

2016 UPDATE

BACKGROUND

The 2013 Cascade County Community Health Needs Assessment and subsequent Community Health Improvement Plan was a joint effort on the part of Cascade City-County Health Department (CCHD), United Way of Cascade County (United Way) and Benefis Health Systems.

Based on the findings of the Community Health Needs Assessment, a Community Health Improvement Plan was developed through a collaborative process with the community. This plan defined the vision for the health of the community, defined the priorities that the community wants addressed and set out guidelines for how to achieve desired changes.

The three priority areas previously established have groups that are already working to implement positive changes and will continue their work. Get Fit Great Falls has been leading the charge on Achieving and Maintaining a Healthy Weight, the Substance Abuse and Prevention Alliance has been working toward change on Substance Abuse and Prevention, and a committee made up of medical administrators and professionals throughout Great Falls has been addresses the issue of Access to Care. Some of the accomplishments from each group are described below.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Access to Care

The issue of Access to Care has been taken on by various organizations throughout Cascade County. The most significant outcome for the Access to Care group is that the uninsured rate in Cascade County has gone from 20% in 2013 to 15% in 2016. There was also a decrease from 37.3% to 30% of people reporting delay in getting care or not getting care on the 2012 to 2015 Community Health Survey. Additionally, the following:

- Expanded service hours and number of community providers
 - Community Health Care Center expanded hours, now offers same day appointments, and added two additional nurse practitioners
 - Center for Mental Health launched open access for kids and adults in Mental Health crisis and opened the Children's Crisis Stabilization group home
 - Indian Family Health Clinic expanded hours, added a new provider and moved to a more accessible floor in their building
 - Benefis Health System remodeled to expand Walk In/Urgent care access and has recruited 17 new primary care providers. In 2015, had 60 new providers sign, 2 of which were psychiatric.

- From 2013-2015, BHS Walk In and Injury Center combined patient volumes increased 49.7% and Family Practice visits increased 58.7%

- Enrollment Education Support
 - Cascade County now has 11 permanent certified application counselors and 4 navigators, all of which are part of the North Central Certified Applications Counselors Coalition Committee
 - The Coalition expanded its reach in 2016 to include Pre-Release, Aging Services and Benefis Native American Center
- Medicaid Expansion
 - Medicaid enrollment began January 2016 and saw 52,817 Individuals enrolled as of September 1, 2016

Substance Abuse Prevention

The Substance Abuse Prevention Alliance is made up of a diverse group of professionals and community members from over 15 organizations in and around Great Falls.

- Community Rx Awareness
 - Partnered with local Doctor to educate peers on Responsible Prescribing Guidelines developed by CDC
 - Saw reduction from 10.5% in 2012 to 5.8% in 2016 of youth using narcotic prescription drugs
 - Doubled the amount of prescription being properly disposed
- Underage Drinking
 - Minor in Possession of Alcohol Citation were reduced from 628 in 2012 to 357 in 2016
 - Cascade County students reporting the use of a fake ID to obtain alcohol went from 5% in 2012 to 2.8% in 2016
 - Binge drinking rates dropped from 20.2% in 2012 to 16% in 2016
- Trauma Informed Community Initiative
 - Eleven local organizations have completed trauma informed approaches assessments and are implementing directed plans of action to improve trauma-informed practices
- Youth Advisory Board
 - Recognized by Montana Chemical Dependency Bureau for Outstanding Achievement in Alcohol Prevention Strategies

- Assisted local law enforcement with the conduction of 3 Retail Compliance Checks and for the first time in Cascade County, the rural towns were checked for alcohol compliance and had a 78% pass rate
- Completed the 6th “Sticker Shock” events (Consumer Reminders). Partnered with local Beer Distributers, and even more retailers and com-munity partners to remind consumers not to provide or sell alcohol to minors
- Tobacco
 - In 2016 nearly 6,000 students received tobacco prevention education which included health effects and media literacy lessons
 - Lessons about the harmful effects of electronic cigarettes were presented to nearly 1600 5th and 6th grade students.

