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.
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 (CHIP)
• 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
Secondary Research

Union County Demographics

- Population: 12,018 (U.S. Census Bureau 2021)
- Race and Hispanic Origin:
  - 96.2% White
  - 1.5% Black or African American
  - 1.1% Two or more races
  - 7% Asian
  - 0.5% American Indian/Alaskan native
  - 3.2% Hispanic or Latino
- Median Age: 40.6 years
- Median annual income: $50,375
- 26.9% live below poverty line*
- 90.5% H.S. Diploma*

Source: https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/unioncountyiowa

Secondary Data - County Health Rankings
Union County Health Outcomes Ranking

- Overall: 91/99
  - Length of Life: 99/99
  - Quality of Life: 58/99
  - Poor or Fair Health
  - Poor Physical Health & Mental Health Days
  - Low Birthweight
  - Overall Ranking Based on
    - Length of Life
      - Years of potential life lost before 75 per 100k people
    - Quality of Life
      - Self-reported through surveys
    - Birthweight data

Union County Health Factors Ranking

- Overall: 61/99
  - Health Behaviors: 74/99
    - Smoking, exercise habits, drinking, STI data, teen births, etc.
  - Clinical Care: 10/99
    - Uninsured, PCP/dentist/MH provider rate, preventable hospital stays, mammograms, flu vaccines
  - Social Economic Factors: 90/99
    - Education, unemployment, poverty, crime, injury deaths
  - Physical Environment: 21/99
    - Water, air, housing, commute time

2022 Union County Community Health Assessment Survey
- 294 Total Responses
Q1: How would you rate Union County as a "healthy community"?

- Answered: 293   Skipped: 1

4.78% 19.80% 21.84% 41.30% 10.24% 2.05% 0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Very unhealthy  Somewhat unhealthy  Unhealthy  Somewhat healthy  Healthy  Very healthy

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

- Answered: 293   Skipped: 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWER CHOICES</th>
<th>RESPONSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access to clean water</td>
<td>20.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to health care</td>
<td>43.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to mental health care</td>
<td>37.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to transportation services</td>
<td>7.51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affordable housing</td>
<td>30.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts and cultural events</td>
<td>2.05%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clean environment</td>
<td>14.68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family life</td>
<td>15.02%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food security/access to healthy foods</td>
<td>26.28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good jobs and healthy economy</td>
<td>33.45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthy behaviors and lifestyles</td>
<td>29.01%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Low crime/safe neighborhoods</td>
<td>16.72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low infant deaths</td>
<td>0.68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low level of child abuse</td>
<td>4.44%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parks and recreation</td>
<td>8.87%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>21.16%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td>3.07%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>933</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

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

- Answered: 290   Skipped: 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWER CHOICES</th>
<th>RESPONSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aging (arthritis, hearing/vision loss, dementia, etc.)</td>
<td>23.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cancer</td>
<td>19.66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diabetes</td>
<td>19.31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance Abuse</td>
<td>66.55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart Disease/stroke</td>
<td>8.28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injuries (falls, car crashes, drowning)</td>
<td>1.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexually Transmitted Infections</td>
<td>7.59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health or Mental Disorders</td>
<td>54.14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obesity and overweight</td>
<td>50.34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teen Pregnancy</td>
<td>3.45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respiratory Disease</td>
<td>1.72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suicide</td>
<td>3.79%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poverty</td>
<td>25.52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child and/or Adult Neglect and/or Abuse</td>
<td>13.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td>1.72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>875</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Substance Abuse
2. Mental Health or Mental Disorders
3. Obesity and Overweight
Q4: What do you think are the three (3) most “risky behaviors” or safety concerns in your community?

