

EAU CLAIRE CITY- COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

2021

ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARY



Eau Claire City-County
Health Department

720 Second Avenue
Eau Claire, WI 54703
www.echealthdepartment.org

Message From The Health Officer

I am proud to share with you the work of the Eau Claire City-County Health Department team in this 2021 Annual Report Summary. The stories in this report highlight a small sub-set of the many public health issues we addressed this year, in addition to our ongoing response efforts for COVID-19. This past year was a busy and challenging year for the health department as we focused on a broad range of emerging and ongoing public health issues, including:

- COVID-19 partnerships, including community vaccination efforts
- Health equity
- Safe, healthy, and affordable housing for all community members
- Safe water
- Reproductive health services
- Healthy early childhood
- Drug misuse prevention, including opioids

As I reflect on this last year, I am grateful for our dedicated health department team and all our community partners, whose hard work and commitment were critical to our successes this last year. Thank you for your continued support of the work we do to promote health and safety for all communities in Eau Claire County.

We look forward to working with all of you in the next year as we continue to work on these and other important public health topics. We will continue to strive to meet the prevention-focused needs of all that live, work, learn, vacation, play, and spend time here. The health department recognizes that there are challenges and opportunities in the year ahead and is positioned well to be strategic in addressing these. In 2022, the health department will work on health equity and incorporating health in all policies, as well as continuing to address the challenges of drug and alcohol misuse, chronic disease, healthy babies, mental health, homelessness, affordable housing, and public health emergency preparedness. Let me know how we can continue to improve the work we do here at the Health Department.

Respectfully,



Lieske (Elizabeth) Giese
Health Officer-Director
Eau Claire City-County Health Department



Photo credit: Volume One

Health Department Overview

Mission

Promoting health and safety for all Eau Claire communities

Vision

Eau Claire City-County Health Department will be a leader in assuring healthy people in healthy communities

Guiding Principles

Seven overarching principles guide the work of the Eau Claire City-County Health Department:

Prevention

Promotion of health and prevention of disease, injury, and disability is critical in saving lives and money

Health Equity

Everyone should have equal opportunity to be healthy

Ethical Practice

Acting with the highest standards of professional practice

Collaboration

People working together to provide the best solutions

Data-Informed

Collection and analysis of data guides decisions

Evidence-Based

Building and utilizing evidence and promising practices in programs and services

Quality

Efficiency and effectiveness are critical in programs and services

Meet Our Managers

Assistant Director



Marisa Stanley

Environmental Sciences



Matt Steinbach

Community Health Promotion



Peggy O'Halloran

Healthy Beginnings



Elizabeth Draeger

Regulation & Licensing



Jeff Robb

Operations and
Clinical Services (acting)



Tegan Ruland

Communicable Disease



Jacqueline Krumenauer

Policy & Systems



Cortney Sperber

Eau Claire City-County Board of Health

The Eau Claire City-County Board of Health (BOH) is an eight-member board appointed by the County Board and City Council. The BOH advocates for reasonable and necessary public health services. They also provide leadership that fosters local involvement and commitment. The BOH is made up of: a City Council member, a County Board member, two practicing physicians, one practicing dentist, one registered nurse, and two community representatives.

Members:

Emily Berge - City Council
Jennifer Eddy, MD
Terry Miskulin, DDS
Merey Price, RN

Donald Bodeau, MD
Mark Kaeding
Martha Nieman - County Board
True Vue

Local Health Data

Data provides an overview of the health of our community and can show how health is influenced by many factors. This includes our everyday surroundings - where we live, learn, work, and play. Accurate data helps us to:

- Identify and understand current and potential health problems or environmental public health
- Provide reliable health information to community partners hazards
- Evaluate if our programs, policy changes, and environmental changes are making a difference

Eau Claire County By The Numbers



105,710

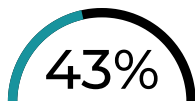
Eau Claire County Population (Census)

\$21,204

Household Costs for Single Adult (United Way)

\$59,476

Median Household Income (Census)



Households in Poverty or Qualify as ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) (United Way)



Persons Living in Poverty (Census)
(Poverty threshold for household of three is \$21,811 or less)



Population is African American, Asian, American Indian/Alaskan Native, Hispanic, or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander (Census)



23%

Eau Claire County Residents Living in Rural Areas (Co. Health Rankings)

79.7

Average Years Expected to Live (Co. Health Rankings)



10

Eau Claire County HPV-related cancer cases per 100k (WI Cancer Collab.)

