



# **Douglas County, Wisconsin Community Health Improvement Plan 2017-2020**

Douglas County Public Health / December 2017

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# Letter to the Community and Acknowledgements

Dear Friends,

The Douglas County Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) is a culmination of work completed in partnership with the Douglas County Community Health Assessment Steering Committee. This process began in 2016 with a Community Health Assessment (CHA) by documenting the health needs, areas of concern, and strengths in our community. The CHA report can be found on the Douglas County website by clicking on the following link:

<http://www.douglascountywi.org/DocumentCenter/View/8116>

The Public Health Accreditation Board defines a Community Health Improvement Plan as a “Long-term, systematic effort to address public health problems on the basis of the results of community health assessment activities and the community health improvement process. This plan is used by health and other governmental education and human service agencies, in collaboration with community partners, to set priorities and coordinate and target resources. A community health improvement plan is critical for developing policies and defining actions to target efforts that promote health.”

“Today’s experience and exposures influence tomorrow’s health.” This is a key concept of the Life Course Framework to help build protective factors and reduce risk factors in our community. The health priorities identified by the CHA include mental health, alcohol and other drug abuse prevention and tobacco prevention.

The CHIP is a community plan to address these health priorities and supports our mission to promote the health, safety and wellbeing of individuals and families.

Sincerely,

Kathy Ronchi RN, BSN  
Health Officer  
Douglas County Department of Health and Human Services

# Community Health Improvement Plan Methodology

Health departments are required to conduct a Community Health Assessment (CHA) at least every five years. In 2016, Douglas County began collaborating on the community health assessment process with Essentia Health. The purpose of the CHA is to evaluate the status of health in Douglas County. CHA data is then used to identify goals for the improvement of health over the next three years and to develop a working plan for the county to achieve these goals. This plan is called the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP).

The Community Health Assessment report can be accessed by the following link:

<http://www.douglascountywi.org/DocumentCenter/View/8116>

Through the compilation of data through various sources throughout the CHA report, the steering committee analyzed the data, prioritized the health needs and selected three focus areas for developing goals. Over the next three years, strategies for community health improvement will be implemented and evaluated.

The following report will lay out implementation strategies with objectives, partnerships, goals and evaluation measures for the Douglas County CHIP for the next three years (2017-2019). The steps listed below are how the development of the plan has come about.

1. Collaborate with stakeholders and community members
  - Include broad participation from the community
  - Actively involve stakeholders throughout the process
2. Assess needs & resources
  - Collect and analyze community health data
  - Include data to analyze health disparities
  - Examine underlying determinants of health
  - Include themes identified by the stakeholders and the community
  - Identify community assets and resources
3. Prioritize strategic issues
  - Identify community health priorities
  - Align the local health improvement plan with state and national priorities
  - Summarize and disseminate the results of the assessment to the community
4. Action plan for impact
  - Engage partners to plan and implement strategies
  - Choose effective evidence-based strategies
  - Have multi-level approaches to change, including policy approaches
  - Develop a detailed action plan
5. Implement Strategies
  - Use a work plan to actively track progress
  - Provide ongoing updates to the community
6. Evaluate Efforts
  - Evaluate and monitor the process and the outcomes/indicators
  - Revise the action plan based on evaluation results



# Health Focus Areas Selected for 2017-2021



Mental  
Health



Alcohol and  
Other Drugs



Tobacco Use  
and Exposure

# Health Priority Focus #1: Mental Health

## DEFINITION

- “Mental health is a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully and is able to make a contribution to his or her community” (World Health Organization, 2001). “Mental health is the foundation for well-being and effective functioning for an individual and community. It is more than the absence of mental illness; it is a resource vital to individuals, families and societies” (British Columbia, Ministry of Health, 2007).

