The background of the page is a photograph of a lake. In the foreground, there are several bare, brown trees with intricate branch structures. The lake is a deep blue color, and in the distance, there is a line of trees and some buildings under a clear, light blue sky. The overall scene is peaceful and natural.

2023 ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARY

**EAU CLAIRE CITY-COUNTY
HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

MESSAGE

FROM THE HEALTH OFFICER



I'm proud to highlight some of the work of the Eau Claire City-County Health Department in this 2023 Annual Report Summary. This report covers only a small portion of the many health issues our department worked on this year.

This past year was rewarding and challenging. It's crucial we take time to celebrate the successes and thank the staff and community members who helped us get here.

A few of our wins in 2023:

- We worked with community partners in Eau Claire, Dunn, and Chippewa counties to gather data and feedback to identify top health issues.
- To reduce the impact of opioids, we created outreach campaigns and introduced new harm reduction tools in Eau Claire County, using federal and state vaping and opioid settlement funds.
- Our laboratory tested its highest-ever number of water samples and worked to improve rural residents' access to water testing.



That's just a quick snapshot. Take a few minutes, turn a page or two, and read some of the stories captured here. They're a glimpse into what we do every day throughout Eau Claire County, putting public health into action.

In 2024, some of the things we'll focus on are supporting our community's response to new health care challenges, creating and implementing a Community Health Improvement Plan based on our identified health priorities, and reinforcing health equity and the social determinants of health as an anchor for all our work.

As I reflect on this last year, I'm grateful to our dedicated and skilled team and our community partners, whose hard work and commitment are critical to making life safer and healthier. Thank you to the people and organizations in our community who have leaned in to the difficult work of prevention with us.

Let us know how we can continue to improve our work at the Health Department. You can reach us at echhealth@eauclairecounty.gov.

Respectfully,

Lieske (Elizabeth) Giese

Health Officer / Director

Eau Claire City-County Health Department

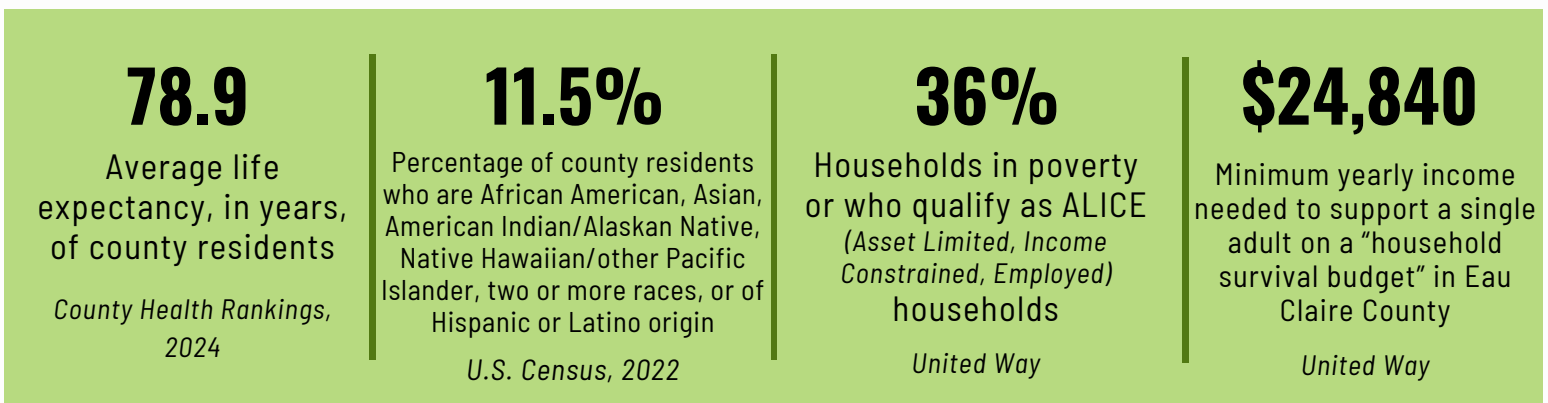
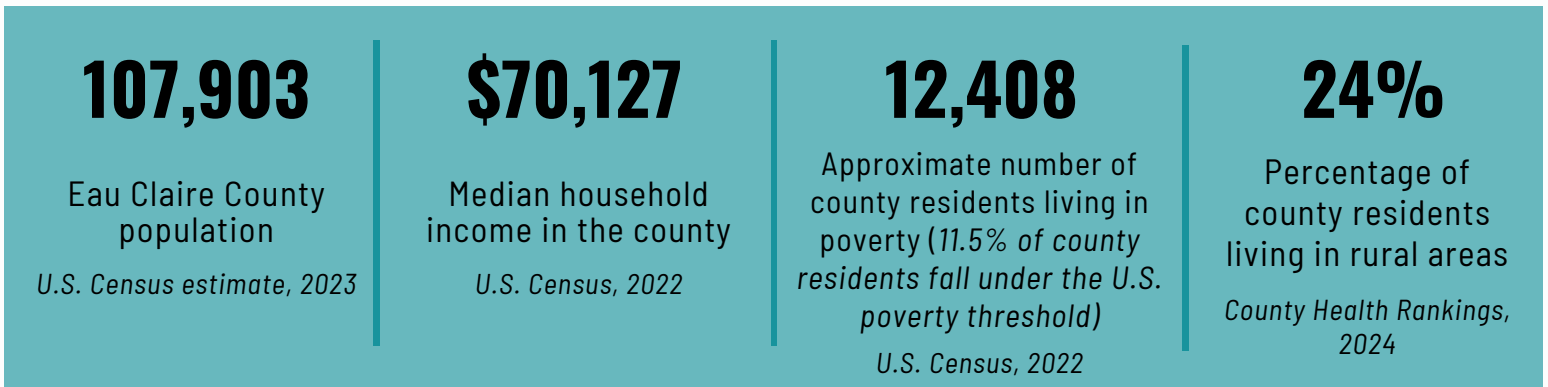
BY THE NUMBERS:

EAU CLAIRE COUNTY HEALTH DATA

Data gives us a snapshot of the health of our community. It shows that many factors influence our health, including housing, income, employment, and our everyday surroundings.

Accurate data helps us:

- Understand current and potential health problems
- Give reliable information to our partners and the public
- Evaluate if our programs, policies, and environmental changes are making a difference.



MATERNAL & CHILD HEALTH

Our Healthy Beginnings division works to support families, especially maternal and child health, by facilitating a wide variety of programs and services.

? BY THE NUMBERS:

2,126
WIC clients served

106
Nurse-Family Partnership clients served

1,350
Nurse-Family Partnership home visits

NFP expands its footprint, geographically and digitally

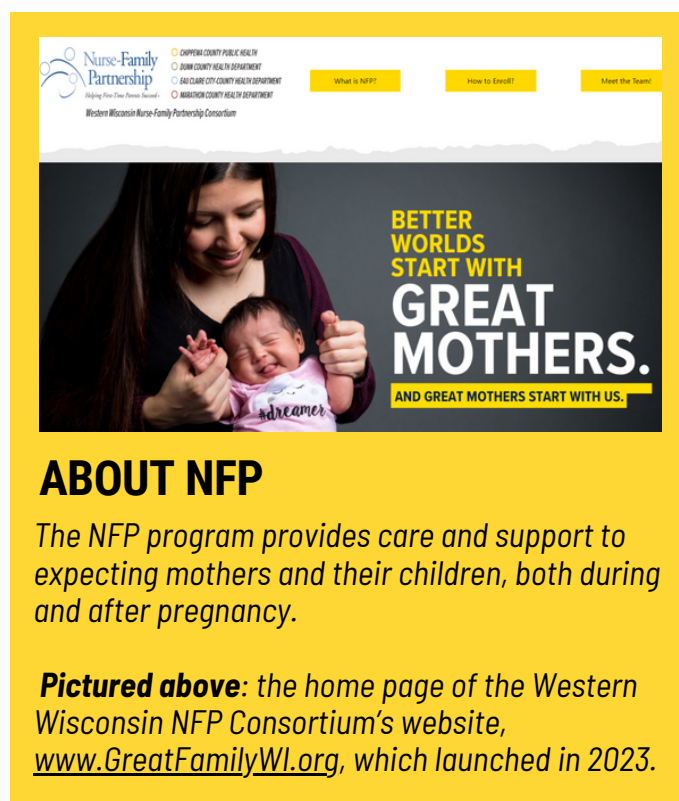
The Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) is a program that combats infant mortality and improves mothers' and babies' health. NFP nurses visit first-time moms at their homes to provide care and support, starting early in the pregnancy and continuing until the child's second birthday. Research shows that NFP reduces child abuse and neglect, reduces behavioral and intellectual problems in children, and increases the likelihood of employment for moms.

