

Community Health Needs Assessment & Implementation Plan



ASPIRUS[®]

Passion for excellence.
Compassion for people.

2019-2021

ASPIRUS MEDFORD HOSPITAL & CLINICS
135 South Gibson Street
Medford, WI 54451

*A partnership between Taylor County Health Department, Price County
Health Department and Aspirus Medford Hospital & Clinics.*

Acknowledgements

Sincere gratitude is extended to those who helped in the 2019-2021 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). Without the support of those who gathered local statistics (including the Northern Regional Office - Division of Public Health), made data available, surveyed community members and attended the Community Health Improvement Plan meetings, this work would not be possible. It is our great fortune to have committed partners and civic members who demonstrate such a great interest in improving the communities we serve. It is our intention and hope that the 2019-2021 plan will gather momentum toward a safer and healthier community and will improve the health of our citizens. We look forward to working in collaboration with our community partners and residents toward a common goal of healthier, happier lives!

Respectfully,

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Health Officer
Taylor County Health Department

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OUR HISTORY

Aspirus Medford Hospital & Clinics is part of the Aspirus health system. The system is a non-profit, community directed health system based in Wausau, Wisconsin. With more than 7,700 employees, Aspirus serves communities throughout northern and central Wisconsin, as well as the western Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

The integrated system includes four hospitals in Michigan and four hospitals in Wisconsin, 50 clinics, home health and hospice care, pharmacies, critical care and helicopter transport, medical goods, nursing homes and high-quality affiliated physicians.

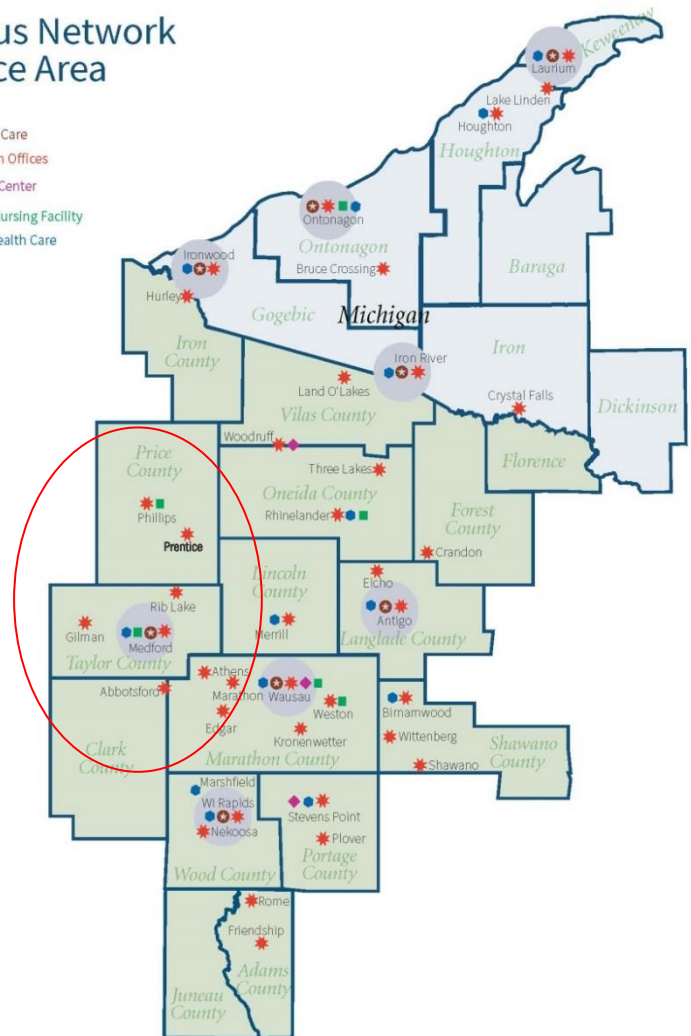
Aspirus Medford’s service area is primarily Taylor, Price and parts of Clark and Marathon Counties. Aspirus Medford employs over 660 employees, ranks among the top 100 critical access hospitals in the nation and is accredited by the Joint Commission.

In addition to the 25-bed hospital, Aspirus Medford Hospital & Clinics includes:

- A Specialist Clinic in Medford for:
 - Cardiologists (Heart)
 - Oncologists (Cancer)
 - Ophthalmologists (Eyes)
 - Otolaryngologists (Ears, Nose & Throat)
 - Nephrologists (Kidney)
 - Urologists (Bladder & Prostate)
 - And many others
- Aspirus Heart & Vascular - Medford Campus
- Kidney Care (Dialysis Center)
- Six Primary Care/Family Medicine Clinics (Athens, Gilman, Medford, Phillips, Prentice, Rib Lake)
- Birthing Center
- OB-GYN (a Woman’s Specialist)
- Walk-In Clinic in Medford
- Aspirus MedEvac Paramedics
- Aspirus Pharmacy - Medford
- Therapy & Fitness Centers (Medford & Prentice) with experts in:
 - Physical Therapy
 - Athletic Training
 - Occupational Therapy
 - Speech Therapy
 - Nutrition Therapy
 - Cardiopulmonary Rehabilitation

Aspirus Network Service Area

- Hospital Care
- Physician Offices
- Surgery Center
- Skilled Nursing Facility
- Home Health Care



- Public Fitness Center & Gym
- A Continuum of Senior Care Services from assisted living to short- and long-term skilled nursing care to restorative nursing services

OUR VISION: Aspirus is a catalyst for creating healthy, thriving communities, trusted and engaged above all others.

OUR MISSION: We heal people, promote health and strengthen communities.

OUR VALUES:

- **COMPASSION:** We demonstrate caring in all we do, and cherish the honor of improving life.
- **ACCOUNTABILITY:** We commit to our work, recognize our power to make a difference, and embrace the responsibility to advocate for each person we serve.
- **COLLABORATION:** As a team we improve our patients' lives; through partnerships we improve the health of our communities.
- **FORESIGHT:** We plan and act today to impact the future, and sustain and grow vital resources for those who need us.
- **JOY:** We work with happiness and enthusiasm; we celebrate successes and build a positive environment.

Every patient, family member and visitor who enters our facility will experience or witness our passion for excellence and our compassion for people. In recent years, Aspirus Medford has received several honors related to excellence in services provided:

- IBM Watson Health – 15 Top Health Systems (2018, 2019)
- iVantage Health Analytics – TOP 100 Critical Access Hospital (2013-2019)
- ANCC – Pathway to Excellence® Organization (2012-2018)



We take seriously our role as a health care provider and steward, promoting health and wellness, and giving back to the communities we serve. We, as an organization, and our employees are tremendously active within the communities we serve – volunteering; participating in civic and social organizations, youth sports and academic events; in addition to participating in county services and chamber events.

