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Washington County Earns Bronze Wisconsin Healthy Communities Designation

31 communities in Wisconsin receive designations

West Bend – Washington County has been recognized for its work to improve local health by receiving a Wisconsin Healthy Communities Designation.

This new program is intended to recognize and encourage achievements in health improvement in Wisconsin communities, and to promote cooperation across multiple sectors.

“In Washington County, we are working hard to ensure access to services that provide for the community’s health and physical well-being,” stated County Administrator Joshua Schoemann. “This designation for the Washington Ozaukee Public Health Department paired with their recent designation as a Level III Health Department demonstrates our commitment to this service.”

The designation recognizes Washington County and the bronze level for its work through Well Washington County to make our county the healthiest place to live, learn, work, and play. To do this, we provide the structure in the county to:

- Eat and Move Well by focusing on healthy, seasonal, whole-foods eating and supporting active communities;
- Think Well by reducing stigma around mental illness, expanding resources, and identifying gaps in early intervention;
- Choose Well by supporting community actions to reduce at-risk behaviors and advocating for substance use prevention in legislation;
- Work Well through expanding and developing workplace wellness programs and policies.

“Washington County is proud to be among the 31 Wisconsin communities that received designations this year. Well Washington County has gained momentum by building collaborative efforts to start addressing some of our major health concerns,” stated Interim Health Office Amanda Wisth.

The Healthy Communities Designation program is designed to be accessible to communities of all shapes and sizes, both rural and urban. The definition of community is broad and can include counties, municipalities, neighborhoods and other self-defined, place-based communities in Wisconsin. The

program uses a three-tiered approach – gold, silver and bronze – which are meant to provide a trajectory and serve as a guide for communities as they continue to strive toward better health.

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The Wisconsin Healthy Communities Designation is a new initiative offered by the Mobilizing Action Toward Community Health (MATCH) group of the UW Population Health Institute (UWPHI), in collaboration with diverse statewide groups. The Healthy Communities Designation program, funded by the Wisconsin Partnership Program of the UW School of Medicine and Public Health, is designed to recognize and encourage achievements in health improvement in Wisconsin. To learn more about the program, visit the program website:

www.wihealthycommunities.org