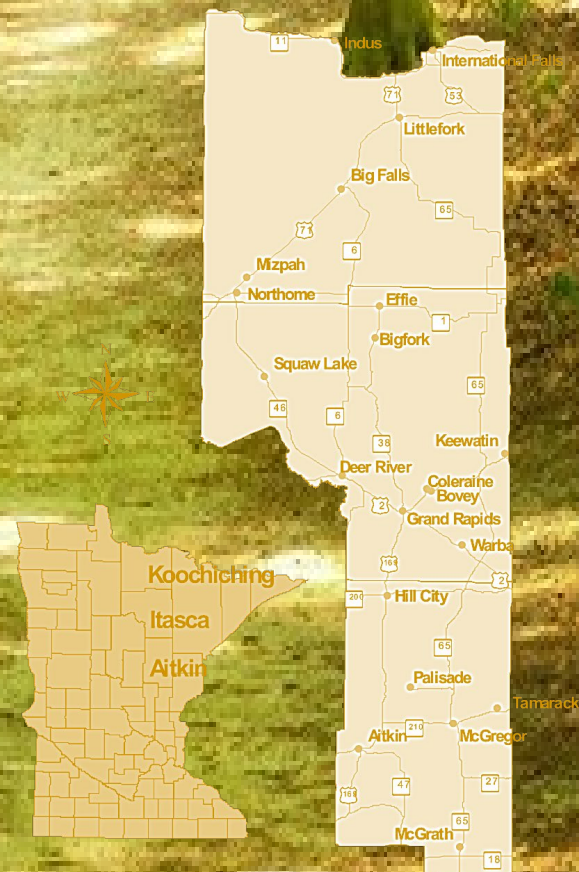


# Aitkin-Itasca-Koochiching Community Health Board

## Community Health Improvement Plan 2020





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# Introduction

## What is the CHB?

The Aitkin-Itasca-Koochiching Community Health Board (A-I-K CHB) is the legally recognized governing body for local public health in the Aitkin-Itasca-Koochiching Community Health Services area, consisting of Aitkin, Itasca, and Koochiching County Public Health Departments. The mission of Aitkin-Itasca-Koochiching Community Health Services system is to lead efforts to promote and protect the health of people and communities in the tri-county area.

**Community Health Boards are mandated  
by MN Stat. SS §145A to:**

**1. Assure an adequate public health infrastructure**

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**2. Promote healthy communities and healthy behaviors**

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**3. Prevent the spread of infectious disease**

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**4. Protect against environmental health hazards**

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**5. Prepare for and respond to disasters, and assist  
communities in recovery**

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**6. Assure the quality and accessibility of health services**

health improvement planning is a foundational practice of public health as well as a national standard for all public health departments. As part of Minnesota's Local Public Health Assessment and Planning Process, every health department must submit a CHIP dated within five years to the Minnesota Department of Health.

## What is the CHIP?

The 2020 Aitkin-Itasca-Koochiching Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) is developed collaboratively and defines a vision for the community's health. The CHIP is the community's plan, not public health's plan for the community. The CHIP will be used by the A-I-K CHB along with community partners to set priorities, coordinate resources, develop policies, and define actions to target efforts that protect and promote health. In Minnesota, community



# Executive Summary

The Aitkin-Itasca-Koochiching Community Health Board facilitates a Community Health Assessment and Improvement Plan every 5 years. The 2020 assessment and planning began in 2018 when the Aitkin, Itasca, and Koochiching public health departments reviewed health outcomes and health behavior data for the respective county, identified gaps and followed up with further investigation with their community members. In Itasca County, additional input was gathered from special populations of interest through focus groups. In all three counties a survey went out to community members. Stakeholders in Aitkin County were asked to identify areas of concern at a later meeting, while in Itasca and Koochiching reoccurring themes of health improvement were more prominent from the survey and focus groups. At the Aitkin County Fair the community voted on where they saw it was most important for the public to be spending resources and time. In Itasca and Koochiching, the stakeholders prioritized the areas in a follow-up survey. The three county public health leaders met with the CHS Administrator and the MDH (Minnesota Department of Health) Nurse Consultant to find commonalities in the priorities and assess what areas they had the resources and capacity to influence the most. The three leaders landed on mental health and substance use. The three leaders, administrator, MDH nurse consultant and MDH assessment planner met to review the data around the two areas, identified which data points they were going to use as their objectives and went through the Root-Cause analysis to go beyond the symptoms of the issue, and reveal what was causing residents to have poor mental health and substance use problems. With lists of causes identified, the three leaders chose objectives to focus on in each county, and collectively they aim to help all residents in Aitkin-Itasca-Koochiching service area abstain from alcohol, tobacco, and other drug misuse; and experience positive mental wellbeing.

# Background

Logging camps in the forests, paper mills along the river's edge, mines up the Range, and farming in the rich fields, the Aitkin-Itasca-Koochiching Community Health Services area is abundant in natural resources with fishing, hunting and outdoor recreation top reasons to visit the area. The area is home to Minnesota's only National Park, Voyageurs, just east of International Falls. With many things to celebrate, the paper and mining industries have plummeted over the years leaving the economies unstable and many residents working for below poverty wages. In Aitkin 12.1% of the population live below the poverty line, Itasca 12.6%, and Koochiching 17.1% Nationally an average of 13.1% of people live below the poverty line.



The A-I-K CHB is a mostly rural area. Aitkin-Itasca-Koochiching Community Health Services area covers 7,593 square miles and holds a population of 73,450 people. The United States Census estimates Aitkin County population as of July 1, 2019 to be 15,902; Itasca County population 45,108; and Koochiching County 12,440 residents.

# Community Health Assessment

The A-I-K CHB used a modified Mobilizing for Action Through Planning and Partnership (MAPP) model. This model was developed by NACCHO (National Association of County and City Health Officials) in partnership with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Public Health Practice Program Office. The model has six phases: organizing, visioning, assessments, identifying strategic issues, formulating goals and strategies, and the action cycle.

## Organizing

Utilizing Circles of Involvement, the three health department's staff met and identified key stakeholders in the community. This approach helped think outside of normal partners and brainstorm other potential key partners in the work

ahead. Circles of Involvement helps to identify partners from various sectors of the community. The working list covered partners who would potentially help implement the strategies; get the survey out into the hands of the community, specifically identifying partners who could reach vulnerable populations and populations often under represented; could inform the process themselves; and outlets that could inform the community about the process. Information on the process was shared with the public through local newspaper coverage, social media, targeted mailing and emailing, and individual conversations. Aitkin County initially identified 42 stakeholders at the meeting, Itasca 54, and Koochiching 39 stakeholders.



## Visioning

After being presented with the available data on the health of their county residents, public health staff in the three counties were asked if anything was missing that is necessary to identify a community plan for health improvement. Aitkin County public health staff identified gaps in the data and developed a supplemental survey to learn more. Itasca County Public Health staff brainstormed who needed to be heard from to get a complete picture of health in the county. Staff identified geographic areas that were missing from the local hospital's catchment areas that would need to be targeted for more focus groups, as well as populations disproportionately experiencing poorer health outcomes. Koochiching County Public Health staff met and wanted to expand upon the data of what wasn't working to learn from the community what they felt could be built upon, in what was working.

## Assessments

### *Community Health Status Assessment*

The CHS Administrator collected data of health outcomes and healthy behaviors for the three counties and presented the data to the Public Health staff in each county. The four categories of data collected were Disease and Injury, Healthy Living, Opportunities for Health, and People and Place. Based on the data available and what was not available, all public health agencies developed questions to ask their community members to expand upon the data available.

### *Community Themes and Strengths Assessment*

Koochiching County developed a survey and asked community members what makes them healthy, what prohibits them from being healthy, and suggestions on how to make Koochiching County healthier. In the fall of 2018, the public health supervisor of Koochiching County emailed out the open-ended survey to 136 community partners and to all county employees and all school

districts, encouraging them to not only fill the survey out themselves, but to also pass the survey on to those they serve in their respected positions. The 145 Koochiching County Health Survey respondents expressed the close-knit community, access to the great outdoors, organizations working in partnership, the local clinics and hospital, fitness centers, farmers' market, opportunities for education, community wellness events, access to transportation options, public programs, and community services organizations keep Koochiching County residents healthy. The respondents identified the main barriers to being healthy as shortage of medical staff, substance use, cost of medical care, limited transportation services, limited healthy food options, limited indoor activity options, limited affordable access to outdoor activities, shortage of mental health providers, limited educational opportunities on healthy lifestyle, and limited financial resources. Many of the matters the respondents reported as making Koochiching County a healthy place to live, were reported also as barriers, as there is not equal access for all community members.

