

# Sheboygan County Health Needs Assessment



A summary of key informant interviews

2017

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## Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Focus Area Ranking	2
Top Five Health Issues	3
General Themes	3
Issue Summaries	4
Mental Health	4
Alcohol and Other Drug Use	6
Nutrition	7
Chronic Disease Prevention and Management	8
Access to Health Services	10
Physical Activity	11
Injury and Violence Prevention	12
Healthy Growth and Development	14
Oral Health	15
Tobacco Use and Exposure	16
Environmental and Occupational Health	17
Communicable Disease Prevention and Control	17
Reproductive and Sexual Health	18
Appendix A	19



## Introduction

This report presents a summary of public health priorities for Sheboygan County, as identified in 2017 by a range of providers, policy-makers, and other local experts and community members (“key informants”). These findings are a critical supplement to the Sheboygan County community health needs assessment (CHNA) survey conducted through a partnership between the Aurora Health Care, Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin, HSHS St. Nicholas Hospital, Lakeshore Community Health Care, the Sheboygan County Division of Public Health, Sheboygan County UW-Extension, and United Way of Sheboygan County. The CHNA incorporates input from persons representing the broad community served by the hospitals, focusing on a range of public health issues relevant to the community at large.

Key informants in Sheboygan County were identified and interviewed by staff from Aurora Health Care, Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin, HSHS St. Nicholas Hospital, Lakeshore Community Health Care, the Sheboygan County Division of Public Health, Sheboygan County UW-Extension, and United Way of Sheboygan County during January, February, March, and April 2017. The interviewers used a standard interview script that included the following elements:

- Ranking of up to five public health issues, based on the focus areas presented in Wisconsin’s State Health Plan, that are the most important issues for the County; and
- For those five public health issues:
  - Existing strategies to address the issue
  - Barriers and challenges to addressing the issue
  - Additional strategies needed
  - Key groups in the community that hospitals should partner with to improve community health
  - Subgroups or populations where efforts could be targeted
  - Targeted efforts toward specific subgroups or populations, when applicable

All informants were made aware that participation was voluntary and that responses would be shared with the Center for Urban Population Health for analysis and reporting. This report presents the results of the 2017 CHNA key informant interviews for Sheboygan County, based on the summaries provided to the Center for Urban Population Health.

The report first presents a summary of the health issue rankings, including a list of the five issues which were ranked most frequently by respondents. The next section provides a summary of the strategies, barriers, and partners described by participants. Themes that crossed health topics are also presented.

**Limitations:** Thirty-two key informant interviews were conducted in Sheboygan County. The report relies on the opinions and experiences of a limited number of experts identified as having the community’s pulse. However, responses may not be representative of the overall perception of community strengths and needs. It is possible that the results would have been substantially different if a different set of informants had been interviewed. Results should be interpreted with caution and in conjunction with other Sheboygan County data (e.g., CHNA surveys and secondary data reports).

## A. Focus Area Ranking

A total of 32 key informants were asked to rank the 5 major health-related issues in their county from a list of 13 focus areas identified in the State Health Plan. The table below presents the results, including a summary of the number of times an issue was mentioned as a top five health issue, and the number of times an informant ranked the issue as the most important health issue. Importantly, not every informant ranked five issues and some informants selected, but did not rank, their priority health issues.

Health Focus Area	Key Informant Rankings	
	Top 5	Number 1
Mental Health	30	11
Alcohol and Other Drug Use	27	9
Nutrition	15	0
Chronic Disease Prevention and Management	14	3
Access to Health Services	13	3
Physical Activity	11	2
Injury and Violence Prevention	11	0
Healthy Growth and Development	9	3
Oral Health	5	0
Tobacco Use and Exposure	3	0
Environmental and Occupational Health	1	0
Communicable Disease Prevention and Control	1	0
Reproductive and Sexual Health	0	0

## B. Top Five Health Issues

The five health issues ranked most consistently as a top five health issue for the County were:

1. Mental Health
2. Alcohol and Other Drug Use
3. Nutrition
4. Chronic Disease Prevention and Management
5. Access to Health Services

Summaries of themes for each issue are presented below in the order listed above. As a guide, issues ranked as the top five priorities for the County are marked with this thermometer symbol:



## C. General Themes

Sheboygan County key informants ranked five of the thirteen major health-related issues as priorities for the County.

It is important to note that since the last release of this report in 2013, the report has changed slightly. Twice as many key informants were interviewed in 2017 than in 2013. The top five health issues are somewhat similar, with Alcohol and Other Drug Use and Chronic Disease Prevention and Management remaining in the top five. Communicable Disease Prevention and Control, and Environmental and Occupational Health have moved out of the top five and were ranked much lower in 2017, while Healthy Growth and Development was ranked only slightly lower in 2017, and Mental Health, Nutrition, and Access to Health Services have moved into the top five in 2017.

