

Healthiest

Safest

Most Prosperous



2018 Annual Report
Executive Summary
Published July 2019

An Apple a Day Keeps the Doctor Away

There is an old adage, “an apple a day keeps the doctor away.” We know eating fruit is good for us, but can it really prevent one from illness, injury, and dying before our time?

I invite you to think of this adage in a new light, “public health is the apple keeping the doctor away.” You now may be wondering how so?

When posed with the question, “What contributed to 30 years of life expectancy gained from 1900-2000?,” the person on the street typically will say modern medicine. Most people are surprised when they learn that public health contributed to 25 of the 30 years of life expectancy gained.

So, what contributed to extending life expectancy? Why public health? In the early 1900s, 30% of all deaths occurred among children less than five years of age. Leading causes of all deaths were pneumonia, tuberculosis, and diarrhea diseases, causes we now can prevent or treat when they do occur. In addition, we now have safer food and water, vaccinations, safer cars, safer workplaces, access to reproductive health services, fluoridated drinking water, and tobacco free places.

In recent years, emerging and reemerging issues have arisen – new tobacco vaping products, resurgence of measles across the United States as a result of children not being vaccinated, lead exposure to children living in older housing, and families impacted by alcohol and drug misuse and abuse.

In order to keep the quality of life gains we have achieved, Marathon County Health Department, with our community partners, continues to keep our eyes on issues impacting our communities by:

- Preventing infectious diseases
- Preventing unsafe food and water
- Promoting strong healthy families during the early years
- Creating places where it is easy to have healthy lifestyles
- Protecting against health hazards
- Monitoring and addressing community health priorities

I invite you to turn the page and read more about the difference the Marathon County Health Department is making in partnership with our communities to be the “apple that keeps the doctor away.”

In good health,
Joan Theurer, Health Officer



Impacts

For students who participated in school mental health counseling services, 76.1% of K-3rd graders and 86.1% of 4th-12th graders reported feeling better now than they did before counseling.



In 2018, the Community Health Improvement Plan Behavioral Health Group met two times to network and discuss community action around local behavioral health initiatives. Representatives identified ways to work collaboratively between initiatives.

Marathon County Health Department continues to implement Phase II of the Advancing Behavioral Health project from the Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin endowment fund and the Medical College of Wisconsin. The goal of this project is to reduce youth depression in Marathon County as reported in the Youth Risk Behavior Survey.

Staff provide ongoing support and coordination of the Marathon County School-Based Mental Health Consortium. The Consortium membership includes representative from all 11 Marathon County public school districts and 12 mental health clinics. The result is every public school district has created access for onsite mental health counseling services in every elementary, middle, and high school in Marathon County.

The first Therapist Networking Event was organized by Health Department staff. School-based therapists spent time building relationships and creating their support system. The result was project staff coordinating four Play Therapy Trainings for school-based mental health therapists, furthering their capacity to work in the specialized area of children's mental health.

Find out more...

Behavioral Health:

www.marathoncountyhealthpriorities.org/priority-areas/behavioral-health/



Tobacco Prevention and Control

Impacts

Wausau City Council passed a smoke free park ordinance that prohibits smoking or vaping within 50 feet of play areas, pools, tennis courts, and common areas.

Stevens Point City Council prohibited the possession of e-cigarettes by minors. North Central Health Care Center integrated nicotine treatment into its outpatient addiction services.

In 2018, 79 compliance checks were conducted throughout the County, and 72 (91.1%) did not sell to minors.



Marathon County Health Department continues to serve as the lead agency to the Central Wisconsin Tobacco Free Coalition, covering Marathon, Portage, and Wood counties.

In 2018, efforts focused on the use of electronic cigarettes or e-cigarettes or “vaping”. Numerous new products are available and are marketed as a safer alternative to cigarettes or to be used as smoking cessation devices. They come in a variety of candy and fruit flavors and in a wide range of appealing shapes and styles. While cigarette use is dropping among Wisconsin youth, e-cigarette use is on the rise. Twenty nine (29) meetings with leaders and policy makers, 15 educational presentations, and 20 published media articles were conducted to educate the community about tobacco and e-cigarette prevention.

The Wisconsin Wins program is a retail compliance program conducted in cooperation with local law enforcement and youth volunteers. The goal of the program is to identify retail locations that will sell tobacco products to minors.

Find out more...

