



Washington County, Florida

Community Health Improvement Plan 2024-2029

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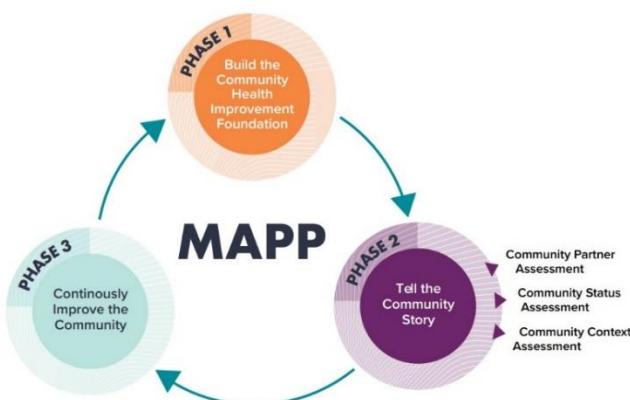
Executive Summary

In 2023, the Florida Department of Health in Washington County (FDOH-Washington) and the Washington County Health Improvement Partnership (WCHIP) launched a major initiative to understand the health needs of the community and develop programs and policies to address these needs. This process included conducting a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) to provide a portrait of the community's health and developing a Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) to identify areas of action. The CHNA was a year-long, community-wide undertaking. Health, business, social service, education, faith organizations, and other community partners across Washington County provided guidance and input by serving on a CHNA Team. Community residents participated through online and paper surveys. Community stakeholders were engaged through collection of feedback and comments from presentations of the findings.

From the CHNA, the Washington Community Health Improvement Partnership chose the following four health priorities for the CHIP. The plan will focus on these priorities for the next five years.

1. Heart Disease
2. Overweight and Obesity
3. Diabetes
4. Mental Health

The purpose of the community health improvement planning process is to create goals, objectives, and strategies targeting the priority health issues identified in the CHNA.



The CHNA was completed using the Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP 2.0) process. It highlights three phases to address authentic community engagement, sustained partner engagement, action, and impact. The three phases are Community Partner Assessment, Community Status Assessment, and Community Context Assessment. Facilitated by public health leaders, this framework helps communities apply strategic thinking

to prioritize public health issues and identify resources to address them. MAPP 2.0 is not an agency-focused assessment process; rather, it is an interactive process that can improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and ultimately the performance of local public health systems.

Acknowledgements

With valuable input from Washington County’s community stakeholders and leaders, the 2024 Washington County CHIP became a decisive community call to action. The Florida Department of Health in Washington County (FDOH-Washington) and the Washington County Health Improvement Partnership (WCHIP) would like to extend gratitude to the organizations and individuals that dedicated their valuable time to make sure that the CHIP goals, objectives, and strategies aligned best with the needs of the local community.

FDOH-Washington would also like to thank the organizations involved with implementing the CHIP action plan; through cooperation and leadership, Washington County will make strides towards its desired health outcomes.

