

# PROJECT OVERVIEW

## Project Goals

This Community Health Needs Assessment is a data-driven approach to assess the health needs of residents of Mills County. Subsequently, this information may be used to inform decisions and guide efforts to improve community health and wellness.

A Community Health Needs Assessment provides information so that communities may identify issues of greatest concern and decide to commit resources to those areas, thereby making the greatest possible impact on community health status. This Community Health Needs Assessment will serve as a tool toward reaching three basic goals:

- To improve residents' health status, increase their life spans, and elevate their overall quality of life. A healthy community is not only one where its residents suffer little from physical and mental illness, but also one where its residents enjoy a high quality of life.
- To reduce the health disparities among residents. By gathering demographic information along with health status and behavior data, it will be possible to identify population segments that are most at-risk for various diseases and injuries. Intervention plans aimed at targeting these individuals may then be developed to combat some of the socio-economic factors that historically have had a negative impact on residents' health.
- To increase accessibility to preventive services for all community residents. More accessible preventive services will prove beneficial in accomplishing the first goal (improving health status, increasing life spans, and elevating the quality of life), as well as lowering the costs associated with caring for late-stage diseases resulting from a lack of preventive care.

This assessment was conducted on behalf of the Mills County Board of Health and Mills County Public Health as part of the Local Public Health Services grant provided by Iowa Health and Human Services.

## Methodology

This assessment incorporates data from multiple sources, including primary research, through the SurveyMonkey Community Health Assessment Survey, and secondary research using vital statistics and other pre-existing health-related data.

The survey used for this study is based on various other public health surveys and customized questions addressing gaps in indicator data relative to health promotion and disease prevention objectives and other recognized health issues. The final survey instrument was developed by Mills County Public Health and administered using SurveyMonkey.

The study area for the survey effort (referred to as the "Total Service Area" in this report) includes the entirety of Mills County in Iowa.

## Sample Approach & Design

The sample design used for this effort consisted of participation, promoted by the study sponsors by sharing a link (via social media, direct email, etc.) to take the survey online; a total of 45 completed surveys were captured this way.

The Healthy Mills County Coalition also contributed to the assessment by completing written questionnaires regarding their experience in the health services throughout the county.

All administration of the surveys, data collection, and data analysis was conducted by Mills County Public Health.

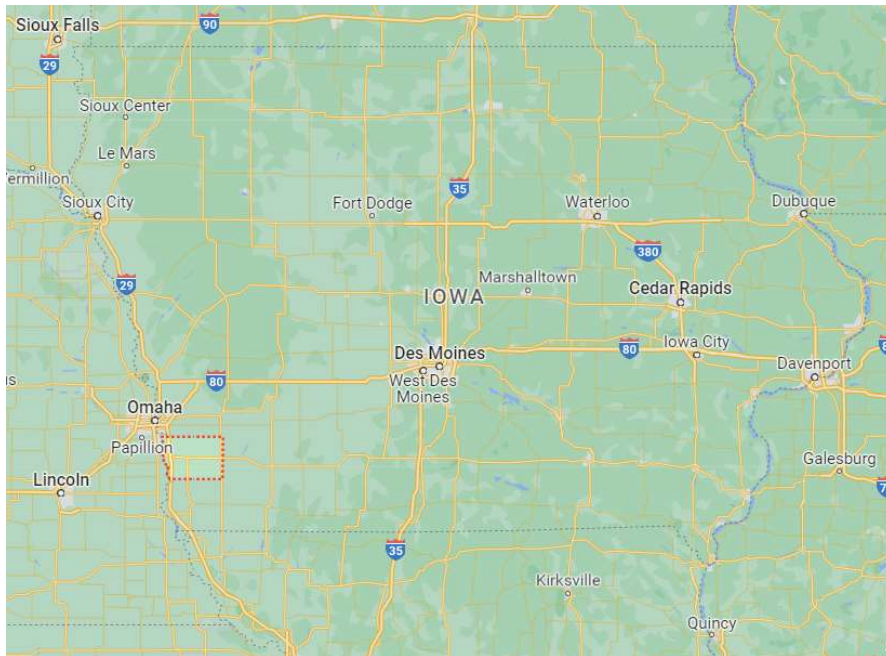


Image 1: Map of the state of Iowa outlining the location of Mills County

## Secondary Data Sources

### SparkMap Community Health Assessment

SparkMap is a product of the Center for Applied Research and Engagement Systems ([CARES](#)) and hosted by the [University of Missouri](#). CARES affiliation to the [University of Missouri Extension](#) and the [University of Missouri System](#) provides a strong foundation for our technical infrastructure, access to applied research opportunities, and a welcoming work environment on campus.

