WASHINGTON, D.C. – The National Association of Counties (NACo) this week will hold the “Roadmaps to Health Forum” in Dane County, Wis. to assist county leaders from across the country in identifying opportunities and exploring strategies to improve public health. The forum will be held Oct. 31-Nov. 1 at the Madison Concourse Hotel.

The forum is being offered as part of NACo's collaboration with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute on the County Health Rankings & Roadmaps program, which provides counties with information and insight about how to develop effective local programs and policies that can improve overall county health.

NACo President Linda Langston said the 1 ½-day forum will be a close examination of opportunities, resources and programs available to improve health in communities across the country.

“The forum is a terrific opportunity for county health officials and county employees responsible for health and human services delivery, parks and recreation programs and economic development efforts to share ideas with one another,” said Langston, supervisor, Linn County, Iowa.

Specifically, the forum will:

- examine opportunities to build, enhance and sustain a diverse multi-sector team of partners to work collaboratively to implement strategies that result in a healthy systems change
- assess potential measures and additional sources of data (e.g. local, state or national) that will help counties address questions about the community needs
- identify tools and resources to help counties determine and prioritize where they need to focus their health improvement efforts, and
- explore evidence-informed policies and programs to address county needs.

Langston said that counties play a large role in fostering healthy American communities.

NACO to hold health forum in Dane County

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“Counties serve the nation’s healthcare system as employers, service providers and payers,” Langston said. “We invest more than $69.7 billion for community health and hospitals annually.”

Many counties operate hospitals and health facilities that provide clinical services, cancer and cardiac care, as well as emergency and rehabilitation services. County nursing homes offer restorative care and health departments offer preventative services such as flu shots and healthy lifestyle education programs.

“In addition to direct health care services, many counties maintain parks and recreational facilities and offer recreation programs year round which help promote healthy lifestyles and activities in the communities that they serve,” Langston said.

For more information, visit www.naco.org.

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The National Association of Counties (NACo) assists America’s counties in pursuing excellence in public service by advancing sound public policy, promoting peer learning and accountability, fostering intergovernmental and public-private collaboration and providing value-added services to save counties and taxpayers money. Founded in 1935, NACo provides the elected and appointed leaders from the nation’s 3,069 counties with the knowledge, skills and tools necessary to provide fiscally responsible, quality-driven and results-oriented policies and services for healthy, vibrant, safe and resilient counties.