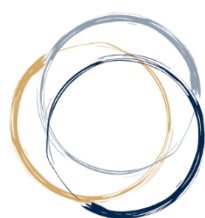


ANNUAL REPORT

2023



IRON COUNTY
Public Health
Prevent. **Promote.** Protect.

Contents

Vision, Mission, and Values	3
Foundational Public Health Services	4
Community-specific Needs	4
Certified Level II Health Department	6
Foundational Areas	7
Communicable Disease Control	7
COVID-19 Recovery Efforts	7
Adult and Child Vaccines	8
Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention	8
Health Screenings	8
StrongBodies	8
Foot Care and Nail Care	8
The Fitness Court	9
Environmental Public Health	9
Water Lab	9
Beach Monitoring and Assessments	9
DATCP Enforcement	10
Transient Non-Community (TN) Water System Surveillance	11
Maternal, Child, and Family Health	11
Title X Reproductive Health Family Planning Services	12
Birth to 3	12
Prenatal Care Coordination	12
Breastfeeding	12
Child Passenger Safety	12
Childhood lead screenings	13
Access to and Linkage with Care	13
Budget and Expenditures	14
Board of Health	14
Our Team	15

CONTACT US

Phone: 715-561-2191

Fax: 715-561-2836



VISIT US

210 5th Ave N

Hurley, WI 54534

www.ironcountypublichealth.org

OUR VISION

Everyone in Iron County Living Better, Longer

OUR MISSION

To promote health, protect the environment and prevent disease and injury in Iron County, Wisconsin.

OUR CORE VALUES

Collaborative Partnership-Based

We strive to assure strong collaborative partnerships within Iron County and beyond its geographic boundaries

Prevention Based

Our programs focus on health promotion and disease prevention

Evidence-Based

Our practice is science based and uses best practices that improve population health status

Social Justice

We are advocates for vulnerable populations and work to empower families to assure quality of life

Responsiveness

We provide leadership on health related issues and concerns expressed by the community, by population data and by the Board of Health

Effective, Efficient, Sustainable

We strive to deliver services that address the health priorities of our community and that last over time

Cohesive and Competent Workforce

We are a cohesive agency achieving and enhancing our shared vision



IRON COUNTY
Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Foundational Public Health Services

The Iron County Health Department has the fundamental responsibility to provide public health protections and services including preventing the spread of communicable disease; ensuring food, air, and water quality are safe; supporting maternal and child health; improving access to clinical care services; and preventing chronic disease and injury. In addition, we provide local protection and services specific to our community’s needs.

Foundational Public Health Services

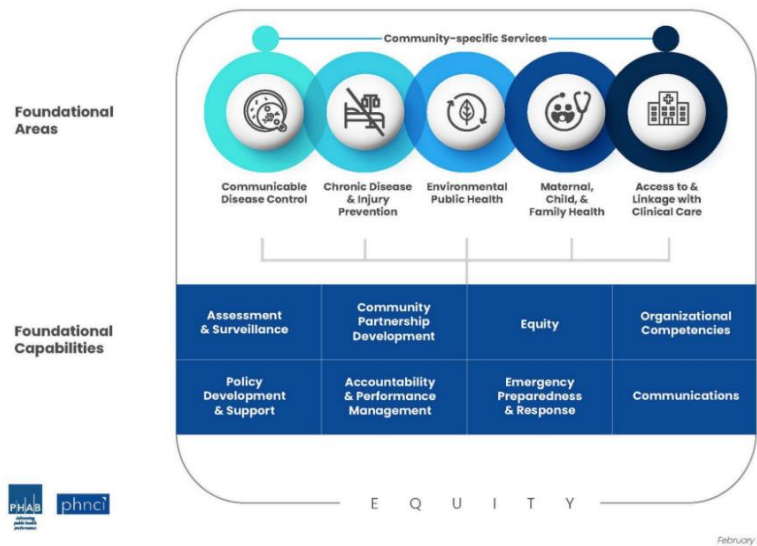
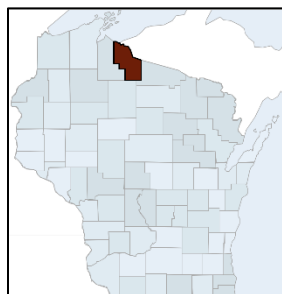


