

Legacy Community Alliance for Health

A dynamic collaboration of Wisconsin local governments, state agencies, academic partners, and nonprofit groups have joined forces to create the Legacy Community Alliance for Health (LCAH). The collaborative has been awarded a \$1 million Community Impact Grant to improve health and health equity through local government policymaking and programming. Funding for this project was provided by the Wisconsin Partnership Program at the UW School of Medicine and Public Health.

Across Wisconsin, opportunities to live a long, healthy life are not shared equally by all. Many of Wisconsin's health outcomes currently lag behind national averages, and Wisconsin is home to some of the most extreme health disparities in the nation. Local governments are on the front lines of these challenges. Every day, they deal with the negative outcomes in lost productivity, high healthcare costs and reduced quality of life. Local governments can directly influence and improve many of the determinants of health and health equity through things like their enforcement of building codes, maintenance of public streets and sidewalks, water treatment, management of parks and recreational spaces, and zoning for urban agriculture. But few local governments are using these policy tools to improve community health and wellbeing in a comprehensive and systematic way.

LCAH, which launched in January, spans five years and builds capacity within participating municipalities to improve health and health equity through the use of data and evidence-informed policies. The goal is to help communities achieve gains in at least one of four policy areas of interest: clean water, active transportation, safe and affordable housing, and healthy and affordable local food systems. Each community will choose its own policy approach.

"We are proud to have received this funding from the Wisconsin Partnership Program and are optimistic about the direct impact that the dollars will have in advancing health policies for all of our participating communities," said Jon Hochkammer of the Wisconsin Counties Association. "We believe that the impact of the grant will spread to other communities and that the lessons learned and policies adopted will be shared broadly."

This project builds on the work of Green Tier Legacy Communities* and Green Tier non-government organizations, led by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and 1000 Friends of Wisconsin. Academic partners under the umbrella of the UW-Madison UniverCity Alliance, led by COWS and the Population Health Institute, will provide data, training, technical assistance and evaluation services (see sidebar for a full list of partners). These diverse partners are excited to work with local governments in Wisconsin to improve the long-term health of their constituents and communities.

*The Green Tier Legacy Community program is a unique partnership of Wisconsin communities, non-profit organizations and state agencies that assists communities in moving towards a sustainable future through initiatives that promote environmental stewardship, economic growth, public health, and social equity. Learn more at greentiercommunities.org

LEGACY COMMUNITY

Legacy Community

Members

Appleton
Ashland
Bayfield
Bayfield County
Bayside
Eau Claire
Eau Claire County
Fitchburg
La Crosse
La Crosse County
Middleton
Monona
Port Washington
Sheboygan
Weston
Wisconsin Rapids

Legacy Community NGOs

1000 Friends of Wisconsin
COWS
Municipal Environment
Group (Wastewater)
Wisconsin Counties
Association
Wisconsin Department of
Natural Resources
Wisconsin Energy
Conservation Corporation
Wisconsin League of
Municipalities

Academic Partners (UW Madison)

UniverCity Alliance,
including:
COWS
Population Health Institute
Global Health Institute
Institute for Research on
Poverty
Department of Urban and
Regional Planning