



COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT

FY 2023-2025


Essentia Health – St. Joseph’s Medical Center



Essentia Health

Essentia Health - St. Joseph's Medical Center
 523 N 3rd Street, Brainerd, MN 56401
 Crow Wing County Population: 64,217

 957 community members participated in a survey

 14 community organizations informed the process

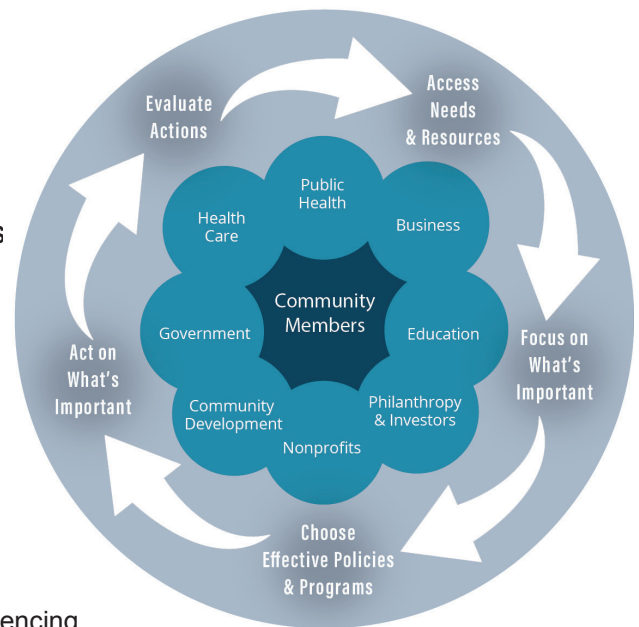
 32 people helped identify strategies

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. Collaborate towards solutions with multiple stakeholders (e.g. schools, worksites, medical centers, public health) to improve community health.
2. Build trust through collaboration with community members experiencing health disparities.
3. Prioritize sustainable evidence-based efforts around the greatest community good.
4. Create clear, specific, realistic, and action-oriented goals to improve priority health indicators.
5. Prioritize strategies that advance health equity, address structural barriers, or reduce health disparities

PROCESS

Work Together



Communicate

Mental Wellbeing	Tobacco Use	Healthy Eating	Active Living
<p>Reduce stigma and raise awareness of existing resources.</p> <p>Build resilience, optimism, and hopefulness through tools and programs.</p> <p>Encourage supportive relationships and social connectedness.</p>	<p>Advocate for policies that limit access to tobacco and reduce harm.</p> <p>Enhance youth tobacco prevention & education programs.</p> <p>Promote tobacco cessation interventions.</p>	<p>Encourage worksites to promote fruit & vegetable consumptions.</p> <p>Implement the "One Vegetable, One Community" program.</p> <p>Support efforts to make healthy food more affordable and accessible.</p>	<p>Encourage worksites to promote physical activity.</p> <p>Offer evidence-based programs that support active living.</p> <p>Promote and support point-of-decision prompts and trail maps to encourage walking throughout the community.</p>

The full report can be found at EssentiaHealth.org/about/chna

For questions or comments, please contact chna.comments@essentiahealth.org



Essentia Health

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report is based on a collaborative process with leadership from the following community members and organizations. Essentia Health would like to express our gratitude to the many individuals who contributed to planning, development and analysis of community health needs. We would like to thank these partners for offering their time and valuable insights to analyze and prioritize data, develop implementation plans and provide knowledge and expertise during this process.

Lead Parties on the Assessment:

- Essentia Health
- Crow Wing County
- Cuyuna Regional Medical Center
- Minnesota Department of Health
- Essentia Institute for Rural Health

Crow Wing Energized Steering Committee Members:

- Karen Johnson, Mike Larson, Kathy Sell, Traci Moreland, Dr. Jon Pryor and Jessica Schwartz, Essentia Health
- Kara Griffin and Nathan Bertram, Crow Wing County
- Julie Christensen, Nystrom & Associates
- Mara Pointer, St. Croix Hospice
- Adam Rees, ACR Consulting, LLC
- Charles Black-Lance, Central Lakes College
- Carolyn McQueen, University of Minnesota Extension
- David Chanski, City of Brainerd
- Daryl Doucette, Mid Minnesota Federal Credit Union
- Susie Stetson-Buchite, Big Stone Therapies
- Renee Richardson, Brainerd Dispatch
- Jon Aga, Lakes Area United Way
- Ryan Sjoblad, Heartland Hospice
- Bill Brekken and Steve Barrows, Crow Wing County Commissioners
- Cindy Myogeto, Crosslake Chamber of Commerce
- Heidi Hagen, Pequot Lakes Schools

Community health needs assessment and implementation plan approved and adopted by the St. Joseph's Medical Center board of directors on May 5, 2022.

INTRODUCTION

Essentia Health Description

Essentia Health is a nonprofit, integrated health system caring for patients in Minnesota, Wisconsin and North Dakota. Essentia Health is called to make a healthy difference in people's lives. To fulfill that mission, we seek opportunities to both enhance the care that we provide and improve health within our communities.

Community Health Needs Assessment Overview

Every three years, each Essentia Health hospital conducts a community health needs assessment (CHNA) to systematically identify, analyze and prioritize community health needs. The process is conducted in collaboration with many community partners including other health care systems, local public health departments and organizations or individuals that represent the broad interests in the community, including members of the medically underserved, low-income and higher health risk populations. Once the priority health needs are identified, Essentia Health works with partners to design an implementation strategy to leverage existing community strengths and resources available to improve community health.

Essentia Health is called to make a healthy difference in people's lives.

Caring for Our Community

Our commitment to our community's health and wellness goes well beyond the work of the community health needs assessments. Through contributions of over \$1.5 million annually to numerous community organizations, we're working together with our communities to improve the health and vitality of our neighborhoods. In addition, we're proud to say our employees donated more than 10,000 hours of their time and talents to a variety of programs and outreach efforts during the last year. Our community investments are designed to promote better health, help reduce inequities in our communities and improve access to health care.

