UNION COUNTY

Community Health Assessment and Health Improvement Plan

Greater Regional HEALTH

2023

WWW.GREATERREGIONAL.ORG

INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

Each county in the state of Iowa is required to complete a Community Health Assessment every five years. From this assessment, a 5-year Health Improvement Plan is completed. The assessment was postponed from 2020 and completed in 2022. Following is the report of the findings of the assessment and the improvement plans. To obtain more information on the process and to see plans from the other counties in the state, go to https://idph.iowa.gov/chnahip.

This assessment enables public health officials to examine current health status indicators, identify key problems, as well as assets in the county and to determine and develop a Community Health Improvement Plan (HIP).

METHODS

Review of current data sources

1. Primary Research

   A survey was created to elicit health and wellness information from those living in Union County and distributed across the county for those living in Union County to complete. Survey content and questions were solicited from the members of coalitions, boards, and elected officials.

   The survey was conducted July-August 2022 and consisted of 11 multiple choice questions related to health and well-being with options to write in additional information. An additional five demographic questions were included.

   Survey questions included rating the health of the county, identifying the most important factors for a healthy community, identifying the top three health problems in the county, identifying the three most risky behaviors and concerns, and selecting activities that would help families start or maintain a healthy lifestyle.

   Survey questions also asked quality of health care delivery in Union County, rating of their own personal health, barriers to being healthy, utilization of health services and type of services received outside of the county and utilizing specific health care practices.

2. Secondary Research

   We reviewed statistics and data from several sources, specifically focusing on the data included in the County Health Rankings and Roadmaps and the U.S. Census Bureau statistics.

   Our data review also included review of previous Community Health Needs Assessments and improvement plans.

3. Community Presentations

   Multiple strong boards and groups are currently in place within the county. To ensure the segments of the populations represented by these entities participated in the needs assessment process, surveys were taken to and distributed among these groups. Many partners participated including the two public school systems - Creston and East Union and the Union County Development Corporation.

   In addition, survey presentations were conducted at a variety of community events including the county fair, the farmer's market, meal sites, and diverse festivals across the county.

Strengths and Limitations

The strengths of this assessment include the variety of places in which feedback was obtained. At multiple meetings of a variety of boards and groups, comments, suggestions for additions or subtractions, advice was solicited as the survey was created and edited for the final product.

Once the survey was completed, a similar system for distribution was utilized. Surveys were given to the boards and groups and disseminated throughout the county and a variety of outreach events. The response was significantly higher than in previous years, demonstrating a more accurate reflection of what is happening in the county.

A limitation of the Community Needs Assessment was encouraging the Latino/Hispanic population to complete the survey. It was often difficult to find this population and it was difficult to persuade them to complete the survey.

Key Participants

Union County Board of Health and Greater Regional Health were the main participants in this survey.

KEY FINDINGS

Union County is a county in Southwest/South Central Iowa. Geographically it serves as the middle point of a triangle between the metropolitan areas of Des Moines, Omaha and Kansas City. Union County is composed of six towns: Afton, Arispe, Cromwell, Lorimor, Thayer and county seat of Creston. The unincorporated city of Kent is also located in Union County. The population of the entire county was 12,018 according to the 2021 Census. Most (7,536) Union County residents live in Creston.

1. Demographics

1. Race: 96.2% white, 1.5% black or African American, 1.1% two or more races, .7% Asian, .5% American Indian/Alaskan native, 3.2% Hispanic or Latino
2. Age: Median age 40.6 years. 20.9% 65+ years; 22.4% <18 Years; 5.4% <5 years
3. Median annual income: $50,375
4. 12.1% live below poverty line
5. 90.5% HS diploma

2. Survey Findings

A total of 294 surveys were completed. Nearly half of the respondents (46.42%) rated Union County as unhealthy, somewhat unhealthy or very unhealthy. The top three problems identified were substance abuse (66.55%), mental health or mental disorders (54.14%) and obesity and overweight at 50.34%.

The three most risky behaviors identified by those completing the survey include illegal drug use (77.89%), alcohol abuse (56.12%) and driving while impaired (37.07%). Lack of physical exercise was a close 4th and 36.73%.

