



# 2023-2028 BREMER COUNTY COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN

## Bremer County Health Department

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# INTRODUCTION

## What is a Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)?

A CHIP is a long-term systematic effort developed to address the community's most pressing public health issues. The CHIP is based on the results of the 2023 Bremer County [Community Health Assessment \(CHA\)](#).

## How will the plan be used?

This CHIP contains goals, objectives, and strategies that the Bremer County Health Department and other partners will undertake to improve the health and well-being of Bremer County residents. To achieve the goals within the CHIP, the Bremer County Health Department is committed to collaborating with our partners both within and outside of Bremer County. The progress of strategies will be tracked and updated as needed to meet the changing needs of Bremer County.

Suggested citation: Bremer County Health Department. (2023). *2023-2028 Bremer County community health improvement plan*. [https://www.bremercounty.iowa.gov/departments/health\\_department/community\\_health\\_needs\\_assessment.php](https://www.bremercounty.iowa.gov/departments/health_department/community_health_needs_assessment.php)

# PRIORITY 1: CHRONIC DISEASE

Chronic diseases are largely preventable by addressing poor nutrition, physical inactivity, mental health, and/or obesity. Some of the leading causes of death in Bremer County- heart disease, certain forms of cancer, cerebrovascular diseases, Alzheimer’s disease, diabetes mellitus, essential (primary) hypertension, and hypertensive renal disease, are all chronic diseases. Further, chronic disease is a major cause of disability and significantly decreases quality of life. As our population ages and lives longer, prevention and management of chronic illnesses take on an even more vital role.

<b>Goal 1: Prevent and Manage Chronic Disease in Bremer County</b>	
<b>Objective 1:</b>	By 2028, reduce adult obesity from 38% to 36%.
<b>Strategies:</b>	
<i>Increase linkages between health care services and community-level prevention services.</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilize Bremer County partners to educate people about healthy living and link people to healthy living community resources, for example, walking clubs, community gardens, nutrition classes, etc.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create linkages between health systems and community resources so medical providers can refer patients to evidence-based health promotion programs that teach self-management and empowerment techniques for chronic disease management and prevention</li> </ul>	
<i>Increase access to healthy food.</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support community partners in increased enrollment into available food programs, such as the Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC); Promote the use of WIC benefits at farmer’s markets for purchasing fresh fruits and vegetables and promote the use of Fruit &amp; Veggie Voucher/Coupons from Waverly-Shell Rock Area United Way.</li> </ul>	
<i>Increase access to opportunities for physical activity</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support policies that prioritize underserved neighborhoods for park investments. Encourage communities to use parks to their full potential by providing quality facilities (i.e. swimming pools, soccer fields), and infrastructure to support safety and maintenance, including proper lighting.</li> </ul>	

<b>Objective 2:</b>	By 2028, prevent further diagnosis of type 2 diabetes in adults 20 and older (current percent of adults with T2D is 8%).
<b><i>Strategies:</i></b>	
<i>Increase the percentage of adults who enroll in the Bremer County Health Department Diabetes Prevention Program.</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continue targeted outreach, enrollment, and retention efforts for Bremer County residents who are pre-diabetic.</li></ul>	

## PRIORITY 2: SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH

Substance use disorder (SUD) is a treatable mental health disorder that affects a person's brain and behavior, leading to their inability to control their use of substances like legal or illegal drugs, alcohol, or medications. Symptoms can be moderate to severe, with addiction being the most severe form of SUD (National Institute of Mental Health [NIMH], n.d.). People with SUD may also have other mental health disorders, and people with mental health disorders may also struggle with substance use. These other mental health disorders can include anxiety disorders, depression, attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), bipolar disorder, personality disorders, and schizophrenia, among others. Mental health and substance abuse were areas that Bremer County residents felt should be addressed. In addition, Bremer County has a unique opportunity to abate the national opioid epidemic through national opioid settlement funding.

<b>Goal 2: Prevent and Treat Substance Abuse and Mental Health</b>	
<b>Objective 1:</b>	By 2028, improve access to behavioral health services, including prevention, treatment, and recovery.
<b>Strategies:</b>	
<i>Ensure the most appropriate allocation of Bremer County's Opioid Settlement Funds.</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a Bremer County Opioid Task Force that is representative and reflects the diversity of affected communities.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determine areas of need and spending by gathering input from groups that touch different parts of the epidemic.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create an opioid abatement action plan, spending plan, and evaluation plan to measure the effectiveness of strategies.</li> </ul>	

# REFERENCES

National Institute of Mental Health. (n.d.). *Substance use and co-occurring mental disorders*.  
<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/substance-use-and-mental-health>