

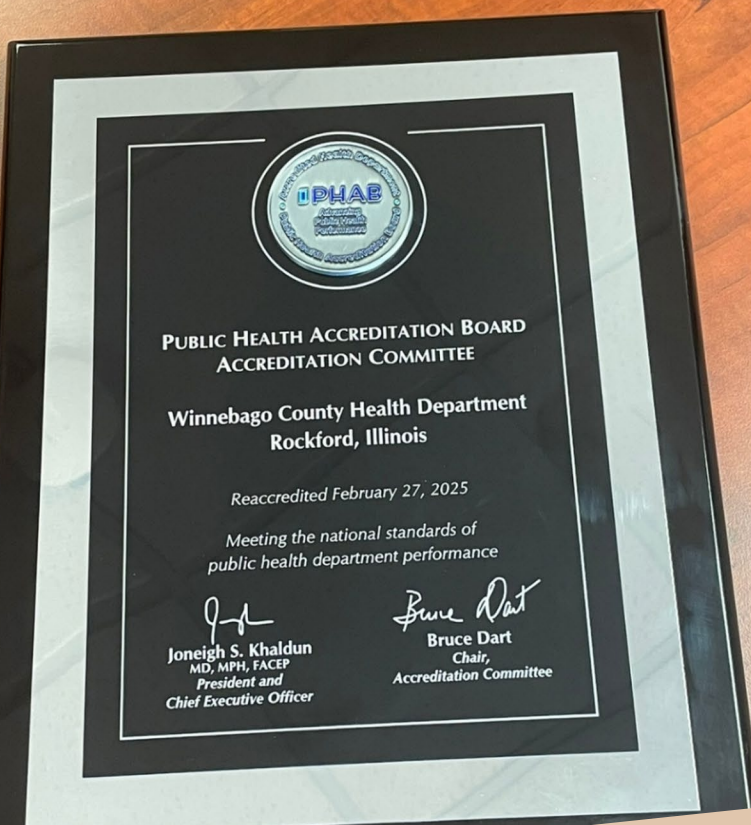


Winnebago County

Health Department

2025 Annual Report

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Winnebago County

Health Department





LETTER FROM THE PUBLIC HEALTH ADMINISTRATOR

Healthy People In A Healthy Community That Promotes Optimal Health For All

The Winnebago County Health Department seeks to engage the community to promote conditions for all residents to achieve optimal health.

2025 was a banner year for the Winnebago County Health Department (WCHD) as the state certified, nationally accredited health department committed to improving the health of all residents of Winnebago County.

The Winnebago County Board of Health reviewed and refreshed the Strategic Plan with input from the staff. The strategic plan defines the priorities and guides decision making and alignment of resources. The value of trustworthy was added by the staff conveying their commitment to honesty and truth in the work. Every WCHD employee participates in the Strategic Plan developing and implementing the action steps to achieve the goals and objectives. The annual Strategic Plan report details the activities of the workgroups over the past year.

WCHD completed and submitted the community health assessment and improvement plan/Illinois Project for Local Assessment of Needs (IPLAN) required for certification as a local health department. The process affirmed again the long-standing priorities of maternal and child health, mental and behavioral health, and violence that will be the focus of efforts of WCHD with its community partners over the next five (5) years. Based on these priorities, WCHD sought grant funding to support public health nurse home visiting for all families, access to mental health self-help resources and support interventions including physical activity and the arts to reduce anxiety and depressions, distribution of firearm safe storage options in healthcare settings, and healthy homes.

Becoming a trauma-informed community that recognizes the impact and strives to build resiliency continues to be an overarching connection to the three health priorities. WCHD and its partners implemented advanced trainings and engaged with schools to address trauma and its impact on the community.

WCHD was reaccredited by the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB). The reaccreditation process recognizes the ongoing commitment of WCHD to continual performance improvement, enhancing accountability, and strengthening services. Throughout this report are examples of the work being done by the health department teams that demonstrate the high standards of PHAB reaccreditation.

Thank you for all of our partners who have been part of the journey. On behalf of the Board of Health, I and the entire WCHD staff remain committed to building a **Safer, Stronger, Healthier Community** for all in Winnebago County built on a foundation of trust.

Your Health Strategist,

Sandra Martell, RN DNP
Public Health Administrator

Building a Safer, Stronger, Healthier Community

Winnebago County Health Department's (WCHD) Progress Toward Three (3) Health Priorities

Maternal & Child Health

Violence

Mental & Behavioral Health

- Launched Winning Start Winnebago, a community-wide initiative to improve maternal and child health outcomes with funding from the Illinois Department of Public Health and support from community partners to include:
 - Universal Newborn Support Services (UNSS) or universal home visiting by public health nurses for all families using the Family Connects International model.
 - A Doula Development Program (DDP) to expand access to trained doulas to support birthing mothers.
 - Five (5) DDP participants were recruited.
- Expanded capacity for long-term home visiting in coordination with igrow partners.
- Revised trauma informed proclamation for adoption by local community agencies and provided resources to support organizations becoming trauma informed.
- To reduce firearm injuries and deaths from accidents and suicides, distributed approximately 3,200 gun locks with education.
- Brought advanced trauma trainings to the community with funding from the Winnebago County Community Mental Health Board.
- Launched the Take Ten 815 website in partnership with CredibleMind to bring free mental health resources to the community, including self-assessments.
 - Had over 4,000 visits to the Take Ten 815 website in 2025.
- Encouraged residents to Take Ten minutes a day for their mental well-being.
- Distributed 74 Red Boxes with life-saving naloxone to community sites and local business.

Core Public Health

- Received reaccreditation from the Public Health Accreditation Board reinforcing that WCHD meets or exceeds national standards for local public health practice.
- Certified by the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) as a local health department for meeting state standards and given authority to enforce health regulations.
- Submitted IPLAN 2025-2030 to IDPH and identified three health priorities: Maternal and Child Health, Violence, and Mental and Behavioral Health.

Responses

- Conducted contact tracing and investigation on an increase of active tuberculosis cases.
- Monitored for measles and other respiratory illnesses.
- Issued health and safety messages in response to extreme weather conditions.
- Monitored air quality to provide guidance in response to unhealthy air quality events.

Collaboration

- Participated in the first Opioid Fatality Review Team.
- Worked with the Village of Rockton in connecting residents impacted by Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) to municipal water and oversaw the sealing of 50 impacted private wells.
- Worked with Winnebago County WinGIS to integrate a groundwater contamination layer in geographical data.



Monitor Health

To improve and protect health, WCHD conducts ongoing surveillance to monitor population health trends while providing timely information, resources, and support to the community.