In 2023, NFP in our community had an exciting expansion. The Western Wisconsin NFP Consortium welcomed Marathon County as its newest member. This added two additional nurse home visitors. Other members of the consortium are Eau Claire, Dunn, and Chippewa County health departments.

Not only did NFP expand its geographic footprint, it also boosted its digital presence. A new website, which includes an online NFP referral form, was created for clients and community members. This will streamline the NFP eligibility and enrollment process for Eau Claire County residents and providers.

The new website, www.GreatFamilyWI.org, offers information about NFP and lets people access both online and printable referral forms. It allows us to reach more people, especially families who want to self-refer, and acts as a "home base" for all NFP information. It will also let community partners and health care providers quickly and easily submit NFP referrals online. Online referrals have a faster turnaround time, so we can now receive and process referrals in a more timely manner - which in turn helps us serve more potential clients.

We're grateful for the progress we made in 2023! This program serves a critical need in western Wisconsin, and these changes will allow us to reach more families.



ABOUT NFP

The NFP program provides care and support to expecting mothers and their children, both during and after pregnancy.

Pictured above: the home page of the Western Wisconsin NFP Consortium's website, www.GreatFamilyWI.org, which launched in 2023.

HEALTH PROMOTION

Our Community Health Promotion division provides education, coordinates programs, and promotes policies and practices that impact local health priorities. Those priorities include chronic disease; mental health; healthy relationships; and alcohol, tobacco, and other drug misuse.

BY THE NUMBERS:

1,976
Doses of Narcan distributed

647
Fentanyl test strip kits distributed

189
County youth who participated in healthy relationship programs

1,473
Education materials and kitchen utensils distributed at onsite farmers market

Short film about resilience will be tool for local professionals

In 2023 the Community Health Promotion team worked with Mental Health Matters, a local mental health coalition in Eau Claire and Chippewa counties, to develop a short film that will act as a unique training tool for youth-serving organizations in our region.

The 30-minute short film - called "Shaping Destiny" - takes a close look at the process of helping youth build resilience and how adverse childhood experiences, or ACEs, impact our mental and physical health. It features interviews with 22 Chippewa Valley residents, including personal testimony from people who have overcome adversity from their childhoods.

The Mental Health Matters coalition decided to pursue the film after designing a two-hour workshop about building youth resilience and overcoming ACEs. The workshop was so popular that the team brought a local filmmaker on board to create a condensed, 30-minute film inspired by the workshop. The film premiered in 2023.

The film serves as a training tool for anyone in our community, but especially for professionals who work with young people - teachers, medical professionals, coaches, counselors, social workers, and more. Several youth-serving agencies in our community have already added the film to their staff orientations and training schedules.



SPOTLIGHT: New vaping resource aims to help adolescents quit

In 2021, one out of every four high school students in Eau Claire County reported trying vaping. But the story doesn't end there - roughly 50% of county high school students who vaped or used tobacco have also tried to quit, according to a 2021 survey. That's why the Community Health Promotion team in 2023 created a new resource for students: the 'How to Quit Vaping' workbook. The workbook lays out easy-to-understand steps and advice for quitting vaping and offers support for challenges young adults may run into when they quit.

The 24-page workbook has been distributed to schools, health care providers, and youth-serving organizations throughout Eau Claire County. It's also available online at www.ehealthalliance.org/resources. Our team also created a countywide campaign about the impact of vaping, using social media, posters, and window clings countywide, and vaping awareness ads on Eau Claire city buses.

Creating and distributing these resources in our communities help us meet students on their own level, support them, and make it easier for them to quit in a healthy and sustainable way.



COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

Our Communicable Disease division works to prevent and control outbreaks of communicable disease and to prepare for public health emergencies.

BY THE NUMBERS:

2,824

Communicable disease reports

971

Non-COVID vaccines given

143

COVID vaccines given to uninsured & underinsured people

Investing in our community's emergency response – with volunteers

The Eau Claire County Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) – a local volunteer unit facilitated by the Health Department – ramped up recruitment and training efforts in 2023, thanks in large part to being awarded multiple competitive state and national grants.