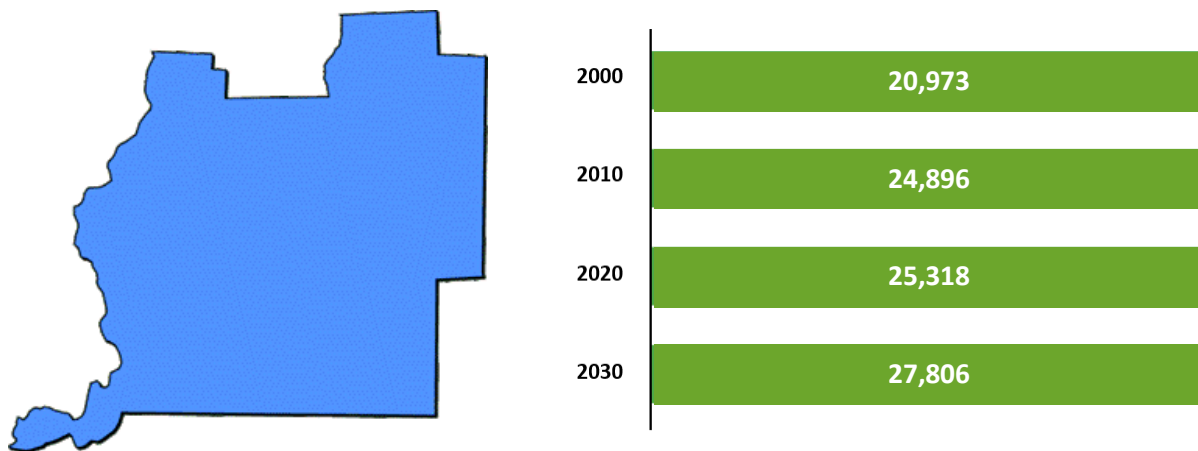
- Florida Department of Health in Washington County
- Early Learning Coalition of Northwest Florida
- Washington County Administrator
- Washington County Public Library System
- Northwest Florida Community Hospital
- Washington County Council for Aging
- Big Bend Area Health Education Center
- Children’s Medical Services
- Gulf Coast Sexual Assault Program
- Washington County Emergency Management
- United Way of Northwest Florida
- Early Learning Coalition
- Healthy Start
- Veteran’s Health Administration
- Department of Children & Families
- Chipola Healthy Start Coalition
- NWF Health Network

Community Profile

Washington County is located in the northwestern part of the State of Florida, in the Panhandle. According to the US Census Bureau, in 2020, Washington County's estimated population was 25,318, the median age was 41.8, with a median household income of \$47,536, and over 19% of persons living in poverty.

While each county and city or town has its own unique characteristics, the surrounding counties to Washington County are intertwined. It is common for residents from one county to commute to and from another county for jobs, entertainment, education, and health care. These neighboring counties include Holmes, Jackson, Walton, and Bay Counties. This assessment covers Washington County, although individual partners may serve in multiple counties and/or communities.

Washington County, Florida is rural (outside of urban cores of 10,000 or more population). Washington County has a racial and ethnic composition, age, demographics, income, educational attainment, and occupation which distinguish this community from other Florida communities. All these factors collectively impact the health of county residents.



Sources: US Census Bureau 2000, 2010, 2020, 2029; US Census Bureau ACS 5-year 2018-2022

Using the Community Health Improvement Plan

The creation of the community health improvement plan (CHIP) for Washington County serves as a reminder for how the collaboration between government officials, community leaders, public health professionals, and community advocates, as well as many other Washington County participants, can build public health infrastructure, aid and guide planning, and ultimately improve the health outcomes of Washington County. There are several suggested ways to use this CHIP to improve the wellbeing and quality of life for the Washington County community:

Community Resident

- Use this CHIP to compare individual health with that of Washington County's community health data
- Be an advocate in the community to support healthy lifestyles and behaviors
- Volunteer! Share your resources, time, funding with your community
- Understand the top health priorities facing Washington County

Health Care Professional

- Understand the top health priorities facing Washington County
- Inform your patients/clients on available resources in the community listed in the CHIP
- Be a resource for the community whether it be expertise, funding, time, or support

Faith-based Organization

- Understand the top health priorities facing Washington County
- Use this plan to improve the overall health (mind, body, and spirit) of members in your community
- Identify opportunities for your community or members to be able to support and encourage participation with other organizations

Government Official

- Understand the top health priorities facing Washington County
- Participate in community efforts as laid out in the CHIP strategies
- Engage with other government officials to inform and promote your community's health

Educators

- Understand the top health priorities facing Washington County
- Be a resource for the community whether it be expertise, funding, time, or support
- Engage the support of leaders, teachers, students, and parents

Public Health Professionals

- Understand the top health priorities facing Washington County
- Recognize how the Washington County community compares with peer counties, Florida, and the U.S. population as a whole
- Be a resource for the community whether it be expertise, funding, time, or support

Employers

- Understand the top health priorities facing Washington County
- Inform and educate your team/staff on the importance of employee wellness and productivity

Community Health Status Assessment

Health is more than just the absence of illness or disease. Health is influenced by many other factors, including healthcare services, treatments, medications, physical environments, social and economic influences, and by our own behaviors. Factors such as education level, neighborhood safety, air quality, available housing, poverty, and employment can have a positive or negative impact on health.

