Community Health Improvement Plan

April 2025

Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.
Winnebago County, WI

Table of Contents

We are pleased to share the 2024 Winnebago County Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). The CHIP is a collaborative effort that involves community planning to address community priorities identified from the Community Health Assessment (CHA). We invite community partners, leaders, and residents to review the report, available on our website at www.winnebagopublichealth.org or by scanning the QR code.

As we reviewed the CHA, health inequities stood out as the critical overarching reality holding our community back. By looking at our community through the lenses of income, race, educational attainment, housing, and other factors that influence health, it is clear that everyone does not have the same opportunities to attain their full potential. Actively and intentionally improving community conditions for populations with less resources can increase consumer spending, grow the tax base, decrease reliance on social safety nets, and improve community safety.

The Problem
Preventable differences in health outcomes between different groups

Shared Goal
Opportunity for everyone to attain their full potential

What the data shows
Differences in health status or resources between different groups due to systematic or other discriminatory barriers

Our community conversations with partners and residents highlighted that current systems and policies prevent specific population groups from better health outcomes. It is crucial to identify strategies that address root causes as they offer the most significant potential for positive health impacts.

Graphic: https://www.healthyhighpoint.org/our-focus/our-upstream-approach/

Improving community conditions for all residents requires upstream strategies and tactics. Only upstream efforts tackle root causes of poor health, poverty, chronic stress, discrimination, environmental contamination, access to quality housing and transportation.

Working together we can implement solutions that eliminate barriers and create even safer, healthier, and prosperous communities.

Community involvement, collaboration, and ownership are key elements to a successful CHIP. This document is the result of community voice, collaboration, and partners leading the way.
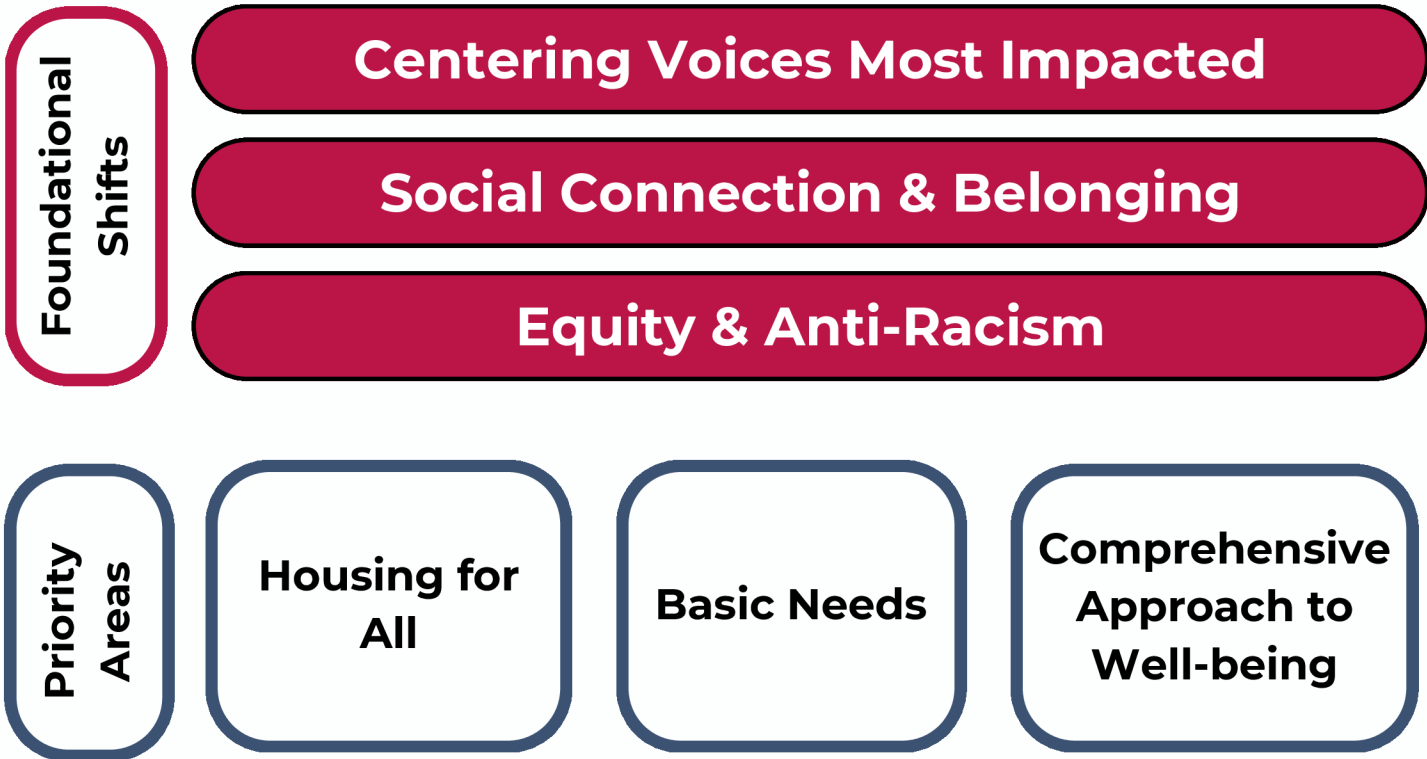
Our strength comes from our ability to bring people together from different places to forge a better future. To build on our strengths is how we achieve shared goals.