FIGURE 1: THE FOUNDATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES FRAMEWORK OUTLINES THE UNIQUE RESPONSIBILITIES OF GOVERNMENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH AND DEFINES A MINIMUM SET OF FOUNDATIONAL CAPABILITIES AND FOUNDATIONAL AREAS THAT MUST BE AVAILABLE IN EVERY COMMUNITY.

Community-specific Needs



Iron County, located in northern Wisconsin, shares its borders with Ironwood, Michigan, Lake Superior, Ashland County, Price County, and Vilas County. Iron County is home to 6,074 people of which 31.9% are 65 years and older. 94.7% identified as Non-Hispanic White. The median household income in Iron County is \$48,908. In 2021, 83.7% of the housing units in Iron County, WI were occupied by their owner. 13% of the population in Iron County live below the poverty line. The largest demographic living in poverty are females 45-54, followed by females 55-64, and then females 25-34. 19% of people under the age of 18 live in poverty. In 2022, the percentage of the adult population (18 and older) that reports a body mass index (BMI) greater than or equal to 30 kg/m² (age-adjusted) was 34% in Iron County. The average life expectancy is 78 years.

The County Health Rankings & Roadmaps (CHR&R) provides county-level data to help understand what is influencing the health of the community. In 2023, Iron County, Wisconsin ranked **19** out of 72 counties for **Health Outcomes** and **58** for **Health Factors** (top ranked county=1)¹.

Health Outcomes

Health Outcomes tell us how long people live on average within a community, and how much physical and mental health people experience in a community while they are alive.

Iron (IR) is ranked in the higher middle range of counties in Wisconsin (Higher 50%-75%).



Health Factors

Many things influence how well and how long we live. Health Factors represent those things we can improve to live longer and healthier lives. They are indicators of the future health of our communities.

Iron (IR) is ranked among the least healthy counties in Wisconsin (Lowest 0%-25%).



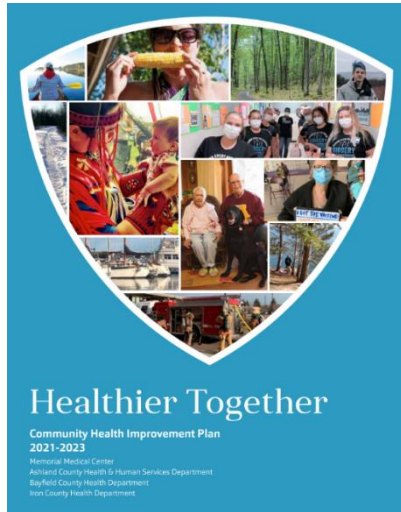
FIGURE 2 IRON COUNTY, WISCONSIN HEALTH OUTCOMES AND HEALTH FACTORS RANK.

Some of the key findings influencing the health outcomes of Iron County residents are outlined in the table below:

	Health Factors	Iron County	Wisconsin
Health Behaviors	<i>Adult Smoking</i>	19%	16%
	<i>Physical Inactivity</i>	20%	20%
	<i>Access to Exercise Opportunities</i>	50%	84%
	<i>Excessive drinking</i>	26%	26%
	<i>Alcohol Impaired Driving Deaths</i>	43%	36%
	<i>Food Insecurity</i>	13%	7%
	<i>Motor Vehicle Crash Deaths</i>	25	10
Clinical Care	<i>Uninsured Children</i>	6%	4%
	<i>Uninsured Adults</i>	9%	8%
	<i>Mental Health Providers</i>	880:1	420:1
Social and Economic Factors	<i>High School Completion</i>	96%	93%
	<i>Unemployment</i>	6.4%	3.8%
	<i>Children in Poverty</i>	19%	14%
	<i>Children Eligible for Free or Reduce Lunch</i>	49%	43%
	<i>Injury deaths</i>	127	89
Physical Environment	<i>Severe Housing Problems</i>	14%	13%
	<i>Homeownership</i>	84%	67%
	<i>Broadband Access</i>	82%	86%
	<i>Homeownership</i>	79%	67%