To assess quality of health care and health behaviors, the County Health Rankings and Roadmaps were developed by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute (UWPHI). The framework illustrates the strong influence that Health Factors and Health Outcomes have on illness and death.

Health Factors can be modified to improve the length and quality of life.

Health Outcomes represent the overall health of a county, reflecting the physical and mental well-being of residents measured by length and quality of life. Health Outcomes are indicators of trends that contribute to the health within a community.

Policies and Programs can improve Health Factors, and thus lead to lower rates of disease and better Health Outcomes.

The County Health Rankings are based on a model of population health that emphasizes the factors that, if improved, can help make communities a healthier place to live, learn, work and play. WCHIP has adopted the County Health Rankings framework. The CHNA reviewed the causes of death, disease, and disability and then determined the Health Outcomes root causes. Contributing Health Factors were then identified that impacted Health Outcomes. Health Outcomes and Health Factors provided a snapshot of the community health status.

1	Collier	13	Broward	25	Charlotte	37	Hernando	49	Highlands	61	Jackson
2	St. Johns	14	Manatee	26	Sumter	38	Gilchrist	50	Jefferson	62	Holmes
3	Seminole	15	Hillsborough	27	Wakulla	39	Calhoun	51	Escambia	63	Dixie
4	Monroe	16	Okaloosa	28	Brevard	40	Volusia	52	Glades	64	Gadsden
5	Martin	17	Pinellas	29	Polk	41	Lafayette	53	Marion	65	Madison
6	Miami-Dade	18	Walton	30	Nassau	42	Gulf	54	Levy	66	Putnam
7	Orange	19	Santa Rosa	31	Alachua	43	Hendry	55	Citrus	67	Union
8	Osceola	20	Flagler	32	Liberty	44	Bay	56	Taylor		
9	Palm Beach	21	Clay	33	Pasco	45	Baker	57	Columbia		
10	Indian River	22	Lake	34	Hardee	46	Duval	58	Bradford		
11	Lee	23	St. Lucie	35	Franklin	47	Suwannee	59	Washington		
12	Sarasota	24	Leon	36	DeSoto	48	Okeechobee	60	Hamilton		

Leading Causes of Death

In Washington County, the leading causes of death in 2023 were 1) Heart Disease, 2) Cancer, and 3) Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease. The graphic below indicates Washington County’s leading causes of death compared to those in the state of Florida.

Unhealthy lifestyles – including poor diet, lack of exercise, tobacco use, and excessive alcohol use – are key contributors to the development of heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes, all of which are leading causes of death in Washington County.

	WASHINGTON COUNTY	FLORIDA
1	Heart Disease	Heart Disease
2	Cancer	Cancer
3	Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease	Unintentional Injury
4	Diabetes	Stroke
5	Stoke	COVID-19
6	COVID-19	Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease
7	Unintentional Injury	Diabetes
8	Alzheimer’s disease	Alzheimer’s Disease
9	Nephritis, Nephrotic Syndrome and Nephrosis	Chronic Liver Disease and Cirrhosis
10	Suicide	Nephritis, Nephrotic Syndrome and Nephrosis

Source: FLHealthCHARTS 2022

Description of Priority Health Issues

Heart Disease

Common risk factors for heart disease can include age, family history, smoking, unhealthy diet, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, lack of exercise, stress, and obesity.