SparkMap is dedicated to continuing to provide free mapping and reporting tools that support data and case-making needs across sectors. Community Health Assessments are available for every state and county in the United States.

SparkMap uses reliable and timely secondary data from the US Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Department of Transportation, Federal Bureau of Investigation, and more. Data geographies range from state, county, city, census tract, school district, and ZIP code levels.

The Mills County of Iowa Community Health Assessment provided by SparkMaps was accessed on July 19, 2023.

## **Healthy People 2030**

Healthy People provides 10-year, measurable public health objectives — and tools to help track progress toward achieving them. Healthy People identifies public health priorities to help individuals, organizations, and communities across the United States improve health and wellbeing. Healthy People 2030, the initiative's fifth iteration, builds on knowledge gained over the first four decades. Healthy People 2030's overarching goals are to:

- Attain healthy, thriving lives and well-being free of preventable disease, disability, injury, and premature death.
- Eliminate health disparities, achieve health equity, and attain health literacy to improve the health and well-being of all.
- Create social, physical, and economic environments that promote attaining the full potential for health and well-being for all.
- Promote healthy development, healthy behaviors, and well-being across all life stages.
- Engage leadership, key constituents, and the public across multiple sectors to take action and design policies that improve the health and well-being of all.

The Healthy People 2030 framework was based on recommendations made by the Secretary's Advisory Committee on National Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Objectives for 2030. After getting feedback from individuals and organizations and input from subject matter experts, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) approved the framework which helped guide the selection of Healthy People 2030 objectives.

## **Information Gaps**

This assessment does not measure all possible aspects of health in the community, nor can it adequately represent all possible populations of interest. It must be recognized that these information gaps might in some ways limit the ability to assess all of the community's health needs. For example, certain population groups — such as the homeless, institutionalized persons, or those who only speak a language other than English — are not represented in the survey data. Other population groups — for example, pregnant women, lesbian/gay/bisexual/ transgender residents, undocumented residents, and members of certain racial/ethnic or immigrant groups — might not be identifiable or might not be represented in numbers sufficient for independent analyses. In terms of content, this assessment was

designed to provide a broad picture of the health of the overall community. However, there are certainly medical conditions that are not specifically addressed.

## Summary of Findings

### Significant Health Needs of the Community

The following “Areas of Opportunity” represent the significant health needs of the community, based on the information gathered through this Community Health Needs Assessment. The Areas of Opportunity were determined after consideration of various criteria, including standing in comparison with benchmark data (particularly national data); the magnitude of the issue in terms of the number of persons affected; and the potential health impact of a given issue. These also take into account those issues of greatest concern to the Healthy Mills County Coalition giving input to this process.

Areas of Opportunities Identified	
<b>ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE SERVICES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Barriers to Access</li> <li>– Inconvenient Office Hours – Cost of Care – Lack of local urgent care/emergency department – Lack of Transportation</li> </ul>
<b>ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Barriers to Access</li> <li>-Lack of providers in the county – Inconvenient office hours – cost – Accessibility to appointments – Urgent care access</li> </ul>
<b>ACCESS TO SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Barriers to Access</li> <li>-Lack of providers – lack of facilities – Transportation – Education – lack of Community Awareness</li> </ul>
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Barriers to Access</li> <li>-Lack of options – Cost – Timeliness – Frustration over MCO transports</li> </ul>
<b>HOUSING</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Barriers to Access</li> <li>-expensive to rent / buy in Mills County – Lack of options – Low quality houses – Waiting lists/ access</li> </ul>

### Community Feedback on Prioritization of Health Needs

Prioritization of the health needs identified in this assessment (“Areas of Opportunity” above) was determined based on a prioritization exercise conducted by the Healthy Mills County Coalition (“the Coalition”) in conjunction with the administration of SurveyMonkey survey. In this process, the coalition was asked to rate the severity of a variety of health issues in the community. Insofar as these health

issues were identified through the data above and/or were identified as top concerns among survey participants, their ranking of these issues informed the following priorities:

1. Transportation
2. Access to Healthcare
3. Access to mental health services
4. Access to Substance Abuse Treatment
5. Housing

## POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

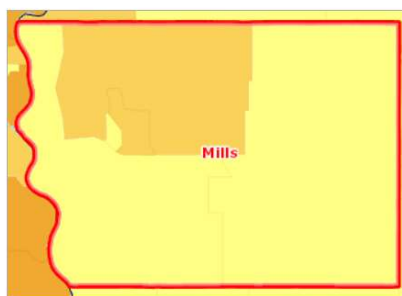
### Secondary Data

### Total Population

The Total Service Area, the focus of this Community Health Needs Assessment, includes Mills County, which encompasses 437.43 square miles and a population density of 33 per square mile.

