



UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

Population Health Institute

Translating Research for Policy and Practice

FOR RELEASE 12.15.16

New report shows much room for improvement in Wisconsin's health

MADISON, Wis. -- A new report by researchers at the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute gives Wisconsin a grade of B- for overall health, but barely passing grades no better than a C for those without a high school education and for African Americans and Native Americans. Of great concern is that Wisconsin's health is not improving faster than other states since the first *Report Card* was released a decade ago. Indeed our ranking in the widely publicized America's Health State Rankings has fallen from 7th in 1990 to 11th in 2006 when our first report was issued. In 2016, Wisconsin has dropped in rank to 20th.

"We can and must do much better," said Patrick Remington MD, MPH, Associate Dean for Public Health Interim Institute Director at the UW School of Medicine and Public Health. The Institute produces this Report Card every three years to track Wisconsin's progress in improving health, and to catalyze discussion and action to achieve longer, healthier lives for all. "Obviously the pace of such discussion and action needs to be substantially accelerated to stop Wisconsin's race to the bottom of state health rankings. Improving our quality of life and economic progress depend on it" Remington added. While the national group gives an overall state numerical rank, Remington says it's important to look at the details, especially the underlying gaps in health for different groups of people within the state.

"We know that reaching the goal of longer, healthier lives for all requires us to focus on creating opportunities for health not only in medical care but also in the social, behavioral, and environmental factors that produce it and that can improve these grades" Remington said.

The UW Population Health Institute is part of the UW School of Medicine and Public Health, and the Report Card is funded by the school's Wisconsin Partnership Program. To read the full report online, including corresponding PowerPoint slides, visit the UW Population Health Institute website at <http://uwphi.pophealth.wisc.edu/programs/match/healthiest-state/report-card/2016/index.htm>.