

Public Health Madison & Dane County

2024 ANNUAL SNAPSHOT



Public Health
MADISON & DANE COUNTY

Healthy people. Healthy places.

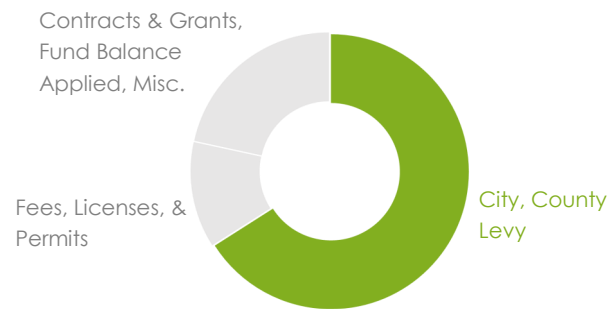
Our Organization

2024 Budget

Most of our revenue is from city and county taxes, and most of that funding goes to salaries and benefits.

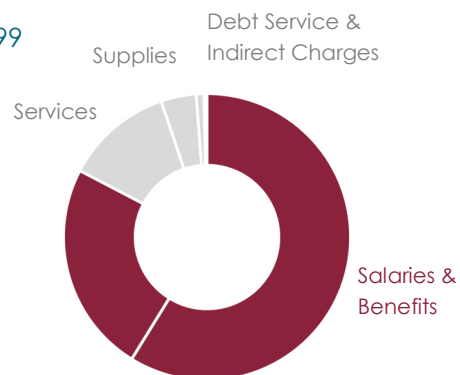
Revenue

\$34,890,299



Expenses

\$34,890,299



Our Staff & Board of Health

Director/Health Officer: Janel Heinrich

Provides administration, leadership, management, planning, and implementation of public health activities. The Office of the Director includes the Epidemiology and Data Science team.

Community Health

Director: Carl Meyer
Deputy Director: Kate Louther

Communicable disease monitoring and follow-up, breast and cervical cancer screening, immunizations, pregnancy, and early childhood support, sexual health services, tuberculous control, language access, access to care, and WIC program

Environmental Health Services

Director: Bonnie Armstrong

Animal services, licensing and inspection, water and lead paint testing, mosquito monitoring and control, well and septic program, environmental protection and monitoring

Policy, Planning, & Evaluation

Director: Aurielle Smith

Health policy, program development and evaluation, Community Health Assessment and Community Health Improvement Planning, violence prevention, substance use prevention and harm reduction, tobacco prevention and control, and emergency preparedness

Operations

Director: Sarah Mattes

Administration and program support, finance and budget, communications, community engagement, health and racial equity, workforce development, and performance management

Board of Health: Dr. Jerry Halverson, Dr. Gene Musser, Leslie Seltzer, Supervisor Lisa Jackson, Alder Yannette Figueroa Cole, Ceri Jenkins, Jessi Kendall, and one vacancy



Community Health Initiatives

We're working with partners to make sure everyone in Dane County has a chance to live a healthy, fulfilling life. Much of our work involves breaking down barriers that stand in the way for some people. Here are some initiatives we're working on:

- Improving healthy birth outcomes
- Preventing violence
- Reducing alcohol, tobacco, and drug harm
- Improving access to healthy foods

Our Expertise & Skills

Community Engagement & Health Equity

- Collaborate with the community to support policy, systems, and environmental change to improve health
- Work to ensure everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be healthy

Epidemiology, Health Policy, & Evaluation

- Build dashboards, make maps, and create ways to visualize data to assess and monitor population health
- Track and analyze policies that impact health
- Make evaluation plans to see if projects and initiatives are making a difference
- Coordinate a community health assessment and improvement plan to identify priority issues and drive community action to improve health

Emergency Preparedness & Response

Respond to public health emergencies including bioterrorism, infectious disease outbreaks, and natural disasters.

Administration Support

Provide programmatic support with budget and finance, communications, logistics, workforce development, and performance management.



Environmental Health Services

Animal Control Services

Respond to animal safety calls and provide education to ensure a safe and healthy relationship between humans and animals.

Lab Services

Perform water quality tests to protect your health and the health of our environment. This includes testing more than 20 public beaches in Dane County every weekday between Memorial Day and Labor Day and testing water samples from private wells.

Environmental Licensing & Inspection

Inspect food, lodging, pool, and body art facilities. Licensed establishment field work consists of routine inspections, re-inspections, complaint follow up, and foodborne and waterborne illness investigations.



Health Services

All services free or low cost. Visit our website to see if you qualify.