Doug Gieryn, Health Officer

Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)

Vision: A connected community where everyone has the opportunity to achieve optimal well-being.

Foundational Shifts are the fundamental changes we must make in the way we do the work of public health to effectively and sustainably address and improve the health and well-being of all. The foundational shifts act as guideposts to ensure CHIP strategies improve health equity.

Foundational Shifts

- **Centering Voices Most Impacted**
- **Social Connection & Belonging**
- **Equity & Anti-Racism**

Priority Areas

- **Housing for All**
- **Basic Needs**
- **Comprehensive Approach to Well-being**

The Community Health Priorities and Foundational Shifts are interconnected and inter-related. By integrating the foundational shifts with the community priorities, we will become a more connected community where everyone has the opportunity to achieve optimal well-being.

Overview & Timeline

The **Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)** is a collaborative effort that involves community planning. It is guided by the **Community Health Assessment (CHA)** which helps identify priorities, goals, indicators and strategies. The CHIP fosters new partnerships, strengthens existing ones, and encourages collaborations among public and private sectors, community-based organizations, and community members. By working together, we aim to implement strategies to improve community health outcomes.

The CHA-CHIP process would not have been feasible without the support of our Community Advisory Team, partners, and community members willing to share their experiences.

2022
- Convene Advisory Team for Community Health Assessment (CHA)
- Collect community data, specifically focused on community conditions
- Identify disproportionately impacted populations

2023
- Conduct Focus Groups
- Identify themes from focus groups
- Analyze data
- Published Community Health Assessment (CHA)

2024
- Expand Community Health Advisory Team (CoHAT) to provide guidance and input on the CHIP Process including:
  - Identify themes from CHA
  - Hold community partner meetings to rank themes
  - Confirm priorities
  - Develop vision
  - Define foundational shifts
  - Develop priority workplans with goals and objectives
- Publish CHIP

2025
- Implement CHIP
- Track progress
- Provide community updates on CHIP

2026
- Report on progress
- Monitor and revise strategies as needed

Community Themes & Meetings

Community Themes

Staff identified themes from the Community Health Assessment using guidance from well-established processes, including NACCHO's Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnership (MAPP 2.0) and County Health Ranking's Take Action Cycle. Staff organized and consolidated complex information from the CHA into themes.

Once the themes were identified, the CoHAT (Appendix A) refined and finalized themes (Appendix B) and established criteria for ranking themes with community partners.

Using partner mapping resources from MAPP 2.0 and the University of Wisconsin's Population Health Institute's Mobilizing Action Toward Community Health (MATCH), community partners were identified and invited to attend a meeting of their choice.

Staff facilitated community meetings to review the CHA themes and led participants in small group discussions to reflect on the following questions.
- What is the change community members most want to see?
- Are there groups that are affected more than others? [health inequity]
- What are the consequences of not intervening? [urgency]
- What does the community think? Do they support this issue? [feasibility]
- What assets and resources can partners bring to address this issue? [feasibility]

Diverse perspectives were shared about experiences living and working in Winnebago County. After discussions, participants ranked their top priorities that could make our communities stronger and more inclusive.

Community Meetings
Meetings were organized with intentional efforts around flexibility, safety, and inclusion.

