Community Health Improvement Plan

Annual Report

2022-2023

Rock County



HEALTH EQUITY ALLIANCE OF ROCK COUNTY

Acknowledgements

Thank you to our partners within the Health Equity Alliance of Rock County (HEAR) and those who have partnered with HEAR to make progress on our Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) goals.

HEAR	Subcomn	nittee M	lembers :
	Subcomin		ciiiocis.

Building a Safer Evansville (BASE)

City of Janesville

Community Health Systems, Inc.

ECHO, Inc.

Edgerton Hospital

HealthNet of Rock County

Mercyhealth

NAMI Rock County, Inc.

Milton Youth Coalition

Rock County Human Services Department

Rock County Public Health Department

Rock-Walworth Comprehensive Family Services Head Start/Early Head Start

School District of Beloit

School District of Janesville

South Central Wisconsin Area

Health Education Center

SSM Health St Mary's Hospital-Janesville

University of Wisconsin Division

of Extension

YMCA of Northern Rock County

Youth 2 Youth 4 Change

YWCA Rock County

Partners in CHIP Implementation:

Adaptive Alliance, Inc.

Beloit Coalition of Churches

Beloit Fresh Start

Beloit Health System

Blackhawk Human Resources Association

Community Action, Inc.

Covering Wisconsin

Diversity Action Team

Dane County PATCH

Edgerton Public Library

Gaston Elementary School-Beloit

Hedberg Public Library

Jason Leikam

Milton Public Library

Milwaukee Area Health Education Center

Nemours Children's Health

Parents Supporting Parents

Rock County Equity Managers

Rock County Trauma Task Force

Rock River Charter School-Janesville

Stateline YMCA

United Healthcare

Wisconsin Health Literacy

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Background

The Health Equity Alliance of Rock County (HEAR) coalition conducts a Community Health Assessment (CHA) to compile local data and inform its Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). To ensure a community-driven process, the Mobilizing for Action Through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP) framework is used to guide the process of the CHA and CHIP. This planning process helps advance health equity and engages community stakeholders to work strategically toward shared goals.

The **CHA** uses data to identify and describe factors that affect community health. To be comprehensive, a combination of methods are used to collect data. In the most recent CHA (2021) primary data was collected directly from community members who live or work in Rock County through surveys, community conversations, and interviews with leaders of the community to identify root problems of health. Secondary data was collected to give a high-level overview of health in the community from sources such as the American Census Bureau, County Health Rankings and Roadmaps, and state and national surveys. Once the data was analyzed, HEAR determined how resources and efforts would be employed. For this cycle, access to care and mental **health** were determined as the prioritized areas for the 2022-2024 CHIP.



MAPP Framework

The **CHIP** is defined as a long-term, systematic effort to address public health concerns. Two subcommittees were created to review CHA data and develop strategic workplans to improve mental health and access to care. A health equity lens was used throughout the planning process to incorporate elements of fairness and inclusion in public health activities. The subcommittees sought out evidence-based solutions to improve outcomes within the two priority areas. A \$100,000 grant from Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) called Mobilizing Communities for a Just Response (MC4JR) is being used to support CHIP activities until May 2024.

Introduction

External Factors

During the process of conducting the CHA, COVID-19 infection rates were high and the pandemic ongoing. While the number of COVID-19 infections and deaths have decreased since the assessment, the effects of the pandemic continue to influence CHIP work and the priority areas. The COVID-19 Public Health Emergency expired on May 11, 2023, which may impact access to care and mental health. CHIP subcommittees will continue to stay informed of changes that may influence accessing care and mental health.

The mental health impact of COVID-19 on communities has been recognized at federal and state levels. The U.S. Surgeon General has prioritized mental health among youth, workplaces, and healthcare and social connection. At the state level, Wisconsin has declared 2023 the "Year of Mental Health" in efforts to expand access to mental and behavioral health services across Wisconsin. The 2023-2027 Wisconsin State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) also prioritizes mental health and access to care. The CHIP subcommittees will continue to partner with the state and use federal guidance to improve mental health and access to care.