Immunizations

Provide free immunizations for children who don't have insurance, have Medical Assistance or BadgerCare, or are Native American or Alaska Native. We provide free immunizations for adults who don't have insurance or qualify based on risk, age, or income.

Sexual & Reproductive Health

Provide birth control and emergency contraception, sexual health supplies, pregnancy testing and all options counseling, testing for HIV/sexually transmitted infections/hepatitis C, STI treatment, and confidential partner notification. Inclusive, confidential, and stigma-free environment for all.

Syringe Services & Condoms

Provide free safer injection equipment and smoking supplies, sharps disposal boxes, condoms, fentanyl test strips, Narcan, risk-reduction information, and disposal of used needles.

Communicable Disease Monitoring & Follow-Up

Track, investigate, and work to prevent and control the spread of infectious diseases and conditions.

Tuberculosis (TB) Control

Control and prevent the spread of TB through treatment, case management, and contact investigations.

Breast & Cervical Cancer Screening

Coordinate The Wisconsin Well Woman Program, offering free breast and cervical cancer screenings for people with limited income and little or no health insurance.

Pregnancy & Early Childhood Support Services

Support pregnant people to set and reach goals, connect them with community services and healthcare, and answer questions about nutrition, preparing for childbirth and parenting, child development, and much more.

WIC

Provide nutrition counseling, breastfeeding support, nutritious foods, and referrals to community programs for pregnant women, new moms, infants, and children up to age 5.

Environmental Health Protection & Monitoring

Investigate and follow-up on spills, lead poisoning, and complaints that may affect our environment. Monitor and control mosquito breeding areas to reduce mosquitoes carrying diseases that can make people sick. Monitor water and air quality and other factors that impact our environment.

Well & Septic System Permitting and Monitoring

Permit and inspect private septic systems and well locations to protect our groundwater resources from contamination.

Building & Maintaining Strong Relationships

Collaborating to Make Vaccinations Accessible in Schools

We hosted ten school-based immunization clinics in partnership with SSM Health, GHC, UW-Health, Madison Metropolitan School District, Verona Area School District, Marshall Public Schools, and Sun Prairie Area School District. These clinics have been a huge success, meeting people where they're at - in their neighborhood or at their child's school - and getting kids the vaccines required for school attendance in addition to other recommended vaccines crucial to safeguarding health. More than 1,200 clients received 3,300+ vaccinations! The vast majority of participants were on BadgerCare or had no health insurance.

Working with Partners to Keep People Who Use Drugs Safe, Healthy, Alive, and Thriving

The Overdose Fatality Review (OFR) works to understand how overdoses are happening locally and helping make systemic changes. In 2024, the OFR program expanded its reach and partnerships and grew from 30 to 50 trained team members. We increased our collaboration and data sharing across 30+ community organizations.

Over the course of the year, the OFR team developed many recommendations aimed at improving community outcomes. These include increasing access to Narcan and providing culturally relevant drug education. Additionally, a new listening session focused on advancing culturally relevant drug education and harm reduction for Black people in Dane County was created in response to a key recommendation. These accomplishments reflect the OFR program's deep commitment to increasing drug user safety and autonomy while reducing overdose deaths through more equitable, compassionate solutions.

Ensuring Food Safety and Building Community Relationships

Part of our sanitarians' work in inspecting and licensing food establishments in Dane County is building relationships in the community. They issue annual transient food and drink license to food vendors for special events to prevent foodborne illness. We completed a project working with the Hmong New Year Festival coordinators to make sure all food vendors were properly licensed. We hosted a virtual licensing and food safety training where vendors were very engaged and



6,464

Immunizations given in 2024

That's an average of 25 vaccines every business day.

asked questions related to their businesses. We also inspected a number of the many food vendors at the two-day event itself. Our work helped ensure that all vendors followed food safety regulations and helped build a relationship with the event coordinators.

Providing Clinic Services at Area Dairy Farms

For years, the TB and Immunizations teams have visited area farms to provide TB screening and immunizations to dairy farm employees, particularly Spanish-speaking migrant workers who might have trouble accessing these services. In 2024, the Sexual and Reproductive Health team joined these visits.

Staff visited four farms to provide education, then followed up with return visits to provide health services, including immunizations, TB tests, STI testing, and contraceptive consultation. We invited family members of employees to attend. Farm employees reported transportation, financial, and language barriers to accessing health services from us or elsewhere and appreciated that our services were available to them at the farms, and in their language. One of the farm managers said, "Everyone this morning at the farm seemed EXTREMELY grateful for the clinic yesterday. You let me know how to make it available for you to come more often, and we will make it happen. I'm glad nearly everyone could take advantage of a good thing!"



