

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



Words from the Director

Bob Rohret

I'm proud to share with you the St. Croix County Health and Human Services (HHS) 2023 annual report. I want to begin by thanking the HHS and County Boards, and Administrator Witt for your continued support over this past year in our efforts to better serve the citizens of St. Croix County. As always, any credit for our Department's work goes to our employees who are among the finest people I've ever had the privilege of working with.

Human service work is continually shaped and influenced by dynamic social, economic, and political factors that result in an ever-changing landscape. Our teams are not just focused on the events of today but are continually looking to the future to gauge how current events may shape what comes next. This perspective allows us to address the needs of the moment while always planning for the future.

With that in mind, HHS undertook a strategic planning effort in 2023 that identified five key strategic directives to guide our work. With assistance from the University of Wisconsin Extension Office, HHS developed our 2023-2026 strategic plan which outlines our priorities within specific areas of focus. In short, our strategic plan lays the groundwork to pursue a culture of innovation and change; improve workflow and efficiencies; align our budget with our vision; expand legislative advocacy efforts and; enhance our use of technology to become more proficient. Our leadership meetings are structured around these strategic directives to better organize our priorities and stay true to the strategic goals in our plan.

Despite our best efforts to anticipate change, we sometimes get surprised. In 2023 we saw a significant increase in adult protection cases and children in out-of-home placement. Additionally, we saw a significant strain on our crisis service system as placement costs rose substantially while resources remained limited. Our Economic Supports division was also tasked with the "unwinding" of benefits associated with the end of the federal public health emergency, and our Aging and Disabilities Resource Center saw dramatic increases in service demands in nearly all areas. The result of all this was a need to recalibrate our service systems and apply additional resources when and where we could. Thank you for taking the time to review this report and meet some of our staff who perform this important work.

Who We Are --- Health & Human Services



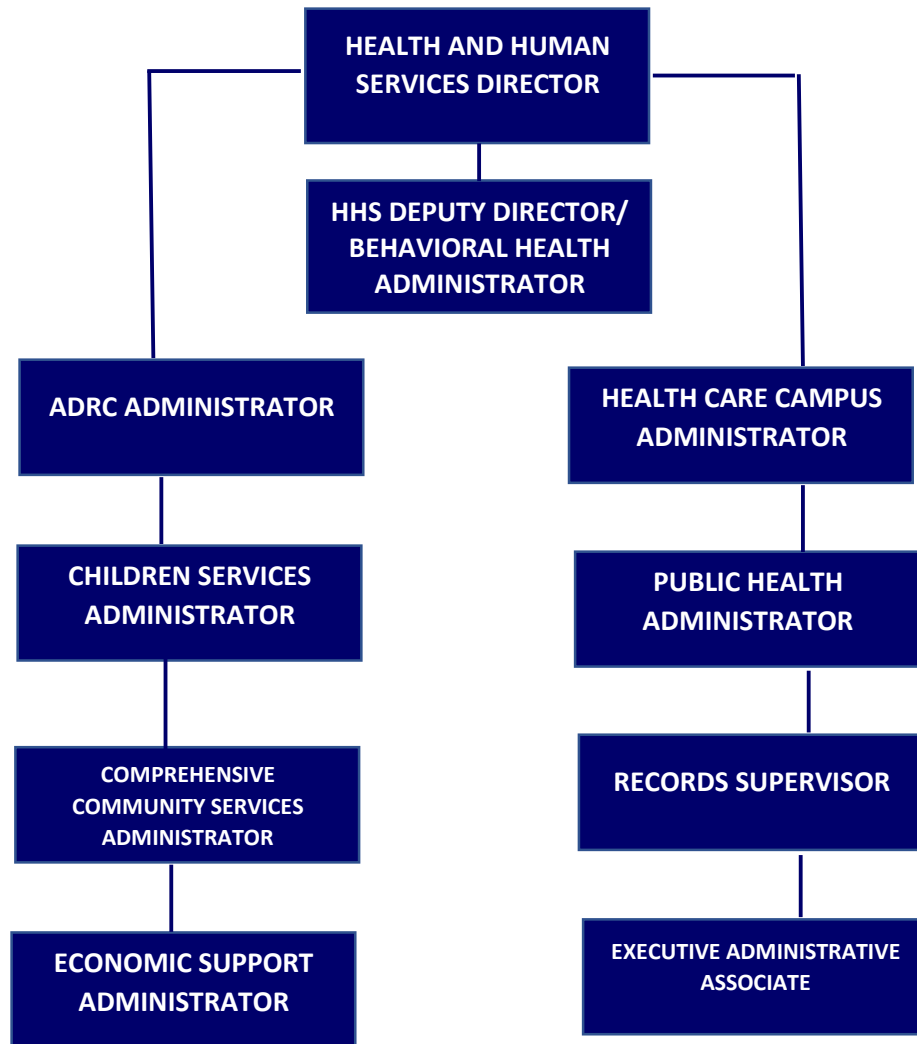
Our Vision

St. Croix County Health and Human Services (SCC HHS) strives to connect and respond to its community through outreach and education, while continuing to evolve and improve our service delivery model and support our staff.

Our Mission

St. Croix Health and Human Services (HHS) promotes quality services and heightens safety, health, and independence for our citizen by providing a continuum of services enhanced by community collaboration.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES - ADMIN TEAM



HHS by the Numbers in 2023

2022 – 2024 HHS Budget Revenues

HHS Revenue			
Program	2022 Actual	2023 Budget	2024 Budget
Administration	882,096	668,280	559,500
Behavioral Health	4,080,033	4,001,513	4,306,837
Economic Support	1,280,297	1,119,469	1,136,280
Comprehensive Community Services	5,147,137	5,839,416	5,926,651
Children Services	3,690,618	3,230,340	3,631,556
Public Health	1,493,833	1,339,083	1,191,009
ADRC	2,010,543	2,092,599	2,169,481
Revenue (Grants & Collections)	18,584,557	18,290,700	18,921,314
Budget Tax Levy	7,346,820	7,891,840	8,301,612
Surplus Applied			
Total Revenue	\$25,931,377	\$26,182,540	\$27,222,926

2022– 2024 HHS Budget Expenses

HHS Expenses			
Program	2022 Actual	2023 Budget	2024 Budget
Administration	2,352,262	2,125,272	1,937,450
Behavioral Health	4,710,800	5,314,664	6,273,480
Economic Support	1,235,529	1,260,258	1,285,408
Comprehensive Community Services	4,777,696	5,839,416	5,926,651
Children Services	6,286,921	6,549,750	7,224,324
Public Health	1,962,398	2,119,179	2,031,395
ADRC	2,930,359	2,974,001	2,544,218
Total Expenses	\$24,255,965	\$26,182,540	\$27,222,926

2022-2024 HCC Budget Revenue

Health Care Campus Revenue			
Program	2022 Actual	2023 Budget	2024 Budget
Health & Rehab Center	4,983,720	5,999,675	6,624,000
Kitty Rhoades Memorial Care Center	-	2,083,728	-
Orchard View Terrace	1,970,048	2,134,352	2,227,499
Revenue (Grants & Collections)	6,953,768	10,217,755	8,851,499
Budget Tax Levy	-	-	-
Surplus Applied		(163,110)	(306,494)
Total Revenue	\$6,953,768	\$10,054,645	\$8,545,005

2022-2024 HCC Budget Expenses

Health Care Campus Expenses			
Program	2022 Actual	2023 Budget	2024 Budget
Health & Rehab Center	4,985,879	5,917,253	6,249,977
Kitty Rhoades Memorial Care Center	16,398	1,010,628	55,223
Orchard View Terrace	1,816,098	2,116,136	2,239,805
Total Expenses	\$6,818,375	\$9,044,017	\$8,545,005



Department Projects and Milestones

- ❖ Developed 2023-2026 Health and Human Services Strategic Plan. Under this plan, formed a Communications Committee and a Legislative Advocacy Committee
- ❖ Partnered with Western Wisconsin Health Hospital to open an “Ambulatory (outpatient) Withdrawal Management service that also offers Medication-Assisted Treatment Options (ARPA funding)
- ❖ Began “Recovering Together Café’s” in partnership with Family Resource Center of St. Croix Valley (ARPA funding)
- ❖ Economic Support Division engaged in the “unwinding” of benefits related to the end of the Federal Public Health Emergency
- ❖ Held our 2nd Annual Mental Health Symposium – “Viewing Addiction Through a Different Lens”

Challenges & Opportunities

- ❖ Experienced significant increases in areas of Adult Protection, children in out-of-home placement, and costs associated with referrals to Winnebago State Hospital
- ❖ Continued challenges in recruiting staff, primarily in the areas of substance use professional and Certified Nursing Assistants
- ❖ Transferred 1 full-time equivalent (FTE) position from substance use services to adult protective services to meet growing demands in that area while avoiding use of tax levy for a new position

- ❖ Participated in Judicial Engagement Team (JET) initiative to seek system improvements within child welfare
- ❖ Front lobby renovations completed (thank you Facilities Dept.!) for added security features

Who We Are --- Office Support Team



“St. Croix County Services Center, how can I help you?”

Lisa Earley

Office Support team staff answered approximately 10,357 calls in 2023. Each call is different and can be regarding any division or program within St. Croix County Services Center (SCCSC). Consumers are often at a difficult point in their life when they call, and the staff do their best each day to provide resources and referrals that can assist consumers in meeting their needs.



“Aging and Disability Resource Center, how can I help you?”

Laura Kristoff

Providing respectful and kind service to the aging and disabled community happens daily at SCCSC. Each call is answered, and each walk-in is assisted to help them find support in navigating everything from Medicaid to dementia care, home delivered meals, to transportation needs.



“Economic Support, how can I help you?”

Jo Alm

The Office Support team staff, working in- office at SCCSC, provide clerical support to the Economic Support Specialists that work remotely in the call center for the Great Rivers Consortium. They can assist walk-ins that are informed to turn in paperwork to their local agency or to obtain a replacement or emergency FoodShare card. Having someone available to issue FoodShare cards is a priority every day.

“How can I help you?” (¿Cómo puedo ayudarle?)

Claudia Earley








Support is provided to many different programs, their staff, and consumers. ADRC, Behavioral Health, Children Services, Comprehensive Community Services, Economic Support, and Public Health are all able to request assistance from the Office Support team. This includes sending and receiving faxes and emails, to helping with a variety of program details, and the day-to-day details needed by staff to assist in doing their daily work. We also have a staff person that can provide Spanish interpreting for our increasing Hispanic population. In 2023 Claudia provided approximately 430 hours of interpreting.