The health issues key informants indicated were priorities for Sheboygan County affect residents across the lifespan, requiring engagement across sectors to adequately address residents' needs. Key informants identified a wide range of stakeholders and community partners engaged to improve the county's health. The Sheboygan County Division of Public Health, Sheboygan County Health and Human Services, Lakeshore Community Health Care, Healthy Sheboygan County 2020, the major health systems, other medical and social service providers, non-profits, businesses, law enforcement, schools, parks and recreation departments and government were all included in the discussion as playing an active role in the health priority areas. The county's parks, trails, lakeshore and local agriculture were also named as unique features that support the health of the county across several health issue areas.

Many of the challenges and barriers identified by key informants across issues have to do with lack of funding for necessary services and programs, or lack of access caused by insufficient means or

insurance to pay for needed services. Other common barriers and challenges noted across issues are related to access: lack of transportation, location, lack of familiarity with resources, and language barriers for the Hmong and Hispanic communities. Another commonly cited barrier was lack of awareness of resources or services that do exist.

Key informants identified strategies needed to improve the health of the county. For many issues discussed, more education and public awareness are important. Other needs identified are related to health insurance policy and payment for services, and better systems of care that offer options for low-income patients. Across health issues, key informants also emphasized the need to have services and resources available to meet health needs across the lifespan, with many recommendations for how to reach young children and their families, as well as aging and older adults. Key informants also recognized the need to meet racial and ethnic minorities where they are, with a focus on linguistically and culturally appropriate services for Hmong and Hispanic residents in the county.

## **D. Issue Summaries**

### **Behavioral Health**

Alcohol and Other Drug Use and Mental Health were the two issues receiving the most rankings in key informants' top five health focus areas. All key informants discussed Mental Health or Alcohol and Drug Use as top priority areas, with many discussing both. Mental Health received the most rankings as the number one health issue in the county. Key informants' insights also suggest these topics overlap significantly with the issue of Access to Health Services, with the main barriers and challenges to addressing both Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drug Use being a lack of providers and services, waiting lists to access providers and services, difficulty paying for services or lack of coverage by insurance for services or medication, and difficulty physically accessing services without a transportation programs for those who cannot or do not drive. There was also some overlap in key informants' suggestions for what is needed to address these two related issues, with a focus on cross-sectoral partnerships and patient navigation to bridge gaps in care, sharing and promoting effective community resources, recruiting more providers to work in the county, and a desire to focus on education and prevention of substance abuse and mental illness.



### **Mental Health**

Thirty key informants ranked Mental Health as a top five health issue for the county. General themes related to this issue are the strength and importance of cross-sector partnerships to address mental health wherever people are living their lives, and the necessity of acknowledging this issue across the life course, and engaging families and communities to identify, prevent, and treat mental illness.

*Existing Strategies:* Though there is a shortage of providers, some providers do exist within the county at hospitals and clinics. Providers are embracing trauma informed care, becoming patient-centered. A treatment court, Mental Health America in Sheboygan County, Lakeshore Community Health Care, the Veterans Administration, Safe Harbor, the We Honor Veterans program, collaboration within the community between private and public services to address issues, having a behavioral health inpatient facility, having a drop-in center, building momentum around addressing mental health in schools, Healthy Sheboygan County 2020, Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT), 24-hour crisis telephone line, and the Zero Suicide in Wisconsin initiative are other examples of strategies in place to support Mental Health in the county.

*Barriers and Challenges:* A shortage of mental health providers; lack of knowledge of where to go for the services that do exist; lack of services for those who cannot pay or are un/under-insured; gaps in insurance coverage; social stigma around discussing mental health and mental illness; systems of care can be confusing to navigate; lack of psychotherapists to come to nursing care facilities; and high levels of stress and isolation among some parts of the county were named as major barriers or challenges to addressing Mental Health in the county.

*Needed Strategies:* More partnerships and working together to connect patients to services; more providers for dementia patients, especially in crisis situations; increased outreach efforts and more bilingual resources and service providers for Asian and Latino communities; more understanding of the connections between mental health and alcohol and drug abuse; further incorporation of mental health into primary health care; continued focus on SBIRT in schools and expansion beyond school settings; more individual practitioners at the table to collaborate; more in-patient facilities; a greater emphasis on infant and early childhood mental; and recruiting more child psychiatrists to work in the county are strategies key informants recommended to address Mental Health.

*Key Community Partners to Improve Health:* Health systems and health care providers, mental health providers, law enforcement, courts, the Aging and Disability Resource Center, churches and faith communities, Sheboygan County Health and Human Services, civic organizations, schools, Mental Health America in Sheboygan County, United Way of Sheboygan County, Family Resource Center of Sheboygan County, YMCA, community businesses, child care providers, teen groups, veterans, and senior centers were named as key partners in the community who can work together to improve health.

*Subgroups/populations where efforts could be targeted and how efforts can be targeted:* The population of patients with dementia should be reached with crisis intervention assistance and additional staff trained to handle crisis situations. Children and youth can be reached at school and schools can be utilized as a health partner. Mental health should also be included with Health a part of the curriculum. SBIRT could also be used to reach children and youth in schools. Males in their mid-50s have a high rate of suicide. They could potentially be reached through workplace wellness campaigns, billboards, and awareness campaigns. Low-income patients may need extra help

understanding the financial structures of the services and connection to services that are available to them.