## REASONS FOR CHOSEN HEALTH PRIORITY (data below taken from the CHA report)

- This was the number one response on the community health survey for the question, “What needs to be improved to make Douglas County healthier?”
- 1 in 5 adults in the U.S. experiences mental illness in a given year (That is over 63 million people)
- In Douglas County, 29% of adults have been told by a health professional that they have had anxiety or panic attack and 23 % of adults have been told by a health professional that they have depression (Bridge to Health Survey)
- Approximately 20% of the population experiences a mental health problem during a one-year period
- Mental health issues are also associated with physical health problems and risk factors such as smoking, physical inactivity, obesity and substance abuse; factors that can lead to chronic disease, injury and disability.
- Hospitalizations for mental health disorders over 400 per year
- Children in poverty in Douglas County is 21% (contributes to adverse childhood events = toxic stress)
- Lack of mental health providers and services, ratio is 1 mental health provider to 910 people

## GOALS

- Improve mental health and well being in Douglas County

## OBJECTIVES/ACTION STEPS

- Partner with, support and participate in the Mental Health Coordinated Community Response Group (MHCCR). The priorities of this group are: Increase awareness about mental health issues, support training by coordinating and/or providing trainings for mental health providers or families or community members/professionals, improve access by being a finding access to meet the needs of all individuals, and enhance options by advocating for the specialized services and providers needed for all people and their families that are affected by mental illness.
- Increase education on the importance of physical activity as important for mental health
- Increased awareness and education on the importance of mental health in infants and children

## STAKEHOLDERS/COMMUNITY PARTNERS

- Douglas County Department of Health and Human Services
- Local Healthcare Providers
- Local schools
- Local higher education institutions
- Law enforcement
- NAMI of Douglas County (National Alliance on Mental Health)
- Faith communities
- Fostering Futures
- Human Development Center
- CASDA (The Center Against Sexual and Domestic Abuse)
- WI Medical Home Initiative
- Lutheran Social Services
- Local State Representatives
- North Country Independent Living
- Tradewinds Residence
- Challenge Center
- Harbor House
- Creative Counseling Group

## EVALUATION TOOLS

- MHCCR team evaluations
- Wisconsin Family Health Survey
- County Health Rankings
- WI DHS Profile for Douglas County
- Increased services available
- Bridge to Health Survey

# Health Priority Focus #2: Alcohol and Other Drugs

## DEFINITION

- Alcohol and other drug use means any use of a substance, or uses of substances, that results in negative consequences. This includes a broad array of mood-altering substances that include, but are not limited to, alcohol, prescription substances, and illegal mood-altering substances. Negative consequences or unhealthy uses include, but are not limited to, operating a motor vehicle while intoxicated, drinking while pregnant, alcohol dependence, fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, alcohol-related hospitalizations, heavy drinking, alcohol-related liver cirrhosis deaths, motor vehicle injury or death, liquor law violations, other alcohol-attributable deaths, underage drinking, non-medical or illicit drug use, drug-related deaths, drug-related hospitalizations, arrests for drug law violations, and alcohol- or drug-related crimes (e.g., property crimes, violent crimes). (Source = Healthiest Wisconsin 2020)

## REASONS FOR CHOOSING FOCUS (data below taken from the CHA report)

- This was the number one response on the community health survey for the question, "What are the top three current problems in Douglas County?"
- The Wisconsin Department of Health Services' (DHS) State Health Officer has issued a Public Health Advisory, in response to the use and abuse of opioids, including heroin and prescription painkillers.
- There has been a surge in use of prescription drugs for non-medical purposes
- Methamphetamine cases in Douglas County from 2013-15 = 239, heroin cases from 2013-15 = 102
- Excessive drinking is 24% in Douglas County

## GOALS

- To decrease the negative impact of drugs and alcohol in Douglas County

## OBJECTIVES/ACTION STEPS (data below taken from the CHA report)

- Partner and support the "AODA (Alcohol and Other Drugs) Community Coalition of Douglas County"
- Two project focuses for the coalition: Community Awareness and Family and Loved Ones Informational Packets
- Increased education to seniors about safe medication storage and disposal
- Increased education to youth about the dangers of drugs and alcohol (Too Good for Drugs Program)
- Increase awareness in the community about the opioid crisis and prevention education

## STAKEHOLDERS/COMMUNITY PARTNERS

- Local healthcare providers
- Local schools
- Local higher education institutions
- Local law enforcement
- Douglas County Department of Health and Human Services
- AIDS Resource Center of WI
- Human Development Center
- Faith Communities
- Community members
- Rural Opioid Research Project (UW Madison)
- WI Opioid Task Force
- Northwoods Coalition