Process for Monitoring and Revision

This report is the first progress report, reflecting CHIP activity from June 2022 to June 2023. The access to care and mental health subcommittees have detailed workplans to track the progress of the activities completed in the CHIP cycle. Revision of initiatives may occur as new data is available and will be communicated through the subcommittees and addendums for community awareness.

Mental Health Overview

Mental health is an essential part of overall health that includes emotional, psychological, and social well-being. Factors that can impact mental health include genetics, family history, community conditions, and life experiences, such as trauma. Mental health often affects how a person thinks, feels, or acts and can also determine how someone copes with stress, relates to others, and makes choices.

Supporting CHA Data

- Mental health services are reported to be the hardest to obtain compared to physical and dental services.
- One in four people in Rock County have four or more Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). As the number of ACEs increase, the risk for mental, physical, and behavioral challenges increases.
- More than one in ten of Rock County residents reported 14 or more days of poor mental health per month.

Summary of Goals & Objectives

1

Reduce Barriers to Mental Health Services

- Reduce Stigma Around Mental Health
- Increase Mental Health Literacy
- Increase Providers' Cultural Competency

2

Improve Social Connectedness

- Build Inclusive Spaces for People to Gather and Connect
- Promote Supportive Relationships and Intergenerational Connections



Number of mental health providers per 100,000 people in Rock County

Partners

The mental health subcommittee met 14 times in 2022.

Co-Facilitators: YWCA of Rock County, Rock County Public Health Department

Subcommittee Members (Past and Present): Youth 2 Youth for Change, SSM Health St. Mary's Hospital-Janesville, Rock-Walworth Comprehensive Family Services Head Start/Early Head Start, National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)-Rock County, UW-Division of Extension, YMCA of Northern Rock County, School District of Janesville, Edgerton Hospital, Beloit Area Community Health Center, APTIV, City of Janesville, HealthNet, Everyone Cooperating to Help Others (ECHO, Inc.), Beloit School District, Milton Youth Coalition, Building A Safer Evansville (BASE)

Reduce Barriers to Mental Health Services

Social factors like acceptance, support, stigma and stereotypes can influence mental health. Low mental health literacy, discrimination in relation to one's identity, and the perceived stigma associated with mental illness can be barriers for people accessing needed mental health services.

Objectives

Reduce Stigma Around Mental Health

Data Point: In 2019, 17% of Rock County students seriously considered suicide.

Increase Mental Health Literacy

Data Point: One in five people in Rock County (CHA respondents) rated their mental health as fair or poor.

Educate Providers on the Disparities and Health Outcomes for BIPOC and LGBTQ+ Communities

Data Point: More than 20% of Rock County residents identified experiencing discrimination in the community. The top types of discrimination in Rock County was based on race, gender, and skin color and occurred at work, stores, school, and when people applied for a job or were receiving healthcare services.

Stigma Reduction Activities

Stigma Reduction Campaign

Youth voice was centered in May's Mental Health Awareness Month in 2023. Local middle and high school students were asked to design and create messages for youth mental health. Thirty-four submissions were received from Fresh Start, Beloit Memorial High School, and Beloit Learning Academy. The HEAR mental health subcommittee selected 11 and youth voted on two final designs and messages through an online survey. Youth met with Houck Transit Advertising to co-create designs for bus wraps. Two buses displayed the messages for Janesville and Beloit bus routes. To broaden reach, the top four images from the survey results were put onto Lamar billboards throughout Rock County. This initiative concluded in June of 2023.











Support Teen Mental Health

A mental health evidence-based program, called Raise Your Voice Club (RYVC), was promoted through NAMI-Rock County for middle and high schools to provide knowledge and change attitudes towards mental health conditions in youth. The RYVC empowers students to engage in youth leadership, create dialogue about mental health, advocacy, and reduce mental health stigma within schools. An "Ending the Silence" presentation was held at local middle and high schools. The subcommittee aims to bring this program to more schools across Rock County and pair it with NAMI's program, RYVC. Rock County has one RYVC at Milton High School. The goal is to increase this to more schools in the county. Three schools are interested in starting the club. The mental health subcommittee plans to work with school districts to encourage NAMI programs be implemented in the 2023-2024 school year.