FIGURE 3: KEY FINDINGS ON THE HEALTH FACTORS OF IRON COUNTY.²

¹ 2023 Data by County: Wisconsin <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/explore-health-rankings/wisconsin?year=2023&tab=0>



The Iron County Health Department, in partnership with Ashland and Bayfield Counties, and Tamarack Health (formerly Memorial Medical Center) completed the community health assessment (CHA) and Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). Details of the CHA can be found in the “Healthier Together: Community Health Improvement Plan 2021-2023”³. Iron County will continue to collaborate with MMC and our neighboring county health departments to learn from and support community

partners contributing to public health as well as to facilitate data sharing.

“Healthier Together: Community Health Improvement Plan 2021-2023” identified 3 goals to accomplish the desired health improvements in the community including:

1. **Collaboration** with existing organizations and programs to increase their effectiveness and reach.
2. **Awareness** to increase the general community knowledge of the identified health priority areas and thus, involvement.
3. Increase access to and involvement in physical **Activity**.

- Mental health and substance abuse continue to be prominent health issues in all communities.
- Concerns about chronic disease and physical health issues were frequently mentioned.
- Access to health care services and other resources continue to be challenges, including unreliable transportation and healthcare provider availability.
- The COVID-19 pandemic was the most notable healthcare crisis seen in our generation - it affects nearly every aspect of society.

FIGURE 4: TOP HEALTH PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED AMONG SURVEY RESPONDENTS.

Certified Level II Health Department

On Friday, March 31, 2023, the Iron County Health Department was formally reviewed by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Division of Public Health and designated a **Level II Health Department**. This designation means that the local health department meets the requirements of Admi. Code DHS



²County Health Rankings & Roadmaps (CHR&R) Iron County 2023 <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/explore-health-rankings/wisconsin/iron?year=2023>

³“Healthier Together: Community Health Improvement Plan 2021-2023”, <https://online.fliphtml5.com/kqkln/lnpj/#p=1>

140.08⁴ and is in force for up to 5 years. State Health Officer and Administrator, Paula Tran, stated “I applaud the dedicated efforts of the Iron County Health Department staff to keep your jurisdiction healthy and safe”.

Foundational Areas

Communicable Disease Control

In collaboration with the Communicable Disease Section of the Wisconsin Division of Public Health, the Iron County Health Department executes the requirements described in [Wis. Stat. § 252](#)⁵ regarding the reporting, surveillance, and control of communicable diseases. These responsibilities are accomplished through the cooperative efforts of hospital infection control personnel, health care providers, local health departments, long term care facilities, school districts, employers, and laboratories.



Iron County received **13** Category I and **491** Category II reported incidences that required surveillance, disease investigation, contact tracing and/or follow-up.

Disease Incident	Confirmed, Probable
Coronavirus, Novel 2019 (COVID-19)	150
Chlamydia Trachomatis	7
Giardiasis	4
Lyme Disease	4

FIGURE 5: SNAPSHOT OF CONFIRMED AND PROBABLE ILLNESSES IN 2023 THAT REQUIRED FURTHER DISEASE INVESTIGATION AND/OR CONTACT INVESTIGATION.

COVID-19 Recovery Efforts

Emergency response recovery efforts to slow the spread of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic waned throughout 2023.

122 COVID-19 immunizations were administered during 2023.

The Iron County Health Department concluded its Community Testing Support Program in April 2023, but the Antigen Home Test Distribution Site continued to support the surveillance of COVID-19 disease in the community.

