

Prairie County Community Health Improvement Plan

PRAIRIE COUNTY

2011

Prepared by Megan Olson, AmeriCorps VISTA, Prairie County Public Health Department

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Prairie County Public Health Department in conjunction with a dedicated group of community members was the driving force for the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). Many community residents and organizations contributed valuable information and opinions throughout the entire process.

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Richland County Health Department & Communities In Action



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PRAIRIE COUNTY VISION

A Prairie County that is safe and healthy with a high quality of life for all community members.

A healthy community is one that is safe, has community pride, a high quality of life and access to health care. It has leadership that makes health a priority by promoting the health and well-being of all community members.



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INTRODUCTION

The Prairie County Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) is the culmination of a year-long collaborative effort to improve the health and well-being of the community and its residents. This is a shared responsibility, held not only by health care providers and public health officials, but community members as well. This process engaged individual community members and organizations to identify the top three health issues present in Prairie County.

The CHIP envisions the community working together to improve and sustain the health and well-being of Prairie County. The plan focuses on several key priorities and outcomes that, when achieved, will support health improvement. These include access to health care, increasing physical activity, and chronic disease prevention/education. The CHIP outlines the goal, vision, barriers, strategies and resources available for each issue for community members and organizations to work together to improve the health of Prairie County residents.

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

Prairie County offers rural living at its best with wide open spaces under the “big sky”, plenty of recreational opportunities, and an old-fashioned sense of western hospitality. The county was formed in February of 1915 from parts of Custer, Dawson, and Fallon Counties. Prairie County is located in Eastern Montana along the Yellowstone River, and is home to the scenic Terry Badlands. It is primarily a ranching and agricultural community with strong historical roots including playing host to world famous English Photographer Evelyn Cameron.

Prairie County is a frontier community with approximately 1,179 residents. The permanent population has started to decline over the past several decades as young people migrate out, leaving behind an aging population.



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METHODOLOGY

MAPP (Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships) is a community-driven strategic tool that was used throughout the entire process. The Prairie County Community Health Assessment Report was used to identify strategic health issues present in the community. Strategic issues are fundamental policy choices or critical challenges that need to be addressed to create a healthy community. Community members voted on the strategic issues and the top three were selected for the CHIP. Input was gathered from community members to develop the goal, vision, barriers, strategies, and resources to address each of the issues.

PRIORITY ISSUE #1: ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

Prairie County residents named access to health care as one of the top issues to address in the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). The inability to access quality health care services can result in health disparities in vulnerable populations, diminish overall quality of life, and have significant costs to the community. Barriers to health care extend beyond simple issues like shortage of health care providers or facilities to include the inability to pay, being underinsured or uninsured, age and availability of prevention care.

Goal: All community members will have access to affordable and high quality health care services.

Vision: Accessible health care services.

Contributing Factors and Barriers:

Health Insurance Coverage	Don't know about existing resources
Income	Availability of jobs
Cost / Affordability	Small company
Social and family support	Uninsured and Underinsured
Fear / Helplessness / Intimidation	Employment Status
Public assistance process	Complex Insurance Process
Transportation	

Suggested Intervention Strategies:

- Promote financial assistance programs at Prairie Community Clinic and Hospital.
- Educate the public about services available in Prairie County (WIC, Breast/Cervical, Clinic services, etc).
- Promote Healthy Montana Kids to families and assist with application process.
- Address health literacy and work on linguistically appropriate material (reading level).
- Promote health services and outreach activities in new ways to reach entire community.

- Educate community about immunization programs (VFC, underinsured) available in Prairie County.
- Educate community about available family planning services.
- Promote Women’s Clinic and community health education programs from Prairie Community Hospital, Clinic and health department.