Mental Health Literacy Activities

Mental Health Community Trainings

Education in mental health can provide community residents with the knowledge and skills to support their own mental health and those around them. HEAR, in partnership with Blackhawk Human Resources Association, held one training event in adult Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) on October 26, 2022. There were 22 participants. Mental Health First Aid courses will continue to be available through UW-Extension.

The subcommittee has transitioned to a similar program called Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) trainings which are under two hours. QPR trainers include NAMI, Rock County Human Services, and UW- Extension of Madison. To support a wider reach of mental health training, grant funds will be used to add five additional QPR trainers. Each trainer will have a specific sector to work in (i.e. rural, law enforcement, etc.) to help build trust and relationships. The Rock County Public Health Department (RCPHD) will host pre- and post-test surveys for all Rock County trainers and evaluate reach. Trainers are expected to complete training by August 2023 and host at least two community trainings by June 2024.



Zero Suicide Training

Zero Suicide, offered by Mental Health America, is one of the Wisconsin Division of Care and Treatment Services' strategies to prevent suicide. It is a three-day virtual training and is intended to be a quality improvement framework for health systems. In Rock County, Mercy Health and SSM Health use similar frameworks. HEAR partnered to offer training funds for HealthNet to attend this training in June 2023. HealthNet intends to implement the approach to improve its policies and practices for all their services.



Mental Health Literacy Activities

Mental Health Toolkits for Schools

To improve youth mental health, the Wisconsin Office of Children's Mental Health (OCMH) provided a variety of programs eliciting youth feedback on several mental health topics. From the feedback, OCMH created recommendations and tools for schools to utilize for navigating youth mental health systems, building social and emotional learning skills, and provided children's mental health data resources. These resources from OCMH along with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) were used to create a toolkit for schools to address youth mental health. School staff and youth in Providers and Teens Communication for Health (PATCH) were consulted regarding the toolkit resources and on their current social and emotional learning curriculums. Due to limited capacity, the toolkit was not fully implemented in Rock County schools, but resources are still available for use. The tools included in the toolkit are described and hyperlinked below:

- <u>988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline</u> for free and confidential mental health support. Connect to mental health professionals by calling, texting, or messaging (chat) the 988 number. The lifeline is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- Accessing Children's Mental Health Services Guide for families seeking help for their children.
- <u>Feelings Thermometer</u> magnets and posters (in English and Spanish) are tools for childcares, educators and caregivers to teach children to identify and manage their feelings. Sixteen Rock County childcares participated. In total, 110 posters and 1,207 magnets were distributed to daycares families in 2023.
- Mental Health Crisis Cards informs people how to de-escalate a situation in the first five minutes of a mental health crisis. The person carrying the card fills out strategies that work for them. The subcommittee consulted PATCH youth to adjust the cards to fit their needs. The original card is available on OCHM's website.
- Mental Health Literacy Instructional Units for grades 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12.
- Trauma-Informed Care Training for individuals or groups.

Provider Education Activities

Racial Trauma Summit

In partnership with the Rock County Trauma Task Force, a virtual Racial Trauma Summit was held on August 10, 2022. The summit had 331 people registered and 238 attendees. A recording and resources are available for those not able to attend.



Prejudice Habit Breaking Intervention Training

HEAR has goals to increase cultural humility in healthcare settings. UW-Madison will partner with HEAR to provide training and teach people to become facilitators of the Prejudice Habit Breaking Intervention. It can be adapted for various audiences such as schools, law enforcement, and organizations trying to improve hiring practices. Six people will become trained as facilitators for this intervention. They will continue to work with UW-Madison to learn the science behind the intervention and how to give the training to others in the county. The trainers are from the Diversity Action Team of Rock County, YWCA, Rock County Administration, and Compass Behavioral Health.