Learn how our Family Planning Clinic provides important screening services on page 7

2.7

Eau Claire County infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births (WISH)

Learn how we are helping families succeed on page 8

14%

Eau Claire County households with severe housing problems (Co. Health Rankings)

Learn how we are improving housing safety on page 11

Operations Division

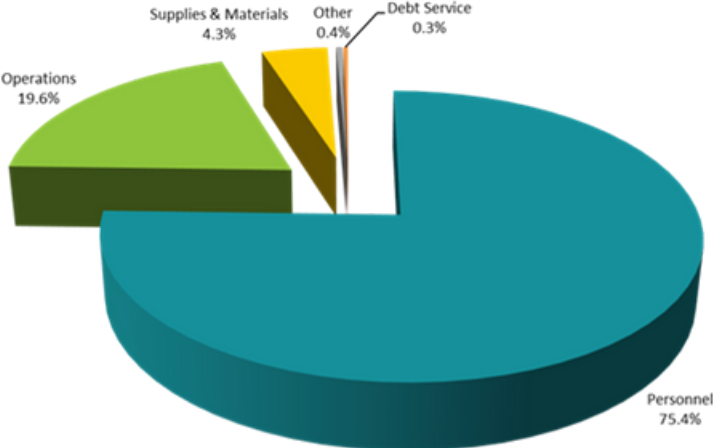
The Operations Division provides leadership, support, and oversight of operational capacity for all divisions, including areas of human resources, finance, and technical support. This team works hard to keep the health department organized and functioning efficiently to best serve the community.



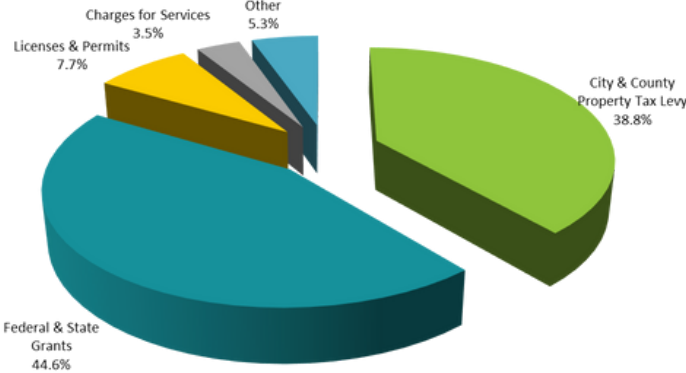
2021 Budget

Here is a general review of the 2021 Eau Claire City-County Health Department budget. We are proud of our remarkable staff and the amazing work they do. Staff represent the largest and one of the most important assets we have. This staff strives to acquire diverse funders to support health department work.

2021 Estimated Expenses



2021 Estimated Revenues (Funding Sources)



Communicable Disease Division

Provides essential services to prevent and control communicable disease outbreaks and prepares public health emergency response activities.

Preventing the spread of infectious disease

The communicable disease division has always worked to promptly identify, prevent, and control infectious diseases that pose a threat to public health, including influenza (flu), tuberculosis, and more.

2021 was the second consecutive year the communicable disease team was committed to our community's COVID-19 response. The team continued to aid in COVID-19 prevention and mitigation efforts, including continuous collection and review of data, monitoring local disease outbreaks, and following up with those who have been exposed. The team continued to ensure that county residents, businesses, congregate living facilities, and other community organizations received the guidance, personal protective equipment, and testing supplies necessary to prevent and control COVID-19 transmission and outbreaks.

Community COVID-19 vaccination was a priority focus of this team in 2021. Vaccination is a key strategy to prevent SARS-CoV-2 transmission, protect personal and public health, and preserve healthcare system capacity. Read more about the collaborative COVID-19 community vaccination and response efforts on pages 13-15.



By the numbers

458 Immunizations administered (non-COVID)

362 Seasonal flu shots administered

963 Reported communicable disease cases (non-COVID) followed up on

Clinical Services Division

Provides quality reproductive health services, including testing and treatment of diseases and infections. The division also provides education to raise community awareness of less risky sexual behavior.

