

**VETERANS MEMORIAL HOSPITAL  
COMMUNITY & HOME CARE  
ALLAMAKEE COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH**

**COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT**



**NOVEMBER 2023**

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***This Community Health Needs Assessment Report is respectfully submitted by Sheryl Darling-Mooney RN.***

## Overview and Executive Summary

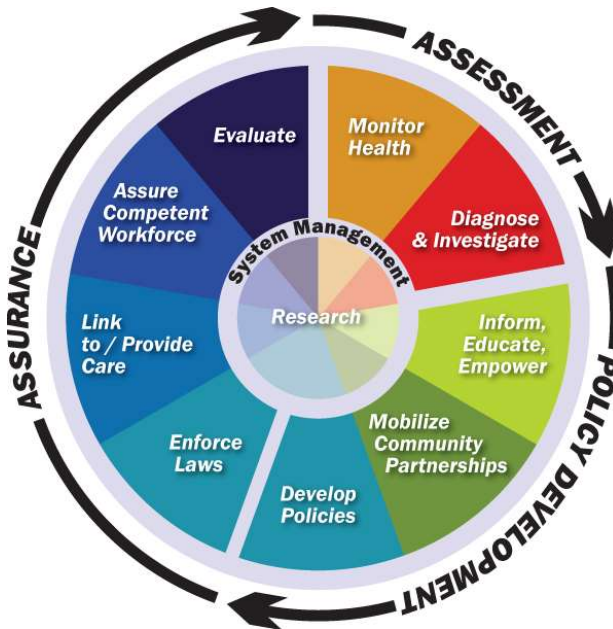
Veterans Memorial Hospital Community and Home Care (VMH - CHC), aka Allamakee County Public Health, performed a Community Health Assessment and from that, developed a Community Health Improvement Plan. VMH - CHC worked closely with Veterans Memorial Hospital, as well as other peer groups, to identify the most pressing needs of Allamakee County residents and create a plan to improve upon those needs and areas of concern.

Both an online and in-person survey was developed for county residents to complete for assistance in identifying what the public feels are the county's most significant health needs. A survey was also developed for members of Allamakee's Inter-Agency Coalition, which consists of agencies that provide social services to county residents. This survey was also distributed to county business personnel to further identify needs.

## ABOUT ALLAMAKEE COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

Allamakee County Public Health (VMH - CHC) plays an important part in supporting the local healthcare system to help promote and protect the health of our county residents. The agency operates under the guidance of Veterans Memorial Hospital, Allamakee County Board of Health and the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services.

The 10 Essential Public Health Services

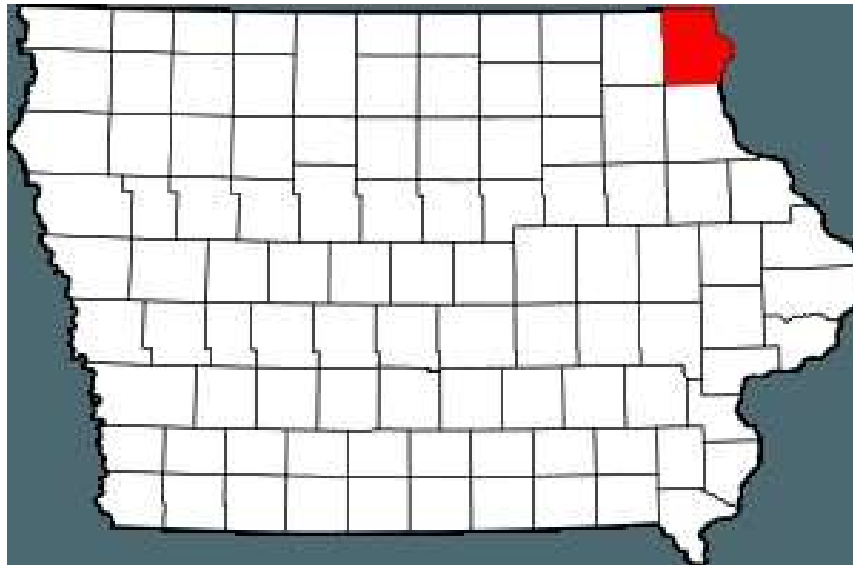


The 10 Essential Public Health Services provide a framework for public health to protect and promote the health of all people in all communities. To achieve optimal health for all, the Essential Public Health Services actively promote policies, systems, and services that enable good health and seek to remove obstacles and systemic and structural barriers, such as poverty, racism, gender

discrimination, and other forms of oppression, that have resulted in health inequities. Everyone should have a fair and just opportunity to achieve good health and well-being.

## COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS

Allamakee County lies in the furthest northeast corner of Iowa. As part of the Driftless Region, it borders Minnesota to the north and is separated from Wisconsin to the east by the Mississippi River. Allamakee County, Iowa, is Rural (outside of urban cores of 10,000 or more in population). In Allamakee County, 74% of the population lives in a low-density area (500 or fewer people per square mile and less than 2,500 people).



## Section 1: Background – Past Community Health Needs Assessment

The issues identified in the 2016 Community Needs Health Assessment were:

### Health Problems to Address:

- The percentage of county residents that are considered overweight and obesity
- The prevalence of chronic disease such as (diabetes, heart disease, cancer, and mental health issues)
- Substance Abuse including tobacco, underage alcohol use and binge drinking

### Health Behaviors to Improve:

- Physical Activity: Provide additional recreational trails/sidewalks, affordable wellness and fitness facilities. Increase awareness of availability of healthy activities through different media avenues and educational opportunities.
- Healthy Behaviors: Drinking more water, eating more fruits and vegetables, having more fresh produce available.
- Decrease incidence of chronic disease: Increase the awareness of health promotion activities. Provide education regarding screening for disease. Increase awareness of signs and symptoms of depression among the youth.
- Prevent Epidemics and the spread of disease: Increase the percentage of fully vaccinated Allamakee County youth.
- Decrease the risk of injury and death related to hazardous emergencies: Assess population vulnerabilities as related to natural/man made risk.

## Section 2: Defining the Community Served

### **Population of Service Area**

For the purpose of the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA), Allamakee County, Iowa, is considered Rural (outside of urban cores of 10,000 or more population).

### **Demographics for Allamakee County<sup>1</sup>**

	<b>County</b>	<b>Iowa</b>
Population	13,926	3,193,079
% below 18 years of age	24.0%	23.1%
% 65 and older	23.3%	17.7%
% Non-Hispanic Black	1.7%	4.1%
% American Indian & Alaska Native	0.7%	0.6%
% Asian	0.6%	2.8%
% Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	0.3%	0.2%

<sup>1</sup> 2023 County Health Rankings

% Hispanic	7.7%	6.7%
% Non-Hispanic White	89.1%	84.1%
% not proficient in English	3%	2%
% Females	48.8%	49.8%
% Rural	74.0%	36.0%

### Health Characteristics

The 2023 Health Rankings show Allamakee ranked #47 in Health Outcomes out of 99 Iowa counties.

Health Characteristics <sup>2</sup>	Allamakee, IA	Iowa	United States
Adult Smoking	19%	17%	16%
Adult Obesity	38%	37%	32%
Food Environment Index	8.9	8.6	7.0
Physical Inactivity	26%	23%	22%
Access to Exercise Opportunities	66%	79%	84%
Excessive Drinking	25%	25%	19%
Alcohol-Impaired Driving Deaths	50%	278%	27%
Uninsured	8%	6%	10%
Primary Care Physicians	1,950:1	1,360:1	1,310:1
Dentists	2,790:1	1,430:1	1,380:1
Mental Health Providers	3,480:1	530:1	340:1
Mammography Screening	47%	47%	37%
Preventable Hospital Stays	2,403	2,400	2,809
Children in Poverty	15%	12%	17%
Children in Single-Parent Households	11%	21%	25%
Life Expectancy	77.6	78.7	78.5
Poor or fair health	17%	14%	17%
Frequent mental distress	14%	13%	14%
Frequent physical distress	11%	9%	12%
Cumulative COVID-19 cases (March 2020-August 2022)	3,066	842,647	96.8 million
Cumulative COVID-19 deaths (March 2020-August 2022)	62	9,940	Not Available

<sup>2</sup> 2023 County Health Rankings

## Section 3: Assessing the Community’s Health

In determining the most comprehensive snapshot of the state of population health for the county, a survey was developed as the primary tool for assessing Allamakee residents. This survey was made available online and at county functions such as the county fair. The survey was completed by 125 respondents.

An invitation to take the survey was made to the public online, in-person and through social media. A survey link could be found at: <https://www.veteransmemorialhospital.com/community-needs-assessment/>.

