



Vilas County Public Health Department

Physical Address: 302 West Pine Street

Mailing Address: 330 Court Street • Eagle River, WI 54521

715-479-3656 • 866-845-2726 • Fax: 715-479-3741

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Contact: Gina Egan, Vilas County Public Health Department: giegan@co.vilas.wi.us

Forest, Oneida and Vilas County Community Health Improvement Plan

Becoming the healthiest nation is this year's theme for National Public Health Week! There could not be a better time to announce the completion of the Forest, Oneida and Vilas County Health Improvement Plan!

"This multi-county plan is a collaboration among health departments, community members, health care partners, local elected officials, tribal health partners, and other government agencies," said Gina Egan, Health Officer, Vilas County Public Health Department. "Local health departments and hospitals are required to complete a local health assessment and because there are many agencies that serve all three counties, it made sense to collaborate on one health improvement plan."

The top three priority health issues identified in the Community Health Assessment were the following: Chronic Disease, Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse, and Mental Health. The Community Health Improvement Plan includes goals, along with suggested strategies to improve those health issues. The intent of the plan is to provide an outline for the many coalitions that are already working to improve the health of our residents and to foster new partnerships.

"Health is not something we get at a doctor's office; it starts in our homes, schools and work places, and playgrounds and parks", stated Egan. "The strategies in the plan provide examples of programs that have been shown to be effective. However, it also stresses that we need to improve our physical and social environment and implement policies to make healthy behaviors the easy choice."

The next steps are to share this plan with the community and work with existing coalitions to implement the strategies and measure success toward the goals. A copy of the Community Health Improvement Plan can be found on Vilas County Public Health Department's website <http://www.vilaspublichealth.com/index.php?page=community-health-plan>, along with each county's website.

It is our hope that community members will read through the plan and find some way to incorporate these strategies into your work, home and your lifestyle. If you are interested in participating in a workgroup or any activities related to improving the health of all residents, please call Vilas County Public Health Department at 715-479-3656.

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The mission of the Vilas County Public Health Department is to promote health, protect the environment, and prevent disease and injury.