Affordable wellness and fitness facilities, additional recreational paths, trails or sidewalks and the availability of fresh food and produces were identified as means to help families start or maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Most (87.03%) identified the quality of healthcare in Union County as “good” or “very good.” And most rated their own personal health in the “healthy” categories.

When identifying the variables that prevent the respondent from feeling healthier, three stood out among the rest in the numbers responding. These include financial concerns (37.99%), lack of motivation (54.12%) and not enough time (58.06%).

3. Health Outcomes Rankings

Overall, Union County ranks 91st out of 99 counties in Health Outcome Ranking. The county is 58 out of 99 for “Quality of Life,” which includes self-reported poor or fair health and poor physical health and mental health days. In addition, birthweight data is also included in this category.

Union County ranks the worst in the state in the “Length of Life” category. This reflects premature death rate (before 75 years of age). The leading causes of death under the age of 75 in the county include malignant neoplasms, diseases of the heart, accidents, and chronic lower respiratory disease.

Union County ranks 61st out of 99 in the Health Factors Category. Factored into this category are health behaviors, clinical care, social economic factors and physical environment. Each of these categories is also ranked with Health Behaviors ranking 74th out of 99; Clinical Care 10th out of 99; Social Economic Factors 90th out of 99 and physical environment 21st out of 99.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A Health Improvement Plan (HIP) has been completed.

The Health Improvement Plan will address 4 strategic Priorities.

1. Substance Abuse
2. Mental Health
3. Obesity and Overweight
4. Leading Causes of Death before age 75.

APPENDIX

Slide 1

2022 Union County Community Health Assessment

Greater Regional Health
Union County Board of Health

Slide 2

Community Health Assessment (CHA)

- Examination of health status indicators
- Gather data of the community's health status
- Identify key problems and assets in the county
- Used to develop a Community Health Improvement Plan (HIP)
  - Community determines priorities and goals to address
- Public Health Departments typically cycle CHA/CHIP every 5 years

Slide 3

2022 Union County CHA

- Conducted by Greater Regional Health with Union County BOH
- Primary Research-Survey
  - Conducted July-August 2022
  - Shared to community partners
    - Creston and East Union Schools
    - Union County Development Corporation
    - Various coalitions, boards and elected officials
    - Various in person community events
- Secondary Research
  - Union County Health Rankings and demographic data

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Secondary Research

Slide 5

Union County Demographics

- Population: 12,018 (U.S. Census Bureau 2021)
- Race and Hispanic Origin: (U.S. Census Bureau 2021)
  - 96.2% White
  - 1.5% Black or African American
  - 1.1% Two or more races
  - .7% Asian
  - .5% American Indian/Alaskan native
  - 3.2% Hispanic or Latino
- Median Age: 40.6 years
  - 20.9% 65+ years
  - 22.4% < 18 years
  - 5.4% < 5 years
- Median annual income: $50,375
- 12.1% live below poverty line*
- 90.5% H.S. Diploma*
  - Updated 11/7/2022

Data from: https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/unioncountyiowa

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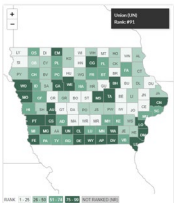
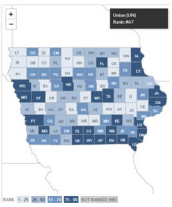
Secondary Data-County Health Rankings

Overall Rankings in Health Outcomes



Overall Rankings in Health Factors



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Union County Health Outcomes Ranking

- Overall: 91/99[1]
  - Length of Life: 99/99[2]
  - Quality of Life: 58/99[3]
    - Poor or Fair Health
    - Poor Physical Health & Mental Health Days
    - Low Birthweight

Leading Causes of Death under age 75 in Union (UN) County

Leading Causes of Death Under Age 75	Deaths	Age-Adjusted Rate per 100,000
Malignant neoplasms	87	122
Diseases of heart	39	70.5
Accidents	15	Unreliable
Chronic lower respiratory diseases	13	Unreliable

