

Blue Earth County Public Health Community Health Improvement Plan 2015-2019

Community Health Improvement Plan

The Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) is a long-term systematic effort to address public health issues in a community. The plan is based on results of community health assessment activities, and is part of a community health improvement process. The plan defines a vision for the health of the community and provides guidance to the health department, its partners, and stakeholders on improving the health of the population within the health department's jurisdiction.¹

Blue Earth County Public Health's assessment process involved collaboration with community partners also involved in assessing and responding to the health of Blue Earth County's residents; and inclusion of findings from other needs assessments completed by public health partners. Blue Earth County Public Health partnered directly with Mayo Health Systems in 2013 to complete a community health assessment.² In 2014 Blue Earth County Public Health hired Wilder Research to complete a Community Health Profile for the Statewide Health Improvement Program's (SHIP) Community Leadership Team (CLT). This profile helped the CLT identify strategies to improve the health of Blue Earth County residents.³ The SHIP Community Leadership Team has broad representation from many sectors of the community. In addition, Blue Earth County Public Health staff are actively engaged with community stakeholders (see Appendix A) including attending community partner meetings, serving on boards and advisory councils, and partnering to implement community events. This high level of involvement has provided an avenue to receive feedback from multiple community partners regarding the health status and priorities for the populations they serve in our community.

Demographics

Geography

The Community Health Improvement Plan encompasses the geographic area of Blue Earth County which is located in southcentral Minnesota. Blue Earth County has many rural features including many rivers, streams, lakes, and farmland. Blue Earth County is also designated as a metropolitan statistical area (MSA). The MSA designation means there is an urban area with a population of more than 50,000 with adjacent areas that contribute to a high degree of social and economic integration within the urban core.⁴ The urban area for the MSA is the City of Mankato.



Population and Ethnicity

Blue Earth County's 2010 population was estimated at 64,013.⁴ The 2013 population estimate was 65,528 an 2.4% increase in three years.⁴ According to Region 9 Development Commission's Blue Earth County Data, residents less than 19 years of age are expected to account for 27 percent of the County's projected population increase by 2020.⁵ Around 22 percent of the County's population will be 65 years of age or older by 2020.⁵ 2011 Population by race shows 89.8% of Blue Earth County residents identify as white, 2.5% as Hispanic, 2.0% as Asian, 2.3% as Black or African America, 1.7% as two or more races, 0.17% as Native American or Alaskan Native, and 0.05% as some other race.⁵

Additionally, approximately 30% of the county's 25 and older population have their bachelor's or graduate degrees and another almost 11% attaining Associate's degrees.⁵

1 [Minnesota Department of Health](#), retrieved 2/3/2015

2 [Mayo Clinic Health Systems-Mankato](#), retrieved 3/4/2015;

3 [Wilder Research - Blue Earth County Community Health Profile](#) Wilder Research - Blue Earth County SHIP Community Health Profile; retrieved 3/23/2015

4 [United States Census Bureau](#), retrieved 3/23/2015

5 [Region 9 Development Commission](#); retrieved 3/25/2015

Community Health Assessment

Community Strengths include:

- Collaboration between private, non-profit, and government systems to address the needs of the community
- Many Colleges and Universities who are actively engaged with the larger community
- Opportunities for outdoor recreation ; including a well-developed trail system in and around Mankato
- A strong sense of community; even with noted population growth
- Top quality medical systems; including a Level III trauma hospital
- A Regional community based initiative and crisis center for adults with mental health issues

Strategic Issues

A review of community health assessments and profiles brought forth common themes about issues impacting health equity in the community:

Health Inequities related to poverty

- Blue Earth County's poverty rate is at 16.6%, or 6th highest poverty rate in Minnesota, per the 2012 U.S. Census Bureau. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation reports, "A large body of research documents the links between income and a wide array of health indicators across the life span, beginning even before birth." Those living in poverty frequently report living in

poor to fair health, activity limitations, reduced life span, lower birth weights, and reduced access to medical care.