HOSPITAL DESCRIPTION AND SERVICE AREA

Essentia Health-St. Joseph's Medical Center has a 162-bed hospital serving the Brainerd Lakes area and has provider clinics in Baxter, Brainerd, Crosslake, Emily, Hackensack, Pequot Lakes, Pierz, Pillager and Pine River. St.

Joseph's Medical Center is the first hospital in greater Minnesota to earn The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval for Advanced Certification for total hip and knee replacement. The advanced certification is for centers seeking to

elevate the quality, consistency and safety of their services and patient care. St. Joseph's Medical Center has been designated as a Primary Stroke Center by the Minnesota Department of Health. Going beyond excellent immediate care, a primary stroke center provides the full spectrum of stroke care – diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation and education – and establishes clear metrics to evaluate outcomes. The cancer program recently received accreditation from the American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer, which is awarded to cancer care programs that have a commitment to providing high quality, comprehensive, multidisciplinary patient-centered care. St. Joseph's Medical Center also earned international recognition as a Baby-Friendly birth facility, the gold standard in care for mothers and babies.

Essentia Health-St. Joseph's Medical Center has a hospital facility in Brainerd and clinic facilities in Baxter, Brainerd, Pequot Lakes, Emily, Crosslake, Pillager, Pine River, Hackensack and Pierz. For the purposes of this assessment, "community" is defined as the Essentia Health-St. Joseph's Medical Center primary service area from which it draws 75-80% of annual inpatient admissions. This includes the ZIP codes of 56401 (Brainerd), 56425 (Baxter), 56465 (Merrifield), 56456 (Jenkins), 56468 (Nisswa), 56472 (Pequot Lakes), 56435 (Backus), 56452 (Hackensack), 56474 (Pine River), 56473 (Pillager) and 56442 (Crosslake). The community was defined based on the hospital's ability to have the greatest impact with the available resources. The hospital is committed to building and sustaining partnerships with area organizations to extend its reach to all areas within this region. Existing health care facilities within the region include hospitals in Crosby and Staples and clinics in Baxter. The closest hospital is about 18 miles away in Crosby.

Essentia Health at a Glance



DEMOGRAPHICS AND SOCIOECONOMIC FACTORS

Table A. Overall Demographics (2018-2019)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey

BLACK = 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates data, GRAY = 2018 ACS 5-Year Estimates data

Total Population	Crow Wing County	Brainerd	Minnesota
Population	64,217 63,321	13,373 13,440	5,639,632 5,611,179
Population under 5 years	5.5% 5.7%	7.8% 9.1%	6.2% 6.5%
Population under 18 years	21.8% 22.2%	23.3% 25.9%	23.1% 23.9%
Population 65 years and over	22.2% 20.7%	16.2% 16.0%	16.3% 14.4%
Population Characteristics			
Veterans	9.2% 11.5%	8.5% 9.9%	6.4% 6.8%
Speak a language other than English	2.0% 1.8%	2.9% 2.0%	12.3% 12.2%
With health insurance coverage	94.4% 93.3%	94.0% 87.8%	95.1% 95.6%
Poverty			
Median household income	\$60,810 \$59,593	\$34,371 \$32,154	\$74,593 \$70,315
People of all ages living in poverty	10.9% 10.4%	22.2% 18.6%	9.0% 9.6%
People under 18 years living in poverty	14.9% 13.5%	32.5% 24.4%	11.2% 11.7%
Employment Status			
Unemployment rate	2.0% 3.4%	2.1% 3.0%	3.2% 3.4%
Educational Attainment			
Population ages 25+ with high school graduation or higher	95.1% 93.4%	91.6% 92.0%	93.6% 93.4%
Population ages 25+ with bachelor's degree or higher	25.4% 24.2%	15.4% 18.4%	37.3% 36.7%
Housing			
Percent of owner-occupied homes	78.6% 75.2%	91.6% 92.0%	71.9% 71.5%
Population spending more than 30% of income on rent	25.4% 24.2%	15.4% 18.4%	44.0% 46.2%
Transportation			
Households with no motor vehicle available	3.9% 6.3%	12.4% 14.7%	6.6% 6.8%

Table B. Race/Ethnicity Distribution (2018-2019)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey

BLACK = 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates data | GRAY = 2018 ACS 5-Year Estimates data

Race	Crow Wing County	Percent
Total population	64,217 63,855	100% 100%
One race	63,057 62,764	98.2% 98.3%
White	61,499 61,333	95.8% 96.1%
Black or African American	526 479	0.8% 0.8%
American Indian and Alaska Native	599 610	0.9% 1.0%
Asian	272 262	0.4% 0.4%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0 0	0.0% 0.0%
Other race	161 80	0.3% 0.1%
Two or more races	1,160 1,091	1.8% 1.7%
Hispanic or Latino	958 923	1.5% 1.4%

Crow Wing County is in the east central part of Minnesota, totaling 64,217 residents. Essentia Health-St. Joseph's Medical Center's hospital is in Brainerd, which is the largest city in Crow Wing County. The county has seen a steady increase in total population over the years. The county has an aging population. The median age has risen from 43.8 years in 2018 to 44.5 years in 2019. Crow Wing County has a predominantly white population accounting for 95.8% of the population. The racial makeup of this county is 0.8% Black or African American, 0.8% American Indian or Alaska Native, 0.4% Asian, 1.8% two or more races and 0.3% another race. The county residents 25+ who have graduated high school or higher has increased from 93.4% to 95.1%, now higher than state rate of 93.6%. In Crow Wing County, the percentage of residents with at least a bachelor's degree (25.4%) is still much lower than the state (36.1%). In 2019, the median household income in Crow Wing County was \$60,810 compared to the state median household income of \$73,306. The percentage of the population living in poverty in Crow Wing County (10.9%) has increased, surpassing the Minnesota rate (9.0%).