Our Mission

HHS Office Support Team will interface with consumers and staff in a positive, courteous, and timely manner while assisting/directing them to resources to help meet their needs.

Office Support Team by the Numbers in 2023

<div>10,357</div> <div>Phone Calls</div> <div></div>	<div>5796*</div> <div>Walk-in Consumers</div> <div></div>	<div>25,916</div> <div>Outgoing Mail Pieces Processed</div> <div></div>
<div>3312*</div> <div>Payments Receipted</div> <div></div>	<div>2296</div> <div>Pieces of Business Reply Mail Received</div> <div></div>	<div>430+ Hrs.*</div> <div>Spanish Interpreting</div> <div></div>

* All asterisks denote an increase for 2023

Notable Projects and Milestones

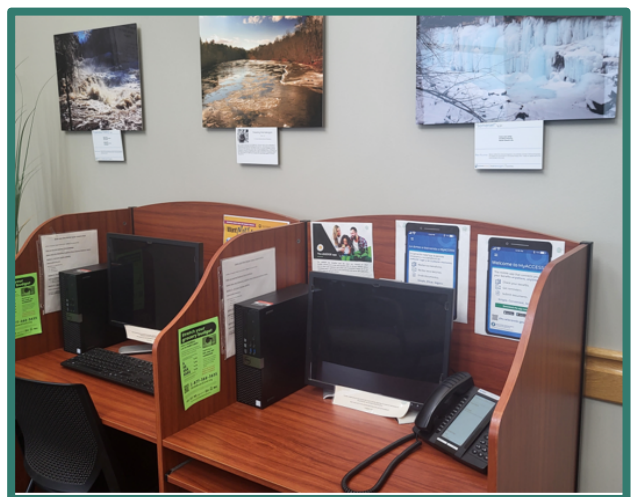
- ❖ Transitioned a new staff member to the team who has been trained/cross trained in multiple areas to support the front reception area
- ❖ Issued 90+ Replacement or Emergency FoodShare Cards
- ❖ Supported the many staff within the Services Center with multiple clerical tasks & special events
- ❖ Provided resource and referral info to our many callers and walk-ins

Challenges & Opportunities

- ❖ The dynamic nature of HHS can prove difficult to keep track of, though we do our best to support the staff and provide consumers with quality customer service. We continue to see an increase with consumers calling and coming in that have more complex needs, from instability with their housing to food insecurity. Locating resources continues to be difficult
- ❖ As demands on HHS increase, those demands are reflected in the amount of support that staff require from our small administrative team
- ❖ In response to these challenges, we strive to communicate effectively and cross-train our team so they can respond to whatever need may arise in a professional manner
- ❖ We continue to look for ways to make every phone call and visit a positive experience for our consumers
- ❖ We work to update our public facing information and provide this, as well as computers and phones in our reception area for consumers to use for benefits enrollment. We strive to stay informed on available resources in the community



Informational Brochures Available



Computers, Phones, and Charging Stations Available

Who We Are --- Records Division

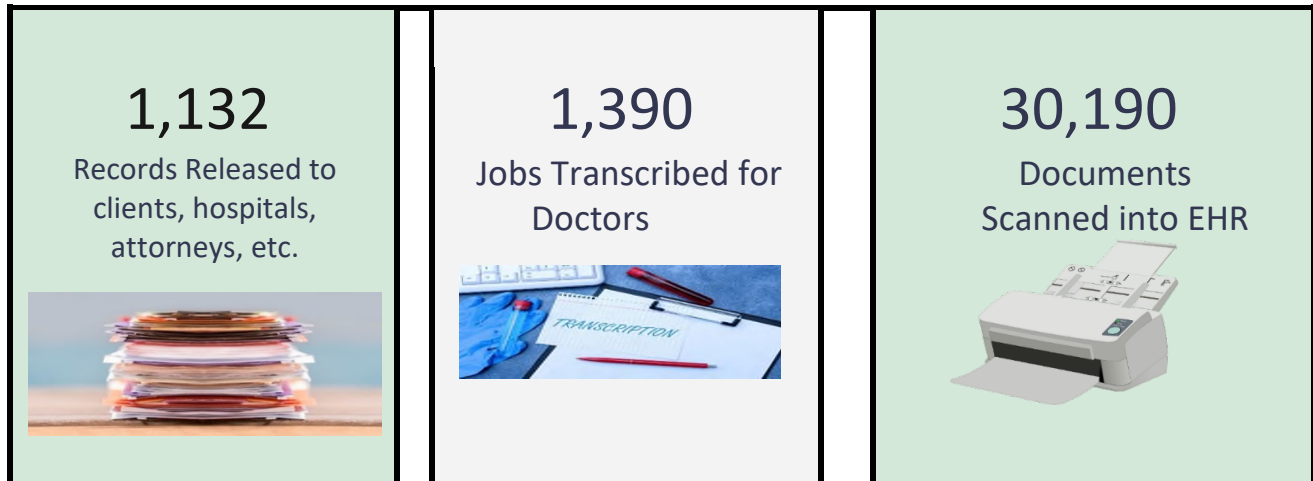




Our Mission

The Records Division's mission is to provide and maintain a high standard of medical and agency record that is an efficient, productive, and cost-effective information system which is conveniently accessible to appropriate and authorized service providers and meet all applicable and administrative, legal, and regulatory requirements governing the Department of Health and Human Services.

Records Division by the Numbers in 2023



Release of Information (ROI) Yearly Totals	
2023	1132
2022	1079
2021	543
2020	396
2019	831
2018	991

Regulations protect the Release of Information in the areas of mental health, substance use, and Child Protection. Records of this nature often require patient consent or a court order and/or subpoena for their release. Clients, Attorney, Courts, and other providers make the majority of requests.

Notable Projects and Milestones

- ❖ Overhaul of ROI format (major project)
- ❖ Conversion from DocuSign to Adobe Pro to obtain electronic signatures, which allowed all Medical Records staff (and many others) to have access to gathering electronic signatures on documents
- ❖ Birth to 3 records now all electronic
- ❖ Youth Community Support Services (YCSS) records now all electronic

Challenges & Opportunities

- ❖ Varying State and Federal requirements.
- ❖ Data Security & Privacy
- ❖ Mounting Privacy laws and regulations
- ❖ Growth in programs and workforce load.

Opportunities

- ❖ Growth in Programs
- ❖ Evolving Technology, AI, Automation
- ❖ Demand for Records Specialists is growing.







Who We Are --- Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC)



Our Mission

The purpose of the Aging and Disability Resource Center Division (ADRC) is to empower and support older adults, people who have a disability and their families by serving as a central source of information, assistance, support, and access to community resources.

Aging & Disability Resource Center by the Numbers in 2023

<p>4020 (41% increase) Information & Assistance Referral Calls</p> 	<p>431 Dementia Care Specialist Calls</p> <p>Participants (*all increased)</p> <p>276 Brain Health Education* 203 Journey Along* 27 Dementia Events* 153 Dementia Friendly Training*</p>	<p>1886 (77% increase) Elder Benefit Specialist Calls</p> <p>\$4,113,332 (136% increase) Financial impact</p>
<p>1523 (45% increase) Disability Benefit Specialist Calls</p> <p>\$1,537,893 (65 % Increase) Financial impact</p>	<p>1068 (15% increase) Hours of Adult Day Respite</p> 	<p>33,385 (16% increase) Rides provided 1217 Social Outings</p> 
<p>18,401 (28% increase) Congregate Meals Served</p> 	<p>31,683 (11% decrease) Home Delivered Meals Provided</p> 	<p>33 Participants Health Education Classes</p> 

Notable Projects and Milestones

- ❖ Independent Living Supports Pilot was awarded and implemented as a program area to assist individuals in maintaining independence; 2 part-time team members were onboarded to facilitate the program
- ❖ Elder Benefit Specialists served 308 people with 1:1 appointments during the Medicare Part D annual enrollment period from October 15th-December 7th—this was a 140% increase in just two years
- ❖ Efforts to reduce social isolation continued throughout the year with multiple “special outings” opportunities provided through all our Senior Center locations; also hosted county-wide Senior Picnic in June and Monster Mash in October, both with high attendance
- ❖ Administrator, Council on Aging and Disabilities Chair, and another Council member attended Aging Advocacy Day in person in Madison—met with 5 reps/senators regarding aging issue briefs provided by the Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network
- ❖ Administrator also attended the Joint Finance Committee Hearing and advocated with area ADRC Directors on issues regarding ADRC funding/aging, etc.
- ❖ The regional Human Service 5 Year Transportation Coordinated Plan was updated
- ❖ Celebrated 1-year anniversaries at both Nutrition restaurant sites--both are very successful programs that were transitioned from traditional models the previous year
- ❖ Recognized our volunteers at a Volunteer Banquet in May--*201 individuals donated approximately 13,000 hours of their time, valued at \$365,184.*
- ❖ Collaborated with Adult Protective Services to honor World Elder Abuse Awareness Day in June at Senior Picnic
- ❖ Coordinated and facilitated annual Caregiver Conference in hybrid format with approximately 100 persons attending again this year

Challenges & Opportunities

- ❖ General ADRC funding remains stagnant with no increases allocated to St. Croix County via the state budget
- ❖ Demand for programming/services/intervention in the aging and disabilities areas continues to grow
- ❖ Increased concerns over social isolation and loneliness
- ❖ Food costs and vendor contracts continue to rise
- ❖ ARPA funds are expiring in 2024
- ❖ We may need to consider increases in suggested contribution rates for Nutrition programming and/or implementation of a voucher system to assist with fiscal challenges in this programming area; will continue to monitor and assess as increased numbers also combat social isolation
- ❖ There is a caregiver shortage and *Caregiver Support funding has not increased since the 1980s*, therefore resulting in stretching grant funds more while serving fewer people
- ❖ Will increase our focus on additional grant exploration efforts moving forward to assist in offsetting nutrition-related costs
- ❖ Will focus on volunteer coordination efforts in 2024 to maximize savings and assist in offsetting program costs
- ❖ Contacts with our ADRC Intake area nearly doubled in 2023 and additional refinement of our overall intake process, in addition to additional staff allocated in this area in 2024 will assist in ensuring

individuals are served in a timely manner, including ensuring individuals are connected to long-term care programming as-needed