By March of 2025, measles cases were occurring in multiple states. WCHD conducted active surveillance for measles and issued a health alert on March 13 to healthcare providers and daycare providers due to expected traveling during spring break. Throughout the year, WCHD remained responsive to provider inquiries regarding suspected measles infections. While fourteen (14) measles cases were recorded in Illinois, none occurred in Winnebago County.

WCHD continued respiratory disease surveillance throughout 2025, including monitoring emergency department visits for respiratory-related illnesses, intensive care unit (ICU) admissions, and respiratory outbreaks in long-term care facilities. There were more cases of ICU admissions for influenza, coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) in 2025 compared to the previous year. While WCHD also monitored for Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza A (H5N1) in both animals and humans, no cases were identified in Winnebago County.

WCHD followed more cases of tuberculosis (TB) identified through healthcare systems than in the previous nine years. Individuals with active TB are infectious and must undergo case investigation and management. To reduce the risk to others in the community, close contacts are tested twice: initially to identify latent infections (those not likely to spread disease) and later to identify new active cases resulting from the exposure. Treatment was provided through Directly Observed Therapy by WCHD for all active TB cases and latent TB cases that chose treatment.

With 1,177 cases reported, chlamydia was the most reported disease and condition in Winnebago County in 2025. WCHD follows up on all reported cases of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) to provide guidance on testing, treatment, and talking with partners. While cases of STIs including chlamydia remain elevated in Winnebago County, there was a decline across all STIs in the number of cases from the previous year.

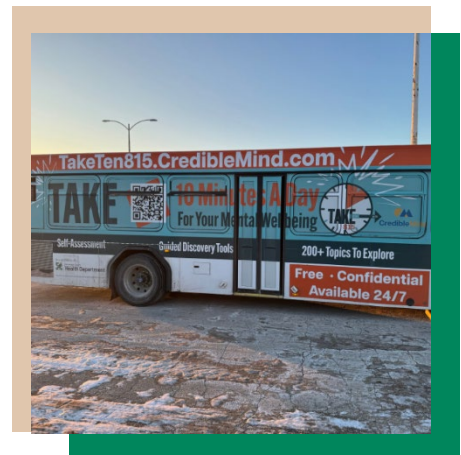
To monitor the risk of vector-borne disease, WCHD continued to conduct surveillance of the mosquito and tick populations in Winnebago County. To monitor for West Nile virus (WNV) in mosquitoes, WCHD collected and tested sixty-two (62) mosquito pools from locations across the county. Twelve (12) mosquito pools tested positive for WNV. The first positive pool statewide for the year occurred in May in Winnebago County and IDPH issued a news release. To eliminate breeding sites for the *Culex* mosquitoes, the primary vector for WNV, WCHD hosted another tire recycling drop off event on May 10 to remove tires from the community. Tick collections done throughout Winnebago County by WCHD and other state partners tested positive for the following Lyme disease, anaplasmosis, Babesiosis, and Powassan virus.



Diagnose & Investigate

Through the diagnosis, investigation, and response to public health concerns, WCHD identified and addressed the following notable issues in 2025:

- **Viral Acute Gastroenteritis in Long-Term Care Facilities:**
WCHD worked with four (4) long-term care facilities (LTCFs) experiencing Viral Acute Gastroenteritis (AGE) outbreaks to provide guidance and mitigation.
- **Antimicrobial Resistant Organisms in Long-Term Care Facility:**
WCHD assisted with the *Carbapenem-resistant Enterobacterales (CRE)* screening within a long-term care facility to prevent further illness and protect resident health. The CRE screening was part of a point prevalence survey (PPS) requested by IDPH to measure the burden of CRE in the facility. WCHD conducted outreach efforts to reach approximately 48% of residents and/or their powers of attorney to discuss the need for screening. Also, WCHD trained the facility's nurses on how to administer the screening. Of the 25 residents screened, all results were negative. Additionally, WCHD assisted two (2) other long-term care facilities with the identification and prevention of further spread of two (2) other healthcare acquired infections: *Carbapenem-resistant Acinetobacter baumannii* (CRAB) and invasive Group A Streptococcal disease.
- **Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease (HFMD):**
WCHD worked with 12 daycares/schools that were experiencing or close to outbreak status for HFMD to prevent the spread. While common in children under five (5), HFMD can spread quickly in schools and daycares.
- **Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) in Well Water:**
WCHD received and reviewed a report from the IDPH Toxicology Department regarding the assessment of PFAS in the Wright Kiles Blackhawk neighborhood in Rockton. WCHD oversaw the sealing of 50 private impacted water wells in this neighborhood as residents were connected to municipal water sources.
- **Small Community Water Security Planning:**
WCHD provided technical guidance to Winnebago County for the development of a countywide plan addressing findings from the Small Community Water Security Assessment Report. This report included a visual map to identify small community water systems, their service boundaries, and their proximity to larger water systems that could serve as alternative water sources in the event of system failure.



Communicate

WCHD used a comprehensive communications approach throughout 2025 to advance public health priorities and utilized a variety of communication pathways including social media, websites, billboards, and transit promotion to deliver timely, actionable messages, encouraging residents to protect and improve their health.

WCHD launched the *Take Ten 815 with CredibleMind* campaign to encourage all residents to **Take Ten** minutes each day for their mental wellbeing. This campaign promoted the use of the **Take Ten 815** website through CredibleMind, [taketen815.crediblemind.com](https://www.taketen815.crediblemind.com), which gives residents free access to trusted, evidence-based self-care tools to improve their mental wellbeing. The campaign was supported through billboards, transit advertising, community events, and outreach materials to increase awareness and access to mental health resources across the county.

On May 12, in collaboration with IDPH, Alignment Rockford, and healthcare system partners, WCHD launched *Winning Start Winnebago (WSW)*, a countywide initiative providing free home visiting services to support healthy pregnancies, child development, and family bonding, giving every baby in Winnebago County a WINNING START. Community partners attended a public announcement prior to families engaging with WSW staff at the Discovery Center Museum. WCHD worked with Alignment Rockford on WSW's brand development while healthcare partners used handouts and posters to promote WSW as continued care after giving birth and returning home.

WCHD encouraged residents to "Be Naloxone Ready" and raised awareness of "Red Boxes" in the community that provide free naloxone. Coordinating with its Opioid Response Team partners and "Red Box" partners, WCHD created a short video to remind residents that opioid overdoses impact our community and that community partners throughout the county provide access to naloxone. In recognition of International Overdose Awareness Day on August 31, this video was shared on social media, while local media reported on the availability of "Red Boxes" in the community.

In response to cold weather, potential extreme heat, unhealthy air quality, and a flash flood warning, WCHD communicated health and safety messages to residents through the WCHD website and social media.