Increase Social Connectedness

Socially connected communities where people feel safe, welcomed, and have meaningful relationships increase the communities mental, physical, and emotional health and well-being. Isolation and loneliness can be reduced through community design and shifting social norms to increase sense of belonging for all community members.

Objectives

Create Inclusive Spaces for People to Gather and Connect

Data Point: 59% of Black or African American respondents reported that there are places for their communities to gather and connect compared to 83% of Hispanic and Latinx and 85% of White respondents.

Promote Supportive Relationships and Intergenerational Connections

Data Point: 20% of students reported they didn't receive emotional support when they needed it, down from 21% two years prior. 55% of students stated they rarely or never get the help they need.

Inclusive Spaces Activities

Environmental Scan of Public Places

To assess public spaces, the subcommittee worked with youth coalitions and a day center for adults with disabilities to complete a questionnaire about public places. This information will be used to inform city and county departments on how to improve the spaces assessed to be more inclusive for people to gather and connect. Partners in this initiative are Adaptive Alliance Inc, Beloit Youth 2 Youth, and Milton Youth Coalition. Nine scans of Rock County parks, organizations, and businesses were completed. Partners received compensation for completing three scans. Over the next year, the subcommittee will request more scans to be completed, analyze the results of the scans, and provide them to city and county entities to inform their comprehensive plans.

Community Gardens

Access to green spaces and healthy foods contribute to good mental well-being. The Merrill Community Garden provides both for its community. MC4JR grant funds provided vegetable signs for the garden in English, Spanish, and a picture for those with a low literacy level. Funds have also been used to expand Stateline YMCA's garden and provide intergenerational gardening with their members.



Supportive Relations Activities

Walking School Bus Pilot Program

A walking school bus is a way for children and adults to walk to school safely. This initiative brings together trusted adults and children for intergenerational and social connections. It can also improve mental health for both the children and the volunteers and provide physical activity before the school day. A mini-grant funded this initiative in January 2023. Gaston Elementary School in Beloit was awarded funds, and their program started in May 2023. HEAR will reopened the mini-grant application for the 2023-2024 school year in hopes that more schools will participate.





Handle with Care Program for Rock County Schools

Handle with Care (HWC) is a program that supports children after a traumatic event has happened outside of school. Law enforcement notifies the school that a child may have academic or behavioral challenges due to a traumatic event, without providing any confidential information about the incident. The school then uses a trauma-informed approach to assist the child. This approach helps children receive the appropriate care and can connect them to resources to lessen the immediate and long-term impacts of the trauma. In Rock County, most schools already use this program. HEAR wanted to expand this to all schools in the county. After an assessment, all schools use either HWC or a similar program.

Social Connection Campaign

A social connection campaign was a way to identify social events happening throughout the county to increase social connectedness and reduce loneliness. Due to capacity and funding resources, this initiative was paused for the first year of the CHIP. The subcommittee will reevaluate the initiative in the second year of the CHIP.

Access to Care Overview

Access to care is the ability to receive quality, culturally appropriate health services, and achieve the best health outcomes possible. It can be dependent on healthcare coverage, timeliness of the available services, and service availability. It impacts overall physical, social, and mental health status as well as quality of life.

Supporting Data from the CHA

- 9% of Rock County adults are uninsured, a rise from 8% from when the CHA was written and higher than Wisconsin.
- Healthcare settings were ranked as the fifth most common place for Rock County residents to experience discrimination.
- People who did not complete high school or receive their GED were less likely to report they could always receive the health services their household wanted or needed.

Summary of Goals & Objectives

1

Improve Navigation of Healthcare Services

- Increase Health Literacy
- Improve Health Insurance Navigation
- Grow Healthcare Collaboration

2

Improve Patient/Provider Relations

- Improve Interpretation Services
- Increase Health Systems' Cultural Competency



Partners

The access to care subcommittee met 13 times in 2022.

