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New Report Shows Cost of Binge Drinking in our Community

Eau Claire, Wis. – October 21, 2019 –The Burden of Binge Drinking in Wisconsin report, released last week, lists Eau Claire County as one of the top 10 counties with the highest rates of binge drinking. Overall, Wisconsin has one of the highest rates of binge drinking in the U.S.

This costs WI residents \$4 billion a year in lost productivity, law enforcement and medical costs and more. In Eau Claire County alone, the cost of excessive alcohol use is roughly \$80 million. “Binge drinking affects everyone through increased spending on health care, lost productivity, crime, and other costs,” says Lieske Giese, Health Department Director.

Alcohol misuse is a top health priority in the 2018 Eau Claire County Community Health Assessment. As a result, many organizations are collaborating to create community change around the culture of binge drinking. This includes looking at policies to see how they can promote safe and healthy alcohol use. Recently, Eau Claire City Council passed a Public Excessive Intoxication Ordinance to address those at risk of harming themselves or others in public.

Excessive drinking increases people’s risk of injuries, violence, drowning, liver disease, and some types of cancer. On average, each year, excessive alcohol consumption contributes to over 1,400 alcohol-related hospitalizations and 99 alcohol-related crashes in Eau Claire County.

“Changes in policy and use of evidence-based prevention strategies can reduce the negative health, social and economic impacts of binge drinking. Creating a healthy alcohol culture is something we can do in this county” adds Giese. This report is a tool to help start, and strengthen, the conversation to change our alcohol culture.

To view the full Burden of Binge Drinking in WI report and report summary, visit:
<https://go.wisc.edu/burdenofbingedrinking>

1 in 4 Eau Claire County adults report binge drinking



Binge drinking is defined as drinking to intoxication or 5+ drinks for men and 4+ for women.



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