In collaboration with Northern Illinois Public Health Consortium (NIPHC) partners, WCHD participated in the National Public Health Week's *It Starts Here* campaign and highlighted the three (3) health priorities and a variety of WCHD services. The *Love Yourself Enough To Know* campaign was launched by WCHD in conjunction with HIV Testing Day to encourage residents to take action on their health. WCHD began 2025 with a similar campaign, *New Year, New Beginnings*, which encouraged smoking cessation, radon testing, and the use of free gun locks. Finally, WCHD leveraged Heart Health Awareness month in February to get residents started on a heart healthy lifestyle, connect residents to WISEWOMAN - WCHD's heart health program, and encourage residents to learn CPR as well as recognize the signs of heart attack and stroke.



Community & Partners

Building a **Safer, Stronger, Healthier Community** requires strong collaboration with partners and residents. Throughout 2025, WCHD continued to convene partners and align efforts to address health priorities and improve health outcomes.

In 2025, WCHD's Violence Reduction Workgroup (VRW) revised the Trauma Informed Proclamation, designed to encourage organizations to integrate trauma-informed principles into their policies and practices. To support agencies that commit to becoming trauma informed, WCHD launched a dedicated webpage to share trauma-informed resources, including a sample policy. Additionally, WCHD contracted with the Illinois Coalition on Youth (ICOY) to host quarterly meetings and provide technical assistance opportunities for organizations that signed the proclamation. ICOY also continued to provide advanced trauma trainings in the community through funding from the Winnebago County Community Mental Health Board on topics including trauma informed supervision, trauma informed de-escalation, building a trauma informed organization, and fostering effective relationships with family. WCHD continued efforts to prevent suicides and accidents from firearms by promoting secure and responsible gun storage and expanding distribution of gun locks through healthcare partnerships.

To improve maternal, child, and infant health, WCHD convened the Maternal, Infant, and Child Health Team to share information on urgent maternal warning signs, respectful care, and the implementation of a universal home visiting program. WCHD continued to facilitate coordinated intake for home visiting programs with igrow partners. All igrow partners were at caseload capacity during 2025, reflecting strong program management and sustained service delivery. Collectively, these efforts strengthened community access to prevention, education, and support services.

Additional partnership efforts included tobacco and vaping prevention through the Tobacco-Free Communities program. WCHD partnered with local schools to bring evidence-based substance use prevention education to students, addressing underage drinking and vaping in middle schools using the *Too Good for Drugs* curriculum. Youth engagement remained a priority through coordination of the Youth Leadership Council (YLC). YLC members planned and hosted a professional development workshop for high school students, participated in National Prevention Week activities, and created social media videos promoting the Take Ten 815 mental wellbeing message.

Through partnership in WCHD's Communities of Concern (COC), WCHD expanded capacity to address mental and behavioral health disparities. In 2025, WCHD advanced mental and behavioral health efforts with a focus on increasing access to prevention, education, and self-care resources. The COC planned a **Get Your Health in Line** event on May 28, which featured a guest speaker on mental health, along with line dancing, and a live demonstration of the Take Ten 815 with CredibleMind website. This event and others like it engaged residents in activities that support mental wellbeing and connect them to local resources.



Policies & Plans

In 2025, WCHD advanced its Strategic Plan and core public health functions through continued accreditation, implementation of the IPLAN 2025-2030, and strengthened preparedness and environmental health efforts.

WCHD achieved reaccreditation through the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) in February, affirming that WCHD continued to meet or exceed current national standards for public health practice. Staff supported reaccreditation by improving documentation, strengthening alignment across programs, and enhancing use of the Knowledge Management System.

Implementation of the IPLAN 2025-2030 remained a central focus. After the IPLAN was finalized, following completion of community assessments, WCHD worked across departments to align strategic objectives, data, and reporting with identified health priorities. Strategic workgroups met regularly to support quality improvement, grant alignment, workforce development, policy initiatives, and partner engagement. Updates to the Strategic Plan were reviewed by leadership, staff, the Quality Committee, and the Board of Health.

WCHD continued to strengthen public health preparedness plans and participated in regional disaster drills, hospital surge exercises, and mutual aid request drills. WCHD expanded outreach for the Registry for Individuals with Disabilities for Emergencies (RIDE) to support residents who may need additional assistance during emergencies. Using Qualtrics, WCHD made improvements to registration, notification, and documentation processes for preparedness activities and community events.

Preparedness efforts also included Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) engagement, notification drills, and community trainings. In partnership with the Tommy Coral Memorial Foundation, WCHD hosted Adult and Youth Mental Health First Aid for MRC volunteers and community members. Additionally, MRC volunteers provided CPR, First Aid Anywhere, and naloxone training to individuals over 65 years old and to those with access and functional needs, increasing community readiness and resilience. MRC volunteers supported preparedness operations, outreach, and special events throughout the year, including by reading to children in WIC the waiting area as part of the partnership with United Way's Reach Out and Read program. MRC volunteers provided an estimated cost savings to the community of \$8,090.72.

Environmental health efforts focused on improving water quality communication and coordination. WCHD collaborated with local water system providers and municipalities to strengthen protocols for water shutoff notifications and public health response, while continuing to encourage intergovernmental agreements to streamline communication and define responsibilities.



Laws & Regulations

Laws, executive actions, ordinances, and regulations directly influence local public health. In 2025, WCHD, in collaboration with the Northern Illinois Public Health Consortium (NIPHC), monitored and responded to policy changes affecting public health authority, funding, and operations. This included monitoring proposed legislation related to food safety, mobile food units, and the Meat and Poultry Inspection Act. WCHD and NIPHC shared health and safety concerns with elected officials and monitored bills through adjournment.

WCHD monitored federal funding and guidance adapting to changes to maintain programming for lead mitigation and refugee health.

WCHD contributed to regional environmental health planning through participation in the Region 1 Planning Council's Climate Resiliency Forum, which resulted in the development of a regional Climate Action Plan to guide coordinated responses to climate-related health risks.

WCHD continued implementation of the updated Illinois Food Code and conducted routine food inspections throughout the year, completing 5,571 inspections and rechecks. WCHD completed inspections for mobile food units, summer and after-school food programs, and high-risk food establishments, supporting food safety compliance and the prevention of foodborne illness.



Equitable Access

Ensuring access to the conditions, information, and systems that help support improved health outcomes builds a **Safer, Stronger, Healthier Community**.

To improve access to mental health resources, WCHD launched the Take Ten 815 with CredibleMind website that provides free mental health assessments, evidence-based tools, and resources to Winnebago County residents. Through the website, residents are linked to local resources to support their mental wellbeing. In 2025, there were over 4,000 users to this website.