Volunteer management was a gap identified during COVID-19 response and has been a public health preparedness and emergency management priority. To learn more about volunteering with the MRC, visit mrc.ehealthdepartment.org.

Staff attended summer events throughout the county to educate residents about emergency preparedness and reach potential volunteers.

We onboarded and trained 26 new MRC volunteers in 2023. MRC volunteers also participated in various trainings in 2023, including:

- Stop The Bleed and Hands-Only CPR trainings in partnership with Mayo Clinic and the American Red Cross, respectively
- Multiple orientation events for new and existing MRC volunteers
- Opioid response/Narcan training
- An event in September honoring MRC volunteers who supported our COVID-19 mass vaccination clinics.



SPOTLIGHT: Critical immunization work continues

We were proud to continue and expand our immunization work in 2023. Our team reviews immunization data, works with healthcare providers, and provides reminders to parents about vaccine schedules and the importance of vaccinating children and adolescents. We used a new vendor this year, Intrado, to send reminder postcards to parents of children 24 months and younger who were behind on their vaccines. We use the messages to remind, educate, and encourage parents to use their health care providers as trusted sources of information.

We also partnered with many community organizations to make vaccines more available. In 2023, in addition to regular vaccine clinics at our office and local schools, our department and clinical partners offered certain vaccines at:

- Detention facilities (ongoing).
- The Mexican Consulate, National Night Out, and the We Care Eau Claire back-to-school events, all in August.
- At sites in Eau Claire used by people experiencing homelessness in October.

Finally, our division was awarded an Immunize Wisconsin grant in 2023, which is funding additional work to promote and educate parents about three adolescent immunizations: Tdap, HPV, and meningococcal ACWY vaccinations. The grant will fund this work through mid-2024. Its goal is to increase uptake of vaccines among adolescents.

REGULATIONS & LICENSING

Our Regulations & Licensing division inspects and educates facilities that provide food, housing, or other necessities to the public. This division also inspects lodging, recreation, and body art facilities.

BY THE NUMBERS:

287

Radon test kits sold

1,114

Food establishment inspections completed

1,876

Properties in the county brought into compliance with housing codes since 2018

Playing a role in Country Jam's new venue

Among many other projects, in 2023 the Regs & Licensing team played a pivotal role in a local music festival's move to a new venue.

Country Jam, an event that brings thousands of people to the Chippewa Valley every summer, officially moved in 2023 from the town of Union to a new site on Eau Claire's north side in Chippewa County.

The Health Department's inspection and licensing team was working with event organizers months before the move. Planning began in late 2022. Our staff was involved with reviewing plans and inspecting and licensing two large buildings at the new site, the new campground, and all the mobile food vendors present at the festival, in order to make sure the venue was healthy and safe for guests.

Because Country Jam has been held at the former town of Union site for more than 30 years, making the move was an extensive project.

Large-scale music festivals and temporary camping don't often happen within city limits, so the significant scope of this planning process had an impact on our division.

Playing a role in the planning process - from start to finish - was a rewarding experience, capped off by a successful first year of Country Jam at the new venue.



SPOTLIGHT: Housing staff work to keep properties safe

Our team takes two approaches to keeping housing in the county safe and healthy for residents: a proactive program and a complaint-based system.

The proactive program begins with a large-scale housing survey, which our team completes yearly in the city of Eau Claire. The city is divided into five sections, and one section is reviewed each summer. Based off of the survey, our team then inspects the properties with the most code violations and works with property owners to resolve the violations. This helps us get ahead of potential larger health or safety concerns.

Tenants experiencing problems with their home or apartment - if they do not get a response from their property owner - can file a complaint with the Health Department. We can then inspect the property, note any violations, and require the property owner to resolve them. Residents can also file complaints if they have concerns about a property.

In 2023, a housing program evaluation showed our work makes a big difference. When comparing exterior housing scores in the northeast section of Eau Claire, 870 homes received a score of 6 or above in 2018 and 147 homes scored 6 or above in 2023.

To learn more about our housing programs, visit housing.echealthdepartment.org.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Our Environmental Sciences division works to enhance and protect our environment and educate about how the environment affects our community's health.