Itasca County's 11 focus groups asked the participants to define being healthy, what the health needs of the community are, access and barriers to health, and of the areas identified, what are those of most importance. Reported were social programs, nonprofits, free clinics, community, senior programs and centers, family support, support groups, church, clinics and hospitals, and public transportation options all help keep their communities healthy. The focus groups also discussed mental health as a problem in the senior citizen population, as well as for those living in poverty, inmates, and in all populations. Other common themes included transportation, healthy eating, awareness of resources, access to providers, opportunities to be active, navigation of community resources, and services for seniors. Just as the Koochiching survey showed, many found the same community strengths that others found to be the communities' weaknesses. The common difference was the cost and resources needed to access named services.

Aitkin County Community Health Survey was developed by the Aitkin County Public Health staff and CHS administrator; and reviewed and refined by MDH Senior Research Scientist. In March 2018 an introductory letter was sent out to approximately 42 stakeholders outlaying the

assessment process and providing an electronic assessment link as well as paper copies of the assessment. Articles, flyers and emails were sent throughout the county, promoting the survey and it was announced in the local newspaper. Postcards were placed throughout organizations in the county. Survey opportunity was open March through April 2018. Paper surveys, electronic surveys and targeted survey opportunities (i.e. food shelves, workforce center, community meals, housing facilities, WIC) were conducted. 580 survey responses were received (351 were received by paper and 229 were completed electronically). Early May 2018, data analysis was performed by CHS Administrator, PH staff and MDH Senior Research Scientist. Results of the data were presented on May 17, 2018 at a stakeholder meeting including a representative from the Aitkin Independent Age who shared the results with the wider community. The survey identified the top ten health concerns of the survey respondents to be drug use, mental health, high medical expenses/deductible, affordable health insurance, transportation, need for a community center, affordable housing, affordable food, elderly care, and alcohol addiction.

### *Forces of Change Assessment*

The Public Health Division Manager of Itasca and the Public Health Supervisor of Koochiching brought the results of the data and community input to the stakeholders through an online survey. The stakeholders, with knowledge of resources and community readiness, were asked to prioritize the areas of concerns. The Public Health Supervisor of Koochiching County sent out emails to targeted people who work with the community and would encourage their clientele and employees to participate in the survey. The Itasca Public Health Division Manager emailed the survey to targeted stakeholders as well as posted the survey on social-media and sent it to three local newspapers in the county.

The Aitkin Public Health Supervisor held a stakeholder meeting at Members Cooperative Credit Union. Eight community stakeholders were in attendance. Data from public data sources and Community Assessment Survey were presented. Using the Technology of Participation Consensus Workshop method, the stakeholders identified nine top areas of concern and what organizations

may be capable of or have capacity to work on the areas which include access to transportation, early, preventative education, dental health promotion and access, healthy weight, livable wage jobs, affordable health care, healthy food access, mental health, and drug abuse. These top areas of concern were presented July 4-7, 2018 at the Aitkin County Health and Human Services fair booth for further consideration and prioritization from the community as a whole. Visitors were invited to vote with three dots, identifying their top area(s) of health concern and an additional three dots provided to vote on where they felt public health should apply resources. It was determined that approximately 300 visitors stopped and voted at the fair booth. The top 3 areas identified were Affordable Healthcare, Mental Health, and Livable Wage Jobs. Aitkin Public Health Supervisor sent out an email to all stakeholders informing them of the fair booth's prioritization of the issues as well as the next steps in the process. The Aitkin Independent Age wrote articles on the outcome of both the stakeholder meeting as well as the fair booth prioritization.

### *Local Public Health Systems Assessment*

The leadership team, consisting of the public health supervisors of Aitkin and Koochiching and the public health division manager of Itasca, the A-I-K CHS administrator, and the MDH (Minnesota Department of Health) regional nurse consultant, met in February to assess the A-I-K CHB public health departments' performance and capacity based on the national public health standards. The A-I-K Community Health Board meets annually in July to review and renew the Strategic Plan for the service area, with consideration of the strengths and weaknesses of the Departments. With these assessments and the community health assessments from each county, the leadership team evaluated the local public health systems capacity to influence the top areas of concern identified by the community. The vision of the Aitkin-Itasca-Koochiching CHB is: individuals across the age-span living, working, learning, and playing in the tri-county area have opportunities to make healthy choices in all aspects of their lives; there is cooperation across all community groups to work toward common goals and develop thriving communities where opportunities are equitable for all; public health and community health board leaders are knowledgeable in public

health and proactive in advocating for the needs of the A-I-K area; resources are sought to address the needs based on community health assessments and health equity data analyses and can be adapted as needs change over time; staff at all levels in each of the three public health departments have adequate training and experiences to assure their ability to provide quality services; and programs are cost-effective and evidence-based or evidence-informed and tailored to the needs of the community; we protect, promote, and prevent foremost.

## ID Strategic Issues

Through the guidance of the data, community, and stakeholders, the leadership team came to the conclusion that as three counties together, the greatest needs and where the communities could have the greatest impact are mental health improvement and substance use reduction. These two areas were found not only of the greatest concern, but also these two areas have the potential to impact many of the other areas of concerns identified by the communities. The Aitkin Independent Age informed the community again of the final results of the Community Health Assessment. The CHS Administrator shared these results and the process with the Aitkin County Board.



# Community Health Improvement Plan

## Formulating Goals and Strategies

In February 2019, the three public health leaders, administrator, and MDH (Minnesota Department of Health) nurse consultant met to decide upon a goal for mental health, and a goal for substance use. The ultimate goals for substance use and mental health is to reach all residents; all residents of Aitkin-Itasca-Koochiching Service Area will abstain from alcohol, tobacco, and other drug misuse; and all residents in Aitkin-Itasca-Koochiching Service Area will experience positive mental wellbeing. When looking at the causes for both, the strategies for adults and youth were going to require different approaches. The leadership team decided to have separate objectives for the youth and the adults. The group reviewed health outcome data for adults and youth on mental health and substance use.

The Minnesota Student Survey provides vast amounts of data on substance use amongst students. The leadership team narrowed down the data to previous alcohol use in the last 30-days, binge drinking, initiation of alcohol use, use of tobacco in the last 30-days and any use of marijuana. Use in the last 30-days is employed as a representation of regular users. Past changes in reported use were used to determine potential percent changes and 2022 was used as the year to reach the objective as it will be the next MN Student Survey conducted after the recent 2019 survey.

The leadership team decided to focus on regular alcohol and tobacco regular use for students.

The youth substance use objectives were narrowed down to:

- 1. 9<sup>th</sup> grade students in Aitkin, Itasca, and Koochiching counties reporting use of alcohol in the last 30-days will decrease by 4% by 2022 and**
- 2. 9<sup>th</sup> grade students in Aitkin, Itasca, and Koochiching counties reporting use of any tobacco, including e-cigarettes and hookah, in the last 30-days will decrease by 3% by 2022.**

Data on adult use is more limited. The leadership team reviewed adult tobacco and alcohol use from Bridge to Health survey data and other drug use from probation reports, prison inmates sentenced for drug offenses, the percent of admissions to treatment facilities for drug use, and arrests for narcotics. Data on adults is limited to those who have been charged with a drug offense. This statistic does not capture the full picture of drug misuse by adults in the region, however it is a base point in that if this number drops with enforcement staying steady, it can be a sign that drug misuse countywide has also declined. The most recent Bridge to Health survey data is from 2015, the next survey will be conducted in 2020. The leadership team set the adult substance use objectives to:

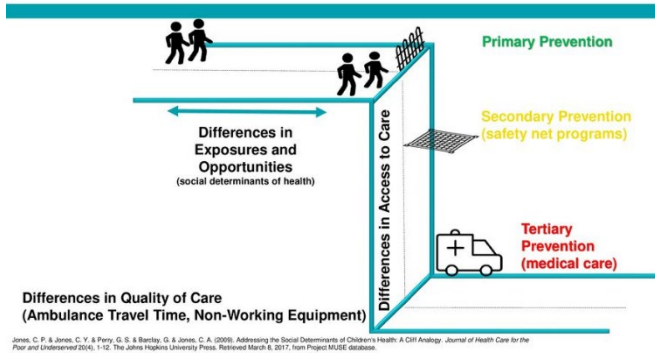
- 1. Reduce the percent of Aitkin, Itasca, and Koochiching county admissions to MN treatment facilities for drug use by 3% by the end of 2020 and**
- 2. Reduce the rate of adults on probation in Aitkin, Itasca, and Koochiching counties for drug offenses as governing sentence by 2% by 2020.**

The leadership team reviewed youth mental health data from the Minnesota Student Survey and narrowed the data down to internal and external disorders indicating high distress levels and reported self-harm or harm to others. Percent of youth reporting high distress levels for internalizing disorders was chosen as the indicator to measure the state of youth mental health. Internalizing disorders are measured using the Global Appraisal of Individual Needs--Short Screener (GAIN-SS). In the Minnesota Student Survey, students were asked about "significant" problems. Significant means "having problems for two or more weeks, problems that keep coming back, problems that keep you from meeting your responsibilities, or problems that make you feel like you can't go on." Students that reported three of the following as significant in the past 12 months are considered as a high distress level for internalizing disorders: feeling very trapped, lonely, sad, blue, depressed, or hopeless about the future; sleep trouble, such as bad dreams, sleeping restlessly or falling asleep during the day; feeling very anxious, nervous, tense, scared, panicked or like something bad was going to happen; become very distressed and upset when something reminded you of the past; thinking about ending your life or committing suicide. The objectives for youth mental health are:

- 1. 9<sup>th</sup> grade students in Aitkin, Itasca, and Koochiching counties high levels of distress for internalizing disorders will decrease by 5% by 2022.**
- 2. 9<sup>th</sup> grade students in Aitkin, Itasca, and Koochiching counties who have seriously considered attempting suicide in the last year will decrease by 3% by 2022.**

The leadership team reviewed data on adult mental health from the Bridge to Health Survey. The team narrowed the data down to anxiety, depression, poor mental health days, social and emotional support, delayed seeking help, and suicide ideation. The leadership found those reporting poor mental health days was a better representation of those living with poor mental health conditions than those reporting being told by a physician, nurse, or health professional that they had a mental health condition. This measure captures those who have not sought

medical attention for their condition. The leadership also felt it was important to focus on suicide ideation. The primary prevention strategies used to help people from developing anxiety and



depression look very different than the secondary prevention needed to help someone with suicidal thoughts. The communities need to help prevent the trauma and promote wellbeing while also throwing out a net to help those already experiencing poor mental health.

*Image depicts primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention. A fence is put up as a primary prevention, a net is put out as a secondary prevention effort, and our medical system is the tertiary prevention.*

The mental health objectives for adults are:

- 1. Decrease adults in Aitkin, Itasca, Koochiching counties reporting (14 or more) poor mental health days in the past 30-days by 5% by 2020 and**
- 2. Decrease adults in Aitkin, Itasca, and Koochiching counties reporting suicidal thoughts in the last year by 1% by 2020.**

In May of 2019, MDH Assessment Planner led the leadership team through a Root-Cause Analysis of the two goals in order to identify strategies that would address the drivers of the issue, through primary prevention. What came out of the Root-Cause analysis for adult substance use was trauma, community awareness, chronic pain management, lack of treatment entities, and stigma. As for youth tobacco and alcohol use the leadership landed on: access to tobacco products, youth perception and narrative around substance use, cessation programs for youth, adults paying attention, trauma, and activities for youth. The Root-Cause Analysis for mental health for both youth and adults unveiled a need for awareness of resources and how to access them, defusing a high stress culture, abolishing stigma preventing people accessing care, addressing trauma, and a developing a united community.

In the spirit of respecting the uniqueness of each county's culture, geography, and readiness, each county worked with the CHS Administrator and key stakeholders to identify strategies for their county specifically, and then prioritize one or two objectives to work on in 2020.

## Substance Use

Substance misuse has a major impact on individuals, families, and communities. The effects of substance abuse snowball, negatively impacting one's social, physical, and mental wellbeing. According to the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Healthy People, substance use contributes to: teenage pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, domestic violence, child abuse, motor vehicle crashes, physical fights, crime, homicide, and suicide. Healthy People set a goal to "Reduce substance abuse to protect the health, safety, and quality of life for all, especially children". Improvements in brain-imaging technologies and the development of medications that assist in treatment have gradually shifted public health's perspective on substance abuse. There is now a deeper understanding of substance abuse as a disorder that develops in adolescence and, for some individuals, will develop into chronic illness that will require lifelong monitoring and care. Effective population-based prevention efforts have enhanced the understanding of environmental and social factors that contribute to the initiation and abuse of alcohol and illicit drugs, and the need for social and culturally specific strategies. With outdoor recreation often something most residents pride themselves on, it can come with negative cultural exceptions around substance use. In the root cause analysis findings, the lake culture or cabin culture, often coincides with a culture of binge drinking.

Other at-risk groups include veterans. Military deployments strain service members and their families. This strain can lead to mental health disorders and substance abuse. According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA) 7.1 percent of veterans, or 1.8 million people, had a substance use disorder in the past year.

Policy Implications

In 2019 Congress raised the national minimum age for tobacco purchases from 18 to 21. This policy change will help keep tobacco products out of high schools and hopefully reduce youth use. However, the community will continue to work to reduce youth use and access.

In 2019 the State Legislature began discussions of legalizing the sale and use of marijuana. In order to set Minnesotans up for success, Public Health must be at the forefront of the discussions surrounding changes in substance use policy. If the state legalizes marijuana, education will need to be shared that legalization does not mean it is safe to use. According to the CDC, using marijuana at an early age can lead to negative health consequences. Heavy marijuana use can do damage to memory, learning, and attention, which can last a week or more after the last time someone used. Using marijuana during pregnancy or while breastfeeding may harm the baby, just like alcohol or tobacco. Marijuana use has been linked to anxiety, depression, and schizophrenia, but scientists don’t know yet whether it directly causes these diseases. Smoking any product, including marijuana, can damage your lungs and cardiovascular system.

<b>Goal:</b> All residents in Aitkin-Itasca-Koochiching Service Area will abstain from alcohol, tobacco, and other drug misuse.
<b>Objective:</b> 9 <sup>th</sup> grade students in Aitkin, Itasca, and Koochiching counties reporting use of alcohol in the last 30-days will decrease by 4% by 2022. <b>Strategies:</b> Increase Adverse Childhood Experiences work Community Coalition work
<b>Objective:</b> 9 <sup>h</sup> grade students in Aitkin, Itasca, and Koochiching counties reporting use of any tobacco, including e-cigarettes and hookah, in the last 30-days will decrease by 3% by 2022. <b>Strategies:</b> Tobacco sales training/checks School education and community education
<b>Objective:</b> Reduce the percent of Aitkin, Itasca, and Koochiching county admissions to MN treatment facilities for drug use by 3% by the end of 2020. <b>Objective:</b> Reduce the rate of adults on probation in Aitkin, Itasca, and Koochiching counties for drug offenses as governing sentence by 2% by 2020. <b>Strategies:</b> Seek out technical assistance to address stigma in the community and stigma in the providers Seek out new grant opportunities Look for chronic pain management programs

