

The 2011 WiCPHET Joint Internship Project Team is proud to present its **Report to the Community**. Over the last four months each of us has had the privilege of meeting and working with many of you — an extraordinary group of health care professionals, civic leaders, and engaged members of organizations and communities all across Monroe and Vernon Counties. We have witnessed firsthand the tireless dedication, commitment, and resolve which you bring to your daily efforts at improving the lives of the most vulnerable individuals and families in your communities. We hope that the work we have begun here represents the beginning of a longer journey toward improved health and well-being for you and your families. Thank you for your generosity of spirit and the goodwill you have shown us. — *Tim, Cari, Lauren, Katie, Alex, and Jen*

the Presentation

Introductions

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WiCPHET & the Joint Internship Program

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Project Overview

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Opportunities & challenges for improved health

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Key Action Reports

Food Security

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Maternal Health

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Domestic Violence

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Other Initiatives & Recommendations

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Summary

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Community Health Centers

Key Action: Food Security

Lauren Gibbs ■ Jen Whitty

Being “food secure” is defined by the UN World Health Organization (WHO) as the point “when all people at all times have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life.” Food security is an issue within rural communities because of their limited access to available foods. The goal for the Food Security initiative is to assist local organizations in creating a more consistent food environment for their community members.

1 the Findings

Based on key informant interviews in Monroe & Vernon Counties:

- Community members are struggling with access to food due to issues like transportation and limited available vendors.
- Low income individuals or those on fixed budgets reduce their spending on food first in order to pay for other necessary expenses, such as rent and utilities.
- Families have been increasingly seeking emergency food assistance over the last few years.

2 the Initiatives

- Assisted Cashton Cupboard & Closet with capacity building, including assistance with grant writing.
- Applied for and awarded a \$1,000 grant from WalMart®, for use by Cashton Cupboard & Closet to purchase food for community members.
- Initiated a food security needs assessment, in collaboration with Couleecap, to help identify the most prevalent food security problems. Actions included the development of a household food security survey and the conduct of focus groups.

3 the Next Steps

- ✓ Use the food security needs assessment to identify issues and opportunities for improvement.
- ✓ Work with area food pantries in capacity building activities, such as grant writing and development of community gardens.
- ✓ Create a resource for community members’ use to assist in making healthy choices when grocery shopping and preparing food at home.
- ✓ Identify and assess household food security issues among different subsets of the community.

Key Action: Maternal Health

Cari Cuffney ■ Katie Lohse

Access by the mother to accurate health information during pregnancy, childbirth, and the postpartum period can help improve the health of a baby well into childhood. The Maternal Health Information Exchange initiative is designed to facilitate the exchange of prenatal and postnatal health information between non-Amish physicians and those women who serve as midwives and birth assistants within the local Amish community.

1 the Findings

- The evidence is clear that childhood health status influences adult health outcomes, even at the prenatal level.
- There is a generally low utilization of prenatal care among Amish women.
- The Amish midwives conference held in Norwalk in 2010 was well-received by midwives within the local Amish community.

2 the Initiatives

- With the help of physicians and other clinicians in the local community, identified gaps in the available maternal health information.
- Reviewed the curriculum of the 2010 Amish midwives conference for lessons learned and opportunities for improvement.
- Worked with UW-Madison health care faculty to identify maternal health informational materials, such as *Plain Talk About Babies*.

3 the Next Steps

- ✓ Work with Scenic Bluffs Health Clinic staff to organize an Amish midwives training conference for Spring 2012.
- ✓ Seek funding to reprint *Plain Talk About Babies*, a maternal health guide developed at UW-Madison in conjunction with the Amish community.
- ✓ Develop workshop materials and training aids appropriate for use by midwives and birth assistants in the Amish community.

WiCPHET

WISCONSIN CENTER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH EDUCATION AND TRAINING



the Project goals

Introduction to the principles and practices of population health.

- Development of skills in conducting needs and capacity assessments.

- Development of skills in community-based participatory research.

- Interactivity with a wide array of community-based professionals and citizens.

- Exploration of rural health care and health promotion systems.

- Development of recommendations and plans for next steps for health enhancement.

the Team

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the Resources

Scenic Bluffs Community Health Centers
www.scenicbluffs.org

- WI Center for Public Health Education & Training (WiCPHET)
www.wicphet.org

- Scenic Rivers Area Health Education Center (AHEC)
www.scenicriversahec.org

- St. Joseph's Health Services
Gundersen Lutheran
www.stjhealthcare.org

Key Action: Domestic Violence

Timothy G. Connolly ■ Alex Ostromecki

As a result of recent events in the community, the administration of St. Joseph's Health Services and Gundersen Lutheran in Hillsboro requested assistance in identifying community resources to support the needs of St. Joseph's staff who are a victim of, or may become involved in, incidents of domestic violence.

1 the Findings

- There did not exist a listing of online, community-based, and regional domestic violence support organizations, agencies, and services.

- St. Joseph's had an interest in including such information in the pending update of its staff handbook.

- A wide variety of organizations and agencies providing support to victims of domestic violence existed in the Hillsboro and surrounding area.

2 the Initiatives

- Compiled a resource listing of domestic violence support organizations and agencies in the counties of Juneau, Monroe, Vernon, Sauk, and Richland.

- Resources included the names of organizations and contact information for both emergency and general help in the counties around St. Joseph's.

- Provided guidance on the development by employers of a workplace policy on domestic and sexual violence.

3 the Next Steps

- ✓ Assist in the development of instructional materials for use during staff in-service training.

- ✓ Identify additional unmet domestic violence informational and resource needs of the St. Joseph's staff community.

- ✓ Disseminate the resource listing to other health care providers in the Hillsboro area.

Key Action: Other Initiatives

Timothy G. Connolly ■ Cari Cuffney

Community oral health education

The expansion of dental services at the Scenic Bluffs Community Health Center in Cashton revealed the need for an increased emphasis on oral health education in the community, particularly among children. As an initial pilot project, the team has begun conversations with the Amish community, with the goal of returning oral health education to their schools (it was taught previously, but was suspended due to the time demands of other academic subjects). As part of this effort, the team has acquired health education classroom materials specifically developed for, and used by, Amish communities across the country, which they will use to develop appropriate oral health classroom materials in conjunction with the Cashton-area Amish community.

Wisconsin federal surplus property program

Non-profit organizations in Wisconsin are eligible to receive surplus U.S. Government property for a small fee, including such items as automobiles, trucks, generators, medical equipment, electronics, food preparation items, and office furniture. The project team enrolled the Scenic Bluffs Community Health Centers into the program (www.wifederal.com).

More effective health information communications

The project team is working with the Scenic Bluffs Community Health Centers (SBCHC) on developing more effective ways to communicate health information to individuals in the community, particularly those in the Hispanic communities who have little or no access to Internet-based resources. Current proposals include the creation of a health newsletter, and a survey of SBCHC patients to identify how they wish to receive health information, e.g., email, phone call, or through the mail.

Addressing unique health challenges of the Amish community

Members of the Amish community do not have either private or government-provided health insurance, and therefore do not benefit from the lower health care costs that such insurance provides. The project team is working with leaders in the Amish community to identify acceptable alternatives to health insurance which will provide many of the same advantages in terms of payment arrangements, cost control, and "buying power."

The team also examined other aspects of health care utilization uniquely affecting the Amish community, including medical advance directives and the use of air medical transportation such as "Medlink" helicopters. Work on developing a series of recommendations on these and other issues continues.

Key Action: Acknowledgments

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