

Community Health Implementation Strategy



2023-2026

ASPIRUS EAGLE RIVER HOSPITAL & CLINICS

201 East Hospital Road
Eagle River, WI 54521

ASPIRUS RHINELANDER HOSPITAL & CLINICS

2251 North Shore Drive
Rhinelanders, WI 54501

HOWARD YOUNG MEDICAL CENTER

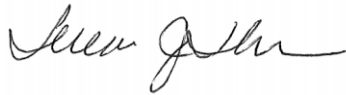
240 Maple Street
Woodruff, WI 54568

Acknowledgments

Aspirus Rhinelander Hospital, Aspirus Eagle River Hospital and Howard Young Medical Center are excited to share this Implementation Strategy with the community. This work reflects significant cross-sector collaboration, building on the recently completed Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA).

The hospitals are grateful to work with the health departments in Forest, Oneida and Vilas counties. Additionally, we are appreciative of the regional substance abuse and mental health coalition – Community, Outreach, Prevention and Education (COPE) – and the leadership they bring to the region. We look forward to continued collaboration with COPE partners as well as others in the community.

Respectfully,



Teri Theiler
Regional President

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Aspirus Health

Aspirus Health is a non-profit, community-directed health system based in Wausau, Wisconsin. Its 11,000 employees are focused on improving the health and well-being of people throughout Wisconsin and Upper Michigan. Aspirus serves communities through four hospitals in Michigan and 13 hospitals in Wisconsin, 75 clinics, home health and hospice care, pharmacies, critical care and air-medical transport, medical goods, nursing homes and a broad network of physicians. For more information, visit [aspirus.org](https://www.aspirus.org).

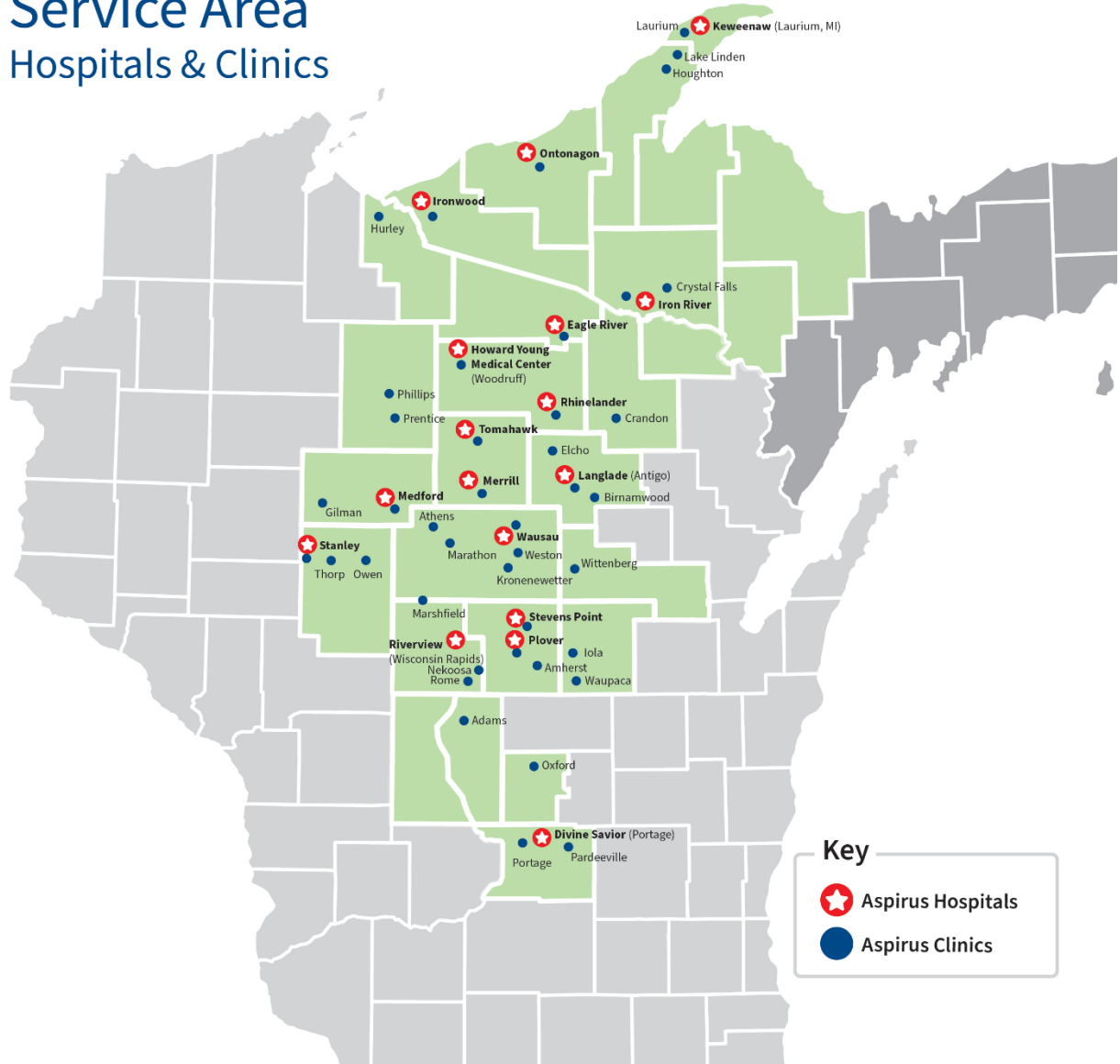
Aspirus Eagle River, Aspirus Rhinelander and Howard Young Medical Center

