



Community Health Implementation Strategy

2021-2024



Aspirus Sacred Heart Hospital

401 West Mohawk Drive
Tomahawk, Wisconsin 54487

Aspirus Good Samaritan Hospital

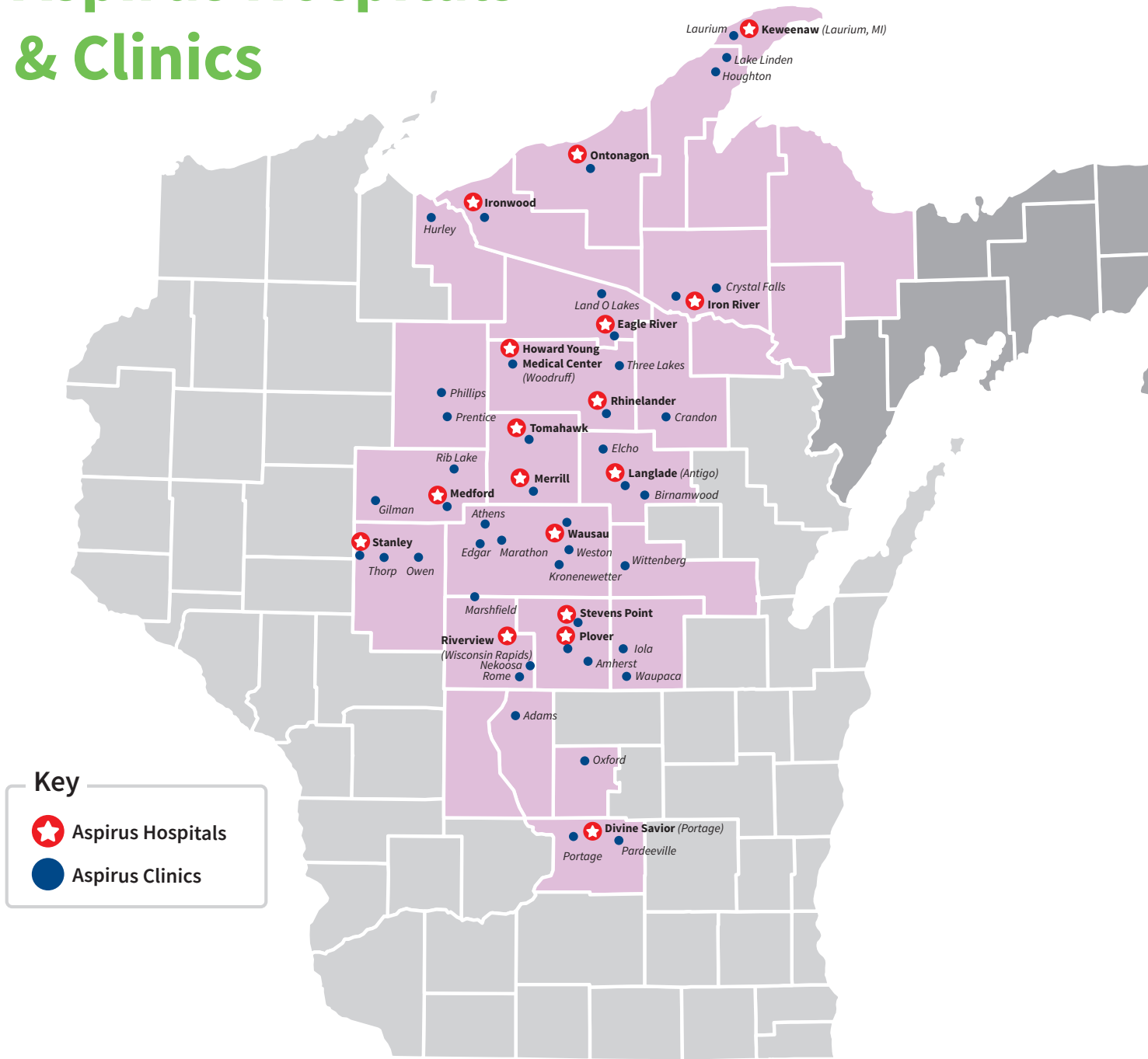
601 South Center Avenue
Merrill, Wisconsin 54452

Communities We Serve

Aspirus Health Service Area



Aspirus Hospitals & Clinics



Key

- Aspirus Hospitals
- Aspirus Clinics

Aspirus Sacred Heart Hospital and Aspirus Good Samaritan Hospital Community Health Improvement Implementation Strategy

Introduction

Aspirus Good Samaritan Hospital and Aspirus Sacred Heart Hospital are part of 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. Aspirus has been recognized for four consecutive years by IBM Watson Health as one of the nation's Top 15 Health System in its annual study identifying the top-performing health systems in the country. Visit aspirus.org for more information.