Who We Are --- Behavioral Health



Behavioral Health (BH) Nurse and Jail Social Worker have worked closely Sheriff's Office Jail Deputies on the **Medication- Assisted Treatment (MAT)** services within the jail. MAT has provided many incarcerated individuals an opportunity to begin services prior to release to reduce the risk of opioid overdose and support their recovery efforts



There was a total of **891** Mental Health Crisis Calls (phone, mobile, telehealth), **175** of the calls were attended by Co-Responders together with Law Enforcement



BH Access Team



Peer Support Specialist

Our Mission

To deliver service with compassion and respect by providing quality services with integrity for the health, safety, and well-being for all

Services Provided within the Behavioral Health Division

Crisis and Intake Services

Intake Line / Mobile Crisis

Law Enforcement Co-Response

Crisis Linkage & Follow Up

Mental Health Commitment

Adult Protective Services

Integrated Clinic

Mental Health Treatment







Substance Use Treatment

Jail Social Worker Services

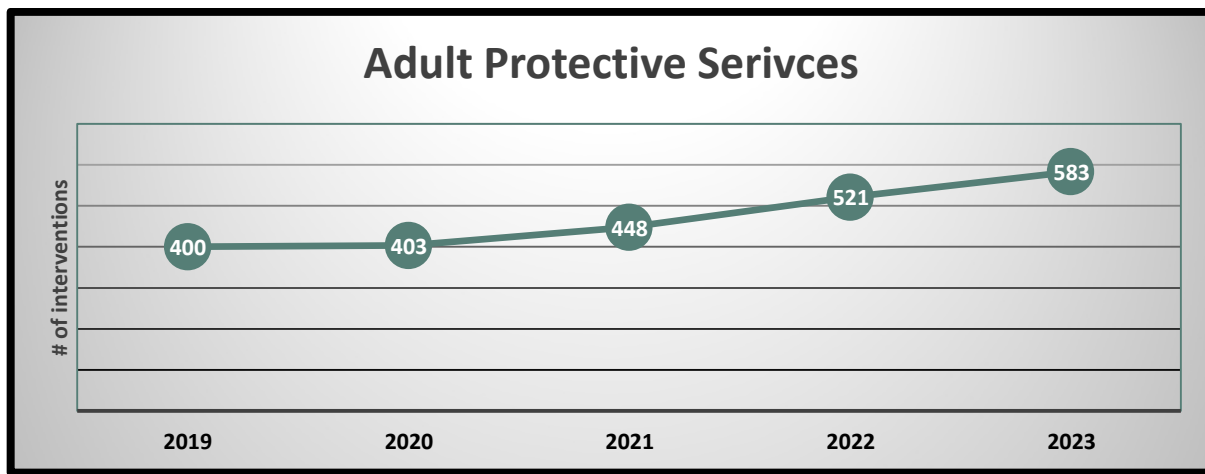
Community Case Managers

Psychiatry/Psychology/RN

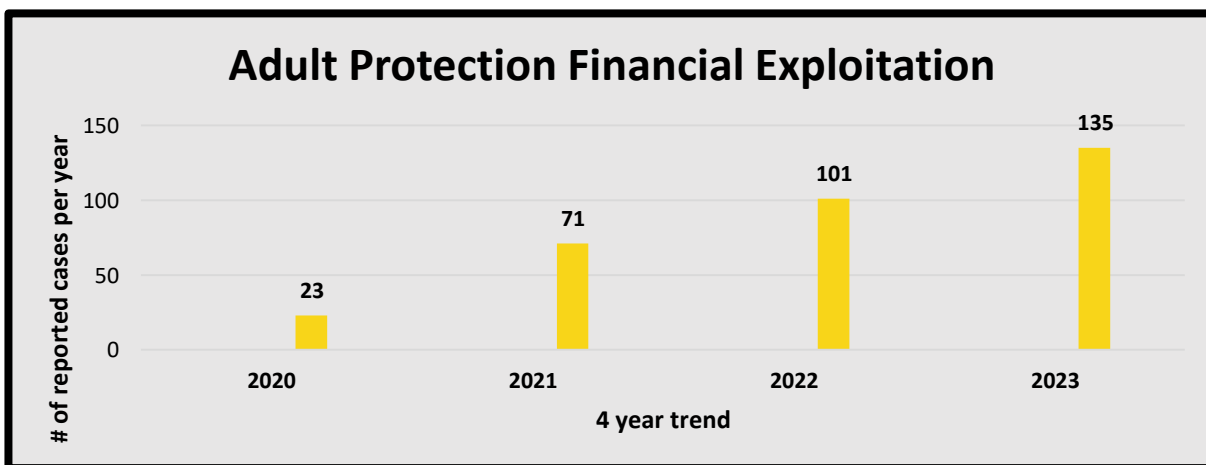
Behavioral Health by the Numbers in 2023

<p>891*</p> <p>Crisis Response Calls</p> 	<p>77*</p> <p>Clients Referred for Psychiatric Services</p>	<p>178</p> <p>Clients referred for Mental Health Therapy</p> 
<p>107</p> <p>Emergency Hospitalization Placements</p>	<p>60*</p> <p>Clients Referred For Psychological Services</p> 	<p>176</p> <p>Individuals Received Substance Use Counseling</p>
<p>124 *</p> <p>Voluntary Hospitalization Placements</p> 	<p>175*</p> <p>Co-Responder calls with law enforcement</p> 	<p>406*</p> <p>Intoxicated Driver Program Assessments Completed</p> 

* All asterisks denote an increase for 2023



There was a **46% increase** in Adult Protective Service reports/requests from 2019-2023.



Reports specific to **financial exploitation** of this vulnerable population **increased 487% between 2020 and 2023**. Many of these were domestic or overseas fraud/scams, some resulting in significant financial loss to the victims.

Notable Projects and Milestones

- ❖ The Behavioral Health Division successfully incorporated upstream intervention strategies, made possible through ARPA funding, State Opioid Response grant dollars and opioid settlement dollars, to mitigate costs and improve outcomes for St. Croix County Residents
- ❖ Behavioral Health also remains focused on our county's most disenfranchised residents through harm reduction efforts, while supporting persons with criminal justice involvement to be successful in their mental health and addiction recovery
- ❖ The Deputy Director/Behavioral Health Administrator and the leadership team has focused on developing efficiencies and process improvement strategies in 2023 that are responsive to dynamic service demands and pressures

Challenges & Opportunities

- ❖ In 2023, there were **107 mental health emergency detention** placements in facilities across Wisconsin. Each emergency detention required a secured law enforcement transport to the receiving facility, straining behavioral health crisis staff and law enforcement agencies
- ❖ Of the 107 emergency detentions, **47 were placed at Winnebago Mental Health Institute**, with an average Law Enforcement salary cost of **approximately \$550 / trip to and from Winnebago**
- ❖ Behavioral Health purchase of services **costs to Winnebago Mental Health Institute for 2023 totaled \$1,055,207 for 745 days of placement**. There were **revenues collected** in the amount of **\$347,971** for a **net cost to St. Croix County of \$707,236**
- ❖ **These challenges are the driving force behind efforts to move upstream of crisis events by engaging and supporting those in need before crisis develops**

Who We Are --- Children Services





Our Mission

The mission of the Children Services Division is to utilize a community-oriented approach to assist families in remaining together while promoting health and safety for all family members.

Children Services by the Numbers in 2023

<p>123</p> <p>Birth to 3 Referrals</p> 	<p>245*</p> <p>Youth Justice Referrals</p> 	<p>32 Families</p> <p>Family Centered Treatment</p> 
<p>1148*</p> <p>(317 Screened In*)</p> <p>Child Protection Reports</p> 	<p>75</p> <p>(# as of Dec. 31, ea. Yr.)</p> <p>Children Placed Out of Home</p> 	<p>282*</p> <p>Total Youth Served</p> <p>Children's Long-Term Support</p> 
	<p>167</p> <p>Total Families Served</p> <p>Coordinated Family Services (CFS)</p> 	

* All asterisks denote an increase for 2023

Notable Projects and Milestones

- ❖ Continued participation in JET (Judicial Engagement Team) initiative to improve coordination with the Courts, District Attorney's Office, and Corporation Counsel
- ❖ Foster Parent Retention and Recruitment Efforts
- ❖ Participation in newly developed Child Protection / Youth Justice CJCC Subcommittee
- ❖ Collaboration with Justice Support Services on substance use testing for parents involved with Child Protection
- ❖ Decline in total number of children in placement by the end of the year (from 2022)
- ❖ Transition of Child Protection Cases to Corporation Counsel for Prosecution
- ❖ Received Relative Care Caregiver Grant
- ❖ Expansion of Targeted Safety Support Funds which increased capacity to support families while keeping more children in their home.
- ❖ Provided guidance and supervision for 2 Interns (1 in Youth Justice and 1 in Child Protection) with UW-River Falls and Marion College

Challenges & Opportunities

- ❖ Increased caseload numbers in multiple areas of Children Services
- ❖ Caseload Complexity increased
- ❖ Coordinated Family Services (CFS) transitioned to Comprehensive Community Services (CCS)
- ❖ Increased number of youth placed in higher level placements continue to have a significant budget impact
- ❖ Education of the Youth Justice implementation of YASI (Youth Assessment Screening Instrument) to key community stakeholders
- ❖ Lower referral and enrollment numbers in Birth to 3 due to limited Speech and Occupational Therapy services available (due to staff turnover and limited contracted services in 2022)
- ❖ Underspent PSSF Grant (Promoting Safe and Stable Families) program specific funding for Family Centered Treatment
- ❖ The number of families served in Family Center Treatment were down due to one less therapist for the entire year as well as one on FMLA
- ❖ Continued focus on Employee Retention

Who We Are --- Comprehensive Community Services (CCS)






Our Mission

CCS helps people of all ages, from children to adults, live their best life by providing supports that address their unique needs related to mental health and substance use concerns. CCS supports recovery by stabilizing and addressing mental health and substance use concerns while helping the individual learn new ways of coping that works for them. The ability to choose from a variety of flexible supports that has meaning for the individual allows them to obtain the best possible level of functioning, stability, and independence as they define it.

