

APPENDIX F

DON'T WAIT:
IDEAS FOR EFFECTIVE ACTIONS

Everyone Living
Better, Longer

Healthiest
Wisconsin
2020



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You don't have to wait a decade or even join an organization to begin implementing some *Healthiest Wisconsin 2020* objectives. Following are a few examples of action steps available to individuals and communities. Groups such as local health departments, trade or professional associations, community collaboratives or schools may already be working on these and other, equally valid implementation strategies. Most of the action ideas listed below have been demonstrated to be effective actions by evaluation and research in Wisconsin or elsewhere.

These action ideas can only do so much in isolation. Consider how your work could connect with the work of others in your community, particularly in relationship to the five recurring themes of:

- Improved and connected health service systems.
- Youth and families prepared to protect their health and the health of their community.
- Environments that foster health and social networks.
- Capability to evaluate the effectiveness and health impact of policies and programs.
- Resources for governmental public health infrastructure.

Helpful websites are listed below for convenience only. People who do not use the Internet can get help seeing website materials at their local library. (Note: All websites listed here were active as of May 2010, but we cannot promise they will remain available for the rest of the decade.)

Health disparities

Individuals:

- Learn more about health disparities in your community. Support efforts to collect information to identify needs, and support funding to meet them.

Communities:

- Collect information to identify and track health disparities in your community.
- Develop collaborative leadership skills in communities affected by health disparities.

Statewide:

- Foster leadership, research and support for policies and programs to reduce disparities.

Social, economic and educational factors that influence health

Individuals:

- Join a group supporting better education, poverty reduction, or addressing discrimination and diversity in your community.

Communities:

- Develop or advocate for policies for livable household incomes and sustainable education.
- Provide more opportunities for interaction and trust between diverse parts of the community.

Statewide:

- Align economic development, tax and human services policies to reduce poverty while creating healthier conditions in communities.

Access to high-quality health services

Individuals:

- Help uninsured people find access to care. (<https://access.wisconsin.gov/> and <http://www.wphca.org/>)
- Ask three questions at each health care visit: 1. What is my main problem? 2. What do I need to do? 3. Why is it important for me to do this? (http://www.npsf.org/askme3/for_patients.php)

Communities:

- Develop sufficient comprehensive “medical home” primary care practices to serve unmet local needs.
- Provide continuing education for health workers on health disparities and providing competent care to diverse populations.

Statewide:

- Align payment toward the quality, not quantity, of care.
- Use the 2010 federal health care reform laws effectively to expand access to preventive and primary care in underserved communities.

Collaborative partnerships for community health improvement

Individuals:

- Join or form a partnership working on a health issue in your community. Call your local health department (<http://dhs.wi.gov/localhealth/>) to find one.

Communities:

- Consider forming a Healthy Wisconsin Leadership Institute team (<http://hwli.org/>) for part of your community’s Health Improvement Plan (available from your local health department).

Statewide:

- Support development of collaborative leadership skills, especially among people affected by health problems.

Diverse, sufficient, and competent workforce that promotes and protects health

Individuals:

- Consider one of the many opportunities available in public health or health careers. (http://www.wihealthcareers.org/Career_occ_toc.cfm)

Communities:

- Form or join partnerships to increase recruitment, training and diversity of the health workforce.
- Consider community health workers to increase the capacity and diversity of the public health workforce, and help them find ladders to other health careers.

Statewide:

- Expand training opportunities and incentives to increase workforce availability and diversity, especially in underserved communities.
- Improve workforce data measurement and tracking.

Emergency preparedness, response, and recovery

Individuals:

- Make a plan and a “ready kit” for your household for emergencies. (<http://ready.wi.gov/Plan/Plan.asp?maintab=0>)

Communities:

- Support local public health and emergency management activities to prevent, plan for, and respond to emergencies.
- Organize a Medical Reserve Corps unit in your community if one does not exist. (<http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/preparedness/MRC/index.htm>)

Statewide:

- Maintain sufficient surge capacity and continuity of operations for critical public health and laboratory functions in emergencies.

