



Wood County Health Department Wisconsin Rapids, WI

Project Overview

Located in rural Central Wisconsin, Wood County has a high population of residents with limited access to healthy foods, opportunities for physical activity and limited referrals for appropriate services. The Wood County Health Department, through the collaboration with the Community Partnerships for Healthy Mothers and Children project, has implemented policy, systems, and environmental change by cultivating community partnerships in various settings to increase access to healthy foods, physical activity, and breastfeeding services, as well as develop a framework for sustainability for years to come. The policy, systems and environmental changes made through this grant work will greatly improve the healthy, as well as health equity, in Wood County.

Objectives Pursued

Increase the number of grocery stores and farmer's markets with new on-site and in-store placement and promotion strategies for healthy foods.



A "Go, Slow, Whoa" grocery store labeling system has been implemented in 4 grocery stores in Wood County. The labeling system includes healthy checkout lanes, various products with shelf banners, and a general sign explaining the program at the entrance of the grocery store. Grocery stores and WIC are partnering to highlight a fruit and vegetable each month. During the process the 4 grocery store managers met for the first time and meetings will convene quarterly.

Uniformity among farmer's markets in Wood County was developed. Farmer's markets have semi-permanent signage that is out year round stating the dates, days, and times the markets are open. A Wood County Farmer's Markets website was created as a source for the community to identify where and when farmer's markets are and which ones accept EBT and/or WIC.



Increase the number of restaurants/bars with new healthy menu options and/or using nutrition labeling to identify healthy menu options.

The Smart Meal™ program was developed to help establishments promote healthy meal options while allowing customers an easy way to identify healthy menu items. The program highlights restaurant meals that are lower in fat, lower in sodium, and include components such as fruits, vegetables, and whole grains while being 700 calories or less. Eating establishments use the Smart Meal icon on their menu to identify meal options that meet the Smart Meal nutritional requirements. The icons are also displayed on the front entrance doors of restaurants that are involved with the Smart Meal program. Kids menu items can also be identified in the Smart Meal program following the kids nutrition and calorie requirements. Over 15 restaurants in Wood County have implemented this program.



Increase the number of primary care providers and pharmacies that develop and/or implement policies to support breastfeeding.

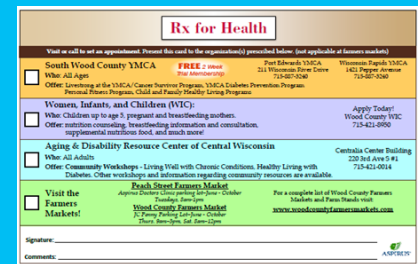


The development of a referral system has made it possible to bridge the gaps in breastfeeding services in Wood County. Prenatal breastfeeding education has been integrated into obstetrical appointments and a comprehensive lactation referral system between the clinics, hospital, pharmacies, public health, and WIC has been developed. Pharmacy referral pads and signage were developed to decrease the prevalence of discontinued breastfeeding when prescribed medication.



Increase the number of primary care and mental illness providers that make "prescriptions" for non-pharmaceutical interventions like exercise and WIC.

By partnering with the YMCA, Aging and Disability Resource Center, and the local farmer's markets a prescription for health has been created for Aspirus Doctors Clinics providers and various mental health providers to utilize as a non-pharmaceutical prescription. Primary care and mental health providers are able to prescribe healthy foods and physical activity, as opposed to prescription drugs.



Increase the number of primary care providers with providers and/or staff that receive basic training in WIC services and benefits and breastfeeding.

Education on WIC services and breastfeeding, as well as developing a WIC and breastfeeding referral system, has made it possible for primary care providers to be able to refer eligible persons to our WIC office for continued care and services. Over 25 providers were educated on WIC program services through face-to-face meetings. A breastfeeding resource guide was created, as well as a WIC referral within the primary care provider's electronic system. WIC information is printed on the aftercare summary of all infants and children.

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