WCHD advanced countywide opioid overdose prevention efforts through continued expansion of the WINNIE Harm Reduction Program, which resulted in a 98% increase in participants, 739 compared to 374 the previous year. Outreach and naloxone education were provided consistently at the Winnebago County Courthouse, Remedies, and numerous community partner sites, with 7,377 naloxone kits distributed in 2025. WCHD also increased access to naloxone through expansion of "Red Boxes" with naloxone at businesses and organizations throughout the community. Additionally, WCHD continued to lead the Winnebago County Opioid Response Team and Drug Overdose Prevention Program Coalition in the coordination of harm reduction and prevention strategies.

WCHD continued to address maternal, infant, and child health concerns through collaboration with partners. In coordination with the Maternal, Infant, and Child Health Team (MIGHT) and Alignment Rockford, WCHD launched Winning Start Winnebago with the county's Universal Newborn Support System, using the Family Connects International model. WCHD secured the Birth Equity Innovation Seeds Grant, completed all requirements for Family Connects certification, and launched universal home visiting services in August. Partnerships with local hospitals and community organizations were strengthened to support referrals, coordinated intake, and community engagement. WCHD also advanced the Doula Development Program by awarding scholarships, selecting a certified trainer, preparing candidates for training, and monitoring candidates' progress. Supported by coordination with healthcare partners, WCHD strengthened referral processes for the Illinois Breast and Cervical Cancer Program and WISEWOMAN program, improving access to services. WCHD also improved access to nutritious fruits and vegetables for families through the Illinois Special Nutrition Action (Farmers Market) achieving a 57% redemption rate, compared to the state average of 38%. WCHD continued collaboration with United Way to expand the *Reach Out and Read* program, providing thousands of books to WIC families in multiple languages.

Using a trauma-informed approach to improve health outcomes, WCHD linked clients with community resources to assist with mental health, condemnation, homelessness, food insecurity, and other needs. In addition, WCHD expanded access to U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development services by re-establishing agreements with neighboring county health departments, increasing the number of residents able to access services.



Workforce

WCHD employees are dedicated to serving the Winnebago County community and strengthening the local public health system through a skilled, prepared, and adaptable workforce. In 2025, WCHD invested in staffing, training, and professional development to meet emerging community needs and support expanding programs.

WCHD actively recruited for key positions, including public health nurses, environmental health inspectors, substance use and overdose prevention specialists, and a mental health outreach coordinator. Additional staffing supported new and expanded initiatives, including Winning Start Winnebago. Seasonal and part-time environmental health inspector positions ensured coverage during peak festival and event seasons.

WCHD received results from participating in the PH WINS (Public Health Workforces Interests and Needs Survey) conducted by the de Beaumont Foundation and the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials. Data collected measured strengths and gaps in the public health workforce to help inform decisions. Results indicated that WCHD staff reported high job satisfaction, satisfaction with organizational structure, and sense of belonging. Employees identified training priorities in budget and financial management, change management, and policy engagement.

WCHD staff were provided introductory trainings on policy and finance during WCHD's All Staff meetings each quarter to help build capacity, competency, and confidence in public health finance and policy development. Select WCHD staff participated in the Family Connects International Academy, along with database and clinical trainings, to support universal home visiting under Winning Start Winnebago to ensure program fidelity.

WCHD continued to support the advancement of a public health workforce through the sharing of experiences and conference participation. The Director of Public Health Policy shared his experience in the *New to Public Health* group in a podcast about the program. Staff attended several conferences including the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) Preparedness Summit, National Public Health Information Coalition's National Conference on Health Communication Marketing and Media, IDPH Public Health and Health Care Preparedness Summit, and WIC and breastfeeding conferences.



Improve & Innovate

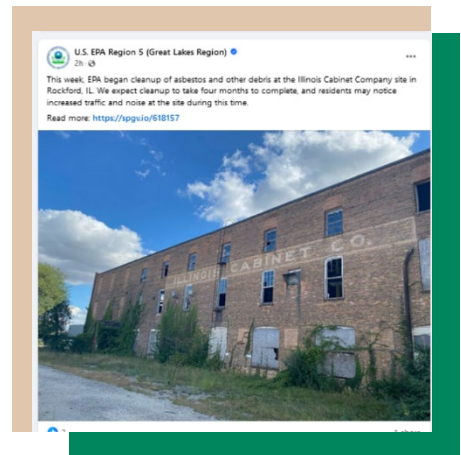
In 2025, WCHD focused on strengthening systems, expanding staff engagement, and improving transparency to enhance programs and services. WCHD's 2025 Quality Improvement (QI) Plan aligned with both the Strategic Plan and IPLAN. The QI Plan emphasized consistent use of the Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) methodology.

WCHD strengthened its performance management system by restructuring the Knowledge Management System (KMS) to integrate the Strategic Plan, QI Plan, IPLAN 2025–2030, Workforce Development Plan, and Emergency Operations Plan. The updated KMS now serves as a centralized platform for tracking QI goals, objectives, and Center-level initiatives.

The 2025 QI Plan prioritized broad staff participation and diverse perspectives. With more than 50% of WCHD staff participating in a QI initiative, staff from across centers applied QI tools and PDSA cycles to implement and assess improvements. 2025 QI initiatives were evaluated to determine whether changes should be adopted, adapted, or refined for continuation into the 2026 QI cycle. WCHD used QI Storyboards to summarize project goals, outcomes, and lessons learned. Three (3) 2025 QI projects are highlighted below:

- **Increasing Collaboration Among Strategic Workgroups**
WCHD dedicates time for all staff to advance strategic goals and objectives to improve health in Winnebago County through participation in workgroups. WCHD developed shared goals that could improve strategic efficiencies, identified additional opportunities for cross-collaboration among workgroups, and implemented a unified method for tracking workgroup progress and outcomes.
- **Foodborne Illness Response Timeliness**
The Health Protection Center and Environmental Health Improvement Center updated the foodborne illness response process to support assessment and mitigation within 48 hours of notification. WCHD explored Qualtrics ticketing features to streamline intake, tracking, and follow-up of foodborne illness complaints.
- **Increasing Caseload Rates in the WIC Program**
The Health Promotion and Wellness Center identified factors that influence caseload and implemented processes to address these factors including improved collaboration with community partners, calling missed appointments for reschedule, and increasing outreach at community events. Caseload rates increased from 80% to 89% of the assigned caseload of 6,961.

WCHD's 2025 QI projects can be viewed on the WCHD website at: publichealth.wincoil.gov/data-and-reports/qualityimprovement



Infrastructure

Through advocacy, collaboration, and financial stewardship, WCHD continued to strengthen the public health infrastructure that protects the health of Winnebago County residents.

