
2023

BUENA VISTA COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH



COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT



ABOUT BUENA VISTA COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

Buena Vista County Public Health & Home Care (BVCPH) is a non-profit organization serving under the direction of the Buena Vista County Board of Health and receives financial support from the Buena Vista County Board of Supervisors. The agency is the public health department for the county as well as a certified home care agency.

The agency offers a wide range of services to the residents of Buena Vista County. The services offered by the agency are high quality services offered at low- or no-cost to qualifying recipients and are aligned with the 10 Essential Public Health Services.

The agency prides itself on serving the diverse community that composes our beautiful county, and diversifies the services offered to meet their needs of various ages and ethnicities.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABOUT BVCPH

ADMINISTRATOR'S NOTE

COMMUNITY SERVED

KEY HEALTH DATA

**ASSESSMENT PROCESS &
FINDINGS**

PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED

NEXT STEPS



ADMINISTRATOR'S NOTE



The last Community Health Assessment conducted by BVCPH was completed in 2016 by a very different public health. It was carried out by a public health agency that had not endured the COVID-19 pandemic. It was facilitated by a public health administrator that was seasoned, and not one that is new (similar to over 75% of the other public health administrators across the state since COVID-19 started).

This assessment was performed with a sense of relief, a sense of inspiration, and a sense of aspiration. Our agency has just undergone a complete renovation and we have a beautiful new space to welcome our community into and make this plan come to life. We have a community that welcomes us into their homes and partners that always raise their hand when we ask who can help.

This assessment was also completed with hesitancy, fear, and doubt as there are many unknowns in our state and our world on a daily basis. But even with all of those uncertainties, I am hopeful that we can do something each day to make tomorrow better than yesterday.

This summer, we needed a tag line, and I have to admit, we nailed it! Be happy. Be healthy. Be you. That is what this assessment helps our community achieve. I am humbled every day to be a part of this community, this profession, and this team.

Yours in service,

Julie Jathun

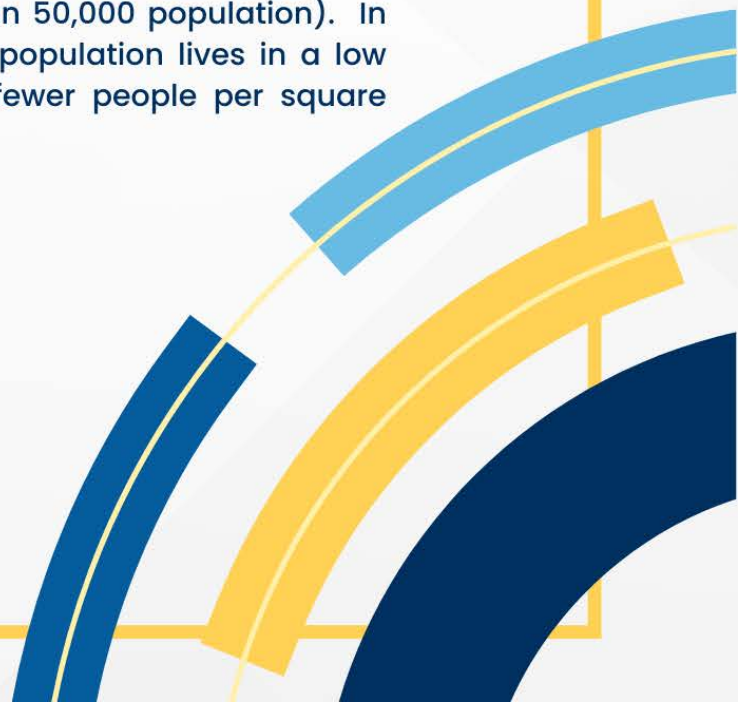
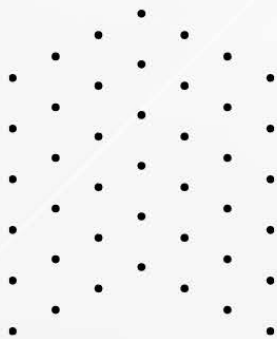
**Be happy.
Be healthy.
Be you.**

THE COMMUNITY SERVED: BUENA VISTA COUNTY



BVCPH serves approximately 20,600 residents from Buena Vista County and attracts clients from neighboring counties for services.

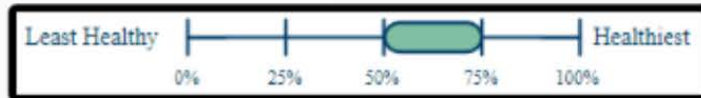
Buena Vista County is Micropolitan (intersecting an urban core of at least 10,000 but less than 50,000 population). In Buena Vista County, 43.9% of the population lives in a low population density area (500 or fewer people per square mile and less than 2,500 people.)