Aspirus Eagle River Hospital, the first critical-access hospital in Wisconsin proudly cares for Eagle River and the surrounding community and joined the Aspirus Health system in August 2021. The hospital features: 24/7 emergency department, inpatient hospital care, paramedic ambulance team serving Eagle River and surrounding communities, surgery center with minimally invasive procedures available when appropriate, Medicare certified swing-bed program, and extensive radiology, laboratory, and outpatient therapy services.



Aspirus Rhinelander Hospital, an acute-care facility, joined the Aspirus Health system in August 2021. The hospital features: 24/7 emergency department, urgent care, paramedic ambulance Team serving Rhinelander and surrounding communities, inpatient hospital care, surgical services, birthing center, cardiology, orthopedics, pain management, retail pharmacy, primary and specialty care clinic, Aspirus Cancer Care-James Beck Cancer Center, Aspirus Koller Behavioral Health, extensive radiology, laboratory, and outpatient therapy services.

Howard Young Medical Center, offers a full range of compassionate healthcare services to residents of all ages and joined the Aspirus Health system in August 2021. The hospital features: 24/7 emergency department, inpatient hospital care, paramedic ambulance team serving Woodruff and surrounding communities, surgery center, sleep lab, pain management, cardiology, orthopedics, radiology, laboratory, and outpatient therapy services.

Service Area Hospitals & Clinics



Key

-  Aspirus Hospitals
-  Aspirus Clinics

Prioritized Significant Needs

Based on the results of the most recent community health needs assessment (CHNA), Aspirus Eagle River, Aspirus Rhinelander and Howard Young Medical Center will formally address the following issues through the community health needs assessment and corresponding implementation strategy:

- Mental health
- Substance use

Needs Not Selected

The hospital executive team discussed two additional potential priorities. These issues were identified as top issues in the key informant interviews and the survey. The issues were:

- Access to care
- Aging issues

These issues were not prioritized for the formal community health needs assessment for the following reasons.

- **Momentum and Alignment.** The two areas with the highest momentum and alignment with others are mental health and substance use.
- **Capacity.** The hospitals and clinics have limited capacity. Choosing only two priority areas allows Aspirus to focus its efforts. Additionally, Aspirus has a strong behavioral health service line.
- **Current Activity.** Access to care is what Aspirus does as its main service. The hospitals and clinics will continue to provide access to care regardless of it being a CHNA priority.
- **Intersection.** There are some mental health and substance use issues that intersect with aging and access to care. Aspirus will continue to advance those efforts.

About the Implementation Strategy

For Aspirus, the community health needs assessment (CHNA) and the corresponding implementation strategy (IS) is one way to live our mission – to heal people, promote health and strengthen communities – and reach our vision – being a catalyst for creating healthy, thriving communities.

Definition / Purpose of a CHNA and Implementation Strategy

A CHNA is “a systematic process involving the community to identify and analyze community health needs and assets in order to prioritize, plan and act upon unmet community needs.”¹ The value of the CHNA lies not only in the findings but also in the process itself, which is a powerful avenue for collaboration and potential impact. An implementation strategy is “the hospital’s plan for addressing community health needs, including health needs prioritized in the CHNA and through other means”.²

Compliance

The completion of a needs assessment – and a corresponding implementation strategy – is a requirement for both hospitals and health departments. For non-profit hospitals, the requirement originated with the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA). The IRS Code, Section 501(r)(3) outlines the specific requirements, including having the final, approved report posted on a public website. Additionally, CHNA and Implementation Strategy activities are annually reported to the IRS.