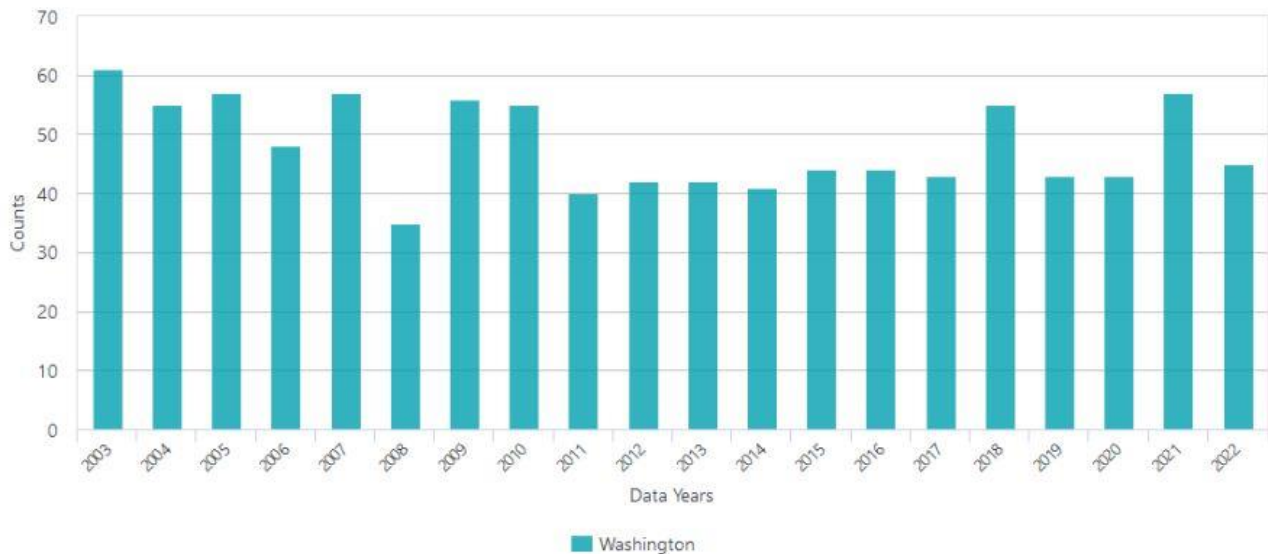
As we grow older the risk of damaged and narrowing arteries increases, as well as a weakened or thickened heart muscle. Men are generally at a greater risk for heart disease, although the risk for women increases after menopause.

Heart attacks are more common in smokers than in nonsmokers. Diets that are high in fat, salt, sugar, and cholesterol have been linked to heart disease. Uncontrolled high blood pressure can cause arteries to become hard and thick. These changes interrupt blood flow to the heart and body.

Obesity worsens other heart disease risk factors because it increases the danger of developing diabetes. Lack of exercise, being inactive or unrelieved stress can contribute to heart disease.

(Source: www.cdc.gov)

Age-adjusted Deaths From Coronary Heart Disease, Single Year



(Source: FLHealthCharts.gov)