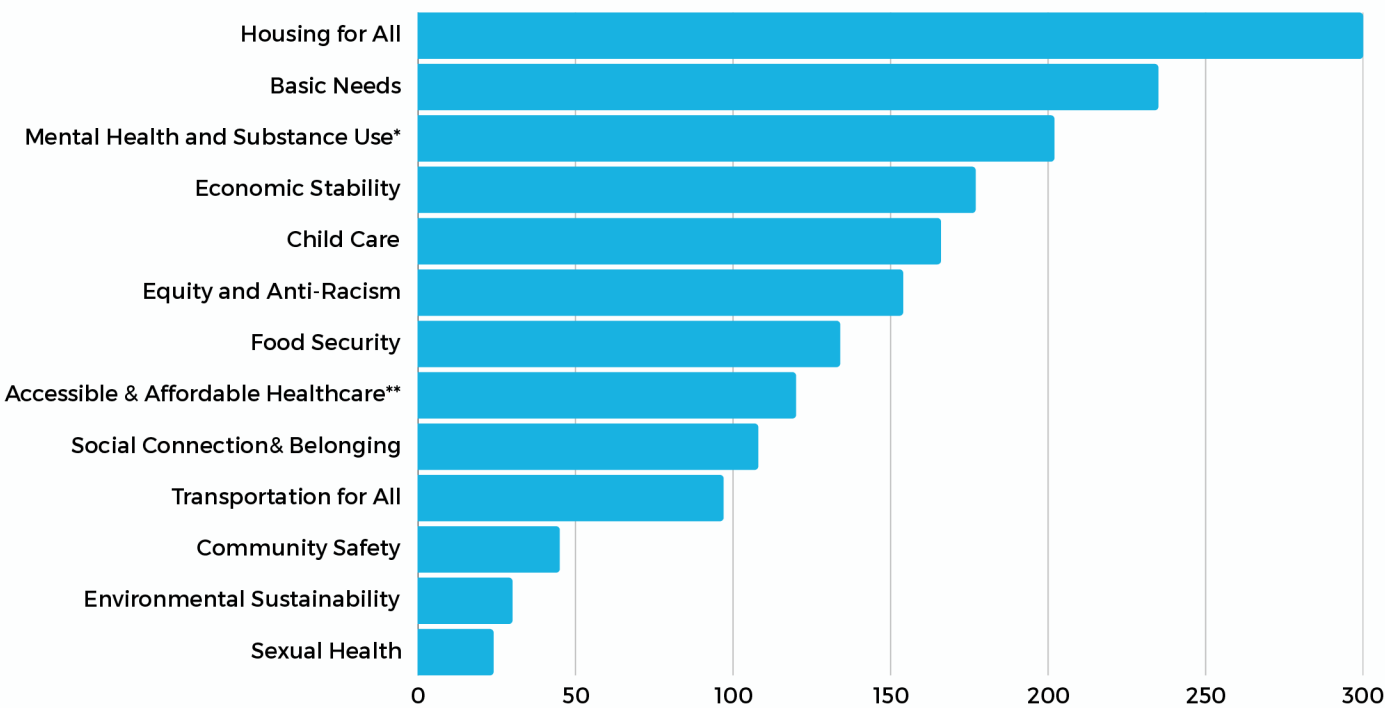|		
March 18-22, 2024 57 attendees 13 one-on-ones **70 Partners**	Virtual & In-person meetings Oshkosh Boys & Girls Club Sunnyview Expo Oshkosh YMCA Neenah Public Library	1-1 meetings offered to partners not able to attend scheduled meetings

Community Priorities

Community meeting results
Ranked voting from all community meetings and 1:1s

Priority	Value (approx.)
Housing for All	300
Basic Needs	235
Mental Health and Substance Use*	200
Economic Stability	175
Child Care	165
Equity and Anti-Racism	153
Food Security	135
Accessible & Affordable Healthcare**	120
Social Connection& Belonging	108
Transportation for All	97
Community Safety	45
Environmental Sustainability	30
Sexual Health	23

*Comprehensive Care for Mental Health and Substance Use
** Comprehensive, Accessible, and Affordable Healthcare

Community Health Advisory Team (CoHAT) Meetings April-May 2024

After the ranking process with community partners, the CoHAT met to finalize priorities, assuring priorities were inclusive of the themes generated from the Community Health Assessment, and are actionable, and feasible. Through the Community Meetings, it became apparent that while Equity and Anti-Racism was its own category like Social Connection and Belonging, it was deeply intertwined within all priorities and needed to be a lens through which the CHIP was written.

The CoHat also reviewed the purpose and intent of the community health improvement plan. Both MAPP and the Take Action Cycle stress the importance of a community vision. Additionally, local health departments must align with the state health improvement plan.

During the next CoHat meetings, the group worked on a vision statement, reviewed the Wisconsin State Health Improvement Plan, and adopted foundational shifts similar to the state.

Foundational Shifts

Centering the Most-Impacted Voices

Means...
Listening and centering individuals experiences, as well as prioritizing the knowledge gained from these experiences and choices when making decisions.