In collaboration with the Taylor County Health Department and Price County Health Department, Aspirus Medford is pleased to submit this Community Health Improvement Plan. We do so both as a matter of compliance with Section 501(r)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code as mandated in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, and as an obligation to those we serve. As an organization, we have embraced this opportunity to improve our community service and continuously focus on meeting the changing health care needs of our community.

Consistent with the requirements of Section 501(r)(3), the Aspirus Medford Community Health Needs Assessment and Community Health Improvement Plan will cover the following:

- Community Health Needs Assessment Methodology
- Prioritized Community Health Needs
- Community Health Improvement Plan
- Health Resources

WHY CONDUCT A COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN



A community health improvement plan (CHIP) is a locally based initiative in which committed individuals, local representatives and leaders with knowledge of the community come together to discuss local health priorities and to develop a plan to address these issues in order to create a healthier, better community. This process includes identifying local factors causing health concerns, recognizing community assets and resources, and mobilizing community resources to improve the health of

residents. A community health improvement plan, while targeting local health priorities, is often linked to state and national health priorities. The process of creating a community health improvement plan, called the community health improvement process, is mandatory for Wisconsin health departments and non-profit hospitals.

Local health departments are required by Wisconsin State Statute 251.05 to complete a CHIP every five years and affected hospitals every three years. Health departments and designated hospitals are required to collect, assemble, analyze and make available information on the health of the community. This includes statistics on health status, community health needs and epidemiological and other studies of health problems. Taylor and Price Counties are very similar – they are both rural counties and demographically comparable.

2016 Community Health Improvement Plan: Look Back

The 2016 CHIP for Aspirus Medford Hospital & Clinics (Aspirus Medford) and the Taylor County Health Department focused on the following areas:

1. Alcohol & Other Drug Use
2. Mental Health
3. Nutrition & Healthy Foods and Physical Inactivity

Throughout the implementation of strategies identified in the previous plan for these health focus areas, ongoing evaluations were completed to help measure the effectiveness of the previous initiatives.

Alcohol & Other Drug Use Achievements:

- TCDOP Navy SEALs Event:** Just shy of 200 students participated in the second phase of the Life of an Athlete program. The Navy SEALs program is a student-led, adult-guided movement to implement principles of nutrition, sleep, involvement in extracurricular activities and avoidance of alcohol and drugs by Taylor County youth. These four principles are evidence-based protective factors for enhancing positive social development in youth and avoidance of adult-related consequences of alcohol and drug use.
- Guest Speaker:** Public speaker Terrence Talley presented at the Medford School District for teachers, parents and agency officials. Topics included mental health and developmental effects on children dealing with trauma, alcohol and drug use, and interventions to help affected youth. The Aspirus Community Benefit program provided all the funding to bring Terrence Talley to the Medford community.
- Education & Awareness:** The Taylor County Health Department, Taylor County Drug Opposition Partners, Aspirus Medford and the Taylor County Mental Health Awareness Council have initiated and sustained several opportunities for continued education in our community. These have included community town hall meetings on the topics of methamphetamine and opioids; including and interactive “Hidden in Plain Sight Room” for participants to explore. Over 200 participants from Taylor County have attended these meetings. Another success was the Meth Awareness Walk which was started by the Taylor County Alternative High School students. These students, in collaboration with the Taylor County Drug Opposition, organized posters, media releases and educational pamphlets for this event. The event was covered by local TV media outlets and had over 150 participants spanning the last two years.



Mental Health Achievements:

- Medford School District CARES Model:** In October 2017, the Medford Area Public School District began offering its new CARES (Counseling for All to Reach Emotional Success) Model of school-based mental health counseling. A collaborative effort between the Medford Area Public School District, Aspirus Medford Hospital & Clinics and Counseling Connection, the CARES Model has dramatically increased availability of mental health counseling for students on location at their schools. The CARES Model addresses social, emotional, behavioral and mental health needs of students through preventive and intervention methods to allow for better success in school, at home and in life.

School Year	Counseling Hours at School	Students Receiving Services at School via CARES Model	Students that Received Services due to CARES Funding*
2017-2018	703.25	244	112
2018-2019**	516.75	283	148

*Services are funded by the CARES Model not by insurance, Medicaid or out-of-pocket expense.

**Numbers as of April 2019

- **Access to Behavioral Health Services:** In 2017, pediatric psychologist Christian DeGregorio, MD, began seeing pediatric Behavioral Health patients via Aspirus Medford Clinic’s telehealth services.
- **Question, Persuade and Refer:** The Taylor County Health Department has provided funding to have 30 individuals who are “train the trainers” for the QPR (Question, Persuade and Refer) evidence – based suicide prevention program. All three school districts in Taylor County have at least one train the trainer in their school to provide education to staff. In addition, the Taylor County Health Department has presented to virtual schools, adult disability center staff, health care providers, human services, industry and other community partners. Over 400 Taylor County residents have been trained to date.
- **Education & Awareness:** The Taylor County Mental Health Awareness Council and community partners initiated the Prevent Suicide Walk in Taylor County. This walk provides education, community resources and a speaker who is a family member of a victim of suicide and/or someone who has survived a suicide attempt. Over 200 participants attend this event annually.

Nutrition & Healthy Foods and Physical Inactivity Achievements:

- **Aspirus Color Run:** Aspirus Medford Hospital continues to hold its annual Community Color Fun Run 5K Run/Walk each fall. Hundreds of participants have run or walked through the non-toxic, biodegradable, colored cornstarch powder at the annual event, which leaves adults and children covered in color. The purpose of this untimed event is to provide the community a health and wellness activity the entire family can enjoy together.
- **School Greenhouse:** Aspirus donated \$10,000 to help bring Medford Area Senior High School’s greenhouse into existence. This project is consistent with and supportive of Aspirus’ mission by providing education and training around healthy, sustainable eating. The greenhouse was built in the summer of 2018. Students will learn firsthand how easy it is to grow their own food.
- **Life of an Athlete Program for Taylor County Schools:** Physical Activity components of this program teach students how to properly train for competition, along with a lifetime of health. The program emphasizes the importance of making time for muscle recovery and of proper training, which can improve their ability to be the best student and athlete they can be.
- **Whip It Up & Work It Out:** Throughout 2017, Aspirus Medford and Medford’s County Market teamed up to provide health and wellness education classes to the community. Topics centered on nutrition and physical activity.



- **Outdoor Exercise Equipment:** The Aspirus Community Benefit program funded an outdoor exercise station along the Medford Riverwalk. The station provides everyone in the community access to free fitness equipment.
- **Growing Together:** Aspirus donated \$2,200 toward the new Phillips Growing Together Learning Garden located in the front lawn of Phillips High School. The garden has ten 4'x12' raised beds, and the location offers the opportunity for expansion as community interest in the garden grows. The garden's objective is to show people how easy it can be to grow and prepare healthy food. The garden organizers are coordinating with UW-Extension, which will provide education about the benefits of eating fresh produce.
- **Senior Fitness:** Aspirus Therapy & Fitness in Medford has partnered with a variety of national exercise programs designed for older adults. These programs provide older adults access to Aspirus' full fitness gym and a variety of fitness classes, including Senior Balance and Basic Strength Circuit, at no cost.
- **Stepping On:** The Stepping On program originated in the fall of 2012. This 7-week class is proved to reduce falls and build confidence in older adults.
- **Strong Bones:** Strong Bones is an evidence – based program provided to Taylor County residents as a collaboration between the Taylor County Health Department and UW-Extension. This program provides education for strength training, nutrition and balance and meets twice a week for 8 weeks. The Taylor County Health Department has provided weights and training to community instructors. Taylor County provides this program in several rural communities and over 500 individuals participate.