Report Area	Total Population	Total Land Area (Square Miles)	Population Density (Per Square Mile)
Mills County, IA	14,484	437.43	33
Iowa	3,190,369	55,853.11	57
United States	331,449,281	3,533,018.38	94

Source: US Census Bureau, Decennial Census (2020). Courtesy of SparkMap, retrieved July 19, 2023, <https://sparkmap.org/report>.



Total Population, Total by Tract, US Census Bureau 2020

- Over 6,000
- 5,001 - 6,000
- 4,001 - 5,000
- 3,001 - 4,000
- Under 3,001
- Mills County, IA

## Total Population by Gender & Age

The total population by gender for Mills County is 50.09% female and 49.91% male which closely reflects state and national averages. The age breakdown of the Mills County population skews slightly older and very young at 2.42% higher and 2.5% higher than the national average respectively.

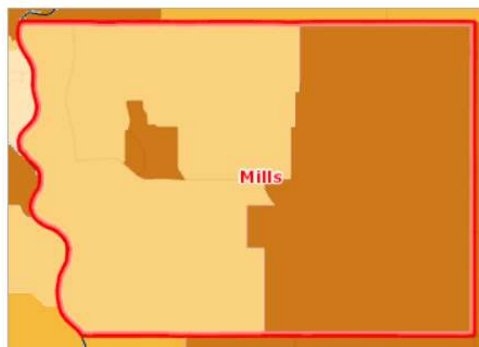
Report Area	Male	Female	Male, Percent	Female, Percent
Mills County, IA	7,229	7,255	49.91%	50.09%
Iowa	1,586,092	1,604,277	49.72%	50.28%
United States	162,685,811	168,763,470	49.08%	50.92%

Source: US Census Bureau, Decennial Census (2020). Courtesy of SparkMap, retrieved July 19, 2023, <https://sparkmap.org/report>.

Report Area	Age 0-4	Age 5-17	Age 18-24	Age 25-34	Age 35-44	Age 45-54	Age 55-64	Age 65+
Mills County, IA	5.48%	19.1%	6.63%	9.25%	12%	12.99%	15.31%	19.25%
Iowa	5.96%	17.25%	9.7%	12.47%	12.19%	11.26%	13.17%	18.01%
United States	5.55%	16.51%	9.43%	13.53%	12.73%	12.33%	13.1%	16.83%

Source: US Census Bureau, Decennial Census (2020). Courtesy of SparkMap, retrieved July 19, 2023, <https://sparkmap.org/report>

The eastern section of the county and the Glenwood Resource Center is where the majority of the the Total Population Area's 65+ and older reside.



Population Age 65+, Percent by Tract, ACS 2017-21

- Over 20.0%
- 16.1 - 20.0%
- 12.1 - 16.0%
- Under 12.1%
- No Data or Data Suppressed
- Mills County, IA

## Population by Combined Race and Ethnicity

The below chart reports the percentage of the total population in the report area by combined race and ethnicity. The percentage values could be interpreted as, for example, "Of all the population in the report area, the percentage of population who are non-Hispanic white is (value)."

*Note: Some of the combined race/ethnicity groups use acronyms for their names in the following table and chart. The full forms are as followed:*

- *Non-Hispanic NAAN = Non-Hispanic Native American or Alaska Native*
- *Non-Hispanic NPI = Non-Hispanic Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander*
- *Non-Hispanic Other = Non-Hispanic Some Other Race*

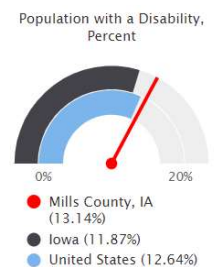
Report Area	Non-Hispanic White	Non-Hispanic Black	Non-Hispanic Asian	Non-Hispanic NAAN	Non-Hispanic NPI	Non-Hispanic Other	Non-Hispanic Multiple Races	Hispanic or Latino
Mills County, IA	92.03%	0.53%	0.33%	0.14%	0.07%	0.21%	3.49%	3.18%
Iowa	82.69%	4.05%	2.35%	0.28%	0.18%	0.27%	3.41%	6.77%
United States	57.84%	12.05%	5.92%	0.68%	0.19%	0.51%	4.09%	18.73%

Source: US Census Bureau, Decennial Census (2020). Courtesy of SparkMap, retrieved July 19, 2023, <https://sparkmap.org/report>