Overweight and Obesity

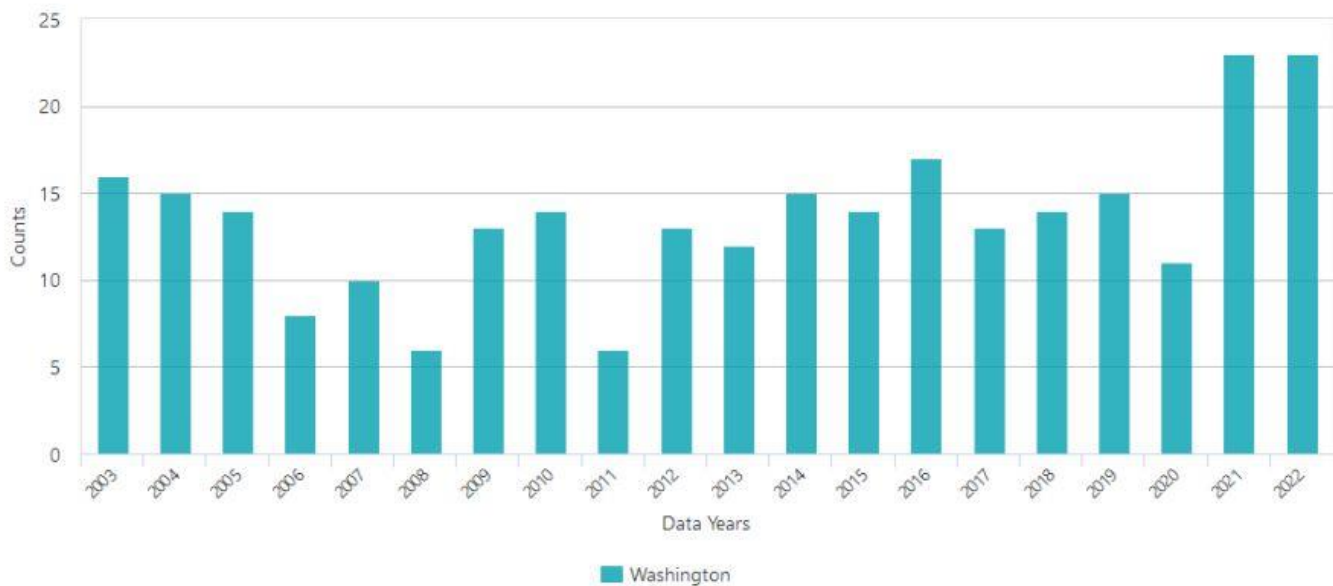
Overweight is defined as a body mass index (BMI) of 25 or higher. Obesity is defined as a BMI of 30 or higher.

People who are overweight or obese, compared to those with a healthy weight, are at increased risk for many serious diseases and health conditions, such as strokes. In addition, obesity and its associated health problems have a significant economic impact on the US health care system.

Other factors are likely to contribute too, including family history, diet, exercise, stress, and gut health.

Obesity also contributes to many other health issues like, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, type 2 diabetes, gallbladder disease, coronary heart disease, and breathing problems such as sleep apnea. Mental illness, such as clinical depression, anxiety or other mental disorders can be contributed to obesity. *(Source: www.cdc.gov)*

Age-adjusted Deaths From Stroke, Single Year



(Source: FLHealthCharts.gov)