Involves...
Building authentic relationships, affirming experiences as system, not personal, failures, and changing systems to bring voices to the table that have historically been excluded, where solutions are guided by people most impacted.

Looks like...

With help from community partners, more than 100 community members participated in focus groups. We supported participation for individuals with lived experience by arranging convenient times and locations, offering food, and providing gift cards. Their experiences were included in the CHA and reflected in the strategies of this CHIP.

Social Connection & Belonging

Means...

Social connectedness is about having strong relationships, feeling valued and accepted within your community, and being able to make meaningful contributions to the people around you.

Belongingness is feeling valued and accepted within your community where you can be your true and authentic self.

Involves...

Holding space for the idea that social connection and belonging are a basic human health need and historically, groups have been intentionally excluded by policy, systems, practices, etc.

Looks like...

Bringing community together to develop the Community Health Improvement Plan:
- Expanding the Community Health Advisory Team
- Inviting community partners to take part in meaningful discussions around community themes
- Priorities focused on populations historically "othered" and peer response models

Foundational Shifts

Equity And Anti-Racism

Means...

"We all want to live in a country where everyone—no matter their race, ethnicity, or class—has a fair and just opportunity to reach their best health and wellbeing. But unfair treatment based on race, referred to as structural racism, prevents this."

"It is built into our laws and policies, making it much harder for some of us to access respectful healthcare, affordable homes, well-funded schools and parks, and good jobs—all of which affect health."

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Involves...

Advocating for new policies and systems to address disparities in resource allocation across communities.

Addressing underlying root causes of problems and work to eradicate the problems permanently across organizations and sectors.

Shifting resources and decision-making power to historically underinvested and underrepresented communities.

Looks like...

Host advocacy trainings for decision-makers and people most impacted to share and hear stories of the consequences of policies on the community, specifically within the Black and Brown communities.

Building relationships with elected officials to develop a shared understanding of community needs and aspirations.

Holding systems accountable for structural failures and taking steps to improve the system for those experiencing racism and inequities.

Priority Area 1: Housing for All

Summary
Housing is a basic need for all and should be affordable, stable, safe, and meets the needs of those who live there. Housing must meet many needs, including being located near good jobs, provide enough space, accommodate multiple generations, and be physically accessible and supportive for people with mobility concerns. A Housing First approach can also benefit communities by prioritizing permanent and supportive housing to people experiencing homelessness so that they can then pursue other goals. Current and historical policies make it more difficult for some groups to secure healthy housing, resulting in ongoing disparities in rates of homeownership, eviction, experiences of homelessness, childhood lead exposure, and more.

Wisconsin State Health Improvement Plan

Goals	Strategies
1.1 Preserve existing and support creation of affordable housing for those with incomes under Winnebago County's median income ($64,000)	**Equip people impacted to engage in policy advocacy** • Host trainings about housing policy with regional housing advocates, especially engaging those historically marginalized **Partnership and Collaboration** • Engage with municipal planning departments and housing developers to determine affordable housing developments **Community Engagement and Accountability in Decisions** • Build in (equitable) community engagement practices when there are decisions being made about housing locally and hold elected officials accountable to people experiencing housing instability
1.2 Reduce barriers for tenants to access affordable and available rental housing	**Partnership and Collaboration** • Identify opportunities to improve regional coordination of emergency financial assistance for rent and security deposits • Attend meetings of the Winnebago Apartment Association and Fox Valley Apartment Association **Identify gaps and opportunities** • Assess resources needed for creation of a tenant and landlord resource center **Reduce barriers** • Pursue comprehensive policies and programs to address housing quality and safety concerns • Convene stakeholders and second chance landlords to identify opportunities to create a landlord risk mitigation fund through Culturally Specific Led Collective (CSLC to reduce risk of renting to high barrier tenants)

Priority Area 1: Housing for All

Goals

1.3 Strengthen an equitable response to homelessness

Strategies

Build trust among people impacted
- Support convening of a youth homeless coalition led by youth impacted by homelessness
- Support creation of a community response or street outreach team to build trust and meet needs of individuals without shelter

Strengthen relationships with elected officials
- Build relationships with elected officials to identify opportunities for collaboration within each local governing body
- Educate elected officials about local data and effective solutions to ending unsheltered homelessness

Partnership and collaboration
- Identify infrastructure funding needs to support creation of a low barrier shelter