## Population with any Disability

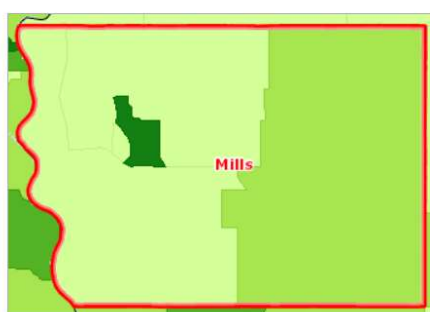
The Total Population Area has a higher percentage of population with any disability, the Glenwood Resource Center, located in the western area of the county, certainly contributes to the overall rate. However, the eastern area of the county overall is where those with disabilities primarily reside.

Report Area	Total Population (For Whom Disability Status Is Determined)	Population with a Disability	Population with a Disability, Percent
Mills County, IA	14,363	1,888	13.14%
Iowa	3,138,332	372,527	11.87%
United States	324,818,565	41,055,492	12.64%



*Note: This indicator is compared to the state average.*

Source: US Census Bureau, Decennial Census (2020). Courtesy of SparkMap, retrieved July 19, 2023, <https://sparkmap.org/report>



### Disabled Population, Percent by Tract, ACS 2017-21

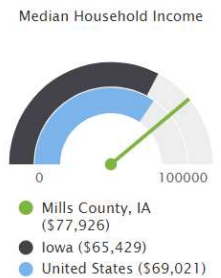
- Over 18.0%
- 15.1 - 18.0%
- 12.1 - 15.0%
- Under 12.1%
- No Data or Data Suppressed
- Mills County, IA

## Income – Median Household Income

Mills County as a population area has a higher median household income than both national and state incomes.

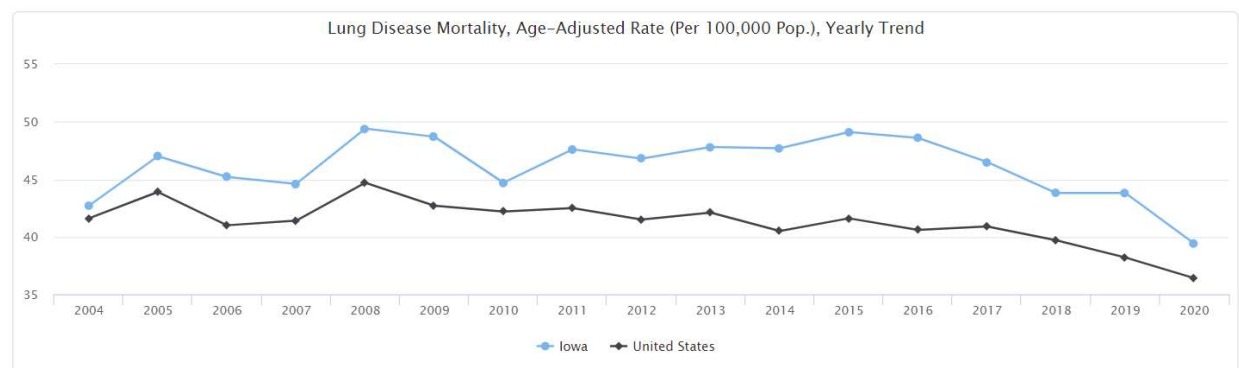
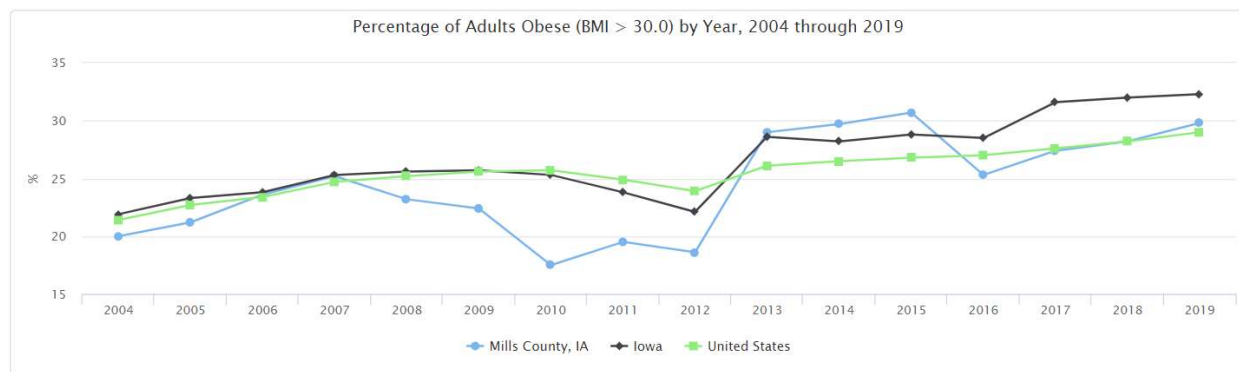
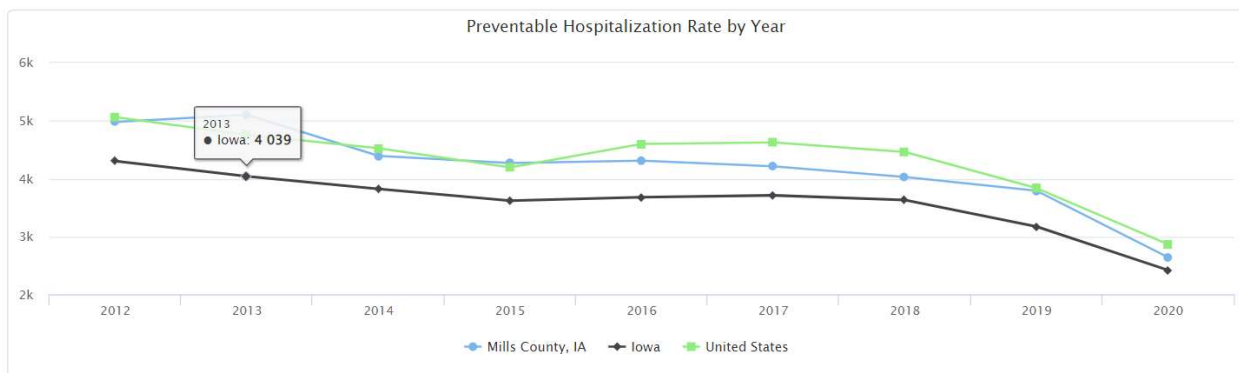
Report Area	Total Households	Average Household Income	Median Household Income
Mills County, IA	5,301	\$97,522	<b>\$77,926</b>
Iowa	1,275,893	\$84,948	\$65,429
United States	124,010,992	\$97,196	\$69,021