### **Alcohol and Other Drug Use**

Twenty-seven respondents ranked Alcohol and Other Drug Use as a top five health issue for the county. Key themes related to Alcohol and Drug Use include the need for better access to treatment and services, increased awareness of the services and supports that do exist and how to access them, and the importance of multi-sectoral work to reduce gaps in care and provide wrap around support.

*Existing Strategies:* The VA medical system, Samaritan's Hand, Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous, drug drop off programs, Drug Court, monitoring in wrap around services, early education for prevention, SBIRT in schools, law enforcement addressing drinking and driving and policies in place at the state level, education on prescription drug abuse, use of Narcan, family therapy, Healthy Sheboygan County 2020, and the 24-hour crisis telephone line are examples of strategies in place to address Alcohol and Drug Use in the county.

*Barriers and Challenges:* Providers sometimes overlook mental health issues during treatment for alcohol or drug abuse, lack of recovery resources for veterans, lack of recognition of trauma, lack of awareness of the resources that are available, cultural acceptance of alcohol abuse, lack of funding, overutilization of the emergency department among drug-seeking patients, change in Wisconsin's Chapter 51 law makes it difficult for hospitals to help overdose patients, and people's lack of familiarity or awareness of positive coping strategies continue to be barriers and challenges to addressing Alcohol and Other Drug Use in the county.

*Needed Strategies:* Specific treatment and programs for veterans who have experienced trauma, more of a focus on alcohol as a serious problem, more thorough navigation to and through treatment or services, start recovery in jails, administering Vivitrol upon release from jails, coordination with faith-based organizations and public services, decriminalization and destigmatization of drug use, more recovery coaches and peer specialists, increased availability of affordable housing and transitional living, availability of a Suboxone clinic, address continuity of care between systems, increase awareness around Heroin, Opiate, Prevention, and Education (HOPE) Agenda Legislation, and more prescriber education of problems with abuse are strategies identified by key informants as necessary to address substance abuse in the county.

*Key Community Partners to Improve Health:* Treatment providers, health systems, health care providers, pharmacists, schools, law enforcement, the VA medical system, non-profit organizations, producers of media, county Health and Human Services, Mental Health American in Sheboygan County, employers, bars and restaurants, YMCA, legislators, transportation companies, liquor stores, the Division of Public Health, and recovery support groups were identified as the key partners

needed to do this work in the county. One key informant said public and private sector cooperation is needed, rather than keeping them separate. Additionally, one informant noted, “*We have everyone. It’s more about resources and getting groups to move on issues.*”

*Subgroups/populations where efforts could be targeted and how efforts can be targeted:* The aging population can be reached through gerontologists or their primary health care providers. Non-English speaking members of the community could be reached through those who speak their preferred language providing education and assistance to them. Low-income neighborhoods can be reached with wrap around services and use of long-term relational models. Middle school-aged children can be reached through programs where they work with high school-aged students to have dialogue about behavioral health issues. It was also suggested conversations and education with children about coping with stress should begin as early as in elementary school.



## **Nutrition**

Nutrition was ranked as a top five health issue by 15 key informants. Discussion of Nutrition included some overlap with Chronic Disease Prevention. Most respondents addressed healthy cooking and eating across the lifespan, especially within the family context and between multiple generations. Many responses also directly addressed food access and hunger in the county as it relates to nutrition.

*Existing Strategies:* Key informants named schools with healthy lunch programs, summer lunch programs, employers offering healthy vending options, meal sites and home meal delivery programs for seniors, community gardens, farmers’ markets, education for farmers, food banks/pantries, health education in schools, diabetes education programs, social workers to link patients to food access, the FoodShare program, restaurants offering healthy menu options, the Women Infants and Children (WIC) Program, and the Healthy Sheboygan 2020 Sheboygan County Activity and Nutrition (SCAN) Committee as strategies in place to promote nutrition and address hunger in the county.

*Barriers and Challenges:* Key informants named some barriers and challenges that make it difficult to address food access and promotion of healthy foods: Poverty and the cost of healthy choices, busy lives and competing demands on people’s time, aggressive marketing of junk food and fast food, lack of a robust network of food pantries across the county, cultural norms around food that encourage consumption of high calorie foods and beverages in large portions, bad habits or lack of knowledge are passed from parents to children, a general lack of knowledge of cooking skills, lack of transportation to reach healthy food options, lack of nutrition education or general misunderstandings about what “healthy” means, unhealthy diets lead to problems with uncontrolled chronic disease, and stress in people’s lives.

*Needed Strategies:* Recommendations for additional strategies to address nutrition and hunger in the county include the following: Systemically address food systems and access to food, additional

changes to promote healthier options in public vending machines, more outreach and community education to seniors because they influence their children and grandchildren, changes to bring more healthy options to food service programs, more donations and funding for nutritious food access, outreach and education to parents and their children, education and demonstrations about how to prepare healthy foods at home, more gardens at schools, and integrated health and nutrition promotion in schools, health care, and other community settings.

