

Community Health Assessment Summary

Winnebago County Public Health





We are pleased to share the 2023 Winnebago County Community Health Assessment (CHA). The CHA provides an overview of the community's health; the drivers of health, health status, and health outcomes. We invite community partners, leaders, and residents to review the summary and full report, available on the Winnebago County Public Health website at www.winnebagopublichealth.org or by scanning the QR code.



Our health starts where we live, learn, work, and play. In many respects, Winnebago County is a good place to be; it's a safe place to raise a family, attend college or technical school, find fulfilling employment, and pursue business opportunities. People hold similar values around the importance of family and caring for one another. High graduation rates and low unemployment help support the economic growth of the county and the cost of living is below the US average and the state as a whole.

The focus group data gathered as part of the CHA process underscores the strengths of our community. These include excellent school systems, abundant green space for parks, playgrounds, and trails, outdoor recreation options, well-equipped libraries, essential social services, dedicated healthcare professionals, and a warm, helpful hometown atmosphere.

While overall health data suggests positive outcomes for residents of Winnebago County, a closer examination reveals an increasing number of households are struggling to meet basic needs and there remain significant disparities among various population groups. These disparities lead to a substantially lower quality of life, limited opportunity for improvement, chronic stress, low income, adverse childhood experiences, and poor health outcomes. Despite existing support systems for food, housing, and medical care, these systems are fragmented, hindering a comprehensive approach to well-being.

This assessment digs deeper into community data to reveal our blind spots. By looking at our community through the lenses of income, race, educational status, housing, and other factors that influence health, we see where our community is struggling and where we can make the most difference.

The CHA can serve as a starting point to bring residents, partners, and community leaders together to determine priorities, identify strategies, and develop plans of action. Our strength comes from our ability to bring people together from different places to forge a better future. Residents want inclusive and welcoming communities that support everyone's health and well-being. When we work together we can implement solutions that eliminate barriers and create even safer, healthier, and prosperous communities.

Sincerely,

Dorglas D. Hieryn

Doug Gieryn, Director/Health Officer Winnebago County Public Health

Purpose

The CHA summary provides an overview of the full assessment, a collaborative process to collect information that shows a comprehensive picture of the community's health. Local health departments are required to conduct a CHA to identify gaps and opportunities to improve the health of the population. The CHA is the basis for priority setting, planning, program development, policy changes, coordination of community resources, funding applications, and new ways to collaboratively use community assets.

Process

Developing a CHA involves establishing a community advisory team, collecting community data, developing a report, and sharing the report with the community. The Advisory Team, comprised of Winnebago County residents representing various sectors, geographies, and diverse experiences, met regularly to identify data sources and indicators, lead focus groups, and provide insight and guidance about what should be included in the final report.

Data

The CHA includes both primary and secondary data. Primary data is data that Winnebago County Public Health collects from the community. Examples include focus groups and key stakeholder interviews. Secondary data is retrieved from other sources and contains information about Winnebago County, such as demographics available from the US Census, vital statistics, income, housing, education, health behaviors, and outcomes. Utilizing both primary and secondary data is necessary to develop a comprehensive understanding about the health status of the population.

Factors that contribute to health challenges

The CHA must describe the health challenges residents face, including an examination of the health disparities or differences between subpopulations within Winnebago County and health factors. Factors that influence health include well paying jobs with benefits, safe and affordable housing, safe neighborhoods, clean parks, reliable transportation, healthy and affordable food, health care that is available to everyone, and high quality education.

What's next? Community Health Improvement Plan

The CHA is the basis for determining the community health priorities and developing a community health improvement plan or CHIP.