In Wisconsin, local health departments are required by Wisconsin State Statute 251.05 to complete a community health assessment and create a plan every five years. The statute indicates specific criteria must be met as part of the process.

¹ Catholic Health Association of the United States, <https://www.chausa.org>

² Catholic Health Association of the United States, *A Guide for Planning & Reporting Community Benefit*

Implementation Frameworks

For its community health improvement efforts, Aspirus Health is using the following approaches:

- *Results-based accountability.* Aspirus Health is applying the results-based accountability (RBA)³ framework to its implementation plans. The green-table descriptions below are outlined in the RBA framework, which includes:
 - Program accountability – What the organization (and its partners) will do and measure.
 - Strategies – Activities or programs to address the health issue.
 - Performance measures – Strategy evaluation data.
 - Population accountability – What (ideally) the multi-sector collaborative effort to address the issue will result in.
 - Indicators – Specific community-level measures or data points.
 - Results – The desired end-state of the community if all efforts are successful.
- *Continuum of care.* Aspirus Health is approaching complex community health issues from multiple levels, as outlined by the Institute of Medicine (IOM):⁴
 - Upstream prevention (also known as promotion): Strategies that are designed to “create environments and conditions that support behavioral health and the ability of individuals to withstand challenges. Promotion strategies also reinforce the entire continuum of behavioral health services.”⁵ Examples of upstream conditions include housing, community safety, education/learning, a living wage/income and more.
 - Prevention: Strategies that are designed to “prevent or reduce the risk of developing a behavioral health problem...”⁶
 - Treatment: Strategies that are designed for individuals “diagnosed with a substance use or other behavioral health disorder.”⁷

³ Clear Impact, <https://clearimpact.com/results-based-accountability/>

⁴ Center for the Application of Prevention Technologies Fact Sheet, <https://www.mass.gov/doc/samhsa-behavioral-health-continuum-of-care-overview-9232019/download>

⁵ Ibid

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Ibid

Implementation Assumptions and Hospital Specifics

Assumptions: A hospital's formal Implementation Strategy report is a three-year plan. With organizational circumstances and community environments constantly changing, this Implementation Strategy report is shared with the following assumptions:

- The planned efforts are described at a general level, allowing flexibility over time.
- Changes in circumstances or the environment may:
 - impact the completion of the efforts.
 - result in the addition, discontinuation and/or alteration of a given effort.

Hospital Specifics: This Implementation Strategy is reflective of three different hospitals because there is significant overlap between the three. Nearly all of the efforts outlined in the 'Strategy' column in the green tables in the subsequent pages reflect all of the hospitals. Some exceptions include: inpatient behavioral health care (Rhinelanders only); some outpatient direct services offered by Koller Behavioral Health (Rhinelanders only); retail pharmacy (Rhinelanders only).

All three Aspirus hospitals are represented on the Northwoods COPE Coalition. The coalition has a mission to “serve and support all people affected by mental health and substance abuse through education, intervention and prevention. We will partner and collaborate with our community to provide knowledge and meaningful resources to improve the well-being of all.” COPE stands for Community, Outreach, Prevention and Education. Many of the activities described in the 'Strategy' column below are conducted by the COPE Coalition.

The community health priorities and accompanying plans are outlined on the next pages. For each health priority area, there are three pages.

- The first page describes some of the relevant secondary data and community input.
- The second page describes the plan (using the results-based accountability framework and the Institute of Medicine's continuum of care model).
- The third page describes collaborators and organizational resources.

For a more detailed description of some of the strategies, please see [Appendix A](#).

Mental Health

Why is it Important?

Approximately 20 percent of the population experiences a mental health problem during any given year.¹ Mental health issues are associated with increased rates of risk factors such as smoking, physical inactivity, obesity and substance abuse. As a result, these physical health problems can lead to chronic disease, injury and disability.² Economic challenges (e.g., unemployment, poverty) are associated with poor mental health.³ During the COVID pandemic, depression, anxiety and suicidal ideation have increased and access to mental health providers and treatment has been limited.⁴