*Key Community Partners to Improve Health:* United Way of Sheboygan County, food banks and food pantries, schools, health systems and health care providers, Health and Human Services, local restaurants and grocers, culinary schools, local farmers, employers, farmers' markets coordinators, nutritionists, legislators, the Division of Public Health, UW-Extension, Family Resource Center of Sheboygan County, parents, Healthy Sheboygan County 2020, and Meals on Wheels were named as key partners that can be engaged to improve health related to nutrition in the county.

*Subgroups/populations where efforts could be targeted and how efforts can be targeted:* Children and youth need to be targeted with messages about prevention and taking better care of themselves to prevent more serious problems and higher health care costs later in life. Young adults, college students, and low-income individuals could benefit from learning cooking and grocery shopping skills while they have time to develop healthy habits for the rest of adulthood and to teach to their families in the future. The group of people who makes too much money to receive nutrition benefits, but doesn't quite earn enough to have a stable food budget might benefit from education on meal planning and budgeting and should also be engaged in the planning and implementation of nutrition programming. It was suggested Hispanic families could be reached with education through Hispanic churches. Children should be reached with nutrition education at schools and employees should be reached in their workplaces. Grocery stores should offer nutrition and cooking education on site, including promotion of local foods. Rural families, especially women who do food purchasing and preparation, can be reached through organizations like UW-Extension and the Sheboygan County Association for Home and Community Education (HCE).



### **Chronic Disease Prevention and Management**

Chronic Disease Prevention and Management was ranked as a top five health issue by 14 key informants. Key informants' discussion of this issue identified overlap between Chronic Disease Prevention and Management and Nutrition, Physical Activity, Tobacco Use and Exposure, and Access to Health Services.

*Existing Strategies:* Health systems and health care providers, Lakeshore Community Health Care, the VA medical system, the Division of Public Health, Health and Human Services, the Alzheimer's Association, the Aging and Disability Resource Center, awareness campaigns, home health agencies, community partners talking about the issues together, drug drop boxes, Healthy Sheboygan County 2020, physical activity programs and organized activities, environmental strategies to increase

opportunities for physical activity, healthy selections at grocery stores, health screenings, farmers' markets, community dialogue about advance directives and end-of-life issues, workshops offered by the county, employee wellness programs at worksites, and prevention programs and education were named as strategies in place to address Chronic Disease.

*Barriers and Challenges:* Lack of access to health services for people who cannot afford health care, who cannot access transportation, or who cannot get into an appointment in a timely manner was named as a major barrier to addressing this issue. Other barriers or challenges to addressing Chronic Disease include: Individuals' lack of understanding of their own illnesses and treatments; lack of awareness of supports that are available; lack of motivation for behavior change; unhealthy diets, sedentary lifestyles, stress, alcohol use, and tobacco use that lead to illness; elderly populations are sometimes struggling with multiple health issues; lack of a supportive culture and the easy options are rarely the healthiest options; challenges related to being a caregiver and managing one's own health issues; and a focus on immediate situations rather than long-term solutions.

*Needed Strategies:* Discussions about the importance of self-care; better research about occupational factors that contribute to Veterans developing chronic illness; more community awareness and education; more upstream approaches for prevention; use of technology to aid caregivers; more support groups; more nutrition education in schools; more physical activity opportunities in schools and workplaces; increased taxes on tobacco products and unhealthy foods; more evidence-based strategies to address dementia, healthy aging, and fall prevention; and more practitioners addressing health holistically are strategies key informants offered for improving health.

*Key Community Partners to Improve Health:* Health systems and health care providers, the Aging and Disability Resource Center, Lakeshore Community Health Care, Generations, employers, churches and faith communities, military and veterans service organizations, law enforcement, school districts, teen groups, senior centers, retirement communities, legislators, and chambers of commerce were named as the key partners to work together to address this issue.

*Subgroups/populations where efforts could be targeted and how efforts can be targeted:* The elderly and aging adult population can be addressed by highlighting health issues like Alzheimer's and dementia within public health efforts. More broadly, it might also be helpful to work with state and national leaders to bring attention to the importance of addressing aging issues. Children and youth can be addressed through schools and lunch programs. Hispanic residents might be reached through Hispanic churches or other relevant social connections. Employees can be reached through employers. Employees who are getting ready to retire could receive end of life decision making guidance or education through their workplace's human resources department or employee assistance program. Some populations who have serious or multiple chronic conditions, or those who have low levels of education or literacy may benefit from having navigation assistance, or being

guided step-by-step through the processes of getting to appointments, obtaining medication and supplies, and managing their health.



### **Access to Health Services**

Thirteen key informants ranked Access to Health Services among their top five health priorities for the county. Responses to this topic highlighted overlap with other health issues, namely Alcohol and Other Drug Use, Mental Health, and Oral Health.

*Existing Strategies:* Strategies in place to address Access to Health Services include existing health services such as Lakeshore Community Health Care, clinics, hospitals, outpatient drug and alcohol treatment programs, urgent care departments, emergency departments, dedicated nurse practitioners in nursing homes, and increased health insurance coverage through the Affordable Care Act. Other approaches include networks of ancillary services, prevention, resources, and referrals to services. This includes the information and assistance offered by the county's Department of Health and Human Services, the Aging and Disability Resource Center, Mental Health America in Sheboygan County, the Salvation Army, United Way of Sheboygan County, and 2-1-1.