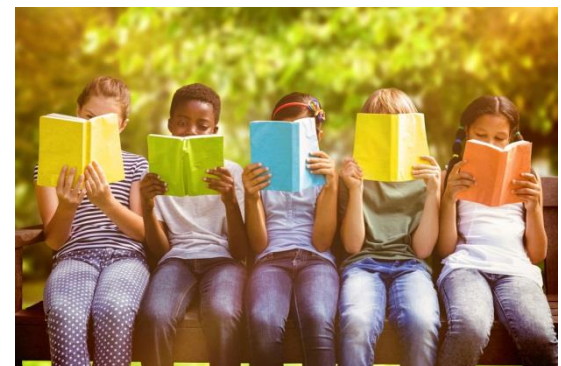
Health Education Achievements:

We recognize the need to provide health and wellness education to our community members. Educational opportunities offered include:

- Huey's Hideaway Health Care exhibit: The Aspirus Community Benefit program funded an interactive health care exhibit and educational play area at Huey's Hideaway Children's Museum
- Disease prevention education
- The importance of identifying and seeing a Primary Care Provider on a regular basis
- Healthy living facts and tips
- Utilization of MyAspirus for efficient communication with providers

Some of the educational events and courses have included:

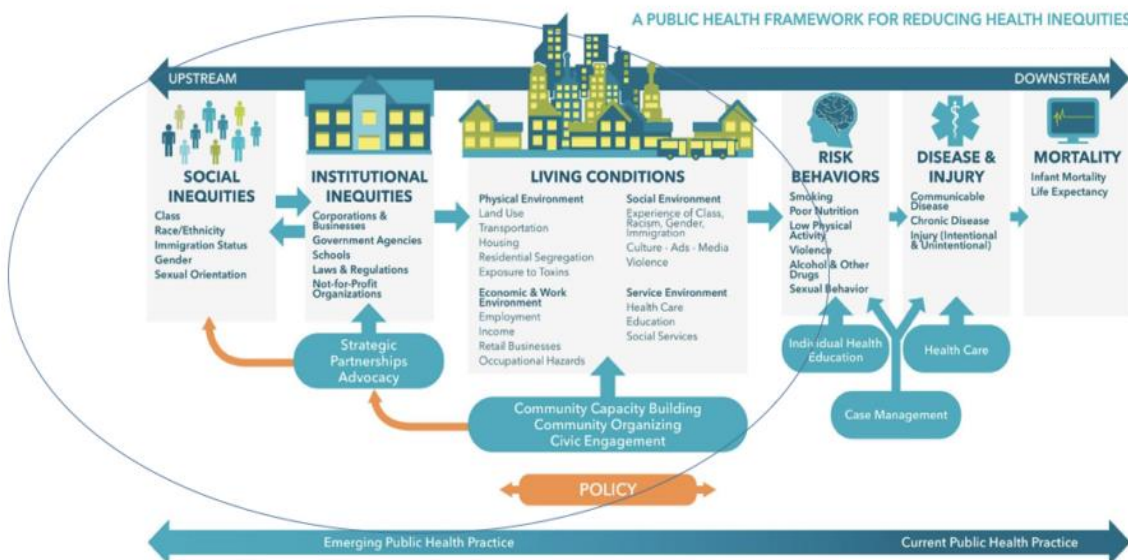
- Taylor County Health & Safety Fair:** Aspirus showed up in a big way at Taylor County's inaugural Health & Safety Fair held during the Medford Home & Business Expo. Staff provided bone density screenings, infant and toddler car seat checks, fitness and wellness information and emergency vehicle tours, including our ambulance and helicopter.
- Mommy & Me:** In October 2016, Aspirus Medford started Mommy & Me, a program that offers support and education to moms with infants ages two weeks to one year old. It's a time for moms to encourage one another and for experts to offer education that can make the first year just a bit easier. Pediatric provider Emily Tracey, MPAS, PA-C, IBCLC, provides programming and support to these moms twice a month at Aspirus Medford Hospital.
- Health Trivia Activity:** An interactive activity offered at Aspirus Medford's booths at various expos and fairs in Taylor and Price Counties. Trivia questions for kids, adults and senior citizens deal with nutrition, physical activity, heart health, immunizations, osteoporosis and more.
- Tissue Donation:** Understand what tissue donation is and how to sign up to be a donor.
- Free Screenings:** Aspirus Medford offered a variety of free screenings and wellness information at a number of community events, including the Commission on Aging's annual Senior Health, Wellness & Safety Fair. The screenings included blood glucose, cognitive testing, balance and blood pressure checks.
- Basic First Aid:** This class is for anyone 12 years and older that is interested in learning first aid techniques ranging from bandaging and splinting to treating victims of poisoning or strokes.
- Do You Want to Help Children or Adults Who Struggle to Read?:** An annual 10-week training course (taught by an Aspirus Medford pediatrician) for adults who wish to help struggling children and/or adult readers. The course focuses on the Orton-Gillingham approach to reading instruction, which has proven very successful for individuals with dyslexia.



- **Medication Mondays:** Aspirus Pharmacy - Medford provides Medication Mondays aimed at helping people who would like to understand their medications better. An Aspirus pharmacist sits down with people to discuss organizing and understanding their medications, mail orders or ordering from more than one pharmacy, managing multiple medications, questions about lowering medication costs and more.
- **Love & Logic:** Kelly Witt-Erickson, LCSW, with Aspirus Clinics in Prentice and Phillips, presented to a group of parents. She spoke about enhancing relationships with their children by ensuring empathy in their parenting style.
- **Alzheimer's and Lewy Bodies:** In the spring of 2016, Aspirus Medford hosted a course aimed at understanding and responding to dementia-related behavior. Licensed psychologist Conrad Christensen, MD, presented about normal brain aging, Alzheimer's disease, unique problems caregivers face and ways to deal, along with uncovering steps for prevention.

What Did We Learn?

Much was accomplished in each of these areas, but more needs to be done. More importantly, we need to stop thinking of these as separate and distinct issues and better understand how they are interconnected. Consequently, our 2019 assessment conversations focused on upstream efforts versus downstream solutions. The choice of this discussion reflects the idea that a high quality medical/clinical system is essential to treat people who are sick. It is critical to help restore people's health. But, it is not where health is created. Health is created in people's homes, workplaces, neighborhoods and communities. That is where people make healthy or unhealthy choices. It is where they establish healthy or unhealthy habits. And the framework for those choices is the social, economic and built environment we create. These are the social determinants of health.