Outreach is underway to share the CHA with community members and determine priorities. Your feedback is important. If you would like to provide your thoughts, please scan the QR code or visit: https://wchd.pub/chafeedback



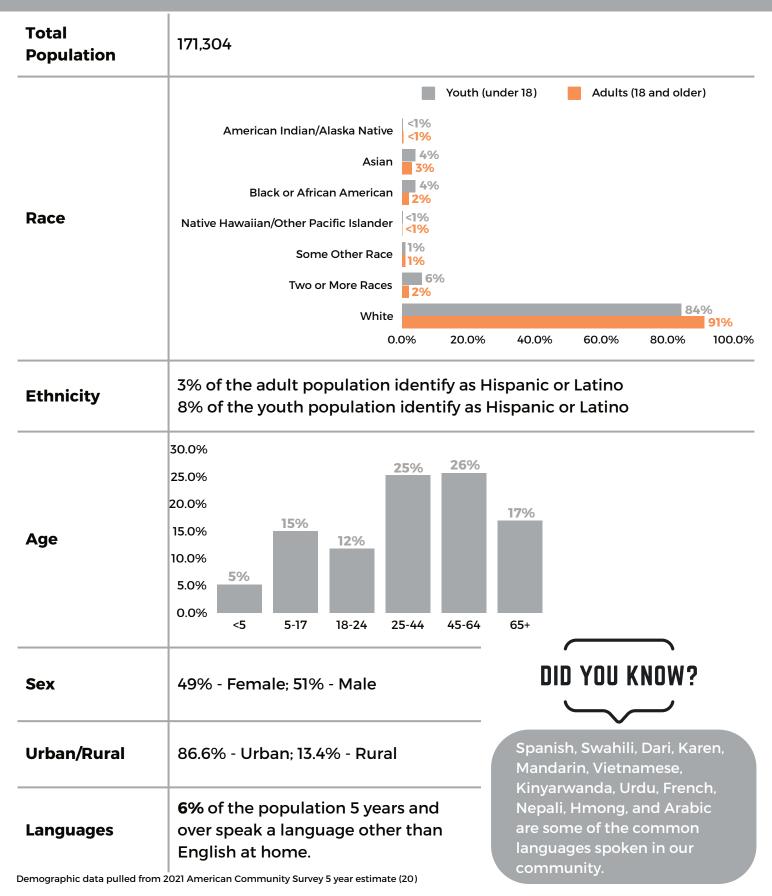


To improve health, we must improve the systems and community conditions that impact health.

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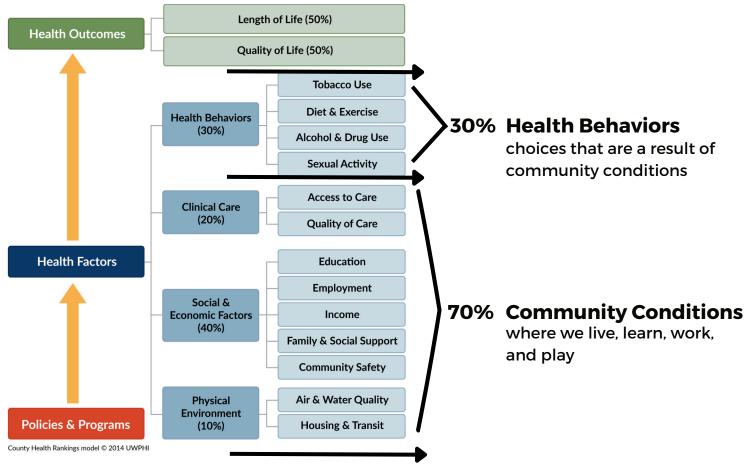
Winnebago County Demographic Snapshot



Models for Community Health

What Influences Health?

The County Health Rankings Model illustrates that policies and programs play an important role in influencing health factors that in turn shape the community's health outcomes.



Community Conditions (2)

Economic stability is defined as having the resources needed to live a healthy life.

Neighborhood and built environment

includes housing, transportation, broadband services as well as the natural environment.

Education access and quality refers to improved educational opportunities and helping children and adolescents do well in school.



Social and community context refers to the relationship people have with the places they live, work, and play. Strong community connection - including civic engagement and employment - are important for well-being.

Health care access and quality means access to comprehensive, high-quality health services.

Economic Stability

Higher Income is Associated with Better Health

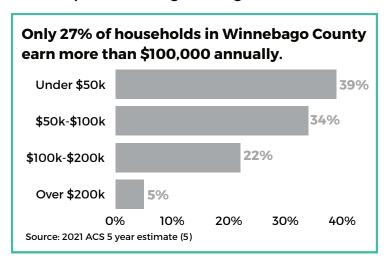
Achieving economic stability for one's self and family is primarily about income and wealth. Income provides economic resources that shape options for housing, education, child care, and food. (4)

\$63,938 Median household income, the lowest compared to neighboring counties. (5)

Living Wage

A family of four in Winnebago County need an annual income of \$102,502 or \$24.64 per hour for two full time working adults to support their family without community assistance.