EVALUATION OF 2020-2022 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN: SYSTEM-WIDE

Don't Blow It: Anti-Vaping Campaign

Essentia Health and the American Lung Association developed a video and toolkit for use by teachers and community groups to educate students and the public about the dangers of vaping. The 10-minute video utilizes a peer-to-peer education model by featuring only youth voices. The video has been viewed more than 8,000 times since Oct. 1, 2020. To evaluate impact of the campaign, pre- and post-surveys were completed by 748 high school students. The survey shows a decrease in the percent of students who would be likely to try an e-cigarette after completing the program. The video and toolkit have been used in eighth to 12th grade classrooms across all Essentia Health markets. The materials are publicly available on Essentia Health's website: www.essentiahealth.org/dontblowitteacherguide/.

Mental Health First Aid

Essentia Health transitioned to offering Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) virtually to both Essentia Health colleagues and community members in 2020. Just as CPR teaches people how to assist an individual having a heart attack, MHFA teaches people to assist someone experiencing a crisis related to mental health or substance use until professional health is obtained. Since June 2019, 557 people have attended the eight-hour training program, including 142 Essentia Health colleagues. After the training, 99% of participants reported feeling confident that they could reach out to someone who may be experiencing a mental health crisis.

Resourceful

In April 2020, Essentia Health expanded a pilot to identify and connect patients with health-related social needs to community resources. All primary care and pediatric patients are given the option to complete a screening for social needs including food insecurity, transportation and financial strain. Over 2,000 patients have been connected to more than 80 different community partner organizations. We launched a new partnership with FindHelp.org to create a community resource guide and referral network (www.WeAreResourceful.org).

The goal of this project is to create a more connected community with improved coordination between and among health and social service providers.

EVALUATION OF 2020-2022 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN: HOSPITAL SPECIFIC

Tobacco

Essentia Health and partners formed a tobacco coalition to advocate for policies that limit the appeal for youth to use tobacco products like Tobacco 21 policies. Tobacco Quit Kits were created and distributed in our community at the Crow Wing Energized Annual Summit and shared with at-risk youth at TheShop and Adult & Teen Challenge. The Quit Kits were also distributed through the workplace wellness goal group through an organized Quit4Cash Challenge. Brainerd High School implemented the In-Depth program as an alternative to teen nicotine suspension or citation. In the Crow Wing County Community Health survey (2021), 16.6% of adults reporting using tobacco. This is an improvement from the 2018 survey which showed 23.3% of adults using tobacco.

Physical Activity & Health Eating

Activities for this priority area are led by the Crow Wing Energized Healthy Choices Goal Group. Since 2019, 1,464 people have participated in our National Diabetes Prevention Program (NDPP) classes that promote healthy lifestyle changes. We have hosted community wide challenges, including a Rethink Your Drink challenge with nineteen participating workplaces (838 individuals) to encourage water consumption. The One Vegetable, One Community program was implemented in 2020 and includes distributing seeds, recipes and educational programming about a vegetable each year. A community-wide Nature Network was formed in March 2021 to educate our community about the benefits of getting outdoors. The Crow Wing County Community survey showed improvements in adult fruit & vegetable consumption and physical activity from 2018 to 2021.

Mental Health

Activities for this priority area are led by the Crow Wing Energized Mental Fitness Goal Group. The Make It OK campaign is designed to reduce stigma about mental illness and was offered throughout our community. Mental Health in the Workplace videos were created for employers to share with employees. Community members were trained in adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and resilience. Webinars were presented in our community on mindfulness, safe messaging for suicide prevention, Loss of Dreams, "Angst: Raising Awareness Around Anxiety in Youth" documentary and story circles; lunch and learns topics included self-care, living in uncertain times, positive parenting, importance of sleep and gardening. We also partnered with Brainerd High School on implementing the Sources of Strength suicide prevention program.

PROCESS AND TIMELINE

Process

Essentia Health utilized the County Health Rankings and Roadmaps action cycle as a pathway for conducting the assessment. This systematic process involved assessing needs and resources, focusing on what's important, choosing effective policies and programs, acting on what's important and evaluating actions. Community members were at the center of each step, with a focus on working together and communicating across sectors.



To develop the implementation plan, we utilized a Results Based Accountability (RBA) framework. RBA uses a data-driven, decision-making process to help communities and organizations get beyond talking about problems to taking action to solve problems. Community members and partners were actively involved, not just in setting priorities, but also in designing solutions.

Guiding Principles



Collaborate towards solutions with multiple stakeholders (examples: schools, worksites, medical centers and public health) to improve community health.



Build trust through collaboration with community members.



Prioritize sustainable, evidence-based efforts around the greatest community good.



Create clear, specific, realistic and action-oriented goals to improve health outcomes.



Prioritize strategies that advance health equity, address structural barriers or reduce health disparities.

Timeline

From March 2021 to November 2021, Essentia Health and partners completed the community health needs assessment. The implementation plan was developed December 2021 to April 2022.

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Essentia Health-St. Joseph's Medical Center, Crow Wing County Public Health and Cuyuna Regional Medical Center worked with the Minnesota Department of Health to conduct a survey to assess community health needs in 2021. The survey instrument was adapted from the same survey tool utilized in 2017 and 2014. The 53-question assessment included questions on general physical health, mental health and health behaviors. A two-stage sampling strategy was used for obtaining a probability sample of adults living in Crow Wing County. For the first stage of sampling, a random sample of Crow Wing County residential addresses was purchased from a national sampling vendor (Marketing Systems Group of Horsham, PA). Address-based sampling was used so that all households would have an equal chance of being sampled for the survey. For the second stage of sampling, the "most recent birthday" method of within-household respondent selection was used to specify one adult from each selected household to complete the survey.

