

## **New West Virginia health survey aims to better inform policy makers to help deliver resources to communities in need**

MORGANTOWN, W.Va. — A new, biennial West Virginia population-based health survey—the Mountain State Assessment of Trends in Community Health (MATCH)—will gather information to help health officials and policy makers better understand the critical health needs of all 55 West Virginia counties, with the goal of directing resource allocation to communities that need them most.

The MATCH is a partnership between the [West Virginia University Office of Health Affairs](#) and four West Virginia [Department of Health and Human Resources](#) bureaus ([Medical Services](#), [Behavioral Health](#), [Children and Families](#), and [Public Health](#)).

The survey, which will be first distributed throughout the State this August through December 2021, will collect information from respondents about general physical wellness, ability to access needed health care, chronic diseases and their impact on general wellness, food security, financial stability, and mental well-being. The results will be shared with health departments, non-profit organizations, and other state leaders to better inform decision-making.

“Data-driven decision-making leads to better health policy, and better health policy leads to healthier West Virginians,” said Dr. Summer Hartley, Principal Investigator of the project and Assistant Vice President for the Office of Health Affairs. “The MATCH survey will yield data essential for ensuring that health resources reach our communities most in need.”

The MATCH team aims to collect accurate information for all 55 counties. Roughly 88,000 surveys will be mailed to randomly selected West Virginia households. About 7%, or one in every 14, adult West Virginia residents will be sampled. If a household is selected to participate, they will receive an invitation with a choice on how they would like to complete the survey—either online, by mail or by phone. The survey will take 35-55 minutes to complete.

The information collected in this survey is confidential and no individually identifiable data is retained or used in any reports. This survey has also been reviewed and approved by WVU’s [Institutional Review Board](#), which is responsible for protecting the rights of survey participants.

Participation in the survey is completely voluntary. Taking, or not taking the survey will not change any state benefits you may be eligible to receive now or in the future.

“As a native West Virginian, I encourage all those selected to participate in the MATCH survey to help WVU and the WV Department of Health and Human Resources use data to build a healthier West Virginia,” said Dr. Hartley.

Results of the survey will be available in 2022 on the MATCH website.

To learn more, visit [WVMATCHsurvey.org](http://WVMATCHsurvey.org), call 304-581-1928 or email [WVMATCHsurvey@hsc.wvu.edu](mailto:WVMATCHsurvey@hsc.wvu.edu).

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