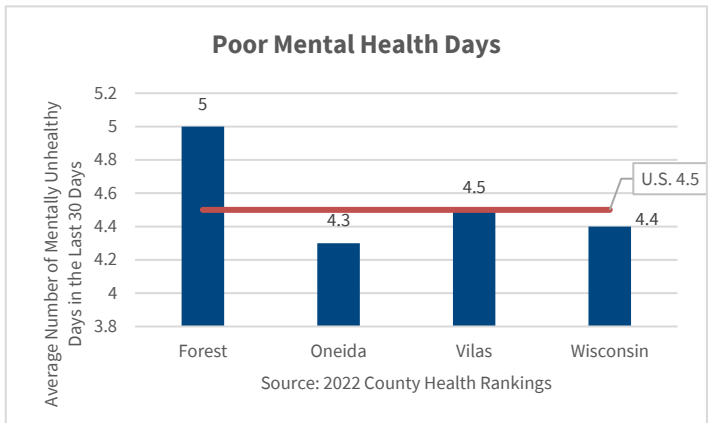
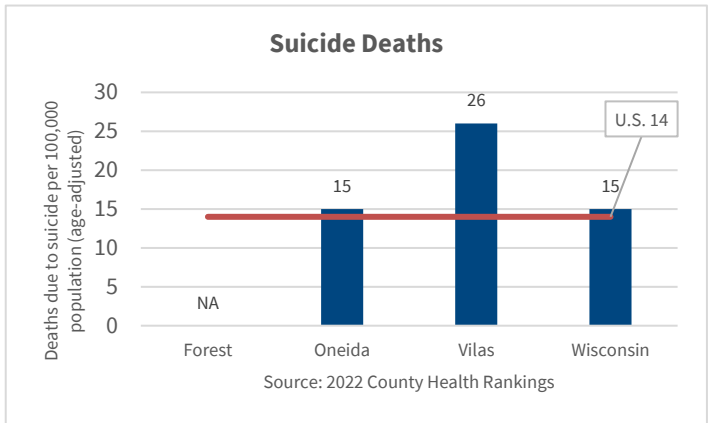
Sources: (1) National Institute for Mental Health; (2) Healthiest Wisconsin 2020; Healthy People 2020; (3) Macintyre, A., Ferris, D., Gonçalves, B et al. What has economics got to do with it? The impact of socioeconomic factors on mental health and the case for collective action. *Palgrave Commun*4, 10(2018). <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-018-0063-2> (4) Czeisler ME, Lane RI, Petrosky E, et al. Mental Health, Substance Use, and Suicidal Ideation During the COVID-19 Pandemic – United States, June 24–30, 2020. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep* 2020;69:1049–1057. DOI:<http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6932a1>

Disparities and Equity

- Women have a 70% higher rate of depression compared to men.⁵
- Poor family relationships can increase the likelihood of depression. Some individuals are at higher risk of poor family relationships – individuals who identify as LGBTQ, persons with disabilities and their caretakers, and individuals who suffered from child abuse and neglect.⁶
- Suicide rates are disproportionately higher⁷ for:
 - * Men (the rate is 4 times higher for men than women)
 - * Older adults and some middle-age adult groups
 - * Veterans
 - * Individuals in rural communities
- Suicide is the second-leading cause of death for youth and young adults (ages 10-24) and increased by more than 50% from 2000 to 2021.⁷

Sources: (5) 2021 America’s Health Rankings, Executive Summary. https://assets.americashealthrankings.org/app/uploads/2021_ahr_health-disparities-report_executive_brief_final.pdf. (6) Shim, Ruth S; Ye, Jiali; Baltrus, Peter; Fry-Johnson, Yvonne; Daniels, Elvan; Rust, George. Racial/Ethnic Disparities, Social Support, and Depression: Examining a Social Determinant of Mental Health. *Ethn Dis*. 2012 Winter; 22(1): 15-20. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4039297/>. (7) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (<https://www.cdc.gov/suicide/suicide-data-statistics.html> and <https://www.cdc.gov/suicide/facts/disparities-in-suicide.html>)

Data Highlights



Additional Data

- In Wisconsin, youth depression and anxiety (a) has been increasing since 2017 and (b) disproportionately affect students who: identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual; have a disability; are a person of color; are food insecure. (Source: YRBS)
- Firearms are used in over half of suicides in Wisconsin (2021). (Source: WI Dept of Health Services, *Suicide in Wisconsin: Impact and Response Report to the Legislature* <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p02657a-22.pdf>)

Community Perceptions & Momentum

- Mental health was a theme in the key informant interviews.
- There is a tri-county mental health and substance use coalition.
- COVID-19 has exacerbated existing mental health issues.