Public health systems that address the three (3) health priorities were advanced through collaboration with partners. WCHD participated in the Mental and Behavioral Health Advisory Committee which consulted Guidehouse, a professional research contractor, to address system access and coordination. The Public Health Administrator participated in the county's first Opioid Overdose Fatality Review, contributing public health expertise to identify system gaps and prevent overdoses. Recommendations were made regarding assessing individuals under the age of 18 years for school enrollment/attendance based on the cases that were reviewed. Maternal and child health efforts advanced through participation in the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) waiver, *Transforming Maternal Health (TMaH)*, with Winnebago County selected to improve outcomes for women and newborns enrolled in Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program through strengthened access, quality, and care delivery systems. The Public Health Administrator participated in the first Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team (DVFRT) series to review and provide opportunities to improve systems addressing domestic violence.

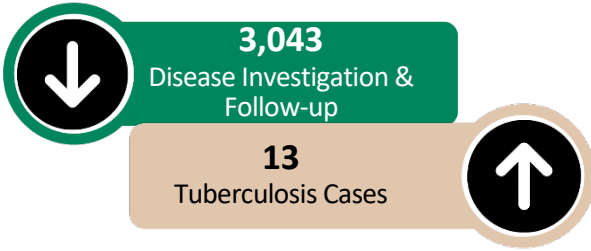
Public health data capacity and transparency were enhanced with the addition of a groundwater contamination layer in the geographical data for Winnebago County WinGIS and by WCHD gaining access to Metopio data through regional partnerships, supporting community health assessment and planning. Metopio data is community health analytics that integrates maps to visualize social determinants of health (SDOH) demographic, economic, and health outcome data. Access to WinGIS data provides more detailed information for staff and clients, especially on new water wells, realty inspections, and overall awareness of possible groundwater contamination plume movements.

WCHD addressed environmental health concerns with secured funding and partner collaboration. WCHD secured \$1.5 million through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to implement a Healthy Homes initiative focused on reducing hazards such as mold, radon, and lead exposure. WCHD collaborated with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on asbestos mitigation at the former Illinois Cabinet Factory, with final reporting confirming no significant air quality exceedances. Additionally, when state and federal partners assessed potential environmental contaminants within the former Camp Grant footprint, WCHD provided guidance on educational materials for the community. WCHD also supported community communication following Right-To-Know notices related to PFAS levels issued by the Village of Rockton and the North Park Water System.

WCHD monitored and responded to the impacts of federal funding cuts, which posed a significant risk to public health operations. The Public Health Administrator participated in statewide workgroups to review core services, community partnerships, and public health assessments to transform public health and the public health workforce. The transformation efforts focused on building an infrastructure to ensure that all residents in Illinois are served by a local health department with the capacity and capability to support public health.

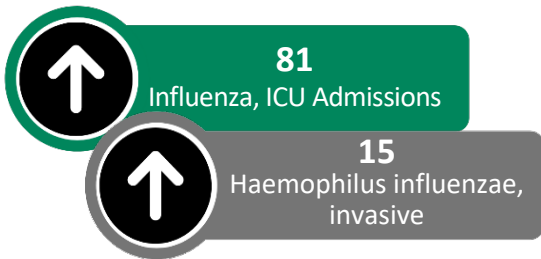
Disease Investigation & Prevention

WCHD investigated disease cases as necessary to contain and control the spread of disease. While disease investigations overall continued to decline, tuberculosis cases increased.



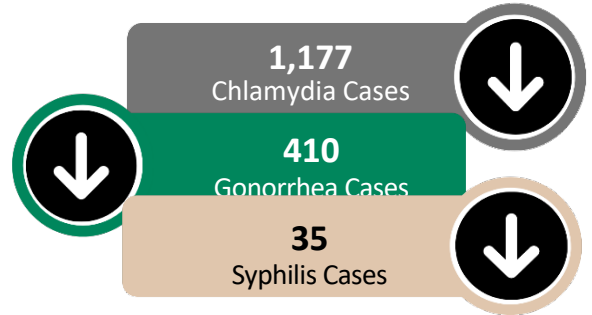
Vaccine Preventable Disease

Vaccines help to prevent disease. There was an increase in vaccine preventable diseases in Winnebago County in 2025 due to an increase in reportable influenza cases.



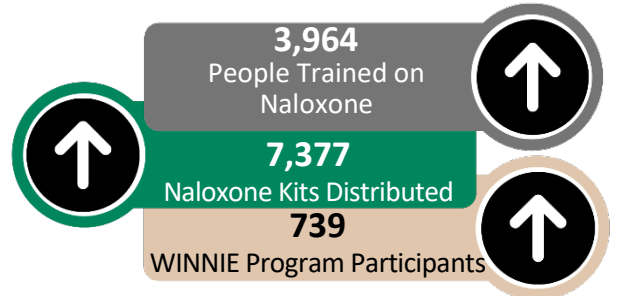
Sexually Transmitted Infections/Diseases

While Sexually Transmitted Infections/Diseases (STI/STDs) decreased overall, chlamydia remained the most prominently reported condition in Winnebago County for 2025.



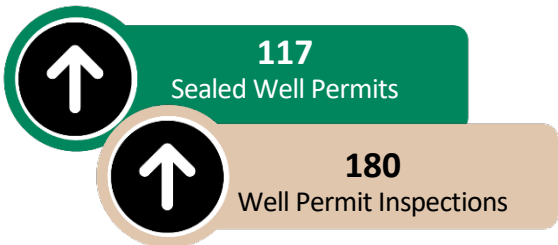
Harm Reduction & Opioid Overdose Prevention

Participation increased in WCHD's harm reduction services (WINNIE program). To prevent opioid overdoses, more people were trained on naloxone use and more naloxone kits were distributed.



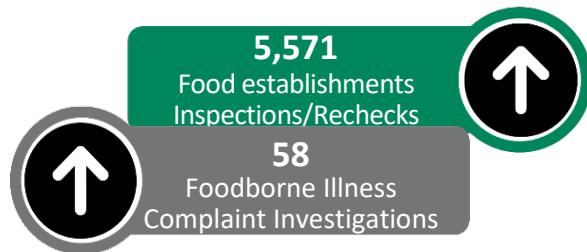
Well and Septic Evaluations

Residences not connected to municipal water or community well water use a private well and/or septic system. WCHD inspects and permits private wells, sealed wells, and septic systems.



