



April 2017 | A quarterly newsletter from Public Health Madison & Dane County

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New Video Series "I Am Public Health"

PHMDC recently released a new video series titled "I Am Public Health" showcasing five of our public health professionals and how their work keeps our community safe and well. The videos give a peek into our day-to-day work in public health and show how it positively impacts the community.



Go behind the scenes and see how we:

[Prevent the spread of communicable disease in our community](#) with Julia Greenleaf, Public Health Nurse in the Tuberculosis and Communicable Disease Programs

[Increase our access to healthy food](#) with Nick Heckman, Food Security Analyst

[Ensure our food is safe when we eat out](#) with Bonnie Lynn, Public Health Sanitarian

[Protect ourland and water resources](#) with Brandon Macomber, PublicHealth Sanitarian

[Immunize toprotect health](#) with Diane McHugh, Public HealthNurse and Immunization Coordinator

To view the series, go to [PHMDC's YouTube Channel](#).

Moving Toward Health and Racial Equity

Dane County was recently named the seventh healthiest county in Wisconsin according to [County Health Rankings](#), a snapshot that looks at 30 factors that influence health and compares them across all counties in the nation.

Overall, this ranking shows that Dane County is doing well, but probing deeper into the specific measures of health and asking “*who is doing well,*” challenges this evaluation.

Substantial pockets of poor health conditions and outcomes exist across the county. For instance, overall about 1 in 10 households in Dane County experience hunger, but certain populations experience hunger more; for African American and Hispanic/Latino households, 1 in 3 experience hunger. Similar racial disparities in health-related factors exist in many areas, including measures of poverty, chronic disease prevalence, low-birth weight and infant mortality, and educational attainment.

To reduce these health disparities in our community, we are building health and racial equity into our agency operations. Our Health and Racial Equity Team just started year two and now includes 30 staff members from across the organization. Their workplan is focused on creating measurable internal health and racial equity goals, developing internal workforce competency through the implementation of an organizational professional development plan, and building community relationships to advance racial equity initiatives.

An evaluation consultant is assessing, evaluating, and reporting on organizational progress toward equity goal. Our hope: to be a highly effective organization that operates with health and racial equity as a guiding principle, and work with the community to create a county where health outcomes are not determined by race, class, gender, income or other group status. If you are interested in knowing more about how PHMDC is embedding health and racial equity work in our day to day operations, please [contact us](#).



Improving Health for the LGBTQ+ Population

Despite progress toward equality for people identifying as LGBTQ+,* data shows that members of the LGBTQ+ population continue to experience worse physical and mental health outcomes than their heterosexual and cisgender peers.

In December, PHMDC published the [Dane County LGBTQ+ Health and Wellness Profile](#) which provides

a summary of challenges and opportunities to improve LGBTQ+ health in Dane County. The Profile provides recommendations for supporting LGBTQ+ health, including efforts to build understanding, assessing and evaluating policies and practices, and enacting new models for the delivering culturally competent services and healthcare. As a result, PHMDC is working with partners on two new initiatives:



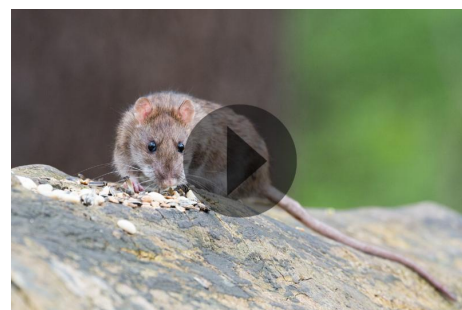
- In February, we hosted three LGBTQ+ health equity trainings for government, social service professionals and community partners. These trainings offered a space to learn more about health issues facing the LGBTQ+ community and imagine ways to offer more inclusive services. Over 190 people attended the trainings and feedback received was overwhelmingly positive.
- PHMDC is focusing on making our sexual health care services culturally-specific for the transgender community. Sexual and Reproductive Health staff are working with the Wisconsin Transgender Health Coalition to develop a trans-inclusive training for our staff as well as with our community partner Planned Parenthood. Additional training modules focusing on trauma-informed care and mental well-being will be provided by Project Respect and UW-Madison's Department of Counseling Psychology.

Along with community partners, our goal is to address LGBTQ+ inequities so LGBTQ+ people in Dane County can achieve their full health potential.

**The acronym LGBTQ+ refers to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer or Questioning. Incorporating the 'plus' into this broad definition allows those who identify with other sexual orientations (e.g. pansexual, intersex, agender) to be included.*

Responding to Rat Infestations

Rat infestations are a clear public health concern since their presence can be linked to several diseases and their ability to dig and gnaw can damage property and contaminate food.



After receiving a number of complaints from Madison residents about spotting rats in their neighborhoods, we created a [short video](#) with tips on how to avoid rat infestations in yards and homes. Unfortunately, it isn't something we can easily fix, but when entire neighborhoods get involved in the prevention efforts, our communities are safer and healthier. To date, the video has nearly 2,000 views and with spring yard clean-up underway across the county, now is a great time to take a minute to watch it and share with your networks.

Thank you from a WIC Participant

Our [WIC* Program](#) makes a difference! See the note below from a proud "graduate".

Dear WIC staff:

Thank you! 6 years ago I came in, worried and confused, thinking I'd need help getting formula when my baby was born.

I was able to successfully breastfeed all 3 of my children without any supplementation! Your encouragement worked!

There were times between paychecks that those PB sandwiches and bowls of cereal you provided made sure we didn't miss a meal. It meant a lot as a Mom to not have to tell the kids there was no food.

Now, my oldest is 5 and "graduated" from WIC. I just graduated from UW in May and finally landed my first professional job. We all graduated from WIC now, and it is a great feeling. Your program was such a wonderful safety net over these years as our family sacrificed financially short-term to ensure a successful future.

Thank you for putting up with our constant cancellations and rescheduling as we tried to juggle kids, class, work and appointment schedules.

We appreciate all that you do.

**Women, Infants, and Children Nutrition Program*



All Are Welcome Here!

In response to federal immigration actions, we have received feedback from clients about their reservations in participating in our services since we are a governmental body. This aligns with [national trends](#) and is, of course, sad and troubling. We are doing our best to support clients and their decisions and have added a few resources to our clinic and reception spaces:

- [All Are Welcome Here](#) Poster
- [ACLU Know Your Rights](#) Pocket Guides



**We proudly serve immigrants, refugees,
and all who live in Madison & Dane County**



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