



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Healthiest Nation 2030: We know we can't do it alone!
National Public Health Week is April 4th-10th

Eau Claire, WI -April 4th, 2016- Annually, the first week of April is recognized as National Public Health Week. This is a time of celebration for Health Departments across the nation. Not only is National Public Health Week a time of acknowledging accomplishments over the past year, and preceding decades, but it also serves as a time to reflect on the overall direction of public health in our ever changing world. Americans are living 20 years longer than their grandparents' generation, thanks largely to the work of public health, according to the American Public Health Association. However, individuals in many other high income countries still live longer and suffer fewer health issues than we do.

We know it is not enough to ask people to make healthy choices when so many factors impact health. Eau Claire County still has work to do to improve our health. In the 2016 *County Health Rankings*, we ranked 20th in the state for both health outcomes (how long people live and how healthy they feel while alive) and health factors (factors that influence health: health behaviors, clinical care, social, economic and physical environmental factors). [County Health Rankings data](#) reinforces the need for Eau Claire County to address the health priorities of obesity, alcohol misuse and mental health, as well as the need to address factors such as poverty. Eau Claire County has one of the highest percentages of income inequality in the state. Income inequality is a measure of the divide between the poor and the affluent, which affects how long and how well people live and is particularly harmful to the health of poorer individuals.

To create the healthiest generation by 2030, we know we cannot do it alone! We are committed to collaboration with community partners and seek innovative approaches that lead to improving the health of our community. Through collaboration with Eau Claire Healthy Communities and the Alliance for Substance Abuse Prevention--community coalitions working on identified community health priorities of chronic disease prevention/obesity, high-risk drinking prevention, healthy relationship promotion, mental health and oral health promotion—we can work together to address the complex health issues affecting our community.

“The work of public health impacts community members daily whether they realize it or not,” says Lieske Giese, Director/Health Officer of the Eau Claire City-County Health Department. “By taking better care of ourselves, and supporting friends and family in their efforts to lead healthier lives, we can all play an important role in improving the overall health of our community.”

If you are interested in learning more about what public health professionals do in the community each and every day and the services that they can help you with go to www.ehealthdepartment.org. Learn how you can get involved in the initiatives that are happening in our community to create a healthier Eau Claire for all by visiting the [Healthy Communities website](#) or the [Alliance for Substance Abuse Prevention website](#). ###