In Itasca and Koochiching County, the Deer River and Grand Rapids communities have grants that support positive community norms to lift the number of students who choose not to use substances. In all three counties, the Public Health staff and the American Lung Association work closely with the schools to provide education to the staff, students, and parents around substance use. Recently lung related injuries from e-cigarettes have been popping up all over the country, including cases in the Aitkin-Itasca-Koochiching Community Health Service Area, and are getting the attention of parents, teachers, public health, and law makers. Tobacco has also taken center stage at the national level as Congress recently passed Tobacco 21, limiting the sales of tobacco to people 21 years of age and older, and also limiting the flavors of e-cigarettes. Youth accessing tobacco is a major concern across the region, state and nation. Aitkin and Itasca County Public Health Departments partner with local law enforcement to administer educational tobacco compliance checks with local businesses, to assure they are equipped to properly check an ID and not sell to a minor customer. Aitkin County Public Health also administers the regulatory tobacco compliance checks with local law enforcement. In 2019 Itasca County increased the penalty for selling tobacco to minors, increasing the incentive to check IDs and not sell to persons under 18. Aitkin and Itasca are working with the University of Minnesota on the Building Rural Capacity to Develop Positive Recovery Capital Project, funded through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Rural Opioid Technical Assistance grant and the United States Department of Agriculture Rural Health and Safety Education grant. The project engages community members to develop solutions for the substance use problems and changes the environment of the community to support healthy living. All three counties are working to combat substance use and poor mental health through more primary prevention methods. Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) trainings are offered in all three counties to increase awareness and resiliency in the community. ACEs are childhood abuse, neglect, and household challenges that increase a person's chance of injury, mental illness, poor maternal health outcomes, infectious disease, chronic disease, risky behavior like substance use, and less

economic opportunities. ACEs can be prevented through strengthening economic supports to families, changing social norms to support parents and positive parenting, providing quality care and education early in life, enhance parenting skills to promote healthy child development, and intervening to lessen harms and prevent future risk.

## Mental Health

Mental health is an important part of overall health and well-being. Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make healthy choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood. Mental

*Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make healthy choices.*

health disorders are among the most burdensome health concerns in the United States according to the CDC. Mental health is different from mental illness. Mental illnesses are conditions that affect person's thinking, feeling, mood, or behavior, such as depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, or schizophrenia. Mental illness, especially, depression, increases the risk for many types of physical health problems, particularly chronic conditions like stroke, type 2 diabetes, and heart disease.

As seen across the state and nation, poor mental health is consuming people and communities. The Aitkin-Itasca-Koochiching Community Health Services area is not different, the rural effects of social isolation can magnify the concern. The community of Aitkin administered a Community Readiness Assessment to identify where efforts are needed to address the issue. The community

was rated at the denial state. Strategies will reflect efforts to raise awareness in the community and of available resources for those in need.

In Aitkin the Committee for the Awareness and Prevention of Suicide (CAPS) is working to raise awareness and promote education and information. Other strategies include education in

**Goal: All residents in Aitkin-Itasca-Koochiching Service Area will experience positive mental wellbeing.**

**Objective:** 9<sup>th</sup> grade students in Aitkin, Itasca, and Koochiching counties reporting three or more of the following as being "significant" in past 12 months: feeling very trapped, lonely, sad, blue, depressed, or hopeless about the future; sleep trouble, such as bad dreams, sleeping restlessly or falling asleep during the day; feeling very anxious, nervous, tense, scared, panicked or like something bad was going to happen; become very distressed and upset when something reminded you of the past; thinking about ending your life or committing suicide will decrease by 5% by 2022.

**Objective:** 9<sup>th</sup> grade students in Aitkin, Itasca, and Koochiching counties reporting to have seriously considered attempting suicide in the last year will decrease by 3% by 2022.

**Objective:** Decrease adults in Aitkin, Itasca, and Koochiching counties reporting poor mental health days in the past 30 days by 5% by 2020.

**Objective:** Decrease adults in Aitkin, Itasca, and Koochiching counties reporting suicidal thoughts in the last year by 1% by 2020.

schools, crisis text line referrals, safe messaging training, QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) training, safeTALK training, and Applied Suicide Intervention Skills training. Offered in the community are ACEs training, mental health awareness information, sharing resources with seniors and the under 65 disabled population and postpartum mental health awareness and referrals. Grand Rapids will also be administering the Community Readiness Assessment in 2020 to identify where efforts are best spent on addressing mental health in the community. All three counties provide education in the schools on the crisis text line and how to talk about mental health. In Itasca County the local Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP) coordinator will be working with local businesses to promote worksite wellness and stress reduction. CDC recognizes workplaces to be a key location for activities designed to improve well-being among adults. Worksite wellness programs can identify those at risk, connect them to treatment and put supports in place to help people reduce and manage stress. By addressing mental health issues in the workplace, employers can reduce health care costs for their businesses and employees.

2015 Bridge to Health survey data shows those living in poverty experience 300-500% more poor mental health days, on average, than those not living in poverty.

14 or More Poor Mental Health Days in the Last 30 Days

Aitkin 200% poverty or less	22.5%
Aitkin more than 200% poverty	8.1%
Aitkin Total	13.3%
Itasca 200% poverty or less	21.7%
Itasca more than 200% poverty	5.3%
Itasca Total	10.2%
Koochiching 200% poverty or less	28.8%
Koochiching more than 200% poverty	5.6%
Koochiching Total	14%

Source: 2015 Bridge to Health

Due to the high discrepancy of mental health in the populations experiencing poverty and those not, all three counties are working to inform the community on ACEs and being inclusive in the work. Realizing that child care and missing shift work for evening learning sessions are often a barrier for those in poverty, the tri-county area will work to identify barriers for those experiencing poverty and poor mental health and find solutions to accommodate the Aitkin-Itasca-Koochiching Community Health Services residents. Itasca County worksite wellness targets low wage jobsites when recruiting businesses to participate.

Factsheets specific to each county with a brief overview of the Community Health Assessment process and the Community Health Improvement Plan were shared with partners for input if the proposed objectives and strategies were the best fit for the goals. The leadership team received positive feedback to move forward on the proposed plan with the goals, objectives and strategies identified.

# The Action Cycle



For each strategy the leadership team identified a performance measure to be used to continually evaluate the effectiveness, in order to suggest when changes to the strategy will be needed.

This is the action cycle in which the community plans, implements, and evaluates, which then informs the next cycle of planning, implementation, and evaluation.

## Substance Use

In order to decrease youth use of alcohol, in Itasca and Koochiching counties, the community is addressing the issue through positive community norms. To monitor the success in engaging youth in the messaging and activities, the community will be tracking the number of students participating in the work through The Movement in Deer River and Rapids Rising in Grand Rapids. In International Falls the community will be monitoring students’ attitudes and perceptions ‘that drinking is never ok’ to track the success of the KAPE coalition. This data is collected through a survey administered by the KAPE coalition.

In Aitkin County the community will monitor underage tobacco sales using the Congratulate and Educate Program and regulatory checks to reduce the use of tobacco among the youth. Partners working on this will include: Aitkin County Attorney’s Office, Aitkin County Auditor’s Office, Aitkin Police Department, Aitkin County Sherriff’s Office, and Clearway MN. The community will measure the percent of licensed businesses checked yearly and measure percent of businesses that pass the checks to evaluate the performance of the strategy. Aitkin County will also be offering presentations in the schools and community. Partners include: American Lung Association, City of Aitkin, City of Palisade, Community Education of ISD1, ISD2, ISD4, Licensed Businesses, and Riverwood Healthcare Center. The community will evaluate the effectiveness of

the presentations through an online poll of participants' knowledge for adults and for youth pre and post presentation assessments will be utilized to measure knowledge of tobacco and vaping related information, track school, grade, and approximate number of attendees. Additionally, the community will measure what schools offer education for staff, number of opportunities and attendees, and track the percent of tobacco vendors that are sent educational information regarding how to properly check ID's for tobacco sales.

## Mental Health

To improve the mental health in the tri-county area, Aitkin has performed a Community Readiness Assessment. The results are that the community is in the denial stage. In response the CAPS (Committee of Awareness and Prevention of Suicide) coalition will work to raise awareness in the community. To measure the success of CAPS, the community will track the membership attendance and inclusivity of membership, and intentionally reaching out to populations that are particularly at risk for mental health disorders. The community will measure the number of media campaigns, estimate number of people reached, the number of trainings given and number of people attended. Grand Rapids has received a grant to administer the Community Readiness Assessment as well. The findings from this assessment will inform what strategies will be most effective in the Grand Rapids community. Beyond efforts identified in the assessment, Itasca County will also offer ACEs interface training and Worksite Wellness stress reduction tools. Partners include ISD 118, ISD 316, ISD 317, ISD 318, and ISD 319. Itasca County will monitor the Community Readiness Assessment outcomes, track the number of worksites, number of employees at worksites offered stress reduction as a strategy, track the number of businesses offered intoxiclock trainings, and track the number of ACEs interface trainings.