Potential Partners

- Culturally Specific Led Collective
- Casa Hispana
- ESTHER
- Fox Cities Housing Coalition
- HeadsUp Fox Cities
- HELP Program
- Northeast Wisconsin Housing Advocates (ESTHER, JOSHUA, Greater Green Bay Blueprint to Prevent and End Homelessness)
- People of Progression (POP)
- SEPO
- Winnebagoland Housing Coalition

Population-level indicator:

Number of **evictions filed** and **eviction judgments** each year in Winnebago County
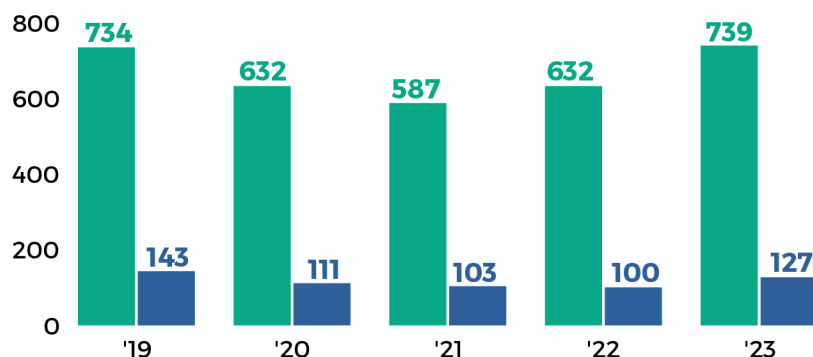
Additional data related to this priority can be found at:

- Eviction Data Project (graph source)

- US Census Housing Characteristics

- Point in Time Counts

8

Priority Area 2: Basic Needs

Summary

Nationally, the cost of household essentials increased faster than other goods and services from 2007 to 2021, which continues to impact lower-income households more than middle and high-income households. Basic needs include: housing, child care, food, transportation, health care, and technology. In Winnebago County 1 in 3 households struggle to cover the cost of basic needs.

Winnebago County Community Health Assessment

Goals	Strategies
2.1 Improve and connect basic needs systems in Winnebago County	**Identify gaps and opportunities** • Conduct environmental scans of basic needs programs and services **Implement and support findings from partner listening sessions** • Address waitlists, navigation, emergency needs and other identified needs **Convene stakeholders** • Basic needs program and service providers • Organizations working with people with lived experience
2.2 Youth in Winnebago County have the resources they need to thrive	**Identify gaps and opportunities** • Conduct environmental scans of the food system and create a food map • School policies impacting students' basic needs **Strengthen relationships with decision makers** • Elected and non-elected officials in Winnebago County School districts **Leverage Partnerships with Trusted Community Organizations** • Pursue funding opportunities that support organizations providing the resources needed to continue their work for Black and Brown youth **Systems change** • Address disproportionate rates of expulsion and suspension in K-12 schools of Black and Brown students **Increase access** • Year round breakfast and lunch for Winnebago County youth
2.3 Decrease the effects of the Benefits Cliff	**Inform and educate** • Increase community understanding of the impact of the benefits cliff **Create a pilot program to counteract the Benefits Cliff** • Convene stakeholders in basic needs programs, including service providers and trusted community organizations • Bring together people with lived experience to provide guidance on potential pilots with continuous feedback **Policy change** • Build support for Paid Parental Leave **Improve systems** • Implement an integrated system for the public to navigate federal and state assistance programs

Priority Area 2: Basic Needs

Goals

2.4 Every child in Winnebago County has access to an early childhood program that ensures resources, supports, and quality care is available to help them reach their full potential

Strategies

Identify gaps and opportunities
- Conduct an assessment of child care provider mental health support
- Development screening that occurs in child care programs and types of resources and referrals offered in Winnebago County
- Examine child care staff retention, wage disparities, and professional development (based on Waupaca County study)
- Analyze programs that are working together to provide a safety of support to the child care industry
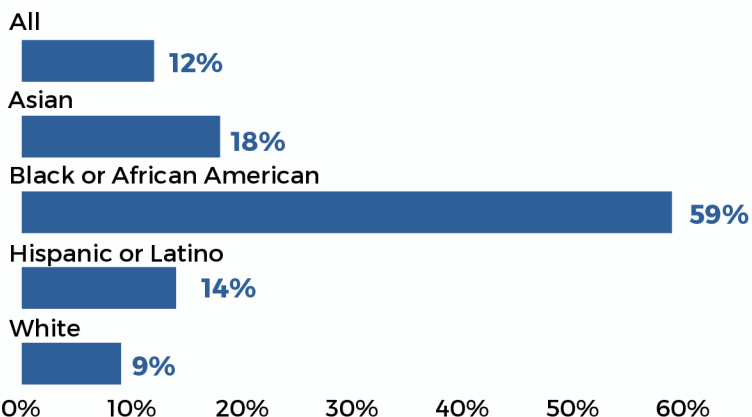
Improve systems
- Develop campaign that supports local and state public-private partnership to increase child care workforce