An initial survey packet was mailed to 4,000 sampled households in Crow Wing County on June 21, 2021. About 10 days after the first survey packets were mailed (June 28), a postcard was sent to all sampled households, reminding those who had not yet returned a survey to do so and thanking those who had already responded. Two weeks after the reminder postcards were mailed (July 12), another full survey packet was sent to all households that had still not returned the survey. The remaining completed surveys were received over the next five weeks, with the final date for the receipt of surveys being Aug. 19, 2021. Completed surveys were received from 957 adult residents of Crow Wing County for an overall response rate of 23.9% (957/4,000).

On Oct. 15, 2021, the results of the survey were shared with Crow Wing Energized Steering Committee and several community members met to analyze data and create the priorities. The 2021 Crow Wing County Survey was utilized; this data source was chosen because of the ability to see trends over time since this survey tool was used in 2014 and 2017.



957 surveys completed.



14 community organizations participated in the prioritization process.

PRIORITIZATION PROCESS

After reviewing the data, the Crow Wing Energized Steering Committee developed the following criteria to prioritize key health needs:

- Size and scope of the issue
- Seriousness of the issue
- Feasibility based on current assets/resources in the community
- Impact on equity

The CHNA Steering Committee identified three final priorities for action:



Needs Not Addressed in the CHNA

Several steering committee members identified housing as an important health community issue, but it is not included in the top priorities. The committee did not feel that we had the resources or funding to address housing. There are other local organizations as well as the movement at the county level to address housing in Crow Wing County. Substance use, specifically alcohol consumption, was identified as an important health issue. The committee did not feel we had the resources or funding to address this issue.

Community Input on Prioritized Needs

A survey was distributed through the Crow Wing Energized newsletter and social media page, as well as through steering committee organizations that asked for community input on how to address the priority needs and resources available to address the needs. 32 individuals shared their perspectives through the survey.

KEY FINDINGS: MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health includes life satisfaction, self-acceptance, sense of purpose, identify, feeling connected and belonging, empowerment and resilience, which is the ability to bounce back after setbacks.

- Mental health was the second most common health condition (26.3%). Within this category, depression was the most common followed by anxiety and panic attacks, according to the 2021 Crow Wing County Community Survey.
- Mental health is connected to other chronic health issues. Those with mental health conditions were more likely to report being obese/overweight, having high blood pressure and being less physically active, the 2021 Crow Wing County Community Survey found.
- 12.5% of Crow Wing County adults reported 10 or more days in the past month of “not good mental health”, according to the 2021 Crow Wing County Community Survey.
- 57% of 11th grade students in Crow Wing County reported often or always finding good ways of dealing with things in life that are hard, a decrease from the 2016 (59%), stated the 2019 Minnesota Student Survey.

Community Strengths and Resources Available:

- Crow Wing Energized Mental Fitness Goal Group
- Crow Wing Energized Adverse Childhood Experiences and Resilience Coalition
- Make It OK campaign
- Sources of Strength program

Community Input

“Even though we say we are making mental illness awareness more available and acceptable, many people still feel shame in admitting help is needed.”

“People are not sure where to start. It’s hard to find someone they trust and to reach out of their comfort zone.”

“Stress, worries and anxiety just completely overwhelm personal healthy lifestyle choices.”

KEY FINDINGS: HEALTHY EATING & ACTIVE LIVING

Eating healthy and being physically active is important for quality of life and sense of well-being. It's recommended that adults get at least 2.5 hours of moderate or 1.25 hours of vigorous physical activity throughout the week. Adults are recommended to have at least five servings of fruits and vegetables every day.

According to the 2021 Crow Wing County Community Survey:

- The total percent of adults in Crow Wing County meeting serving recommendations for fruits and vegetables has steadily increased from 34.0% (2014) to 34.3% (2017) to 38.3% (2021).
- The total percent of adults in Crow Wing County meeting physical activity recommendations increased. 36.2% of adults did 30+ minutes of moderate activity 5-7 days per week (compared with 25.7% in 2017). 33.5% of adults did 20+ minutes of vigorous physical activity 3-7 days per week (compared to 25.4% in 2014).

Community Strengths and Resources Available:

- Crow Wing Energized Healthy Choices Goal Group
- Crow Wing Energized Workplace Wellness Goal Group
- National Diabetes Prevention Program
- One Vegetable, One Community Program
- Local trails for walking, biking and running
- Nature Network

Community Input

"People are busy and like grab-and-go snacks. They don't think to grab a fruit. Instead it's easier to stock the cupboards with junk food."

"It's too expensive to eat healthy."

"Many people simply don't know how to prepare fresh vegetables."

"Families are so overscheduled between jobs and extra-curricular activities that they are too busy to exercise."

"Too much screen time."

"Fast food is so convenient."

KEY FINDINGS: TOBACCO USE

Tobacco use is a leading cause of preventable death in the United States. Smoking leads to disease and disability and harms nearly every organ of the body.

- 25% Crow Wing County 11th grade students reported using an e-cigarette at least one day in the past 30 days, according to the 2019 Minnesota Student Survey.
- 14% of Crow Wing County 11th grade students reported using a tobacco product that was flavored like candy, fruit, chocolate, clove, spice or alcoholic drinks, the 2019 Minnesota Student Survey found.
- Tobacco use in adults improved from 23.3% in 2017 to 16.6% in 2021, stated the Crow Wing County Community Survey.
- Current cigarette smokers trying to quit decreased (39.2% in 2021 compared to 44.1% in 2017 and 70.8% in 2014), according to the Crow Wing County Community Survey.

Community Strengths and Resources Available:

- Crow Wing Energized Tobacco Coalition
- Essentia Health certified tobacco treatment specialists
- American Lung Association
- Local schools

Community Input

“People think vaping is safer than smoking. Vaping doesn’t leave the smoking odor so it’s easier to hide.”

“Vaping is a stress reliever for some people.”

“Students have easy access. The true risks are not known or taken seriously.”

“Not enough education in school at an early age to inform students of the dangers.”

“Manufacturers pushing their products – targeting kids with flavored products.”

