



LA CROSSE COUNTY
Health Department
Nationally Accredited

CHIP Progress Report

October - December
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 October through December 2025.

Progress: What has been done?



Youth substance use prevention

- The County board **passed a hemp-derived THC ordinance** that includes age restrictions and retailer requirements for checking ID's and selling only to the 21+ age group.
- Onalaska Police completed **8 alcohol compliance checks with 4 passing (50%)**. Letters containing education were sent to all retailers after the checks.
- Health Education staff surveyed 178 youth and 75 parents about their views on **substance use and risky behavior in youth**.
- The **Logan High School FACT club** and the **Logan Middle School FACT club** created the **12 Days of FACTmas** in December where they shared education and prevention messages about vaping.



Mental health and resiliency

- Family Health staff **continue using the PHQ-9 screening tool** with all WIC pregnant and postpartum women. Staff ensure exam rooms have a folder with paper copies of the screening tool, a laminated scoring tool, and a laminated process flow chart.



Self-harm and substance use prevention

- With the Alliance To HEAL coming to a close, the harm reduction workgroup transitioned into a regional network that has **projects planned for 2026**.
- **3 Narcan education and training opportunities** were given this quarter. **Alliance to HEAL partners** also provided trainings to UWL, WTC and Viterbo students and RA's.
- **66% of dental pain calls** have received treatment this quarter.
- Staff are working with Emplify and Mayo to **schedule dental block training** for ER providers.
- **Education on 988** was provided to gun shop owners along with information on safe storage.

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 October through December 2025.

Progress: What has been done?



Safe, affordable, and supportive housing

- Radon education and test kits are a focus for **Radon Action Month** in January. Staff are prepping supplies and providing education to community groups to encourage participation.
- Social workers and sanitarians have **worked together on 45 housing complaints** this year. This work continues to provide positive support and connections with community agencies that decreases hazards and housing concerns.
- Environmental sanitarians have been trained and are now using a standardized **housing inspection checklist** that matches common standards in the region. This tool creates consistency for all housing complaint follow-up and referrals.



Year-round access to healthy food

- The **Food Resource Map** was updated during the fall with help from a UWL student and professor. The new map provides more information about where to use food assistance program dollars in the county.
- Food access is important to many in our community. As federal food assistance programs were delayed, the Food Access team **increased promotion** of the Food Resource Guide. Materials were placed at Little Free Pantries, schools shared the resource with all school families, and Kwik Trip created short ads to play in the store and at the pump.



Increase opportunities for active transportation

- The Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program has 7 participating schools. This fall, the schools hosted **Walking School Buses with 1,335 walks to school**.
- Early winter is all about planning for the SRTS program. The winter snow doesn't keep everyone indoors - Hintgen Elementary took on the winter challenge and enjoyed the walk with warm hats and gloves.
- Staff are getting prepared for warm weather to return - planning for spring events includes field trips, bike rodeos, and events for educating about safe walking and biking.
- SRTS staff continue to **advocate for safe walking and biking**. They bring parent feedback and school perspectives to many committees, including the Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Committee and the Regional Safety Action Plan Taskforce.

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 October through December 2025.

Progress: What has been done?



Increase access to clinical services

- Public Health Nurses held **9 community-based vaccine clinics** throughout 2025 in partnership with schools, Cia Siab, and agencies that serve the unsheltered population.
- **All La Crosse School District schools** will have their first Seal-A-Smile visits for the 2025-2026 school year completed by February. The program is offered to all students at **no cost to the families**.
- La Crosse Smiles started the school year with **188 children enrolled** in the program. The services received at school are x-rays, exam, treatment plan and referral to a dental office if needed.



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 **623 individuals with health insurance benefits in 2025**. Overall, the team had **891 contacts** to help with health insurance benefits, FoodShare, and answering benefit questions for the community.
- Staff continue to **connect with partner agencies** to share resources for food, health department services, and community connections.
- In 2025, the WI Well Woman program has enrolled **57 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.