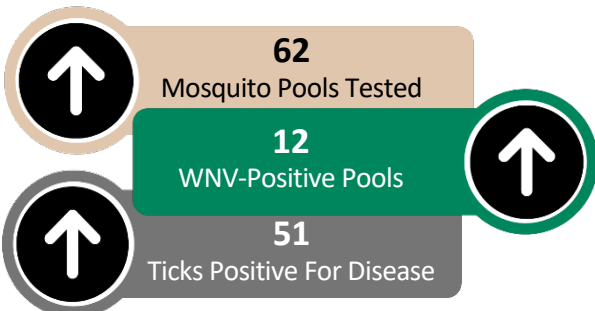
Food Establishments

WCHD permits and inspects food establishments in Winnebago County. In 2025, the total number of inspections and rechecks increased as did the number of investigations for illness complaints.



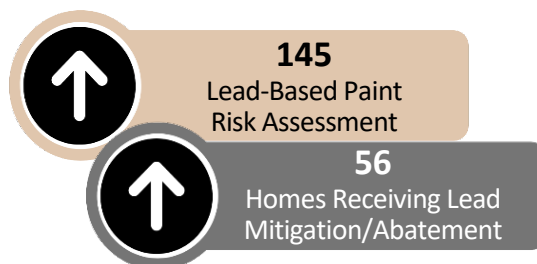
Vector Control

WCHD monitors for vector borne disease including WNV (spread through mosquitoes) and Lyme disease (spread through ticks). To test for these diseases locally, WCHD gathers mosquitoes in groups (pools) and collects ticks.



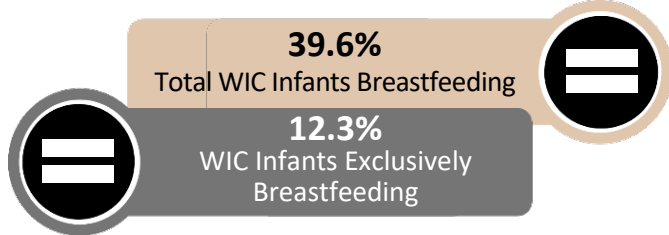
Lead Poisoning Prevention

WCHD conducts lead-based paint risk assessments to help families reduce and prevent exposure to lead in their home. Through grants obtained by WCHD, some homes qualify for mitigation assistance to remove the lead sources.



Women, Infants, and Children Program

WCHD helps to provide supplemental nutrition to pregnant and breastfeeding women, and children up to age 5 through the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program. WCHD works to increase the percentage of WIC infants that are breastfeed. In 2025, both the rate of total breastfeeding and exclusive breastfeeding for WIC infants remained stable.



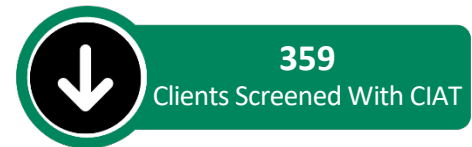
Tobacco Free Communities

WCHD advocates for clean air in public spaces and educates businesses about the Smoke Free Illinois Act, including the prevention of the sale of tobacco to youth. WCHD conducts compliance checks and assists local law enforcement in preventing the sale of tobacco to youth.



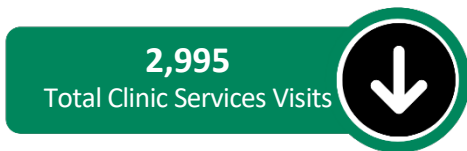
Home Visiting Program

WCHD works with families with young children to ensure they are developing and ready for kindergarten through the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting programs. As coordinated intake for families, WCHD identified each family's unique needs with the help of a Coordinated Intake Assessment Tool (CIAT) and matched them with services provided through multiple community partners (igrow partners). All igrow partners were at caseload capacity during 2025 and Family Connects International (FCI) was implemented in September.



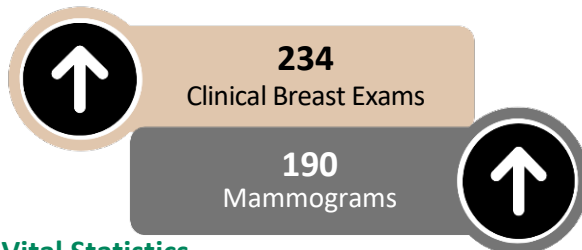
Clinical Services

WCHD provides limited clinical services for women's health screenings, pregnancy testing, STD/STI screenings, fertility and birth control access. Clinical services are focused on clients without health insurance or inadequate health insurance.



Cancer Screenings & Treatment

Breast and Cervical Cancer Screenings can detect cancer early when it is easier to treat. WCHD helps those who need assistance paying for routine screening or treatment get access to services through the Illinois Breast and Cervical Cancer Program (IBCCP).



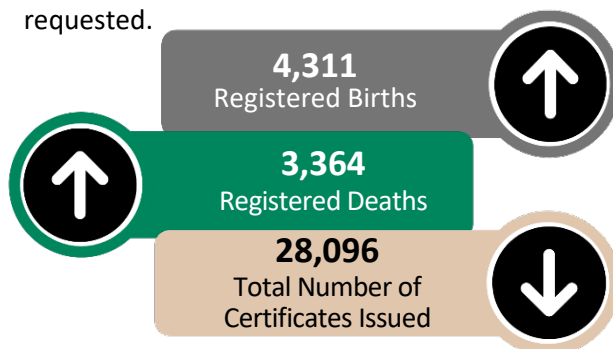
Tuberculosis Prevention & Care

With more TB cases in the community, WCHD used additional resources to help impacted individuals get treatment and prevent the spread. WCHD saw more clients in 2025 for case management and directly observed therapy.



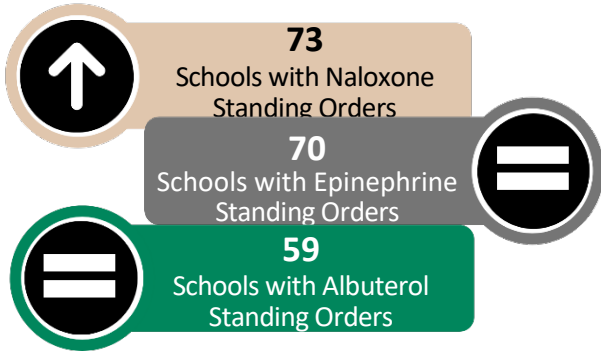
Vital Statistics

As the Local Registrar, WCHD is responsible for recording the number of births and deaths in the county each year, and issues copies of certificates requested.



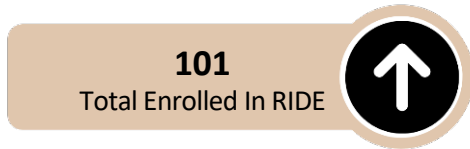
Standing Orders at Schools

WCHD works with schools to provide standing orders for life saving medications.