Iron County Health Department staff **administered 15** COVID-19 tests and **distributed 145** home antigen test kits (2 tests/box).

⁴ Administrative Code DHS 140.08 https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin_code/dhs/110/140/08

⁵ <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/statutes/statutes/252/>

Adult and Child Vaccines

83 Vaccines for Children (VFC) and Vaccines for Adults (VFA) were administered during 2023. Another **392 flu shots** were administered.



Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention

Health Screenings

The Iron County Health Department connects our community members to much needed health services that support a healthy community.

In collaboration with other partners the health department continues to offer general health screenings and tuberculin skin testing.

Health Screenings	59
Blood Pressure Screening	43
Tuberculin Skin Testing	15
A1C	31
Cholesterol	40
Blood Glucose	44

FIGURE 6 SNAPSHOT OF PREVENTIVE HEALTH SCREENINGS PROVIDED.

StrongBodies

The StrongBodies program helps midlife and older individuals increase muscle mass, bone density, balance, and energy by increasing access to structured, safe, and effective strength training programs.

14 individuals participated at the **Hurley** location and **11 individuals** participated at the **Springstead** location.



Foot Care and Nail Care



Foot Care and Nail Care services includes a lower extremity assessment, nail care and debridement, patient mental health assessment and health education of various health conditions and their effect on the feet.

192 Foot and nail care encounters were performed in 2023. **16 new clients** received services.

The Fitness Court

The Iron County Health Department identified physical activity and wellness as a major priority on the most recent community health improvement plan. We strongly support the efforts of Quartz and National Fitness Campaign to expand free, equitable access to high quality physical activity. The Fitness Court brings the world’s best outdoor gym to our community and lets people use their own body weight to get a complete workout



using seven exercise stations, all for free. Users also may download the free Fitness Court App which acts as a coach-in-your-pocket and enhances the outdoor gym into a digitally supported wellness experience. The court is located at Cary Park in Hurley, WI. The park features a paved walking trail, sand volleyball courts, ball field, playground, covered pavilion and access to bathrooms. The purpose of this project was to address disparities in public health outcomes including addressing obesity rates, increase equitable access to physical activity so everyone can lead their healthiest life.

Environmental Public Health

Water Lab

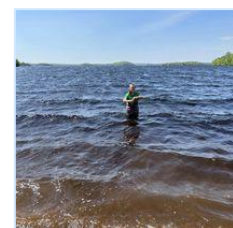
The Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) requires public water systems to test water supplies for bacteriological agents and chemical contaminants to protect the health of their consumers. Private well owners are also encouraged to test their water supply to ensure good health. The department can also help ship out samples to ERIC/UWO which performs other chemical testing.

Bacteria Samples	Nitrate	Samples sent to ERIC/UWO
441	82	11

FIGURE 7: BREAKDOWN OF WATER SAMPLE TESTING.

Beach Monitoring and Assessments

In collaboration with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources the Iron County Health Department monitored water at public beaches for 14 weeks during the summer (Memorial



Day-Labor Day). **6 inland beaches** and **3 Lake Superior coastline beaches** were tested to ensure people safely enjoy swimming.

DATCP Enforcement

As an agent of the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) enforcement activities are performed on a regular basis to promote safe operation of retail food, lodging, and recreational establishments.

