



Goodhue County **Health and Human Services**

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For immediate release

Community Health Needs Assessment Names Top 10 Issues *Mental Health, Housing, and Drug & Alcohol Use Top the List*

By: Goodhue County Health and Human Services

Goodhue County, MN (January, 2023) - The health of all people in Goodhue County is the subject of a newly released report. The 2022 Goodhue County Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) identifies top health issues and offers a starting point to identify health inequities.

The report is an effort to take stock of the health of all people in Goodhue County. In the past local public health conducted the community health assessment every five years, and Mayo Clinic Health System every three years. The 2022 CHNA is a joint effort and will continue on a three-year cycle. As part of the process, members of the Community Health Assessment committee reviewed responses and comments from a 2021 random sample survey, a 2021 convenience sample survey, key informant interviews, an online prioritization survey, a community partner assessment, and community engagement events. Additionally, data from state and national sources were reviewed.

“Both health departments and hospitals are required to assess the needs of our communities and identify priorities,” said Ruth Greenslade, Public Health Supervisor for Goodhue County Health and Human Services. “We looked at health conditions, like diabetes. We looked at the factors that contribute to health conditions, like our behaviors and access to health care and income. When we took a list of all these health issues to community leaders from different towns in the county a year ago and asked them to identify the top issues, more than 80% of them said mental health. Then our intern went out to community events in the summer and the again the issue the most people were concerned about was mental health.”

The impact of COVID-19 had a major influence on the top health issues in this assessment. While mental health was also a top 10 issue in the 2017 Community Health Assessment, it rose to the number one spot, and for the first time, social connection and inclusion, and education access and quality were identified as top 10 issues, with many key informants and community members identifying the pandemic as a contributing factor.

“So many of our top issues are interrelated and the data shows how the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated many of these issues,” said Maggie Cichosz, Community Engagement Specialist at Goodhue County Health and Human Services. “In 2021 we saw a spike in opioid overdose deaths and the 2022 student survey showed an increase in students who reported seriously considering suicide.”

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“We are so thankful for all the community members and partners that have taken the time to work on this important report,” said Nina Arneson, Goodhue County Health and Human Services Director. “A special thank you goes to our core group for their strong leadership, partnership and commitment to improving health for all.” The core group includes Greenslade, Cichosz, Stephanie Olson, Mayo Clinic Health System Community Engagement Specialist, Michelle Leise, City of Red Wing Community Engagement Facilitator and Maureen Nelson, Goodhue, Wabasha and Pierce Counties United Way Executive Director.

Olson said, “Moving to doing an assessment report together every three years will allow Goodhue County and Mayo Clinic Health System to advance our partnership. In the past we have shared data and now we are working together throughout the assessment process and the process of writing the implementation plan.”

The CHNA report sets the stage for the Goodhue County Community Health Improvement Plan 2023- 2025, which will describe long-term, collective efforts to improve the health of everyone in the county.

The 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment, as well as many of the data sources used, are available on the Goodhue County website at www.co.goodhue.mn.us/chna.

Top 10 Health Issues:

1. Mental Health & Mental Disorders
2. Housing & Homes
3. Drug & Alcohol Use
4. Social Connection & Inclusion
5. Education Access & Quality
6. Health Care Access & Quality
7. Economic Stability
8. Physical Activity
9. Health Communication
10. Violence Prevention

This assessment was made possible in part by a grant from the National Association of City and County Health Officials to pilot test Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP) 2.0 assessment guidance as well as by a Minnesota Department of Health Rural Health Assessment grant using federal funds from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The mission of the Goodhue County Community Health Assessment Committee is to identify health disparities and top health issues for Goodhue County and implement and evaluate strategies, policies, and programs.

About Goodhue County Health and Human Services:

The mission of Goodhue County Health and Human Services is to “Promote, Protect and Strengthen the Health of Individuals, Families, and Communities.” The department has four service divisions: Economic Assistance, Public Health, Social Services, and HHS Finance/IT. For more information on Goodhue County Health & Human Services, please visit www.co.goodhue.mn.us.



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