A survey was also shared with our social services partners through the Allamakee Inter-Agency Coalition, as well as with county business owners through Allamakee County Economic Development. A survey link could be found at: [https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/allamakee\\_community\\_health\\_assessment](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/allamakee_community_health_assessment)

Results of the survey were reviewed with the VMH and VMH - CHC task force to summarize the Health Assessment, as well as develop an Improvement Plan.

Geographic Distribution	
Zip codes	52172, 52162, 52151, 52160, 52146, 52140, 52170
Gender Identity	
Online participants	87.39% Female 11.76% Male 0.84% Other
Additional Demographics	
Race	95.83% White or Caucasian 1.67% Hispanic or Latino 2.50% Prefer Not to Answer
Age Group	9.09% age 18-24 14.88% age 25-34 20.66% age 35-44 17.36% age 45-54 25.62% age 55-64 12.40% age 65 +
Education Level	10% High School Graduate/GED 17.50% Some College 52.50% College Graduate 20% Advanced Degree

Employment <sup>3</sup>	Unemployment rate 3.6% (Aug. 2023) Resident Labor Force 7,610 Labor Force male 941 Labor Force female 941 Resident unemployed 350 Resident total employment 7,260 Area Labor Force 132,182
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## Section 4: Prioritized Description of Significant Health Needs

Our Community Health Needs Assessment distributed to the general public, social service peers and business owners identified the following categories of concern:

The five most important health problems to address:

- Obesity
- Untreated Mental Health
- Aging, arthritis, hearing/vision loss, dementia, etc...
- Cancer
- Poor nutrition

The five most important health behaviors to improve:

- Physical activity
- Stress reduction and ability to function with stressors
- Healthy nutritional behaviors
- Alcohol Abuse
- Suicide

The five most “risky behaviors” identified were:

- Alcohol Abuse
- Suicide
- Untreated Mental Health
- Illegal drug use
- Driving while drunk or high

The top five concerns relative to children’s health:

- Screen time
- Child care/day care availability
- Bullying
- Access to mental health services
- Affordable fresh foods

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<sup>3</sup> Allamakee County Economic Development



The top five issues that prevent people from being healthy, according to survey respondents were:

- Not enough time
- Lack of motivation
- Financial Concerns
- Too expensive to buy healthier foods
- Nowhere to exercise

The top five social issues facing people in Allamakee County:

- Poor parenting skills
- Single parent families
- Poverty
- Lack of health insurance coverage
- Lack of transportation services

The top five public health services respondents would like to see more readily available in Allamakee County:

- Mental health treatment options for all ages
- Increased dental access for those just over or under the poverty level
- Education on coping and parenting skills
- Teen pregnancy nutrition and education
- Bilingual or multilingual staff in social and healthcare services

The survey respondents rated the overall health of Allamakee as being “somewhat healthy”.

These health concerns were prioritized based on the number of respondents identifying them as areas of concern.

## Section 5: Collaboration

### **Community Partners**

Survey invitations were sent to members of the Waukon Chamber of Commerce, Allamakee Economic Development partners, Allamakee Interagency Coalition, all members of Allamakee County aged 18 years and older.

The following media were invited to share information on the survey with the general public:

- Allamakee County Economic & Development & Tourism
- Driftless Journal
- Postville Herald Newspaper
- Monona Outlook Newspaper
- Waukon Standard Newspaper
- KVIK Radio
- KNEI Radio
- KMRV Radio
- KDEC Radio

- VMHCF Newsletter

We appreciate the input on the survey from 147 people.

The finalized prioritized areas of concern were shared with VMH - CHC staff, Allamakee Inter-Agency Coalition and Allamakee County Board of Health.

## References

County Health Rankings and Roadmaps (2023)

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

Allamakee County Economic Development

<https://allamakeecounty.com>

Iowa Cancer Registry 2023

<https://shri.public-health.uiowa.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023cancer-in-iowa-2023.pdf>

National Center for Health Statistics

<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/deaths.htm>

Iowa Data Portal

<https://data.iowa.gov/>

Iowa Health Fact Book

<https://iowahealthfactbook.org/>

U.S. Census Bureau Quick Facts: Allamakee County, Iowa

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/allamakeecountyiowa>

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach

<https://indicators.extension.iastate.edu>