Source: Bay Area Regional Health Inequities Initiative; <http://barhii.org/framework/>

2019 Community Health Needs Assessment

During the course of 2018, the Taylor County Health Department, Price County Health Department and Aspirus Medford Hospital & Clinics embarked on a collaborative effort to assess and prioritize the health needs of the region and, in turn, create an action plan to create real and sustained change within the communities we serve.

We turned to residents within the three counties to understand the impact these issues had within our local communities. This included feedback collected during our Community Health Improvement Planning session held on January 25, 2019. We compiled this data and partnered with state experts for additional quantifiable data on these issues. This information was shared with local stakeholders during a half-day session that included analyzing what services are currently available and gaps in services, and prioritizing key health concerns within Taylor and Price Counties. *See Appendix A & B for a list of community stakeholders in attendance.*

The collaborative also considered the local assets and resources currently available in the counties that can be mobilized to address health. These included both physical and non-physical assets and resources. Physical assets include parks, open space, markets, clinics and other aspects of a community that can affect a person's opportunity to achieve health. Non-physical assets include the skills of residents; the power of local associations like service or professional groups; local institutions like faith-based groups, local foundations, government institutions and institutions of higher learning; social capital; community resilience; and a strong business community.

Community assets and resources are especially important for populations with the greatest health disparities – those who are most vulnerable and are experiencing conditions that make it difficult to get and stay healthy. *For a local asset inventory compiled by partners throughout the assessment process, see Appendix C.*

Using this community guidance and extensive research, the top three issues for 2019-2021 identified include:

1. Alcohol & Other Drug Use
2. Mental Health
3. Access to Health Care

Recognizing the limited resources and scope of these areas, the collaborating organizations concluded that to create real momentum and substantial change, an effort should be made to have Taylor County Human Services and the Taylor County Health Department focus on the Alcohol & Other Drug Use (AODA) priority through their Drug Free Communities grant. In addition, the health departments and Aspirus Medford have partnered with Memorial Member Association and the Taylor County Mental Health Awareness Council – an active coalition with key stakeholders and community representatives – to address Mental Health issues. Aspirus Medford Hospital & Clinics will focus on Access to Health Care, looking to internal efforts to impact this issue.

Steering Committee

Patty Krug, Director, Taylor County Health Department

Amanda Lange, Director - Community Health and Foundation, Aspirus Medford Hospital & Clinics

Michelle Edwards, Director, Price County Health Department

Dani Hoffman, Price County Health Department

Technical Support

Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Division of Public Health, Northern Regional Office

Angela Nimsgern, Epidemiologist, Regional Director, Northern Regional Office

COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

Our Community

For the purposes of our Community Health Needs Assessment we have defined our “community” as a broad area, including all of Taylor County, the southern area of Price County, the northeastern portion of Clark County and the northwestern corner of Marathon County. It is in this area that 88.6% of our patient population reside. Throughout this document, any reference to “community” is meant to indicate this broad service area.

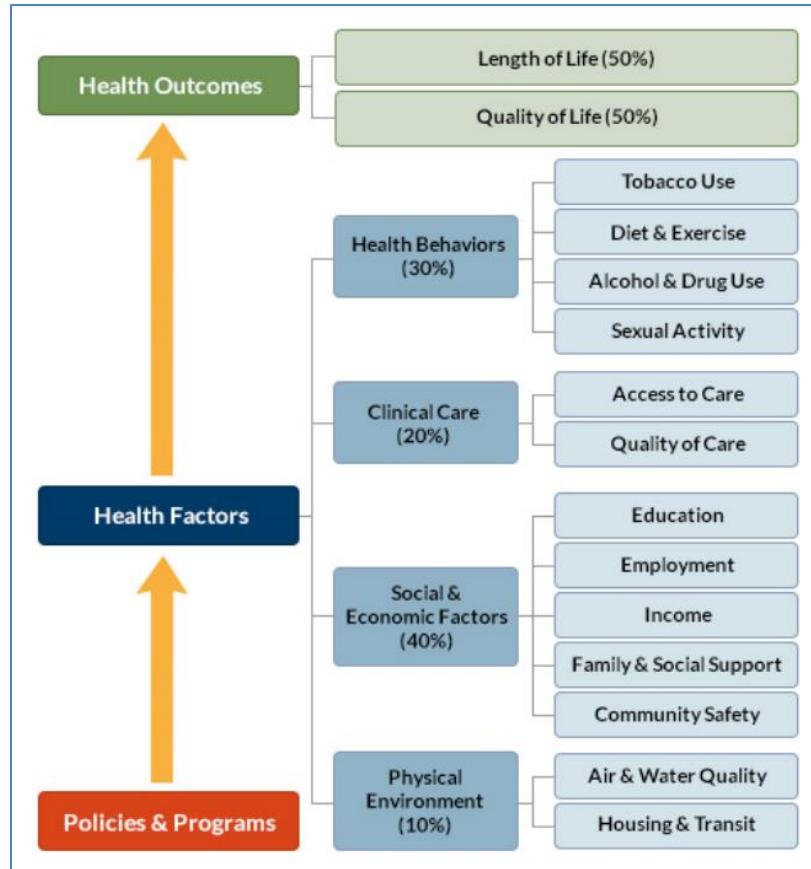
In 2010, the U.S. Census Bureau conducted the nation’s most recent census and published that data by county. Similarly the Population Health Institute collects and reports health data and demographic data by county on an annual basis. Although county borders do not exactly align with our community, the data does provide a reasonable approximation of our community. Because our community consists of mostly Taylor and Price Counties, this report focuses on those two counties. U.S. census data is as of 2010 while Population Health Institute data is as of 2015.

	Wisconsin	Taylor County	Price County
Population	5,774,798	20,653	13,707
Age <14	18.6%	19.89%	13.5%
Age 15-64	65.8%	61.9%	62.6%
Age 65+	15.2%	18.19%	23.8%
Female	49.5%	48.8%	48.6%
Male	50.14%	51.2%	50.7%
Caucasian	87.9%	96.5%	97.6%
African American	7.2%	0.7%	0.73%
American Indian	1.6%	0.5%	1.19%
Asian	3.0%	0.6%	0.91%
Hispanic	6.4%	2.0%	1.51%
Median Household Income (2016)	\$52,600	\$48,700	\$42,700
Ratio of Population to Providers (Primary Care)(2015)	1,215:1	2,276:1	1,387:1
Ratio of Population to Providers (Mental Health)(2015)	675:1	1,472:1	1,972:1
Ratio of Population to Providers (Dental)(2015)	1,631:1	1,585:1	1,380:1
Uninsured Adults (2012-16)	7.19%	10.55%	7.0%
Free Lunch - Eligible Children (2014-15)	40%	36%	45%
Reading Proficiency	7.3%	9.1%	8.2%

Taylor, Price and Clark Counties are largely Caucasian and are almost exclusively rural. The median household incomes in Taylor and Price Counties are both below the state average, while the state average is also below the national average. The major occupations in the community are manufacturing, trade/transportation/utilities, education and health, which includes Aspirus Medford Hospital & Clinics. While the Hispanic population in our community is relatively small and below the state average, we provided special consideration to this minority group for two reasons. First, the Hispanic community consists of both documented and undocumented individuals who frequently have communication challenges. Second, demographic-growth estimates indicate that the Hispanic population is likely to grow more rapidly than any other group in our community in the next ten years due to agriculture growth. Each of these factors requires special consideration by both Aspirus Medford and the health departments in how to best provide for the health needs of this group.