Central Wisconsin Tobacco Free Coalition: www.centralwitobaccofree.org

Wisconsin WINS: www.wisconsinwins.com

Clear Gains—Wisconsin’s Smoke Free Housing Initiative: www.wismokefreehousing.com



Alcohol and Other Drug Misuse and Abuse

Impacts

Support of the AOD Partnership – Education and Awareness

- Facilitated and supported five AOD Partnership meetings, which included educational sessions on: new data platforms, resources and programs, medication abuse, building resilience, addiction in the criminal justice system, and hosted a special screening of the documentary *Written Off*
- Facilitated and supported two special events: the 8th Annual Spotlight Event and the 6th Annual Faces of Recovery Luncheon

Medication Abuse

- Expanded the Marathon County Medication Drop Box Program by adding two new locations in Spencer and Edgar; bringing the total number of locations to eight in Marathon County
- 100% of pharmacies continue to promote the Marathon County Medication Drop Box Program

Recovery

- Contributed to the development of the Marathon County Overdose Fatality Review Team in partnership with the Marathon County Medical Examiner's Office

Policy Development

- Contributed to multiple state policy discussions on opiate and other drug abuse, including the Governor's Opioid Task Force

Substance abuse is one of the health priorities identified in the 2017-2020 Community Health Improvement Plan and it continues to drive program and policy conversation throughout the community. As addiction and treatment have become more prevalent, more awareness is emerging of the links between addiction, recovery, and behavioral health. The dialog often includes the impacts substance abuse is having on the ability to raise children and contribute to the workforce. To that end, the Health Department provides staff support to the AOD Partnership and coordinates many community activities with their members and partnering agencies. Awareness of and education on the challenges of substance abuse are critical to shifting attitudes, norms, and behaviors related to how our community will respond to the public health epidemic of substance abuse.

Find out more...

AOD Partnership Council:
www.aodpartnership.org



MARATHON COUNTY ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL, INC.

Healthy Weight—Food Systems and Activity

Impacts

Wausau has included the Subcommittees' recommendations in their planning for next year and Rib Mountain is placing two audible walk signals at a busy intersection on Rib Mountain Drive.

In 2018, Wausau was ranked as the #1 small city and the 2nd best place overall to bike in the county, according to People for Bikes, a national advocacy organization for cycling. The Wausau area has transformed from one of the worst places to ride a bike to one of the best in the last 10 years because of the ongoing partnership between Marathon County Planners, Health Department staff, municipal leaders, and the Central Wisconsin Off-road Cycling Coalition (CWOCC). In 2018, phase I of the new off-road trail was built by CWOCC in Ringle, and Phase II is being planned for 2019. Health Department staff assisted with grant writing for this project.

In 2018, the Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) coalition met six times and featured a speaker or event on a subject of interest to members to further this community health priority. The topics were: Making Streets Safer for All, Staying Active in Winter, Horticulture Therapy—a Behavioral Health Strategy, Health and Wealth, Health and Transit, and a “Regional Rally” focused on integration and building healthy communities.

The Health Department staff continued the support of the initiative RISEUP by providing evaluation of the community engaged art projects. RISEUP formed a nonprofit organization, mirrored by the Mural Arts project in Philadelphia, and are doing their own fundraising to support the mural developments. The first mural located at Aspirus Hospital was dedicated to those with chronic disease in September 2018. Two other murals are under development; one created by students from Enrich Excel Achieve Learning Academy, and one created by persons at Lakeside Recovery.

Support of Farmer's Markets continues to increase as measured by point in time counts. The Farm to School initiatives continue within our school districts. Health Department staff supported School Food Service Directors with connections to growers.

Find out more...

HEAL (Healthy Eating and Active Living): www.facebook.com/HEALCoalitionMarathonCounty

Marathon County Local Food: www.marathoncountylocalfood.org

Bicycle Wausau: www.bicyclewausau.org



Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

Impacts

- Two additional persons became certified ACE Interface Trainers for a total of seven trainers , and trainers held six ACE Interface Trainings, with 808 people in attendance
- Child Caring provided a one day-long training for licensed child care providers, having 76 providers attend
- Three part training series provided for Marathon County Health Department staff on ACEs and trauma informed practices
- Law enforcement and Northcentral Technical College have partnered to include the ACE Interface training within the curriculum for the Police Academy and Criminal Justice Associate's degree programs

The Health Department facilitates the ACEs Collaborative Workgroup, having Adverse Childhood Experiences being a community health priority. The ACEs Collaborative goal is to help the public shift the thought of “what’s wrong with that person,” to “what happened to that person?”