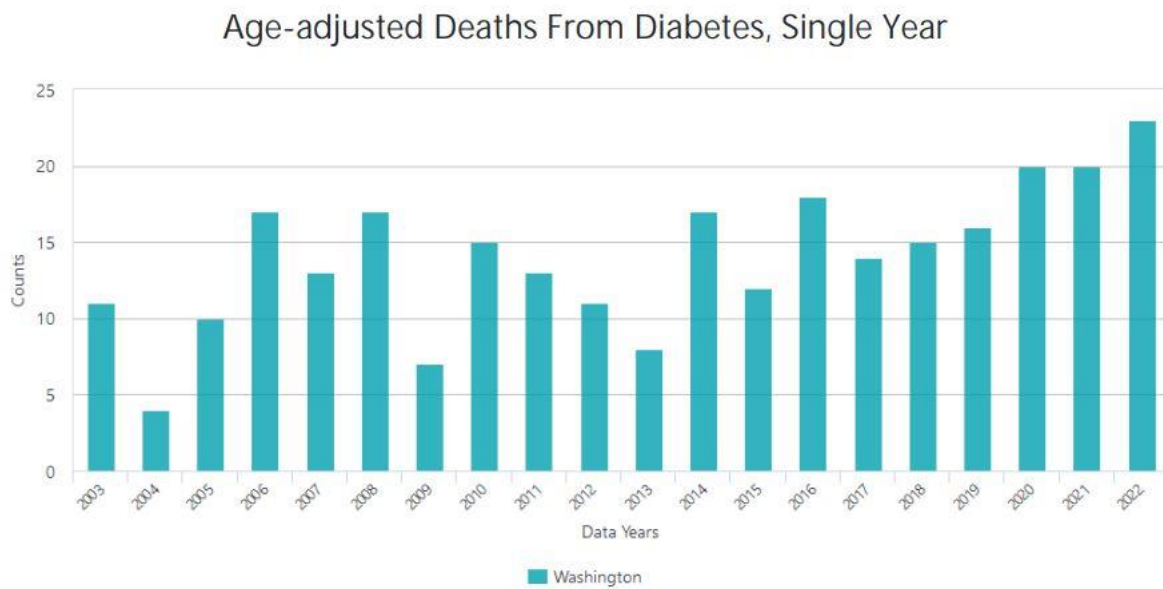
Diabetes

Diabetes is the condition of having too much glucose (sugar) circulating in your bloodstream. Having high blood sugar from diabetes over time can cause serious health complications across different parts of your body.

Diabetes can damage the blood vessels, causing high blood pressure, heart attacks, or heart failure. It can damage the small blood vessels at the back of the eyes, leading to vision loss. Because of the reduced blood flow to your feet, wounds can develop causing infection, or amputation.

Diabetes affects every part of your body. Your nerves, ears, mouth, stomach and your brain can be affected due to blood vessel damage. Your kidneys, liver and skin health are also at risk, along with sexual health issues.

Seeking medical treatment and keeping your blood sugar levels in range can help prevent or delay all these conditions. (Source: www.cdc.gov)



(Source: FLHealthCharts.gov)

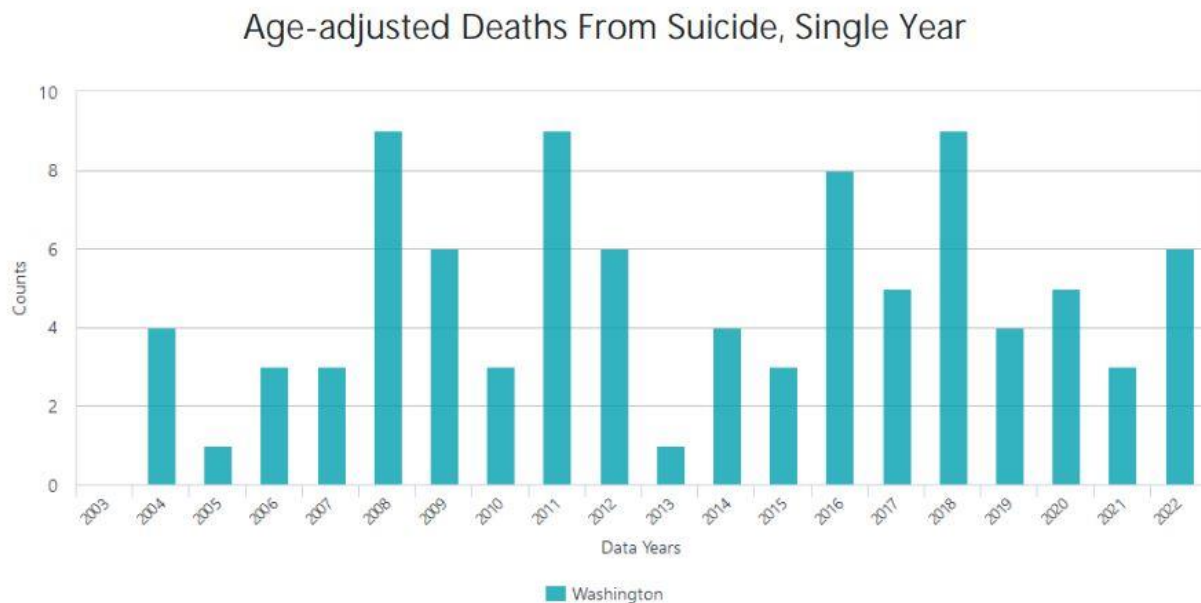
Mental Health

Mental health includes emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make healthy choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood to adolescence through adulthood.