# Stakeholders

## Aitkin County

Access Health Care  
Access North  
Aicota  
Aitkin Area Food Shelf  
Aitkin City Police Department  
Aitkin County Attorney's Office  
Aitkin County Auditor's Office  
Aitkin County Health & Human Services  
Aitkin County Health and Human Services Advisory Committee  
Aitkin County HRA  
Aitkin County Jail  
Aitkin County Sheriff's Office  
Aitkin Fare for All  
Aitkin Independent Age  
Aitkin Police Department  
Aitkin School District  
Aitkin Workforce Center  
American Lung Association  
ANGELS  
AMHI Region 5+  
Black Rock Terrace  
CARE  
Chamber of Commerce  
City of Aitkin  
City of McGrath  
City of McGregor  
City of Palisade  
City of Tamarack  
Clearway MN  
Committee for Awareness and Prevention of Suicide  
Community Education  
Community Food Shelf  
Crisis Line and Referral  
Developmental Achievement Center  
First Lutheran Church  
Golden Horizons  
Hill City Food Shelf  
Hill City Police Department  
Hill City School District  
ISD 1  
ISD 2  
ISD 4

Jacobson Food Shelf  
Lakes and Pines CAC  
Mental Health Local Advisory Council  
Minnesota Department of Health  
Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe  
McGrath Fare for All  
McGregor Community Center  
McGregor Dental Clinic  
McGregor Food Shelf  
McGregor Police Department  
McGregor School District  
McGregor VFW  
Northern Minnesota Suicide Prevention Crisis Text Line  
Northern Pines  
Northland Counseling Center and Club House  
Northland Village  
Oak Ridge  
Regional Suicide Text Line  
River Oaks Dental  
River's Edge Assisted Living  
Riverwood Healthcare Center  
Ruby's Pantry  
Rural Rides  
St. James Catholic Church Food Shelf  
Tobacco Licensed Businesses  
UMN SNAP Educator

## Itasca County

Bigfork Schools  
Bigfork Valley Foundation  
Bigfork Valley Hospital  
Circles of Support  
Children's Mental Health Services  
Deer River Healthcare Foundation  
Essentia Health  
Fairview Range  
Get Fit Itasca  
Grand Itasca Clinic and Hospital  
GRIP  
Invest Early  
ISD 316  
ISD 317  
ISD 318  
ISD 319  
Itasca County Health & Human Services  
Itasca Family Services Collaborative  
Itasca foster care providers  
Itasca County Sheriff's Department  
Itasca Area Schools Collaborative  
Keewatin City

Keewatin Seniors  
Kiesler Wellness Center  
Kootasca  
The Movement  
Northland Counseling  
Ross Resources  
Salvation Army  
SPARK  
STEP Coalition  
UMN Extension

## Koochiching County

Access North / Center for Independent Living  
AEOA  
Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging  
Backus Community Center  
Bois Forte  
Carefree Living Homes  
Chamber of Commerce  
City of Big Falls  
City of International Falls  
City of Littlefork  
City of Northome  
City of Ranier  
Decker's Family Care  
ElderCircle  
Essentia Health  
Fairview Range Home Care and Hospice  
Faith United  
Falls Hunger Coalition  
Falls Public Library  
Friends Against Abuse  
Good Samaritan Society  
Housing & Redevelopment Authority of Koochiching County  
ISD 361  
ISD 361 P&I Coordinator  
ISD 362  
ISD 363 - Northome School  
ISD363 - Indus School  
Itasca County Aging Network  
KAPE Coalition  
Koochiching Family Planning  
Koochiching Aging Options  
Koochiching County  
Koochiching County Health & Human Services  
Koochiching County Veterans Services  
Koochiching Soil & Water Conservation  
KOOTASCA Community Action  
Legal Aid Service of Northeastern Minnesota

Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training  
Northern Life Care Center  
Northland Counseling  
Northland Counseling - Hardwig House  
Northland Special Ed Co-Op  
Occupational Development Center  
Rainy Lake Medical Center  
Rainy River Community College  
Rainer Recreation Club  
Salvation Army  
Servants of Shelter  
Small Business Development Center  
U of M Extension - 4H  
United Way of NE MN  
Voyage Forward  
Voyageurs National Park  
West Falls Estates  
Work Force Center / DEED



# Resources

- Bridge to Health, <http://www.bridgetohealthsurvey.org/>
- Minnesota Student Survey, <https://www.health.state.mn.us/data/mchs/surveys/mss/index.html>
- NACCHO: National Association of City and County Health Officials, MAPP: Mobilizing For Action Through Planning and Partnership , <https://www.naccho.org/programs/public-health-infrastructure/performance-improvement/community-health-assessment/mapp>
- NACCHO: National Association of City and County Health Officials, Circles of Involvement, [https://www.naccho.org/uploads/downloadable-resources/http\\_www-naccho-org\\_topics\\_infrastructure\\_mapp\\_framework\\_clearinghouse\\_loader.pdf](https://www.naccho.org/uploads/downloadable-resources/http_www-naccho-org_topics_infrastructure_mapp_framework_clearinghouse_loader.pdf)
- Community Tool Box, Root-Cause Analysis, <https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/analyze/analyze-community-problems-and-solutions/root-causes/main>
- Global Appraisal of Individual Needs--Short Screener (GAIN-SS), [https://www.assessments.com/assessments\\_documentation/gain\\_ss/GAIN%20SS%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf](https://www.assessments.com/assessments_documentation/gain_ss/GAIN%20SS%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf)
- Healthy People, Substance Use: <https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/substance-abuse>
- Substance Abuse and Mental health Services Administration (SAMSHA) National Survey on Drug Use and Health indicate that from 2004 to 2006, <https://www.datafiles.samhsa.gov/study/national-survey-drug-use-and-health-nsduh-2004-nid13548>
- CDC: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, ACEs <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/cestudy/index.html>,
- CDC: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Marijuana <https://www.cdc.gov/marijuana/index.htm>
- SUMN Web Site <http://sumn.org>

# Appendix

## Data

Minnesota Student Survey data shows:  
Percent of 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Students Reporting Any Use of Alcohol in the Past 30 Days

	2013	2016	2019
<b>Aitkin County</b>		25%	11%
<b>Itasca County</b>		20%	23%
<b>Koochiching County</b>		36%	21%

MN Student Survey data shows:  
Percent of 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Students Reporting Any Tobacco Use, Including E-Cigarettes and Hookah, in the Past 30-Days

	2016	2019
<b>Aitkin</b>	14%	17%
<b>Aitkin Free and Reduced Lunch</b>	16%	n/a
<b>Itasca</b>	23%	26%
<b>Itasca Free and Reduced Lunch</b>	29%	n/a
<b>Koochiching</b>	17%	29%
<b>Koochiching Free and Reduced Lunch</b>	n/a	n/a

Drug and Alcohol Abuse Normative Evaluation System (DAANES) data shows:  
Percent of Admissions to Minnesota Treatment Facilities for Drug Use, 2017

<b>Aitkin All Substances</b>	71%
<b>Itasca All Substances</b>	67.90%
<b>Koochiching All Substances</b>	54.20%

SUMN (Substance Use in Minnesota) Web Site, Probation Survey:  
Rate Per 1,000 Pop of Adults on Probation in Minnesota for Drug Offense as Governing Sentence,  
All Available Years: by County

	2015	2016	2017
Aitkin County	4.9	5.5	7.1
Itasca County	5.1	5.5	4.6
Koochiching County	6.2	6.4	6.2

2013 Minnesota Student Survey data shows:  
Percent of 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Students Reporting High Distress Levels for Internalizing Disorders

		Female	Male	Total
Aitkin County	9th	40.3%	18.3%	29.9%
Itasca County	9th	40.3%	20.8%	30.5%
Koochiching County	9th	38.7%	18.2%	28.1%

2019 MN Student Survey data shows:  
Percent of 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Students Reporting Having Ever Seriously Considered Attempting Suicide