## EVALUATION TOOLS

- Wisconsin Youth Risk Behavior Survey
- County Health Rankings data
- WI Epidemiological Profile on Alcohol and Other Drug Use
- Too Good for Drugs program evaluations
- Evaluations/surveys from community awareness events

# Health Priority Focus #3: Tobacco Use and Exposure

## DEFINITION

- Eliminating tobacco use and exposure means improving health by preventing tobacco abuse, promoting tobacco dependence treatment, protecting all people from exposure to secondhand smoke, and identifying and eliminating tobacco-related disparities. This is accomplished by partnering with state and local leaders to implement a research-based comprehensive tobacco prevention and control plan. (Source = Healthiest Wisconsin 2020)

## REASONS FOR CHOOSING THIS FOCUS (data below taken from the CHA report)

- Tobacco use and exposure represent the leading overall cause of death in the U.S. and Wisconsin.
- In Douglas County, 1 out of 5 adults or 20% of adults smoke
- 23% of pregnant women in Douglas County smoke and this is above the state rate of Smoking during pregnancy rate is high at
- 13% of youth report e-cigarette use (E-Cigarette Use is Surpassing Conventional Cigarette Use)
- 20% or 1 in 5 of WI youth report using some form of tobacco product
- 21% of WI high school youth report living in homes where others smoke
- Nearly 7,000 people die annually from illnesses directly related to smoking and approximately 751 die from illnesses and fires indirectly related to smoking, for a total of 7,717 annual deaths in Wisconsin. (Source: WI Dept of Health Services)
- Tobacco use also costs Wisconsin approximately \$4.5 billion annually in health care expenses and lost productivity (Source: WI Dept of Health Services)

## GOALS

- To reduce the use of and exposure to tobacco products in the community

## OBJECTIVES/ACTION STEPS

- Participate in and support the Northwest WI Tobacco Free Coalition and their projects and initiatives
- Promote and increase education to pregnant and post partum women about the negative health effects of tobacco use
- Promote and increase education to pregnant and post partum women about resources for smoking cessation
- Increase education to youth and adults on the dangers and negative health effects of e-cigarettes
- Increase education on the negative health effects of second hand smoke
- Increased education on the science of addiction and promoting positive behaviors to improve health
- Support the Lethal Lure Campaign (campaign that educates the community about the harms menthol and flavored tobacco products)
- Inform and educate policy makers on the health dangers of e-cigarettes

## STAKEHOLDERS/COMMUNITY PARTNERS

- Local healthcare providers
- WIC (Women, Infants and Children) of Douglas County
- Northwest WI Tobacco Free Coalition
- American Lung Association
- Local schools
- Local higher education institutions
- State representatives
- Northwestern High School FACT (Fighting Against Corporate Tobacco) group
- St. Louis County (MN)
- WI Quit Line

## EVALUATION TOOLS

- Wisconsin Youth Risk Behavior Survey
- Wisconsin Youth Tobacco Survey
- County Health Rankings
- Bridge to Health Survey
- TOBWIS.org (online tobacco prevention resource)



## Conclusion

Thank you so much for taking the time to review the Community Health Improvement Plan for Douglas County. The benefits of this plan (as identified by the Centers for Disease Control) are:

- Improved organizational and community coordination and collaboration
- Increased knowledge about public health and the interconnectedness of activities
- Strengthened partnerships within state and local public health systems
- Identified strengths and weaknesses to address in quality improvement efforts
- Baselines on performance to use in preparing for accreditation
- Benchmarks for public health practice improvements

This plan is important in making decisions within the community to make Douglas County a healthier and a better place to live, work and play. The decisions on the top focus areas of this community health improvement plan have been based on priorities of the community as they align with the Wisconsin State Plan.

Please join us in improving the health of Douglas County Wisconsin!

Respectively Submitted,

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**Public Health Nurse**

**Douglas County Department of Health and Human Services**

**Kathy Ronchi RN, BSN**

**Health Officer**

**Douglas County Department of Health and Human Services**