Potential Partners:

- 9 to 5
- Boys & Girls Club
- Breakwater
- Child Care Alliance
- Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R)
- Christine Ann
- First 5 Fox Valley (F5FV)
- Greater Oshkosh Economic Development Corporation (GoEDC)
- Humana Health Care
- Mountains of Hope
- Neenah Library
- Oshkosh Area School District
- Planned Parenthood
- POP
- Reach Counseling
- SEPO
- UW Extension
- Vinnie's Pantry
- WI Department of Health Services
- World Relief

Population-level indicator:

Children experiencing poverty in Winnebago County

All
12%

Asian
18%

Black or African American
59%

Hispanic or Latino
14%

White
9%

0%   10%   20%   30%   40%   50%   60%

Additional data related to this priority can be found at:

- County Health Rankings (graph source)

- United for Alice

- US Census

- Youth Risk Behavior Survey

Priority Area 3: Comprehensive Approach to Well-being

Summary

For this priority area, a comprehensive approach to well-being refers to a complex combination of a person's physical, mental, emotional, and social health factors. Well-being services include mental health, substance use, sexual health, and interpersonal relationships.

Many people stated that their communities need more care options and systems inclusive of and responsive to cultural and other identity-specific needs and preferences. They said that when they receive care from providers who share their identities it makes the patient-provider relationship more effective at addressing their needs and improving their health and well-being outcomes.

Wisconsin State Health Improvement Plan and Winnebago County Community Health Assessment
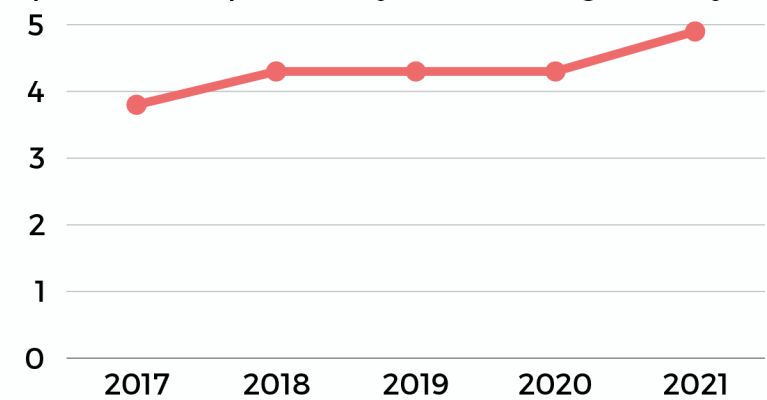
Goals

3.1 Winnebago County residents have access to well-being services

Strategies

Identify gaps and opportunities
- Conduct environmental scans of peer support models for substance use and mental health

Identify and expand peer support models for mental health
- Hold listening sessions for people with lived experience
- Conduct 1:1 conversations with current peer support and recovery organizations

Convene stakeholders
- Emergency department staff, treatment providers, and other members of the medical community

Increase access
- Create and improve warm handoffs with service providers
- Pursue funding opportunities and provide backbone support to organizations offering the resources needed to disproportionately impacted/historically marginalized populations

Population-level indicator:

Average number of mentally unhealthy days reported in the past 30 days in Winnebago County

Additional data related to this priority can be found at:

- County Health Rankings (graph source)

- Youth Risk Behavior Survey

Priority Area 3: Comprehensive Approach to Well-being

Goals

3.2 People in Winnebago County receive person-centered services*

* Allows patients to make informed decisions about their treatment and well-being. They have a team of primary care providers, specialists, and other health care providers who know them, listen to them, and are accountable for their care.

