

## WELLNESS SURVEY

# Does it hurt here or in your wallet? City wants to know

By Rita Frankenberg  
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**D**uring the next few weeks, if Rebecca Payne asks how you're doing, she's more than making polite chit-chat.

She really wants to know, and don't be surprised if she asks you to get specific.



**Dr. Venita Newby-Owens**

Payne, a statistical analyst with the city's Department of Public Health, is charged with

completing the city's first Community Wellness Survey. For the past month, she's been out visiting the city's Parks and Recreation facilities, urgent care centers, civic leagues and churches to try and find out what residents'

### how are you feeling?

The city's Wellness Survey will continue for another month. If you are interested in participating, go to [www.vbhealth2008.com](http://www.vbhealth2008.com) to fill out the online survey. If you'd prefer a survey mailed to you, call Rebecca Payne at 518-2757.

top health concerns are.

Whatever is on their minds – whether it relates to crime rates, health care costs, nutrition or housing – she wants to hear about it.

In the coming weeks, Payne plans to visit local libraries as well.

"I'm trying to spread myself out over the community to get a good response for the survey," Payne said. "I would say that the cost associated with health care – across the board – is a top concern."

Payne has not yet analyzed the data. So far, she has gotten about 300 responses to the Wellness Survey online, and 200 on paper. The Public Health Department is waiting until it collects input from 1,100 residents before concluding the survey.

"So far, we're halfway there," said Dr. Venita Newby-Owens, director of the city's public health department. "Basically, this is an attempt to get the input of as many citizens as we can, so we can include their feelings and opinions on health care in our plan to address health needs in our city.

"We're combining all this data, from all segments of Virginia Beach, to include in this comprehensive plan to improve the health of the citizens of Virginia Beach."

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