*Barriers and Challenges:* Barriers named by most key informants included the high cost of services and insurance, and lack of funding for assistance, programs, and resources. Other barriers named included limited hours for appointments, lack of access to transportation to get to appointments, a limited number of providers, especially in smaller communities and within specialties, undocumented families may be afraid to seek care, lack of primary care and medical homes for families, and a lack of services to make sure patients are connected when they are referred to other providers.

*Needed Strategies:* Key informants named the following as strategies to address barriers to accessing health services: Recruiting additional health care providers to Sheboygan County, especially mental health, dental, behavioral health, and specialty care providers; more providers that will accept Medicaid or sliding fee scale payment; more providers that offer appointments outside of a traditional business day schedule; additional transportation options, especially evenings and weekends; paramedicine services; community education about the appropriate places to seek care (i.e. primary care vs. urgent care vs. emergency department); partnerships between health care and education, law enforcement, and other sectors; have up-to-date resource lists or databases publicly available; additional financial support from foundations; and improved communication across systems and in between providers to prevent patients from "falling through the cracks."

*Key Community Partners to Improve Health:* Health systems and health care providers, specialty care providers, transportation companies, employers, Sheboygan County Health and Human Services, the Division of Public Health, school districts, informal leaders within the community, local government and legislators, insurance companies, representatives from churches and faith communities, and

United Way of Sheboygan County were named as key partners to be engaged in efforts to promote Access to Health Services. One key informant stated they believe everyone is already at the table.

*Subgroups/populations where efforts could be targeted and how efforts can be targeted:* It was suggested the working poor might be best reached through partnerships with employers. People being re-integrated following incarceration may need to be reached right as they are coming out of prison or a detention center. An additional idea to reach this group is coordination between the Department of Corrections and the Department of Health and Human Services as people are released. Another idea provided is universal screening to prevent people from entering the criminal justice system in the first place. Children and teens should be reached at school. Patients who have Medicaid or are un/under-insured may require additional communication between systems, better transportation options, and may benefit from workplace wellness programs. One key informant believes the whole community needs to be targeted by getting “*the right services at the right place.*”

### **Physical Activity**

Eleven respondents ranked Physical Activity as a top five health issue for the county.

*Existing Strategies:* Key informants emphasized the natural geography of the county lends itself to opportunities for outdoor physical activity, identifying trails, parks, the lakeshore, and bike paths as assets to the county. Other opportunities or strategies for physical activity identified by key informants include: employee wellness programs and incentives at work, parks and recreation departments in the county, fitness centers, Healthy Sheboygan County 2020, Sheboygan County YMCA programs, programming at schools, community events that promote physical activity (i.e. fun runs), sports clubs, and physical activity programs specifically for seniors (e.g. Silver Sneakers, arthritis exercise groups).

*Barriers and Challenges:* Key informants named lack of youth programming, lack of resources in more rural areas of the county, sedentary habits of parents being passed to children, lack of access (i.e. financial, transportation, time), concern for children’s safety when playing outside, lack of indoor facilities to use in winter, crowding in schools and decreased time for physical activity in the school day, busy family schedules, lack of funding or support for programs that do exist, declining interest of children to participate in sports, screen time replacing active play, and lack of motivation to change behaviors as challenges to increasing physical activity in the county.

*Needed Strategies:* Continued support and education for families to incorporate physical activity into their daily lives, community fitness challenges and more community events, more encouragement of children’s participation in athletics, more low-cost opportunities for families, employer-encouraged walking breaks and other healthy choices at work, increased funding for physical education in schools, indoor walking areas during winter months, transportation services to

get people to programs, and more collaboration across sectors and organizations in the community were identified as strategies needed to improve health in the county.

*Key Community Partners to Improve Health:* Schools, employers, health and fitness clubs, park and recreation departments, YMCAs, local and county government, the non-profit community, child care providers, the Parents as Teachers program, health systems, legislators, parents, and coaches were identified as key partners to work on improving physical activity in the county.

*Subgroups/populations where efforts could be targeted:* A variety of broad groups were named: adults with families, church groups, fitness centers, senior citizens, low-income residents and neighborhoods, and adolescents.

*How efforts can be targeted:* Not all respondents who identified specific populations offered suggestions for targeted efforts to reach them. For adults, it was suggested a wellness record could be tied to the medical record and incentives could be provided for positive behaviors. For seniors, expansion of programs like Silver Sneakers was recommended. At worksites, activity challenges or competitions among employees was suggested.

### **Injury and Violence Prevention**

Injury and Violence Prevention was ranked as a top five health issue by 11 respondents. Key informants' responses focused on a few different topics including intimate partner/domestic violence, sexual assault, injuries from falls, violent crimes, child abuse, and child safety issues.

