

**Waushara
County
Community
Health Needs
Assessment**

2009: Summary

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Waushara County last had a community needs assessment completed in 2005. At our last assessment Waushara County's population had increased by 19.4%, making it a fast growing county. At the time of this assessment the county grew 7.7% to a population of 25,099 residents. The largest growth was in the 20-24 age groups and the largest loss was in the 35-39 year old age group. Considerations for these trends may be economical as college students return home while looking for employment in a tighter economy and as several businesses close in the county adults moved out seeking employment opportunities elsewhere.

Waushara County is predominantly white; the Hispanic/Latino population has a strong and growing presence in the county and makes up 4.6% of the population.

Waushara County's economy relies strongly on government and education. Five of the County's top 10 employers are in these industries. Many residents commute outside of Waushara County to work. Waushara County's unemployment rate was consistently higher than that of the state throughout the 1990s and 2000s. Poverty rates in Waushara County are higher than the state of Wisconsin, but lower than the national average. In December of 2008 the rate was 5-5.9% but in 2009 increased to as high as 9.8% with the closing of major businesses in Waushara County.

Educational levels are also lower compared to the state. The rate of homeownership, however, is significantly higher in Waushara County.

Previous Assessments – Three community assessments were completed prior to the present data set.

Assessments completed during the past 10 years in Waushara County identified many important community health issues. The issues most commonly identified across multiple assessments were:

- **Diet, nutrition, exercise, and chronic disease**
- **Poor economy/low income**
- **Lack of health insurance**
- **Substance abuse (including tobacco)**
- **Teenage pregnancy**
- **Reproductive health/prenatal/follow-up services**

Results of Present Data Set 2009: The Data Set Sources are referenced in the document. The information was compiled by Rebecca Hovarter, Nurse Consultant, Northeastern Regional Office.

The data was organized by the 2010 Wisconsin Health Priorities. Comparisons are made as often as possible between National, State and Local data. The following issues were of note according to the 2009 data:

Lack of Access to Primary and Preventative Care:

- **Lack of access to oral health care**, especially for Medical Assistance patients; only 22% of MA eligible clients receive services
- **Lack of access to prenatal care in the first trimester**, high rate of low birth babies
- **Lack of access to mental health care**, with lack of treatment leading to other health issues such as drug abuse and domestic/child abuse, and lack of mental health providers, plus high rate of chronic disease hospitalization for age 18-44 was for mental health
- **Poor nutrition and lack of exercise**, among all community populations often resulting in obesity and diabetes
- **Unhealthy behaviors**, including smoking, alcohol abuse, other drug abuse (especially methamphetamine and marijuana) and unsafe sex
- **Highest years of life lost**, were for malignancy, heart disease, accidents, suicide and chronic respiratory disease

Tobacco Use and Exposure:

- **Increased number of women smoking during pregnancy**, increased rates of low birth weight
- **Increased health care costs**
- **Increased cancer (lung) and respiratory disease**

Overweight, Obesity, and Lack of Physical Activity:

- **Increased mortality rate of residents caused by Ischemic /Coronary Heart Disease**, listed as primary cause of death.
- **Heart Disease is the leading cause of death for all Americans**, tobacco use, poor nutrition (high in fat, high calorie, and low fiber), and lack of physical exercise all contribute to the development of heart disease.
- **Increased Breast Cancer rate**, in comparison to other counties in Wisconsin. Being overweight can be attributed to 20% of cancers.
- **Increased costs both directly and indirectly**, according to the 2008 Burden of Diabetes the direct cost in 2007 to Waushara County for diabetes were estimated at \$20.4 million and indirect costs at \$10.2 million. In Waushara County it is estimated that 4,990 people age 20 years and older have pre-diabetes.

Mental Health:

- **Increased Suicides and suicide hospital related emergency room visits** according to the 2004 Wisconsin Violent Death Report
- **Higher rate of non- firearm suicides than Winnebago County** which is 6 times the size of Waushara County; in the Burden of Suicide 2008 publication, the aggregate rate of suicide for Waushara County for 2001-2006 at 12.3 was greater than Waupaca County which is twice the population and similar to Winnebago (12.2) which once again is six times the population.

Alcohol and Other Substance Use and Addiction:

- **Rate of binge drinking is higher than National goal**, although lower than the State of Wisconsin
- **Alcohol related crashes**, similar to state at 4.5-6.5%, the highest rates that resulted in death were 15 year and less than 1 year of age
- **Increased rate of OWI compared to other counties**
- **Increased number of child deaths in Wisconsin due to no car seats or seat belts**

Intentional and Unintentional Injuries:

- **High range of mortality rate for motor vehicle accidents** in comparison to other Wisconsin Counties
- **Falls are number one reason for cause of injury hospitalizations** in Waushara County for age 45 and older, falls are one of the leading causes of several, disabling and costly injuries in Wisconsin.

High Risk Sexual Behavior:

- **Waushara County's older teen birth (18-19 years) rate is in the high range compared to other counties**, 67.3 compared to Wisconsin at 53.6
- **Waushara County's younger teen birth (15-17) rate is in the high range compared to other counties**, 17.2 to 18.2 for the state of Wisconsin
- **While the percent of births to teens under 20 has slowly declined in the NE region and in Wisconsin from 2001-2007, the percentage in Waushara County has fluctuated more.**
- **Waushara County's percent of low birthweight births is in the high range as compared to other counties**, 7.4% compared to 6.9% in Wisconsin
- **According to the Wisconsin Youth Risk Behavior Survey Summary from 1993-2009**, youth in Wisconsin are abstaining longer before first sexual intercourse experience and increasing use of condoms, fewer ever had sex, fewer sex partners, but they were fewer who discussed HIV/ AIDS with parents.
- **In comparing Wisconsin to the United States in youth sexual behavior, Wisconsin youth are lower in percent of youth having sex before age 13, having 4 or more partners and who have ever had sexual intercourse.**

Recommendations

Convene a county wide committee to complete a CHIP (community health improvement plan).