Mental Health

Aspirus Eagle River Hospital, Aspirus Rhinelander Hospital and Howard Young Medical Center plan to support mental health through the strategies below. Strategies might be completed with funding, dedicated staff time and/or coalition participation. Additional strategy details can be found in [Appendix A](#).

Program Accountability		Population Accountability		
Strategies	Performance Measures	Indicators	Results	
Prevention				
External Northwoods COPE Coalition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness campaigns 988 (suicide prevention hotline) promotion Reduce access to lethal means Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) suicide prevention training (adults, youth) Mental Health First Aid training (adults, youth, first responders) Re-establishing a loss-survivor group (survivor of suicide) Other <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise Your Voice (school-based club focused on mental health) Suicide Death Review team (Aspirus participates) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of 988 stickers distributed # of campaign participants (businesses) # of trainings # of training participants Training evaluation results # of Raise Your Voice Club students Depression screening measures (% of patients screened; % who screen positive) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decrease the number of suicide deaths per 100,000 population (2021-2026) (baselines: 15 Oneida; 26 Vilas) Decrease the average number of poor mental health days in the last 30 days (2021) (baselines: 5 Forest; 4.3 Oneida; 4.5 Vilas) Decrease the percent of high schoolers that felt sad or hopeless in the last 12 months (2021) (baseline: 38% Forest; 32% Oneida; not available for Vilas) Decrease the percent of high school and middle school students who experience anxiety (2021) (baseline: 45% middle & 51% high Forest; 55% middle & 51% high Oneida; 48% middle Vilas) Decrease the percent of middle and high school students who experience bullying (2021) (baseline: 38% middle & 23% high Forest; 63% middle & 31% high Oneida; 40% middle Vilas) 	Community members have equal opportunities for mental well-being.	
Treatment				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share information on resources (e.g., through FindHelp.org) Koller Behavioral Health direct care/services Aspirus inpatient behavioral health care (local, 18+) Support groups Tele-mental health Aspirus therapists in schools (contracted) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of closed loop referrals (FindHelp.org) # of patients 			

Collaborative Partners	Aspirus Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forest, Oneida & Vilas County Health Departments • Northland Pines High School • Lakeland High School • Crandon High School • Rhinelander High School • Project Advancing Wellness and Resilience Education (AWARE) – school district collaborative grant focused on mental health • National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) • Raise Your Voice programming staff and students • University of Wisconsin Extension • Aspirus Koller Behavioral Health • Marshfield Clinic • Lac Du Flambeau Tribal Community • Cooperative Educational Service Agency (CESA) 9 • YMCA • Aging and Disability Resource Center • Human Service Center-Local Crisis Line • Forest, Oneida & Vilas County Veterans Affairs • Iron Mountain Veterans Affairs (VA) • Pending: Potawatomi Tribal Community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding – particularly for coalition-related efforts • Staff time – coalition participation, event/program planning and promotion, resource identification • Space (pending COVID-19 restrictions) – hosting support groups and meetings • Clinical services and related infrastructure – providing direct care, supporting the FindHelp platform and related resource development

Substance Use

Why is it Important?

An estimated 22 million people per year in the U.S. have drug and alcohol problems. Ninety-five percent of them are unaware of their problem.¹ Approximately 88,000 deaths annually in the U.S. are attributed to excessive drinking (2006-2010).² Drug and alcohol use can also lead to costly physical, mental and public health problems such as teen pregnancy, HIV/AIDS and other STDs.¹ Interactions between prescription medications and alcohol can contribute to falls, which can result in injuries and death.³ COVID-19 has increased substance use in the US related to social isolation, loss of routines and norms, income related stress, anxiety and fear of the virus and loss of loved ones.⁴

Sources: (1) Healthy People 2020; (2) Center of Disease Control and Prevention; (3) Wisconsin Alcohol Policy Project; (4) Czeisler MĚ, Lane RI, Petrosky E, et al. Mental Health, Substance Use, and Suicidal Ideation During the COVID-19 Pandemic – United States, June 24–30, 2020. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2020;69:1049–1057. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6932a1>