- Overall Ranking Based on
  - Length of Life
    - Years of potential life lost before 75 per 100k people
  - Quality of Life
    - Self reported through surveys
    - Birth Weight data

Union (UN)

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Union County Health Factors Ranking

- Overall: 61/99[4]
  - Health Behaviors: 74/99[5]
  - Clinical Care: 10/99[6]
  - Social Economic Factors: 90/99[7]
  - Physical Environment: 21/99[8]

- Health Behaviors
  - Smoking, exercise habits, drinking, STI data, teen births, etc.
- Clinical Care
  - Uninsured, PCP/dentist/MH provider rate, preventable hospital stays, mammograms, flu vaccines
- Social Economic Factors
  - Education, unemployment, poverty, crime, injury deaths
- Physical Environment
  - Water, air, housing, commute time

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2022 Union County Community Health Assessment Survey

- 294 Total Responses

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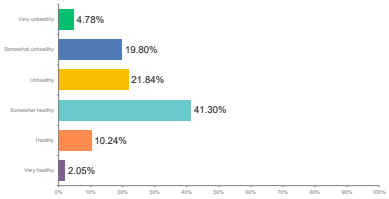
Q1: How would you rate Union County as a "healthy community"?

- Answered: 293 Skipped: 1



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Q2: What are the three (3) most important factors for a "Healthy Community"

(those factors which most improve the quality of life in a community)?

- Answered: 293 Skipped: 1

1. Access to Health Care
2. Access to Mental Health Care
3. Good Jobs and Healthy Economy

ANSWER CHOICES	%	RESPONSES
Access to clean water	20.82%	61
Access to health care	43.00%	126
Access to mental health care	37.20%	109
Access to transportation services	7.51%	22
Affordable housing	36.39%	89
Arts and cultural events	2.05%	6
Clean environment	14.68%	43
Family life	15.02%	44
Food security/access to healthy foods	26.28%	77
Good jobs and healthy economy	33.45%	98
Healthy behaviors and lifestyles	29.01%	85
Low crime/safe neighborhoods	16.72%	49
Low adult death and disease rate	4.10%	12
Low infant deaths	0.68%	2
Low level of child abuse	4.44%	13
Parks and recreation	8.87%	26
Schools	21.16%	62
Other (please specify)	3.07%	9
TOTAL		933

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Q3: What do you think are the top three (3) health problems in Union County?

- Answered: 290 Skipped: 4

1. Substance Abuse
2. Mental Health or Mental Disorders
3. Obesity and Overweight

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Aging (arthritis, hearing/vision loss, dementia, etc.)	23.10%	67
Cancer	19.66%	57
Diabetes	19.31%	56
Substance Use	66.55%	193
Heart Disease a/stroke	8.28%	24
Injuries (falls, car crashes, drowning)	1.38%	4
Sexually Transmitted Infections	7.59%	22
Mental Health or Mental Disorders	54.14%	157
Obesity and overweight	50.34%	146
Teen Pregnancy	3.45%	10
Respiratory Disease	1.72%	5
Suicide	3.79%	11
Trauma	2.07%	6
Poverty	25.52%	74
Child and/or Adult Neglect and/or Abuse	13.10%	38
Other (please specify)	1.72%	5
TOTAL		875

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Q4: What do you think are the three (3) most "risky behaviors" or safety concerns in your community?

- Answered: 294 Skipped: 0

1. Illegal Drug Use
2. Alcohol Abuse
3. Driving while Impaired

ANSWER CHOICES	%	RESPONSES
Alcohol Abuse	55.12%	105
Distracted driving	24.49%	72
Driving while impaired (drunk or high)	37.07%	109
Dropping out of school	3.40%	10
Illegal drug use	77.89%	229
Lack of physical activity	9.18%	27
Not getting vaccinations	10.20%	30
Not wearing a helmet on bike/motorcycle	3.40%	10
Not using a seatbelt/Child safety seat	3.74%	11
Suicide	10.54%	31
Unsafe sex	9.86%	29
Using tobacco/vaping products	27.21%	80
Other (please specify)	1.02%	3
TOTAL		887

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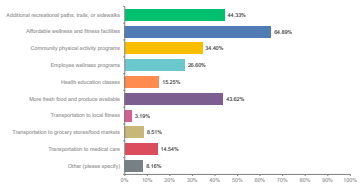
Q5: What would help you or your family start or maintain a healthy lifestyle? Select all that apply.

