



LA CROSSE COUNTY
Health Department
Nationally Accredited

CHIP Progress Report

July - September
2025

Health Priorities

The Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) includes 3 health priority areas. Our community helped shape the goals written in this plan. Each year, our 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 individuals 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 July through September 2025.

Progress: What has been done?



Youth substance use prevention

- **City of La Crosse has joined the movement** and added hemp-derived THC policy that includes age restrictions and retailer requirements for checking ID's and selling only to the 21+ age group.
- La Crosse Police conducted **17 alcohol compliance checks with 10 retailers passing (59%)**. Onalaska Police completed **37 alcohol compliance checks with 28 passing (76%)**. Letters containing education were sent to all 57 retailers after the checks.
- The **FACT youth club is starting back up again** at Logan High School. The teens will be educating their peers and sharing their knowledge with Logan Middle School students as well.



Mental health and resiliency

- Family Health staff are using a **new screening tool** with all WIC pregnant and postpartum women. The tool is a 9-question screening tool that helps identify mental health needs. Staff connect clients to additional resources for those that need more support.



Self-harm and substance use prevention

- During the month of August, we ran a public health campaign to raise awareness during **Overdose Awareness Month**. Messages were up on billboards, in social media, shared on radio and during events, and seen throughout the community in businesses and yards. The campaign shared information and sparked many meaningful community conversations.
- Narcan education and training opportunities were given to **12 local bars and restaurants in August**.
- **65% of dental pain calls have received treatment this quarter**. With a new dental office willing to see patients referred from the Dental Pain Program, we have seen an increase in referrals receiving the treatment they need.



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 July through September 2025.

Progress: What has been done?



Safe, affordable, and supportive housing

- Environmental health staff have **distributed 256 radon test kits with a 68% return rate** where people have tested their homes and received results.
- Social workers and sanitarians have **worked together on 36 housing complaints** this year. They provide resources and education to help residents address health hazards in the home.
- Our department responds to housing complaints from the community. This year we developed a **housing inspection checklist** that matches common standards in the region. The environmental sanitarians are being trained on how to use the checklist so each inspection is standardized across the team.



Year-round access to healthy food

- The Food Access team is working with a UW-La Crosse student and professor to update the **food resource map**. Changes will include updated information for pantries and free meal sites, locations for all grocery and convenience stores that accept SNAP and WIC dollars, and a new format for separating the data into different layers.
- The **Food and Nutrition Partners meeting** was planned and held in October with 24 participants from a variety of community agencies that are tied to food insecurity and providing resources. Updates were provided for FoodShare, SNAP-Ed funding, and the **current need in food pantries and meal sites**.



Increase opportunities for active transportation

- Safe Routes to School (SRTS) staff coordinated **International Walk to School Day** on October 1, 2025 with 6 schools holding a walk to school combined with education about safe walking skills.
- There are 7 schools participating in the school-year SRTS program where they organize weekly walking school bus routes, educate about bike and pedestrian safety, and participate in fun activities like bike rodeos.
- Hintgen Elementary hosted a **Night of Wheels event** where SRTS staff set up a bike rodeo and helmet fitting/education station for about **200 attendees**.



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 July through September 2025.

Progress: What has been done?



Increase access to clinical services

- Public Health Nurses planned **5 community-based vaccine clinics** as a partner for Back-to-School events and on-site clinics for two middle schools.
- Working **collaboratively with healthcare and health insurance partners** to educate and encourage services for lead testing, fluoride, and vaccines.
- **4 out of the 17 La Crosse School District schools** have started their Seal-A-Smile visits for the 2025-2026 school year. The program is offered to all students at **no cost to the families**.
- **Lead testing outreach** has connected with Hope Restores and Holmen Community Center to provide education to families and providers.



Enhance organizational health literacy

- Health literacy has become an integrated skill set in La Crosse County Health Department staff. We continue to use our **literacy standards** and encourage **clear communication for materials and presentations** to the public.
- **New employees** will receive health literacy training as part of their **onboarding**. Continued training and review of the materials will be provided to all staff as we continue to grow this skill set.



Increase connections to resources

- Health Department Social Workers assisted **500+ individuals with health insurance benefits** so far this year and passed along 9 referrals to ACA/Marketplace application assisters.
- Staff continue to **connect with partner agencies** to share resources for food, health insurance access, health department services, and community connections. This last quarter, our team has spent more time distributing the food resource guide and checking in with partners
- In 2025, the WI Well Woman program has enrolled **48 participants**. All enrollees are able to receive **free preventive cancer screenings** - mammograms and cervical screenings. Our team is making additional efforts to encourage all participants to use the benefits of the program.