Enhancing access to important procedures

The Family Planning Clinic (FPC) team is dedicated to enhancing capacity and clinical services for clients through delivery of important colposcopy procedures. The FPC colposcopy program allows for the provision of affordable colposcopy procedures for those in the community who are uninsured. A colposcopy is often recommended after a cervical cancer screening test, such as a Papanicolaou (Pap) test, reveals an abnormal result. In 2021, 70 clients received a Pap test through the FPC. Seven of these clients then also received a colposcopy procedure. The detection of cervical precancer and other conditions is a valuable service and significant benefit to women in our community.

Reproductive health services and education

The Family Planning Clinic (FPC) team participated in the Get Yourself Tested (GYT) campaign to increase public awareness of the importance of sexually transmitted infection (STI) testing, and to provide confidential, convenient, low-cost tests and treatment. STIs are among the common infectious diseases. As part of this campaign, the FPC promoted risk awareness and conducted outreach and promotion of its services through several GYT events in the community.

One of these events occurred at Bolton Refuge House. At this event, FPC staff were able to promote their services, provide free on-site STI testing, distribute contraceptive and menstrual products, and educate guests on various reproductive health topics. As a result, Bolton Refuge House staff expressed interest in scheduling regular programming with the Health Department. The GYT events have been a valuable way to connect with various groups in the community and provide important reproductive health services and education.



By the numbers

906

Total visits

337

Clients receiving long-acting contraception

70

Pap tests administered

543

Sexually transmitted infection screenings

Community Health Promotion Division

Works collaboratively with partners to identify and address strategies to improve community health where we live, work, and play.

Prevention of opioid misuse

Opioids range from prescription medication to illegal drugs such as heroin and fentanyl. Opioid misuse and overdoses have negative effects on individuals, families, and communities. The community health promotion (CHP) team is dedicated to the implementation of strategies to prevent opioid misuse, opioid-related harm, and overdoses. The CHP team educated the community on signs of an opioid overdose and promoted resources to prevent and reduce harms associated with opioid misuse. The team created 12 videos, each available in English, Spanish, and Hmong, developed 120 social media posts, and equipped community partners with Narcan, a life-saving medicine to stop an opioid overdose. Additionally, thousands of opioid resource packets were disseminated across the county, including to individuals who have experienced a nonfatal overdose. The team worked to prevent diversion of medications for nonmedical purposes. 662 lockboxes and bags were distributed across the county to provide residents with a tool to secure medications in their homes. National Prescription Drug Take-Back events were hosted in the Spring and Fall, where over 2,000 pounds of expired and unwanted medications were collected!

Promotion of healthy relationships

A lifetime of positive relationships helps create safer communities. In 2021, with community partners, CHP staff engaged youth to promote healthy relationships by facilitating evidence-based programs at county schools and organizations. Programs like Safe Dates, HIP Teens, and 3 R's (Rights, Respect, and Responsibility) teach youth about recognizing red flags, healthy relationship skills, and how to make healthy and safe decisions in a relationship. This programming reached 155 youth in 2021! In addition, the CHP team worked with Fall Creek School District students and staff to update their bullying and sexual harassment policy to create a safer, more inclusive environment for students. This updated policy was presented to school staff members and included in the student handbook.



By the numbers

4,000	Opioid resource packets distributed	124	Doses of Narcan provided to partners	2,092	Pounds of expired or unwanted medication collected	155	County youth receiving healthy relationship programming
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Healthy Beginnings Division

Provides a wide variety of individual and family services that positively impact the health of our community, specifically the maternal and child health population.

Enhancing nutrition for families

During the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) continued to provide life-enhancing supplemental foods, nutrition education, breastfeeding support, and community resource referrals to the families it serves.

In 2021, as part of the American Rescue Plan Act, families participating in WIC enjoyed an increase in fruit and vegetable benefits in their WIC food packages. This benefit bump resulted in increased fruit and vegetable consumption among WIC-enrolled children. Because of the positive effects of this benefit increase, there is a national push to make it permanent! Another WIC milestone in our community was Eau Claire's new HyVee grocery store becoming a WIC-approved site where families can use their WIC card at the self-checkout. HyVee joins Walmart as the second WIC-approved self-checkout site in our community. Eight additional stores throughout the county also accept WIC benefits.

Supporting families during a difficult time

As the COVID-19 pandemic continued in 2021, the Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) program continued to engage and retain the families it serves. The NFP program helps improve the lives of young expectant mothers and their children by providing care and support to have a healthy pregnancy and a healthy start for their child. NFP program staff aimed to be a strong pillar of support for the most vulnerable populations during such a difficult time. In a year where family visits were conducted almost entirely virtually, the Nurse Home Visitors (NHVs) maintained normal retention of clients, while also being called upon to assist with the community's pandemic response, including serving roles in disease investigation, vaccination, and working the Call Center. Despite the extra demand, the NHVs did an extraordinary job of keeping and engaging their clients. The NHVs completed 1,121 visits, with 173 of them in-person. In 2021, the NFP program served 86 families with 64 children.