BY THE NUMBERS:

10,066
Drinking water tests performed

273
Inspections of private wells and septic systems

364
Beach water samples analyzed for bacteria contamination

Well water testing services get a boost in 2023

It was a busy year for the Health Department lab's well water testing program: Homeowners brought us 3,156 water samples, and lab staff ran a total of 10,066 tests on those samples. It was the highest number of water samples and tests for the lab ever.

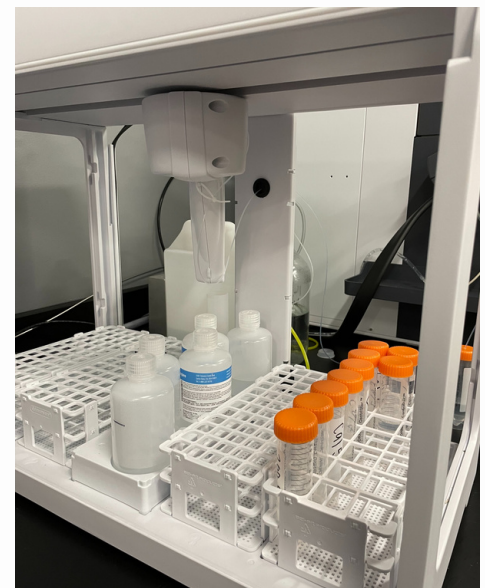
In the spring, lab staff trialed a new grant-funded water testing project. Typically, anyone who wants to test their water must bring their water sample directly to the Health Department office in Eau Claire. For a limited time, rural Eau Claire County residents were able to drop off their water samples at sites in their own communities, significantly cutting down on driving time.

The project's goal was to make well water testing more convenient for rural residents. The project yielded mixed results; some aspects were more successful than others, and it gave our team valuable insights. During the project timeframe, 71% of the water samples we received came from households that hadn't tested their well water in the last five years, and a total of 237 tests were done on water samples brought in via the rural program. 95% of people who filled out a survey said they were "likely" or "very likely" to use the service again.

The lab was also able to purchase new technology to improve its well water testing process. In 2023, lab staff began using an inductively coupled plasma-mass spectrometer (ICP-MS), a new instrument that more efficiently analyzes metals and minerals in water. The ICP-MS replaced an outdated instrument and has made our testing workflow much more efficient.

A testing process that previously took multiple days now takes about three minutes, and we can detect elements at much lower levels and much more accurately.

The upgraded ICP-MS instrument was mostly funded by the county via American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) grant funds.



In 2023 the lab also marketed its well water testing options slightly differently, resulting in more testing overall. In addition to offering testing for single contaminants, like bacteria or nitrate, we began offering "homeowners' bundles" to test for a wider range of contaminants.

The added efficiency from the new ICP-MS instrument was the primary reason these bundles were more feasible in 2023. The bundles were popular with residents and led to more people choosing to test for the wider range of contaminants.

Private well owners should test their drinking water at least once a year, as many contaminants can't be seen, smelled, or tasted. Find more information about well water testing in Eau Claire County at wells.echealthdepartment.org.

REPRODUCTIVE & SEXUAL HEALTH

Our Clinical Services division provides inclusive sexual health services, including testing, treatment, and reproductive health services. It also provides education around risk reduction and disease prevention.

BY THE NUMBERS:

961
Family Planning
Clinic visits

1,225
STI screenings
completed
(chlamydia,
gonorrhea,
syphilis, HIV)

60
Pap tests
(cervical cancer
screenings)
completed

36
Clinic clients who
received long-
acting
contraception

Partnerships, outreach help clinic expand cancer screenings

In 2023 the Family Planning Clinic continued working to expand access in our region to the Wisconsin Well Woman Program, which pays for cancer screening procedures and more (clinical breast exams, diagnostic testing, HPV tests, mammograms, pap tests, pelvic exams, and other services) for people with limited incomes who qualify. To learn more about our clinic, visit fpc.ehealthdepartment.org.