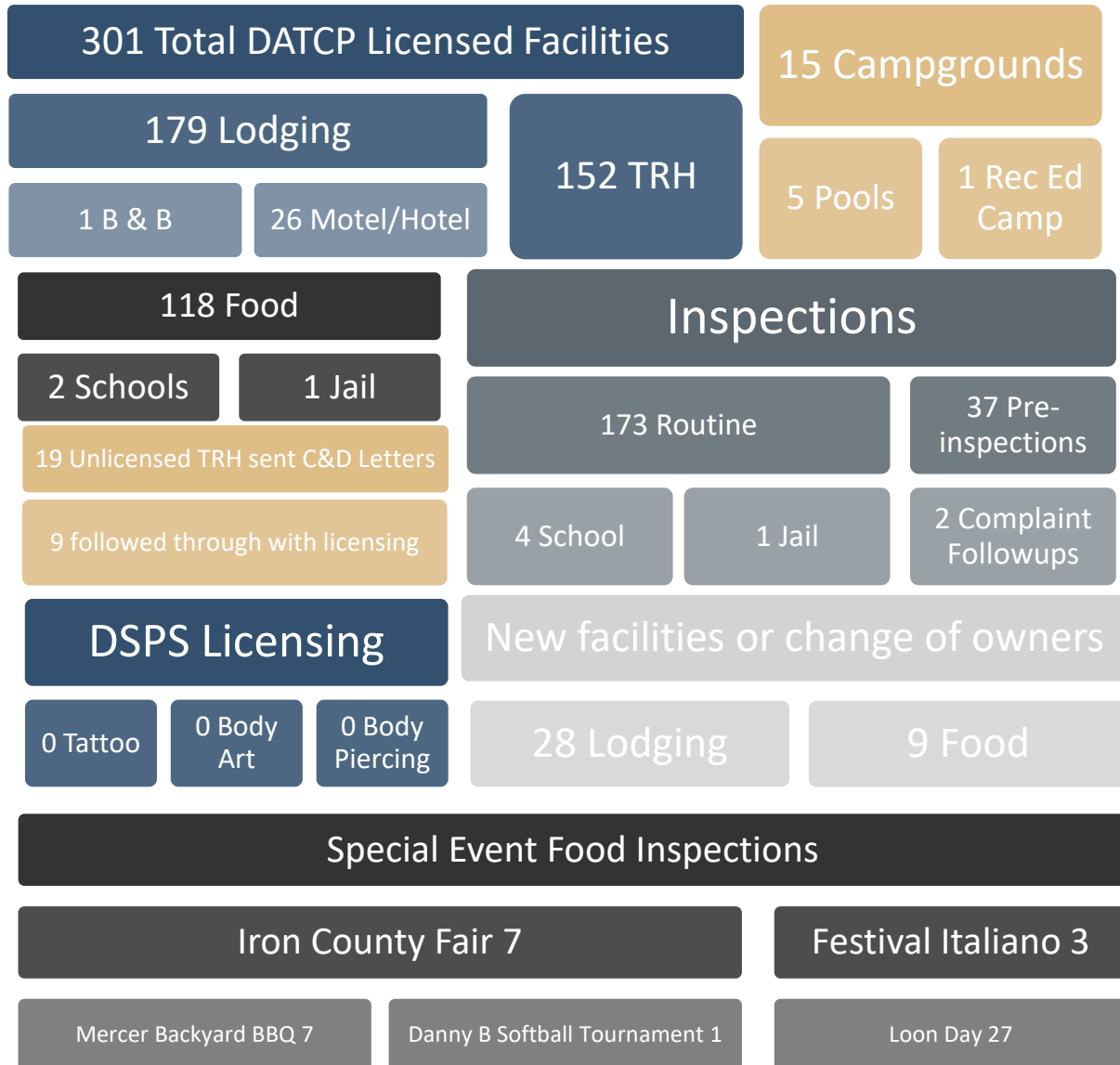


FIGURE 8: DATCP AND DSPS LICENSE BREAKDOWN IN IRON COUNTY.



Denise Lotzer received recertification as a Certified Pool Operator (CPO) in 2023.