Note: This indicator is compared to the state average.

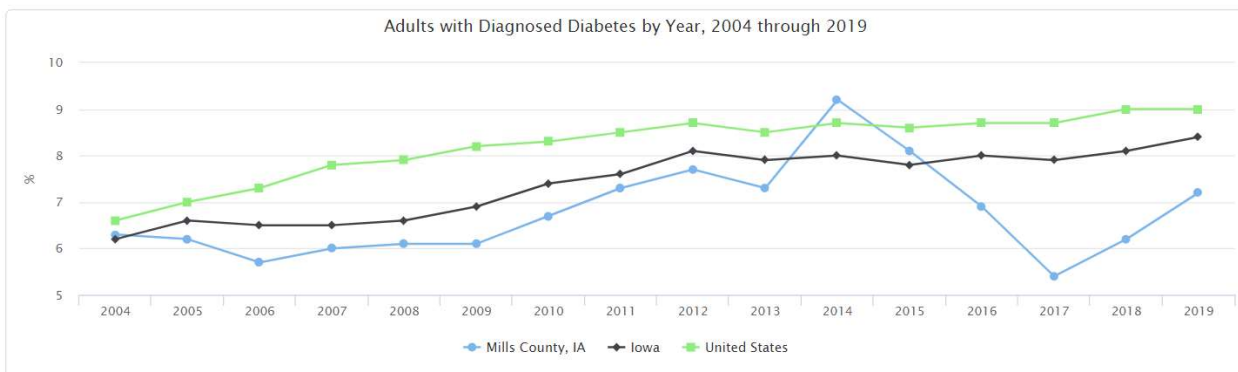
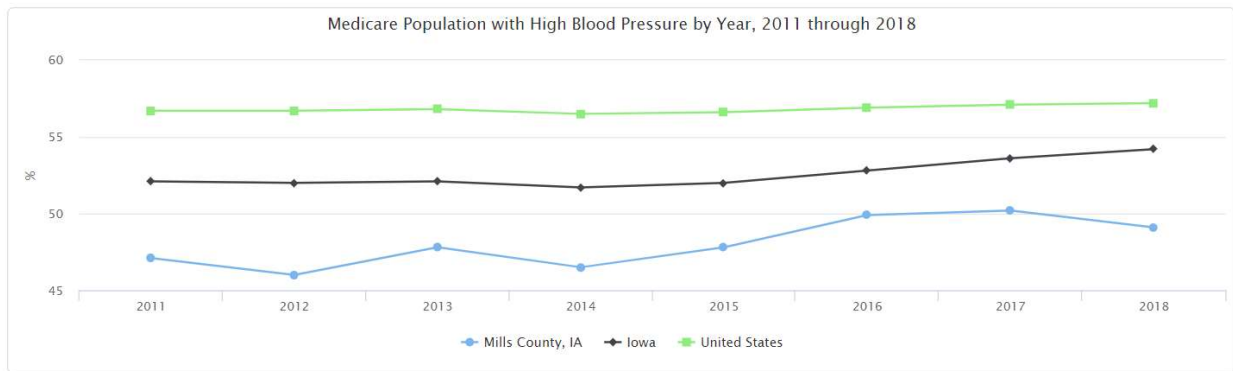
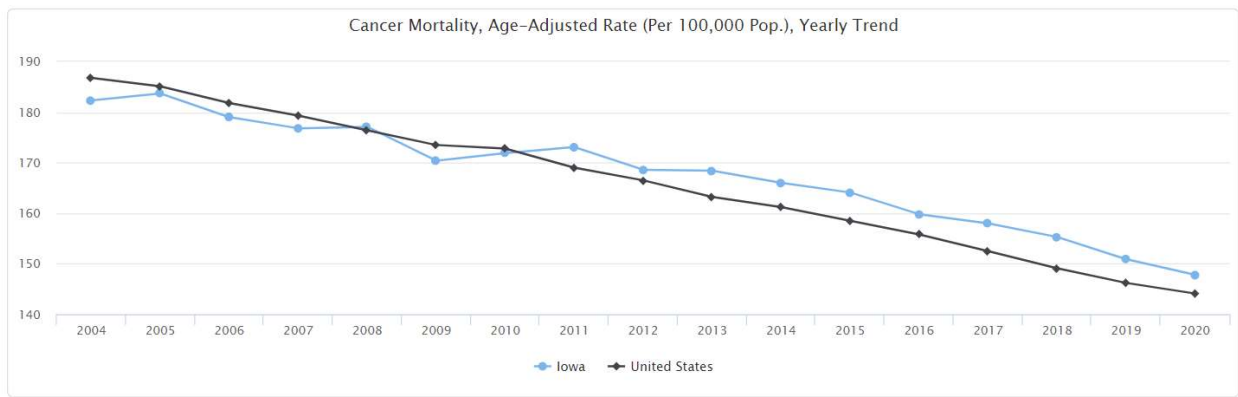


Source: US Census Bureau, Decennial Census (2020). Courtesy of SparkMap, retrieved July 19, 2023, <https://sparkmap.org/report>

## Health Characteristics







This indicator reports the percentage of Medicare enrollees with diabetes who have annual Hemoglobin A1c Test from 2008 to 2019.

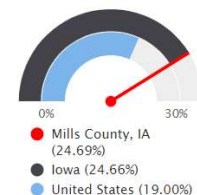
Note: The Dartmouth Atlas Data team has noted substantial decreases in hemoglobin A1c testing in