Story County Public Health – 2025 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)

Overview
Story County Public Health (SCPH) is committed to protecting, preventing, and promoting the health and wellness of all Story County residents.
The 2025 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), informed by the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA), addresses the top health indicators for the county and outlines collaborative strategies for improving them by 2030.

Top Health Indicators identified by the CHNA

1. Mental Health
2. Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Weight
3. Substance Use
4. Cancer (addressed in nutrition, physical activity, and weight; substance use)
5. Diabetes (addressed in nutrition, physical activity, and weight)
6. Access to Health Care Services

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1. Mental Health

Initiatives and strategies:
- *Make It OK* initiative to reduce stigma of mental health conversations and increase awareness of mental health resources. Continue community presentations and event tabling.
- Educational resources such as 988, QPR, Mental Health First Aid, 211, NAMI, My Life Iowa and the Iowa Office of Recovery Services. Provide in lobby and at community events.
- Distribute gun locks at no cost (supplied by the VA) and promote gun safety with *Talk It Up, Lock It Up* and *Be SMART* literature and social media messaging. Provide in lobby and at community events.

Metric:
Goal—Story County will be below the U.S. average in suicide mortality indicators by 2030.

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2. Nutrition, Physical Activity & Weight

Initiatives and strategies:
- Bingocize for seniors: free classes combining exercise, bingo, and nutrition education. Continue at community locations.
- Pick a Better Snack: nutrition education for K–2 students beginning January 2026. Begin with K in Roland Story, Nevada, and Collins-Maxwell.
- Keys to Dementia Prevention: continue these classes in the community that promote the MIND diet and regular physical activity.
- Rural at Heart Program: promotes heart-healthy habits through community events and Heart Healthy Hubs. We hope to obtain a member late 2025.

- Senior Health Clinics: provide blood pressure screenings, healthy lifestyle education, and offer resources to healthy living programs.

Metric:
Goal—Reduce prevalence of overweight children (children 5-17) and No leisure-time for physical activity in the past month related indicators by 5% by 2030.

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3. Substance Use

Initiatives

- Distribute Narcan (provided by Iowa HHS) free of charge with training.
- Provide prevention and recovery resources through collaborations with Youth & Shelter Services, Community & Family Resources, and others.
- Participate in community awareness events, including the Ames Overdose Awareness Event and Hidden in Plain Sight trailer program.
- Continue education on the brain impacts of alcohol and substance use through the Keys to Dementia Prevention program.
- Promote Iowa Cancer Consortium social media materials on the risks of alcohol, smoking, and vaping.

Metric:
Goal—Story County will be below the state average for Individuals currently using vaping products (every day or on some days) by 2030.

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4. Access to Health Care Services

Initiatives

- Continuing memberships with Iowa Public Health Association (IPHA) and Iowa Immunizes to advocate for continued health access programs.
- Refer patients to Primary Health Care (PHC) and Obria for low- or no-cost medical services.
- Promote Vaccines for Children and Adults programs, MMR Initiative, and Farm Worker Flu Initiative.
- Provide prescription savings cards, translation services, and culturally appropriate educational materials.
- Develop new patient education tools encouraging routine medical checkups.
- Maintain membership in Story County Immigrant and Refugee Collaboration.
- Maintain membership in NAACP Ames Health Committee.

Metric:
Goal—Improve the metric of Child has visited a Physician for a Routine Checkup in the past year (children 0-17) by 2030.

Social Determinants of Health

The CHNA identified four key social determinants that significantly affect health outcomes: income & poverty, housing & homelessness, food insecurity, and transportation.

Income & Poverty

- Distribute needs surveys and connect clients to programs such as United Way, Hunger Collaboration, Hawk-I, Medicaid, SCIRC, PHC, WIC, and MICA.
- Share information on affordable prescription programs (GoodRx, SingleCare).

Housing & Homelessness

- Partner with organizations to provide flu clinics and health education.
- Maintain in-office resources for shelters and emergency funding.

Food Insecurity

- Investigate launching a food bag program to offer nutritious foods and recipes.
- Maintain membership in the Story County Hunger Collaboration.
- Maintain in office resources listing free meals, food pantries, and low-cost food options.
- Collaborate with MICA mobile food pantry to be at VFC clinics.

Transportation

- Maintain membership in the Story County Transportation Collaboration.
- Provide informational brochures for CyRide, HIRTA, regional transit, Wheels for Work programs, and other programs.

Conclusion

Story County Public Health continues to extend its reach through community engagement, collaborations, and education. By addressing both health behaviors and social determinants, SCPH aims to improve health and outcomes across Story County.

"For he who has health has hope, and he who has hope has everything."
— *Owen Arthur*