Find out more...

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs):

www.marathoncountyhealthpriorities.org/priority-areas/adverse-childhood-experiences/

Northern Regional Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs

Impacts

Regional Center connected with over 100 individual families and professionals to provide support and technical assistance throughout the year.

The Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCN) Program works to improve systems of care for children and youth from birth through 21 years of age with a physical, developmental, behavioral, or emotional disability or a chronic illness or condition that requires specialized health or educational services. Program areas include:

- Improve the quality of health care through a medical home
- Assure a smooth transition from child health services to adult health care

Find out more...

Marathon County Special Education: www.mcspecialeducation.com

Prevent Blindness America: www.preventblindness.com

Northern Regional Center for Children and Youth with Special Healthcare Needs:

www.northernregionalcenter.org



Northern Regional Center
Children and Youth with
Special Health Care Needs

Start Right

Impacts

During 2018, 141 pregnant women received health teaching, information and referrals to assist them in having a healthy baby.

Women who reported smoking, and stopped or decreased smoking

86%

Women who initiated breastfeeding

82%

Infants who slept in a safe sleep environment

80%

Parents who responded appropriately to their infants hunger cues

79%

Parents who responded appropriately to their infants crying cues

93%

Start Right provides support and parent coaching for families throughout Marathon County from pregnancy to age five. Start Right focuses on developing safe, healthy, nurtured and school-ready children and parents who are connected to community resources to support healthy parenting. Start Right is a partnership program between the Marathon County Health Department and Children's Hospital of Wisconsin.

Start Right program goals are:

- Children will experience nurturing relationships with their parents
- Children will be healthy
- Children will be safe in their homes
- Children will be "school ready" when they begin school

Start **R!**ight



Impacts

During 2018, 208 families received in-home parenting education and information on community resources

Children up-to-date on immunization at 2 years

90%

Homes had a decrease in an identified safety hazard

98%

Parents scored 80% or higher on post parenting knowledge test

81%

Children with a potential developmental delay were referred and accepted services, or were already receiving services

100%

Find out more...

Marathon County Health Department: www.marathoncountyhealthdepartment.org

Start Right First Steps : www.facebook.com/StartRightFirstSteps/

First Breath: www.wwhf.org/programs/first-breath

My Baby and Me: www.wwhf.org/programs/my-baby-me

Early Years Coalition: www.RaiseGreatKids.org

Be a Superhero: www.raisegreatkids.org/be-a-superhero/
www.beachildssuperhero.com



Children’s Hearing and Vision Screening

Impacts

During this school year 6,971 children were screened for hearing, and 286 were rescreened for hearing loss. Of those rescreened, 107 children were referred for further evaluation of their hearing. In addition, 7,139 children were screened for vision, and 1,337 were rescreened for vision loss, with 890 children being referred to providers for further evaluation of their vision. Of those referred to health care providers, 97% of the children referred for hearing difficulties, and 87% of the children referred for vision difficulties, reported receiving follow up care by July of 2018.



Children were screened in 63 locations including all public, private, and parochial school districts in the county. Four-year-old Kindergarten is offered in various locations, including daycare facilities and community based organizations, in addition to the neighborhood schools, resulting in the high number of screening sites.

Childhood Lead

Impacts

A total of 19 children had a blood lead test result greater than 5 ug/dl. There has been a downward trend in the number of children having their first blood lead test resulting in blood lead levels of 10 ug/dl or greater. Early intervention efforts at levels between 5 to <10 ug/dl are thought to be responsible for this trend. Three properties completed lead hazard reduction in 2018.

Lead is toxic to everyone, but especially to children under the age of six. The goal of the childhood lead program is to identify and lower elevated blood lead levels in children.

The actions taken by Marathon County Health Department to lower a child’s blood lead level include: 1) Educate parents and caregivers on lead hazards and ways to reduce the child’s blood lead level, 2) Provide case management to ensure the child receives follow-up medical care and treatment, and 3) Conduct an environmental lead hazard investigation to identify sources for lead hazards, along with recommendations for addressing identified hazards. The Health Department monitors children until their blood lead level drops below 5 ug/dl.

Find out more...

Lead Safe Wisconsin: www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/lead/

Human Health Hazards

Impacts

In 2018, approximately 242 pounds of dental amalgam waste and containers were disposed of properly.

