

ALCOHOL MISUSE

Alcohol misuse is a health priority in Eau Claire County because...

Misuse of alcohol has harmful effects on the health, safety, and economic success of community members. Alcohol misuse is defined as binge drinking (>4 drinks in one sitting for women, > 5 for men), heavy drinking (>8 drinks/week for women, >15 for men), underage drinking, and drinking during pregnancy. Poor health outcomes associated with alcohol misuse include liver problems, several types of cancer, unintentional injuries and deaths, fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, and more. In addition to health consequences, misuse of alcohol can also contribute to social harms, such as motor vehicle accidents, violence, or damage to property. Underage drinking is a serious issue contributing to academic problems, risky sexual behaviors, unintended pregnancy, and sexual violence¹². Yet, 11% of Eau Claire County high school students had their first drink of alcohol under the age of 13 in 2019, and 25% reported having had at least one drink in the past 30 days⁸. Starting to drink at an early age is also associated with alcohol dependence and related problems during adult life¹³. Further, acceptance of alcohol misuse within social networks, the county, and the state of Wisconsin perpetuates unhealthy drinking behaviors in our community. On the Eau Claire County community health survey, 76% of respondents identified alcohol misuse an accepted attitude or belief in our community, and 64% noted that alcohol is highly prevalent at community events, celebrations, and college campus environments⁵.

Prevention of alcohol misuse is important to Eau Claire County.

All members of a community are subject to the health or economic effects of alcohol misuse.¹¹ Alcohol misuse results in significant health and economic consequences for the community. Incidents, injuries, and deaths related to alcohol misuse happen frequently in Eau Claire County and affect the health, safety, and finances of residents. Associated costs related to health care, involvement with the criminal justice system, and lost productivity, represent a significant economic burden for community members. In recent years, the estimated annual cost of binge drinking in Eau Claire County was \$80.4 million, or \$787 per each resident (Figure 5).¹⁴ Community-based interventions to change norms and promote healthier behaviors around alcohol consumption amongst people of all ages will be critical to curb alcohol misuse and its widespread consequences.

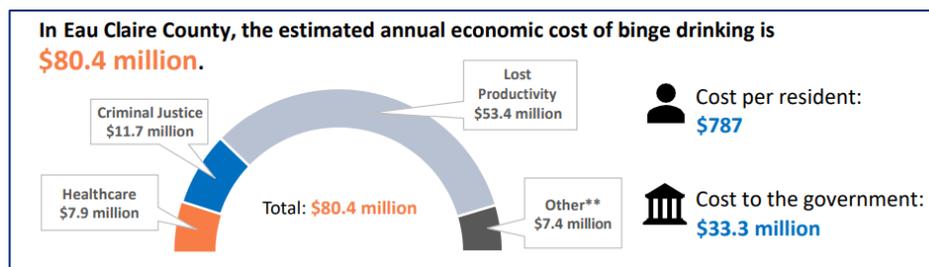
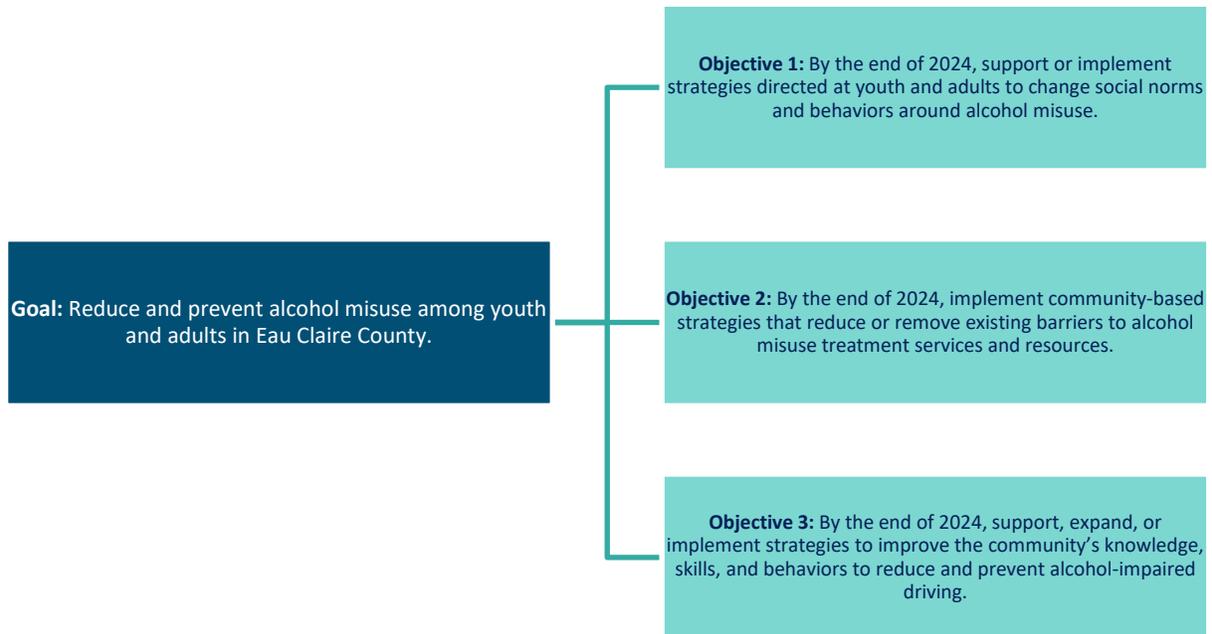