Mental illnesses are among the most common health conditions in the United States. More than 1 in 5 U.S. adults live with a mental illness. Over 1 in 5 youth (ages 13-18) either currently, or at some point during their life have had a debilitating mental illness. About 1 in 25 U.S. adults live with a serious mental illness such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, or major depression.

There is no single cause for mental illness, although adverse childhood experiences, trauma, abuse or assault, can lead to adverse mental stability. Other related factors include use of alcohol, isolation, chronic medical conditions or biological and chemical imbalances in the brain.

Mental health can change over time. It can improve or worsen depending on many factors and coping abilities. (Source: www.cdc.gov)



(Source: FLHealthCharts.gov)



CHIP Action Plans

Washington Community Health Improvement Partnership

Priority Group: *Heart Disease*

SMART Objective:

By December 31, 2025, add 1 additional education location option to existing tobacco cessation classes.

Date last updated:

STRATEGIC ISSUE AREA:

Group Members:

Melanie Spradlin and Amanda Baker

Leader:

Lisa Moon

Co-Leader:

Olivia Brock

GOAL:(Desired outcome)

STRATEGY:(How to get desired outcome)

Major Milestone Activities/Action Steps	Responsible Person	Completion Date	Status	Progress Comments
<i>(What will be done?)</i>	<i>(Who will do it?)</i>	<i>(When? Month/Yr)</i>	<i>(Not started; on schedule; at risk; not on schedule complete)</i>	<i>(Describe progress; barriers; successes)</i>
How will you measure improvement?				
How will you continue to monitor the process?				

Washington Community Health Improvement Partnership

Priority Group: *Heart Disease*

SMART Objective:

By December 31, 2029, partner with and increase the number of local farmers markets that accept vouchers by 1.

Date last updated:

STRATEGIC ISSUE AREA:

Group Members:

Melanie Spradlin and Amanda Baker

Leader:

Lisa Moon

Co-Leader:

Olivia Brock

GOAL:(Desired outcome)

STRATEGY:(How to get desired outcome)

Washington Community Health Improvement Partnership	
Priority Group: <i>Overweight and Obesity</i>	
SMART Objective: By December 31, 2025, increase the number of community garden sites from 3 to 4.	Date last updated:
STRATEGIC ISSUE AREA:	
Group Members: Olivia Brock	Leader: James Lewis
	Co-Leader: Sheri Rushing
GOAL: (Desired outcome)	
STRATEGY: (How to get desired outcome)	

Washington Community Health Improvement Partnership	
Priority Group: <i>Overweight and Obesity</i>	
SMART Objective: By December 31, 2025, increase the number of food swap events from 0 to 1.	Date last updated:
STRATEGIC ISSUE AREA:	
Group Members: Olivia Brock	Leader: James Lewis
	Co-Leader: Sheri Rushing
GOAL: (Desired outcome)	
STRATEGY: (How to get desired outcome)	

Washington Community Health Improvement Partnership	
Priority Group: <i>Overweight and Obesity</i>	
SMART Objective: By December 31, 2027, increase publications of local exercise opportunities via print media from 0 to 1.	Date last updated:
STRATEGIC ISSUE AREA:	
Group Members: Olivia Brock	Leader: James Lewis
	Co-Leader: Sheri Rushing
GOAL: (Desired outcome)	
STRATEGY: (How to get desired outcome)	

Washington Community Health Improvement Partnership

Priority Group: *Diabetes*

SMART Objective:
By December 31, 2024, publish one article in the local newspaper regarding diabetes.