	During the Last Year	More than a Year Ago
Aitkin	16.2%	14.7%
Itasca	18.1%	14.4%
Koochiching	15.4%	19.2%

	Male	Female
Aitkin	6%	24%
Itasca	14%	21%

\*Koochiching County data not available by sex

2015 Bridge to Health data shows:

Thinking about your mental health, which includes stress, depression, and problems with emotions, for how many days during the past 30 days was your mental health not good? (14 or more days)

<b>Aitkin 200% poverty or less</b>	22.5%
<b>Aitkin more than 200%</b>	8.1%
<b>Aitkin Total</b>	13.3%
<b>Itasca 200% poverty or less</b>	21.7%
<b>Itasca more than 200%</b>	5.3%
<b>Itasca Total</b>	10.2%
<b>Koochiching 200% poverty or less</b>	28.8%
<b>Koochiching more than 200%</b>	5.6%
<b>Koochiching Total</b>	14%

2015 Bridge to Health data shows:

Have you thought about killing yourself? (During the last year)

<b>Aitkin 200% poverty or less</b>	6.2%
<b>Aitkin more than 200% poverty</b>	4.1%
<b>Aitkin total</b>	6.2%
<b>Itasca 200% poverty or less</b>	15.1%
<b>Itasca more than 200% poverty</b>	4.2%
<b>Itasca Total</b>	7.8%
<b>Koochiching 200% poverty or less</b>	3.5%
<b>Koochiching more than 200%</b>	2.9%
<b>Koochiching Total</b>	2.9%

# Factsheets for stakeholders



## Community Health Improvement Plan

The community health improvement plan is developed collaboratively, and defines a vision for the community's health; the community health improvement plan is the community's plan, not public health's plan for the community.



### Community Health Assessment



### Community Health Improvement Plan

**Goal 1: All residents in Aitkin-Itasca-Koochiching Service Area will experience positive mental wellbeing.**

#### Aitkin Objectives

Decrease adults in Aitkin county reporting suicidal thoughts in the last year by 1% by 2020.<sup>2</sup>  
Decrease 9<sup>th</sup> grade students who have seriously considered attempting suicide in the last year by 3% by 2022.<sup>3</sup>

#### Strategies

- Strengthen CAPS (Committee for the awareness and Prevention of Suicide) membership
- Raise awareness and education offered by:
  - text line information and education in schools
  - crisis line referrals
  - safe messaging training
  - QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) training
  - safeALK training
  - ASIST training
  - Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training
- ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences) trainings
- Provide Mental Health awareness information and share resources to seniors and the under 65 population every 6-months
- Provide postpartum mental health awareness and referrals

#### Partners

- Aitkin County Health and Human Services Advisory Committee
- Committee for Awareness and Prevention of Suicide
- Crisis Line and Referral
- ISD1, ISD2, ISD4
- Local Advisory Council
- MDH (Minnesota Department of Health)
- Northern Minnesota Suicide Prevention Crisis Text Line
- Northern Pines
- Norland Counseling Center and Club House
- AMHI Region 5+
- Regional Suicide Text Line

#### How will we know if we're making a difference?

- Inclusive CAPS membership, high coalition attendance rate
- Measure number of media campaigns, estimate number of people reached
- Measure number of trainings given, number of people attended



## Community Health Improvement Plan

The community health improvement plan is developed collaboratively, and defines a vision for the community's health; the community health improvement plan is the community's plan, not public health's plan for the community.



**Goal 2: All residents in Aitkin-Itasca-Koochiching Service Area will abstain from alcohol, tobacco, and other drug misuse.**

#### Aitkin Objective

Aitkin County 9<sup>th</sup> grade students reporting use of any tobacco, including e-cigarettes and hookah, in the last 30-days will decrease by 3% by 2022.<sup>1</sup>

#### Strategies

- Monitoring underage tobacco sales using Congratulate and Educate and regulatory compliance checks
- School and community education and information presentations

#### Partners

##### Tobacco Checks:

- Aitkin County Attorney's Office
- Aitkin County Auditor's Office
- Aitkin Police Department
- Aitkin County Sheriff's Office
- Clearway MN

##### Adult Education:

- American Lung Association
- City of Aitkin
- City of Fallsade
- Community Education of ISD 1, ISD2, ISD4
- Licensed Businesses
- Riverwood Healthcare Center

##### Youth Education:

- ISD 1, ISD 2, ISD 4

#### How will we know if we're making a difference?

##### Tobacco checks:

- Measure the percent of licensed businesses checked yearly
- Measure percent of businesses that pass the checks

##### Adult Education:

- Online poll of participants knowledge
- Percent of tobacco vendors that are sent educational information regarding how to properly check ID's for tobacco sales.
- Measure what schools offer education for staff, number of opportunities and attendees

##### Youth Education:

- Track school, grade, and approximate number of attendees given education
- Pre and post presentation assessments will be utilized to measure knowledge of tobacco and vaping related information



## Community Health Improvement Plan

The community health improvement plan is developed collaboratively, and defines a vision for the community's health; the community health improvement plan is the community's plan, not public health's plan for the community.



### Community Health Assessment



### Community Health Improvement Plan

**Goal: All residents in Aitkin-Itasca-Koochiching Service Area will abstain from alcohol, tobacco, and other drug misuse.**

**Objective:** 9<sup>th</sup> grade students in Aitkin, Itasca, and Koochiching counties reporting use of alcohol in the last 30-days will decrease by 4% by 2022.<sup>1</sup>

**Strategies:** Community Coalition work.

**Partners:** Koochiching Area Prevention in Education

**How will we know if we're making progress?** Asking KAPE Coalition 11/13: Students Attitudes-perception that drinking is NEVER ok.

2019 Minnesota Student Survey data shows:  
Percent of 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Students Reporting Any Use of Alcohol in the Past 30 Days



**Goal: All residents in Aitkin-Itasca-Koochiching Service Area will experience positive mental wellbeing.**



## Community Health Improvement Plan

The community health improvement plan is developed collaboratively, and defines a vision for the community's health; the community health improvement plan is the community's plan, not public health's plan for the community.



### Community Health Assessment



### Community Health Improvement Plan

**Goal: All residents in Aitkin-Itasca-Koochiching Service Area will abstain from alcohol, tobacco, and other drug misuse.**

**Itasca Objective:** 9<sup>th</sup> grade students in Aitkin, Itasca, and Koochiching counties reporting use of alcohol in the last 30-days will decrease by 4% by 2022.<sup>1</sup>

**Strategies:** Positive community norms

**Partners:** The Movement, STEP Coalition, Rapids Rising, GRIP Coalition

**How will we know if we're making a difference?** Number of students participating in the Movement and Rapids Rising in Middle School and High School

**Goal: All residents in Aitkin-Itasca-Koochiching Service Area will experience positive mental wellbeing.**

**Itasca Objective:** Decrease adults in Aitkin, Itasca, and Koochiching counties reporting poor mental health days in the last 30-days by 5% by 2021.<sup>2</sup>

**Strategies:** Community Readiness Assessment

- ACEs interface training
- Worksite Wellness stress reduction tools

**Partners:** ISD 118, ISD 316, ISD 317, ISD 318, ISD 319

**How will we know if we're making a difference?**

- Monitor the Community Readiness Assessment outcomes
- Number of worksites and number of employees at worksites offered stress reduction as a strategy
- Number of businesses offered ~~toxicology~~ trainings
- Number of ACE interface trainings

# Community Health Assessment Studies

## Aitkin County Community Health Survey

County Public Health Services

Have you or anyone in your household ever utilized any of the following Public Health Services? (Please check all that apply)

☐ WIC (Women, Infants and Children)

☐ Childhood immunizations

☐ Car seat education

☐ Newborn home visiting

☐ Child & Teen Checkups

☐ Family Planning Program

☐ Farm2School Lunch

☐ Follow Along Program

☐ Flu or immunization clinic

☐ The Aitkin County Family Newsletter

☐ MnCHOICES Assessment or other Home & Community Based Services

☐ Visited Public Health or Health & Human Services booth at a school fair, Rivers & Lakes Fair, Commerce & Sports Show or County Fair

☐ No one in my household has utilized these services.