several HRRs in Montana and North Dakota between 2017 and 2018. A conclusive explanation cannot be established thus far for these changes, especially in smaller rural areas; caution should be used in interpreting longitudinal data for the measure.

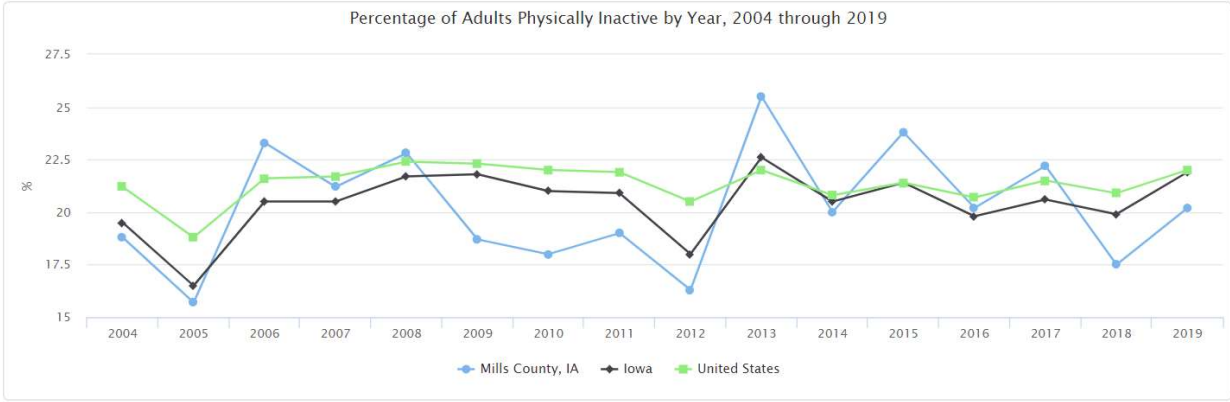
## Health Behavior Characteristics

Report Area	Population Age 18+	Adults Reporting Excessive Drinking	Percentage of Adults Reporting Excessive Drinking
Mills County, IA	11,364	2,805	24.69%
Iowa	2,433,992	600,176	24.66%
United States	256,451,565	48,725,797	19.00%

Note: This indicator is compared to the state average.