CHNA 2023-2025 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Essentia Health worked with internal stakeholders and community partners in the Essentia Health-St. Joseph's Medical Center service area to design strategies that address each of the priority community health needs identified in the community needs health assessment (CHNA). The strategies outline actions that will be taken to respond to the identified needs.

The resulting implementation plan is a three-year plan to address priority needs in the community and will be reviewed annually, with progress shared with hospital leadership, the board of directors and Crow Wing Energized Steering Committee on an annual basis. During the fiscal years 2023-2025 CHNA implementation cycle, some activities are led by Crow Wing Energized, while others are coordinated across the health system. The Essentia Health system has outlined an allocation of resources available to each hospital as a percentage of net revenue to address the priorities set forth in the CHNAs. This strategy helps Essentia Health make the greatest impact with available resources.

Any comments received during the most recent CHNA implementation cycle inform development of the next implementation plan. No written comments were received from the fiscal years 2020-2022 CHNA for the Essentia Health-St. Joseph's Medical Center service area.

Desired Results and Data Indicators

Responding to community health needs identified in the CHNA, the results and indicators listed below outline the desired results of community action and data points to help indicate progress. Essentia Health uses Results-Based Accountability, which is a disciplined way of thinking and acting to improve entrenched and complex social problems, to frame and implement this plan.

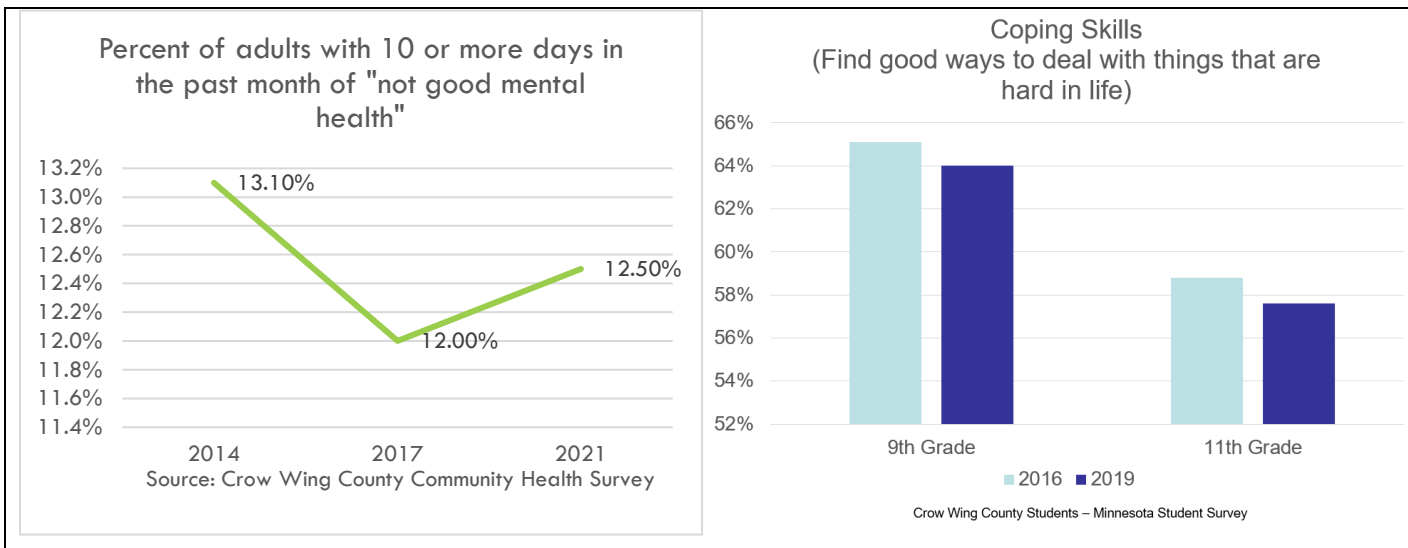
- Desired result: People experience good mental well-being most days.
 - Crow Wing County Community Health Survey data indicator: Percent of adults with 10 or more days in the past month of "not good mental health"
 - Minnesota Student Survey data indicators: Percent of Crow Wing County students who frequently or always find good ways of dealing with things in life that are hard
- Desired result: People no longer desire tobacco products.
 - Crow Wing County Community Health Survey data indicator: Percent of adults who use any tobacco product
 - Crow Wing County Community Health Survey data indicator: Percent of current cigarette smokers who stopped smoking for one or more days in the past 12 months because they were trying to quit

- Desired result: People eat fruits and vegetables everyday.
 - Crow Wing County Community Health Survey data indicator: Percent of adults not eating 5 or more fruits and vegetables per day
- Desired result: People are active everyday.
 - Crow Wing County Community Health Survey data indicator: Percent of adults not meeting the recommended moderate or vigorous physical activity guidelines

Strategies: Mental Well-being

Result: People experience good mental well-being most days.

Baseline: What is the history and forecast of the issue?



Partners: Who are the partners who have a role to play?

- Bridges of Hope
- ARC Goal Group
- Mental Fitness Goal Group
- The Shop
- Schools
- Media
- Crow Wing County
- Mental health agencies
- Chamber of Commerce
- Workplace Wellness Goal Group
- Lakes Area United Way
- Head Start and Early Childhood Family Education
- Faith-based organizations
- Kinship mentorship program
- Lutheran Social Services
- Health care systems

Story behind the baseline: What are root causes of the issue?