Co-Facilitators: HealthNet of Rock County, Beloit Community Health Systems, Rock County Public Health Department

Subcommittee Members (Past and Present): Youth 2 Youth for Change, SSM Health St. Mary's Hospital-Janesville, Rock-Walworth Comprehensive Family Services Head Start/Early Head Start, National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)-Rock County, UW-Division of Extension, YMCA of Northern Rock County, School District of Janesville, Edgerton Hospital, Beloit Area Community Health Center, APTIV, City of Janesville, HealthNet, Everyone Cooperating to Help Others (ECHO, Inc.), Beloit School District, Milton Youth Coalition, Building A Safer Evansville (BASE)

Improve Navigation of Healthcare Services

Navigating the healthcare system can be a challenge for many. Health insurance and health literacy are large determinants of accessing and receiving care. Collaboration across systems to implement best-practice solutions and provide education can improve navigation of the healthcare system and improve health outcomes for those accessing care.

Objectives

Increase Health Literacy

Data Point: 88% of adults in the United States tested below a proficient health literacy level.

Improve Health Insurance Navigation

Data Point: Around one in two Hispanic or Latinx respondents and one in three Black or African American respondents reported difficulty getting needed health services.

Grow Healthcare System Collaborative

Health Anchor Institutions generally include large, place-based organizations such as health systems, health departments, and academic institutions. These organizations participate in a large collaborative to invest in their communities and address the social determinants of health together.

Health Literacy Activities

Health Literacy Assessment

HEAR partnered with Wisconsin Health Literacy, Inc. (WHL) to assess health literacy practices in healthcare organizations and train healthcare staff to conduct the assessment internally. Health systems were able to select categories to be assessed such as organizational policies, institutional practices, navigation, culture and language, and communications. A report of recommendations will be given with implementation strategies to improve current policies and practices. The healthcare systems who participated in the assessment include: SSM Health, Beloit Health System, MercyHealth, HealthNet, and Community Health Systems of Beloit. HEAR will facilitate a convening with the health systems and WHL to collaborate on strategies that worked well for health systems and brainstorm how to increase health literacy scores. Health systems will be able to reassess after interventions are in place to see how their score is impacted. The assessments will be completed by the end of August 2023.

Electronic Health Portal (MyChart) Trainings

Digital literacy has become a new skill for people to develop. Electronic health portals such as MyChart are great tools to access personal health information, talk to providers, and schedule appointments. A training was developed to teach people how to access MyChart and the basic uses of the portal. This training was developed for libraries with the hope that the libraries could host their own community trainings and help answer questions that patrons have. This initiative started as a train-the-trainer model. In 2022, the subcommittee completed four trainings with 17 librarians at Hedberg Library (2), Milton Library, and with parent educators from Rock-Walworth Comprehensive Family Services Head Start and Early Head Start. Over the next year, trainings will be held with Evansville and Beloit Public Libraries as well as Hedberg for a program called Senior Moments. Pre- and post-test data showed an increase in levels of understanding of telehealth services, comfort in providing technical assistance, and librarian staff's ability to provide training regarding the electronic portal.

Insurance Navigation Activities

Health Insurance Events

A health insurance event with the Coalition of Beloit Churches was held in April 2023 to increase health insurance navigation and awareness of resources. Vendors for this event included Rock County Restorations Substance Abuse Recovery Center, UnitedHealthcare, Community Action, Inc. (Merrill Community Sharing Garden), Rock-Walworth Comprehensive Family Services, Beloit Public Library, Community Health Systems, Inc., and HealthNet of Rock County.





High School Healthcare Navigation Course

HEAR and the School District of Janesville collaborated to pilot a series of insurance modules to be implemented in Rock River Charter School classrooms. The modules are based on Nemours Children's Health adolescent health literacy curriculum called Navigating the Healthcare System. The modules were adapted to fit the needs of Rock River Charter School. Four video modules were created along with resources such as a facilitator's guide, activities, and pre/post-tests for teachers. These videos are posted on the RCPHD's YouTube channel for access. Rock River Charter School will pilot-test the courses in the fall of 2023 and will meet with the team to give feedback on how the lessons went. The goal is to work with other school districts and have the lessons as a tool to prepare students to manage their own healthcare as they transition into adulthood.