The hospitals conducted their Community Health Needs Assessment and initiated the Implementation Strategy when they were part of Ascension Wisconsin. The Implementation Strategy was completed under Aspirus. Aspirus is continuing the rich and long tradition of addressing the health of the community, following in the footsteps of legacy Ascension Wisconsin and prior to that, Ministry Health Care.

Prioritized Significant Health Needs

Based on the data presented and the prioritization process with the community stakeholders, the following priorities were selected:

- Nutrition and Healthy Food
- Oral Health
- Mental Health
- Alcohol and Other Drug Use

Significant Health Needs Not Included in this Plan

All significant needs were prioritized by the hospitals.

Implementation Strategy

The Aspirus Sacred Heart and Aspirus Good Samaritan implementation strategy is part of a broad community effort to address the priority health needs in the Lincoln County. Under the umbrella of Live Well Lincoln, representatives from both hospitals actively participate on health priority coalitions: the Nutrition Coalition and the Mental Health and AODA (“Healthy Minds”) Coalition. (At the writing of this report, the Oral Health (“Healthy Smiles”) Coalition was paused.)

This implementation strategy outlines the actions Aspirus Sacred Heart and Aspirus Good Samaritan will take to address the local health needs. (Note: The addendum includes a summary table describing which strategies each hospital is undertaking.) As noted below, many of these strategies will be implemented in collaboration with community partners. Recognizing that no one organization can affect substantial community change alone, the long-term outcomes identified in this plan will be achieved as many community organizations work together for collective impact.

NUTRITION AND HEALTHY FOOD

Goal: Increase access to and consumption of healthy foods.

Long-term Performance Indicators:

- By June 30, 2026, increase the consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables. (County-level measure not available at this time.)
- By June 30, 2026, decrease the percent of Lincoln County residents who have food insecurity from 8 percent (2018) to 7 percent. (Source: *Map the Meal Gap project*; available on the *County Health Rankings and Roadmaps website*)

The Lincoln County Nutrition Coalition formed in 2012 when nutrition and healthy foods were identified as a top health priority in the county. The coalition is facilitated by Aspirus Good Samaritan, Aspirus Sacred Heart, UW- Extension Lincoln County and the Lincoln County Health Department. Additional coalition partners include: grocery stores, schools, the Aging and Disability Resource Center and others.

Strategy 1: Aspirus Sacred Heart and Aspirus Good Samaritan – Access to Healthy Foods

Aspirus Sacred Heart and Aspirus Good Samaritan will work with their partners to increase access to healthy foods.

Medium-Term Indicators

- By June 30, 2024, increase the number of Merrill Farmer’s Market coupons collected from 129 (FY21) to 175.
- By June 30, 2024, increase the value of Merrill Farmer’s Market coupons collected from \$1290 (FY21) to \$1750.
- By June 30, 2024, increase Aspirus Sacred Heart’s EBT matching dollars from ~\$200 (multiple years – 2018, 2020) to \$400. (Source: Tomahawk Main Street)

As part of the coalition, Aspirus Sacred Heart and Aspirus Good Samaritan will:

- Continue the distribution of a food access brochure

Aspirus Sacred Heart will:

- Provide financial contributions to support healthy eating (e.g., for a community garden or electronic benefit transfer (EBT) availability at the farmer’s market)

Aspirus Good Samaritan will:

- Provide financial contributions for electronic benefit transfer (EBT) options at area farmers markets
- Provide food pantries and low-income populations with fresh produce from community gardens
- Provide financial contribution for hydroponic gardening at school (if needed)
- Conduct and respond to nutrition assessments through its Community Care Paramedic Program
- Continue a food re-purposing program between the hospital’s cafeteria and the local food pantry

Collaborative Partners:

- Lincoln County Nutrition Coalition members
- Tomahawk area farmer's market
- Merrill area farmer's market
- Food pantries

Resources (Aspirus Sacred Heart and Aspirus Good Samaritan):

- Clinic and hospital associate time
- Printing of marketing materials
- Program funding

Strategy 2: Aspirus Sacred Heart and Aspirus Good Samaritan – Nutrition Education

Aspirus Sacred Heart and Aspirus Good Samaritan will work with their partners to promote healthy eating.