Another small, but important, group within our community is “the Plain People,” consisting of individuals from the Amish, Mennonite, German Baptist and Old German Baptist religions. The Plain People also require special consideration by Aspirus Medford and the health departments because of their non-mainstream lifestyle. Depending on the group, beliefs may influence their use of preventive health care, treatment for illnesses and injuries, use of insurance, use of electricity, transportation and various other facets of daily life.

The University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute (PHI) publishes annual health data for every county in the United States. The data is aggregated into *health outcomes* and *health factors*. The PHI separates health outcomes into mortality (length of life) and morbidity (quality of life). Health factors are separated into four factors that largely influence the health outcomes: physical environment, society and economics, clinical care and health behaviors.



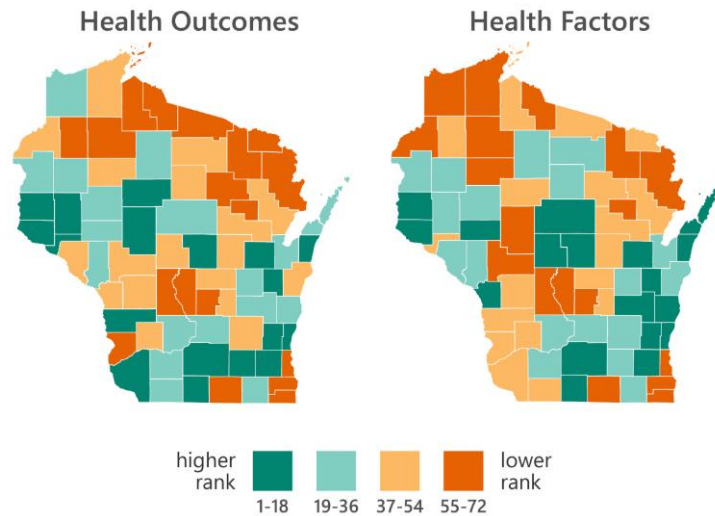
Source: University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute

In 2019, the rankings are based on 72 counties in Wisconsin. Taylor County's health factors ranked 42nd and Price County's ranked 35th. In the same year, Taylor County's health outcomes ranked 6th, while Price County's ranked 30th. Because health factors lead to health outcomes, the disparity in Taylor County's rankings indicates that its residents are currently benefiting from positive health factors in the past while the current health factors are likely to lead to worsening future health outcomes.

2019 County Health Rankings for the 72 Ranked Counties in Wisconsin

County	Health Outcomes	Health Factors	County	Health Outcomes	Health Factors	County	Health Outcomes	Health Factors	County	Health Outcomes	Health Factors
Adams	67	70	Florence	66	44	Marathon	19	14	Rusk	44	60
Ashland	64	51	Fond du Lac	29	15	Marinette	55	58	Sauk	24	31
Barron	21	24	Forest	69	69	Marquette	61	62	Sawyer	70	68
Bayfield	49	55	Grant	14	46	Menominee	72	72	Shawano	41	40
Brown	31	36	Green	10	12	Milwaukee	71	71	Sheboygan	27	10
Buffalo	40	29	Green Lake	53	47	Monroe	48	41	St. Croix	3	7
Burnett	47	67	Iowa	25	20	Oconto	52	49	Taylor	6	42
Calumet	5	5	Iron	62	56	Oneida	39	21	Trempealeau	35	19
Chippewa	22	23	Jackson	54	59	Outagamie	16	8	Vernon	13	48
Clark	18	61	Jefferson	15	22	Ozaukee	1	1	Vilas	68	52
Columbia	28	32	Juneau	58	65	Pepin	7	43	Walworth	36	25
Crawford	56	50	Kenosha	60	66	Pierce	8	16	Washburn	57	39
Dane	12	3	Kewaunee	11	11	Polk	34	26	Washington	2	4
Dodge	37	34	La Crosse	38	6	Portage	9	17	Waukesha	4	2
Door	20	9	Lafayette	32	37	Price	30	35	Waupaca	50	38
Douglas	26	57	Langlade	63	54	Racine	65	63	Waushara	46	53
Dunn	17	28	Lincoln	51	33	Richland	42	45	Winnebago	23	30
Eau Claire	33	13	Manitowoc	43	27	Rock	59	64	Wood	45	18

Source: University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute



Caitlin Bourbeau/UW Applied Population Lab

Source: University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute

Assess the Health of the Community

The first step in creating a CHIP is to evaluate the progress of the previous plan, assess the surrounding community and identify health priorities. For the 2019-2021 Community Health Improvement Plan, community outreach was obtained by holding a Data in a Day session, utilizing participant worksheets and discussion.

We asked representation of community residents, businesses, schools, medical/health, law enforcement, human services, judicial, other community partners and county/local municipality policymakers within the two counties to understand the impact these issues had within our local communities. We compiled this data and partnered with state experts to examine data framed around Healthiest Wisconsin 2020's eleven health priorities, including morbidity, mortality, risk factors and community opinion for additional quantifiable data on these issues. This information was shared with local stakeholders during a half-day session that included analyzing what services are currently available and prioritizing key health concerns within Taylor and Price Counties. We identified priority health problems and the factors that can be impacted as well as identified community assets and resources to be supported or utilized.

Community Health Improvement Plan Prioritization

To assist in prioritizing the identified community health needs, we developed a list of possible criteria for prioritization. Our stakeholders conducted a Nominal Group Technique exercise, in which each member of the group was asked to identify his/her top three criteria. The following prioritization is the result of the community's deliberation and discussion regarding the health concerns of Taylor and Price Counties.

Community Health Needs Prioritization		
Prioritization	Health Issue	
	Taylor County	Price County
Primary	Alcohol & Other Drug Use (AODA) Mental Health Health Care Access	Mental Health Youth Reproductive Health Alcohol & Other Drug Use (AODA)
Secondary	Access & Awareness to Resources Poverty & Social Economic Issues Aging	Economic Instability Parenting (Trauma, Low Income, Stress) Injury/Violence
Tertiary	Obesity/Physical Activity/Nutrition Housing/Homelessness Literacy	Chronic Diseases
Unclassified	Bullying (in relation to suicide) Dental Care Out-of-Home Placement Family Instability	

PRIORITIZED COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS

Aspirus Medford Hospital & Clinics is responding to the identified community health needs through a series of steps that we collectively refer to as our "implementation plan." Included in this plan is the ongoing commitment of our Community Benefit Program.