CCS is based on a Teaming model that regularly brings together a group of people to support the individual in achieving their goals related to recovery. The Recovery Team includes the individual (and if a minor, legal decision maker), a Service Facilitator, a Mental Health Professional and/or Substance Use Professional and any other supports of the individual's choosing. The Recovery Team helps the individual identify their preferences, strengths, needs, and priorities as part of an assessment. They partner with the individual in developing a Recovery Plan that outlines the services and supports that will help the recipient realize their goals. Regular Recovery Team meetings allows the individual and their Team to monitor progress and make changes in services and supports as needed until the individual has achieved their goals and graduates from the program.

To support recovery, CCS maintains a robust provider network that includes offering (put a picture with these options rather than just a list?) various types of mental health therapy, peer/parent peer support, substance use treatment, yoga, meditation, canine therapy, employment skills, nutrition coaching, equine assisted learning, medication management, and life skill development.

CCS Division by the Numbers in 2023

<p>156*</p> <p>Referrals</p> 	<p>43*</p> <p>Program Graduations</p> 	<p>52</p> <p>Contracted Providers</p> 
	<p>143</p> <p>Average Monthly Enrollment</p>	

* All asterisks denote an increase for 2023

Notable Projects and Milestones

- ❖ Program certification changed to non-expiring due to a change in Administrative rule
- ❖ CCS Staff trained in Crisis DHS 34 and Columbia Suicide Scale
- ❖ Promoted 2 internal staff to higher level CCS positions: Lead and CCS Supervisor
- ❖ Joined the UW Green Bay Behavioral Health Training Partnership that provides behavioral health related training for all County employed staff

Challenges & Opportunities

- ❖ Oversight for the Coordinated Service Teams grant will move to CCS from Children's Services
- ❖ Review cross-departmental meetings for efficiencies and consistent information sharing
- ❖ Continual review of internal forms to minimize having multiple similar forms across divisions

Adult Community Support Services (ACSS)



The ACSS team is made up of one supervisor, one clinical coordinator, two social workers, and two behavioral health technicians. Our team also collaborates regularly with St. Croix County's Behavioral Health psychiatrist, Dr. Platz, and his Behavioral Health nurse, Kristen Eckman.

The ACSS group consists of folks who support two programs: Targeted Case Management (TCM) and the Community Support Program (CSP). TCM and CSP both serve adults who live with severe and chronic mental illness in our community. Many of our clients are struggling with severe mental illness that affects their everyday lives and contributes to homelessness, physical health issues, employment difficulties, economic stress, and loneliness.

Targeted Case Management (TCM): Provides short-term case management, connecting clients to resources to support them in meeting their mental health and basic needs. Staff work collaboratively with clients in accessing professional and natural supports to enhance independence and promote community integration.

Community Support Program (CSP): Offers coordinated professional care and treatment in the community for adults who live with severe and chronic mental health needs. Staff focus on collaboration, hope, personal choice, and respect. CSP focuses on recovery and is specific to a client's needs and goals to support them in living a higher quality of life.

TCM/CSP by the Numbers in 2023



The folks who do this important and difficult work support some of the most vulnerable in our community. Our clients have histories of multiple hospitalizations, homelessness, and crisis situations. The work we do with our clients helps them to maintain stability in the community and reduce the use of emergency services. Our goal is to help people live healthier and happier lives. In turn, we support our community by lowering the rates of hospitalizations, homelessness, and crisis situations.

Notable Projects and Milestones

- ❖ Maintained excellent quality services to clients while being short-staffed
- ❖ Implemented a quality review process to ensure data integrity
- ❖ Staff completed trainings on the Columbia Suicide Scale, Wraparound Teaming, and Crisis-DHS 34

Challenges & Opportunities

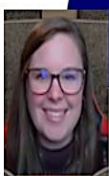
- ❖ It has been a challenge to retain staff and fill positions. ACSS had turnover in the CSP Social Worker and Clinical Coordinator positions
- ❖ Client's needs are increasing while resources are decreasing
- ❖ Affordable housing is a challenge

Who We Are --- Economic Support

Economic Support Division

When asked, staff provided the following individual words and phrases to represent the work they do as economic support specialists:

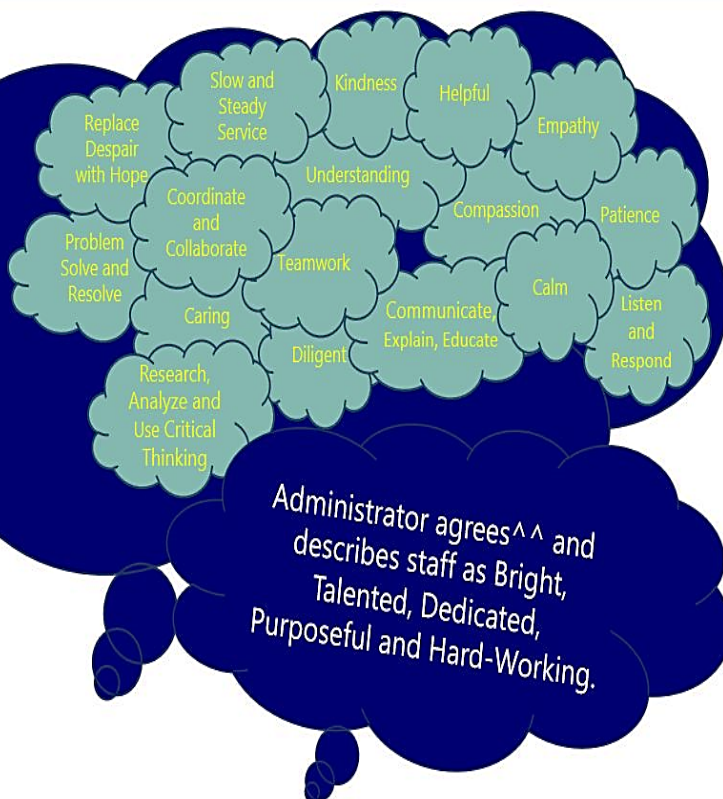
11 Specialists



2 Lead Specialists



1 Administrator



Our Mission

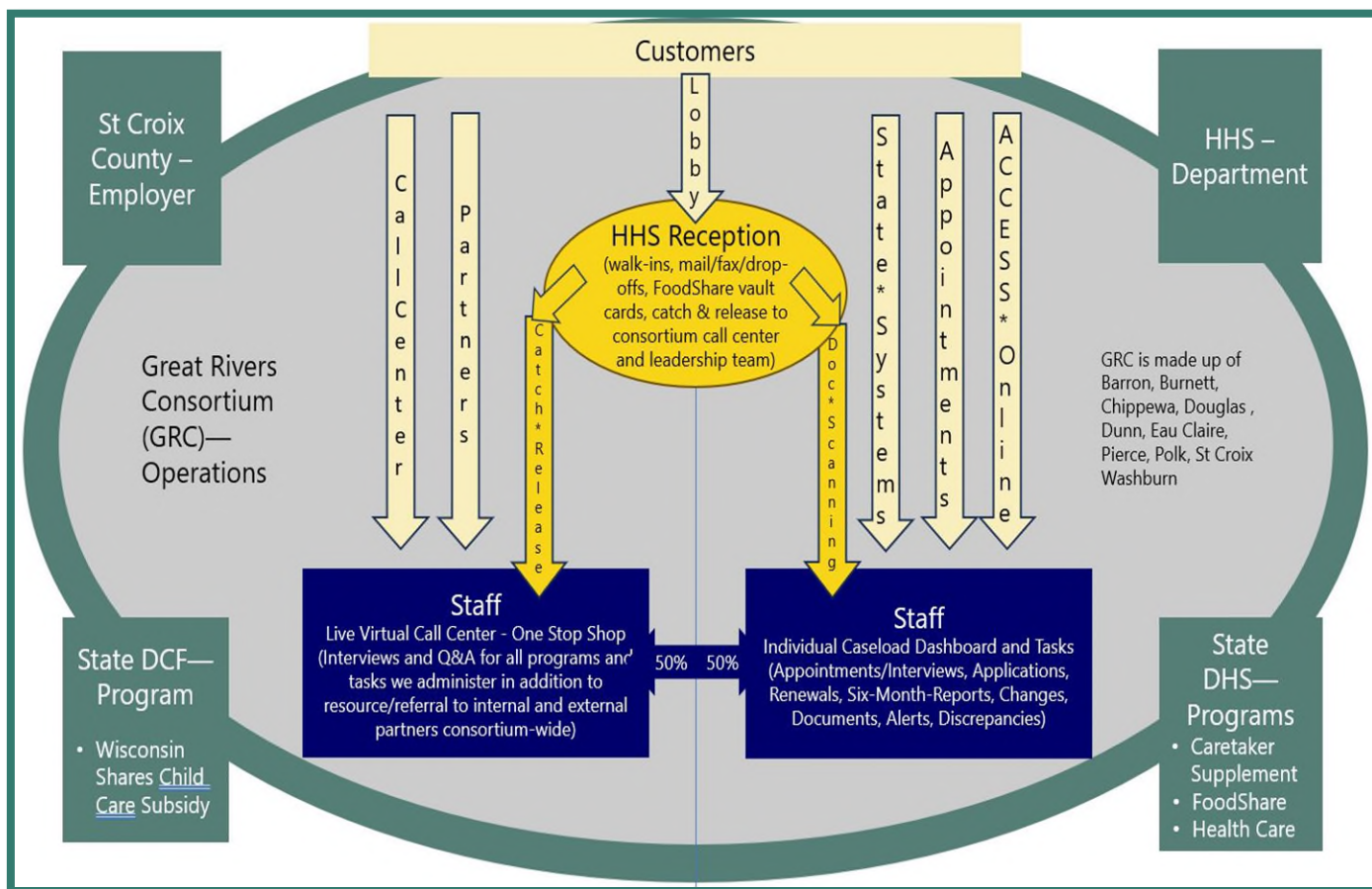
St. Croix County's Economic Support Division serves residents seeking access to health care, food, childcare, and other ancillary resources funded through public and non-profit programs. Anyone is entitled to apply for public assistance programs at any time, and based on financial and non-financial guidelines, any qualified individuals are eligible to receive benefits.

Consortium staff remain continuously connected via an intranet site called The Hub to include news, events, calendars, file- and resource-sharing, operational guidance, and performance data .