*Existing Strategies:* Related to domestic violence and abuse, sexual assault, and child abuse, services and partnerships provided by Safe Harbor, sexual assault nurse examiners (SANE) are embedded within the Aurora Health Care system, child deaths are reviewed, and the Child Advocacy Center is being developed. Regarding fall injury prevention, Sheboygan County has fall prevention programming, and there is greater awareness of the need for accommodations for individuals with mobility issues. Regarding violent crimes, police departments address these after the crimes occur, law enforcement departments are interconnected, and several key informants reported there are positive connections between law enforcement and local organizations, such as Safe Harbor, Aurora Health Care, and Victim Witness, and between police departments and social workers. Law enforcement officers are also trained in trauma informed care. Regarding the medical treatment of injuries in general, local clinics and health care providers, and Lakeshore Community Health Care were named as service providers.

*Barriers and Challenges:* For domestic violence and abuse, there is a stigma related to these issues that can prevent people from seeking help and can prevent community acknowledgement that these issues are a problem where they live, and alcohol and drug abuse can escalate violent situations. Regarding childhood injury prevention, there is a lack of funding or availability for car

seat checks, helmets, and other preventive safety measures. Regarding fall injury prevention, lack of awareness of the serious nature and prevalence of these injuries, winter weather, and lack of enforcement of municipal policies to keep walkways clear are barriers to prevention. Regarding injuries from violent crimes, drugs are often part of these situations. More generally, there is a lack of funding or availability of alcohol and other substance abuse treatment, the media landscape and some prevailing attitudes of tolerance for violence and individual entitlement contribute to violence, the tendency for violence to be perpetuated intergenerationally through families and the difficulty breaking those cycles, and a general focus on punishment rather than prevention were named as challenges in addressing injury and violence prevention.

*Needed Strategies:* To address domestic violence and abuse, key informants recommended a program for offenders, having a domestic violence court, and maternal and child health home visiting and a Safe Mom, Safe Baby program for pregnant women and women with infants that would provide case management and safety planning. In terms of violence prevention, it was suggested educating youth about conflict resolution, healthy relationships, and consent is a needed strategy. Another recommendation is to have more open dialogue and outreach about violence awareness and to have more providers in the community trained in trauma informed care. To address family and child safety more generally, respondents suggested working together as a community with a unified message, doing targeted outreach to children and families and having accessible programming available regardless of income, and having programs to promote safety related to bike helmets, gun locks, and door stops. To address fall prevention, more outreach and education are needed, specifically for the aging and elderly populations, and for the community more broadly. It was also suggested businesses could do more to make sure their locations are clear and accessible for all customers and municipalities can better enforce policies related to snow removal and pedestrian crossings.

*Key Community Partners to Improve Health:* A wide array of partners were named as being important to efforts to prevent violence and injuries in the county: Law enforcement, health systems and health care providers, Health and Human Services, United Way of Sheboygan County, local government and public works departments, Safe Harbor, the District Attorney's Office, Hmong organizations, Healthy Sheboygan County 2020, local companies' human resources representatives, school districts, first responders, physical and occupational therapists, and non-profit organizations.

*Subgroups/populations where efforts could be targeted and how efforts can be targeted:* Men, particularly former abusers, rapists, and sex work consumers, could be addressed with treatment and conversations about violence and their roles in prevention. Low-income individuals and families could be reached with support groups or skills-building groups to address friendship, healthy relationships, and boundaries. The aging population could be addressed by partnerships through organizations that work with older adults. Children can be addressed by stabilizing homes and families, coordinating efforts when there is crisis in homes, and identifying girls and young women who have experienced trauma and reaching them to avoid their being targeted for human trafficking. It was also suggested that entire county could be addressed with messaging to raise

awareness about problems that do exist. One key informant recommended the Hmong community could be reached by doing outreach to group leaders or planning a Hmong cultural festival. Other groups recommended for targeted outreach include pregnant women, racial and ethnic minority groups generally, and individuals and families living in poverty, though specific efforts to reach these groups were not described.

### **Healthy Growth and Development**

Healthy Growth and Development was ranked as a top five health issue by nine respondents. Responses to this health issue were focused mainly on early childhood growth and development.

*Existing Strategies:* The development of a Child Advocacy Center; the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program, Well Baby care; community trauma informed care, training in trauma informed care, and the work Sheboygan County Health and Human Services is doing to promote trauma informed care; the work of the Family Resource Center of Sheboygan County, Sheboygan County YMCA Programs, and the Sheboygan Area School District's Early Learning Center; services and case management offered by health care providers; the Reach Out and Read program; the Birth to 3 program; community education for young families; developmental screening; the work of Family Connections, Inc.; Welcome Baby through the United Way; and family programming through Lakeshore Community Action Program (CAP) were named as existing strategies in place to promote Healthy Growth and Development in the county.

*Barriers and Challenges:* Respondents identified a lack of funding and resources for the programs that do exist, difficulty engaging families, difficulty reaching families who could benefit from existing programs, community segregation, poverty, lack of follow up screening for children's growth and development, the amount of time children spend in front of screens, declining literacy levels and levels of healthy social interaction, lack of quality childcare options that are affordable for working families, lack of social workers to fill the demand for case management, un/under-employment to adequately provide for families, early childhood work is often done in silos, existing cycles of negative behaviors, lack of knowledge base among parents, parents' fear of accessing services, and language or cultural differences as challenges to improving this health issue in the county.