There were 224 human health hazard consultations in 2018. Fifty-three (53) consultations were regarding pests such as mice, bedbugs, cockroaches and 34 were housing related such as heat, structural concerns, hoarding, and other issues.



The Human Health Hazards program responds to reports or concerns from the public, or other agencies, about potentially hazardous situations. The goal of the program is to reduce exposure to substances, activities, or conditions that can negatively impact health, thus minimizing the health impacts of such exposures.

Mercury Reduction Program

The Mercury Reduction program is a partnership with Wausau Water Works and Rib Mountain Metropolitan Sewerage District. The program continues to demonstrate success in keeping mercury waste from waterways. In turn, this reduces the level of mercury in the fish caught from those waters. Marathon County Health Department's role is to outreach to dentists, schools, automotive repair facilities, and other businesses on proper disposal of mercury-containing products. In addition, residents may exchange mercury-containing thermometers for digital thermometers, free of charge, through seven locations.

Radon

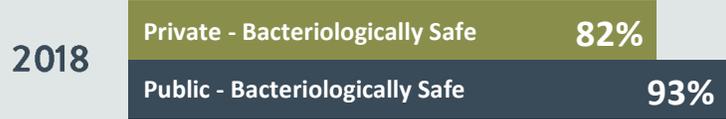
The Health Department operates the regional Northcentral Radon Information Center (RIC), an 11-county consortium to educate individuals and promote testing for radon. Counties participating in the consortium include Florence, Forest, Langlade, Marathon, Marinette, Menominee, Oconto, Oneida, Shawano, Vilas, and Waupaca. The Radon Information Center provides radon information and test kits to individuals, private businesses, and government agencies.



Water Testing Lab

Impacts

In 2018, there were 2,505 public drinking water samples (2,603 in 2017) and 1,531 private drinking water samples (2,021 in 2017) tested in the lab. In 2018, 7% of public drinking water samples were bacteriologically unsafe, as were 18% of private public drinking water samples.



The Marathon County Health Department Water Testing Laboratory provides water testing services to residents and municipalities with the goal of safer drinking water. In addition, recreational waters such as swimming pools, and beaches are tested for several microbiological and chemical parameters. Lab personnel interpret results for well owners and provide education concerning water safety issues.

Find out more...

Marathon County Health Department: www.marathoncountyhealthdepartment.org

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources: dnr.wi.gov

Drinking Water: dnr.wi.gov/topic/DrinkingWater/

Wisconsin Department of Health Services: dhs.wisconsin.gov

Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and

Consumer Protection: datcp.wisconsin.gov



Licensing

Impacts

At the end of the 2017-2018 licensing year, 907 permits were issued for public facilities such as taverns, restaurants, temporary food stands, hotels/motels/tourist rooming houses, bed and breakfasts, recreation and education campgrounds, swimming pools, retail food (groceries and convenience stores), body art facilities, and mobile home parks. The largest are those facilities in the restaurant category, followed by retail food.

The Marathon County Health Department, as an agent of the State of Wisconsin, provides health inspections and licensing for a variety of establishments including: restaurants, groceries, convenience stores, lodging, campgrounds, recreational/education camps, swimming pools, mobile home parks, and body art facilities.

Food Safety

Impacts

In 2018, eight foodborne illness complaints were reported to the Health Department resulting in an inspection. Of the eight complaints received, none of the complaints were verified as a foodborne illness outbreak.

In 2018, restaurant inspections noted 487 CDC Risk Factor violations. When violations are noted, education and training on the standard is provided.

As part of the Licensing Program, the Marathon County Health Department works to identify and respond to problems related to food safety, including foodborne outbreak investigations.

In addition to investigating illness complaints, the food safety program provides:

- On-site informal education to food service employees;
- Inspection of food service facilities, including 51 schools in the Federal School Lunch/Breakfast Program;
- Food sampling; and
- Respond to product recalls and consumer complaints.

The Health Department's inspectors use every interaction as an opportunity to inform and assist establishment operators to meet regulations, with a common goal of ensuring food safety.

Find out more...

Marathon County Health Department: www.marathoncountyhealthdepartment.org

Wisconsin Department of Health Services: dhs.wisconsin.gov



Immunizations

Impacts

In 2018, Marathon County Exceeded the Healthy People 2020 Goal of 80% of Children Between 24 and 35 months be up to date on immunizations.