The last questions are to help us compare your answers with those of others in the county

If you prefer not to answer demographic information, opt out by checking this box:

☐

Gender:

☐ Male

☐ Female

☐ Other

Age:

☐ under 18

☐ 18-24

☐ 25-40

☐ 41-54

☐ 55-64

☐ 65+

Race/ethnic background: (Please check ALL that apply):

☐ White

☐ American Indian

☐ Black/African American

☐ Hispanic

☐ Asian/Pacific Islander

☐ Other

Highest education level you have achieved:

☐ Less than 8<sup>th</sup> grade

☐ Some college

☐ Bachelor's Degree

☐ Some high school (1-3 years)

☐ Technical Certificate and/or degree

☐ Graduate degree (MA, PhD)

☐ High school diploma/GED

☐ Associate's Degree

Your annual household income:

☐ Less than \$20,000

☐ \$30,000-\$39,999

☐ \$50,000-\$74,999

☐ \$20,000-\$29,999

☐ \$40,000-\$49,999

☐ \$75,000 or higher

Marital status:

☐ Married

☐ Divorced

☐ Separated couple

☐ Widowed

☐ Member of an unmarried couple

☐ Single, never been married

We are interested in your thoughts.

What do you believe are the biggest health related issues in Aitkin County?

Thank you for participating in our survey! If you would like to be entered into our drawing to win one of 5 \$25.00 gift cards to local retail stores, please provide your name and phone number.

Name:

Phone Number:

### AITKIN COUNTY COMMUNITY HEALTH SURVEY

\* N/A means “not applicable”. That response indicates that the question doesn't apply to you. Aitkin County Public Health is planning for community health services that will be provided in 2019-2024. We need your help in determining which areas to spend time and resources on. Please take a few minutes to complete this survey. Thank you!

Healthy Communities & Healthy Behaviors

A-1

Do you feel that you have time and space to exercise?

☐ Yes

☐ No

A-2

Do you have access to fresh produce and unprocessed foods?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If you answered no, why not? (Please check all that apply.)

☐ Can't afford them

☐ No transportation

☐ Not stocked locally

A-3

Have you ever been told that you have any of the following health conditions?

Overweight or obese

☐ Yes

☐ No

Pre-diabetes

☐ Yes

☐ No

A-4

If you have children in your home, have they ever been told by a health care provider that they have any of the following health conditions?

Overweight or obese

☐ N/A

☐ Yes

☐ No

Pre-diabetes

☐ N/A

☐ Yes

☐ No

A-5

Do you participate in the following health screenings when recommended by your provider? (Please check all that apply.)

☐ No, I do not participate in any of these health screenings

Males:

☐ Testicular cancer screening

☐ Prostate screening

Females:

☐ Pap smear

☐ Mammogram

Males & Females:

☐ Cholesterol screening

☐ Colonoscopy

A-6

If you have missed any screenings, why? (Please check all that apply.)

☐ Not applicable

☐ No insurance

☐ Afraid

☐ My insurance is major medical only

☐ Painful

☐ High deductible

☐ Embarrassed

☐ Too costly

☐ Other (please describe):

☐ Not recommended by my provider

☐ Can't get time off of work

Infectious Disease

B-1

Do you get an annual flu shot?

☐ Yes

☐ No

B-2

If you have any children in your home, do they get an annual flu shot?

☐ N/A

☐ Yes

☐ No

B-3

Have you ever been told by a health care provider that you have a tick-borne illness (such as Lyme Disease or Ehrlichiosis.)

☐ Yes

☐ No

B-4

Have you ever been told by a health care provider that you had a sexually transmitted infection of any kind?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Environmental Health

C-1

If you smoke, do you smoke in your home?

☐ N/A

☐ Yes

☐ No

C-2

If you do smoke in your home, do you have children living with you?

☐ N/A

☐ Yes

☐ No

C-3

If you smoke, do you smoke in the car?

☐ N/A

☐ Yes

☐ No

C-4

If you do smoke in the car, do you when there are children in the car?

☐ N/A

☐ Yes

☐ No

C-5

Have you ever tested your home for radon?

☐ I don't know.

☐ Yes

☐ No

C-6

Have you ever had your water tested for contaminants?

☐ I don't know.

☐ Yes

☐ No

C-7

Do you have a working carbon monoxide detector in your home?

☐ I don't know.

☐ Yes

☐ No

C-8

Do you have working smoke detectors in every bedroom of your home?

☐ I don't know.

☐ Yes

☐ No

C-9

Do you test your detectors annually?

☐ I don't know.

☐ Yes

☐ No

Injury Prevention

D-1

Do you text while driving?

☐ Often

☐ Sometimes

☐ Occasionally

☐ Never

D-2

Do you feel safe at home?

☐ Always

☐ Usually

☐ Sometimes

☐ Never

D-3

Do you feel safe at work and/or school?

☐ N/A

☐ Always

☐ Usually

☐ Sometimes

☐ Never

D-4

If you have children, do they wear a helmet if biking, rollerblading, skateboarding or snowboarding?

☐ Always

☐ Usually

☐ Sometimes

☐ Never

☐ N/A

☐ My children do not participate in these activities.

D-5

If you have children under 8, do you feel confident that they have an appropriately sized car seat and that it is properly installed?

☐ N/A

☐ Yes

☐ No

D-6

If you have children in your home, have any ever complained of: (check all that apply)

☐ N/A, do not have children at home.

☐ Bullying

☐ Sexual harassment

☐ Cyber-bullying

(Example: Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter)

☐ My children have not complained of any of the above.

D-7

If any, where? (Please check all that apply.)

☐ Home

☐ School

☐ Neighborhood

☐ Work

☐ Elsewhere

☐ My children have not complained about any bullying, sexual harassment or cyber-bullying.

D-8

If you have children at home, have any of them complained about the following during the last month? (Please check all that apply.)

☐ N/A, I do not have children at home.

☐ My children have not complained of any of these.

☐ Anxiety

☐ Depression

☐ Suicidal thoughts

Emergency Preparedness

E-1

Do you have an emergency plan to communicate with family members during a disaster?

☐ N/A

☐ Yes

☐ No

E-2

Do you keep enough food and bottled water on hand to last 3 days?

☐ Yes

☐ No

E-3

Do you have a Winter Emergency Kit in your vehicle?

☐ I do not own a vehicle.

☐ Yes

☐ No

Access to Quality Health Care

F-1

What best describes your current employment status?

☐ Employed

☐ Under employed

☐ Unemployed

☐ Laid off

☐ Retired

☐ Homemaker

☐ Student

☐ Other:

F-2

What best describes your current health insurance status?

☐ Insured

☐ Under insured

☐ MN Health Care Program

☐ No insurance

F-3

What best describes your current health insurance deductible?

☐ No deductible

☐ Low deductible

☐ High deductible

☐ N/A

F-4

Have you been to a health care provider in the last year?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If not, why? (Please check all that apply)

☐ N/A, I have been to my health care provider.

☐ Do not go unless I am ill

☐ No insurance

☐ High deductible

☐ Other

☐ Do not have transportation

☐ Too costly

F-6

What best describes your current dental insurance status?

☐ Insured

☐ Under insured

☐ MN Health Care Program

☐ No insurance

F-7

Have you been to the dentist in the last year?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If not, why? (Please check all that apply)

☐ N/A, I have been to my dentist.

☐ No insurance

☐ No providers

☐ Painful

☐ Other:

☐ High deductible

☐ Can't get time off of work

☐ Afraid

☐ Too costly

☐ Do not have transportation

F-9

If you have children, have they been to the dentist in the last year?

☐ N/A

☐ Yes

☐ No

F-10

If not, why? (Please check all that apply)

☐ N/A, My children have been to the dentist.

☐ No insurance

☐ No providers

☐ Painful

☐ Other:

☐ High deductible

☐ Can't get time off of work

☐ Afraid

☐ Too costly

☐ Do not have transportation

F-11

If you are 65 or older or a disabled adult, do you have problems with any of the following? (Please check all that apply.)

☐ N/A, I am less than 65 years old or disabled.

☐ Caring for yourself at home

☐ Conducting routine household chores or home repairs

☐ Keeping track of medications

☐ Lack of transportation to health care services

☐ Do not have problems with any of these activities.

