



**LA CROSSE COUNTY**  
Health Department  
Nationally Accredited

# CHIP Progress Report

January - March 2024

## Health Priorities

The Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) includes 3 health priority areas. Our community created the goals that we work on each year. The Health Department puts together a community-driven action plan to address the greatest needs in La Crosse County.



### Behavioral Health Vision

Build a community that prioritizes protective factors for positive childhood experiences and resilient communities.



### Healthy Environment Vision

Collaborate for solutions that build healthier and more accessible neighborhoods where people are connected to what they need where they live.



### Access to Care Vision

Grow a system of care that represents and supports underserved peoples to get the right care at the right time.

# Behavioral Health

The Behavioral Health Goal has three objectives. Over time, the work aims to improve mental health and decrease substance use, suicide, and self-harm. This quarterly update describes the activity from January through March 2024.

## Progress: What has been done?



### Educate about ACEs and mental health

- Health Department staff have developed **2 new relationships** with agencies that are involved in positive parenting initiatives.
- A **mental health workshop** was developed with 4 sessions spread out over a few weeks. Three sessions were held on ACEs/mental health with **15 attendees**.



### Self-harm and suicide prevention work

- **3 new partners** have been recruited for the Suicide Death Review Team (SDRT).
- SDRT has **reviewed 1 case** during this quarter and has continued to meet monthly to discuss updates on recommendation progress. **2 recommendations** were handed off to the Suicide Prevention Initiative (SPI), and **4 gaps in the community were identified** by the team.
- The team has been working on creating a **list of evidence-based recommendations**. 4 recommendations have been added to the list so far.
- The SDRT has begun working with all **3 college campuses** in the area. They are now communicating more and combining their efforts in mental health and suicide prevention.
- Health Department staff and SPI partners have advocated for 3 existing signs on Grandad's Bluff to be replaced and include promotion of 988, and adding 3 new signs to Miller Bluff. The City of La Crosse unanimously **approved the new suicide prevention signage**.
- Health Department staff and SPI partners have also been advocating for suicide prevention signage to be installed on **Cass and Cameron Street bridges**. This was recently approved.

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# Behavioral Health (cont.)



## Opioid harm-reduction work

- 2 meetings were held to discuss Overdose Fatality Review (OFR) recommendations. Teams have been actively working on the **jail release kit pilot program**, creating a **virtual toolkit for overdose prevention**, and developing a **plan for spike alerts**, all of which came from OFR recommendations.
- Health Department staff continue their efforts with Narcan distribution. **116 cases** have been distributed this quarter. Staff have also held **2 Narcan administration trainings with 66 attendees**.
- Fentanyl test strip distribution is new to the Health Department this year. **100 fentanyl test strips** were distributed this quarter.
- Health department staff have made **109 referrals** to community-based dental care for non-traumatic dental pain.
- A new partnership has been developed with **Rivertown Dental**. They have agreed to provide **dental care to 6 children a month**. This benefits the non-traumatic dental pain referrals as well as the La Crosse Smiles program.



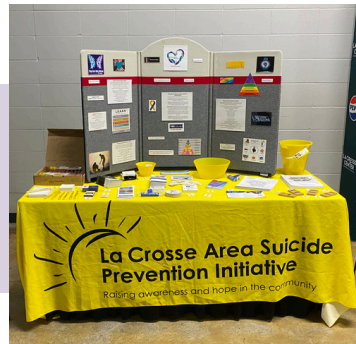
## Culture change around substance use and mental health

- The Health Department staff **facilitated educational conversations** with the FACT group members on social norming strategies. Following the conversations, they provided activities related to social norming. **15 students participated** in the conversations and activities.
- A training for **Teen Intervene** was held for 3 school districts in February. This program is a brief motivational intervention that works with teens who display the early stages of substance use problems. Trained staff will be able to work with teens on behavior change.
- Staff are working with Onalaska Police Department to help them begin moving forward with **alcohol compliance checks**.

Mental health and substance use prevention at work



Dental Pain Training



Prevention Education



Bluff signs

# Healthy Environment

The Healthy Environment Goal has three objectives. Over time, the work aims to improve housing, food access, and opportunities for physical activity. This quarterly update describes the activity from January through March 2024.

## Progress: What has been done?



### Safe, affordable, and supportive housing

- This year's goal is to demonstrate the connection between housing and health. Educational materials, webinars, and existing literature are being compiled and reviewed.
- Health department staff are continuing to **strengthen the relationship** with the County Planning & Zoning Department staff.



### Year-round access to healthy food

- Health department staff are growing relationships with UWL, Kane Street Gardens, GROW La Crosse, and UW-Extension.
- Staff revised a Food Resource Guide for La Crosse County and has been distributed to almost **100 community partners**.
- Two UWL students are working with LCHD staff to develop an **interactive Community Garden Map** for all of La Crosse County. The map will be used to better understand gaps in local garden space for community use.



### Increase opportunities for active transportation

- Safe Routes to School (SRTS) staff have developed **model language** for schools to use in handbooks and policy.
- Staff are expanding SRTS programming into community spaces. They are planning a **summer pilot project** with the City of La Crosse Library. The program will include helmet education, encouragement to use active transportation, and community activities.
- School programming continues to include **education and encouragement** activities to increase the number of kids that are walking and biking to school. Activities include: Monthly challenges, Winter Walk to School Day, weekly Walking School Buses, bike rodeos, and more!
- Staff are also involved in community workgroups that focus on **building opportunities for active transportation** - Holmen Task Force, Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee, and the Transportation Advisory Committee.

# Access to Care

The Access to Care Goal has three objectives. Over time, the work aims to improve relationships, communication, and community-centered services. This quarterly update describes the activity from January through March 2024.

## Progress: What has been done?



### Build relationships and increase community engagement

- The **La Crosse Smiles** program was started at 2 elementary schools to provide dental services for children. **107 children** have already received services in the schools with 41 needing further treatment. Scenic Bluffs and Rivertown Dental have partnered with the program to offer follow-up treatment for kids.
- Nursing staff are working with the Coulee Region Immunization Coalition to develop **universal messages** to share with parents and caregivers.
- LCHD staff are developing relationships with St. Clare's Health Mission and Salvation Army to offer vaccines for children and adults.
- Hmong Breastfeeding videos were finalized in February and being shared widely to reach families in La Crosse County and throughout the region. There have been **over 350+ views of the videos** so far.



### Build organizational health literacy

- LCHD assessed all website content (52 pages) against **health literacy standards** to ensure it is easy to read and understand for the general public.
- 32 staff were trained on health literacy and will be asked to revise website content to match the standards.
- The **goal is to revise at least half of the pages** by the end of the year.
- Additional materials have also been reviewed: Vaccine Reminder letter, Lead Testing poster, and social media posts



### Provide health services in community spaces

- Social workers have been to **9 community outreach events** to provide services.
- Public health nurses researched Health Check services to **identify opportunities to expand** current services based on community gaps.
  - Lead screening was recently added to our services at the Health Department.