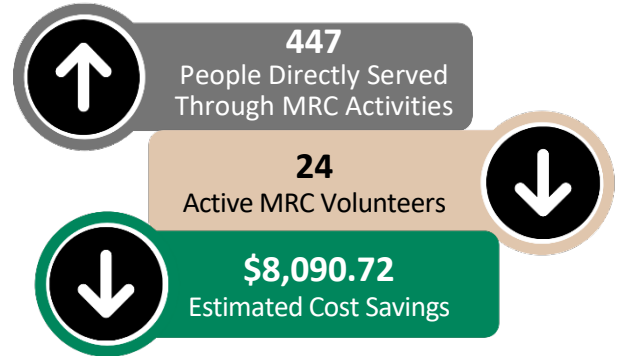
Registry for Individuals with Disabilities for Emergencies (RIDE)

WCHD continued to work to identify individuals in the community who have access and functional needs to better plan with them for emergencies.



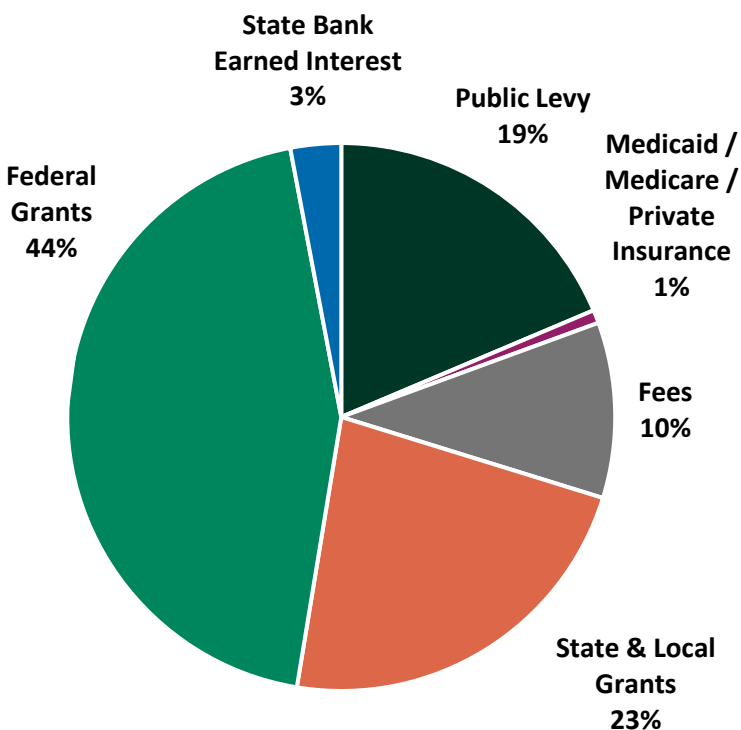
Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) Volunteers

WCHD recruits, screens, trains, and deploys local medical and non-medical volunteers to support public health emergency preparedness and response efforts.

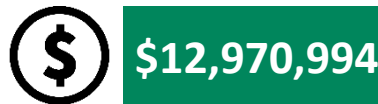


Budget

WCHD Funding Sources



Total Budget



WCHD Staff (Average)



Winnebago County Residents



Funding Supports WCHD Centers and Programs

WCHD is organized into five (5) Centers that have multiple programs, many of which are funded through grants. The Centers are supported by Administration and five (5) Support Services: Strategic Initiatives, Data and Quality, Communications, Policy, and Finance. WCHD Centers and Support Services work together to provide core public health services for the community and address the community's three (3) health priorities - violence, maternal and child health, and mental and behavioral health.

Full Data Report

Type of Data	2025 Data	2024 Data
All Data is Preliminary and Subject To Change.		
Center For Health Protection		
* Indicates Updated Data Verified by IDPH.		
VACCINE PREVENTABLE DISEASES (REPORTING TIMEFRAME)		
Chickenpox (Varicella) (24h)	2	7
Coronavirus Novel 2019 with ICU Hospitalization	40	31
Haemophilus influenzae, invasive (24h)	15	6
Hepatitis A (24h)	4	3
Hepatitis B-Acute (7d)	1	1
Hepatitis B-Chronic (7d)	42	28
Influenza deaths in < 18 yrs old (7d)	0	0
Influenza A, variant (immediate)	0	0
Influenza, ICU admissions (24h)	81	28
Measles (rubeola) (24h)	0	0
Meningococcal (Neisseria Meningitidis) Invasive Disease (24h)	0	1
Mumps (24h)	0	2
Pertussis (whooping cough) (24h)	21	30
Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) with ICU Hospitalization	17	7
SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS		
AIDS	0	0
Chlamydia (7d)	1,177	1,566
Gonorrhea (7d)	410	467
HIV infection (7d)	20	22
Syphilis (7d)	35	97
OTHER COMMUNICABLE DISEASES		
Acute Flaccid Myelitis (24h)	1	0
Anaplasmosis (7d)	1	6
Babesiosis (7d)	2	0
Botulism, infant, wound, other (24h)	0	0
Campylobacteriosis (7d)	55	83
Candida auris, clinical (7d)	1	4
Candida auris, screening (7d)	1	0
Carbapenemase Producing Organism – Clinical (7d)	12	6
Carbapenemase Producing Organism – Screening (7d)	19	0
Carbapenem Resistant Organism (7d)	20	15
Cryptosporidiosis (7d)	7	11
Cyclosporiasis (7d)	7	2
Dengue	2	0
Ehrlichia chaffeensis (7d)	1	2
Enteric E. coli infections (STEC,O157:H7) (24h)	17	14
Hepatitis C-Acute (7d)	3	4
Hepatitis C-Perinatal (7d)	2	0
Hepatitis C-Chronic (7d)	108	113
Histoplasmosis (7d)	6	5
Legionellosis (7d)	15	16