Factors that have contributed to improvements:

- Make It OK stigma campaign
- Telehealth makes mental health treatment more accessible
- Internet resources for staying connected virtually
- More people and organizations recognize the importance of mental well-being and connection
- Adults can model positive coping skills for children
- Sources of Strength program in the schools
- More willing to talk about mental health in workplace, school and faith communities

Factors that have contributed to decline:

- Bullying and social media
- Stress felt by teachers, parents and children
- COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted normal coping mechanisms and social connection
- Political climate and unrest have created polarization and family tensions
- Staffing and workforce issues
- Drug and alcohol use
- Behavioral health provider availability and competence
- Less preventative healthcare seeking due to COVID-19 pandemic
- Gyms, sports and other group physical activity options have closed

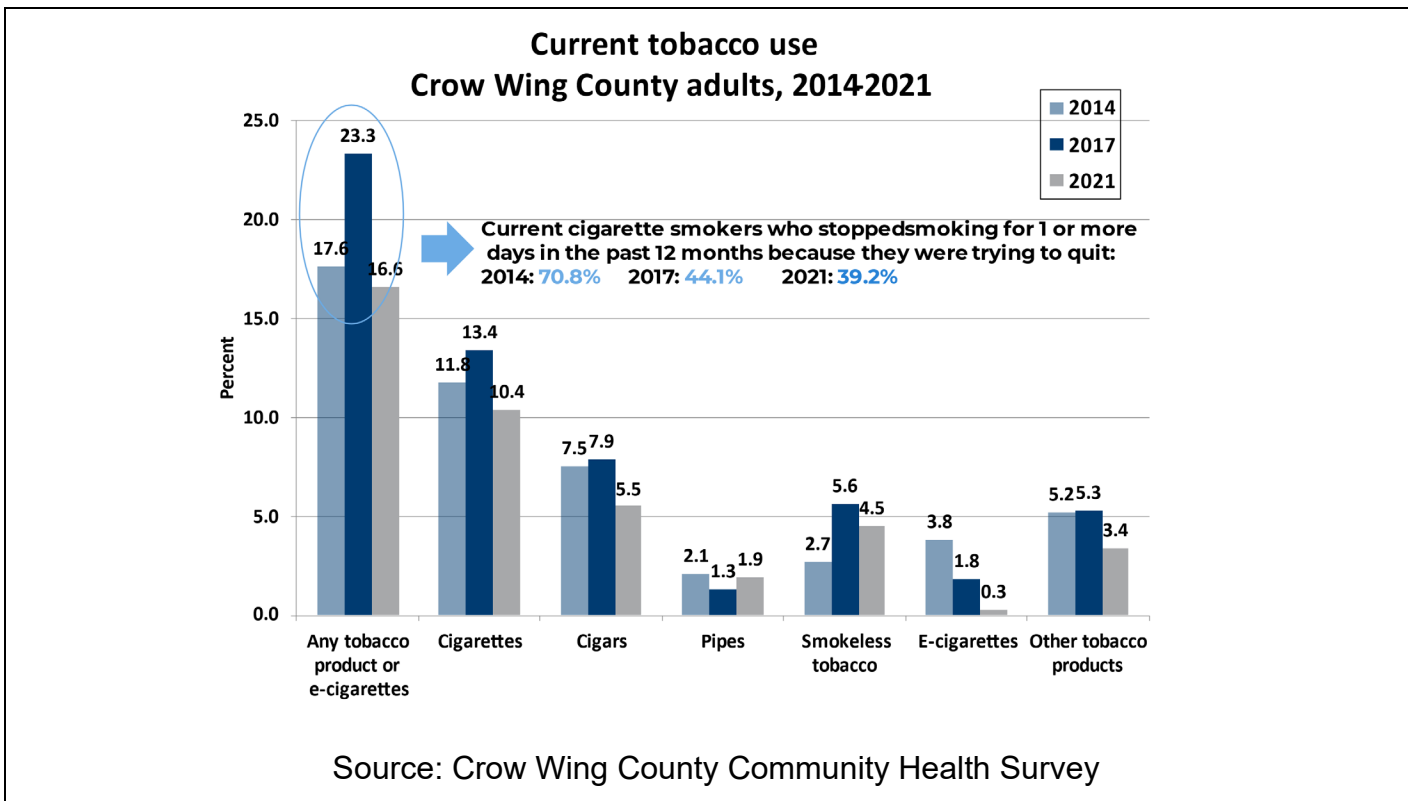
Strategies: What works to do better?

- **Strategy #1:** Encourage help-seeking behaviors through stigma-reduction campaigns (Make It OK and ACEs education) to reduce stigma and raise awareness of existing community resources.
- **Strategy #2:** Build resilience, optimism, positive self-concepts and hopefulness through tools (i.e., resiliency toolkits, sleep booklets, three good things notepads and attitude of gratitude trees) and programs (i.e., Sources of Strength).
- **Strategy #3:** Encourage supportive relationships, protective factors and social connectedness through mentorship, parent supports, community education and community engagement.

Strategies: Tobacco Use

Result: People no longer desire tobacco products.

Baseline: What is the history and forecast of the issue?



Partners: Who are the partners who have a role to play?

- American Lung Association
- Minnesota Department of Health
- American Cancer Society
- Local schools
- Local governments
- Tobacco treatment specialists
- Mental health providers
- Tobacco Coalition participants
- Law enforcement
- Lakes Area Restorative Justice Project

Strategies: What works to do better?

- **Strategy #1:** Advocate for policies that limit access to tobacco and reduce harm (i.e., updating local tobacco ordinance and increasing tobacco-free public places).
- **Strategy #2:** Enhance youth tobacco prevention and education programs (i.e., school-based/ youth group programming, marketing campaigns, peer-to-peer education).
- **Strategy #3:** Promote tobacco cessation interventions and resources (i.e., strengthen connections for evidence-based tobacco treatment programs and increase community awareness of available resources).

Story behind the baseline: What are root causes of the issue?