Expenses include food, child care, medical, housing, and transportation. (6)



Why Can't Families Afford Basic Needs?

The cost of household essentials increased faster than other goods and services, which impacts lower-income households more than middle and high-income households. (7)



1 in 3 Households struggle to cover their basic needs. (8)













	Housing	Child care	Food	Transportation	Health care	Technology
% Increase in cost from 2007-2021 (9)	53%	46 %	23%	27 %	59%	44%

High Cost of Raising Children

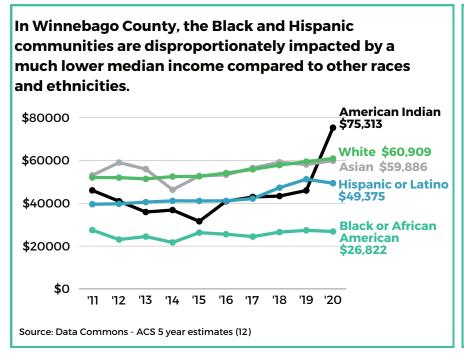
Age	Average Annual Cost of Child Care*	
Infant (0-1 years)	\$12,695	
Toddler (1-3 years)	\$10,326	

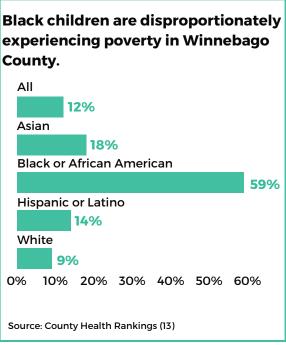
*Cost is at a child care center, home care is slightly less

WI child care providers' average yearly income is \$23,650, less than \$12/hour (living wage is \$24.64). Only a small percent receive benefits through their employer. (11)

Economic Stability

Economic Impact of Disparities





Income inequality is NOT due to a lack of work ethic or work hour differences between groups. People of color, LGBTQ+, and women face income disparities. Policies and practices are linked to the widening wealth gap. (14)

Complexity of Assistance

Qualifying for assistance programs is difficult and maintaining benefits is complicated, creating problems for families. Inadequate rises in wages can severely impact families benefitting 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

This loss of income is called a benefits cliff and often leaves families financially worse off than before they received a raise. Single parent households in Winnebago County face significant cost burdens.



Neighborhood and Built Environment

Impact of Housing

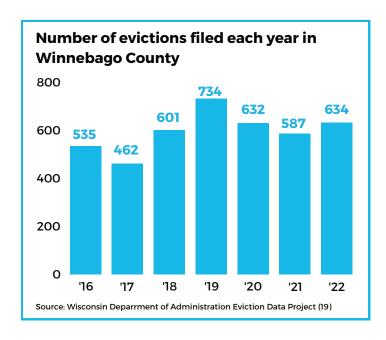
Having a safe and stable home is crucial for both mental and physical well-being.

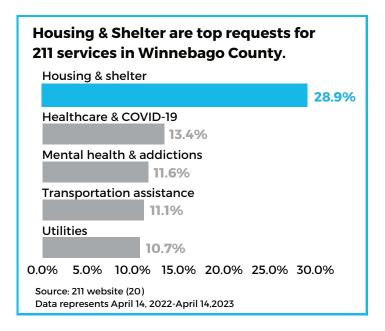
When rents are high compared to how much people earn it can lead to eviction, homelessness, or doubling up. If people are forced to move, it can can lead to job loss, making it harder to afford housing and increasing the likelihood of moving into low-quality housing.⁽¹⁷⁾

Poor housing conditions can increase exposure to mold, lead, pollutants, and security concerns. These situations contribute to asthma, impaired cognitive development, chronic disease, and injuries. (17)

20% - 35%

Amount rent increased in the past two years (18)





Community focus group themes:

- Some full-time workers are unable to find housing.
- If a renter does not have immigration documents, landlords have charged double rent.
- Eviction records are a real obstacle to acquiring housing, and renters have been unjustly evicted. Renters may not even know they have an eviction on their record.
- Any felony record makes it challenging to find a place to rent.
- There is a fear among renters that if they complain about conditions in their unit, the landlord will raise their rent or evict them.