1. [Robert Wood Johnson Foundation](#); March 13, 2015
2. [US Census Bureau](#); March 13, 2015

Chronic disease – Overweight/Obesity

- The Mayo Community Health Needs Assessment shows an estimated 68.4% of Blue Earth County residents report being overweight or obese. According to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, “Obesity Rates have doubled among adults in the last twenty years and tripled among children in a single generation. Evidence suggests that by 2040 roughly half the adult population may be obese. Obesity increases the risk of type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, certain types of cancer, stroke and many other diseases and conditions. These associated conditions carry high financial costs and can be devastating to quality of life. Health care spending due to obesity is estimated to be as high as \$210 billion annually, or 21 percent of the total national health care spending. When also accounting for the non-medical costs of obesity, the overall annual cost is estimated to be \$450 billion.”

1. [Robert Wood Johnson Foundation](#); February 3, 2015

Reduced access to dental care for lower income residents; especially those enrolled in Minnesota Health Care programs.

- According to Open Door Health Center’s Service Area Needs Assessment, “lack of dental care is unanimously reported as a significant problem by county human services directors across southern Minnesota. Limited availability of dental providers, low reimbursement rates, administrative burdens for providers, and lack of clear information for beneficiaries about dental benefits, missed appointments, transportation, cultural and language competency, and a need for consumer education about the benefits of dental care are all barriers to adequate

care.” The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation states “...research shows that children in low-income families and children who lack health insurance have a lower chance of receiving the recommended level of dental care and have more unmet dental needs than children who are insured or from higher income families.” This lack of care includes children, and others living in their household, of having untreated dental issues.

1. [Robert Wood Johnson Foundation](#); March 4, 2015
2. [Medical Dictionary](#); March 4, 2015
3. Open Door Health Center: Service Area Needs Assessment; August 2014

Barriers to accessing health care

- There are many barriers that people face in accessing health care, but all seem to come back to the challenge of navigating the complexity of the healthcare system. As Holman notes, the shift from acute disease dominance to chronic disease dominance has changed the role of the patient. Patients must now carry out oftentimes complex treatments prescribed by the physician and other specialists. Research from Sofaer talks about the many factors that can create barriers to access care in a complex healthcare system including, but not limited to, a person’s health literacy, functional status, communication skills, relationship with the medical provider, and culture of patient centered care. Open Door Health Center’s Needs Assessment additionally notes the added challenges of discrimination, cultural and language barriers that impact health literacy, providers are not always prepared to treat patients with varying backgrounds, all of which can lead to misdiagnosis, inappropriate/ineffective treatment and patients having difficulty adhering to treatment or participating fully in their care. All of these barriers are also seen in the delivery of public health services.

1. Open Door Health Center: Service Area Needs Assessment; August 2014
2. Holman, Halsted R., Chronic disease and the healthcare crisis, 2005; 1; 265. Chronic Illness.

3. Sofaer, Shoshanna, Navigating Poorly Charted Territory: Patient Dilemmas in Health Care “Nonsystems”. 2009; 66; 75S. Medical Care Research and Review.

Community Health Improvement Plan Development

The CHIP was developed utilizing multiple data sources that include community feedback regarding the health of our community, as well as identification of community priorities. A prioritization matrix was used to create the plan using the following criteria:

- Importance of community issue
- Community Readiness
- Community Resources
- Available Funding and Staff Capacity
- Feasibility
- Issue already being addressed at a community, regional or state level

10 Most Important Community Health Issues

As reported in the Minnesota Department of Health’s Planning and Performance Measurement Reporting System (PPMRS) the 10 most important community health issues for Blue Earth County are listed below:

Promoting Healthy Communities and Healthy Behaviors

- 1) Obesity
- 2) Mental Health/Well-Being
- 3) Healthy Start for Children- Adolescents
- 4) Oral Health
- 5) Chronic Disease

Preventing the Spread of Infectious Disease

6) Tuberculosis and other emerging infectious diseases

Protect Against Environmental Health Hazards

7) Surface Water Quality

Prepare for and Respond to Disasters, and Assist Communities in Recovery

8) Environmental Disasters and Emergencies

Assure the Quality and Accessibility of Health Services

9) Access to dental care

10) Income and Poverty

5 areas most in need of Improvement

- **Promoting Healthy Communities and Healthy Behaviors**
 - *Obesity/Overweight, Healthy Start for Children and Adolescents*
- **Preventing the Spread of Infectious Disease**
- **Protect Against Environmental Health Hazards**
- **Prepare For and Respond to Disasters**