By the numbers

2,107 WIC clients

1,121 NFP visits

53 Car seats given & installed

20 Safe sleep education & cribs provided

Environmental Sciences Division

Provides programs and services to enhance and protect environmental quality. This division increases awareness of how environmental conditions influence the health and welfare of communities.

Protecting our water from wastewater contaminants

The Environmental Sciences Division plays an integral part in protecting the county's surface and groundwater through its multi-faceted private onsite wastewater treatment system (POWTS) program.

A POWTS is often referred to as a septic system. Any structure where people live, or work needs a septic system to dispose of household or commercial wastewater. Proper design, installation, and maintenance of septic systems helps prevent our surface and groundwater from becoming contaminated by disease-causing pathogens, chemicals, and other harmful substances present in untreated wastewater. The POWTS program is intended to ensure that all POWTS are functioning properly, in the interest of public and environmental health.

The POWTS program protects public and environmental health through regulation of onsite wastewater treatment systems and the promotion of best available technology to provide onsite sewage treatment system solutions for property owners. As part of the POWTS program, Environmental Sciences staff review septic design, assess soil conditions for individual lots, issue permits for new, replacement, and reconnected systems, conduct on-site inspections, and oversee required septic system maintenance in Eau Claire County. In 2021, Environmental Sciences conducted 1,907 POWTS inspections and issued 220 permits to protect the county's water from wastewater contaminants.



By the numbers

151

Animal bite/
exposure
follow-Ups

163

Permits issued for
well installation,
replacement, &
reconnection

220

Permits issued for
private on-site
wastewater
treatment systems
(POWTS)

7,165

Drinking
water tests
performed

Regulation & Licensing Division

Inspects any facility that provides necessities such as food, water, and housing to the public. This division also inspects recreational facilities and temporary event spaces.

Ensuring safe and healthy housing

The homes in which we live play a critical role in shaping our health and the health of the community. Every summer, the Regulation and Licensing housing program surveys a different part of the City to encourage neighborhood safety and ensure that the city's housing meets minimum health and safety standards. In 2021, the housing survey was conducted in the West Riverside area of the City which included over 4,300 properties in the Randall Park and Westside neighborhoods. Maps for these survey areas are available on our website [here](#). The top 3 highest scoring violations from the housing survey found deficiencies in windows, soffits and fascia, and exterior frame walls.

The Environmental Health Specialists educate and work with property owners to bring housing up to minimum code standards. This method provides a systematic way to identify and upgrade unhealthy or unsafe housing, eliminate health hazards such as lead paint, eliminate accident hazards, and reduce the deterioration of individual homes and neighborhoods, while preserving existing affordable housing. This program also takes a proactive approach to increase health and safety of homes, encourage neighborhood safety, remove hazards associated with unsafe housing conditions, and increases property value.

In addition to housing surveys, the housing program works with neighborhood associations and the public to respond to requests for inspection of deteriorated property. This program is supported by the Community Development Block Grant and has contributed to over 4,900 homes being brought into compliance with minimum code standards.



By the numbers

1,014 Licensed facility inspections
10,952 Rental units registered
3,901 Rental properties registered
1,772 Property inspections

Policy & Systems Division

Works closely with partners to collectively identify and communicate importance of including health in policy, system, and environmental changes across the department and community.

Measuring community needs and setting priorities

Community partners from Eau Claire and Chippewa Counties completed the 2020-21 Community Health Assessment (CHA). The goal of the CHA is to identify local health needs that the community can work on together. The CHA process included an online survey and community conversation events, where residents shared what they felt are the top health priorities in our community.

Through the CHA process, residents prioritized five top health priorities. These priorities will be addressed in the 2021-2024 community health improvement plan, along with continued efforts to promote healthy relationship promotion and oral health.

Planning to improve community health

After top health priorities were identified in the CHA, the community creates a 3-year community health improvement plan (CHIP). This plan includes goals, objectives, and strategies to address the identified community health needs.