Factors that have contributed to improvements:

- Increased number of smoking cessation programs
- Increased awareness and education on long-term health effects of tobacco
- Policies that have limited accessibility
- Cost of tobacco and taxes
- Earlier education on tobacco health impacts

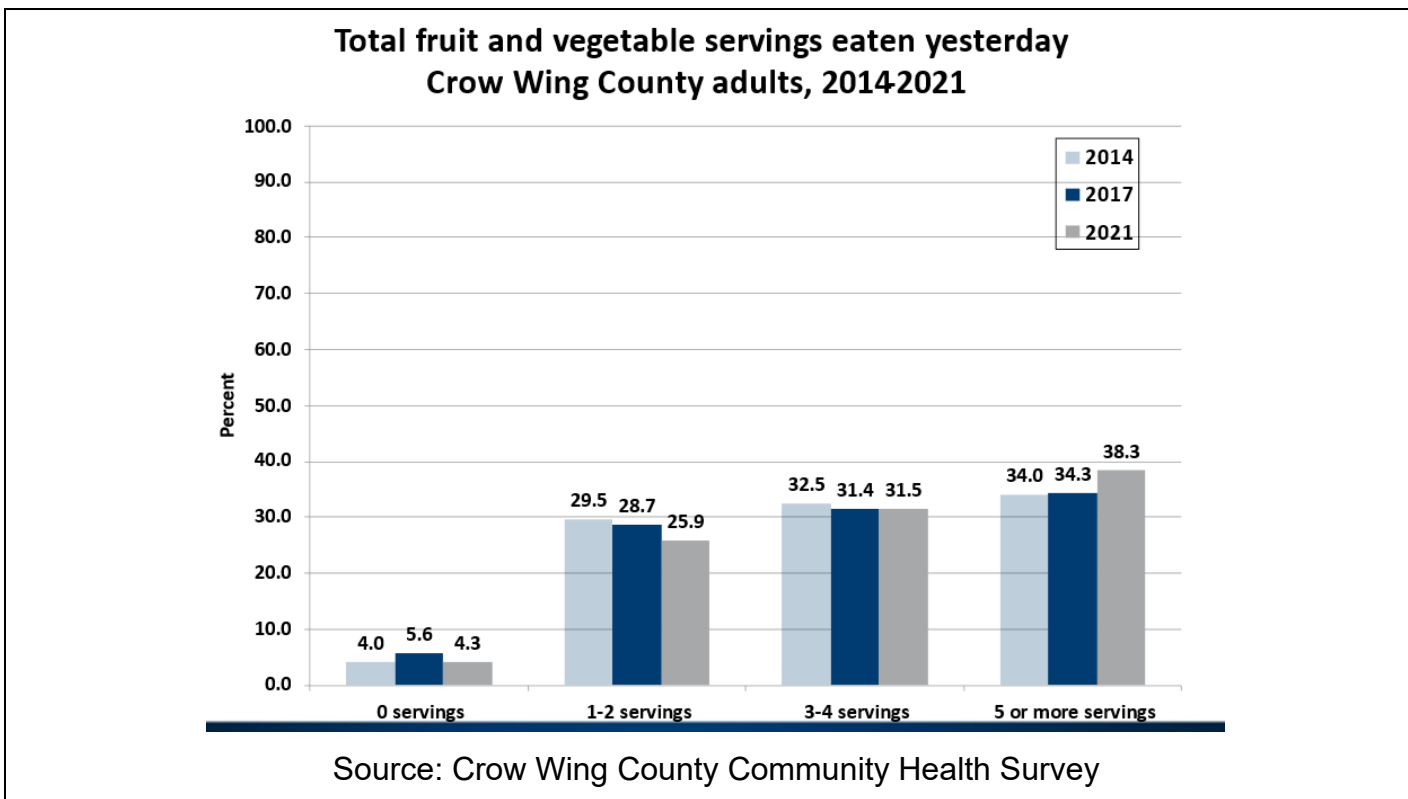
Factors that have contributed to decline:

- Vaping popularity due to social media and peer pressure
- Flavored tobacco products are enticing for children
- Mental health and tobacco use are linked

Strategies: Healthy Eating

Result: People eat fruits and vegetables everyday.

Baseline: What is the history and forecast of the issue?



Story behind the baseline: What are root causes of the issue?

Factors that have contributed to improvements:

- Workplace wellness programs (healthy vending, community challenges)
- National Diabetes Prevention Program
- Produce available through food shelves (pop-up produce distributions)
- One Vegetable, One Community
- People cook more meals at home during the COVID-19 pandemic

Factors that have contributed to decline:

- Cost of healthy foods
- Access to healthy food
- Easier and more convenient to eat snacks and fast food

Partners: Who are the partners who have a role to play?

- Minnesota Department of Health
- University of Minnesota Extension
- Crow Wing County
- Local farmers' markets
- Brainerd Family YMCA
- Brainerd Chamber of Commerce
- Local schools
- Restaurants
- Food shelves
- Community gardens
- Healthy Choices Goal Group members