Strategies

Identify gaps and opportunities
- Conduct an environmental scan to identify culturally-appropriate care and accessibility

Build trust among people impacted
- Hold listening sessions for people with lived experience, specifically with the LGBTQ+, BIPOC, and youth communities to understand experiences in service settings
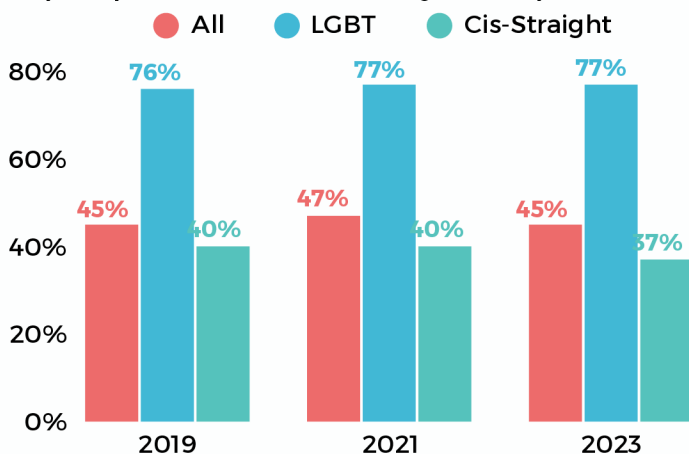
Increase Safe Community Services
- Celebrate and support organizations that are currently providing person-centered services to expand and lead community change
- Pursue funding opportunities and provide backbone support to organizations working to broaden the understanding of wellbeing within disproportionate populations

Potential Partners:

- Christine Ann Youth Team
- Diverse & Resilient
- HeadsUp Fox Cities
- N.E.W. Mental Health Connection
- Overdose Fatality Review Team (OFR)
- Planned Parenthood
- Reach Counseling
- SEPO
- Thedacare Behavioral Health

Population level indicator:

High school students in Winnebago County who report problems with anxiety in the past 12 months

Legend: ● All ● LGBT ● Cis-Straight

2019: All 45%, LGBT 76%, Cis-Straight 40%
2021: All 47%, LGBT 77%, Cis-Straight 40%
2023: All 45%, LGBT 77%, Cis-Straight 37%

Additional data related to this priority can be found at:

- Youth Risk Behavior Survey (graph source)

- WI DHS Substance Use Services

Next Steps: Implement & Track Progress

Implementation

Winnebago County Public Health along with CoHAT members and community partners are centering the foundational shifts as they implement strategies listed in the prioritiy areas.

Tracking Progress

Winnebago County Public Health is utilizing ClearPoint Strategy, a cloud-based platform, for data collection and reporting. ClearPoint is designed for managing projects and showcasing results. Staff and partners continue to identify appropriate population level indicators important to the community as well as process metrics, demonstrating progress towards goals. Each priority area will include two-three population level indicators, the goals and strategies documented in ClearPoint.

CHIP Updates and Revisions

Winnebago County Public Health and community partners involved in each priority area will review, revise, and update the CHIP on an annual basis. The CHIP is a living document and changes in direction and strategy are to be expected as resources, assets, and community needs shift or change.

Healthy people are a result of **healthy communities**.

Healthy communities are achieved by intentional efforts to assure the conditions and resources are available for everyone to achieve their optimal health and well-being -- regardless of their race, ethnicity, income status, gender, age, sexuality, abilities/disabilities, educational level, or experience with the criminal justice system.

Appendix A: Community Health Advisory Team (CoHAT)

Adam BellCorelli	Winnebago County	Beth Oswald	United Way Oshkosh
Danielle Bittelman	Boys & Girls Club	Jeremy Pingel	Vinnie's Food Pantry
Sarah Bassing Sutton	New Mental Health Coalition	Marianne Radley	Planned Parenthood
Ben Bruso	Vivent Health	Reiko Ramos	Diverse and Resilient
Jennifer Considine	ESTHER Housing Adovcates & UW Oshkosh	Molly Smiltneek	World Relief
Trevor Fenrich	Solutions Inc.	Mushe Subulwa	SEPO Zambia
Katie Jaegly	UW Extension Winnebago County	Heidi Thomas	United Way Oshkosh
Lynn Kromm	Omro Community Center	Austin Wellhoefer	Student Intern
Kevin Kropp	UW Oshkosh	Madeline Breager Lynnsey Erickson Danielle Florence Susan Garcia Franz Heidi Keating Ashlee Rahmlow Hannah Wainio	Winnebago County Public Health Staff
Anthony Miller	Oshkosh Area School District		
Katie Olson	ESTHER		

We would like to extend our sincere appreciation to all Winnebago County Community Health Advisory Team members.

Winnebago County Public Health
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health@winnebagocountywi.gov
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Appendix B: Themes

Themes from Community Health Assessment

- **Equity and anti-racism**: Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) in Winnebago County experience mistreatment, exclusion, and discrimination. These experiences are often dismissed because of their race and result in severe consequences, including increased incarceration and early death. Black and Brown students in Winnebago County experience opportunity gaps, increased punishment, and worse educational outcomes compared to their white peers. Individuals who identify as BIPOC and/or LGBTQ+ report not feeling safe in Winnebago County nor feeling that they belong at school or in the community.
    - Inequity and racism are evident in all of the domains.