Medium-Term Indicators:

- By June 30, 2024, maintain at 90 percent, the percent of educational programming participants who report an increase in knowledge of preparing healthy nutritional food.

As part of the coalition, Aspirus Sacred Heart and Aspirus Good Samaritan will:

- Conduct healthy cooking demonstrations
- Promote 5-2-1-0 programming throughout the community

Aspirus Good Samaritan will:

- Provide funding for day care and/or pre-school gardening education programming

Aspirus Good Samaritan and Aspirus Sacred Heart will:

- Explore a fruit and vegetable prescription program in the clinical setting

Collaborative Partners:

- Lincoln County Nutrition Coalition members
- Facilities and programs that serve individuals with low income or who are vulnerable (e.g., Head Start, subsidized housing)

Resources (Aspirus Sacred Heart and Aspirus Good Samaritan):

- Clinic and hospital associate time
- Program materials (e.g., printing)
- Program funding

ORAL HEALTH

Goal: Increase good oral healthcare practices and access to oral health services.

Long-Term Performance Indicators:

- By June 30, 2026, maintain the percent of children aged 6-9 who have dental sealants on one or more permanent first molar teeth at 94 percent (2018). *(Source: Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Oral Health Program, as displayed in the Live Well Lincoln May 2020 Annual Report)*

As of Fall 2021 and at the writing of this plan, two factors are impacting the implementation of this work: (1) The Oral Health (“Healthy Smiles”) Coalition has paused. The ongoing consequences of the coronavirus pandemic have limited the ability of community agencies to lead this effort. (2) The nature of the delivery of the Seal-a-Smile program is uncertain. While the county health department has provided that service in the past, the school districts have already or are likely to contract with an external, for-profit agency for those services. If services are provided by a private company, the availability of data is uncertain.

Strategy: Aspirus Sacred Heart and Aspirus Good Samaritan – Increase Access to Oral Health Services

Aspirus Sacred Heart and Aspirus Good Samaritan will participate in several community initiatives and campaigns to increase awareness of good oral hygiene practices.

Medium-Term Indicator:

- By June 30, 2024, increase the number of Lincoln County 2nd, 4th, 5th and 6th graders who participate in the Seal-a-Smile program from 99 (2017-18) to 120. *(Source: Lincoln County Health Department Seal-a-Smile program)*

Aspirus Sacred Heart and Aspirus Good Samaritan will:

- Provide funding to assure the implementation of the Seal-a-Smile program (if applicable)
- Provide financial support for oral health supplies (e.g., toothbrushes), printed materials and/or educational opportunities as available

Aspirus Good Samaritan will:

- Provide a Tooth Fairy Fund for oral health emergency room visits

Collaborative Partners:

- Health Department
- Merrill Area Public Schools
- Tomahawk School District

Resources (Aspirus Sacred Heart and Aspirus Good Samaritan):

- Associate time
- Program funding

MENTAL HEALTH AND ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG USE

Given the intersection between mental health and substance abuse, Lincoln County's efforts around those two health priorities will be coordinated by one coalition (Lincoln County Healthy Minds Coalition). Aspirus hospital associates are active participants in the coalition.

Goal: Increase mental health (wellness) and substance abuse prevention, awareness and services.

Long-Term Performance Indicators:

- By June 30, 2026, decrease the average number of mentally unhealthy days reported in the past 30 days from 4.4 (2018) to 4.0 (2018 level for Wisconsin). *(Source: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, available on County Health Rankings and Roadmaps website.)*
- By June 30, 2026, decrease the percent of Lincoln County high school students who report feeling so sad or hopeless almost every day for two or more weeks in a row that they stopped doing some of their usual activities in the last year, from 26 percent (high school, 2019) to 23 percent and from 28 percent (middle school, 2019) to 25 percent. *(Source: Lincoln County High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey and Lincoln County Middle School Youth Risk Behavior Survey)*
- By June 30, 2026, decrease deaths due to:
 - Suicide by 13 percent, from 15 per 100,000 population (2015-19) to 13 per 100,000 population. *(Source: 2021 County Health Rankings)*
 - Alcohol and other substances by 10 percent, from 269.8 (2017) per 100,000 population to 242 per 100,000 population. *(Source: Wisconsin Public Health Profiles)*

The Lincoln County Mental Health Coalition began in 2012 after mental health was identified as a top health priority in the county. The Lincoln County Drug-Free Coalition began in 2003 to bring multiple community sectors and resources together to reduce the use/abuse of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. Starting in mid-2018, these two coalitions merged into one coalition to more effectively use local resources and address the intertwined issues of mental health and substance abuse. Coalition members include: public health department, health care, schools, domestic abuse shelter, University of Wisconsin-Extension, social services (government and non-profit), law enforcement, and mental health care providers.