Neighborhood and Built Environment

Food Insecurity

Food insecurity is the lack of reliable access to food, whether due to financial limitations, transportation, or distance to a food outlet₍₂₁₎ Food pantries have seen a steady increase in new registrants. On March 1, 2023, FoodShare benefits returned to pre-pandemic status, lowering the dollar amount by at least \$95 even though the need has remained high!⁽²²⁾

of Winnebago
County's
population is
food insecure (23)

Transportation

Accessible, affordable, and reliable transportation is essential for everyone.

Reliable (24)

Reliable transportation means either public transit or a personal vehicle is available when needed.

Accessible(25)

Accessible transportation, whether by car, bus, or sidewalk, is used by everyone - with or without disabilities - and does not have barriers.

Affordable (24)

Affordable transportation can refer to the costs associated with owning a vehicle or paying for transit or ride services such as taxis, Uber, or Lyft.

Challenges:

- Limited hours of service and routes prohibits reliance on public transportation, especially for 2nd and 3rd shift employees.
- Rural areas have restricted public transportation, only offered for medical appointments.
- Transportation options are limited and there is desire to see bus service operate later and be available on Sundays.

Natural Environment and Recreational Opportunities

Winnebago County's natural environment, lakes, rivers, parks, green space, trails, and outdoor recreation provide opportunities to interact with nature.

\ _{\)) <u>Community focus group</u>
<u>theme</u>: Community
members love the parks
and the lakes in our
county.

124 Designated parks



770 Miles of bike lanes, trails & sidewalks⁽²⁶⁾



Education Access and Quality

Quality Education

Education shapes opportunities, employment, income, and is key to lifting people out of poverty. Factors that impact well-being, including access to health care, safe housing, and livable wages, all increase as a person obtains higher levels of education.⁽²⁷⁾

Literacy

Until the end of third grade, most students are '<u>learning to read</u>.' Beginning in fourth grade, students begin '<u>reading to learn</u>.' Increased educational demands becomes more difficult for students who struggle to read. (28)

Percent of 3rd graders who CAN read at grade level or above (30)	2021-22 School Year
Menasha School District	29%
Neenah Joint School District	42 %
Omro School District	38%
Oshkosh School District	25%
Winneconne School District	54%

Today's jobs require literacy and numeracy skills beyond the basic levels.

One in seven Wisconsin adults struggle with low literacy.⁽³¹⁾



Almost **one in four** Wisconsin adults do not understand percentages or multiple step math problems.



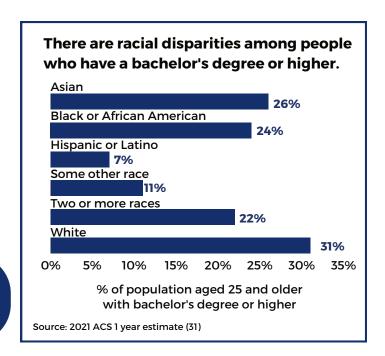
Access to Education



30%

of Winnebago County residents aged 25 or older have a bachelor's degree or post-graduate degree, slightly lower than the state average (33%).⁽³¹⁾

Cost and academic preparation are top barriers to college access and success. (32)



Social and Community Context

Social Connectedness

Social connectedness is the meaningful relationships and bonds with those around them, including peers, families and communities. Communities where residents are more connected with one another fare better on several measures of population health, community safety, community resilience when natural disasters strike, prosperity, and civic engagement. (53)



A lack of social connection is associated with increased risk of heart disease, stroke, anxiety, depression, and dementia. (34)

Groups at Highest Risk for Social Disconnection

Anyone of any age or background can experience loneliness and isolation, but some groups are at higher risk than others, such as:⁽³⁴⁾