KEY HEALTH DATA

HEALTH OUTCOMES

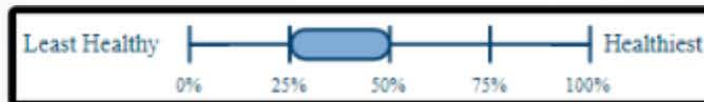
Health outcomes represent how healthy a county is right now, in terms of length of life but also, quality of life as well. BV County is ranked in the higher middle range of counties in Iowa.



Length of Life	Buena Vista (BV) County	Iowa	United States
Premature Death	5,600	6,500	7,300
Quality of Life	Buena Vista (BV) County	Iowa	United States
Poor or Fair Health	15%	12%	12%
Poor Physical Health Days	3.0	2.8	3.0
Poor Mental Health Days	4.0	4.4	4.4
Low Birthweight	7%	7%	8%

HEALTH FACTORS

Health factors represent those things we can modify to improve the length and quality of life for residents. BV County ranked in the lower middle range of counties in Iowa.



Health Behaviors	Buena Vista (BV) County	Iowa	United States
Adult Smoking	19%	17%	16%
Adult Obesity	33%	37%	32%
Food Environment Index	8.9	8.6	7.0
Physical Inactivity	29%	23%	22%
Access to Exercise Opportunities	79%	79%	84%
Excessive Drinking	20%	25%	19%
Alcohol-Impaired Driving Deaths	14%	27%	27%
Sexually Transmitted Infections	443.4	478.5	481.3
Teen Births	26	16	19

source: <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/explore-health-rankings/iowa/buena-vista?year=2023>

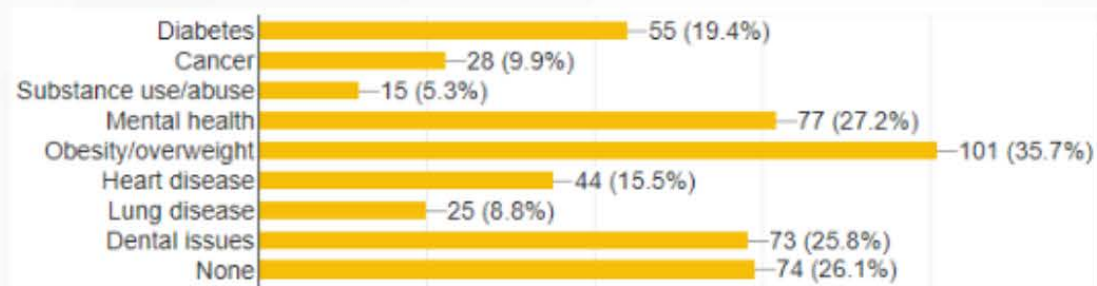


ASSESSMENT PROCESS & FINDINGS

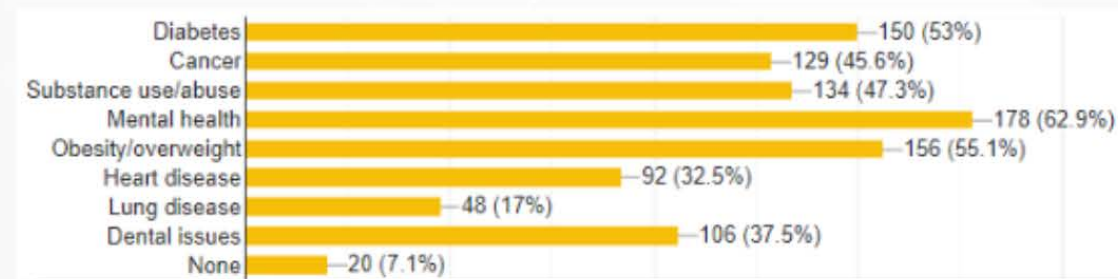


A core group was developed to determine the assessment process for the community health assessment. The group was comprised of participants from Buena Vista County Public Health, the Buena Vista County Board of Health, The Bridge, SALUD!, and Buena Vista Regional Medical Center. To gather information from our community members, we used a survey which was conducted electronically, on paper, and verbally through the use of Service Navigators. The survey was provided in written form in English and Spanish, but also verbally in Pohnpeian. There were 283 surveys completed.

WHAT ARE **YOUR** TOP HEALTH ISSUES?