- Answered: 282 Skipped: 12



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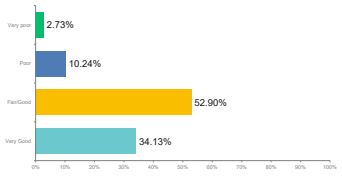
Q6: In general, how would you rate the overall quality of healthcare delivered in Union County?

- Answered: 293 Skipped: 1



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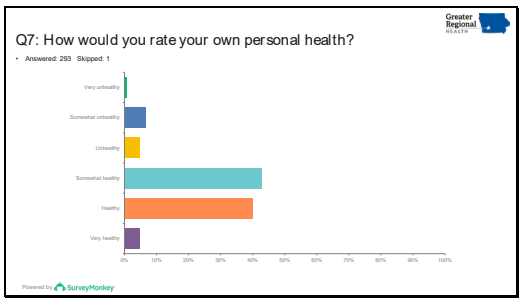

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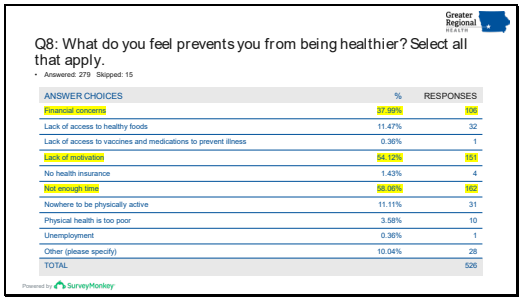

ANSWER CHOICES	%	RESPONSES
Financial concerns	37.99%	106
Lack of access to healthy foods	11.47%	32
Lack of access to vaccines and medications to prevent illness	0.36%	1
Lack of motivation	54.12%	151
No health insurance	1.43%	4
Not enough time	58.06%	162
Nowhere to be physically active	11.11%	31
Physical health is too poor	3.58%	10
Unemployment	0.36%	1
Other (please specify)	10.04%	28
TOTAL		526

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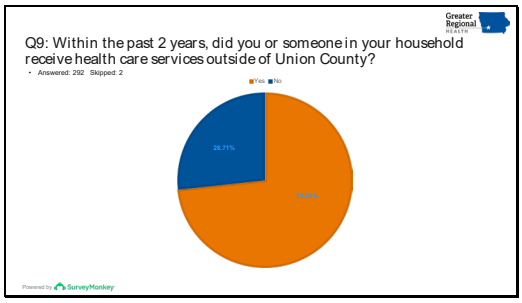

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Q10: If you received health care outside of Union County, In the past 2 years what type of health services did you or your immediate family members receive? Select all that apply:

- Answered: 263 Skipped: 31

1. Dental Care
2. GP
3. OBGYN

ANSWER CHOICES	%	RESPONSES
Cardiac/Heart Care	9.89%	26
Dental Care	30.04%	79
Ear, Nose, Throat Care	11.03%	29
Emergency room service	10.27%	27
Eye Care	13.31%	35
Family Planning	6.08%	16
General Practitioner care	25.24%	66
General Surgery	10.27%	27
Hearing services	3.04%	8
Immunizations	9.13%	24
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Mental health services	14.07%	37
Obstetrics/Gynecology	19.77%	52
Orthodontia	7.98%	21
Orthopedic/Bone care	11.41%	30
Pediatrician	11.41%	30
Podiatry Care	1.90%	5
Urology care	3.04%	8
X-Ray/MRI	14.45%	38
Other (please specify)	14.83%	39
TOTAL		697

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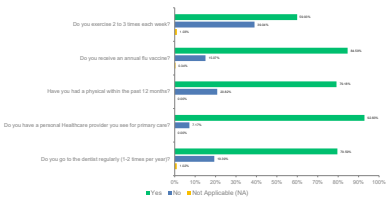
Q11: Do you follow any of these health practices?