Available Resources:

Federal Programs

Prescription drug programs

Healthy Montana Kids (HMK)

WIC

Prairie Community Hospital and Clinic

Prairie County Public Health Dept

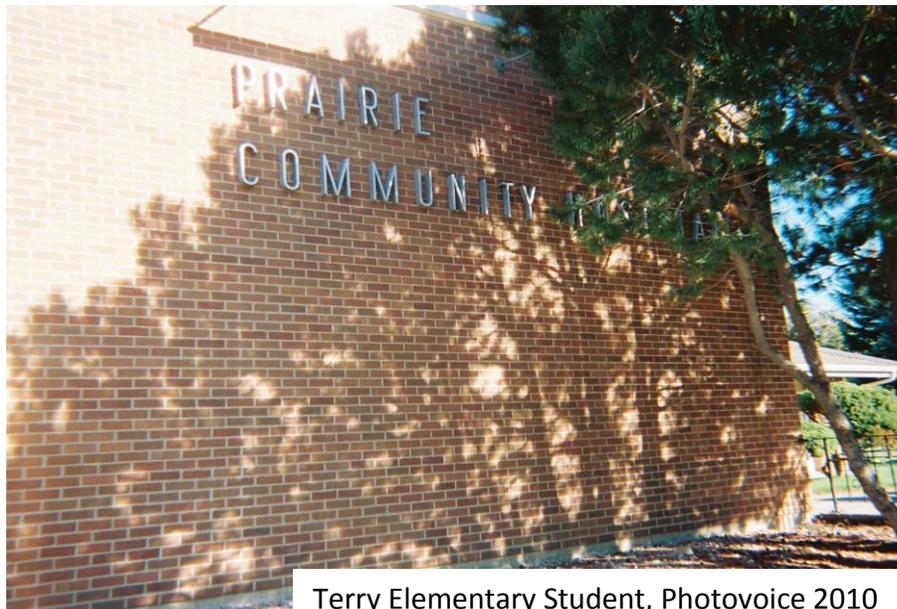
Telemedicine

MT Breast and Cervical Program

Transportation through Council on Aging

Patient Assistance Program at Clinic for Prescription

Family Planning



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PRIORITY ISSUE #2: CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION AND EDUCATION

Community members selected chronic disease prevention and education as another of the top health issues to address in the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). Heart disease is one of the leading causes of death in Prairie County and Montana according to the Montana Office of Vital Statistics. Nearly one-third of the population in Prairie County has been diagnosed with either high blood pressure or high cholesterol (BRFSS). Many of these diseases including heart disease, blood pressure and cholesterol are preventable. These diseases impact residents' quality of life, and if not properly managed increase the cost of medical care, placing a strain on limited resources in Prairie County.

Goal: All community members will know about chronic disease and prevention services available in Prairie County.

Vision: Increase in use of prevention services and decrease rates of chronic disease.

Contributing Factors & Barriers:

- Income
- Aware of available information sources
- Access to Internet
- Low promotional budgets
- Education about prevention
- Health literacy
- Motivation / attitudes

Suggested Intervention Strategies:

- Identify and promote existing health education programs in Prairie County (school, clinic, hospital, and health department).
- Promote blood pressure monitoring services in Prairie County.
- Identify populations at risk for adult and childhood immunizations.
- Use health months and weeks to education community about prevention.

- Create monthly “bathroom times” to present health information to the community at restaurants, bars, courthouse, etc.
- Share prevention services and information at community events.
- Continue to grow and promote Prairie County Health Fair.
- Focus education efforts on top chronic diseases in Prairie County.
- Use existing communication dissemination methods to share health information (school bulletin, tax mailing, etc).
- Offer screening tests for chronic diseases every year.
- Present follow-up information and material about results from health fair (informational sessions, articles, etc)

Available Resources:

Prairie County Library

Prairie Community Hospital and Clinic

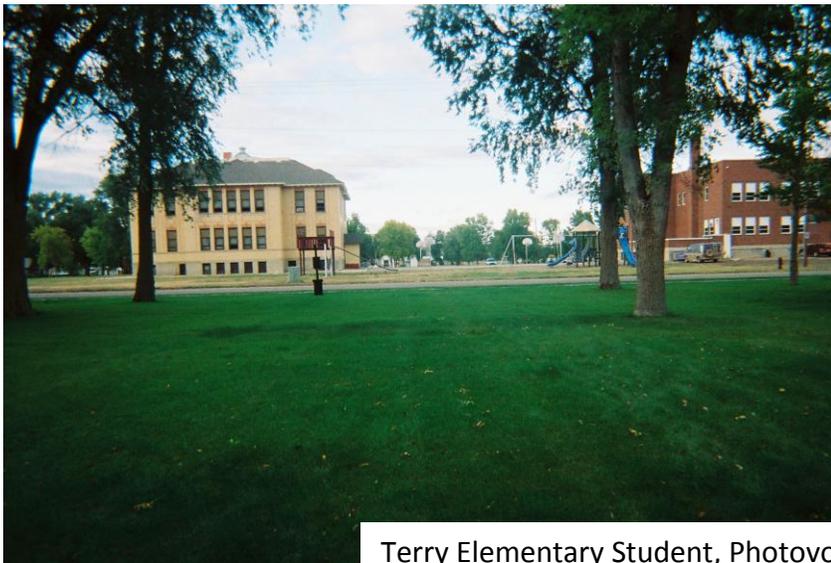
Prairie County Public Health Department

Health Fair

Community Center

Extension Agent

Available Prevention Services / Resources



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PRIORITY ISSUE #3: PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Prairie County residents identified physical health as the final top issue to work on in the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). Health experts recognize that physical activity decreases the risk for a number of chronic diseases including heart disease and the prevalence of obesity. 31% of people in Eastern Montana had no leisure-time physical activity in the past month (BRFSS). It is important to empower community residents to make healthy lifestyle decisions that include physical activity.

Goal: Community members will have access to physical activity and fitness options. Community members will lead a more active and healthy lifestyle.

Vision: Increased physical activity, and lowered rates of obesity in Prairie County.

Contributing Factors & Barriers:

Knowledge

Disabilities

Lifestyle

Motivation / Attitudes

Access to exercise opportunities

Concern about safety

Environment unfavorable to physical activity

Time Constraints

No positive role models

Weather

Chronic illness

Suggested Intervention Strategies:

- Promote local exercise options available in Prairie County.
- Promote exercise classes and equipment at Prairie Community Center.
- Develop educational messages about healthy lifestyles and a dissemination plan.
- Assess physical activity options in school and the after-school program.
- Encourage local employers to offer exercise and stretching breaks.
- Create age-appropriate community walking groups.
- Develop walking paths and sidewalks in Prairie County.

- Promote community members walking and riding bikes to school and work once a month.
- Determine if financial barriers exist to participation in sports in Prairie County.
- Look into available funding options for physical activity and sport programs.

Available Resources:

Murn Park

Community Center

Calyпсо Trail

Sport Fields / Courts

School physical education

After-school program

Terry Badlands

Pool

School athletic programs

Yellowstone River

National Discussion / Funding

Outdoor activities



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PUTTING THE PLAN INTO ACTION

Now that the CHIP is complete, community members will move to the Action Phase. This part of the cycle consists of Planning, Implementing and Evaluating initiatives and interventions to reach measurable objectives for each issue. Measurable objectives will be set and strategies selected by community members. Evaluation will be an integral piece of the process and measure progress toward the goals.

The CHIP was designed to be living document, meaning it can and should be modified as progress is made and new community partners contribute. Community members will work on the strategies in the CHIP to improve the health and well-being of Prairie County.

All community residents and organizations are invited to join the health improvement effort. For more information or to become involved, please contact the Prairie County Public Health Department.



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SOURCES

Acknowledgements: Picture from Prairie County Photovoice 2010.

Vision: Picture from Prairie County Photovoice 2010.

Community Overview: Picture from Prairie County Photovoice 2010.

Access to Health Care: Picture from Prairie County Photovoice 2010.

Chronic Disease Education & Prevention: Montana Vital Statistics, 2004 – 0; Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) 2009; Picture from Prairie County Photovoice 2010.

Physical Activity: Montana Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) 2008; Picture from Prairie County Photovoice 2010.

Putting the Plan Into Action: Picture from Prairie County Photovoice 2010.