Equitable, adequate, stable public health funding

Individuals:

- Ask policy-makers how your local and state public health funding compares to national averages.

Communities:

- Support public and private funding for programs, partnerships and agencies that address local or state health plan objectives.

Statewide:

- Support stable revenue streams for state and local health departments, especially approaches aligned with other healthy outcomes like reducing youth tobacco or alcohol use or obesity. (<http://publichealthcouncil.dhs.wi.gov/financeproposal.pdf>)

Health literacy

Individuals:

- Become a patient advocate, navigator or advisor to a local health organization to help them meet patient needs.

Communities:

- Add health literacy to adult literacy programs and school curricula.
- Implement patient communication strategies in local clinics and hospitals. (<http://www.ahrq.gov/qual/literacy/>)

Statewide:

- Promote integration of health literacy into youth, adult and professional education programs.

Public health capacity and quality

Individuals:

- Support local health department efforts to achieve accreditation.

Communities:

- Share performance management capabilities (for example, project management, team leadership, continuous quality improvement) with local health department managers.

Statewide:

- Support local and state health department efforts to achieve standardized accreditation.

Public health research and evaluation

Individuals:

- Participate in research and evaluation studies when invited to do so (as a research subject or community advisor).
- Encourage policy-makers to value programs based on effectiveness and alignment with the best available science.

Communities:

- Support local efforts to evaluate, report and compare the effectiveness of health programs.
- Consider potential health impacts when weighing major policy or design changes.

Statewide:

- Establish the Public Health Research and Evaluation Council and support greater capability for program evaluation and policy health impact analysis in the state.

Systems to manage and share health information and knowledge

Individuals:

- Participate in your clinic's personal health record system, or start your own. (<http://www.myphr.com/>)

Communities:

- Encourage medical providers to use electronic health records and to join regional or statewide information exchange. (<http://www.metastar.com/web/Default.aspx?tabid=386>)
- Support local health department efforts to upgrade and maintain information management systems.

Statewide:

- Participate in WIRED for Health planning and implementation. (<http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/ehealth/WIREDforHealth/index.htm>)

Adequate, appropriate, and safe food and nutrition

Individuals:

- Ask for healthy choices (unsweetened beverages, fruits and vegetables, whole grains) where you shop, study, work and live.
- Ask your health provider to measure your Body Mass Index (BMI) using your height and weight, and discuss whether it is healthy. Do the same thing for those you care for.

Communities:

- Promote healthy food choices in school and work environments.
- Support programs that make healthy foods more accessible and affordable, like the Women, Infants and Children Nutrition Program (WIC) and farmers markets.
- Implement policies that promote breastfeeding at hospitals, clinics, child care and work.

Statewide:

- Advance policies that make breastfeeding and nutritious, non-sweetened foods the simplest and preferred choices for children.

Alcohol and other drug use

Individual:

- Support businesses that do not promote reckless or excessive alcohol use.
- Encourage people to seek early treatment if alcohol or drug use is affecting their lives or loved ones.

Communities:

- Reduce high concentrations of alcohol-serving businesses.
- Support early intervention and treatment for alcohol and drug problems in clinics, social services, correctional settings and schools.

Statewide:

- Implement measures that make alcohol less accessible and affordable for youth.
- Support increased availability of culturally appropriate alcohol and drug-abuse intervention and treatment services in underserved populations.

Chronic disease prevention and management

(Note: Many other *Healthiest Wisconsin 2020* objectives also work to prevent chronic diseases before they start.)

Individuals:

- If you have chronic disease, manage it actively with your health care provider even when you don't feel sick. Learn how your medicines work and warning signs meaning you should call for help.
- Ask your health care provider about preventive services. A checklist is available from <http://www.ahrq.gov/consumer/healthy.html>.