CHIP development kicked off in August. Community coalition members and partners participated in review of CHA survey responses, local, state, and national health data, and discussion of root causes behind the health priorities. Community input was used to develop overarching goals, specific objectives, and evidence-based strategies the community can work on together to improve health. Health equity was a crucial focus throughout the CHIP development process.

The CHIP relies on the resources and collaborative efforts of a wide range of county stakeholders. It reflects the work of many dedicated people and organizations who are working to improve health across our county. Over the next three years, the community will implement improvement strategies and evaluate our progress towards improving the health priorities. The goal is to make Eau Claire County a place where everyone can attain health. View the CHA, CHIP, and health priority work plans at www.echealthycommunities.org.

We are excited to see the changes that happen in our community from the work in the new plan. Thank you to all the community members and partners who took part in the process!

Top 5 Health Priorities from the Community Health Assessment

1. Drug Use
2. Mental Health
3. Alcohol Misuse
4. Obesity
5. Healthy Nutrition



COVID-19: 2021 Response Accomplishments

2021 was another unprecedented year of response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We continued to follow up on cases, implemented large and small vaccination clinics to protect our community, and faced new variants of COVID-19.

2021 COVID-19 response accomplishments by the numbers:

- Provided 33,682 COVID-19 vaccinations at 90 unique clinic sites throughout Eau Claire County. This included 5 mass clinic sites and various mobile clinics at schools, the jail, shelters, businesses, UWEC, the courthouse, and community service organizations.
- Worked with partners throughout the region to provide more than 122,500 doses of COVID-19 vaccine for Eau Claire County residents. Many of these vaccines were given in healthcare, pharmacy, and health department clinics with more than 60% of the eligible population getting fully vaccinated in 2021.
- Contacted more than 11,000 people with COVID-19 via telephone following a positive test to slow spread through isolation of the case and quarantine of close contacts. This work included comprehensive disease investigation, answering questions, providing resources, use of local website www.covid19eauclaire.org, identification and management of outbreaks, and following up on hospitalizations and deaths.
- Promoted and coordinated COVID testing throughout the community. 233,594 tests were performed among Eau Claire County residents. PCR testing made up 66.3% of total testing and antigen testing accounted for 33.7% of total testing.
 - Eau Claire City County Health Department in partnership with Altoona Fire Dept: 282 tests
 - Jacob's Well Church: 923 tests
 - Regional site with the Wisconsin National Guard (WING)-Eau Claire: 643 tests
 - Augusta site with WING: 57 tests
- Responded to more than 5,900 calls and emails through the COVID-19 Call Center.
- Provided hotel rooms, transportation, and case management for 60 people experiencing homelessness who were COVID positive with support from the Department of Human Services and Altoona Fire Department
- Continued partnership work to address COVID-19 with schools (K-12, daycare, UWEC, CVTC), healthcare (pharmacy, clinics, hospitals), groups that address health barriers (income, race, language, geography, more), and businesses (Chippewa Valley Economic Recovery Taskforce) through regular meetings, group planning and strategy, and shared testing, vaccination, and messaging efforts.
- Consulted with special events to implement best practices for prevention of COVID-19 spread, including spacing, masking, and vaccination policies, and making sure those who were ill stayed home.
- Consulted with UWEC staff and students on a project to evaluate the potential benefits of utilizing wastewater testing as a supplemental tool for local COVID surveillance

COVID-19: Community Vaccination

We got by with a little help from our friends!

Vaccination was a huge effort, and we couldn't have done it without a lot of help from partners. We are so thankful for all of our community partners that provided vaccinations, hosted a clinic, promoted our clinics, and helped provide education about COVID-19 vaccinations.