Disparities and Equity

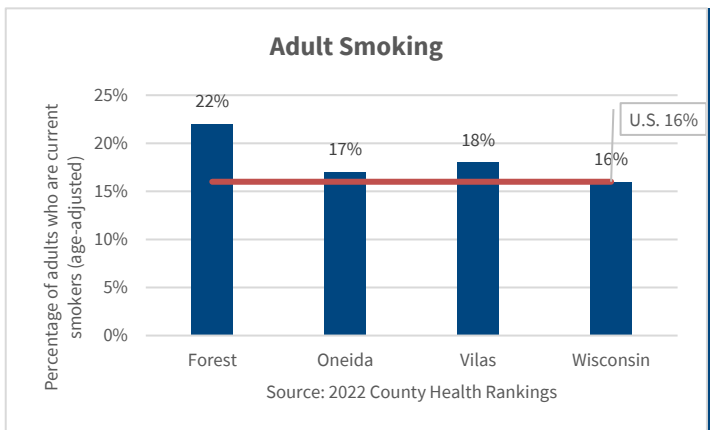
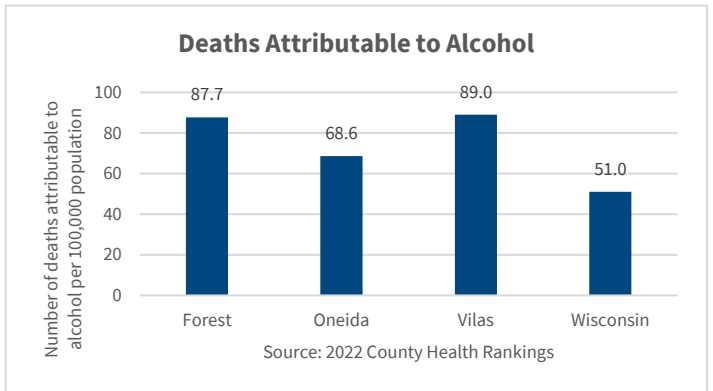
- Binge drinking is more common among individuals who are (any of the following): male, age 18-34, white or have an annual household income of more than \$50K.⁵

Sources: (5) Fact Sheet: Health Disparities in Binge Drinking (Findings from the CDC Health Disparities and Inequalities Report – United States, 2011)

Community Perceptions & Momentum

- Substance use and vaping were themes in the key informant interviews.
- There is a tri-county mental health and substance use coalition.
- COVID-19 has exacerbated existing substance use issues.
- Aspirus has been increasing its capacity for opioid medication assisted treatment (MAT) delivery system/approach as well as recovery coaching.

Data Highlights



Additional Data

- Alcohol outlet density in each of the three counties is at least twice the level of the state average. (Source: WI Dept of Health Services, Environmental PH Tracking Program)
- Approximately one-half of driving deaths in the region involve alcohol; for Wisconsin, the rate is approximately one-third. (Source: 2022 County Health Rankings)
- Over one-fourth of high school students reporting drinking during the 30 days before the youth risk behavior survey. (Source: YRBS)
- Opioid-related hospital (emergency department) discharges per 100,000 population: Forest 207; Oneida 124; Vilas 179; Wisconsin 153. (Source: WI Dept of Health Services, WISH)
- The rate of opioid overdose deaths in Forest County is twice the state rate. (Source: WI Dept of Health Services, Opioid Death Module)

Substance Use

Aspirus Eagle River Hospital, Aspirus Rhinelander Hospital and Howard Young Medical Center plan to support plan to address substance use through the strategies below. Strategies might be completed with funding, dedicated staff time and/or coalition participation.

Program Accountability		Population Accountability	
Strategies	Performance Measures	Indicators	Results
Prevention			
External Northwoods COPE Coalition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Light up the Night (resources, recovery) • Medication drop boxes and drug take-back days • Lockbox distribution; Doterra bag; • Sharps disposal – there are some public locations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of pounds of medication collected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the number of drug poisoning deaths per 100,000 (2018-2020) (baseline: 48 Forest; 10 Oneida; 23 Vilas) • Reduce the number of opioid-related hospital (emergency department) discharges per 100,000 population (2018, 2019, 2020) (baseline: 208 Forest; 125 Oneida; 180 Vilas) 	Community members of all ages and abilities are free from the physical, emotional, and social impacts of substance misuse. <small>(Adapted from the Marathon County Health Department's plan)</small>
Treatment			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share information on resources (e.g., through FindHelp.org) • Koller Behavioral Health direct care/services • Aspirus inpatient behavioral health care (local, 18+) • Expansion of medication assisted treatment services • Peer recovery coaches • Addiction recovery support group (Comprehensive OutPatient Education – COPE) (in Rhinelander) • Identify opportunities for improved housing options for individuals with substance use issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of closed loop referrals (FindHelp.org) • # of patients receiving medication assisted treatment • # of patients accessing peer recovery coaches; # and type of referrals made from peer recovery coaches • # of support groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the percentage of high school youth who mis-used over-the-counter and/or prescription pain medication (2021) (baseline: 11% Forest; 12% Oneida; not available for Vilas) • Reduce the percentage of high school students who use an electronic vapor product in the last 30 days (2021) (baseline: 22% Forest; 13% Oneida; not available for Vilas) • Reduce the percentage of high school students reporting drinking during the 30 days before the survey (2021) (baseline: 30% Forest; 27% Oneida; not available for Vilas) 	

