Community Health Assessment (CHA)-Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) Indicator List: Frequently Asked Questions

Introduction

A Community Health Assessment (CHA) is a state, Tribal, local, or territorial health assessment that identifies critical health needs through data collection and analysis. The assessment results in a Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) to address public health concerns identified in the assessment.[1] The completion of a CHA and CHIP involves an expansive process of community engagement and data collection. Data collection includes both primary and secondary data and both quantitative and qualitative data. For more information, review the Community Health Assessments and Improvement Plans webpage.

What is the CHA-CHIP Indicator List?

The CHA-CHIP Indicator List is a curated collection of state, federal and other data sources that provides public health practitioners with a guide for finding available secondary data for CHAs-CHIPs and for other data needs. The goal of this list is to make finding and accessing secondary data easier, which reserves staff capacity for focusing on other elements of the CHA-CHIP process (for example, primary data collection, community engagement). This indicator list is intended to be comprehensive, which means there are many more indicators included in this list than would be relevant or required for any single CHA-CHIP. Many public health practitioners may find it useful to choose a subset of indicators from this list for their CHA based on community input highlighted in the primary qualitative or quantitative data they have collected.

How should I use the CHA-CHIP Indicator List?

This CHA-CHIP Indicator List is formatted in an Excel workbook. The first tab, titled "Intro and Table of Contents," provides a short overview of the indicator list's purpose and summarizes the number of indicators by sub-section. Indicators are grouped into four large categories, including community conditions, population demographics, health behaviors, and health outcomes, which are detailed in separate tabs within the workbook. An additional tab titled "Featured Shortened List" includes a shortened list of prioritized indicators across all four categories. The last tab titled "Acronyms" defines acronyms that are used throughout the file.

For the tabs titled Community Conditions, Population Demographics, Health Behaviors, and Health Outcomes, many columns are included that provide additional information for each included indicator. The below information outlines each column name and what type of information is included in that column.

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[1] Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Community Health Assessments, and Improvement Plans

Column Title	Description
Sub-Section	The column titled "Sub-Section" organizes indicators by topical area within each of the larger categories (Community Conditions, Population Demographics, Health Behaviors, Health Outcomes).
Featured	The four tabs titled Community Conditions, Population Demographics, Health Behaviors, and Health Outcomes include comprehensive lists of available indicators. However, some prefer to also view shortened list of prioritized, or featured, indicators. This featured column indicates which indicators are included on this shortened list. Indicators were generally labeled as "featured" if the following criteria were met: (a) of the indicators within the section, is the indicator the most indicative of overall population health and/or health disparities?, (b) is the indicator used in the State Health Improvement Plan or State Health Assessment?, (c) are there at least five years of data available?, (d) are demographic break downs available?, (e) is data available for most counties?
Metric Name	The column titled "Metric Name" indicates a plain-language name of a specific indicator. The term "metric" may be used interchangeably with "indicator" within the confines of this project.
Metric Definition	The column titled "Metric Definition" specifies the definition of the metric from the "Metric Name" column.
Data Source	The column titled "Data Source" details the source of the data, including links where possible, for this metric.
Available	The column titled "Available" provides details regarding data accessibility and/or calculation requirements. This may identify that an indicator is publicly available, that a data request is required, or that a certain actor (for example, DPH) could facilitate access to the indicator.
SHA-SHIP Alignment	The column titled "SHA-SHIP Alignment" identifies metrics that have been identified by DPH as a state health assessment (SHA) or state health improvement plan (SHIP) metric, as of April 2024.
Granularity	The column titled "Granularity" identifies the geographic level at which the metric is available (state, county, census tract, block group, zip code).
Demographic Specific	The column titled "Demographic Specific" details demographic group stratifications that may be available for the specified metric, such as age, race and ethnicity, sex, socioeconomic status, educational attainment, and others.
Collection Frequency	The column titled "Collection Frequency" describes the frequency of data collection or updates.
Understandable	The column titled "Understandable" describes if the indicator can be clearly understood by most people. In some instances, this column may include additional definitions or context to make the indicator easier to understand or interpret.
Data Quality Notes	The column titled "Data Quality Notes" describes any additional methodological concerns or data limitations that are important to consider when interpreting an indicator.
Accepted	The column titled "Accepted" denotes whether an indicator is commonly accepted, recommended, or used by national organizations.

This indicator list is meant to be comprehensive; therefore, not all indicators will be relevant to all jurisdictions. Public health practitioners should **not** feel like they need to look at every indicator included on this list. Conversely, when trying to decide what data to look at, public health practitioners should think about the specific purpose or goal of their assessment, then choose a subset of meaningful indicators that best meet that goal.

How was the CHA-CHIP Indicator List developed?

In the spring and early summer of 2022, representatives of local and Tribal Health departments (LTHDs) were asked to participate in a mixed methods assessment regarding LTHD community health assessment (CHA) data needs. The assessment included a quantitative survey, key informant interviews, and two focus group discussions during community of practice sessions. The goals of the assessment included (1) identifying strengths and challenges regarding finding, accessing, analyzing, and using data during the CHA process, and (2) identifying potential solution concepts that DPH could explore to help address CHA data needs for LTHDs.

The top two concepts that were prioritized included a standardized list of indicators along with a list of sources. Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) Division of Public Health (DPH) staff in the Office of Policy and Practice Alignment (OPPA) worked collaboratively with the DPH Office of Health Informatics to develop a draft indicator list. The first draft of the list was created by using the "Core Data Set" published by the Wisconsin Association of Local Health Departments and Boards in 2015[2] and updating it to reflect current DPH data sources and experiences supporting local public health partners through the CHA-CHIP process. This list was shared with a small group of LTHDs for input and feedback. The group then made the following suggestions:

- Format the list in a way that incorporates data on the social determinants of health (SDoH).
- Use narrative around SDoH that is applicable to LTHDs that face limitations with language around SDoH, health equity, and related concepts.
- Show which indicators are aligned with the state health assessment (SHA) and state health improvement plan (SHIP).
- Provide data sources and any pertinent information regarding data quality.

This feedback has been incorporated into the current CHA-CHIP Indicator List.

Who do I contact with questions or feedback?

If you find errors in this list, have ideas on how to improve this list, or would like technical assistance utilizing this resource, please contact Jacquie Cutts (jacqueline.cutts@dhs.wisconsin.gov), David Strong (david.strong@dhs.wisconsin.gov), or Chelsea Robinson (chelsea.robinson@dhs.wisconsin.gov).

Acronyms

CHA   Community health assessment
CHIP   Community health improvement plan
DPH   Division of Public Health
LTHD   Local and Tribal health department
SDoH   Social determinants of health
SHA   State health assessment
SHIP   State health improvement plan

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[2] Recommended Core Data Set for Initial Assessment and Prioritization v2.0: February 2015, Wisconsin Community Health Improvement Plans and Processes (CHIPP) Infrastructure Improvement Project