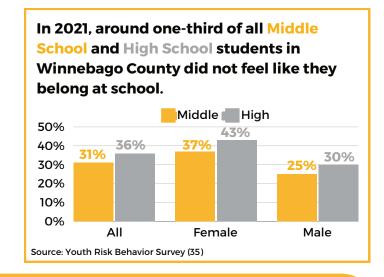
- Those with poor physical or mental health
- Those with disabilities
- Those experiencing financial insecurity
- Those who live alone
- Single Parents
- Younger and Older Populations
- LGBTQ+ persons

- Those from ethnic and racial minority groups
- Rural Residents
- Victims of Domestic Violence
- Those who experience discrimination or marginalization

Belonging

Belonging is a fundamental human need. It is the feeling of deep connection with social groups, physical places, and individual and collective experiences.

The 2021 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) displayed gaps in connection and belonging in schools. 56% of high school students who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or Transgender (LGBT) do not feel like they belong at school compared to only 31% of Straight students.



} _{1)) <u>Community focus group theme</u>: There are a lack of activities for some members of the community. Older community members want more evening activities and people experiencing homelessness have no where to go on Sundays.

Social and Community Context

Racism and Discrimination

Our community members are experiencing racism and discrimination leading to exclusion and a lack of belonging. They experience mistreatment by those they do not know in the community on a day-to-day basis, including interactions at work, in schools, in housing, in neighborhoods, and at stores.

Community Members Shared Their Experiences of Racial Profiling in Their Daily Interactions



Work

At work when someone messes up, they always blame me because I don't have the language to defend myself. It's exhausting.

It's mentally draining to be mistreated each day at work and to know there is nothing I can do about it without risking my job.

As for promotions at work, I watch them offer promotions to my white co-workers first. And the few times they eventually gave me a shot (after exhausting everyone else), the percentage of raise was smaller than what had been offered to my co-workers.



Neighborhood

The neighbors call the police on the kids when they are just playing with each other and being kids. It makes me uncomfortable, especially as the kids get older.



School

The problems our black children have been having is just too much. Our kids come home with bruises, but nothing is communicated from the school. Yet when our kids misbehave, they threaten expulsion.



Juvenile Arrests

Local Data Confirms Experience

Juvenile arrests add insight into policing, local laws, and community and family support. Youth who are arrested and incarcerated can face disproportionately higher rates of sickness, including infectious disease and stress-related illness.⁽³⁶⁾

- In 2019, juvenile arrests in Winnebago County were 38 arrests per 1,000 youths, higher than the national average of 24 arrests per 1,000 youths. (36)
- In Wisconsin, Black youth are at least 10 times more likely to be held in placement as white youth.⁽³⁷⁾



<u>Community focus group theme</u>: Access to community resources and services is difficult for individuals with a criminal history.

Health Care Access and Quality

Access to Care

All people need timely personal health services in order to achieve good health outcomes. This includes the ability to see health professionals in primary care, specialists, dentists, and behavioral health professionals (mental health and substance use disorder providers). Access to care also includes being able to afford services and receive treatment from capable, qualified, and culturally competent providers. (38)



<u>Community focus group theme</u>: There are often long waiting periods to get an appointment, especially for mental health and dental services. There is a lack of diverse and culturally responsive care among mental health providers.

Barriers to Care

High Cost (39)

- Increase in health care costs including hospital stays and prescriptions
- Increase in high deductible insurance plans; where families pay thousands of dollars before their coverage kicks in. Family deductibles can top \$10,000 per year.
- Out of pocket maximums, federally capped at \$8,700 for individual plans, is too high for many

The US has one of the most complex health insurance systems compared to other high-income countries, with coverage eligibility depending on factors such as employer, income level, age, and health care needs.

Behavioral Health Care Barriers (40)

Workforce shortages disproportionately impact:

- People living in rural areas
- People covered by Medicaid
- People of color
- People who do not speak English as their first language
- LGBTQ+ community
- People with a dual diagnosis: co-occurance of mental health condition and substance use disorder

Dental Care Barriers (42)

- Large employers are more likely than small businesses to offer dental benefits.
- High-wage earners are more likely to receive a dental benefit than low-wage earners.
- Medicare does not cover dental care except if related to a medical procedure such as surgery.
- Medicaid recipients face long waiting lists.