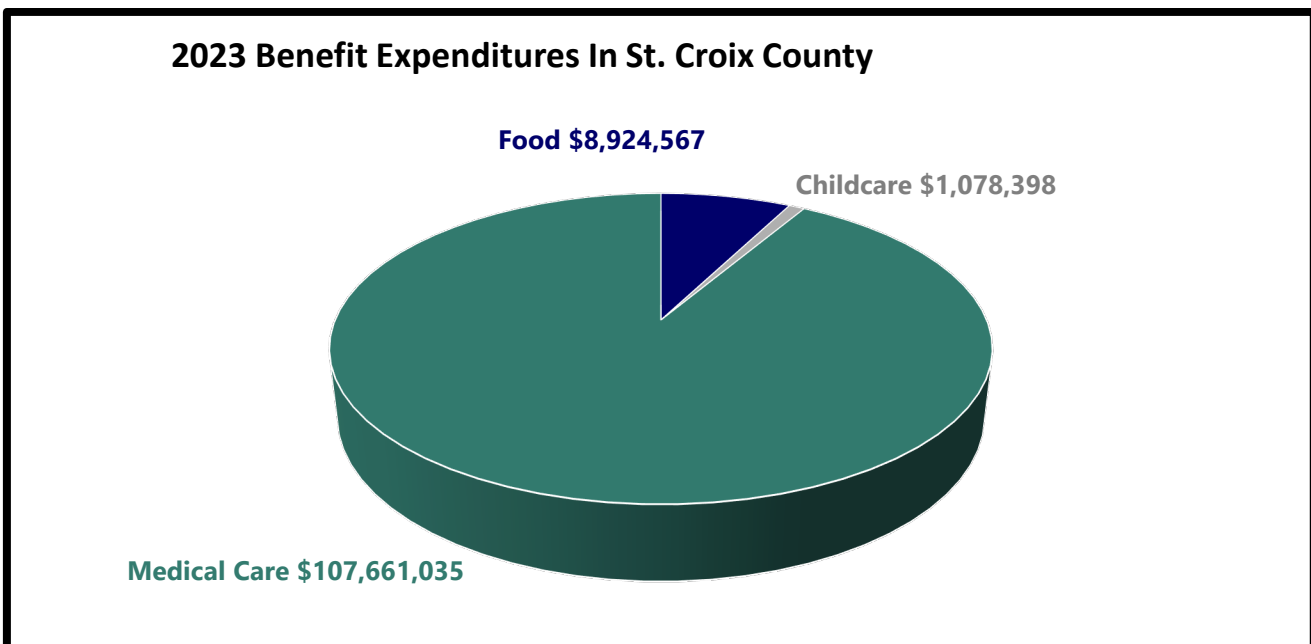
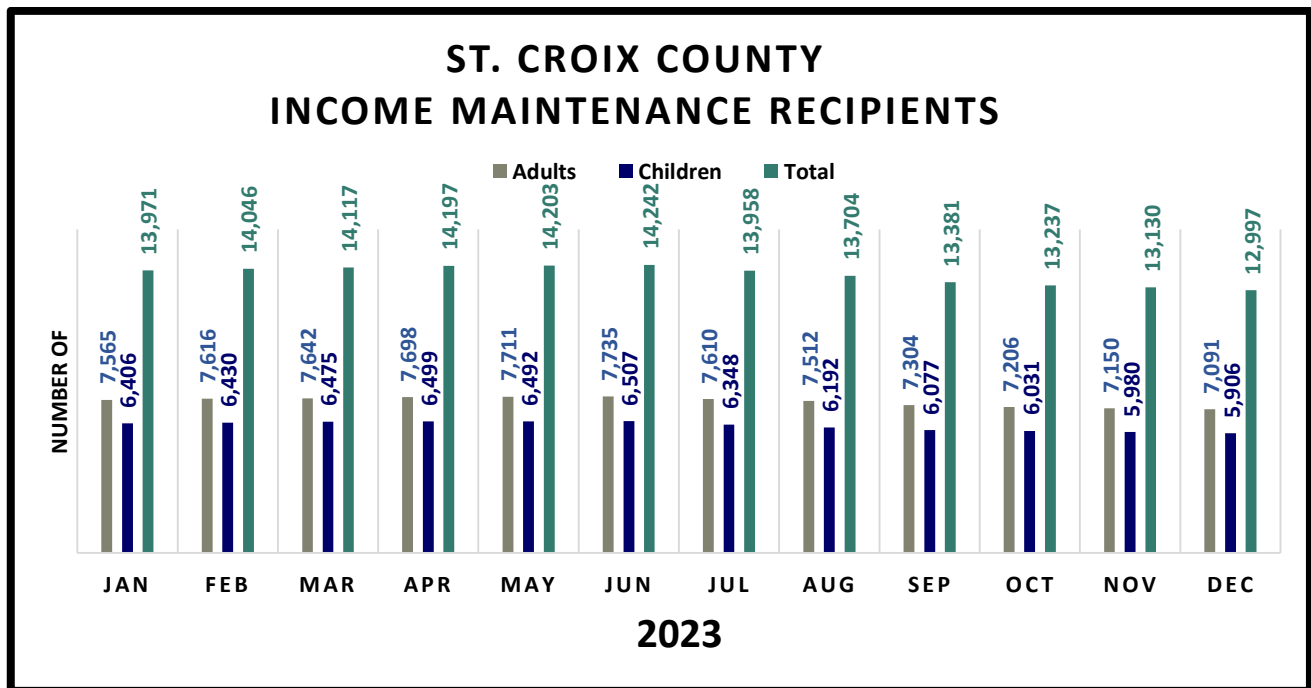
Division staff and leadership team remain continuously connected via Microsoft Outlook and Teams including emails, chats, posts, files and meetings.

With laptops, dual monitors, softphones and headsets; their voices; and the use of numerous systems, applications, human and electronic resources; staff determine consumer's eligibility for our programs in a timely and accurate manner; right benefit, right person, right time.



The heart of our operations is a virtual call center.



ECONOMIC SUPPORT by the Numbers in 2023



Recipient benefits utilized, that support SCC community partners.

<p>151,304*</p> <p>Calls Received by Great Rivers Consortium</p> 	<p>38,758*</p> <p>Applications Received for FoodShare & Medical Assistance</p>	<p>99.37%*</p> <p>Applications Processed Timely</p> 
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*All asterisks denote an increase for 2023

Notable Projects and Milestones

- ❖ Staff continued to exceed performance measures throughout the pandemic with increased caseloads, very minimal overtime, and while learning, unlearning, and applying temporary and regular policies and processes. The “unwinding” of pandemic policies began in April 2023 and continues through August of 2024.
- ❖ The Great Rivers Consortium upgraded from a legacy SharePoint site to a modern site in January 2023 with high accolades from managers and staff for its improved functionality, visual appeal, and automated processes among other things. Our Economic Support Division Administrator is the consortium’s SharePoint Coordinator who actively planned for, built, and maintains the consortium’s SharePoint site titled “The Hub” with a great deal of communication and collaboration with partners.

Challenges & Opportunities

- ❖ There have been numerous permanent changes in policies and processes, some due to Federal direction to the State, some due to advances in technology, and some with the goal of simplifying requirements for consumers. Leadership continues to monitor for potential impacts on caseloads, recipients, programs, services, workloads, and staffing.

Who We Are --- Health Care Campus



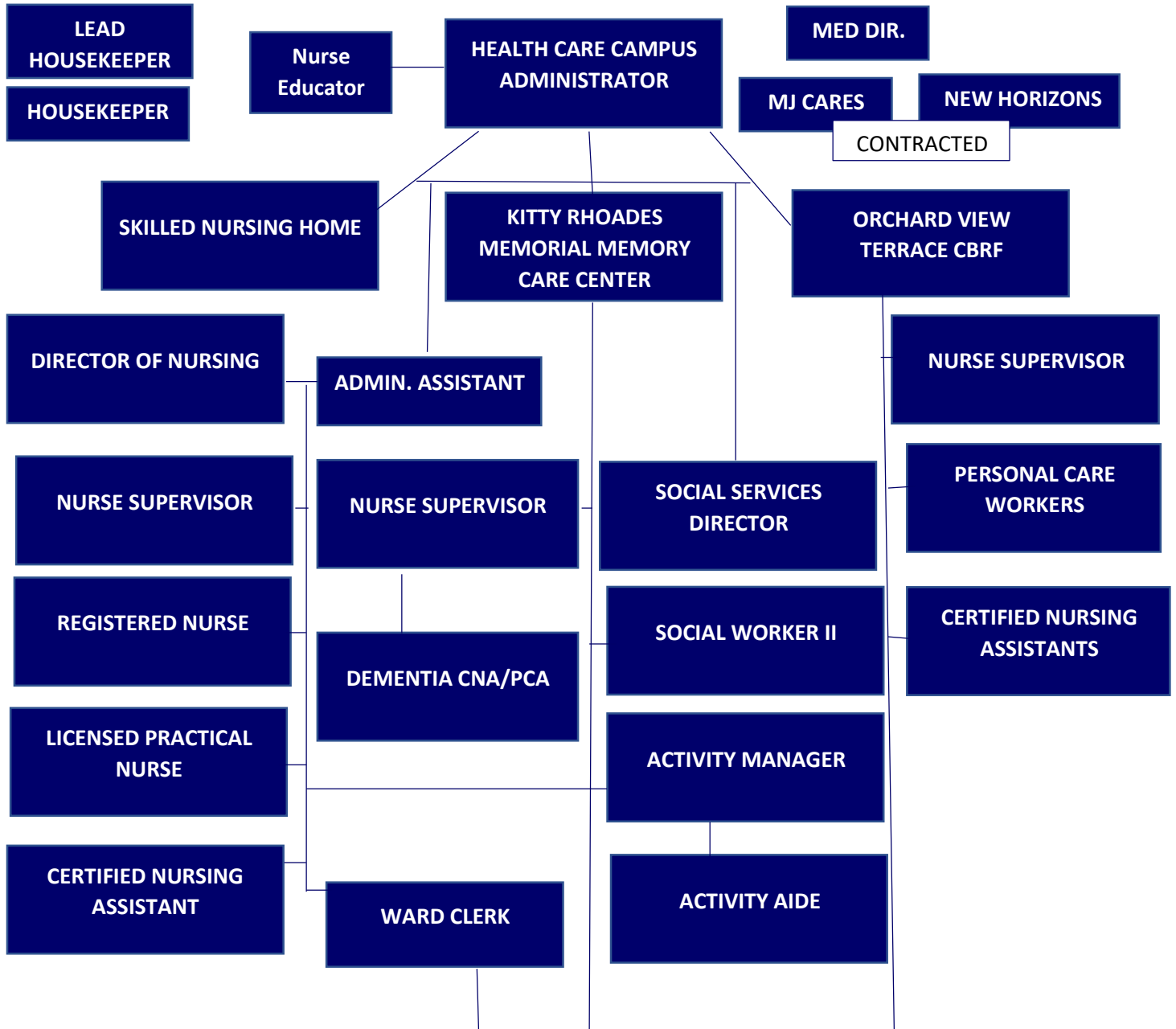
Marie Zelinski has worked for SCC for 45+ years. She was nominated as SCC employee of the year by her coworkers and received the award after review of all the finalists. Congratulations to her!