There are many organizations with great ideas and talents that want to help educate, provide the understanding and motivate the public to make healthy lifestyle choices, but they lack the financial resources to develop and implement their strategies. To assist these organizations, Aspirus Medford Hospital & Clinics launched its Community Benefit Program in 2014. Community agencies and members can apply for funding to support their programs and initiatives that have a direct impact on an identified health need.

Throughout the CHIP process, both the Price County Wellness Coalition and the Memorial Member Association Community Health Needs committee were formed. The initiatives of both of these groups focus around identified risk factors. Their members represent the county health department, the UW-Extension office, Memorial Member Association, local school districts, local health care providers and other various community agencies. They are great examples of how community agencies can collaborate to strategize on common goals to impact the health of our communities.



Priority #1: Alcohol & Other Drug Use



Current Situation

Wisconsin leads the country in adult alcohol consumption, binge drinking and heavy drinking. According to Healthiest Wisconsin 2020, Wisconsin recently ranked worst among states for adult binge drinking,

worst for current alcohol use among youth, third in binge drinking among youth and fourth in the incidence of youth riding with a driver who had been drinking. The alcohol problem in our community can be summarized in four examples:

- Children and youth spend time in bars (which is legal in Wisconsin) accompanying a parent or sibling who is drinking alcohol.
- Parents host parties, with alcohol, for their children.
- The Youth Risk Behavior Survey documented that 26% of Taylor County middle school students self-reported consumption of alcohol (more than a sip) prior to age 13.
- Baseline data from the 2014 survey indicated that 32% of Taylor County high school students and 5% of total middle school students report current drinking. Ten percent of Taylor County high school students self-reported opiate use for non-medical purposes.

The common justifications for these behaviors were the importance of adult supervision and avoiding drinking and driving. However, such behaviors also teach youth the acceptability of drinking large quantities of alcohol. Although Alcoholics Anonymous operates in our community, we lack the necessary facilities for detoxification and rehabilitation for any substance abuse problems.

Abuse of prescription drugs and illicit drugs in our community is concerning. According to local law enforcement officials, the most abused prescription drugs in our community are Oxycodone and Vicodin. The most abused illegal drugs are marijuana, methamphetamine, cocaine and heroin.

GOAL: Prevent harmful opioid use and reduce opioid-related consequences.

Objective 1

Reduce youth access to prescription opioids. Decrease community availability to opioids.

Strategies

Strategy 1: Increase the number of prescription drugs disposed of in Taylor County via permanent drug drop sites, take-back days, awareness and collection efforts. Aspirus Medford will look to implement a permanent drug drop site on its campus.

Strategy 2: Utilization of Chronic Opioid Use Monitoring reports by Aspirus Medford providers. These reports display information about patients who use opioids long term. Clinicians can use this information to identify patients who need preventive care or follow-up visits related to their diagnosis, condition or related medication therapy.

Strategy 3: Continue community education and awareness opportunities like the Meth Awareness Walk and opioid forums.

Objective 2

Reduce opioid abuse among youth ages 10-18 as measured by the Youth Risk Behavior

Strategies

Strategy 1: Collaborate with Taylor County Drug Opposition Partners coalition and students to create a campaign for National Alcohol and Drug Facts Week to be implemented within the

Survey.

- Decrease self-report of 30-day use of opioid (8th and 12th grades)
- Increase perception of risk or harm related to use of opioids (8th and 12th grades)
- Decrease youth access of prescription drugs from a friend or relative with or without their knowledge by 10%

schools and include community involvement.

Strategy 2: Adopt Wisconsin’s “Dose of Reality” in continuing community education campaign annually.

Strategy 3: Collaborate with the Taylor County Drug Opposition Partners to ensure that all school districts within the Aspirus Medford service area participate in the Youth Risk Behavior Survey.

Objective 3

Reduce electronic cigarette use among youth ages 10-18 as measured by the Youth Risk Behavior Survey.

- Decrease in past 30-day use of electronic cigarettes (high school aged students)

Strategies

Strategy 1: In collaboration with the Taylor County Drug Opposition Partners, educate community members and parents about the effects that electronic cigarettes have on the body, while emphasizing they are a product that contains nicotine and other harmful chemicals and metals.

Strategy 2: In collaboration with the Taylor County Drug Opposition Partners, develop an electronic cigarette awareness campaign in all school districts.

Strategy 3: Aspirus Medford will continue to offer referrals via Primary Care to tobacco cessation classes that are aimed at helping people quit smoking. Single sessions and more extensive programs will continue to be offered through Aspirus Medford Respiratory Therapy. The initial session will continue to be offered at no cost to the patient.

In addition to these efforts, our organization continues to support a grant that was awarded to Taylor County Health Department/Taylor County Drug Opposition Partners coalition in 2015 to prevent youth substance use. The Taylor County Drug Opposition Partners will specifically work to address delaying the age of onset of alcohol consumption, decreasing the amount of current use and binge drinking of alcohol among Taylor County youth, decreasing youth access to opiates (pain killers) and increasing perception of harm related to opiates and other illegal drugs. The coalition will continue to partner with Gilman, Rib Lake and Medford area school districts, law enforcement, health care providers, the faith-based community, businesses, parents, youth, service organizations, alcohol and drug abuse specialists, and local media to create a healthy environment for Taylor County youth.

Priority #2: Mental Health**Current Situation**

Mental health problems, ranging from mild depression to schizophrenia, occur about as often as in other communities. However, stress from economic situations, including unemployment and underemployment, has added to the normal mental health problems, especially in parents.

While the occurrence of mental health problems is not especially high, the lack of accessibility in obtaining professional treatment is a problem. Individuals in our community feel psychiatrists, behavioral health specialists and counselors are all lacking. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration has designated our service area as a mental health professional shortage area.

Although several options are available in Medford and a few options are available in Phillips, Gilman, Rib Lake and Prentice, most other areas lack any opportunities. Additionally, the options available in Medford and Phillips generally require insurance or self-pay, or focus on low-income individuals. The insurance and self-pay options generally have availability, but many in our community lack insurance and cannot afford to pay. In contrast, the low-income options are affordable, but lack availability. In addition, severe mental health problems require at least 2-3 hours travel, each way, to reach inpatient psychiatric centers.

GOAL: Increase access to mental health resources and improve the mental health of our community.

Objective 1

Increase access to mental health resources.