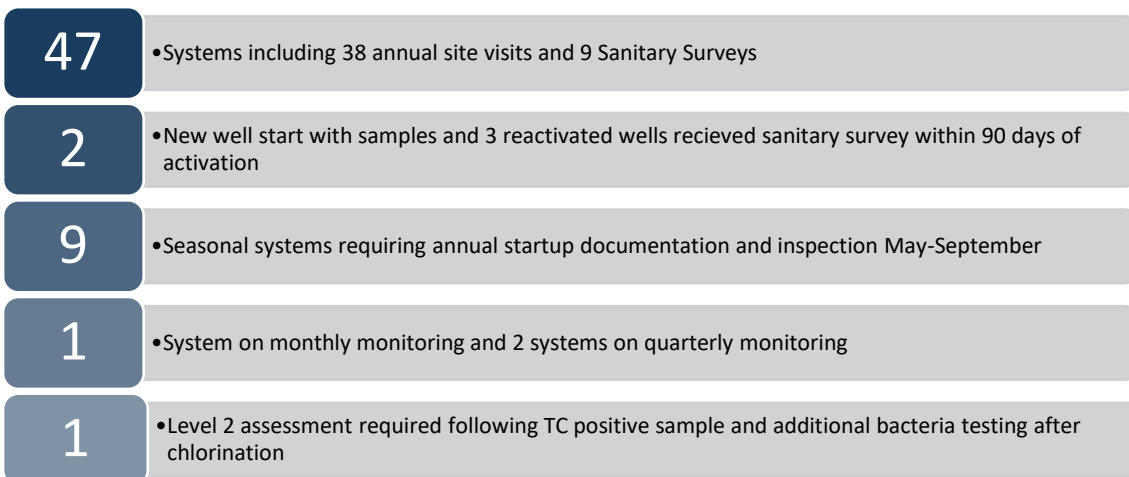


FIGURE 9: TRANSIENT NON-COMMUNITY (TN) WELLS SYSTEM INSPECTIONS COMPLETED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES (DNR).



9 Radon kits distributed



2 Animal Bites



0 Harmful Algal Bloom (Blue Green Algae)



25 Recycling Inspections



0 Lead Hazard Investigations

Maternal, Child, and Family Health

The Iron County Health Department partnered with UW-Extension Iron County, Hurley School, and Mercer School to support opportunities to improve physical activity and nutrition for children during out of school time. Staff worked with summer kids club to implement fun activities to get kids moving and learn about planting, taking care of and harvesting from the school garden. Students also received healthy snacks with recipe cards to take home to family.

Planting



Fun games



Watering

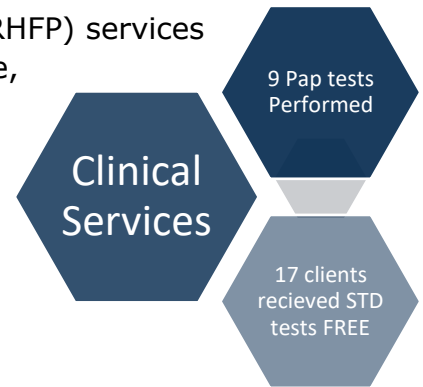


Plants for home



Title X Reproductive Health Family Planning Services

Confidential, affordable reproductive health family planning (RHFP) services continue to be available for anyone regardless of religion, race, color, national origin, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identify, sex characteristics, number of pregnancies or marital status. A total of **59 unduplicated clients received RHFP services** accounting for a total of **225 family planning encounters**.



Birth to 3

The Iron County Birth to 3 program received **9 referrals** and **3 children qualified** to receive services, **4 children declined services or children's parent/guardian did not return call for evaluation, 2 are in progress**.



The program provides services to families of children with developmental delays or disabilities under the age of three. The team of professionals working with families includes 1 Registered Nurse, 2 Speech Therapists, 1 Physical Therapist, 1 Early Childhood Education Specialist, and 1 Infant Mental Health Specialist.

Prenatal Care Coordination

Prenatal care coordination connects pregnant people to medical, social and educational services to improve birth outcomes. **2 pregnant women** received prenatal care coordination services in 2023.

Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding is a great way to nurture you and your baby's health. Breast feeding takes practices and support from a lactation specialist is a great option for a families. **2 breast feeding consultations** were completed in 2023.

Child Passenger Safety

Car seat and booster education program helps parents and caregivers learn how to properly install and use child safety seats.

3 child safety seat inspections were completed in 2023.



