



Ford Motor Company

NEWS

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

UAW-FORD STUDY FOCUSES ON IMPROVING HEALTH CARE IN LOUISVILLE AREA

LOUISVILLE, Ky., October 15, 2002 – The Louisville Community Health Initiative, a joint program of the UAW and Ford Motor Company, today released its findings from an 18-month comprehensive study of health care quality in the seven-county Greater Louisville area.

The report, called the *Louisville MSA Kentucky-Indiana Community Health Care Assessment Factbook*, provides an understanding of the populations' needs and health care resources. It evaluates and compares the community health, medical resources, service utilization and health care costs of the Louisville Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) to other comparable communities and national averages. Most important, the *Factbook* establishes an information baseline to help facilitate community discussions on health care planning for the future.

The report was prepared by The Lewin Group, a Washington, D.C.-based strategic health and human services consulting firm. Lewin has more than 30 years of global experience in tracking health care systems and formulating improvements.

"When communities work together to improve care, real strides can be made to make people healthier, keep them well and make sure that

those who need care get it," said Leslie Genewick, director of Ford Community Health Initiatives. "The most important part of the process is yet to come – working with interested community groups to use this information to help guide improvements in our health care delivery system and the health of our neighbors."

Mary Lyle, director of UAW Community Health Initiatives, said, "We believe that the results of this study will be instrumental in making strides toward a better health care system. The UAW, Ford, General Motors and DaimlerChrysler have jointly conducted seven previous health needs assessment studies across the country. In every case, these initiatives have nurtured and built stronger and healthier communities."

The UAW and the automobile manufacturers created the community health care initiatives to improve the health care delivery system and support healthy lifestyles for the entire community.

The target for this analysis was the entire Louisville MSA, which includes Bullitt, Jefferson and Oldham counties in Kentucky and Clark, Floyd, Harrison and Scott counties in Indiana. Results were benchmarked against statewide and national norms; comparison communities including Nashville, Tenn. and Milwaukee-Waukesha, Wis.; and industry standards.

Among the report findings:

- When compared to other communities, the area has low rates of unemployment and uninsurance and high use of screening and prevention services, such as cholesterol and blood pressure screenings, mammograms and pap smears.
- Early disease detection and prevention could be improved. Residents have high rates of death from chronic disease, including heart disease, liver disease and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Residents also are more frequently diagnosed with and die from cancer.
- Residents engage in a host of risky behaviors that may be contributing to high rates of chronic disease and cancer, including smoking and chronic drinking.
- Approximately one third of residents report high rates of obesity and two-thirds report living a sedentary lifestyle.

- Women in the community are disproportionately affected by chronic disease and cancer. Death rates among women for cardiovascular disease, heart disease, COPD and kidney disease are more than twice that of the national rate for women.
- Women have poor birth outcomes, such as a high percentage of low birthweight babies. The high proportion of women reporting alcohol and tobacco use during pregnancy may contribute to these outcomes.
- The area has an excess of hospital-staffed beds, although some counties have a shortage – particularly for maternity beds.
- Hospital admissions overall are similar to the nation and other communities. However, admissions for circulatory disease are high.
- Similar to national trends, African Americans in the area are more likely than white residents to live in poverty, have a lower income and receive less education. African Americans are also twice as likely to die from diabetes, have higher death rates from heart disease and higher rates of death from cancer than whites. The death rate for African American infants is more than twice that of white infants.

The report was presented to more than 150 members of the health care community, civic leaders, health care purchasers, elected officials and others today at a community forum at Kye's II Conference Facility in Jeffersonville, Ind.

Ford Motor Company employs more than 10,000 men and women at its Louisville Assembly Plant (LAP) on Fern Valley Road and Kentucky Truck Plant (KTP) on Chamberlain Lane. The company also has more than 5,000 retirees in the Louisville area.

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Note to editors: The complete executive summary of the report is available upon request.