1. Illegal Drug Use
2. Alcoehol Abuse
3. Driving while impaired

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWER CHOICES</th>
<th>RESPONSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol abuse</td>
<td>56.12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distracted driving</td>
<td>24.49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driving while impaired</td>
<td>37.07%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dropping out of school</td>
<td>3.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illegal drug use</td>
<td>77.89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of physical activity</td>
<td>36.73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not getting vaccinations</td>
<td>10.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not wearing a helmet on bike/motorcycle</td>
<td>3.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not using a seatbelt/Child safety seat</td>
<td>3.74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suicide</td>
<td>10.54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsafe sex</td>
<td>9.86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using tobacco/vaping products</td>
<td>27.21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td>1.02%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>887</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

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

- Additional recreational paths, trails, or sidewalks
- Affordable wellness and fitness facilities
- Community physical activity programs
- Employee wellness programs
- Health education classes
- More fresh food and produce available
- Transportation to local fitness
- Transportation to grocery stores/food markets
- Transportation to medical care
- Other (please specify)

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

- Very poor
- Poor
- Fair/Good
- Very Good
Slide 16

Q7: How would you rate your own personal health?

- Very unhealthy
- Somewhat unhealthy
- Unhealthy
- Somewhat healthy
- Healthy
- Very healthy

Answered: 293   Skipped: 1

Slide 17

Q8: What do you feel prevents you from being healthier? Select all that apply.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWER CHOICES</th>
<th>% RESPONSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Financial concerns</td>
<td>37.99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of access to healthy foods</td>
<td>11.47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of access to vaccines and medications to prevent illness</td>
<td>0.36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of motivation</td>
<td>54.12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No health insurance</td>
<td>1.43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not enough time</td>
<td>58.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nowhere to be physically active</td>
<td>11.11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical health is too poor</td>
<td>3.58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment</td>
<td>0.36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td>10.04%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL 526

Slide 18

Q9: Within the past 2 years, did you or someone in your household receive health care services outside of Union County?

- Yes
- No
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:

- None
- Cardiac/Heart Care
- Dental Care
- Ear, Nose, Throat Care
- Emergency room service
- Eye Care
- Family Planning
- General Practitioner care
- General Surgery
- Hearing services
- Immunizations
- Lab work
- Mental health services
- Obstetrics/Gynecology
- Orthodontia
- Orthopedic/Bone care
- Pediatrician
- Podiatry Care
- Urology care
- X-ray/MRI
- Other (please specify)

TOTAL 697

Q11: Do you follow any of these health practices?

- Answered: 294  Skipped: 0

- Do you exercise 2 to 3 times each week?
- Do you receive an annual flu vaccine?
- Have you had a physical within the past 12 months?
- Do you have a personal Healthcare provider you see for primary care?
- Do you go to the dentist regularly (1-2 times per year)?
- If you are over age 50, do you have annual prostate exams?
- If you are female and over age 40, do you have routine mammograms as advised by your physician?
- If you are female, do you have routine pap smears as advised by your physician?
- Do you use tobacco products?
- If you use tobacco products, have you tried to quit?
Slide 22

Q13: What is your gender?

- Answered: 292
- Skipped: 2

- 80.82% Female
- 19.18% Male

Other (please specify)

Slide 23

Q14: Which age group applies to you?

- Answered: 293
- Skipped: 1

- 20.14% Under 18 years
- 20.14% 18 - 24 years
- 41.98% 25 - 34 years
- 14.68% 35 - 50 years
- 10% 51 - 64 years
- 0% 65 years and above

Slide 24

Q15: Which one of these groups would you say best represents your race?

- Answered: 292
- Skipped: 2

- 98.63% White
- 0.68% American Indian or Alaskan Native
- 0.00% Asian
- 0.00% Black or African American
- 0.34% Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- 0.34% Two or More Races
- 0.00% Unknown
Slide 25

Q16: Are you Hispanic or Latino?

- Yes: 98.65%
- No: 0.35%
- Skipped: 5

Slide 26

Q17: Health Insurance status:

- I am covered by private health insurance: 19.24%
- I am covered by employer provided health insurance: 65.29%
- I am covered by Medicaid/Medicare: 14.09%
- I am covered by health insurance, but my child is not: 0.00%
- My children are covered by insurance, but I am not: 0.69%
- No one in my family is covered by health insurance: 0.69%

Slide 27

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
Feedback & Next Steps

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

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

References