Figure 5. Estimated annual economic costs of binge drinking in Eau Claire County (2013-2018).
Graph from: Linnan, S., Paltzer, J., & Skalitzky, E. Paltzer, J. (2019). [The Burden of Binge Drinking in Wisconsin.](#)

Goal and Objectives

The following goal and objectives were identified at a meeting of Alliance members and community partners based on several factors: root cause, evidence, community input, [assets](#) (located in the appendix of the CHA), alignment with [state](#) and [national](#) plans, and community readiness.



How We Know We Are Making a Difference

Data indicators that will be used to measure success over time.

Key: ✓ or ✗ indicates whether Eau Claire County did better or worse compared to Wisconsin or the nation.

Data indicator	Eau Claire County	Wisconsin	United States
Percentage of adults (18+) engaging in binge or heavy drinking in the past 30 days ¹⁵	25%	27% ✓	22% ✗
Percentage of motor vehicle deaths involving alcohol ¹⁶	41%	36% ✗	29% ✗
Percentage of high school/middle school students who drank alcohol on at least one of the past 30 days ⁸	25% HS 8% MS	30% HS —	29.2% — ✓
Percentage of high school/middle school students who believe that parents or peers disapprove of alcohol use (1-2 drinks/day) ⁸	HS: 90% parents, 66% peers MS: 96% parents, 87% peers	—	—



Current Stakeholders

Stakeholders involved in Alliance’s alcohol misuse prevention and reduction work.

Altoona Police Department	Marshfield Clinic Health System
At The Roots, LLC	Mayo Clinic Health System
Augusta Area School District	Morning Rotary Club
Augusta Police Department	Neighbor to Neighbor
Criminal Justice Services	Northwoods Coalition
Eau Claire Area Hmong Mutual Assistance Association, Inc.	Prevea Health
Eau Claire Area School District	REALTORS Association of Northwestern WI
Eau Claire County Department of Human Services	Regis Catholic Schools
Eau Claire County Restorative Justice	School District of Altoona
Eau Claire County Sheriff’s Office	State of WI Regional DHS
Eau Claire Fire Department	The Boys & Girls Clubs of the Greater Chippewa Valley
Eau Claire Police Department	The Community Table
Fall Creek School District	UW-Eau Claire
Fall Creek Police Department	UW-Madison Division of Extension Eau Claire County
HSHS Sacred Heart Hospital	Vivent Health
Lutheran Social Services	YMCA of the Chippewa Valley



Strategies

Some policies and practices considered by The Alliance and community partners to discourage unhealthy use of alcohol. (= evidence-informed strategies)*

- Support the implementation of best practices/policies for serving alcohol at community events*
- Continue and expand education and training with alcohol establishments, retailers, and staff to prevent underage drinking, over-serving, and other risky use of alcohol*
- Collaborate with community partners to reduce barriers to treatment and support services*
- Initiatives to reduce stigma and normalize dialogues around substance use disorder (SUD) and seeking help
- Mass media campaign against alcohol-impaired driving*



Alignment with State & National Plans

State and national plans were reviewed to help form health priority goals, objectives, and strategies that align with the vision of the state and nation that also consider disparate populations.

Below are some of the specific state or national goals and/or objectives that align with alcohol misuse prevention and reduction efforts included in the 2021-2024 Eau Claire County CHIP.

Alcohol Misuse
<p><u>Healthiest Wisconsin 2020 Objectives:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce unhealthy and risky alcohol and other drug use by changing attitudes, knowledge, and policies, and by supporting services for prevention, screening, intervention, treatment, and recovery. • Assure access to culturally appropriate and comprehensive prevention, intervention, treatment, recovery support and ancillary services for underserved and socially disadvantaged populations who are at higher risk for unhealthy and risky alcohol and other drug use.
<p><u>Healthy WI 2020</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal: Prevent and reduce underage and excessive alcohol consumption. • Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reduce heavy and binge drinking among adults 18 years and older ○ Reduce alcohol-related deaths ○ Reduce underage drinking
<p><u>Healthy People 2030 Objectives:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Reduce the proportion of people aged 21 years and over who engaged in binge drinking in the past month — SU-10</u> • <u>Reduce the proportion of people under 21 years who engaged in binge drinking in the past month — SU-09</u> • <u>Reduce the proportion of motor vehicle crash deaths that involve a drunk driver — SU-11</u> • <u>Reduce the proportion of adolescents who drank alcohol in the past month — SU-04</u>