Top 3 Priorities and Goals

Promoting Healthy Communities and Healthy Behaviors:

Goal #1 - Strengthen community collaboration to improve health

Objective: Convene stakeholders to engage in community collaboration to improve health

Strategy	Tactic	Performance Indicator	Target Date(s)	Who's Responsible
Maintain a formal community-clinical linkages collaborative group	Group Driven Agenda and Focus	Maintain a 85% organization attendance rate at meetings	4/2015 to 12/2019	Blue Earth County Public Health
Increase community awareness of the	Utilize social media and other	2 success stories released to the	12/2016	Blue Earth County Public Health

Strategy	Tactic	Performance Indicator	Target Date(s)	Who's Responsible
groups existence, purpose, and successes	media to highlight the group's successes	media		

Priority - Promoting Healthy Communities and Healthy Behaviors

Goal #2- Strengthen prenatal support to families through care coordination

Objective: Convene stakeholders to engage in community collaboration to improve prenatal health

Strategy	Tactic	Performance Indicator	Target Date(s)	Who's Responsible
Maintain programs to support healthy birth outcomes	Provide care coordination to women who are pregnant	Provide outreach to 100% of families referred.	4/2015 to 12/2019	Blue Earth County Public Health
Support other organizations working toward healthy birth outcomes	Develop and coordinate education for community organizations; provide technical assistance	5 educational or training opportunities to support prenatal health and healthy birth outcomes	4/2015 to 12/2019	Blue Earth County Public Health

Priority - Promoting Healthy Communities and Healthy Behaviors

Goal #3 - Support culture that encourages physical activity and healthy eating across the life span

Objective: Actively engage in and provide support to community efforts that involve physical activity and healthy eating

Strategy	Tactic	Performance Indicator	Target Date(s)	Who's Responsible
Provide support to community efforts that involve physical activity and healthy eating	Provide public health staff support and technical assistance in 4 settings supporting policy, systems, and environment change:	Support and technical assistance will be provided to at least 4 organizations in the 4 categories.	12/2015 to 12/2019	Blue Earth County Public Health

Strategy	Tactic	Performance Indicator	Target Date(s)	Who's Responsible
	Community, Schools, Healthcare, and Worksites			
Regional Breastfeeding Coalition	Public health staff will provide support for regional breast feeding coalition; working collaboratively with SHIP to maximize ability to impact policy, systems, and environment change.	2 meetings held annually to provide education and support to medical providers/clinics and public health agencies to encourage breastfeeding	4/2015 to 12/2019	Blue Earth County Public Health

Appendix A – Community Stake Holders

American Diabetes Association
American Lung Association
Blue Earth County Community Farm
Center for Childhood
Child Care Aware
Children’s Museum of Southern MN
City of Eagle Lake
City of Lake Crystal
City of Madison Lake
City of Mankato
ECHO Food Shelf
Feeding Our Community Partners/Back Pack Food Program
Greater Mankato Area Hunger Assistance Network
Growing with Grace Community Gardens
Heart and Soil Community Gardens
Lake Crystal Area Recreation Center
Lake Crystal Early Childhood Initiative
Lutheran Social Services of Minnesota
Hy-Vee Pharmacy and Dieticians
Mankato Area Bike/Walk Advocates
Mankato Area Care Network
Mankato Clinic
Mayo Clinic Health Care Systems
Minnesota Council of Nonprofits
Minnesota Department of Transportation
ISD #77- Mankato Area Public Schools
ISD #75-St. Clair Public Schools
ISD#2017-Lake Crystal Wellcome Memorial Public Schools
ISD#2135 Maple River Schools
Minnesota Area Agency on Aging
Minnesota State University, Mankato
Minnesota Valley Action Council
Open Door Health Center
Public Health Law Center
Regional Breastfeeding Coalition
Region 9 Development Commission
School Sisters of Notre Dame/Center for Earth Spirituality and Rural Ministry
Senior Network Providers
South Central Food Shelf Network
Thro Company
Towards Zero Deaths Coalition
Greater Mankato Area United Way

Appendix A-Continued

University of Minnesota Extension

VINE Faith in Action

Visit Mankato

YMCA Mankato

YWCA Mankato