*Needed Strategies:* More parent education, more providers trained in trauma informed care, more education for youth and teenagers about the responsibilities of parenting and working on healthy relationships, more support for families to encourage education and literacy, more opportunities for developmental screening, a child care safety net, more funding and resources for programs that do exist, increased health literacy among parents, Parent Cafes, and increased community awareness and acceptance of growth and development issues were named and strategies that could be implemented to improve health. Another recommendation was greater partnership between organizations, programs, and services that currently serve children and families in this community.

*Key Community Partners to Improve Health:* Lakeshore CAP, Family Connections, Inc., the Family Resource Center, United Way of Sheboygan County, non-profit organizations, health care providers and health systems, legislators, schools, business leaders, individual citizens, local government, Sheboygan County Head Start, Rainbow Kids, adult literacy programs, child care providers, Healthy Sheboygan County 2020, and WIC providers were named as community partners who can work together to improve health in the county.

*Subgroups/populations where efforts could be targeted:* Parents of children from birth to five years, low-income families, Hispanic women, English language learners, grade school and middle school aged children, and mothers who are addicted to drugs or alcohol were named as specific groups that might benefit from targeted efforts.

*How efforts can be targeted:* For young children and their parents, special programming and events can be offered with a focus on offering universal developmental screening, literacy programming, and education about brain development. Primary care physicians' offices were named as a site to reach out to families. Low-income families may need more supportive services such as assistance with transportation and child care. It was recommended that reaching English language learners and Hispanic families is easier with a more diverse early childhood workforce so families can connect with providers that know their language and culture. Connecting with families at churches was provided as an idea to reach more families where they are. Finally, it was suggested that a collective impact model might be useful to work together to better serve everyone in the community.

## **Oral Health**

Five key informants ranked Oral Health among their top five health issues for the county. Responses to this issue overlapped with responses related to Access to Health Services.

*Existing Strategies:* Key informants cited providers in the county currently providing dental services, particularly those that can meet the needs of low-income patients, including Lakeshore Community Health Care. They also named specific dental programs or coverage for veterans, children, and low-income individuals. Other strategies include school-based oral health programs, the work of the Sheboygan County Oral Health Partnership, and sealant programs for children.

*Barriers and Challenges:* Barriers to improving oral health in the county are mainly issues of access, such as a shortage of dentists, long waiting lists for appointments, lack of transportation to appointments, lack of insurance coverage or Medicaid coverage for services, high costs of dental insurance or out of pocket costs for services. Other barriers or challenges named by key informants are a lack of resources or capacity to have programs in all schools, lack of education about oral health in young children and lack of knowledge about where to go for help, and issues related to poor nutrition.

*Needed Strategies:* Key informants discussed the following strategies that could improve oral health in the county: Increased partnerships with Lakeshore Community Health Care, developing an oral health master plan for the county, more options for veterans, more local providers who are willing to see low-income patients, better reimbursement for dental services through Medicaid, and providing oral health programs in all schools.

*Key Community Partners to Improve Health:* Lakeshore Community Health Care, local dentists and oral health care providers, state legislators, physicians, schools, professional dental organizations, Sheboygan County Public Health, and the Marquette University dental program were named as key partners to be engaged in efforts to improve oral health.

*Subgroups/populations where efforts could be targeted:* School-aged children, patients who have Medicaid and who are uninsured or underinsured, and senior citizens were named as specific groups who could benefit from targeted efforts.

*How efforts can be targeted:* No suggestions or recommendations were provided.

### **Tobacco Use and Exposure**

Three key informants ranked Tobacco Use and Exposure among their top five health priority areas.

*Existing Strategies:* Tobacco product label changes, anti-smoking campaigns, increasing the age at which consumers can purchase tobacco products, increasing the prices of and taxes on tobacco products, smoking cessation programs, and policies designating tobacco free campuses and workplaces were named as strategies that have worked to address Tobacco Use and Exposure in the county.

*Barriers and Challenges:* The addictive nature of nicotine and tobacco products, the prevalence and marketing of electronic cigarettes, specifically the marketing of electronic cigarettes to minors, and a lack of prevention programs and education to address all age groups were named as challenges to addressing this issue.

*Needed Strategies:* More tobacco-free public spaces, neighborhoods, and housing; more messaging about quitting; raising the smoking age to 21; increased taxes on tobacco products; Medicaid payment for smoking cessation programs; more education about the dangers of electronic cigarettes; and a change in marketing strategies to tobacco products to make products less desirable to children are strategies needed to address this issue.

*Key Community Partners to Improve Health:* Schools, tobacco product retailers, tavern owners, policy makers, “big tobacco” companies, and physicians were named as key partners needed to address tobacco cessation in the county.

*Subgroups/populations where efforts could be targeted:* School-age children, youth, and teenagers; low-income adults; and tavern owners were named as specific populations that could benefit from targeted efforts.

*How efforts can be targeted:* Children and youth can be reached through marketing campaigns, classroom education, and programming in schools and through sports leagues, clubs, or programming. It was also suggested youth could be reached via policies or laws that restrict marketing or sales of tobacco products to youth. Low-income adults could potentially be reached at food pantries.