- Increase the number of patients served by Aspirus Medford Behavioral Health
- Increase the number of students served by CARES (Counseling for All to Reach Emotional Success) Model

Strategies

Strategy 1: Aspirus Medford to expand availability of behavioral health services at all Aspirus Medford clinic locations. Active recruitment for a psychiatrist is underway.

Strategy 2: Aspirus Medford will continue to develop telemedicine psychiatric services, allowing individuals to consult with a professional psychiatrist over the Internet. And, depending on the success of this program and available Internet bandwidth, the telemedicine program could be expanded to other health services in the future.

Strategy 3: Expand the CARES Model to all districts in the Aspirus Medford service area as provider access allows.

Strategy 4: Hold regular care-team meetings in which Aspirus Medford primary care providers, behavioral health providers, school district staff and Human Services staff collaborate on care plans for the patients they are serving.

Strategy 5: Aspirus Medford will explore a Behavioral Health Navigator role to assist patients in navigating Behavioral Health services.

Strategy 6: Aspirus Medford will partner with the Taylor County Drug Opposition Partners and local health departments to produce a resource folder to be distributed throughout the county. This folder will contain key information related to resources and how they can be accessed.

Objective 2

Reduce suicide attempts.

Strategies

Strategy 1: Continue collaboration with the Taylor County Mental Health Awareness Council and Price County Mental Health Coalition to address suicide prevention and related issues.

Strategy 2: In collaboration with the Taylor County Mental Health Awareness Council, provide community-wide training and education regarding Mental Health First Aid, Signs of Suicide, QPR (Question, Persuade and Refer) and suicide prevention.

Strategy 3: Increase awareness of existing mental health resources through the development and distribution of a mental health resource guide.

In addition to these efforts, our organization continues to collaborate with the Taylor County Mental Health Awareness Council. The Taylor County Mental Health Awareness Council is a collaboration of county behavioral health service providers comprised of representation from local school districts, health care providers, parents, mental health specialists, government agencies and others. This group will specifically work to create awareness and address mental health issues in our county.

Priority #3: Healthcare Access



Current Situation

Our community members consistently identified access to health care – meaning available facilities, professionals, specialties and hours – as a significant need. These results are consistent with state and county studies. Healthiest Wisconsin 2020 encourages 10 “pillar objectives.” While many of these objectives are oriented toward state and local governments and schools, one in particular relates to health care providers:

“Improve Wisconsin’s systems of primary health care; behavioral screening and intervention; services for mental health, alcohol and drug use, oral health, chronic disease management, and reproductive sexual health...”

Similarly, “access to primary and preventive health care” was identified as one of Taylor County’s top priorities in its 2013 Community Health Improvement Plan. Many of the problems in our community relate to geography. Medford is the largest town, with a population of 4,300 residents (2017). Because of this, Medford has the most medical resources available. However, our community stretches more than 20 miles to the east, west and south and more than 60 miles to the north. Those individuals who live outside of Medford have more difficulty obtaining reasonably accessible health care. The following are examples of access limitations in our community:

- Lack of facilities in northeast Clark County.
- Lack of behavioral health provider availability at all clinic locations.
- Lack of specialist provider availability in outlying clinics.
- Lack of pediatric providers.
- Lack of OB-providing physicians.
- Lack of provider availability in evenings and on weekends.
- Overuse and/or inappropriate use of Emergency Department and urgent care sites.
- Lack of transportation to and from appointments at all clinic locations.

Accessibility problems are enhanced by demographic and economic issues in our community. Due to economic hardship, people have less money available for prescriptions and non-emergency medical treatments. Similarly, individuals have less money available for gas and transportation. Our community lacks a public transportation system and the few taxi-type services that do exist are either too expensive or do not serve a large enough geographic area. Price County has a transportation system available; however, it does not travel to Aspirus Medford Hospital if advanced care is needed. Related to this, working adults have fewer days off for the necessary travel and appointment time, either for themselves or their children. These transportation and time limitations are even more pronounced for our Hispanic community members. Finally, because of the rural nature of our community, services that are normally available via the Internet may not always be available because of limited access to high speed Internet.

GOAL: Increase access to health care services.

Objective 1

Increase access to primary care services.

Strategies

Strategy 1: Aspirus Medford will continue to offer same-day access for primary care visits in all clinics.

Strategy 2: Continued support of innovative interpretation services at Aspirus Medford. Video Remote Interpreting and Over-the-Phone Interpreting for people with Limited English Proficiency and those who are deaf or hard of hearing became available in January 2015. Video Remote Interpreting provides a reliable way for patients to communicate with doctors, improving health outcomes, reducing costs and raising the standard of care at hospitals worldwide.

Strategy 3: Recruit and retain providers at Aspirus Medford Hospital & Clinics.

Objective 2

Increase access to specialty health care services.

Strategies

Strategy 1: Aspirus Medford will expand its offering of telehealth services to include video visits. The new services may be used on a smartphone, tablet or computer via the Aspirus Video Visit app for mobile devices (Apple and Android), or on the web at aspirusvideovisit.org. To support this objective, Aspirus has employed two nurse practitioners and partnered with the vendor American Well, which contracts with board-certified physicians to provide coverage for off hours or higher volumes. The service is open to anyone 18 months of age or older, regardless of whether they are a current Aspirus patient or not.

Strategy 2: Aspirus Medford will undergo a renovation project in 2019 that will add additional specialty provider space in its Medford Clinic location. This renovated space will allow four visiting specialty providers to serve patients at the same time.

Objective 3

Increase health literacy and access to health resources in the community.

Strategies

Strategy 1: Aspirus Medford will continue to seek new and innovative ways to educate the community on important health topics, such as through our Aspiring Women program where health and wellness education, stats and facts, and tips and recipes are shared with the goal that participants will incorporate what they learn to achieve happier, healthier and more active lifestyles for themselves and their families. Programs are presented by Aspirus health care providers and content experts.

Strategy 2: Aspirus Medford will continue to share knowledge with the public through the:

- Aspirus *Aspire*, a health and wellness magazine that is circulated throughout our entire service area, free of charge, three times a year.
- Development of educational handouts that are free for the taking at health fairs, expos and county fairs.
- Public service announcements (PSAs) via the radio, news articles and paid advertisements.
- Social media campaigns.
- Free public health forums and seminars.
- CPR classes for health care providers such as professional health care providers, nurses, EMTs and CNAs. The course provides training in lifesaving techniques of CPR for adults, children and infants.

We recognize the need to create access to health care services and provide educational opportunities for our community members. Educational opportunities we currently offer and/or plan to address for our community include:

- All of the community health needs identified in this report.
- Disease prevention education.
- The level of care mid-level providers can provide at clinics, even when physicians are absent.
- The importance of identifying and seeing on a regular basis a primary care provider.
- Available specialists at Aspirus.
- The patient's ability to change providers at any time at the patient's discretion.
- Medical terminology.
- Healthy living facts and tips.
- Utilization of MyAspirus for efficient communication with providers.