- **Economic Stability:** Winnebago County has the lowest median household income compared to surrounding counties and households are not able to afford basic needs (food, shelter, security). The disparity increases in communities of People of Color, those who identify as LGBTQ+, and single-parent households. Income inequality is NOT due to a lack of work ethic or work hour differences between groups. Policies and practices, such as tax policies, are linked to the widening wealth gap.

    - **Benefits Cliff:** Inadequate wage increases can severely impact families benefiting from programs such as FoodShare and BadgerCare. These public assistance programs structure their support to decrease as earnings increase, resulting in even slight pay raises triggering a total loss of benefits.

- **Basic Needs:** Nationally, the cost of household essentials increased faster than other goods and services from 2007 to 2021, which continues to impact lower-income households more harshly than middle and high-income households. Basic needs include: housing, child care, food, transportation, health care, and technology.

- **Child care:** Without a reliable child care system, both parents and children are negatively impacted. Parents face rising costs and a shortage of available care, while the local child care industry struggles due to low wages and a lack of benefits for its workforce. The scarcity of child care providers leads to reduced availability and higher costs. Ultimately, this situation adversely affects the local economy, resulting in labor shortages and reduced tax revenues.

Appendix B: Themes

Themes from Community Health Assessment

- **Housing for all**: Lack of stable, affordable, and quality housing has constrained Winnebago County residents' budgets and ability to thrive. Finding a place to rent is increasingly difficult, particularly for those who have conviction histories, eviction records, or are immigrants.

- **Food Security**: Community members lack reliable access to food due to financial constraints, increased costs, transportation, and distance to a food outlet. Food pantries in our county have seen significant increases in service needs.

- **Transportation for all:** Lack of affordable, comprehensive, and reliable transportation options, including public transit, limit residents' ability to access health care, employment, school, and social activities. A limited transportation system places additional barriers and places a higher burden on low-income residents and on people who cannot drive.

- **Environmental sustainability:** Winnebago County's natural environment, lakes, rivers, green space for parks, playgrounds, and trails are universally considered a community asset. Changing climate can put the natural environment and outdoor activities at risk, specifically for sensitive groups including people with heart or lung disease, older adults, children, those who are pregnant, and those who work outside.

- **Social connection & belonging:** The presence of discrimination and oppression in systems results in a lack of inclusive public spaces, social support, and a sense of belonging. This negatively influences overall connection to the community. There is a need for safe spaces to share our authentic selves and advocate for our perspectives and needs.

- **Community safety:** The experiences of incarceration and the record that follows make it difficult to access basic needs and community resources necessary to thrive post-incarceration, particularly for Black youth and men. The focus on punishment and extended supervision make integrating back into the community challenging.

Themes from Community Health Assessment (continued)

- **Comprehensive, accessible, & affordable health care:** The access, navigation, and affordability limit many community members from receiving quality health care and preventative services.

- **Comprehensive care for mental health & substance use:** There has historically been a lack of investment in behavioral health care, which includes treatment for mental health and substance use disorders. This results in a lack of coverage, long wait lists for services, and low provider reimbursement rates. People of color, non-English speakers, LGBTQ communities, people covered by Medicaid, and people who reside in rural areas are disproportionately impacted.

- **Sexual Health:** Access to sexual health care and comprehensive education are not provided consistently in Winnebago County, nor does Wisconsin have legislation requiring any standardization of sexual health curriculum. Poor sexual health outcomes can increase without inclusive and evidence-based services widely available in our county.

Community Partner Profiles

Completed by Austin Wellhoefer, MPH student intern

> Achieving health equity requires strategic collaboration and alignment across multiple sectors to systematically undo historical injustices, tackle inequities, and provide everyone with the opportunity to live healthy, fulfilling, and productive lives. Partnerships are critical to implementation of the CHIP, and the priority issue subcommittees.
>
> <div align="right">Source: MAPP 2.0</div>

The community partner profile project was completed in June 2024. The project consisted of identifying community organizations currently addressing the three priority areas; Housing, Basic Needs, and Comprehensive well-being services (specifically related to mental health and substance use). The project was modified from the MAPP 2.0 handbook. The project is a compilation of:
- the community organization
- a description, goals, and objectives
- outcome metrics
- process metrics

The project was based on information about the organization made available on their website. A separate document includes the community partner profiles.