Healthcare Collaboration Activity

Interagency Collaborative

The Health Collaborative is an effort to increase public health, healthcare, academic institutions, and non-profit organization partnership in directing resources at a common inequity to improve health outcomes in a single area. This approach is intentional about finding solutions for the root causes of inequities and promotes cross-sectoral collaboration throughout the community. There is interest from healthcare systems to join the collaborative. During the next year of the CHIP, partners will be solidified and will aim to establish goals and foundations for meeting regularly.

Improve Patient/Provider Relations

Cultural competency is the ability of a healthcare system to provide care to diverse populations with various beliefs, values and behaviors. This includes modifying health information to meet the needs of the patients', socially, culturally and linguistically. Using a culturally competent approach can positively impact health outcomes, patient engagement, and decrease the medical errors and other safety issues.

Objectives

Improve Language Services

Data Point: 11% of Hispanic CHA respondents reported that accessing healthcare was difficult due to language barriers.

Increase Cultural Competency within Healthcare Systems

Data Point: 13% of Black or African American respondents reported not feeling welcome in the healthcare system.

Language Services Activities

Interpretation Services

In February 2023, two focus groups were held to understand barriers in accessing care for those who use interpretation services. Attendees were compensated for their time. In total, twenty community residents came to the focus groups. A survey was developed for those unable to attend focus groups and thirty responses were received. In both the focus groups and surveys, the CHIP team asked for interest in creating a workgroup to analyze the data received and develop a plan to improve interpretation services. From this, interest was received from fifteen people with four volunteering to help facilitate the workgroup. The workgroup had its first meeting in May with six attendees. The workgroup will continue to meet the first Tuesday of the month.

Cultural Competency Activities

The following initiatives were determined as a year two priority due to capacity. After further review, the subcommittee decided the initiatives would be best presented to the health systems as one project instead of implementing three at various times. Below is a description of each initiative that will work on improving cultural competency at the healthcare systems.

Healthcare Self-Assessments

This initiative employs self-assessments and bringing awareness to unconscious biases in the healthcare setting.

Patient Surveys on Inclusion

Consumers of healthcare are often asked to give feedback on their most recent healthcare experience (primary care or an emergency room visit). This initiative would allow consumers to comment if they are fairly treated. It would also ensure that healthcare systems have practices in place to address concerns.

Inclusive Health Forms

At a healthcare system, a person is required to fill out forms verifying identity and insurance coverage. This initiative focuses on using inclusive language that would make consumers feel welcome before they meet with staff. With these practices in place, it helps healthcare staff know their patient better.

Community Health Worker (CHW) Training:

Eight scholarships were given to Rock County organizations for staff to attend a Milwaukee Area Health Education Center Community Health Worker Training. Beloit Area Community Health Center had two people trained, HealthNet of Rock County had 3 people trained, and a program in Rock County Human Services Department called Parents Supporting Parents had two parent advocates trained. One scholarship was not used due to turnover at one of the organizations.

This initiative was originally categorized as an activity from a third objective named "Grow Diversity in the Healthcare System". This activity accurately fits to improve the cultural competency in healthcare. CHWs provide culturally appropriate care in communities with fewer resources and to individuals who face barriers in accessing care.

Conclusion

HEAR will continue to implement strategies to improve the two priority areas based on data and apply a health equity lens to ensure a fair and just allocation of resources that is distributed throughout the county.

Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of data and strategies will inform future work in the CHIP. This can include adapting current goals to meet the needs in the community and adopting new goals in the case of emerging health trends. Annual reports will be used as a tool to inform the community of the progress and changes to CHA-CHIP work. The annual report also serves as a call to action for individuals and organizations to address the priority areas through their own work and engagement in HEAR.

Contact Us!

To contact the Rock County Public Health Department or HEAR on future collaborations, partnerships, or questions regarding the CHIP Annual Report, use the information below.

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