- Answered: 294 Skipped: 0



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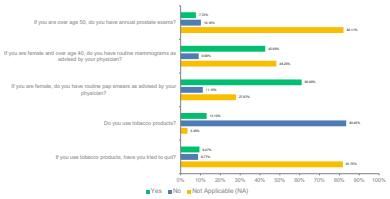
Q11: Do you follow any of these health practices?

- Answered: 294 Skipped: 0



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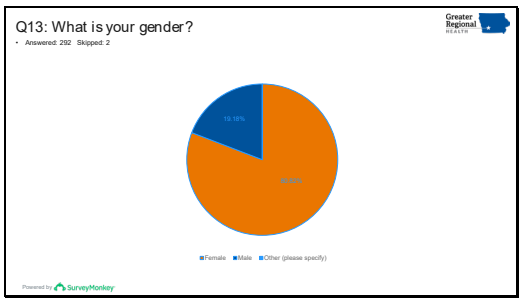

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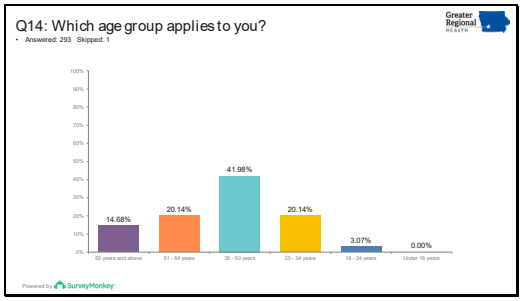

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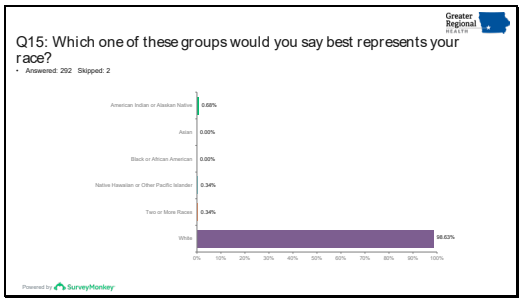

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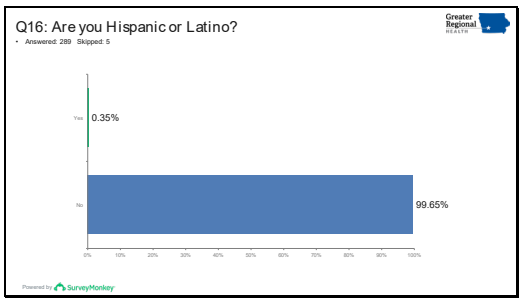

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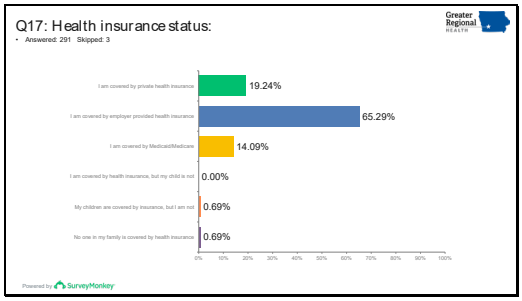

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Summary

- Most Important Factors for Healthy Community
  - Access to Health Care, Access to Mental Health Care, Good Jobs
- Top 3 Health Problems
  - Substance Abuse, Mental Health, Obesity and Overweight
- Top 3 Risky Behaviors
  - Illegal Drug Use, Alcohol Abuse, Driving while impaired
- Barriers to being healthier
  - Time, Motivation, Financial Concerns

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Feedback & Next Steps

- Additional feedback and community needs
- Community health improvement plan
  - Identify resources
  - Match resources to needs
- Collaborative Effort!

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Thank you!

- Zach Woods, MS, ATC
  - Director of Public Health and Emergency Preparedness
- Karla Hynes, BSN, RN
  - Public Health Nurse
- Kayla Hoffman
  - Director of Marketing Communications
- Maddie Simmons
  - PR Coordinator
- Carol Eckels
  - Chief Clinical Officer

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