Creating & Improving Programs and Services

Supporting Access to Reproductive and Sexual Health Services

Over the last year, our Reproductive Nurse Navigators have been developing their program, which was established in late 2023 following changes to the reproductive health landscape. One of the highlights of the last year is a growing partnership with the Madison Metropolitan School District school nurses. Teenagers have a lot of reproductive health questions and needs, and many school nurses lack the resources and time to fully support these needs. Our navigators helped support this load by providing emergency contraception, pregnancy tests, answering questions about contraception, and connecting students to resources, including appointments within our clinic. Navigators communicate with students via phone or text, at times through their school nurse, and often visit area schools to drop off supplies or provide in-person education. In 2025, the team is looking forward to continuing and expanding their partnership with local schools, including districts outside of Madison.

Our Reproductive & Sexual Health clinic has also been expanding services in 2024, this year to offer Long Acting Reversible Contraception (LARCs), which include IUDs and implants. As their name implies, LARCs are long-acting birth control methods that prevent pregnancy for several years. In addition to offering this free service, we are also one of few clinics in the area to offer pain management (cervical anesthetic) for IUD placements. We placed our 200th LARC in the first week of 2025!

Making Accessible, Community-Centered Communications

In November, we launched significant [website improvements](#) with a client- and community-centered approach. The redesign included new navigation, new features, and trimmed content, all making it easier to find what you're looking for quickly. Based on feedback from user testing, our team assessed the content from 300 webpages, redesigned them, and translated all pages into Spanish. Our website pages were viewed nearly 5,000,000 times during the year!

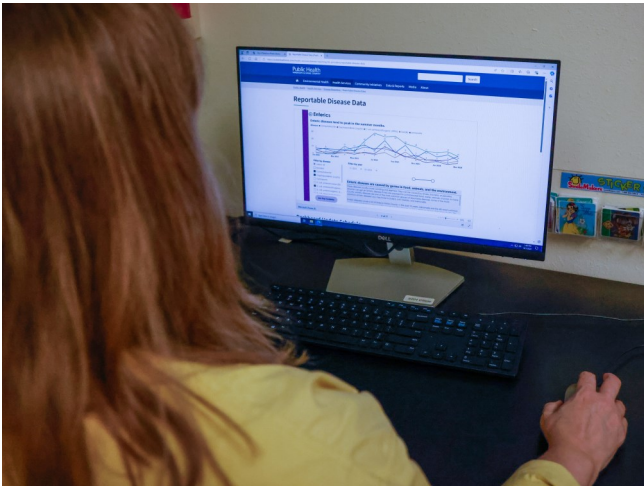
Implementing Medicaid Billing to Help Prevent and Investigate Childhood Lead Poisoning

When a child is lead poisoned, we work with the family to investigate the source of lead, provide education about managing lead hazards, and make sure the child's lead level is going down. This includes an assessment of the child's home and other places they visit, assessing the child's development, and making sure they get medical care. While we have a childhood lead prevention program grant to help prevent and investigate childhood lead poisoning and exposure, we implemented Medicaid billing for risk assessments so we can focus grant dollars on prevention. We billed Medicaid for 3 risk assessments in 2024.

307 Birth control appointments in 2024, compared to 113 in 2023

1,730 People screened for STIs in 2024

Using Data to Drive Action & Support Health



Making Data More Accessible to the Public via Dashboards

In February, we launched a brand-new [Communicable Illness Dashboard](#). The purpose of the dashboard is to provide Dane County-specific data to health care providers, community partners, and people who live in Dane County. The data can be used to inform clinical testing decisions, influence prevention actions at organizations or businesses, and apply for grants. We use the dashboard ourselves to quickly pull numbers for media requests! We continue to improve our other dashboard, the award-winning [Respiratory Illness Dashboard](#). This year's updates included improvements and enhancements, which you can read about [on our blog](#).



Using Data to Understand Dane County Drug Overdose Deaths

Dane County has been grappling with an ongoing and preventable tragedy. Since 2016, the number of lives lost to drug overdoses has nearly doubled. Behind these statistics are real people who lived full lives and are deeply missed by their loved ones. Our [May 2024 data update](#) provided valuable insights into current overdose death trends, highlighted areas of concern, and outlined our next steps in combatting this crisis. Encouragingly, Dane County saw a decrease (-11%) in overdose deaths in 2022 and provisionally looks to continue in 2023. While this is a positive development, significant work remains. Our [blog post](#) outlines other key findings to drive future action.



