



# Healthiest Wisconsin 2020

## Aligning Policies and Systems for Better Health



### Fact Sheet: Partners in Prevention Roles You Can Play

#### Why is leadership needed?

Leadership at the local, regional and statewide levels is critical to support *Healthiest Wisconsin 2020 (HW2020)*. Though a shared focus on prevention, together we can catalyze action within and across Wisconsin communities – the places where we live, grow, work, learn and play.

The roles described below identify ways that individuals, agencies, organizations and communities can work, alone or together, to improve our state's health. Carrying out these roles using the *HW2020* framework helps us *align policies and systems for better health*.

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#### Policy Makers

Policy makers have a role in developing, implementing, and enforcing policies, laws, and regulations within their jurisdictions, whether they are towns, cities, counties, communities, worksites, schools or recreation areas. Organizational leaders can consider the potential health impact of policy options, and choose to implement policies that improve the health of individuals and communities. *For example*, a metropolitan planning organization can regularly consider health criteria when making planning decisions on land use and design to provide opportunities for safe physical activity and access to healthy foods and beverages.

#### Purchasers

Individuals, agencies, and organizations purchase various goods and services, such as food, vehicles, health insurance, and supplies; and some finance the construction of infrastructure projects, such as buildings, housing, and roads. Buyers of goods and services can use their purchasing power to promote health and wellness. *For example*, businesses can adopt policies to procure locally grown foods and build healthier environments for their workers and customers.

#### Employers

Employers can implement policies and programs that foster health, wellness, and safety among their employees. Worksite wellness and safety policies and programs can reduce health risks and improve the quality of life for thousands of workers in Wisconsin. *For example*, employers can provide confidential counseling to promote life skills, combat depression, and address substance use problems for employees. Improving the health of Wisconsin's workforce is good for both employees and employers – it improves productivity, reduces health care expenditures, and encourages economic growth. *For example*, employers can improve the health of their workers by implementing programs to prevent illness and injury; ensure access to healthy foods; create opportunities to be physically active; and encourage use of preventive services.

## Health Care Providers

Individuals and organizations that deliver health care, including mental health services, can implement policies and systems to support the delivery of evidence-based clinical preventive services and enhance linkages between clinical and community prevention efforts. [For example](#), a health care system can adopt electronic medical records with a decision-support system prompting clinicians to deliver preventive services and anticipatory guidance to patients.

## Funders

Funding for sustainable community capacity will improve health, save lives and conserve limited resources. Elements of capacity include partnership engagement, workforce development, training, technical assistance, communication, surveillance, research and epidemiology. Organizations providing financial support can encourage funding recipients to adhere to health principles and standards, leverage cross-sector collaboration, and support the development of healthy communities. Partnerships among funders can leverage resources for greater impact. [For example](#), state, tribal, and local governments can incorporate recommendations for physical activity and healthy eating into performance standards for schools and childcare providers.

## Data Collectors and Researchers

Data and research form an important foundation for *HW2020* and can be used to strengthen its implementation. [For example](#), a university can help demonstrate the business case for prevention and share these findings with corporate decision makers (e.g., board chairs, corporate officers). [In another example](#), with the support of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute developed the “County Health Rankings and Roadmaps Program.” This program ranks the health of all counties in the nation, and provides data, tools and guidance to improve the health of local communities in Wisconsin and around the country.

## Communicators and Educators

Individuals and communities provide and receive information through many sources: advertising, educational campaigns, websites and trainings. Such sources raise awareness, provide people with knowledge and skills, and create supportive environments to help people make healthy decisions. [For example](#), text4baby (<https://www.text4baby.org/>) sends free text messages to pregnant women on topics like prenatal care, baby health, and parenting. Messages are timed to where a woman is in her pregnancy, through baby’s first year.

## Health Promoters

Community health workers work almost exclusively in the community. They are also known as community health advocates, lay health educators, community health representatives, peer health promoters, community health outreach workers, and in Spanish, promotores de salud. They serve as connectors between health care consumers and providers to promote health among groups that have traditionally lacked access to adequate health care (Witmer 1995, p. 1055). [For example](#), they provide culturally appropriate health education and information using popular education methods; they help assure that people get the services they need; and they provide informal counseling and support.

Source: Text for this fact sheet was adapted from the *National Prevention Strategy*, U.S. Surgeon General U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2011

# Healthiest Wisconsin 2020 Partnership Model

