



News from the Legacy Community Alliance for Health

Wisconsin Rapids completes a rapid Health Impact Assessment on Senior Housing

By Madeline Petz, Community Development Specialist, City of Wisconsin Rapids

With support from the Legacy Community Alliance for Health project (2017-2022), the City of Wisconsin Rapids has teamed up with the Wood County Health Department to conduct a series of Rapid Health Impact Assessments (HIA) on timely development projects taking place in the City.



The first HIA in the series focuses on a new senior housing development in the central core of the City. With direction from a project advisory team made up of various community leaders, the City selected this as our first HIA to satisfy a local desire to devote attention to housing needs and associated health impacts in the community. We were also eager to zoom in on this downtown neighborhood, where multiple other exciting developments are either underway or slated for the near future. This geographic focus provides a way to explore some of the broader health impacts that the project has the potential to influence by way of proximity; or how appropriate planning can ensure that all of the connected developments together generate positive ripple effects for the whole population.

The learning and execution of the HIA process was a great success, and the recommendations generated for the senior housing development are currently coming to life. The senior housing development will open for business in the fall of 2019, including impactful building and site design elements that are direct results of recommendations from the HIA.

The advisory team is concurrently developing an HIA Matrix that summarizes our collective and co-created health areas of focus and the subtopics we are interested in exploring within each. Our intent is to use the Matrix to screen other potential HIA projects in the future, while also providing a less intensive, but still effective, tool to routinely incorporate health into City decision-making and considerations. We also plan to carry out another HIA by the end of summer 2019.

Informed by a Health in All Policies approach, the City is using the HIA project experience to build the appropriate local capacity to incorporate a tangible health lens tool into planning processes, which will evolve into the new "business as usual". The City is also motivated by the community engagement component inherent to HIA projects, which allows staff and elected officials to further increase transparency and trust in local government decision-making processes, as this has been

identified as a need in the community. We are grateful for the stakeholders we have at the table and excited about the potential this approach has to support long term positive changes in health outcomes in the community.

You can read the full text of our newly released HIA Report [here](#).

Save the date - April 26, 2019!

The Legacy Community Alliance for Health and its partners at the League of Wisconsin Municipalities and Wisconsin Counties Association are hosting a training workshop for all LCAH communities on *Meaningful and Equitable Community Engagement* on April 26th in Wausau. This training is being created in response to interest we heard from many of you on how to create sustained, equitable engagement strategies for the projects you are working on. We ask that teams come ready with an engagement need in mind and you will leave with the outline of an actionable plan to elevate engagement efforts for that need. All LCAH participants are eligible to attend. LCAH will pay all costs associated for teams of up to five from each city/village/county, and teams who attend will receive a \$1000 mini-grant to implement their engagement plans after the workshop. Contact Katya Spear at knspear@cows.org or 608.262.5831 to learn more, ask questions, or confirm your spot!



Middleton, Fitchburg, and Sheboygan join WI Active Together Communities

WI Active Together is a coalition of statewide partners working to promote healthy, thriving communities in Wisconsin. They recently formed Wisconsin Active Together Communities, a network of communities that are being recognized for their commitment to advancing

strategies for safe places to be active. The Municipality, the membership newsletter of the League of Wisconsin Municipalities, published a story in its February issue about communities recently added, including Middleton Fitchburg, and Sheboygan which passed "Wisconsin Active Together" resolutions in support of initiatives and goals that promote active transportation. See more in the League's [Feb. Newsletter](#), p. 32 or learn more from [Wisconsin Active Together](#).

News on Health Equity

Rice County Public Health in Minnesota, which serves 65,000 residents, recently completed a health equity organizational assessment, which led them to prioritize staff understanding of health equity. They've created a Health Equity Plan that includes seven practices to build department and community momentum to advance health equity. You can learn about their process and more about how your county could consider a health equity organizational assessment, [here](#).



Learn about how one county is tackling equity issues through policy in [this case study](#) on **Fairfax County, VA**, which passed its "One Fairfax" policy in Nov. 2017. The policy requires the Board of Supervisors and School Board to "consider equity in decision-making and in the development and delivery of future policies, programs, and services." The case study talks about the county's process, the importance of local government leadership, and the use of data in decision and policy-making.

Learning Opportunities

1 pm CDT March 5: The Better Buildings Challenge and US Dept. of Energy are hosting a webinar on "**Better Buildings, Better Bodies: Strategies for Health & Wellness**." The webinar will showcase how

some are implementing design strategies and benchmarks in their buildings and sustainability plans that focus on the wellness, health, and productivity of the people inside them. Register [here](#).