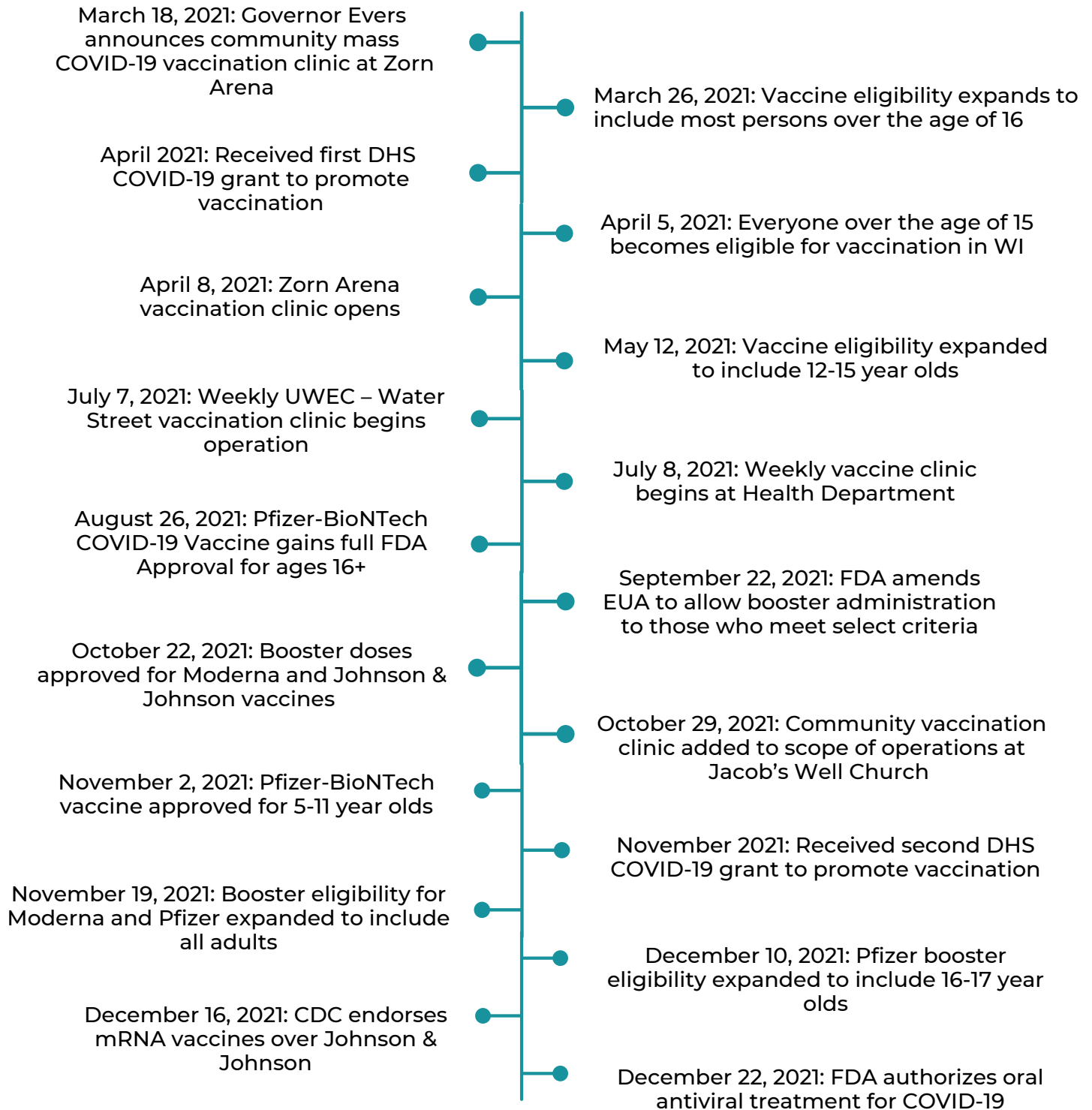
In 2021, Eau Claire County residents received 122,500 doses of COVID-19 vaccine! Many of these vaccines were given in healthcare facilities, pharmacies, and health department clinics. More than 60% of eligible people in the county got fully vaccinated in 2021.



The health department provided 33,682 vaccine doses at 90 unique clinic sites throughout Eau Claire County in 2021. This included 5 mass clinic sites at UWEC, Jacob's Well Church, and North High School. We also provided vaccination at various mobile clinic sites at schools, the jail, shelters, businesses, the courthouse, community service organizations, and community events. The health department received funding for 5 community-based organizations to help remove barriers to and promote acceptance of COVID-19 vaccination for communities that have barriers to accessing medical care and people who have historical mistrust of the medical community and vaccines. Through these partnerships, 23 mobile clinics were held at trusted locations throughout the county, and nearly 1,000 people were vaccinated through these clinics. Additional partner strategies included educational events, media campaigns, and registration and transportation assistance for vaccination clinics. Again, we could not have done any of this without a little help from our friends and our staff!



COVID-19: Community Vaccination Timeline





Eau Claire City-County
Health Department

We are committed to creating a safe and healthy community for all the citizens of Eau Claire County. We are proud to share some of the progress that our county has made in 2021. Thank you for taking the time to read about the impactful work that our dedicated staff devote their time to each and every day.

Annual Report Summary available at
www.echealthdepartment.org