Appendix A: Data Day Participants – Taylor County

Name	Title	Organization
Allen Lang	Pharmacist	HealthMart Pharmacy
Judy Lang	Employee	HealthMart Pharmacy
Rachel Dixon	Physician Assistant	Aspirus Medford Hospital & Clinics
Diane Albrecht	Board Member	Taylor County Public Health
Catherine Lemke	Board Member	Taylor County
Judy LeMaster	District School Nurse	Rib Lake School District
Tammy Tom-Steinmetz	Director of Human Services	Taylor County Human Services Dept.
Andria Farrand	County Clerk	Taylor County
Colleen Handrick	Taylor County Emergency Management Director	Taylor County
Mike Wellner	Mayor	City of Medford
Michele Armbrust	Public Health Coordinator	Taylor County Health Department
Ingrid Purvis	Public Health Nurse	Taylor County Health Department
Derrick Fritz	Taylor County Drug Opposition Partners Project Director	Taylor County Human Services
Krista Blomberg	Assistant Director	Rib Lake Public Library
Nathanael Brown	Director	Taylor County Commission on Aging
Joseph Greget	Director of Special Education and Student Services	Medford Public School District
Dale Hustedt	President	Aspirus Medford Hospital & Clinics
Patricia Mertens	Board Member	Taylor County Public Health
Michelle Grimm	Community Development	UW-Extension
Justine Thicke	Outreach Coordinator	HealthFirst
John Lange	AVP Retail Banking Officer	Nicolet National Bank
Patty Krug	Health Officer	Taylor County Health Department
Amanda Lange	Director of Community Health & Foundation	Aspirus Medford Hospital & Clinics

Appendix B: Data Day Organizational Representation – Price County

Ascension Wisconsin
Chequamegon School District
Community Members
Embrace (Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Program for Washburn, Rusk & Price Counties)
UW Extension- Price County
Flambeau Home Health and Hospice
Flambeau Hospital
Limberg & Associates Counseling, LLC
Marshfield Clinic Health System
New Horizons North (Not for Profit Social Services & Support Agency)
Park Falls Police Department
Phillips Public Library
Phillips School District
Price County Aging and Disability Resource Center Unit
Price County Behavioral Health Unit
Price County Board of Supervisors
Price County Children and Youth Unit
Price County Public Health Unit
Price County Sherriff Department

Appendix C: Community Assets and Resources

HEALTH		
Name	Address	Contact Information
Audiology & Better Hearing	123 State St, Medford	715-748-4447
Aspirus Athens Clinic	729 Pine St, Athens	715-257-1687; www.aspirus.org
Aspirus Medford Hospital & Clinics	135 S. Gibson St, Medford	715-748-8100; www.aspirus.org
Aspirus Gilman Clinic	320 E. Main St, Gilman	715-447-8293; www.aspirus.org
Aspirus Phillips Clinic	625 Peterson Ave, Phillips	715-339-4035; www.aspirus.org
Aspirus Prentice Clinic	1511 Railroad Ave, Prentice	715-428-2521; www.aspirus.org
Aspirus Rib Lake Clinic	1121 Highway 102, Rib Lake	715-427-5701; www.aspirus.org
Aspirus Therapy & Fitness	103 S. Gibson St, Medford	715-748-8112; www.aspirus.org
Borealis Wellness Clinic LLC	115 E. Perkins St, Medford	715-748-4433 www.borealisclinic.com
Brost Chiropractic	1377 N. 8 th St, Medford	715-748-4343
Counseling Connection	429 W. Broadway Ave, Medford	715-748-4312
Correction Creek Chiropractic	1260 S. 8 th St, Medford	715-748-6969
Courage to Change Recovery Counseling Services	880 E. Perkins St, Medford	715-748-0480
Family Health Center of Marshfield, Inc.	843 W. Broadway Ave, Medford	715-785-8100 www.marshfieldclinic.org
First Impressions Pediatric Dentistry & Orthodontics	124 S. Main St, Medford	715-748-5435; www.fidkids.com
Head Start	1259 N 8 th St, Medford	715-785-7936
Hope Hospice & Palliative Care, Inc.	537 W. Broadway Ave, Medford	715-748-3434; www.hospice.com
Hopeline – Crisis Hotline		Text HOPELINE to 741741 1-866-317-9362
Medford Dental Clinic	309 E. Broadway Ave, Medford	715-748-4111
Northwoods Dentistry	915 Casement Ct, Medford	715-748-2688 www.northwoodsdentistry.com
Rib Lake Health Services	650 Pearl St, Rib Lake	715-427-5291; www.riblakehs.com
Strama Sport & Spine Physical Therapy	640 S. 8 th St, Medford	715-748-5203
Stronger Version Fitness	330 S. Whelen Ave, Medford	715-748-4300
Taylor County Health Department	224 S. 2 nd St, Medford	715-748-1410
Taylor County Human Services	540 E. College St, Medford	833-327-7233
Taylor County Family Care Clinic LLC	811 W. Broadway, Medford	715-748-5580 www.taylorcountyfamilycare.com

EDUCATION		
Name	Address	Contact Information
Gilman School District	325 N. Fifth Ave, Gilman	715-447-8211 www.gilman.k12.wi.us
Immanuel Lutheran School	420 Lincoln St, Medford	715-748-2921 www.diedforme.education
Holy Rosary School	215 S. Washington, Medford	715-748-3336 www.school.hrmedford.org
Little Lamb Academy of Medford	420 Lincoln St, Medford	715-748-2891 www.diedforme.education
Medford School District	124 W. State St, Medford	715-748-4620 www.Medford.k12.wi.us
Rib Lake School District	1236 Kennedy St, Rib Lake	715-427-3222 www.riblake.k12.wi.us
Rural Virtual Academy	624 College St, Medford	888-801-2666
Sand Box Child Care & Preschool	664 W. Cedar St, Medford	715-748-4525 www.sandboxchildcare.com

GOVERNMENT & PUBLIC SAFETY		
Name	Address	Contact Information
City of Medford	639 S. Second St, Medford	715-748-4321
Medford Police Department	224 S. 2 nd St, Medford	715-748-1447
Taylor County Emergency Management	224 S. 2 nd St, Medford	715-48-3503
Taylor County Sheriff	224 S. 2 nd St, Medford	715-748-2200
Village of Gilman	380 E. Main St, Gilman	715-447-8650
Village of Rib Lake	655 Pearl St, Rib Lake	715-427-5404

TRANSPORTATION		
Name	Address	Contact Information
Medford Taxi	120 N. Main St, Medford	715-748-4200

SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT & SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS		
Name	Address	Contact Information
Gilman Lioness Club	Gilman	
Kiwanis International	Medford	715-748-3237
Medford Chamber of Commerce	104 E. Perkins St, Medford	715-748-4729 Medfordchamber1@gmail.com
Medford Morning Rotary		
Taylor County Lions Clubs	Gilman, Medford, Whittlesey, Rib Lake, Jump River	