Strategy 1: Aspirus Sacred Heart and Aspirus Good Samaritan

– Increase Preventative Education and Outreach that Strengthens Families, Builds Coping Skills and Increases Resiliency

Aspirus Sacred Heart and Aspirus Good Samaritan will increase mental health and AODA awareness, knowledge and skills of families, community members and community professionals.

Medium-Term Performance Indicators:

- By June 30, 2024, 80 percent of training participants will report increased knowledge of mental health prevention and/or intervention strategies.
- By June 30, 2024, increase the percent of Lincoln County students who believe there is moderate to great risk in using alcohol from 44 percent (2016) to 48 percent. *(Source: Social Norms Survey)*
- By June 30, 2024, decrease the percent of students who used an electronic vapor product at least one day in the past 30 days from 25 percent (high school, 2019) to 22 percent and from 9 percent (middle school, 2019) to 8 percent. *(Source: Lincoln County High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey and Lincoln County Middle School Youth Risk Behavior Survey)*

As part of the coalition, Aspirus Sacred Heart and Aspirus Good Samaritan will:

- Implement public awareness and social norms campaigns (e.g., Hopeline, Small Talks, kNOw Meth, adverse childhood experiences [ACEs], Parent Pact, social host awareness)
- Provide community presentations, town hall events and summits about mental health and substance abuse, as well as distribute posters, cards, and related visual materials
- Provide evidence-based trainings to increase skills of residents, coalition members and professionals (e.g., QPR, Mental Health First Aid)
- Provide school administrators and counselors with evidence-based strategies and resources to support preventative education related to mental health and substance abuse (e.g., through students' Raise Your Voice Club)
- Covid response strategies (e.g., Family Fun Packs)

Aspirus Good Samaritan will:

- Provide funding to develop and implement mental health- and AODA-related programming
- Conduct depression screenings through its pilot Community Care Paramedic Program and provide appropriate referrals and resources

Collaborative Partners:

- Lincoln County Mental Health/AODA Coalition members
- T.B. Scott Free Library
- Aging and Disability Resource Center
- Merrill Fire Department, EMS Division

Resources (Aspirus Sacred Heart and Aspirus Good Samaritan):

- Clinic and hospital associate time
- Training materials
- Financial and in-kind support

Strategy 2: Aspirus Sacred Heart and Aspirus Good Samaritan – Become a Community that Supports Recovery

Aspirus Sacred Heart and Aspirus Good Samaritan will work with their community partners to strengthen recovery opportunities in the community.

Medium-Term Performance Indicators:

- By June 30, 2024, the recovery coach infrastructure is maintained.

As part of the coalition, Aspirus Sacred Heart and Aspirus Good Samaritan will:

- Maintain the current set of recovery coaches (paid and volunteer)
- Collaborate with partners to monitor the program
- Provide education/information on the role of recovery coaches in the community
- Collaborate with partners to develop a system for accessing recovery coach services
- Work to expand the number and type of substance abuse and mental health support groups available (and then promote those groups)
- Explore medication drop-box options at the hospitals
- Meet with elected officials and legislators and/or involve them in local events to discuss emerging mental health and substance abuse issues and needed policy changes

Collaborative Partners:

- Lincoln County Mental Health/AODA Coalition members
- HAVEN (domestic abuse shelter)
- North Central Health Care
- Lincoln County Jail
- Social Services
- National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)

Resources (Aspirus Sacred Heart and Aspirus Good Samaritan):

- Associate time
- Facility/room usage for support groups

Next Steps

This implementation strategy outlines a three-year community health improvement process. Each year within this timeframe, Aspirus Good Samaritan and Aspirus Sacred Heart will:

- Participate actively in Live Well Lincoln and its related coalitions
- Create an annual implementation plan with specific action steps for that year
- Set and track annual performance indicators for each strategy
- Track progress toward medium-term performance indicators
- Report progress toward the performance indicators to the hospital boards
- Share actions taken to address the needs with the community at large

Approval

This implementation strategy report was adopted by:

- The Aspirus Good Samaritan Hospital Board on October 20, 2021.
- The Aspirus Sacred Heart Hospital Board on October 19, 2021.

ADDENDUM
Summary of Strategies by Hospital

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