Disaggregating Race Data in the Dane County Youth Assessment

In January, we assembled an intergenerational community workgroup of Hmong high school students, parents, and community partners. Together, they co-created a [report on Hmong American youth in Dane County](#), highlighting disaggregated 2021 Dane County Youth Assessment (DCYA) data. They met monthly from January until May to discuss the results, gather perspectives and insights related to the findings, prioritize key data points and identify key themes, and gather recommendations to address the key themes. This project underscored how important data disaggregation is for health equity; when people are invisible in the data, they become invisible in policymaking and funding decisions.



Engaging with Communities to Better Meet Needs

Funding Partners to Expand Public Health Work

We distributed \$524,000 through four community-based Request for Proposal processes. The goals of these funding opportunities are unique, but they all prioritize community voice and ownership. RFPs included work in:

- **Violence prevention:** Funding agencies whose work directly addresses the root needs for preventing violence, including resources for youth, safe housing, and mental health. Funds also supported victims of gun violence during and after hospital visits.
- **Community PFAS outreach:** Funding community groups that conduct outreach and foster community engagement about PFAS with people who live in Madison, especially those traditionally marginalized or underserved.
- **Emergency preparedness.** Funding local organizations interested in helping their community stay prepared for emergencies.
- **Healthy communities.** Funding community groups that focus on the impact that root causes of health have on health outcomes.

Fostering Meaningful Partnerships and Making our Community Interactions More Impactful

We are committed to supporting community partnerships and connecting people to our services. One way we do this is through participation in community events, where we can foster meaningful partnerships and strengthen referral networks to our programs and services. Aligned with our core values of Health & Racial Equity and Relationships, we created a Community Outreach Policy. The policy aims to elevate our outreach efforts, making our community interactions more impactful and streamlined. We now have an event coordinator to review event requests, plan logistics around the event and which of our staff will attend and track our work. We attended over 140 community events in 2024!

Creating Empowered Neighborhoods Resistant to Crime

Through the Isthmus Safety Initiative grant, Violence Prevention staff provided training to nonprofit workers, public sector staff, and community leaders to support Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) strategies on State Street in Madison.

Following the training, four groups worked to develop proposals for their specific site areas, with a goal of reducing crime and violence. In August, the groups presented their proposals in a two-day workshop, which included a day for community members to attend and provide feedback. Two of the projects focused on new developments and working directly with the constructors to provide suggestions for their area designs. The other two projects aimed to improve existing spaces through suggestions like changing traffic flows, lighting improvements, streetscape enhancements (e.g., more appealing gates, murals, and planters), and the addition of a bike path.

The Steering Committee for the grant discussed the proposals and decided to move forward with strategies in the 400 block of W. Gilman Street, as this area was identified as a high-priority area of concern. We anticipate the project will include improved lighting, improved pathways and sightlines, support for maintenance of public spaces, and community event engagement. The committee plans to implement the strategies by September 2025.

\$524,000

Granted to community organizations in 2024



Centering Equity in Our Work

Centering People with Lived Experience

- **Gathering Data from Clients in Our Syringe Services Program:** In our [evidence-based Syringe Services Program](#), we aim to center the voices of people with lived experience. This means we ensure people who use the program provide input and share their experiences to shape what services we offer. In 2024, we conducted an evaluation and point in time survey with 279 participants, which revealed visits to SSP increased 84% over a four year period, while the total number of syringes decreased; 1 in 3 respondents reported injecting less often in the past year; 61% said they picked up Naloxone in the last 3 months, and visits among Black people tripled since we began offering safer smoking supplies.
- **Compensating People with Lived Experience to Participate in Fetal Infant Mortality Review (FIMR):** The FIMR case review process helps us identify places where we may prevent infant deaths. FIMR has historically been made up of white, female medical providers. As part of our work to [improve birth outcomes](#), the FIMR team wanted to partner with Black families, as they experience the greatest inequities in poor birth outcomes in Dane County. They secured additional funding to continue a model where people with lived experience are paid to participate in FIMR. This model not only pays participants for their partnership but also recognizes that people with lived experience are valuable members of the FIMR team. Including people with lived experience deepens the FIMR team’s learning and encourages more inclusive, collaborative work.

Partnering with the Latino Community to Offer Licensing Trainings in Spanish

We hire bilingual sanitarians who can conduct inspections and trainings in Spanish. During 2024, the team presented "Starting a Food Business" at the Latino Academy of Workforce Development and the Latino Chamber of Commerce to dozens of prospective food business owners.