Communities:

- Support programs that help patients manage chronic illnesses more skillfully, such as Living Well with Chronic Conditions: <http://dhs.wi.gov/aging/CDSMP/LivingWellwithChronicConditions/index.htm>.

Statewide:

- Build sustainable funding for chronic disease prevention and management programs.

Communicable disease prevention and control

Individuals:

- Make sure all household members have received recommended vaccines. Consult your health care provider or local health department.
- Have yourself tested for human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and other sexually transmitted diseases unless you know you cannot be at risk. (The most common infections reported to public health are sexually transmitted.)

Communities:

- Support efforts to ensure all children, adolescents and adults receive recommended vaccines.

Statewide:

- Improve systems to support local vaccination and disease control programs.

Environmental and occupational health

Individuals:

- Inspect and equip your home against possible health hazards. (<http://www.uwex.edu/healthyhome/book.html>)

Communities:

- Add neighborhood design features that support safe walking, safe bicycling and public transit to reduce pollution and improve healthy physical activity.

Statewide:

- Keep regulations up-to-date and support local capability to plan improvements in environmental and occupational health.

Healthy growth and development

Individuals:

- Space between pregnancies, and help the pregnancy and infant grow in environments free from violence, smoke, and substance use. Subscribe to <http://www.text4baby.org/> to receive reminders for a healthy baby.

Communities:

- Expand Head Start and other early childhood development programs that encourage development and help detect disabilities early.

Statewide:

- Expand access to evidence-based home visiting programs for families during pregnancy and early childhood.

Injury and violence

Individuals:

- Use proper bike helmets, seat belts and infant or booster seats.
- Reduce home tap water temperature to 120° Fahrenheit.

Communities:

- Support youth violence prevention programs.
- Add traffic calming and pedestrian-safe design.

Statewide:

- Implement additional graduated driving restrictions for new teen drivers.

Mental health

Individuals:

- Learn the warning signs of depression and seek help if they persist. (http://www.dbsalliance.org/site/PageServer?pagename=Signs_symptoms)

Communities:

- Support programs that treat mental illness while also addressing risk factors for chronic physical disease.

Statewide:

- Work to achieve health insurance parity for mental health diagnosis and treatment.

Oral health

Individuals:

- Schedule regular oral exams and cleanings.

Communities:

- Support community water fluoridation and school-based dental sealant programs.

Statewide:

- Expand access to oral health professionals through insurance reform, community health centers, and expanded scope of practice for dental hygienists in public health settings.

Physical activity

Individuals:

- Adults should aim for at least 30 minutes of moderate exercise at least five days a week. Even climbing stairs, mowing the lawn and walking for errands helps.
- Children need an hour of physical activity daily. Turn off the television and get them moving.

Communities:

- Establish safe routes to walk to school and places to play outdoors.
- Encourage workplace fitness programs.
- Support mixed-use neighborhood design with public transit that encourages walking or bicycling for errands and work.

Statewide:

- Support policies enabling increased physical education at schools.

Reproductive and sexual health

Individuals:

- Protect from unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease through sexual abstinence or appropriate contraception. (http://dhs.wi.gov/dph_bfch/MCH/familyplanning.htm)

Communities:

- Provide medically accurate sexual health education in schools.
- Reduce stigmas and barriers based on sexual activity, sexual orientation or identity, or gender identity.

Statewide:

- Expand access to comfortable reproductive and sexual health care services, particularly where there are high disparities in health outcomes.

Tobacco use and exposure

Individuals:

- Help yourself or friends quit today: 800-QUIT-NOW (800-784-8669).

Communities:

- Enforce smoke-free laws and prohibitions on selling tobacco products to minors.

Statewide:

- Support a comprehensive, evidence-based tobacco control program. (http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/stateandcommunity/best_practices/index.htm)

HEALTHIEST WISCONSIN 2020: Everyone Living Better, Longer

A State Health Plan to Improve Health Across the Life Span, and
Eliminate Health Disparities and Achieve Health Equity

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On the Web: <http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/hw2020/>



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