Only 1 in 7 Winnebago County Medicaid recipients received preventive dental services. (42)

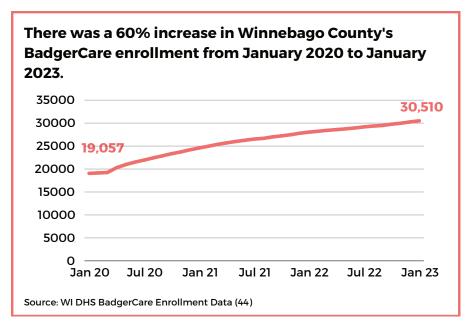
Health Care Access and Quality

Coverage Gap

The coverage gap exists in states that have not adopted the Affordable Care Act (ACA) Medicaid expansion for adults who are not eligible for Medicaid coverage or subsidies in the Marketplace. Wisconsin is one of ten states that has not adopted Medicaid expansion, thereby foregoing the additional fiscal benefit estimated at approximately \$1 billion. (43)

BadgerCare Enrollment

During the pandemic, the federal government allocated funding for states to expand Medicaid (including BadgerCare) in order to ensure access to health care. BadgerCare increased benefits, provided automatic re-enrollments, and had less stringent eligibility qualifications. In March 2023, federal support of the enhanced coverage expired, resulting in many people no longer eligible for Badgercare.



High Cost of Health Care

More than 100 million people, or 41% of American adults, struggled to pay medical bills in 2022. (45)

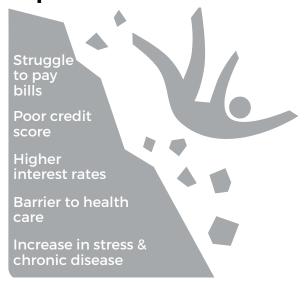
Nationally, the annual premium for individual coverage has risen more than \$225 per year on average, and family coverage has risen more than \$700 per year on average from 2010 to 2022.

of Wisconsin residents have medical debt in collections (47)

is the median amount of medical debt in Wisconsin (47)

Coverage that is unaffordable or insufficient can harm physical, mental, and financial health. (47)

Impact of Medical Debt



Health Behaviors

Health behaviors are health-related practices that can improve or damage individual health, such as: diet and exercise, tobacco use, alcohol and drug use, and sexual activity. Health behaviors are determined by the choices available in the places we live, learn, work, and play.⁽⁴⁸⁾

Community Conditions and Resources Influence a Person's Choices







Nutrition



Tobacco/Vaping



Alcohol



Substance Use



Sexual Activity

Health Behaviors	Total
% of High School students who did not exercise in the past week (49)	13%
% of adults who report no leisure-time physical activity (50)	23%
% of population that do not have a reliable source of food (50)	8%
% of High School students who have tried vaping/e-cigarettes (49)	26%
% of High School students who are smokers tried cigarettes by age 13 (49)	34%
% of High School students who have drunk alcohol report trying alcohol by age 13 (49)	28%
% of adults who report binge drinking or heavy drinking (50)	27%

Corporate Marketing Can Cause Poor Health

Many industries including tobacco, alcohol, pharmaceutical, snack foods, and sweetened beverages, aggressively target specific populations (especially youth) through tailored campaigns and extensive marketing strategies to sell their products. These well-funded companies are profit-driven rather than health-focused and often fight against health strategies such as warning labels that could prevent chronic disease, disability, and premature death. (51)



<u>Community focus group theme:</u> Alcohol is everywhere. Many community events revolve around alcohol. There is a need for more family-friendly and alcohol-free events.

Health Outcomes

Health Outcome indicators show how well people live (quality of life) and how long people live on average within a community. Health outcomes are influenced by community conditions and health behaviors. (52)

Quality of Life

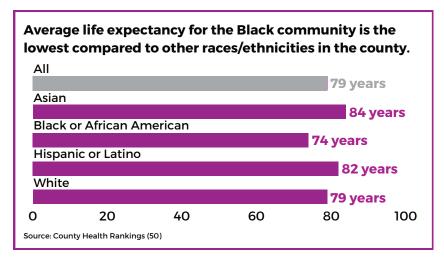
Quality of life as an indicator represents the well-being of a community and emphasizes the importance of physical, mental, social and emotional health from birth to adulthood.