From 2022 to 2023, the clinic increased both local Well Woman enrollments and the number of services it provided to clients. Our clinic staff partnered with several other organizations and counties to increase breast and cervical cancer screenings in 2023:

- Partnered with the Chippewa Valley Free Clinic at four events to help enroll clients in the Well Woman program. Marshfield Clinic Health System provided a Mammography Mobile Unit at the events.
- Distributed outreach materials to Eau Claire, Chippewa, Dunn, Jackson, Pepin, Pierce, St. Croix, and Trempealeau counties.
- Represented the Well Woman program at a Hudson fundraiser; the event raised over \$9,000.
- Represented the Well Woman program at a Mexican Consulate event and a Latin Health Fair in Eau Claire.



SPOTLIGHT:

Clinic begins offering PrEP services

Adding to its roster of services focused on sexual and reproductive health, the Health Department's Family Planning Clinic began offering HIV PrEP in 2023.

PrEP stands for pre-exposure prophylaxis, which is a daily oral antiretroviral medication accompanied by regular clinic visits and risk reduction counseling. When taken as directed, PrEP can significantly decrease the chances of contracting HIV.

A lack of access to HIV PrEP exists. According to the CDC, about four in five people that may benefit from using PrEP are not able to access it. Locally, there are only a handful of health care providers serving the whole region that consistently offer HIV PrEP services. Even with these providers, the cost of services may prevent people in our community from accessing PrEP. The clinic is uniquely situated to provide grant-supported, low to no-cost HIV PrEP services with staff who are trained in HIV counseling, testing, referral, and partner services.

Clinic staff collaborated with local infectious disease doctors, health educators, community partners, and community members to develop HIV PrEP services. They created policies, protocols, educational materials, and clinical documentation templates to ensure the services would be accessible and sustainable. Since the clinic started offering the services, six clients have initiated HIV PrEP through the clinic. As we continue providing HIV PrEP, staff will continue to work to increase the program's accessibility and sustainability.

POLICY & PARTNERSHIPS

Our Policy & Systems division works with our partners to identify and communicate about health needs, gaps, resources, and policy and system changes—both inside and outside the department.

BY THE NUMBERS:

1,368

Residents who gave feedback on top health priorities

10,336

Facebook followers

90

Media interviews and statements given by staff

20

Press releases sent to media and public

SPOTLIGHT:

Community health survey completed across three counties

That's (almost) a wrap! The Policy and Systems team began a wide-ranging project in 2023: the Community Health Assessment (CHA). The community survey is the first step of a process to identify and prioritize our community's most important health needs.

Kicking off the larger, multi-year process, the community health survey was completed in 2023. Twelve organizations from Eau Claire, Dunn, and Chippewa counties—health departments; health coalitions; United Way chapters; and HSHS, Marshfield Clinic, and Mayo Clinic health systems—began planning in May, undertaking an intensive process of writing, adjusting, and analyzing survey drafts. The Health Department staffed the project and acted as its fiscal agent.

The team decided to prioritize attracting a diverse range of people to take the survey. The survey was kept relatively short and simple, and more questions were made open-ended to encourage individualized feedback. Survey questions were also designed to encourage residents to consider social determinants of health (the factors that influence our health outside of individual behavior, such as housing, childcare, income, and transportation).

Starting in July 2023, the survey was offered to the public in English, Hmong, and Spanish. Though the survey closed and the team began analyzing results in September 2023, the process isn't over. In 2024, CHA partners will continue working with the public and health coalitions to solidify the top health priorities and create comprehensive reports for each county. Those reports will be released in 2024, followed by in-depth Community Health Improvement Plans for each county.

Health coalitions merge

In 2023, the Eau Claire Health Alliance was created when two longtime health coalitions - Eau Claire Healthy Communities and the Alliance for Substance Misuse Prevention - merged.



Both coalitions were facilitated by the Health Department and had been in existence for over 20 years. Throughout their history, the coalitions drew members from public health, schools, health care, nonprofits, government, and many other sectors. Members worked together to improve health issues identified by the community.

In 2022, leaders of both coalitions, along with health department staff, decided that merging into one larger coalition would eliminate duplicated work and increase efficiency. In January 2023, the newly merged coalition - with its new name and logo - hosted its first official member meeting, with more than 40 attendees.

The Eau Claire Health Alliance continues to work on projects involving substance and alcohol misuse, mental health, healthy relationships, and chronic disease. Teams meet monthly, and members are invited to semi-annual meetings to learn more about coalition work, connect with other members, and attend presentations and trainings. To volunteer or learn more, visit www.ECHealthAlliance.org.