Percentage of Adults Self-Reporting Excessive Drinking, 2020





## Findings of Primary Data

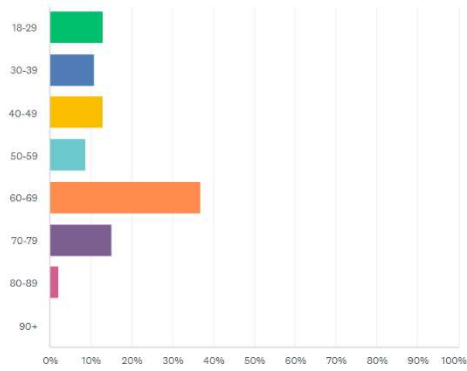
### SurveyMonkey Community Survey

### Demographics

The demographics of the 46 Community Surveys did not match the population trends of the Total Service Area and demonstrate an information gap in the overall quality of the assessment.

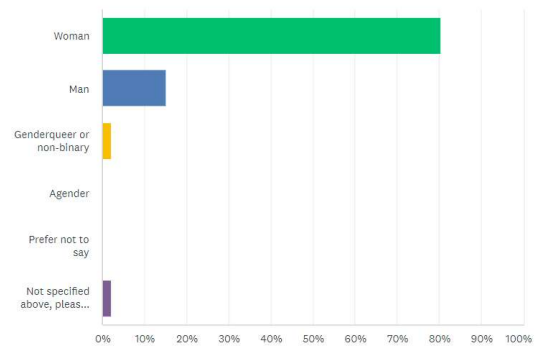
#### What is your age?

Answered: 46 Skipped: 0



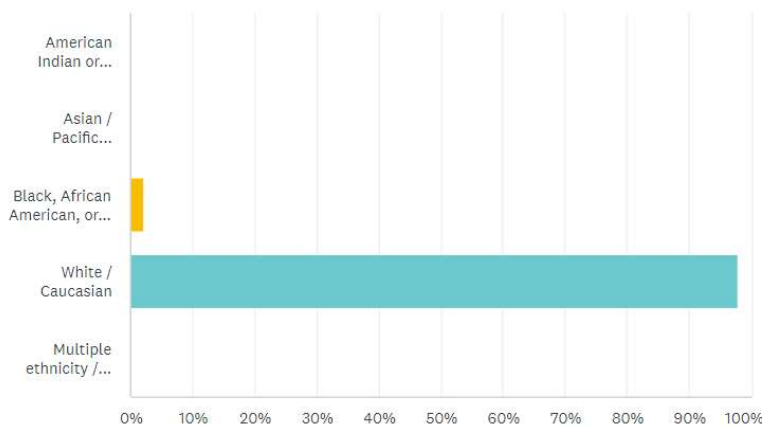
#### What is your gender identity?

Answered: 46 Skipped: 0



#### How do you describe your race?

Answered: 46 Skipped: 0



## Health Characteristics

# Summary of Public Comment

### Healthy Mills County Coalition Open Meeting on 09/08/2023

#### Method of Coalition

Healthy Mills County Coalition has been active for many years in Mills County. This coalition was created to share information, give referrals and make connections between health agencies who serve those who live in Mills County. Agencies represented cover a wide range of services from food bank and HeadStart, to nursing home and parent supports. The coalition does also include community members. This coalition has a depth of knowledge of the area and many connections to collaborate and focus on problems. The coalition was given information and background information about the CHA-CHIP process. The coalition was presented with the results of the Survey Monkey.

#### Community Stakeholders Present:

- West Central Community Action
- Glenhaven Village Nursing Home
- Parent Partners
- West Central Community Action / Head Start
- Family Inc.
- Community Member
- Mills County Public Health
- Heartland Family Services
- Iowa Department of Health and Human Services
- Jennie Edmundson Caring for Our Communities

#### Areas of Opportunity Identified in Coalition Meeting

Healthy Mills County Coalition reviewed the survey monkey results. Discussion around each of the 5 areas which were identified. Areas: Transportation, Access to Healthcare, Access to Mental Health Services, Access to Substance Abuse Treatment, and Housing. Discussion around each of the 5 identified needs. Questions were answered and instructions given for the voting process. The coalition was then asked to cast dot votes as to which areas should be the focus of our county's improvement plan.