Achieving and Maintaining a Healthy Weight

The goal of achieving and maintaining a healthy weight has been coordinated and led by Get Fit Great Falls, a community organization that partners with schools, government agencies, non-profits, and local business to promote the benefits of physical activity and a nutritious diet.

- Activities
 - “Get Inspired “ Awards are given to local individuals each month to recognize their achievement in reaching a health goal
 - Talks are underway with Holiday Village Mall to open its doors to early morning walkers during the winter months and to add posters illustrating and encouraging burst movements
 - Neighborhoods throughout Cascade County that do not have easy access to free fruits and vegetables, or food deserts, are being identified so that they can be connected with master gardeners from the County Extension Agency to get funding to start community gardens
 - Presented information to volunteer organizations and school food pantries about local resources and tips on how to best use the food given to recipients
 - Launched a new website and a free Get Fit phone app which allows users to get updates and suggestions about fitness possibilities and nutrition tips
- Building Active Communities Initiative
 - A demonstration project transformed the Davidson Plaza into an active space that included a mini park area with grass, trees and benches, an area for games such as ping pong or checkers and a space for live entertainment

- Over 200 people shared their feedback about the demonstration and potential for future use of that space. The most popular suggestion was adding a water feature that kids and adults could play in during warm weather
 - Design plans are now underway to add a water feature to the plaza area with work potentially beginning as early as the spring of 2018
- Presentations about transforming spaces into more usable, active areas have been given to over 300 individuals, including City Commission, Realtor’s Associated, the Ad Club, Downtown Association, United Way Board and Rotary Club and feedback has been very positive with several ideas being brought

MOVING FORWARD

2016 was the end of the second version of the Community Health Improvement Plan. Using data from the 2016 Community Health Assessment, reviewing successes and challenges of the current work, and input from the over 25 community agencies who attended the 2016 Community Health Symposium, a 2017-2019 edition of the Community Health Improvement Plan has been developed. A consensus was reached regarding the health priorities, the three that have been in place for the past three years will continue and a fourth priority area was added:

- Access to Care
- Substance Misuse
- Healthy Weight
- Child Abuse and Neglect

Access to Care

The Access to Care group has expanded into three specialty groups, each focusing on one of three areas: medical and urgent care, dental care, or behavioral health care. The medical and urgent care group will be focusing on getting individuals insured, knowledgeable about services available, and increasing the percentage of individuals utilizing primary care services. The dental group is focusing on special populations, particularly those who are vulnerable and working with local resources to promote interventions/behaviors that reduce dental disease. The behavioral group is working toward reducing the stigma attached to behavioral health services and strengthening the partnerships that exist between primary care providers and substance abuse providers and the behavioral health providers.

Substance Misuse

In an effort to better encompass the full picture of what is going on with substance issues in our community the Substance Abuse and Prevention Association is changing the language from abuse to misuse. The group has the same primary goals of reducing youth and adult smoking, drinking and drug misuse.



Healthy Weight

Get Fit Great Falls is looking to increase community awareness, ensure community collaboration, become financially stable and develop a succession plan. The group's strategic plan is really focusing on sustainability of the non-profit and thus the CHIP leadership is in discussions about how to move forward goals more related to achieving and maintaining a healthy weight for Cascade residents.

Child Abuse and Neglect

Cascade County is one of six (out of 56) counties in Montana that is considered to be at high risk for child abuse and neglect. It has also been high on the list of health concerns every cycle of the community survey. At the symposium this year it was decided to add Child Abuse and Neglect as a fourth priority area. A group leader/facilitator has been identified and the main goals of this group are to lay the groundwork for future partnerships and prevention strategies.

The next three years will be an exciting time in Cascade County as work continues and begins on implementing the four identified priority areas. If you have questions, want additional information, or would like to get involved contact Tanya Houston, Health Officer of the Cascade City-County Health Department at thouston@casadecountymt.gov or visit www.cchdmt.org.