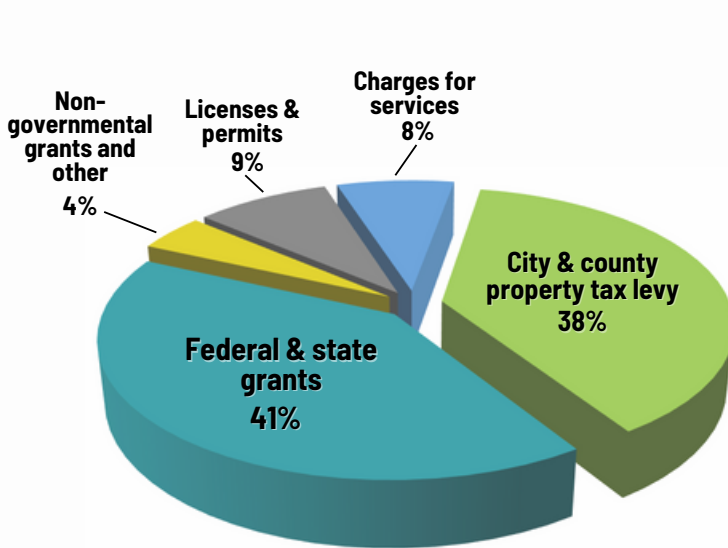
OPERATIONS

The Operations division leads, supports, and oversees operations for all divisions, including human resources, finances, and technical support. This division works to keep the Health Department organized and functioning efficiently.

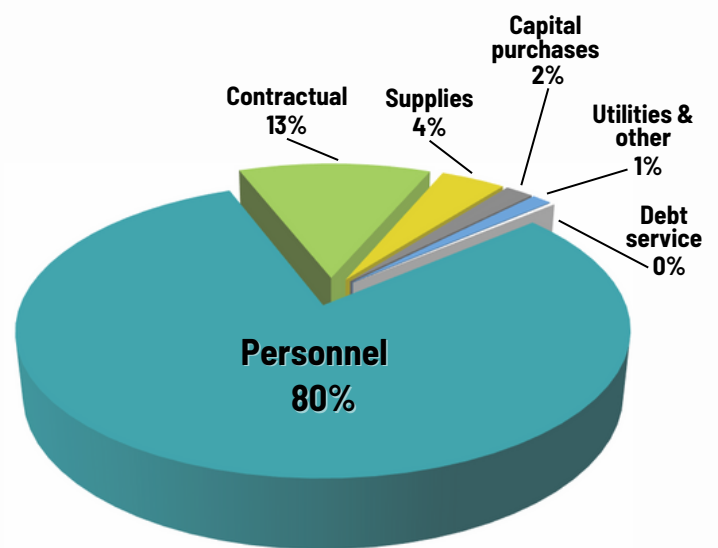
2023 BUDGET

Here is a general, preliminary review of the 2023 Eau Claire City-County Health Department budget.

Staff represent the largest and one of the most important assets we have. Our staff strive to acquire diverse funders to support the department's work. We are proud of our remarkable staff and the amazing work they do.