Collaborative Partners	Aspirus Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forest, Oneida & Vilas County Health Departments • Aspirus Koller Behavioral Health • Marshfield Clinic Health System • Lac Du Flambeau Tribal Community • Cooperative Educational Service Agency (CESA) 9 • YMCA • Aging and Disability Resource Center • Human Service Center-Local Crisis Line • Oneida County Department of Social Services • Law enforcement • Emergency Medical Services (EMS) • National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) • Nicolet College • UW-Extension • Forest, Oneida & Vilas County Veterans Affairs • Iron Mountain Veterans Affairs (VA) • 211 • 988 suicide prevention hotline • Alcoholics Anonymous • Homeless shelter • HOPE Consortium • Koinonia • Northwoods Tobacco-Free Coalition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding – particularly for coalition-related efforts • Staff time – coalition participation, event/program planning and promotion, resource identification • Space (pending COVID-19 restrictions) – hosting support groups and meetings • Clinical services and related infrastructure – providing addiction treatment services, providing referrals to peer recovery coaches, FindHelp

Social and Economic Needs

Research shows that social and economic factors are significant ‘upstream’ contributors to poor mental health and substance use issues (as well as many other health issues). Children who don’t have their basic needs met early can suffer irreparable long-term harm. Aspirus is committed to recognizing and addressing these ‘root causes’ as part of its overall community health improvement efforts.

Recent regulatory changes reinforce Aspirus’ commitment to this work. Aspirus has increased its screening of patients for social needs, in part by integrating a resource platform (FindHelp.org) into its electronic medical record system. The community health team and their internal partners are working to assure that when patients identify a social need they are connected with the appropriate resource.

Approval by the Hospital Boards

This CHNA report was reviewed and approved on October 17, 2023, by the Boards of Directors for:

- Aspirus Rhinelander Hospital
- Aspirus Eagle River Hospital
- Howard Young Medical Center

Conclusion

Thank you to community organizations and members for raising important community issues. Aspirus Eagle River Hospital, Aspirus Rhinelander Hospital and Howard Young Medical Center look forward to continued collaboration to help improve the health of our community.

Appendices

Appendix A: Strategy Descriptions

The list below describes some of the plan resources, programs and strategies.

Both Health Issues

Northwoods COPE Coalition. The Northwoods COPE Coalition has a mission to “serve and support all people affected by mental health and substance abuse through education, intervention and prevention. We will partner and collaborate with our community to provide knowledge and meaningful resources to improve the well-being of all.” COPE stands for Community, Outreach, Prevention and Education. Many of the activities described in the ‘Strategy’ column below are conducted by the COPE Coalition. Aspirus is represented on the COPE Coalition. The COPE Coalition conducts many strategies throughout the year:

- Awareness campaigns – Examples include May Mental Health Month, Suicide Prevention Week (September), Light Up the Night event, media interviews.
- 988 promotion – This effort promotes the awareness and availability of the national suicide prevention hotline (988). The coalition creates 988 stickers for distribution in a variety of settings. Stickers placed on commercial pharmacy prescription bags promote to the individual who may be contemplating overdose suicide the 24/7 support that is available to them. 988 stickers can also be distributed in other settings, including through home delivered meals to elders.
- Reduce access to lethal means – In addition to the 988 campaign, the coalition also works with gun stores to promote the ‘Live for Today, Put it Away’ campaign.
- Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) suicide prevention training (adults, youth) – QPR is an evidence-based program. QPR training gives community members and youth the skills to learn how to ask the question, persuade an individual to get help, and learn about local resources and supports. QPR training can be held in the community and within Aspirus (for staff). Source: <https://qprinstitute.com/>
- Mental Health First Aid training (adults, youth, first responders) – “Mental Health First Aid is a course that teaches you how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental illness and substance use disorders.” Source: <https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/about/>
- Medication drop boxes, drug take-back days and public sharps disposal
- Medication lockboxes and Detera bags: Lockboxes are used to keep prescription medications such as opioids in a safe place so that only the person with the prescription can access the medication. Detera bags are used to neutralize and safely dispose of unused medications.

