



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Eau Claire Healthy Communities Mental Health Action Team to Participate in the Healthy Wisconsin Leadership Institute**

**Eau Claire, WI** – The Eau Claire Healthy Communities Mental Health Action Team was selected to participate in the Healthy Wisconsin Leadership Institute’s Community Teams Program, a year-long state-wide leadership training program that helps prepare local residents to address their communities’ most pressing health concerns. Mental health has emerged as one of the top health concerns of Eau Claire county residents through a recent [community health needs assessment](#). The Healthy Communities Mental Health Action Team was formed to address this need and includes members from across the county. The action team seeks to improve access to mental health services by making it easier for both consumers and professionals to navigate the mental health services system.

Five members of the Healthy Communities Mental Health Action team are participating in the Healthy Wisconsin Leadership Institute (HWLI). The five members are representatives from Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin Community Services in Eau Claire, Eau Claire City-County Health Department, Marshfield Clinic, Sacred Heart Hospital, and United Way of the Greater Chippewa Valley. “With what we learn from the Healthy Wisconsin Leadership Institute, we hope to be able to use those tools to make long term meaningful changes in our Community,” says Danielle Draxler, Healthy Communities Mental Health Action Team and HWLI team member.

The team will receive training and technical assistance from national and state experts in building stronger community partnerships, implementing sustainable change strategies and measuring their own success. “The issues around mental health are very complex, but we believe that with increased education and access to resources, along with improved coordination of care between providers, our community members will be better served,” says Dan Meier, Co-Chair of the Healthy Communities Mental Health Action Team and HWLI team member.

The UW School of Medicine and Public Health (UW SMPH) is partnering with the Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW) to provide the Healthy Wisconsin Leadership Institute. The program is funded through the Wisconsin Partnership Program and Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin. The Institute is co- led by Dr. Peter Layde, of MCW and Karen Timberlake of UW SMPH.

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