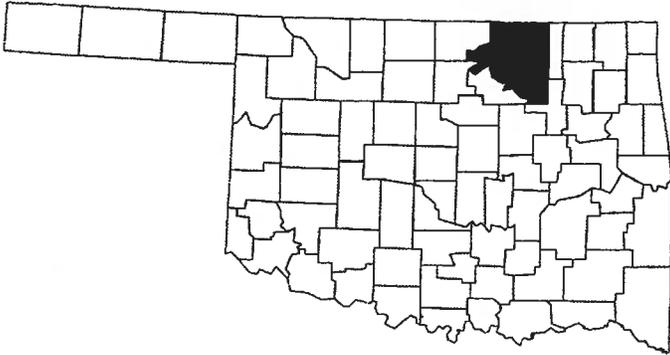


# OSAGE COUNTY

## OSAGE COUNTY TURNING POINT

Established in January 2003



**W**ith less than a year into the community development process, Osage County Turning Point Partnership has begun to see system changes. The first significant change has been the collaboration with local county officials. In 1996 the county voted on a one-penny sales tax increase to help fund the new jail in Pawhuska. The Sheriff has been very prudent with the excess funds and has invested the money that has been collected after the jail was completed and the debt paid down. After much research and discussion, the partnership decided to approach the county with a proposal that would include 10% of the 1-cent sales tax to be designated for a public health system in Osage County. Initially, county officials were against the plan. But after much networking and education on what exactly those moneys would fund, the dissention was minimized and support for the plan was accepted. The plans are to take it to a vote of the people in the spring of 2004. If approved, the money will be used to create a public health department, open a community health center in partnership with the Osage Tribe, and to fund senior nutrition sites throughout the county. Osage County is unique in not only its size but also its ability to quickly identify issues and the ability to collaborate with diverse partners. The lack of health services in a large geographical area like this county has allowed for the development of a comprehensive plan that not only addresses public health but also primary health care for all the residents.

### Activities

- Conducted community opinion survey April 2003.
- Partnership meetings are held in various communities within the County because of the vastness of the area.
- Created work groups to deal with the pressing health issues:
  - Health Education and Promotion – This group is charged with researching what is currently available in each of the communities and design strategies that get the word out to the community.

- Youth Issues – This group will research and design health education classes targeted at teens and teen health focusing on self-esteem, anger management, healthy relationships, sexuality education, and alcohol/drug abuse information.
- Federally Qualified Health Center – This group would research location, funding options, and grant preparation for submission April 2005.
- Osage County Health Department – This group will continue to research funding streams and location and/or design of a local health department.
- Senior Issues – This group will look at the need for assisted living facilities, access to care, high-priced medications, and other health related issues.

### Outcomes

- Over 500 surveys were completed and returned from all 18 communities within the county.
- 44,000 residents, 14 percent are members of the Osage Tribe.
- According to the results of the community survey, the residents of Osage County are dealing with several chronic diseases including hypertension, cancer, and arthritis. Many of the respondents feel that drug and alcohol abuse and poor lifestyle choices are the biggest risk factor to the community.
- The work group focusing on youth issues has identified several after-school programs that they want to pilot this school year in various school districts throughout the county.
- Sales tax issue will be voted on in the spring of 2004.
- A collaboration with the Osage Tribe and the partnership will apply for the Federal 330 funds in the spring of 2004.

### Participants

- Osage Nation
- Pawhuska Chamber of Commerce
- City of Barnsdall
- City of Wynona
- City of Fairfax
- City of Shidler
- Youth Services of Osage County
- Osage Sheriff's Department
- Oklahoma State University Cooperative Extension Service
- Osage County Public Health Nurse
- Fairfax Hospital
- Pawhuska Public Schools
- Local legislators
- Medical community