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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Taney County Health Department Awarded National Accreditation by the Public Health Accreditation Board

PHAB-Accredited Health Departments Demonstrate the Capacity to Serve their Communities Well

Branson, MO — The Taney County Health Department announced today that it has achieved national accreditation through the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB). The national accreditation program works to improve and protect the health of the public by advancing the quality and performance of the nation's Tribal, state, local and territorial public health departments. Hundreds of health departments across the country are preparing to seek accreditation through the PHAB, the non-profit organization that administers the national public health accreditation program. Nationally, 75 governmental health agencies are accredited by PHAB, The Taney County Health Department is the second local public health agency in Missouri to achieve national accreditation.

The Taney County Health Department values the accreditation process and has been an accredited health department of the Missouri Institute for Community Health's accreditation program since 2005. The decision to seek national accreditation was the culmination of these early efforts and indicates the commitment to continuously improve services and performance.

"Achieving the national accreditation indicates our continued commitment to advanced standards that include performance management, quality improvement, and increased accountability in order to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and quality of services we provide to the residents and guests of Taney County," said Robert Niezgod, director of the Taney County Health Department. "This milestone was accomplished through the dedication of our staff, commitment of the board of trustees, as well as the collaboration and support that we receive from our community partners. Without a supportive community, the public health system in Taney County would not be able to achieve such high standards."

The national accreditation program, jointly supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, sets standards against which the nation's more than 3,000 governmental public health departments can continuously improve the quality of their services and performance. To receive accreditation, a health department must undergo a rigorous, multi-faceted, peer-reviewed assessment process to ensure it meets or exceeds a set of quality standards and measures.

Public health departments play a critical role in protecting and improving the health of people and communities. In cities, towns, and states across the nation, health departments provide a range of services aimed at promoting healthy behaviors; preventing diseases and injuries; ensuring access to safe food, water, clean air, and life-saving immunizations; and preparing for and responding to public health emergencies.

“The accreditation process provides a framework for the Taney County Health Department to continue to improve our services and performance, we can be sure we are meeting the public health needs of those we serve as effectively as possible.” said Buddy Roberts, chair of the Taney County Health Department Board of Trustees. “With accreditation, the health department is demonstrating increased accountability and credibility to the public, funders, elected officials and community partner organizations with which we work.”

“The Taney County Health Department joins the growing ranks of accredited health departments in a strong commitment to their public health mission,” said PHAB President and CEO Kaye Bender, PhD, RN, FAAN. “The peer-review process provides valuable feedback to inform health departments of their strengths and areas for improvement, so that they can better protect and promote the health of the people they serve in their communities. Residents of a community served by a nationally accredited health department can be assured that their health department has demonstrated the capacity to protect and promote the health of that community.”

The national accreditation program was created collaboratively over a 10-year period by hundreds of public health practitioners working at the national, Tribal, state, and local levels. Since the program’s launch in September 2011, hundreds of public health departments have applied to PHAB for accreditation, and hundreds of public health practitioners from across the nation have been trained to serve as volunteer peer site visitors for the program.

“Achieving accreditation indicates that the Taney County Health Department is dedicated to improving and protecting the health of the community by striving to continuously improve the quality of the services it delivers,” said Leslie M. Beitsch, MD, JD, chair of PHAB’s Board of Directors and chair of the Department of Behavioral Sciences and Social Medicine at Florida State University College of Medicine. “Accreditation also promotes consistency in meeting standards. With an ever-increasing number of health departments now applying for and becoming accredited, you will be able to expect to receive the same quality of public health services wherever you go in the United States.”

For more information about PHAB and the accreditation process visit www.taneycohealth.org or call either location at Branson (417) 334-4544 or Forsyth (417) 546-4725.

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About the Public Health Accreditation Board

The Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB), established in 2007, was created to serve as the national public health accrediting body, and is jointly funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The development of national public health accreditation has involved, and is supported by, public health leaders and practitioners from the national, Tribal, state, and local levels. Learn more about PHAB or sign up for the PHAB e-newsletter by visiting www.phaboard.org.