### **Environmental and Occupational Health**

Environmental and Occupational Health was ranked as a top-five health issue by one key informant.

*Existing Strategies:* Tractor safety courses, pesticide application training and a new annual training for farmers to provide to employees about pesticides, and regulations for farm equipment safety were identified as strategies in place to address this issue.

*Barriers and Challenges:* This key informant named a lack of awareness of the potential for injury, lack of implementation of safety precautions, and the presence of lead paint in older homes as the key barriers related to addressing this issue in the county.

*Needed Strategies:* Building awareness about the potential for injuries, and equipment manufacturers or dealers working with farmers and employees to educate them on safe operation of machinery are strategies suggested by key informants to improve health in this area.

*Key Community Partners to Improve Health:* Members of the agricultural industry, cooperatives, UW-Extension, equipment dealers, veterinarians (as a site of outreach), and regulatory agencies, like the Department of Natural Resources, were named as the key partners in the county to improve health in this area.

*Subgroups/populations where efforts could be targeted:* Hispanic agricultural workers are a key population.

*How efforts can be targeted:* Outreach and training can be done through farm and business owners. Another potential site for outreach is through churches.

### **Communicable Disease Prevention and Control**

Communicable Disease Prevention and Control was ranked as a top-five health issue by one key informant.

*Existing Strategies:* This key informant identified the work of the Sheboygan County Immunization Coalition as a strategy to address communicable diseases in the county.

*Barriers and Challenges:* Lack of education about vaccinations and outbreaks of communicable diseases among children due to lack of vaccinations were identified as key barriers or challenges to addressing this issue.

*Needed Strategies:* An additional strategy needed to improve health is increasing immunization rates, perhaps by providing additional education about immunizations at physicians' offices.

*Key Community Partners to Improve Health:* Schools, physicians, and Sheboygan County Public Health are the key county partners needed to improve health related to this issue.

*Subgroups/populations where efforts could be targeted:* None were identified for this issue.

### **Reproductive and Sexual Health**

Reproductive and Sexual Health was not ranked as one of the top health-related priorities for the county. Neither existing strategies nor barriers were described.

## Appendix A. Interview Participants for Sheboygan County

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### Key Informant Interview Participants

Thirty-two individuals participated in key informant interviews about our community's most pressing health needs. The organizations listed here include many that serve low-income, minority, and medically underserved populations. They represent an array of perspectives from communities that include, but are not limited to: racial and ethnic minorities, the elderly, youth, veterans, faith communities, individuals with disabilities, rural and agricultural communities, survivors of domestic and sexual violence, and those living with mental illness and substance abuse.

Name	Title	Organization
Betsy Alles	Executive Director	Sheboygan County Chamber of Commerce
Kate Baer	Executive Director	Mental Health American in Sheboygan County
Jerry Baker	Clinic Administrator	Aurora Sheboygan Clinic
Mike Ballweg	Agriculture Agent	Sheboygan County UW-Extension
Phillip Bock	Reporter	Sheboygan Press
Charles (Chuck) Butler	Deputy Fire Chief & City Emergency Manager	City of Sheboygan
Charlene K. Cobb	Veterans Service Officer	Sheboygan County
Dale Deterding	Elder Services Supervisor	Sheboygan County Health and Human Services
Christopher Domagalski	Chief of Police	Sheboygan Police Department
Tom Eggebrecht	Director	Sheboygan County Health and Human Services
Gregory Grose, MD	Chief Medical Officer	Prevea Health System
Heidi Gudmundson	Executive Director	Sheboygan County Interfaith Organization
Lori Knitt	Chief Nursing Officer	Aurora Sheboygan Memorial Medical Center
Kent (Kully) Kollath	Director	Samaritan's Hand
David Leffin	Medical Examiner	Sheboygan County
Gina Lemmenes	Director of Nursing	Pine Haven Christian Communities
Mary Martin	Chief Nursing Officer	HSHS St. Nicholas Hospital
Dan Mella	Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction	Plymouth School District
Ruth Orozco	Community Resource Specialist	Lakeshore Community Action Program (CAP)
Matricia Patterson	Executive Director	Family Connections, Inc.
Adam Payne	County Administrator	Sheboygan County
Todd Priebe	Sheriff	Sheboygan County Sheriff's Office
Karlyn Raddatz	Health Officer	Sheboygan County Public Health
Laura Roenitz	Executive Director	Safe Harbor of Sheboygan County
Ruth Ruiz	Social Work, Child & Family Resource Unit	Sheboygan County Health and Human Services

Craig Schicker	Emergency Services Manager; Board Vice President	Aurora Sheboygan Memorial Medical Center; Orange Cross Ambulance
Vicky Schneider	Operations Manager	Generations
Laura Schwartzburg	Deputy Executive Director	United Way of Sheboygan County
Kristin Stearns	CEO	Lakeshore Community Health Center
LuAnn Travis	Executive Director	Family Resource Center of Sheboygan County
Donna Wendlandt	President	Sheboygan County YMCA
Miva Yang	Public Health Nurse	Sheboygan County Public Health