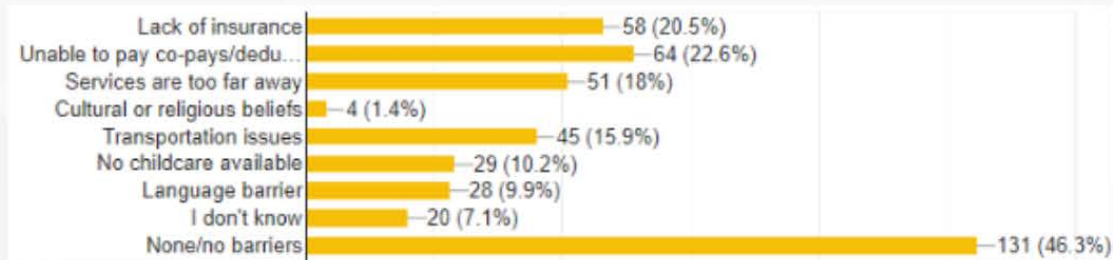


WHAT DO YOU SEE AS TOP HEALTH ISSUES IN YOUR **COMMUNITY**?

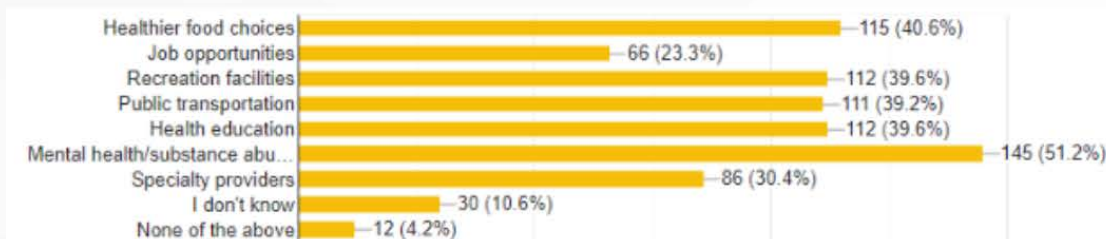


FINDINGS CONTINUED

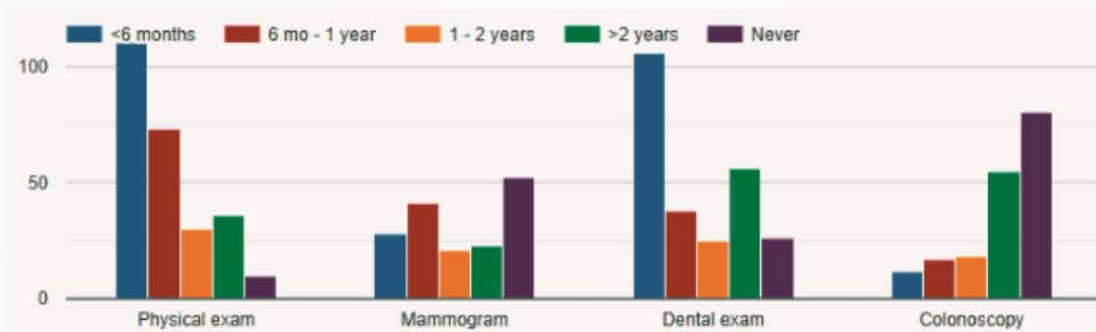
WHAT KEEPS YOU FROM SEEKING MEDICAL CARE/TREATMENT?



WHAT IS NEEDED TO IMPROVE HEALTH ISSUES IN YOUR COMMUNITY?



HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN SINCE YOU HAVE HAD THE FOLLOWING:



PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED

● ORAL HEALTH CARE

- Buena Vista County has one provider location that currently accepts Medicaid reimbursement for dental services, however dentists per capita are insufficient.
- Residents do not have a good understanding of appropriate oral hygiene practices leading to inadequate brushing and flossing leads to increased decay and infections.
- What people eat and drink impacts the overall health of their dentition. Many high-sugar drinks are consumed by all age groups, and un-fluoridated water is drunk.

● ACCESS TO CARE

- Access to care has a direct impact on the willingness and ability of people to obtain care. People that have barriers are less likely to seek preventative care which leads to worse outcomes, lower quality of life, and higher mortality rates.
- The healthcare and insurance systems are very difficult to navigate. When people are uncertain how to answer questions or access systems insurance coverage is denied and services are not provided. Many residents are uncertain of benefits that are eligible to them through their current insurance carriers.

● HEALTH EDUCATION

- An educated population is a healthy population. People that are educated are more likely to be responsible for making informed decisions that positively impact their lives and improve health outcomes.
- Empowering others to become a part of the solution for our county gives our plan more strength and therefore, a better chance of making a difference.
- Developing a plan around health education affords the county the opportunity to be fluid in understanding the needs of the community at any given point in time. This allows the education provided to be relevant. The goal is to be all encompassing, however, focus on the topics that were high on the list of identified concerns pertaining to obesity, diabetes, and mental health.

NEXT STEPS



The information from this assessment will be used to develop a health improvement plan. A baseline plan will be developed, and the plan will be shared widely with community partners, and it will be a living document and continue to be developed until the next community health assessment in 2028.





BUENA VISTA COUNTY
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