Date last updated:

STRATEGIC ISSUE AREA:

Group Members:

Leader:

Traci Corbin

Co-Leader:

Faneician Russ

GOAL:(Desired outcome)

STRATEGY:(How to get desired outcome)

Washington Community Health Improvement Partnership

Priority Group: *Diabetes*

SMART Objective:

By June 30, 2025, provide library with 20 diabetic educational kits. Will work to ensure kits provided to Director will be distributed to all libraries in Washington County.

Date last updated:

STRATEGIC ISSUE AREA:

Group Members:

Leader:

Traci Corbin

Co-Leader:

Faneician Russ

GOAL:(Desired outcome)

STRATEGY:(How to get desired outcome)

Washington Community Health Improvement Partnership

Priority Group: *Diabetes*

SMART Objective:

By December 31, 2025, publish one article in the local newspaper regarding recipe swapping to promote healthy eating.

Date last updated:

STRATEGIC ISSUE AREA:

Group Members:

Leader:

Traci Corbin

Co-Leader:

Faneician Russ

GOAL:(Desired outcome)

STRATEGY:(How to get desired outcome)

Washington Community Health Improvement Partnership

Priority Group: *Diabetes*

SMART Objective:

By December 31, 2029, partner with AHEC and other community providers to provide A1C checks at 20 community events or locations.

Date last updated:

STRATEGIC ISSUE AREA:

Group Members:

Leader:

Traci Corbin

Co-Leader:

Faneician Russ

GOAL:(Desired outcome)

STRATEGY:(How to get desired outcome)

<h1>Washington Community Health Improvement Partnership</h1>	
<h2>Priority Group: <i>Mental Health</i></h2>	
<p>SMART Objective: By December 31, 2024, NWF Health will engage in one promotion of TESS (chat text) and NWF Health resource guide for students and families.</p>	<p>Date last updated:</p>
<p>STRATEGIC ISSUE AREA:</p>	
<p>Group Members: Alexis Balbuena, Marcia Croom, Kelsey Davis, Suzette Barnes, Lauren Anzaldo, Mary Ann Roberts, Lisa Moon</p>	<p>Leader: Amber Whitford</p>
	<p>Co-Leader: Brenda Blich</p>
<p>GOAL:(Desired outcome)</p>	
<p>STRATEGY:(How to get desired outcome)</p>	

Washington Community Health Improvement Partnership

Priority Group: *Mental Health*

SMART Objective:

By December 31, 2025, create and distribute 20 mental health resource kits to Washington County Library. Director with distribute to all libraries in Washington County.

Date last updated:

STRATEGIC ISSUE AREA:

Group Members:

Alexis Balbuena, Marcia Croom, Kelsey Davis, Suzette Barnes, Lauren Anzaldo, Mary Ann Roberts, Lisa Moon

Leader:

Amber Whitford

Co-Leader

Brenda Blitch

GOAL:(Desired outcome)

STRATEGY:(How to get desired outcome)

Washington Community Health Improvement Partnership

Priority Group: *Mental Health*

SMART Objective: By December 31, 2025, implement one instance Human Trafficking Awareness Training among Washington County shared services providers.	Date last updated:
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STRATEGIC ISSUE AREA:

Group Members: Alexis Balbuena, Marcia Croom, Kelsey Davis, Suzette Barnes, Lauren Anzaldo, Mary Ann Roberts, Lisa Moon	Leader: Amber Whitford
	Co-Leader: Brenda Blitch

GOAL:(Desired outcome)

STRATEGY:(How to get desired outcome)

Washington Community Health Improvement Partnership

Priority Group: *Mental Health*

SMART Objective:

By December 31, 2029, schedule a mental health training for primary health care providers and medical staff by partnering with local colleges.

Date last updated:

STRATEGIC ISSUE AREA:

Group Members:

Alexis Balbuena, Marcia Croom, Kelsey Davis, Suzette Barnes, Lauren Anzaldo, Mary Ann Roberts, Lisa Moon

Leader:

Amber Whitford

Co-Leader:

Brenda Blitch

GOAL:(Desired outcome)

STRATEGY:(How to get desired outcome)