Type of Data	2025 Data	2024 Data
Listeriosis (7d)	4	1
Lyme disease (7d)	42	41
Malaria (7d)	1	5
Mpox (monkeypox, MPV) (7d)	1	0
Rabies, potential human exposure (24h)	61	67
Salmonellosis, other than typhoid (7d)	53	50
Shigellosis (7d)	9	9
Spotted fever rickettsioses (7d)	1	5
Streptococcal infections, Group A, invasive including STSS and necrotizing fasciitis (24h)	11	18
Toxic shock syndrome due to S. aureus (7d)	1	0
Tuberculosis (7d)	13	5*
Vibriosis (non cholera) (7d)	0	4
West Nile virus (7d)	1	4
SERVICES		
Communicable Diseases (Investigation & Follow-up) ^Decrease due to the lessening of the impact of the pandemic	3,043	8,799
Ryan White (Medical Case Management)	729	680
HIV Counseling & Testing	523	786
PrEP Prescribed at WCHD	13	13
DRUG OVERDOSE PREVENTION		
Number of People Trained on Naloxone	3,964	3,211
Number of Naloxone Kits Distributed	7,377	5,832
Reversal Forms Received	3	4
Winnie Program Participants	739	374
Center For Health Promotion and Wellness		
WOMEN, INFANTS, AND CHILDREN (WIC)		
Percent Caseload Goal Achieved ^Caseload Goal for 2025 was 6,532	81.0%	81.0%
Percent of WIC Infants Exclusively Breastfeeding	12.3%	12.2%
Percent of WIC Infants Partially Breastfeeding	27.3%	27.3%
Percent of WIC Infants Breastfeeding (Total)	39.6%	39.5%
MIECHV (MATERNAL INFANT AND EARLY CHILDHOOD HOME VISITING COORDINATED INTAKE)		
Number of Clients Screened with Coordinated Intake Assessment Tool	359	580
Number of Clients Referred from MIECHV Agencies	235	372
Number of Clients Referred from Non-MIECHV Home Visiting Agencies	107	186
Number of Clients Screened with Coordinated Intake Assessment Tool	359	580
TOBACCO FREE COMMUNITIES		
Smoke Free Illinois Compliance Checks ^Decrease due to program restructuring	170	444
Center For Environmental Health Improvement		
*** Indicates No Data Available For Previous Year (Category New To The Report This Year).		
PRIVATE WATER WELLS		
New Well Permits	47	49
Repaired Well Permits	0	4
Sealed Well Permits	117	52
Well Permit Inspections	180	110
Well Complaint Inspection	52	47
Non-Community Water Supply Inspections	77	111

Type of Data	2025 Data	2024 Data
PRIVATE SEWAGE DISPOSAL SYSTEMS		
Soil Boring Evaluations	67	71
New Septic System Permits	72	36
Repaired Septic System Permits	38	25
Septic System Installation Inspections	61	66
Septic Complaint Inspection	104	77
WELL/SEPTIC SYSTEM MORTGAGE EVALUATIONS		
Loan Evaluations Ordered	124	134
Site Verifications Ordered	264	229
Loan Evaluation Inspections	143	162
Site Verification Inspections	303	256
FOOD SERVICE ESTABLISHMENT / RETAIL FOOD STORES		
Food Establishments Inspections/Rechecks	5,571	5,220
Plan Reviews	104	106
Temporary Food Service Events	881	881
IDPH Summer Food Program Inspections	66	41
Foodborne Illness Complaint Investigations	58	43
Non-Foodborne Illness Complaint Investigation	230	260
LEAD PROGRAM		
Lead-Based Paint Risk Assessments	145	114
Recheck/Final Clearance Inspections	144	76
Complaint Inspections	0	0
Contractor Compliance Inspections	173	103
Homes Receiving Lead Mitigation / Abatement	56	36
INDOOR AIR QUALITY		
Radon Screening Requests	3	6
Radon Screening Average (pCi/L)	9.5	4.5
Radon Test Kit Requests	22	35
Radon Test Kits Average (pCi/L)	2.7	3.5
NEIGHBORHOOD CODE ENFORCEMENT		
Housing Inspections – Initial	647	682
Housing Inspections – Recheck	2,583	2,189
Nuisance Inspections – Initial	304	265
Nuisance Inspections – Recheck	1,322	979
Survey Inspections	125	149
Received Complaints	1,065	1,087
OTHER PUBLIC FACILITY INSPECTIONS		
Pool and Spa Inspections	199	145
Hotel/Motel Inspections	65	82
Tanning Facility Inspections	7	11
Body Art Facility Inspections	39	33
VECTOR CONTROL		
Mosquito Trap Checks/Surveys	121	45
Mosquito Pools Tested	62	15
WNV-Positive Mosquito Pools	12	1
Dead Bird Reports from the Community	20	21
Dead Birds Tested	0	4
*Testing was halted in 2025 due to Bird Flu concerns		
WNV-Positive Birds	0	2

Type of Data	2025 Data	2024 Data
Larvicide Treatments Performed	7	4
Ticks Collected From Winnebago County	95	***
Ticks Positive for Disease (Lyme disease, Powassan, etc.)	51	***
Center for Personal Health Services		
*** Indicates No Data Available For Previous Year (Category New To The Report This Year).		
HRFCM (High Risk Family Case Management)		
Average Monthly Caseload	85	***
FCI (Family Connects International)		
Average Monthly Home Visits	21	***
HEALTHWORKS (MEDICAL CASE MANAGEMENT FOR FOSTER CARE)		
Average Monthly Caseload (Winnebago County)	685	657
Average Monthly Caseload For Region Outside of Winnebago County	191	199
CLINICAL SERVICES		
Clinic Visits	959	965
Nurse Visits	2,036	2,363
Total Visits	2,995	3,328
TUBERCULOSIS PREVENTION AND CARE		
Clients Managed	106	100
Direct Observed Therapy Nurse Home Visits	1,542	693
REFUGEE SCREENING AND CASE MANAGEMENT		
Number of Refugees Arriving	48	303
FAMILY PLANNING		
Number of Clients Seen	1,159	1,196
New Clients	534	496
Continuing Clients	625	700
Pregnancy Test	419	397
^Increase due to including all pregnancy test preformed both negative and positive results		
ILLINOIS BREAST AND CERVICAL CANCER PROGRAM		
Clinical Breast Exam	234	221
Mammograms	190	182
Pap Smears	44	42
^2023 data increase due to addition of final month of data being reported		
VITAL STATISTICS		
Registered Births	4,311	4,165
Registered Deaths	3,364	3,361
Number of Birth Certificates Issued	7,290	7,084
Number of Death Certificates Issued	20,806	22,115
Total Number of Certificates Issued	28,096	29,199
RESPIRATORY VIRUS PREVENTION		
COVID-19 Vaccine Administered	4	142
Influenza Vaccine Administered	348	562
Center for Public Health Emergency Preparedness		
*** Indicates No Data Available For Previous Year On Category New To The Report This Year		
Preparedness, Response, and Recovery Activities		
Enrollment in the Registry for Individuals With Disabilities (RIDE)	36	65
Total number of registered Individuals With Disabilities	101	65
MRC Volunteers		
Total Number of Active Volunteers	24	32
Total Hours Volunteered	209	247

Type of Data	2025 Data	2024 Data
Estimated Cost Savings	\$8,090.72	\$10,186.78
Number of People Served	447	***
Undesignated Medications In Schools		
Number School Participation in WCHD Standing Orders		
Albuterol (Asthma)	59	59
Epinephrine (Allergies)	70	70
Naloxone (Opioid Overdose Reversal)	73	67



Winnebago County

Health Department

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PublicHealth.wincoil.gov



A Nationally Accredited Health Department Since November 2017