The coalition vote results were as follows:

- 1) Access to Mental Health Services (29%)
- 2) Access to Substance Abuse Treatment (27%)
- 3) Access to Healthcare (25%)
- 4) Transportation (16%)
- 5) Housing (2%)

## Conclusion

Healthy Mills County Coalition identified Access to Mental Health Services and lack of transportation as the focus for our health improvement plan. The coalition feels that changes / improvements can be made to improve these issues for the community. It was noted that the coalition feels that changes in this area will improve other focus areas. The coalition will work as a task force to improve access to mental health services as well as access to transportation in Mills County over the next year.

Stakeholders were asked to gather information about how each of their agencies can contribute to improving access to mental health services and lack of transportation. Information will then be shared at our next meeting and ongoing work will be planned.

This report was presented to the Mills County Board of Health on 10-24-2023.

## Community Health Improvement Plan

### Access to Mental Healthcare:

With the information presented, Mills County has implemented a plan to address our identified need focusing on access to mental healthcare. Mental healthcare has long been an issue for our county. We have limited providers and/ or support systems in place to deal with mental health crisis.

The Mills County health improvement plan is to collaborate with county and region partners to expand mental health care within the community and support resources already available. Connecting and training county EMS, Fire, Police, city government offices, libraries and the YMCA in available resources and mental health crisis training will be a priority.

### Goals and Objectives:

Goal : Mills County Public Health will strengthen Mills County's emergency responders and key community groups understanding and effectiveness with connecting vulnerable populations to appropriate mental health resources.

Objectives:

1. MCPH in partnership with area resources will find training for emergency responder groups about Mental Health First Aid, Crisis Intervention Training, and C3 De-escalation.
2. Mills County Public Health in partnership with area resources, will provide training for area groups about Mills County's resources for mental health crisis/ emergencies. Mills County will also track data to monitor improvements.

Goal: Mills County Public Health will collaborate with local first responders and regional resources to connect vulnerable populations facing health and mental health crises with ongoing supports that will help them achieve stability.

Objectives:

1. Mills County will be able to connect those vulnerable populations to ongoing support through existing programming, online resources or connect with mental health providers in the county.

2. Referral pathways and the implementation of the partnerships will be established by end of February 2024.
3. Mills County Public Health will also implement grief support. There is no grief support available in our county. This will enhance access to mental healthcare and support to our county.

### **Transportation:**

Mills county has continued to identify that there is a lack of access to transportation for healthcare and/or essential needs. Mills county has identified this as a need and feel that if this issue is addressed other needs will also be resolved.

The location of Mills County places many people with primary providers outside of our county. Due to this, many elderly and those who do not have transportation, are left to find rides to and from appointments. Current transportation options in Mills County have age/ insurance status and income restrictions. Many choose not to go to appointments. This causes lack of follow-up and overall lack of healthcare.

### **Goals and Objectives:**

Goal: Mills County Public Health will collaborate with region partners to bring awareness to transportation issues in Mills County.

1. MCPH will bring the issue of lack of transportation to community action groups by holding information meetings, attending community gatherings, faith-based groups, etc. The goal would be to educate the community and ask for cooperation and partnership with this issue.

Goal: Mills County Public Health will continue to provide transportation to those who qualify for this service through Area Agency on Aging grant.

1. Client will be 60yrs or older and not have Iowa Medicaid to qualify for transportation services. MCPH will publicize this and will provide this service to as many residents as possible.

Goal: Expand and bring new transportation options to Mills County for citizens to access.

1. MCPH will partner with faith-based organizations to provide essential transportation for citizens of Mills County.
2. MCPH will partner with community groups and region partners who would like to fund additional transportation options in Mills County. This may include, but not limited to, funding a van/car which could be used for transportation without limits of age or insurance status.

This transportation would be offered free or at a reasonable rate. Current rates for regional transportation services run near \$30/ hr. This is out of reach for many of our citizens who need transportation.

With expansion of transportation options within Mills County we feel our citizens in need will have better access to mental healthcare, substance abuse treatment, and general healthcare. This will in turn, improve the overall health and wellbeing of our citizens.

Mills County is committed to the health and wellbeing of our citizens. We will continue to strive to provide or locate services which are of high need. We will also fill gaps where we can to keep our community healthy and safe.