12% of Winnebago County adults consider themselves in poor or fair health (50)

Length of Life

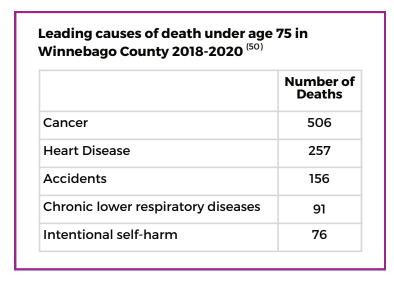
Length of life is the time between birth and death. Investigating length of life among population groups can explain differences in health outcomes and life expectancy. There are stark racial disparities in premature death rates in Winnebago County, specifically among the Black population. (50)

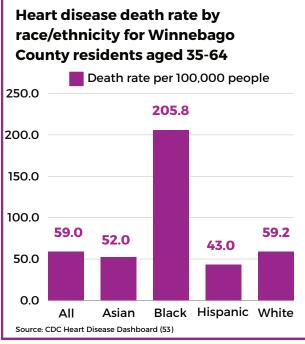
Life Expectancy



Premature deaths focuses attention on deaths that might have been prevented (52)

Premature Death

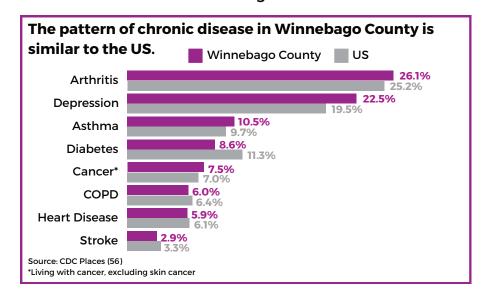


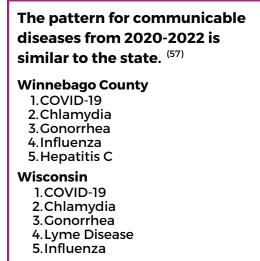


Health Outcomes

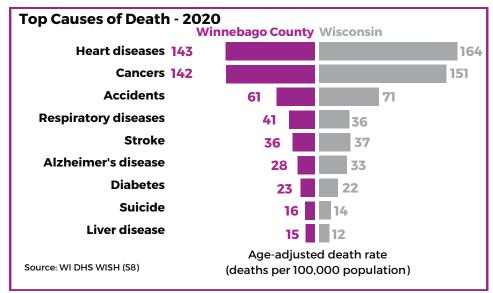
Disease

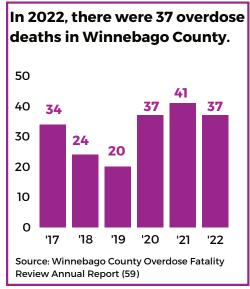
Disease, whether it is a chronic disease or a communicable disease, impacts a person's quality and length of life. Chronic diseases are defined as conditions that last one year or more, may require ongoing medical attention, and can limit activities of daily living. Communicable diseases are contagious and can be transmitted from a person, animal, or other source to another through various means.





Causes of Death





More than 40 countries have a higher life expectancy than the United States. The shorter life expectancy in the US is true across age brackets, racial demographics and income levels. While many blame individual lifestyle choices, the research tells a different story. The US lags behind in the policies and programs that lead to long healthy lives.⁽⁶⁰⁾

Where Do We Go From Here?

Invest in Our Community

4 Considerations to Improve Health and Well-Being for All

What Know What Affects Health



of health outcomes are determined by community conditions





Source: CDC Community Health Improvement Navigator (61)



Focus on Areas of Greatest Need

There are widely varying experiences in the community. This report has identified profound disparities, specifically among:

- · People with low income
- People of color
- People previously incarcerated
- People who identify as LGBTQ+





Use Multiple Strategies that Impact Community Conditions

- Plan and implement collective action to create positive ripple effects
- Connect with public health to get involved in next steps



Winnebago County CHA Advisory Team

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Additional contributions by staff from the following organizations:

- City of Menasha Health Department
- Oshkosh Area School District
- Oshkosh United Way
- UW-Extension Winnebago County
- Winnebago County Supervisors

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



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