Our Mission

Delivering service with compassion and respect for our residents, tenants, and staff, focusing on resident centered care to provide the highest quality of care, treatment, and rehabilitation.

HEALTH CARE CAMPUS



HEALTH CARE CAMPUS by the Numbers in 2023

<p>151*</p> <p>ADMISSIONS</p> 	<p>142*</p> <p>TOTAL DISCHARGES</p>	<p>69</p> <p>REHABILITATION DISCHARGES</p> 
<p>31.8*</p> <p>AVERAGE CENSUS IN SKILLED NURSING</p>		<p>37*</p> <p>AVERAGE CENSUS IN ORCHARD VIEW</p>

* All asterisks denote an increase for 2023

Notable Projects and Milestones

- ❖ Health Center has opened and expanded our census into the Bluebird wing
- ❖ We are successfully hiring Licensed Nurses
- ❖ We have trained 56 Nursing Assistants
- ❖ We have trained 37 Personal Care Assistants
- ❖ Training also provided to 49 County employees in CPR
- ❖ We continue to build and support our hospice partners and community
- ❖ We are again growing our outpatient and pool therapy
- ❖ Our therapy staff have stabilized and are growing as a team

Challenges & Opportunities

- ❖ Workforce challenges continue. There simply are not enough workers to fill all vacant positions
- ❖ We are also challenged with opening Kitty Rhoades, primarily due to state-wide workforce shortages
- ❖ The skilled and dedicated staff at the Health Care Campus ensure that, in spite of these challenges, our county residents are well cared for without relying on property tax funding



Public Health 2023 Annual Report



Who We Are

An Accredited Level III Health Department

St. Croix County Public Health is nationally accredited by the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) and a Level III health department as defined by Wisconsin Administrative Rule Department of Health Services (DHS) 140.06 according to our services offered and focus as a department. There are three levels of Wisconsin health departments.



Our Mission

St. Croix County Public Health **protects** and **promotes** health, **prevents** disease and injury, and **empowers** communities to live healthier lifestyles.



Our Vision

Healthy People Creating Healthy Communities



St. Croix County Public Health Staff - January 2023

Not pictured: Vicki Anthony, Mary Boe, Christy Cunningham, Kelli Engen, Michelle Fontanille, Sarah Kosmalski, Lori Peterson

2023 RETIREES

Teresa Babich - 18 years

Patty Jackson - 39 years

Sue Lindberg - 31 years



Public Health Framework



Healthier Together

Pierce and St. Croix Counties, along with our hospital systems and the St. Croix Valley United Way, serve as the backbone of the Healthier Together coalition, which is responsible for guiding our Community Health Assessment and our Community Health Improvement Plan. The coalition is made up of over 100 members from organizations across both counties.

Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA)

Multisector collaborations that support shared ownership of all phases of community health improvement, including assessment, planning, investment, implementation, and evaluation. The CHNA informs the CHIP. The next assessment process will happen starting in 2024.

Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)

The CHIP is a long-term, systematic effort to address public health problems based on the results of CHNA. A community health improvement plan is critical for developing policies and defining actions to target efforts that promote health. It should define the vision for the health of the community through a collaborative process. **The Current Plan Priorities (2023-2025) are: Mental, Social and Emotional Health & Thriving and Livable Communities.**

Public Health Accreditation (PHAB)

The submission of our 2023 annual report to PHAB kept SCC PH in good standing. The accreditation process evaluates health departments to a national set of standards to ensure they meet specific criteria and provide essential public health services in their communities. SCC PH has been a nationally accredited health department since September 16, 2014.

Learn More At:

Healthier Together: <https://www.healthiertogetherpiercestcroix.org/>

Public Health Accreditation Board: <https://phaboard.org/>

Strategic Plan and Performance Management

2023 - 2025 Public Health Strategic Plan Priorities

- 1) Address the factors of health and health equity for all at both a population health level as well as by providing foundational public health services.
- 2) Anticipate, prevent, and mitigate health threats in the community.
- 3) Improve and innovate public health functions through ongoing evaluation, research, performance management, and quality improvement.
- 4) Communicate and educate effectively to inform stakeholders regarding health, the factors that influence it, and how to improve it.
- 5) Build and support a sustainable, diverse, and strengths-based Public Health workforce.

Performance Management: Public Health Program Goals

In 2023, 24 goals were tracked in our Performance Management system. This a four-step process where all goals are set, measured, evaluated, and considered for quality improvement. Our Performance Management system tracks our Strategic Plan goals, goals for grants received, quality improvement efforts, and our health equity checklist.



24 Goals Tracked

*a glimpse
at a few!*

Bridging Smiles Dental Programs are now offered at Public Health.

Through an awarded grant Environmental Health completed nine retail standard assessments.

Water samples from 10 daycares were collected for lead testing to ensure safety of facility water.

The Breastfeeding Coalition held several Events to support breastfeeding awareness.

A Health Equity page and resources were compiled and launched on the Healthier Together website.

Environmental Health held private well screening events .

Quality Improvement and Workforce Development

PUBLIC HEALTH PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM



Quality Improvement: Quality improvement (QI)

has been introduced to, and embraced by, the field of public health as a means to achieve efficiencies and improve quality of services to improve overall community health.

In 2022, SCC-Public Health initiated two quality improvement projects. One was a program type, regarding the immunization program and coalition, to identify processes/strategies to increase immunization rates within the county. The second project was an administrative project where we evaluated phone call data and streamlined the calling tree to improve customer service. Given we have some new staff and current staff, we are planning to provide quality improvement training in 2023 as we remain committed to continually improving our department.

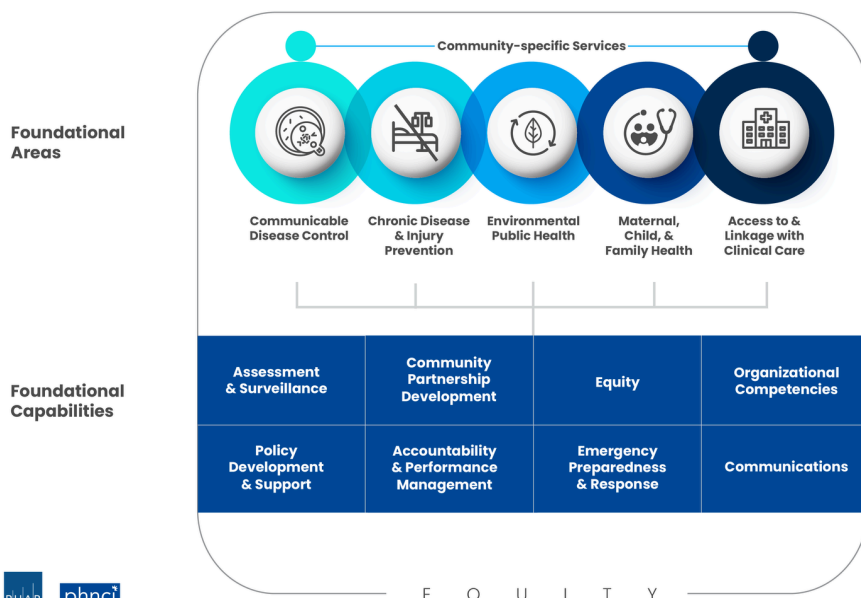
Workforce Development: Protecting our nation's health requires a public health workforce prepared to meet emerging and future challenges

In 2023 SCCPH staff completed the Core Competency Assessment. The Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals (Core Competencies) represent foundational or crosscutting knowledge and skills for the broad practice of public health that professionals may want to possess as they work to protect and improve the nation's health. The Core Competencies offer a starting point for public health professionals in identifying professional development needs and developing training plans



Foundational Public Health Services

The Foundational Public Health Services framework outlines the unique responsibilities of governmental public health and defines a minimum set of foundational capabilities and foundational areas that must be available in every community.



Endline version 10/2019

All local health departments in WI are required by DHS Administrative Code 140 to provide Surveillance and Investigation, Communicable Disease Control, Other Disease Prevention, Emergency Preparedness and Response, Health Promotion, Human Health Hazard Control, Policy and Planning, Leadership/Organizational Competencies and Public Health Nursing Services. As a level III health department, we are required to focus on organizational performance and capacity building and serve as a health strategist in our community.

Learn More At:

<https://phnci.org/transformation/fphs>

https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin_code/dhs/110/140

Communicable Disease Control

Public Health investigates and follows up on communicable diseases per the Center for Disease Control and Prevention Program and the Wisconsin Department of Health. There are different categories (see blue callout) of importance of disease which determine how quickly public health is notified and the type of follow-up and intervention required of public health.

CATEGORY 1 Communicable Diseases

are of urgent public health importance and shall be reported IMMEDIATELY by telephone to the patient's local health department upon identification of a case or suspected case. In addition, within 24 hours, complete and fax, mail, or submit a case report electronically through the Wisconsin Electronic Disease Surveillance System. Public health intervention is expected as indicated.

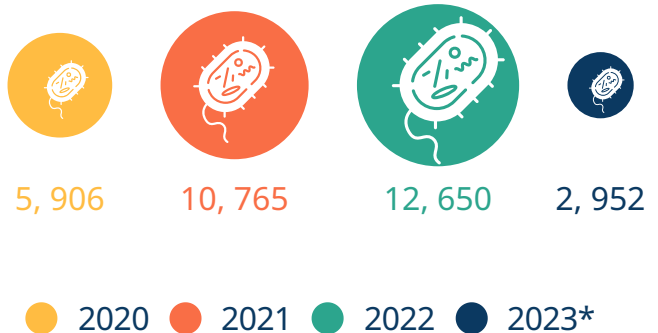
Examples include: measles, influenza or COVID-19 hospitalizations

CATEGORY 2 Communicable Diseases

shall be reported to the patient's local health officer or the local health department either electronically through the Wisconsin Electronic Disease Surveillance System within 72 hours upon recognition of a case or suspected case, unless otherwise indicated. Public health intervention is expected as indicated.