Maria Swartz received training as a **Child Passenger Safety (CPS) technician** in 2023.

Childhood lead screenings

All children who are at risk for lead exposure should be tested for lead poisoning. **31 children were screened for blood lead levels** in Iron County.

Access to and Linkage with Care



The Iron County Health Department partnered with UW Extension-Iron County and 4-H Youth Development to provide the Summer Youth Camp program with Registered Nurse services.

34 new parent/guardians received **newborn packets** in the mail containing information on local services, development screening resources and other health education.

The Iron County Health Department continues to work towards building and maintaining a strong public health infrastructure. The COVID-19 pandemic emphasized the critical importance of a robust public health system. The pandemic also accentuated long-standing weakness and created new challenges. As we enter the recovery phase of the pandemic the Health Department will be working to address support for core infrastructure improvements in the public health workforce, capacity to implement foundational capabilities, and data infrastructure/performance management. All updates will be available in the ICHD Resource Guide.

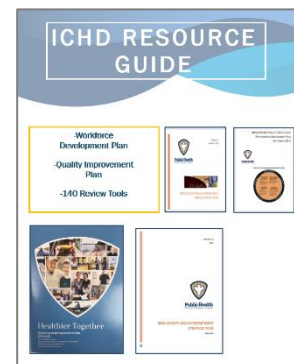
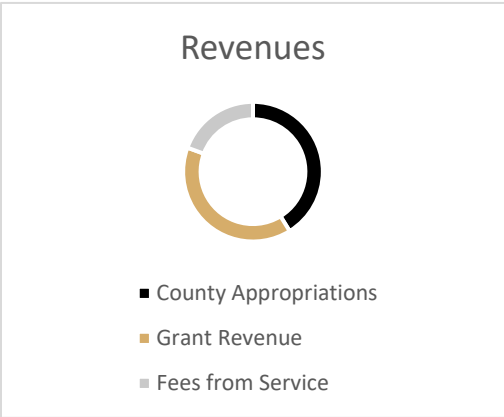


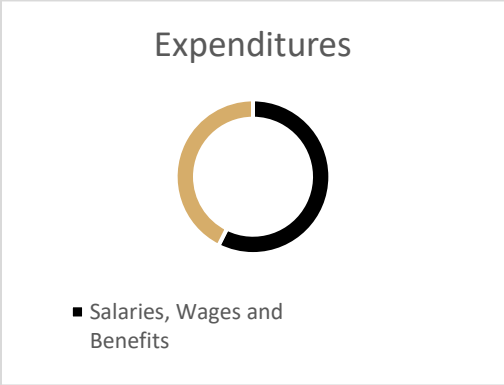
FIGURE 10 LOCAL COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND PARTNERS COME TOGETHER TO IMPROVE THE PUBLIC'S HEALTH.

Budget and Expenditures



**January 1-
December 31,
Revenues: 2023**

<i>County appropriations</i>	\$394,015.19
<i>Grant revenue</i>	\$376,696.00
<i>Fees from service</i>	\$185,594.55



**January 1-
December 31,
Expenditures: 2023**

<i>Salaries, Wages, and Benefits</i>	\$503,989.93
<i>Operation costs</i>	\$374,100.06
<i>Total expenditures</i>	\$878,089.99

Board of Health

John Sendra, Chair* (until September 2023)

Brandon Snyder, Vice Chair

James Rocco, MD, Medical Director

Zona Wick, RN Health Representative

Dr. Paul Hagemann

Jamey Francis

Tanner Hiller

Melissa Geach, Health Officer

Joe Pinardi

Our sincere thanks to our Board of Health members for their direction, council, and support of our work to improve the health of our community.

OUR TEAM

Their dedication to the health of this community is essential to the work that we do!



Melissa Geach
Health Officer



Maria Swartz
Public Health Nurse



Dan Mueller
Community Health Nurse



Denise Lotzer
Environmental Health
Specialist



Melissa DeCarlo
Office Manager



Sue Herlevi
Program Assistant