



Progress Report for 2018

Live Well Gratiot is a countywide initiative focused on improving the overall health and well-being of Gratiot County residents. Through the completion a community health assessment process that utilized current health data and input from community partners, a community health improvement plan (CHIP) was developed to serve as a framework for action. This progress report focuses on the achievements of the third and final year of the 2016-2018 CHIP. Four health priorities, specifically obesity, mental health, substance use and abuse, and utilization of health services, were addressed, each with specific strategies for action.

This report describes the activities and progress within the identified health priorities of the *Live Well Gratiot* CHIP from April 2018 through March 2019. The CHIP is an evolving document, recognizing that time alters the strategies and activities that are achievable. It allows for new ideas to be considered and acted upon based on changing trends and community needs.

Live Well Gratiot would like to thank and recognize the community partners who routinely met to review and implement the CHIP during the past year. The steering committee included representatives from: Mid-Michigan District Health Department, MidMichigan Medical Center – Gratiot, Gratiot Isabella RESD, Alma College, Gratiot Integrated Health Network, Gratiot County Substance Abuse Coalition, MSU Extension, the St. Louis Farmers’ Market, and Day Dreams, Inc. . An advisory group represented by the Gratiot Collaborative Council provided valuable input into the selection of health priorities and adoption of the plan.

Priority Issue: Obesity

Goal: Reduce the prevalence of obesity for adults and youth in Gratiot County.

- *Live Well Gratiot* successfully completed a pilot project for *Prescription for Health*. With a \$4,300 grant from the Gratiot County Community Foundation (GCCF), 28 patients recruited from MidMichigan Medical Center-Gratiot (MMMCG) clinics participated in a six-week *Eat Healthy, Be Active* program taught by MSU Extension. Participants were eligible for \$100 worth of coupons to be spent on fresh produce at the St. Louis Farmer’s Market. As a result of the program, participants were given the opportunity to improve their eating habits, increase their activity level by walking throughout the market, and benefit from the social interactions of engaging with vendors and fellow participants. *Live Well Gratiot* received a second GCCF grant in March of 2019, to continue and expand the program in the summer of 2019.

- *Live Well Gratiot* worked with the Gratiot-Isabella RESD to explore opportunities to support school wellness teams and summer meal programs. This included sharing of community resources, and enhancing nutrition and physical activity programs, such as the *Promoting Active Communities* initiative.
- Alma College, in collaboration with MidMichigan Health of Breckinridge, offered an exercise program for at-risk patients, benefitting both the patients and student health coaches.

Priority Issue: Mental Health

Goal: Reduce the prevalence of untreated mental health disorders.

- In May of 2018, the Gratiot Integrated Health Network (GIHN) expanded services by opening an integrated health clinic in St. Louis. Medical appointments, in partnership with PRISM Primary Care, were added to the mental health services provide by GIHN. Initially offered to GIHN consumers, services were expanded to the community in August of 2018. Integration of these services helps to reduce the stigma of mental health concerns.
- Six Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) trainings were provided to the community throughout the year. MHFA provides instruction in recognizing risk factors and warning signs of individuals facing mental health or substance abuse crises. Strategies and skills for providing assistance, support, resources and referrals are taught to participants.

Priority Issue: Substance Use and Abuse

Goal: Reduce alcohol, tobacco and other drug use.

- The Gratiot County Substance Abuse Coalition (GCSAC) collaborates with area schools to provide the *Above the Influence* (ATI) campaign. ATI is designed to bring awareness of positive and negative influences that can affect behavior. The campaign gives students tools needed to rise above negative influences. Activities included:
 - The ATI Art Show at Alma College in May of 2018. Students presented 30 canvases of their artwork on how they choose to remain above the influence.
 - GCSAC offered ATI Awareness nights to provide education and awareness around the issues of substance abuse, vaping, bullying and suicide awareness. Activities took place at Ithaca, Alma, and Fulton Schools sporting events.
 - Ithaca, Alma and Ashley School students completed a Sticker Shock campaign at 12 area stores. Stickers placed on merchandise spread messages about preventing underage drinking .
 - Alma High School ATI students provided mentoring sessions with over 200 5th grade students on how to avoid negative influences.

- GCSAC offered the *It's All About Being A Teen* program to students in Ithaca, St. Louis and Fulton Alternative Education. This program provides mentoring and support for at-risk youth.
- Efforts to reduce maternal smoking were supported by a Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) grant received by MMDHD to address maternal and child health issues. Recognizing that 29% of pregnant women in Gratiot County smoke, exceeding the state rate of 17%, MMDHD and GCSAC joined efforts to:
 - Develop and display a billboard in November of 2018, addressing the risks of smoking while pregnant and encouraging women to call the Michigan Tobacco Quit line.
 - Develop and distribute brochures and posters to be shared throughout the county, providing women with resources and reminders about quitting.
 - Conduct outreach by sharing information through community events, agency networks and distributing information to public locations and agencies, including the Child Advocacy Baby Pantry, Pregnancy Services and local libraries.
 - Provide the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program at MMDHD with updated resource information to be shared with clients seen in clinics.

Priority Issue: Utilization of Health Services

Goal: Increase utilization of preventive health services

- MMDHD offers the *Pathways to Better Health* Program, in which community health workers (CHW) assist residents in navigating health and social service agencies. By connecting clients to services, CHW's aim to improve the health and quality of life for clients, and reduce the need to access emergency room services. Approximately 30 individuals were served on a monthly basis in the Gratiot County program.
- Gratiot Integrated Health Network (GIHN) expanded services by opening an integrated health clinic in St. Louis in May of 2018. Mental health services, along with medical care provided in partnership with PRISM Primary Care, were first offered services to GIHN consumers. Services were expanded to include the community in August 2018.
- MidMichigan Health launched an online depression screening for patients. Those identified as having risk factors are referred for services.
- MidMichigan Health expanded telemedicine services. From July 2018 through February 2019, 2,292 Gratiot County patients participated in telehealth visits.

The *Live Well Gratiot* community health assessment process is now in progress for 2019-2021, the 3rd cycle in an initiative begun in 2011. This process will involve the analysis of county and state health data, community input from the Gratiot Collaborative Council which serves as the advisory group, and the ongoing work of the steering committee. *Live Well Gratiot* will

continue to monitor the progress of its initiatives, adapt to changing trends and strive to improve the health and well-being of Gratiot County residents, so that they may reach their full health potential.

For more information regarding community health assessment, the community health improvement plan and *Live Well Gratiot*, contact:

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Gratiot County, united in a culture of healthy living.