Examples include: sexually transmitted infections, tick-borne diseases, and the majority of food- and water-borne diseases.

Number of Reportable Communicable Diseases: St. Croix County Residents by Year, 2020 - 2023



*Communicable disease cases have dropped IN 2023 due to changes in reporting of COVID-19.

Notable in Communicable Disease Control

- Blastomycosis presentation to St. Croix Valley Homeowners Association (35 attendees)
- Blastomycosis presentation to St. Croix County Highway Department
- Salmonella testing for CDC with River Feeds in New Richmond

Learn More At:

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/disease/reporting.htm>

Immunizations

Public Health provides immunizations for vaccine-preventable diseases adults, adolescents, and children. We provide free immunizations for those who are under-insured or without insurance.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF: A SCC PUBLIC HEALTH NURSE PROVIDING IMMUNIZATIONS



- Check and respond to emails
- Take temps of fridge and freezers holding vaccines - twice in the morning
- Answer/respond to calls for clients regarding immunizations or clinic scheduling
- Webinars to stay up to date on current information that is pertinent to public Health and promoting/protecting our community
- Check immunization schedule and see what vaccines are going to be given that day

- Verify clients and needed vaccines in WIR (Wisconsin Immunization Registry)
- Set up for immunization clinic and meet with other staff that will be working
- Clinic to discuss clientele and vaccines that will be given
- Pull out vaccine information sheets to provide to clients
- Meet with clients when they arrive



- Inform the clients which vaccines they are eligible to receive
- Provide education on the vaccines
- Answer any questions the clients have
- Update Wisconsin Immunization Registry to reflect correct client information
- Screen the clients for any contraindications or precautions to receiving the vaccines

- Vaccinate the clients
- Enter vaccination information into Wisconsin Immunization Registry
- Monitor the clients for 15 minutes post vaccination to watch for any reactions
- Clean up from clinic
- Take temperatures of fridge and freezers holding vaccines - twice in the afternoon



[Learn More At:](#)

[Immunization & Communicable Disease Control | St. Croix County, WI \(sccwi.gov\)](#)

Chronic Disease & Injury Prevention



Collaboration with Police Explorer Program

Community Health Education

One of the most important roles in public health today is in community health education. Public health educators teach people about behaviors that promote wellness. Within this field, there is a variety of public health issues to address, such as disease prevention, environmental health, nutrition, safety and disaster preparedness, and more.

Notable in Chronic Disease & Injury Prevention

- SCCPH applied for and was awarded The NARCAN® Direct Program. The program provides free NARCAN® for community distribution. Trainings are provided on how to identify an opioid overdose and how to use NARCAN® to reverse an opioid overdose.

Narcan Training and Kit Packing Community Event



- The statewide WI Wins campaign uses a science-based strategy to decrease youth access to tobacco products and help retailers avoid fines. WI Wins uses positive reinforcement to create healthier communities by congratulating clerks who don't sell tobacco to youth and educating those who do

[Learn More At:](https://www.wiwins.org)

<https://www.wiwins.org>

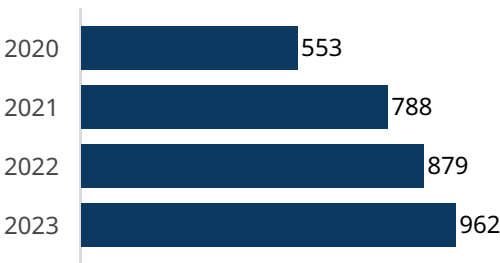
Environmental Public Health

Environmental Health (EH) staff of St. Croix County Public Health strive to promote health and quality of life by identifying, preventing, and controlling harmful environmental conditions.

Program Areas

Animal Bites/Rabies, Beach Health, Drinking Water, Lead, Radon, Human Health Hazards, Licensing and Inspections

Establishment Inspections Performed



2023 EH Intake Numbers By Topic



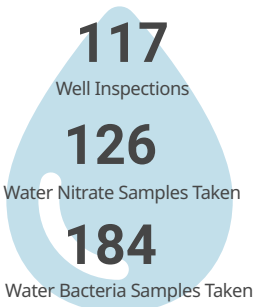
76 Animal Bite/Rabies

53 Health Hazards

25 Radon or Lead

24 Housing Issues

2023 EH Water Program



Notable in Environmental Health

- Participated in the Emerald Clean Water Forum.
- Provided private well testing events for nitrates.
- Multiple grants awarded.

[Learn More At:](https://www.sccwi.gov/192/Environmental-Health)

<https://www.sccwi.gov/192/Environmental-Health>

Maternal, Child, & Family Health

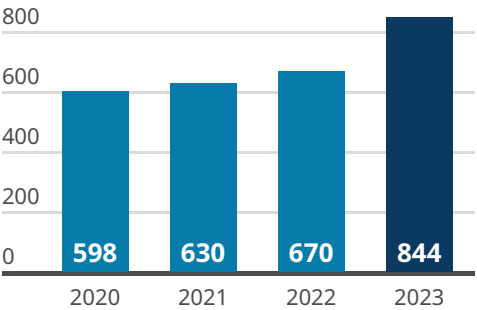
Program Areas

Maternal and Child Health - Prenatal Care Coordination (PNCC) -
Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) - Reproductive Health

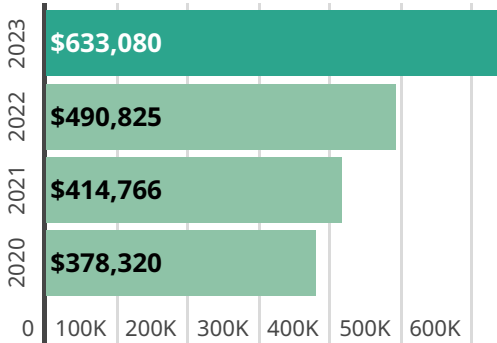


WIC Client Numbers, 2020 - 2023

*Average of yearly caseload



WIC Vendor Redemption \$



Notable in WIC



- WIC partnered with FoodWise and Master Gardeners for a Storytime in the Garden event which involved games, stories, nutrition education, and food sampling from the New Richmond Community Garden.
- The St. Croix County Breastfeeding Coalition also had a booth and lactation station at Farm City Days to promote breastfeeding during the World Breastfeeding Month in August.



Maternal, Child, & Family Health

Prenatal Care Coordination

Clients
Served

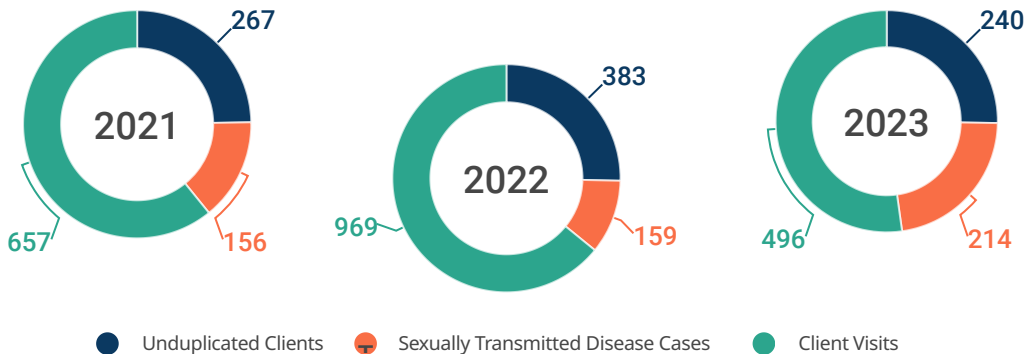
17

Get Yourself Tested Program - *Reproductive Health*

52 Individuals Tested

Offered at Northwoods College and Justice Support Services

St. Croix County Reproductive Health Clients and Cases, 2021 - 2023



Notable in Maternal, Child, & Family Health

- Fluoride Varnish now offered at every WIC Clinic
- Prenatal Care Coordination started administering an Anxiety Screener
- Three infant safety classes were held for expecting parents



Community Engagement by PHN at the Fair

Preparedness

Public health preparedness refers to the strategic planning, coordination, and implementation of measures to effectively respond to and manage public health emergencies. These emergencies can include natural disasters, disease outbreaks, bioterrorism incidents, and other health-related crises.

Types of Preparedness in Public Health

Community Preparedness: Engaging communities in preparedness efforts.



Individual Preparedness: Prepare Your Health, an initiative by CDC, encourages personal health preparedness for public health emergencies.



Collaboration and Coordination: Preparedness efforts involve collaboration at every level, including government agencies, private sectors, non-governmental organizations, and individuals.

