Waushara County Wellness Coalition: A Look through the Past

The coalition informally started as a partnership with the Wild Rose hospital to discuss mutual interests, share resources, and collaborate for greater community impact. This partnership continued to grow and gain involvement from other community organizations, and in June of 2009, it became known as the Waushara County Wellness Coalition. In 2009, the health department wrote their first Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) and began to use this document as a guidebook to move the work of the coalition forward.

In October 2012, the health department received a grant from the State of Wisconsin and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to use a data-collection tool and planning resource for the next 5-year cycle of the CHIP. This grant allowed community members in the workplace, schools, healthcare, and other organizations to have input on the health needs and assets in Waushara County through an interviewing process. This information, along with the Wisconsin Guidebook on Improving the Health of Local Communities, set the goals and strategies for the 2013 CHIP.

In July of 2016, the coalition was selected to participate in a yearlong coalition coaching project in partnership with UW-Extension and the Reducing Rural Cancer Disparities Together program. The project goal aimed to reduce cancer disparities in rural WI counties that have cancer incidence and/or mortality rates greater than the state average. This project delivered coaching to coalitions to connect direct education to policy, systems, and environmental change.

Our coalition continues to move forward and grow its focus on policy, systems and environmental changes using our current Community Health Improvement Plan as a guidebook to improve the health and wellness of Waushara County residents. We welcome you to join us!