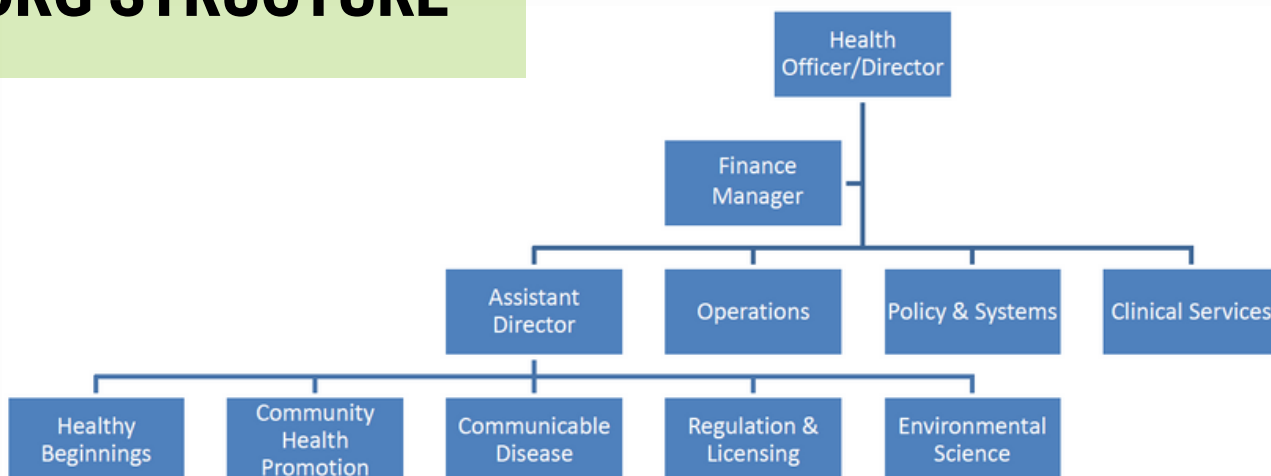


2023 Estimated Revenues



2023 Estimated Expenses

ORG STRUCTURE



MEET OUR MANAGEMENT TEAM

Assistant Department
Director



Marisa Stanley

Environmental
Sciences



Matt Steinbach

Community Health
Promotion



Peggy O'Halloran

Healthy
Beginnings



Elizabeth Draeger

Regulations &
Licensing



Nicole Kragness

Clinical Services
(acting) and
Operations



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 and foster 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:

- Joshua Miller (City Council)
- Donald Bodeau, MD
- Terri Nordin, MD
- Mark Kaeding
- Terry Miskulin, DDS
- Kimberly Cronk (County Board)
- True Vue
- Catherine Wildenberg, RN



L-R: Kaeding, Nordin, Wildenberg, Bodeau, Miskulin, Vue, Miller (Cronk not pictured)

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

OVERVIEW

MISSION

Building a healthier community for all through prevention-focused programs and partnerships.

VISION

A community where everyone can live a healthier life.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Our work is guided by five overarching principles:



MORE TO EXPLORE:

OUR DIVISIONS AND PROGRAMS

COMMUNITY HEALTH PROMOTION DIVISION

- Mental health promotion
- Suicide prevention
- Alcohol, tobacco, and substance misuse prevention
- Alcohol and tobacco compliance checks
- Child, overdose, and suicide death review teams
- Opioid misuse and overdose prevention
- Healthy relationship promotion and sexual violence prevention
- Chronic disease prevention

CLINICAL SERVICES DIVISION

- STI prevention, screening, and treatment
- Contraceptive options
- Pregnancy testing
- HIV Partner services
- Regional Nurse Practitioner services
- Wisconsin Well Woman program
- Colposcopy program

OPERATIONS DIVISION

- Budget support
- Administrative support
- Human resources
- Health Department leadership
- Western Wisconsin Public Health Readiness Consortium

HEALTHY BEGINNINGS DIVISION

- Farmers Market Nutrition program
- Nurse-Family Partnership® home visitation
- Prenatal care coordination benefit services
- WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) services
- Vision screening for elementary kids
- Childhood lead poisoning prevention and followup
- Breastfeeding peer counseling

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE DIVISION

- Immunizations
- Communicable disease followup and surveillance
- Disease outbreak response and investigation
- Emergency preparedness program
- Eau Claire County Medical Reserve Corps

POLICY & SYSTEMS DIVISION

- Communications
- Health equity
- Community Health Assessment
- Community health improvement planning
- Strategic planning
- Quality improvement
- Eau Claire Health Alliance coalition

ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE DIVISION

- Private well program
- Private Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (POWTS) program
- Local ordinance support and administration (environmental hazards)
- Potential rabies exposure followup
- Environmental sampling and testing
- Certified drinking water lab testing
- Radiological field team

REGULATIONS & LICENSING DIVISION

- Restaurant and retail food inspections
- City of Eau Claire proactive housing inspection program
- Human health hazards and housing complaint investigations
- Tourist rooming house (Airbnb, VRBO) licensing
- Radon protection
- Pool and campground inspections
- Body art
- Asbestos and lead inspection and prevention



We are committed to building a safe, healthy community for everyone in Eau Claire County. We're proud to share some of the progress our department made in 2023.



Eau Claire City-County
Health Department

Find our Annual Report online:
www.ehealthdepartment.org

Get more Health Department news:
www.facebook.com/eaucloirehealth

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