Notable in Preparedness



- The Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) is a national network of local volunteers within Preparedness
- Training curriculum has been developed within TRAIN for MRC volunteers
- Wrote and obtained multiple grants
- MRC is supporting water testing needs within St Croix county by purchasing a nitrate tester and coliform tests in the event of flooding or other water events
- Grant funds also purchased supplies able to support future MRC deployment (purchased POD aids, portable blood pressure/o2, temp machine, PA system, portable generator)
- Public Health Emergency Plan has been updated

Access to & Linkages with Clinical Care



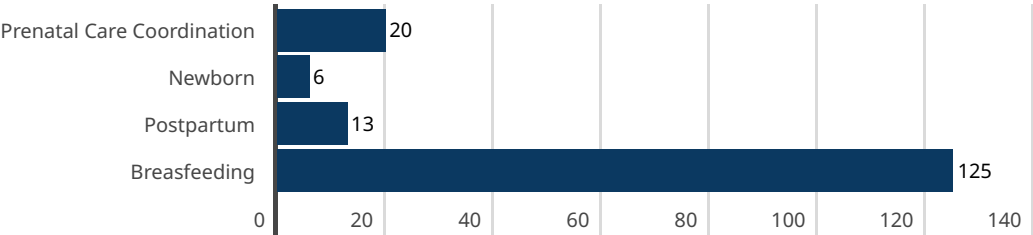
Public Health Resource Guide

St. Croix County Services Center
 1752 Dorset Lane
 New Richmond, WI 54017
 Phone: 715-246-8263
 Fax: 715-246-8367
www.sccwi.gov

Immunizations 715-246-8330
 Reproductive Health 715-246-8365
 WIC 715-246-8359
 Pregnant women, children under 5
 Birth to 3/Children Services 715-246-8260
 Economic Support 715-246-8257
 Medical Assistance, Food Share,
 Daycare Assistance, www.access.wi.gov
 Behavioral Health Services 715-246-8255
 Mental Health, Substance Use Disorder, Adult
 Protective Services
 Aging and Disability Resource Center
 715-381-4360
 800-372-2333
 United Way
 Locate local resources 211

- We held regular meetings with the Infection Preventionists at the hospitals
- Our PH intake line linked community members to resources and services.
- We maintain a Public Health Resource Guide for the care and safety of residents. *See graphic on right*
- Our Maternal and Child Health group received referrals regarding high risk pregnant women and high risk infants who live in St. Croix County from our neighboring hospitals and the Twin Cities. *See below*

2023 Referrals to Public Health Nurses



Notable in Access to & Linkages with Clinical Care

- To increase access to dental and oral health care, we now host the services of Bridging Brighter Smiles to provide dental care for children and mothers in need.
- Our Epidemiologist began surveillance of St. Croix County disease and injury trends through the Emergency Department National Syndromic Surveillance Program

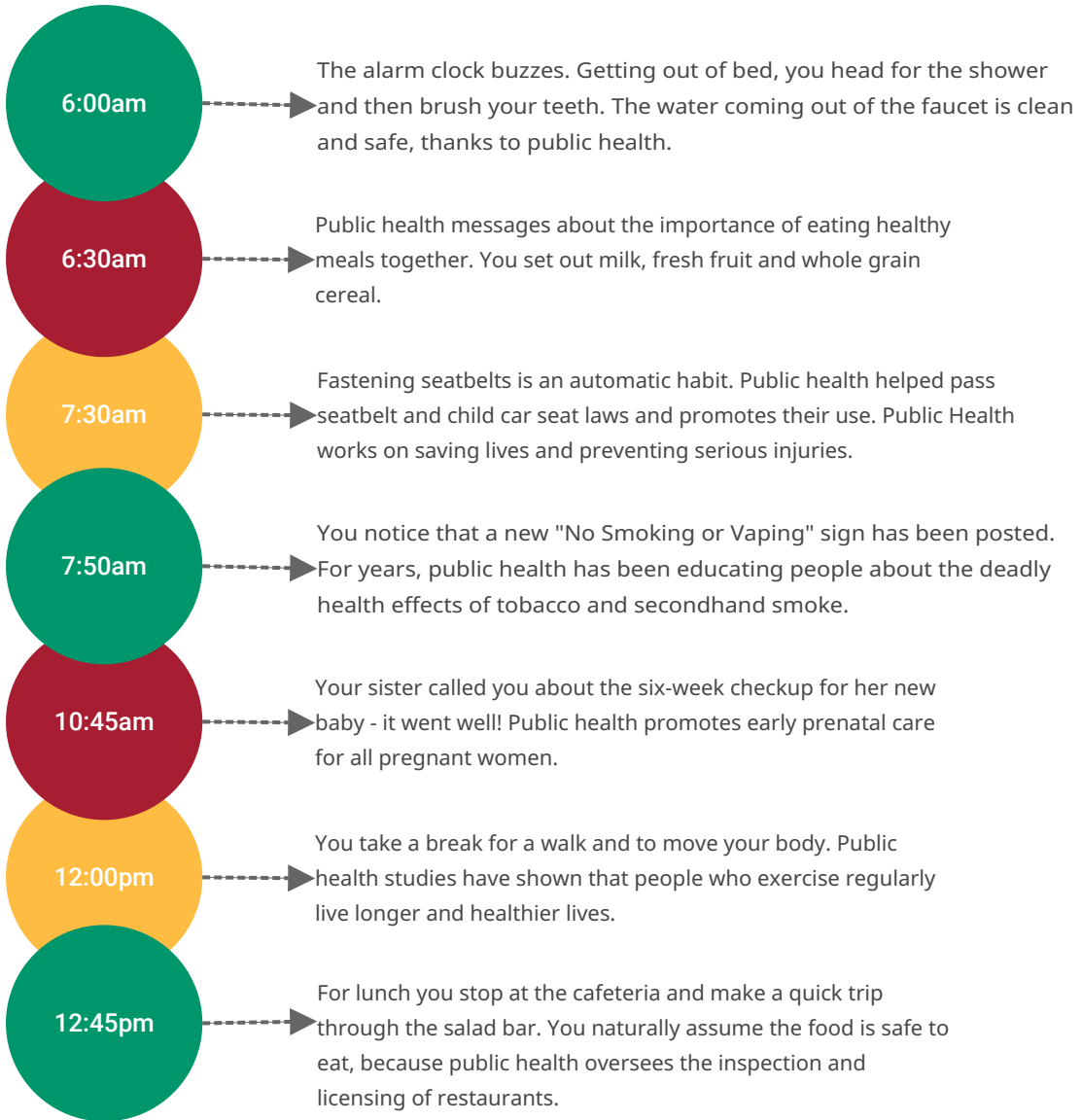
Learn More At:

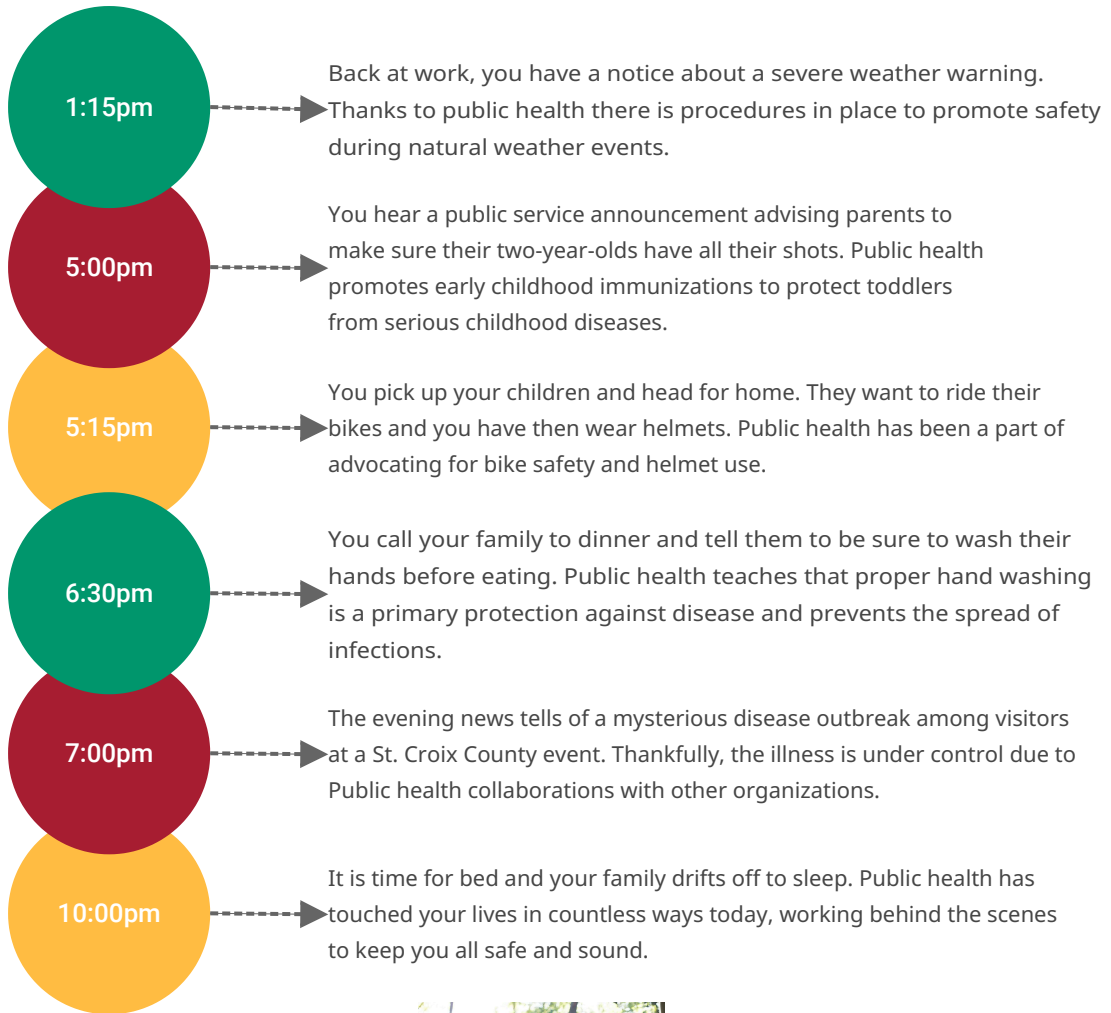
Public Health Resource Guide:

<https://www.sccwi.gov/DocumentCenter/View/5511/Public-Health-Resource-Guide-PDF?bidId=>

Public Health in Everyday Life...

Through the programs that St. Croix County Public Health offers things in your every day life are positively impacted. We invite you to look at our services through a story lens.





Friend of Public Health

St. Croix County Public Health has been selecting a “Friend of Public Health” since 1998 as a part of our National Public Health Week. This is to recognize someone who has been an exceptional partner within our community by positively impacting the health and well-being of St. Croix County residents.

2023 FRIEND OF PUBLIC HEALTH Sharon Reyzer - Community Gardens Contribution



Sharon is a former Public Health Nurse and Supervisor with St. Croix County Public Health for 30 years. Sharon has continued, after her retirement, to support public health work in the community. She provides tremendous support to the community garden. Vegetables from the garden provide nutrition for many residents including clients at the St. Croix County Services Center and participants of the New Richmond School District Backpack Program.

Challenges and Opportunities

CHALLENGES:

- Turnover in staff (still maintained great service delivery and collaboration with partners)
- Low staff numbers compared to other counties of a similar size, similar work expectations and that we have consistently been one of top, if not, the fastest growing counties in Wisconsin.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- Continually enhance and grow collaborations with the public and partners to strategically address the needs of our community
- Narcan Direct Programming expanding
- Multiple grants received
- Promoting a Friend of Public Health

