



Winnebago County

The Wave of the Future

DATE: June 1, 2022
TO: Board of Health
FROM: Doug Gieryn, Public Health Director
RE: MC4JR (Mobilizing Community for a Just Response) Grant Summary

Background:

Last summer, Winnebago County Health Department (WCHD), along with other regional partners conducted key stakeholder interviews in order to learn more from our partners about the impact of the pandemic and what aspects of the COVID response worked well. Interview analysis showed the fragility of the current social safety net, an increase in basic needs requests, and the importance of addressing complex issues holistically. Respondents said safe and affordable housing, economic stability, affordable childcare, social connection and a sense of belonging in the community were all important before the pandemic, and intensified as a result of the pandemic. Key stakeholders also identified involving people with lived experience is crucial when identifying strategies to improve community conditions.

Using the information from the Key Stakeholder interviews, WCHD applied and was awarded the Mobilizing Community for a Just Response grant.

Mobilizing Community for a Just Response

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) has been funded by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to support a *just recovery* initiative for communities disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, by structural inequities, and for all public health issues. The funding, training, technical assistance, and coaching available as part of the “Mobilizing Communities for a Just Response” grant program will support communities in their effort to influence change and increase the opportunity for a shared and expanded understanding of what creates health, with a focus on social determinants of health and health equity.

The “Mobilizing Communities for a Just Response” grant program seeks to engage local and tribal government agencies and community-based organizations to address COVID-19-related health disparities and address community recovery through opportunities for engagement and partnerships in order to expand community capacity for equity and change. This program is not intended for direct services, but rather focuses on:

- Building broader upstream efforts that will help to address overall COVID-19 prevention (e.g., paid sick leave, childcare assistance, housing programs, etc.).
- Addressing the broader consequences of the pandemic through systems change as opposed to direct service provision, including: chronic disease prevention; violence prevention; social connectedness and cohesion; substance use; infant mortality; and social determinants of health, including food and housing insecurity.
- Building relationships of respect and cultivating trust.



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- Develop partnerships for change.
- Strengthening data availability and quality for communities' planning and analysis

DHS awarded grants to applicants at different stages of project readiness. The WCHD grant project is focused on relationship building in order to lay the foundation for greater community involvement in addressing health disparities and improving systemic barriers impacting health.

As WCHD transitions from COVID mitigation to community recovery, we are evaluating our community needs. WCHD is starting a new community health assessment (CHA), a process that involves compiling data in order to assess community needs and resources that will be used to determine priorities for a new community health improvement plan (CHIP). The grant project will enable us to conduct listening sessions with populations in our community who have been disproportionately impacted by the COVID pandemic. The information from the listening sessions will be included in the new CHA and CHIP.

Please see the included scope of work for additional details.

Policy Discussion:

Requested Action:

To approve the budget transfer for allocation of the MC4JR grant funds.

Committee Action:

June 17th Board of Health - Voted 7-0 to pass.