The presentation demystifies the food licensing process by covering the different food-related licenses we offer and the necessary steps to getting them, supporting the Latino community in achieving their food business goals. The goal of these presentations is to make applying for a food license more equitable and less intimidating, while also improving relationships with future food operators in the community. More of these presentations have happened in 2025!

8 Bilingual positions hired in 2024, including 2 full-time medical interpreters

279 Syringe Services Program participants surveyed in 2024

308 Documents translated into 16 languages in 2024

Responding to Outbreaks & Emergencies

Responding to a Measles Case

Because measles is extremely infectious, just a single case is considered an outbreak that requires a rapid public health response. While Dane County's measles case didn't happen until late April, our work began before that. Staff reviewed and prepared surveillance, vaccination campaigns, serology services, public awareness efforts, and quarantine protocols to make sure they were ready to respond effectively. When a measles case was identified, the team sprang into action, conducting extensive contact tracing efforts and [communicating possible exposure sites](#) to the public. In collaboration with the Department of Health Services, Rock County Health Department, and other local health departments, we worked to make sure all people exposed were either immune or had proof of vaccination. We coordinated with SSM Health to give 18 doses of immune globulin to children under 12 months and high-risk people. Our efforts were successful in limiting the spread of measles, with no secondary cases being identified.

Responding to a Pertussis Outbreak

Last June, a few cases of pertussis (whooping cough) surfaced in Dane County. Our Communicable Disease team began case and outbreak investigations, helped people and community partners prevent the spread of infection, and managed incoming pertussis results. When kids went back to school, cases continued to climb. We soon realized the team would need more help and enlisted additional Public Health staff, then hired a few LTE staff to assist. The work of the team to follow-up on cases and provide education to the public helped contain the outbreak. [Cases peaked](#) at over 100 in December and have been falling steadily since.

6,472

Communicable disease reports in 2024,
including 429 pertussis cases



Double Whammy Day for the Environmental Protection Unit

March 7 started out like any ordinary day for two staffers on our Environmental Protection Unit. Then the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources called to report that roughly 300 gallons of used motor oil had spilled from the back of a pickup truck in Oregon. Oregon Fire Department had been on scene the night prior to clean the street and place absorbent booms in the entrance of the storm sewer inlets, but the storm sewer ended up contaminated and the oil was draining to a nearby wetlands area. Our staff provided cleanup guidance and steps were taken to pump all the standing oil out, flush and power wash the storm sewer, and remove all contaminated soil.

While heading back to the office to complete their report, the team got a call about a sanitary sewer overflow in Madison. Upon arrival, there was sanitary waste flowing out of a manhole. Since Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District was already on site and were properly cleaning up, they documented the overflow and let them handle things. Thanks to the quick actions of not only our staff, but our community partners, both environmental and human health were protected in this one very busy day!

Responding to Outbreaks & Emergencies



Responding to Hoarding Situation with 77 Cats

Ordinances give us the authority to handle human health hazards or nuisances for people or animals living in a home. In hoarding situations, there are often human health hazards, in this hoarding case, there were 77 cats and extreme levels of ammonia due to the animal waste. Our Animal Services team was able to capture 50 cats on their first visit to the home, but had to set traps and catch the remaining cats in groups over the next couple of weeks. Many of the cats had respiratory and eye problems and numerous dead cats were found in the home.

Responding to Extreme Weather Events

In January, the southern Wisconsin region was hit with snow and ice followed by a stretch of bitter cold. During weather-related emergencies like this, our staff team up with Dane County Emergency Management and the City Emergency Operations Center to coordinate efforts and share resources. Our team monitors conditions, which helps us prepare for potential impacts like power outages. We communicate messages about health education and safety to the public through social media posts, news releases, and media interviews.

During this event, there were significant power outages, including some communities with 24+ hours without power. Using a database of folks who registered that they rely on electrically powered medical devices, the team requested, organized, and triaged this data swiftly. They worked with Dane County Emergency Management and Deerfield EMS to identify those at risk and send an EMS crew for wellness checks. Our team is well-aware of the growing impact of climate change, which is likely to increase frequency and severity of extreme weather events. This understanding drives us to evolve and enhance our strategies to help protect the community.

3,726

Animal service calls responded to, including this hoarding case



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We are @publichealthmdc on each channel.



OUR VISION

Healthy People. Healthy Places.

OUR MISSION

Work with the community to enhance, protect, and promote the health of the environment and the well being of all people.

WHO WE ARE

We are your local health department and serve over 575,000 people in more than 60 cities, villages, and towns in Dane County, Wisconsin.