1 pm CDT March 13: America Walks will host a webinar on **“Stronger Together: Partnering with the Disability Rights Movement.”** Attendees will hear from communities that have worked to be more inclusive and accessible and about tolls to help them foster strong partnerships between walkability advocates and the disability rights movement. Register [here](#).

1 pm CDT on March 13: NACCHO will host its next Health in All Policies technical assistance webinar on **“Increasing Health Department Capacity to Implement HiAP Initiatives,”** which will feature staff from local health departments describing their own efforts. These monthly webinars are a great way to connect with others working on HiAP initiatives. Register [here](#).

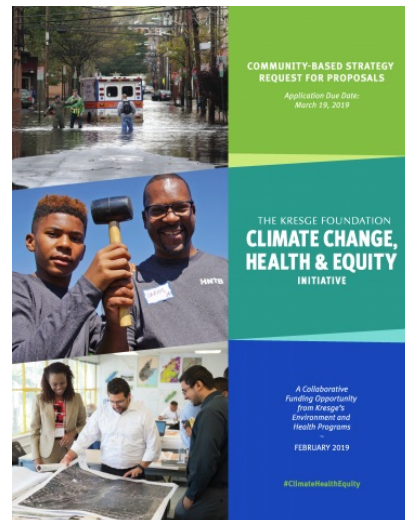
The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) hosted a webinar on Feb. 13th on **“HiAP Initiatives and Policy Opportunities.”** Participants heard from two communities with HiAP resolutions and ordinances to better understand how they are implementing their HiAP initiatives. Attendees heard directly from cities and counties that have implemented these initiatives and you can access the recording [here](#).

America Walks hosted a webinar on Feb. 13th on **“Creating Safer Streets for All.”** The webinar presented a systems approach to improving the built environment to reduce pedestrian injuries and fatalities. You can access the recording [here](#).

Funding Opportunities

The National Recreation and Park Association’s **Increasing Access to Healthy Foods Innovation Grants** are accepting applications through March 6. The grants fund local park and recreation agencies to implement at least one of three selected innovation strategies to increase access to healthy foods within underserved communities. More information and application materials [here](#).

The Kresge Foundation is launching a new initiative through its **Health and Environment** programs that is well suited for communities who are working on Health in All Policies frameworks and initiatives. The goal of the initiative is to fund projects that build climate resilience with policies and practices that also improve community health. Kresge will fund planning grants of up to \$100,000 each to up to 15 community-based nonprofit organizations. Planning projects selected for the funding would have 14 months for planning and then be invited to apply for multi-year implementation grants. Letters of intent are due no later than March 18, 2019. More information and application materials [here](#).



The BUILD Health Challenge is seeking applicants to its third cohort, through which it will support collaborations between community-based organizations, hospitals or health systems and public health departments working to address upstream health challenges. The Challenge will select up to 17 collaborations to receive up to \$250,000 in funding, coaching and support, and participation in a national network of peers engaged in similar work, among other benefits. Applications are due April 5, 2019. More information [here](#).

City, village and county efforts to improve long-term health outcomes require sustained multisector partnerships and effort. If you’re ready to start thinking beyond short-term grant funding to support your work, a new workbook from ReThink Health entitled **“Beyond the Grant”** offers a look at long-term sustainable financing for these kinds of multisector partnerships.

Data, Tools, and Messaging for Your Work

Many of you have been interested in the connections between affordable housing and health. A new tool, the **Healthy Housing Outcomes Survey** developed by Enterprise Community Partners and NeighborWorks America, could help you measure changes in health outcomes likely to be influenced by healthy housing development. The resident survey they created is available in English and Spanish and takes no more than 20 minutes to complete. It aims to measure the health impacts of housing and community development programs, with an focus on impact on low-income populations and on short-term outcomes that may lead to improvements in long-term health outcomes. Learn more and access the survey [here](#).

Safe Routes to School National Partnership recently released a new toolkit, [Building Blocks: A Guide to Starting and Growing a Strong Safe Routes to School Program](#), to help communities create a new Safe Routes to School program or strengthen your existing one. The toolkit covers stakeholder engagement, communications and messaging efforts, and more.

You may already be working on Safe Routes to Schools, but have you considered **Safe Routes to Parks**? The Safe Routes to School National Partnership is also working on this issue, and notes that this is especially critical in “communities lacking infrastructure, such as sidewalks, crosswalks, and speed humps, to support safe walking and bicycling; where violence and crime are prevalent; and where there are high rates of weight-related diseases or conditions.” They have created a series of fact sheets specifically focusing on equity in different stages of SRTP work: Engagement, Planning, Implementation, Sustainability, and Assessment. Access these resources [here](#).

If you have questions about the Legacy Community Alliance for Health, or would like more information, contact Katya Spear, Project Manager at knspear@cows.org