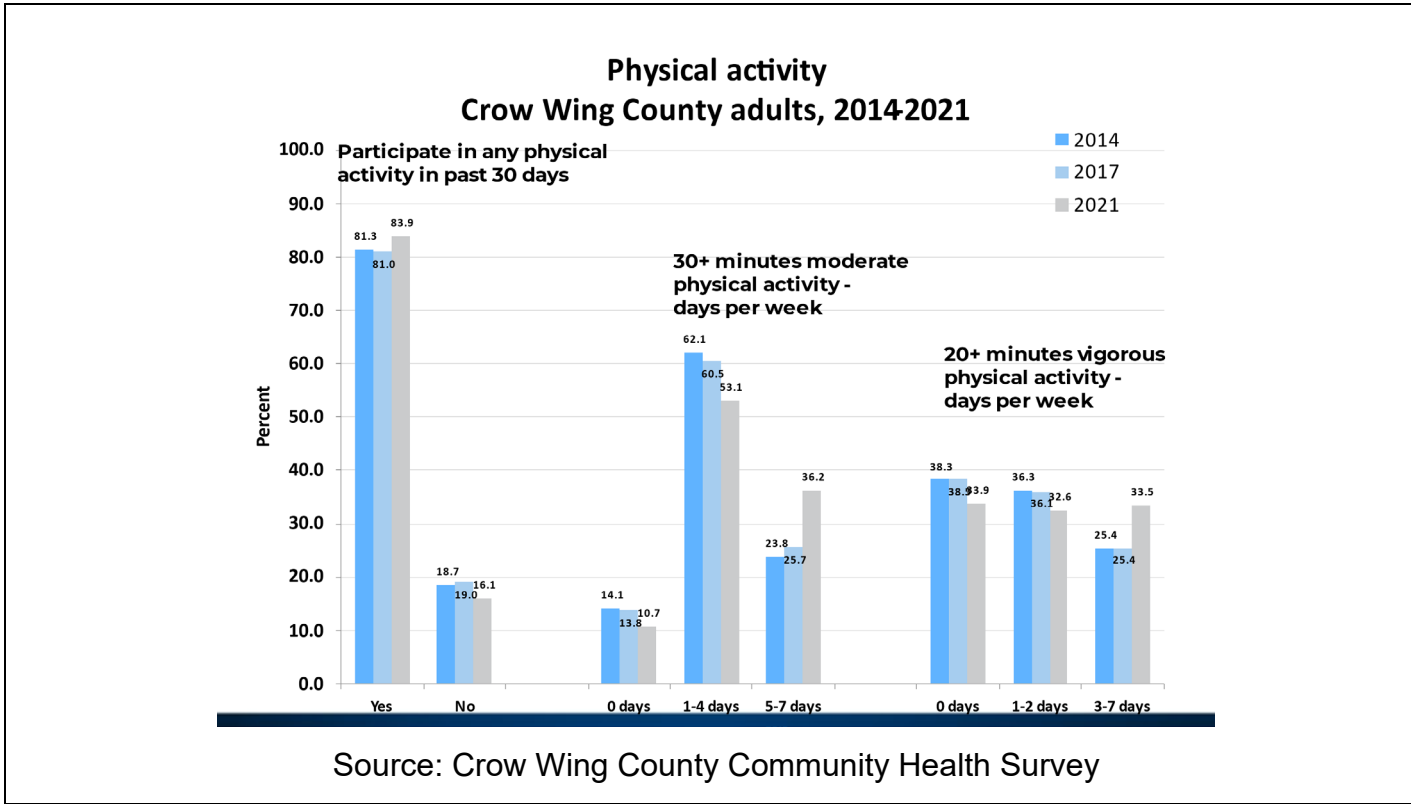
Strategies: What works to do better?

- Strategy #1: Encourage workplaces to implement policy, system and environment changes that promote fruit and vegetable consumption (i.e., healthy vending machine policies).
- Strategy #2: Implement the One Vegetable, One Community program across the community through community events, media and partnerships with schools, restaurants and food shelves.
- Strategy #3: Support efforts to make healthy food more affordable and accessible (i.e. farmers' market EBT/SNAP matching, Power of Produce club and mobile/pop-up produce distributions).

Strategies: Physical Activity

Result: People are active everyday.

Baseline: What is the history and forecast of the issue?



Story behind the baseline: What are root causes of the issue?

Factors that have contributed to improvements:

- More virtual exercise options
- Workplace wellness initiatives
- National Diabetes Prevention Program and Matter of Balance initiatives

Factors that have contributed to decline:

- Not all areas are walkable/bikeable
- Difficult to get started when you don't have an exercise routine
- Cold winters and icy roads make it hard to be active outside year-round

Partners: Who are the partners who have a role to play?

- Minnesota Department of Health
- Crow Wing County
- Brainerd Family YMCA
- Brainerd Chamber of Commerce
- Local gyms
- Local schools
- Healthy Choices Goal Group members
- Local bike shops
- Worksites
- City of Brainerd
- City of Baxter
- City of Nisswa
- City of Crosby
- City of Pequot Lakes
- Park Board
- Rotary Club
- Visit Brainerd
- Nature Network

Strategies: What works to do better?

- Strategy #1: Encourage workplaces to implement policy, system and environment changes that promote physical activity (i.e., walking meetings, group exercise classes and company challenges).
- Strategy #2: Offer evidence-based programs that support active lifestyles (i.e., National Diabetes Prevention Program, Staying Active and Independent for Life, Matter of Balance, Walk with Ease).
- Strategy #3: Promote and support point-of-decision prompts and trail maps or signage to encourage physical activity throughout the community.

CONCLUSION

As a nonprofit health system, Essentia Health is called to make a healthy difference in people's lives. This CHNA illustrates the importance of collaboration between our hospitals and community partners. By working collaboratively, we can have a positive impact on the identified health needs in our community in fiscal years 2023-2025. For questions or comments about the community health needs assessment, please contact: chna.comments@essentiahealth.org. Copies of this plan can be downloaded from our website: <https://www.essentiahealth.org/about/chna/>.

APPENDIX A: CHNA PARTNER INVENTORY

Organization	Representing medically underserved, low income, or minority community	Representing state, local, tribal or governmental public health	Steering Committee Member	Focus Group Participant
ACR Consulting			X	X
Big Stone Therapies			X	
Blue Cross Blue Shield of MN				X
Brainerd Dispatch			X	
Brainerd Family YMCA	X		X	
Brainerd HRA	X			X
Brainerd Lakes Area Economic Development			X	
Central Lakes College	X		X	
Central Minnesota Council on Aging	X		X	
City of Brainerd			X	
Community Members				X
Crosslake Chamber of Commerce			X	
Crow Wing County		X	X	X
Cuyuna Regional Medical Center	X		X	
Essentia Health			X	X
Heartland Hospice Care			X	
ISD 186 School Board			X	
Lakes Area Restorative Justice				X
Mid-Minnesota Federal Credit Union			X	
Minnesota Department of Health		X		
Northern Pines Mental Health				X

Organization	Representing medically underserved, low income, or minority community	Representing state, local, tribal or governmental public health	Steering Committee Member	Focus Group Participant
Nystrom & Associates			X	X
St. Cloud Veterans Administration Medical Center	X			X
Lakes Area United Way	X		X	X
University of Minnesota Extension	X		X	X



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