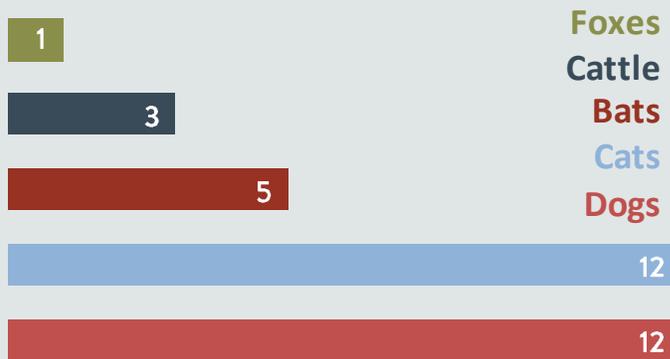


Immunizations are considered one of the greatest public health achievements in the 20th century. Vaccines prevent disease in the people who receive them, and provide indirect protection to individuals in the community who are not fully immunized, or have weakened immune systems. Preventing and reducing the spread of disease through indirect protection is referred to as “herd immunity.” Before vaccines, many children died from childhood diseases such as Polio or Pertussis, or had lifelong health conditions from complications. Children under two years old are especially vulnerable to childhood diseases, making it critical that they be protected through immunization.

Rabies Control

Impacts

Thirty-three specimens were submitted to the State Lab of Hygiene for rabies virus testing. Specimens included 12 dogs, 12 cats, 5 bats, 3 cattle, and a fox. For 2018, none of the specimens tested positive for rabies.



The Rabies Control Program goal is to prevent humans from contracting rabies as the disease is nearly always fatal. The program accomplishes this goal by:

- Investigating reports of animal bites by hospitals, clinics, and law enforcement agencies
- Ensuring animals are properly quarantined
- Arranging for testing for rabies of animals
- Recommending when prophylaxis is needed

Find out more...

Marathon County Health Department: www.marathoncountyhealthdepartment.org
Wisconsin Department of Health Services: dhs.wisconsin.gov

Tuberculosis

Impacts

In 2018, 81% of those scheduled to complete TB treatment through the department for latent TB completed treatment.

In 2018, 3 individuals with active TB disease received DOT. The length of treatment ranges from 6-9 months to over 3 years for a person with multi-drug resistant TB. In 2018, 3 individuals completed TB treatment for TB disease.

Marathon County Health Department's Tuberculosis (TB) program follows up with individuals who have latent (non-infectious) TB to assure treatment, and individuals with active (infectious) TB disease to prevent the spread of TB in the community.

In 2018, 13 persons diagnosed with latent TB started treatment coordinated by the Marathon County Health Department. Treatment of latent TB can take two forms: the client self-administers medication daily and visits with a public health nurse once a month, or a visit with a public health nurse weekly for 12 weeks for Directly Observed Therapy (DOT). DOT is the observation of persons taking medication for TB disease by a public health nurse or a community health worker.

When a case of active TB disease is reported to the health department, immediate action is taken to isolate the person with the disease, initiate appropriate treatment, and conduct contact tracing to determine exposure of other individuals. Marathon County had one new case of active TB disease diagnosed in 2018.

Marathon County Health Department was the recipient of additional communicable disease funding from the state of Wisconsin through a communicable disease prevention grant in 2018. The department used this funding to conduct TB screening for high risk individuals who were homeless and/or formerly incarcerated. Through the two testing clinics conducted, 32 individuals were tested and all were negative for TB.

Find out more...

Marathon County Health Department: www.marathoncountyhealthdepartment.org

Wisconsin Department of Health Services: dhs.wisconsin.gov

Wisconsin Tuberculosis Program: www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/tb/index.htm

Sexually Transmitted Disease

Impacts

In 2018, there were a total of 700 client visits for STD services, and 233 vaccines were given.

Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) represent a large percentage of all reportable diseases in Marathon County. In an effort to provide accessible screening, treatment, and partner follow up, the Marathon County Health Department provides STD clinic services weekly at two sites: Aspirus Wausau Family Medicine (AWFM) and the Marathon County Jail.

All individuals seen through the clinics are counseled on risk-reduction behaviors. Partners are identified and counseled to seek treatment with their primary care provider or at the clinic.

Find out more...

Marathon County Health Department: www.marathoncountyhealthdepartment.org

Wisconsin Department of Health Services: dhs.wisconsin.gov



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