Share information on resources (e.g., through FindHelp.org). FindHelp.org is a publicly available platform of community-based resources. The hospitals are working with their community partners to better connect the community resources with patients’ social needs through closed-loop referrals. FindHelp.org is integrated into the electronic health records.

Koller Behavioral Health direct care/services – Koller Behavioral Health provides all outpatient services, including therapy, programming, community support, community education (e.g., Mental Health Summit) and support groups.

- Additionally, Koller Behavioral Health staff partner with the Aspirus Wellness staff to train hospital and clinic staff on wellness topics, including QPR and stress management skills. Although the primary audience is all employees, the learnings can also be applied with patients.

Aspirus inpatient behavioral health care – Aspirus supports an adult, 10-bed behavioral health inpatient unit at the Aspirus St. Mary’s Rhinelander Hospital.

Mental Health

Prevention – External (regional; inclusive of clinics and all three hospitals)

Raise Your Voice. Raise Your Voice was developed by NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) Wisconsin to empower teens “to create a new conversation about mental health through education, leadership development and civic advocacy.” Source: <https://namiwisconsin.org/education-programs/for-youth-young-adults/raise-your-voice/>

- Raise Your Voice is currently in place in two high schools: Rhinelander and Lakeland (in Minocqua).
- Northland Pines in Eagle River is considering the creation of a Raise Your Voice club.
- Raise Your Voice students are being invited to COPE coalition meetings.
- Raise Your Voice students are being trained in QPR.
- Aspirus has not been involved in the development of the clubs in this region, but has supported NAMI and clubs in other communities. Aspirus will be exploring future Raise Your Voice club support in the region.

Suicide Death Review team: As a way to identify opportunities to intervene with suicide attempts, many communities establish a Suicide Death Review team. The team reviews multiple factors that may have contributed to a suicide. Aspirus representatives participate on this team to provide the mental health perspective.

Prevention – Internal (regional; inclusive of clinics, retail pharmacies and all three hospitals)

Depression and suicide risk screening in primary care – Aspirus consistently screens for depression in primary care settings. Efforts are ongoing to improve the response when patients screen positive for depression. Aspirus has a planning team in place to implement best practices for suicide risk screening.

Emergency department screening for suicide risk – All three emergency departments use the Columbia – Suicide Severity Rating Scale (C-SSRS) assessment protocol to screen patients for suicide risk.

988 stickers on prescription bags at Aspirus retail pharmacies – This effort promotes the awareness and availability of the national suicide prevention hotline (988).

Treatment – Regional; inclusive of clinics and all three hospitals unless indicated

Support groups – Koller Behavioral Health facilitates ongoing support groups, including dialectical behavioral therapy (for patients struggling to regulate emotions).

Tele-mental health – Some mental health therapy visits can be conducted through tele-mental health. This can ease the burden of travel on the patient.

Aspirus therapists in schools – Aspirus provides contracted, direct services in multiple area schools, including Lakeland Union High School in Minocqua (the STAR program for autism) and Northland Pines High School in Eagle River. Other contracts are pending.

Substance Use

Treatment – Regional; inclusive of clinics and all three hospitals unless indicated

Medication assisted treatment (MAT): Medication assisted treatment is the combination of FDA-approved medications along with counseling and behavioral therapies to treat substance use disorders.

Source: <https://www.samhsa.gov/medications-substance-use-disorders>

Peer recovery coaches: To support individuals struggling with addiction, Aspirus contracts with a non-profit organization to provide peer recovery coaches to individuals presenting in the Emergency Department and seeking recovery. Aspirus has not had peer recovery coaches in this region, but is exploring this opportunity for the future.

Support groups: Koller Behavioral Health in Rhinelander hosts an ongoing support group focused on addiction recovery. The COPE – Comprehensive, OutPatient, Education – group meets twice a week in 6-week blocks.

Other

Aspirus participates in a number of healthcare workforce development efforts, including:

- Providing internships for AODA Counselor students from Nicolet College.
- Providing clinical placements for Psychiatry residents on rotation at the Aspirus Koller Behavioral Health outpatient clinic and Aspirus St. Mary's Rhinelander Hospital inpatient unit.



[aspirus.org](https://www.aspirus.org)

October 2023