Economic Health

G-1

Do you feel you have access to affordable housing?

☐ Yes

☐ No

G-2

What is your main source of transportation? (pick one)

☐ Personal vehicle

☐ Friends' vehicle

☐ Volunteer driver services

☐ Other:

☐ Public transportation

☐ Bicycle

☐ Walking

G-3

Do you ever utilize: (Please check all that apply.)

☐ Ruby's Pantry

☐ Fare for All

☐ Food shelves

☐ EBT

☐ I do not use any of the above listed resources.

G-4

Do you ever feel as though you are not sure where you will get your next meal?

☐ Always

☐ Sometimes

☐ Usually

☐ Never

G-5

Do you ever feel as though you are not sure where you will spend the next night?

☐ Always

☐ Sometimes

☐ Usually

☐ Never

G-6

Do you have the resources to buy appropriate weather attire (coat, gloves, boots), and household goods (toothbrush, toilet paper, etc.)

☐ Always

☐ Sometimes

☐ Usually

☐ Never

G-7

Do you ever feel you may not have the resources to pay your next month's living expenses (mortgage/rent, heat, electricity)?

☐ Always

☐ Sometimes

☐ Usually

☐ Never

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# Itasca County Focus Group Narrative

I think we should get to know each other before starting. **Let's go around the room and share your first name and your favorite summer activity.**

Thanks for sharing everyone! Now that we know a little more about one another, we can start our discussion.

## 1. Definition of Being Healthy – 10 minutes

1. Let's start by taking turns going around the table, and share what does "being healthy" mean to you and your family?

## 2. Health Needs – 10 minutes

When [hospital] did its Community Health Needs Assessment in 2015, these were the top health needs that were selected by the hospital:

- 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
- *Show list of needs on flip chart*

1. Going back to what we just talked about – what being healthy means to you, are there any health needs in your community that should be added to this list?

- *Add any new needs to the list – note-taker*

We'll come back to this list at the end of our conversation today to talk about if any other needs should be added to this list.

## 3. Access and Barriers to Care – 45 minutes

Next, we want to talk about the difficulties or barriers you experience that keep you, your family, or your community from being healthy or from maintaining your health.

1. Whom do you turn to or where do you go when you need help with being healthy?

Debrief

5. What do you see as the role of the clinic or hospital to help you, your family, and your community to be healthy?

## 4. Prioritizing Health Needs – 10 minutes

1. Now that we've talked through different aspects of health for you, your family, and your community, let's revisit the top health needs we identified at the beginning of our conversation. Should anything new be added to this list?

- *Add any new needs to the list using a different color marker – note-taker*

Please take a moment to think about the needs listed here (including the added needs, if any) and select the **top three** you believe are the most important to address – the needs that are not being met very well right now, in your opinion, here in your community.

*Give group 1 minute to think*

1. You'll find some dot stickers on the table; when you're ready and you've decided which three of these needs you think are the most important, please come on up here and put one dot sticker next to each of those needs.

*Include entire list below along with number of dot stickers for each response*

*Note to facilitator – If only three health needs were identified, have the group rank from 1-3 (1 most important, 3 least important).*

## 5. Closing – 5 minutes

Thank you for taking the time to talk with us today about health in your community. I'm going to briefly summarize the main points I heard during our conversation today:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

- a. Spiritual leader
- b. Family or friends
- c. The internet

2. Going back again to how you described what being healthy means to you, what difficulties, barriers, or roadblocks do you experience when you are working to manage your physical or mental health? Barriers such as time or money.

Prompts –

What about:

- a. Physical environment (safe neighborhoods, transportation, proximity to grocery stores)

*If people start talking about barrier to services, let them know that our next question is about difficulties when seeking or receiving health services. Now we are interested in hearing about difficulties in managing your physical or mental health.*

3. Now, tell us what difficulties, barriers, or roadblocks you experience when seeking or receiving health services? By health services, we mean any care related to your health such as medical care, counseling, physical therapy, etc.

Prompts -

What about:

- a. The cost of care, co-pays, cost of prescriptions
- b. Don't have insurance, or have insurance – but the cost of care is still too expensive
- c. Time
- d. Language
- e. Understanding how to access care
- f. Transportation

4. Thank you for sharing about the difficulties you experience when working to manage your

1. Does this summary sound accurate? Do you have any comments or corrections?

2. We've talked about a number of different topics, are there any last thoughts you would like to share?

Closing Remarks:

- Thanks again for talking with us today.
- Information we heard to today and from other similar conversations that are taking place will be used to help create a community health needs assessment report that will be available on our website by December 31.
- We will take everything we heard from these conversations into consideration as we begin planning our programs and activities for the next three years, based on available time and resources.
- Please remember to fill out the brief questionnaire on the table in front of you and hand it to [co-facilitator]. Please do not put your names on the form.
- [Co-facilitator] also has the \$25 gift cards for everyone who participated in the conversation today, please see her/him to receive your gift card.

**Facilitator and note-taker debrief – take 15-20 minutes directly after conversation to debrief**

1. What were the key themes, key ideas?
2. What was the overall emotion/feel of the group?
3. Overall observation of the group?
4. Any clarifications? Any sticking points?
5. Any surprises?
6. Any concerns?
7. Anything else we should know about the group?
8. Any situations come up unsure how to handle – any learnings as a facilitator/note-taker. Challenges as a facilitator?

# Itasca County Prioritization Survey



### The Health of Itasca County Residents

Form description

Please select your top three concerns for the health of Itasca County residents \*

☐ Lack of transportation services

☐ Mental health and wellbeing, chemical use

☐ Healthy eating

☐ Awareness of resources

☐ Access to providers

☐ Opportunities to be active

☐ Healthcare navigation

☐ Services for seniors

☐ Parenting skills, support

☐ Poverty, homelessness

☐ Other...

What can we, as a community, do to support these initiatives?

Short answer text

# Koochiching County Health Survey

### County Health Survey

Form description

What area(s) of Koochiching County do you represent?

☐ International Falls

☐ Ranier

☐ Littlefork

☐ Big Falls

☐ Northome

☐ Mizpah

☐ Birchdale

☐ All of Koochiching County

What in Koochiching County limits the ability of our population to be healthy?

Short answer text

What in Koochiching County enables our population to be healthy?

Short answer text

What can we do to make Koochiching County a healthier place to live?

Short answer text

# Koochiching County Prioritization Survey

Prioritization of County Health Survey Results

This is a follow-up from the data we received from the County Health Survey that was collected in August and September.

What area(s) of Koochiching County do you Represent?

☐ International Falls

☐ Littlefork

☐ Ranier

☐ Northome

☐ Mizpah

☐ Big Falls

☐ Birchdale

☐ All of Koochiching County

What In Koochiching County enables our population to be healthy?

(Please choose your top 3)

☐ Outdoor Activities

☐ Fitness Centers

☐ Farmers Markets/Access to fresh fruits and vegetables

☐ Opportunities for Education

☐ Community Wellness Events

☐ Access to Transportation Options

☐ Community Services Organizations

☐ Public Programs

☐ Clinics/Hospital

☐ Close-knit Communities

What in Koochiching County limits the ability of our population to be healthy?

(Please choose your top 3)

☐ Shortage of Medical Staff

☐ Alcohol, Tobacco or Other Drug Use

☐ Lack of Insurance/Cost of Care

☐ Limited Transportation Services

☐ Limited Healthy Food Options

☐ Limited Indoor Activity Options

☐ Limited Affordable Access to Outdoor Activities

☐ Shortage of Mental Health Providers

☐ Limited Educational Opportunities on Healthy Lifestyle

☐ Limited Financial Resources

What can we do to make Koochiching County a healthier place to live?

(Please choose your top 3)

☐ Increase Affordable Active Living Opportunities

☐ Improve Access to Specialized Medicine

☐ Improve Access to Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

☐ Improve Access to Mental Health Services

☐ Education On Dangers of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs

☐ Community Events Promoting Healthy Living

☐ Education On Healthy Eating

☐ Community Education on Ways to Increase Active Living

☐ Improve Out of Town Transportation Options

☐ Promote Infrastructure Improvements (e.g. bike trails, sidewalks, indoor winter activities)