

At a Glance: Priority Health Issues by Minnesota Community Health Boards, 2025

All Minnesota community health boards (CHBs)¹ are statutorily required to assess community health and prioritize issues. This allows CHBs to focus local resources on the greatest community needs.

A community health assessment (CHA) serves as the foundation for this work, providing insight into health status, risk factors, and available resources. Based on the assessment, public health officials, along with community partners, identify and prioritize key health issues for collective action. This leads to a long-term, systematic health improvement plan, known as a community health improvement plan (CHIP).

Both the assessment and improvement plan are dynamic, evolving with new data and shifting community needs. As such, this summary highlights the top five most prioritized health issues by all 51 Minnesota CHBs as of March 2025².

How to use this information

Community health boards can use this report to:

- Assess regional and statewide health priorities, identifying commonalities and opportunities for collaboration.
- Share findings with community partners and officials to discuss drivers of health, the community's vision of health, and potential support.
- Connect with peers statewide working on similar issues to learn from their efforts.
- Engage partners to explore underlying factors and systems contributing to health disparities.
- Leverage this information to secure funding and support for health improvement initiatives.

TOP PRIORITY HEALTH ISSUES IDENTIFIED BY COMMUNITY HEALTH BOARDS IN MINNESOTA 2025



Mental health

46 community health boards (90%)



General substance use

22 CHBs (43%)



Access to health care services

17 CHBs (33%)



Economic stability

10 CHBs (19%)



Neighborhood & built environment

10 CHBs (19%)

¹ In Minnesota, community health boards are official local public health authorities that partner with the state health department and may represent single or multiple counties, cities, or city-county collaborations.

² As of January 2025, there are 52 CHBs. However, Brown-Nicollet selected their priorities when they operated jointly which is why 51 CHBs are listed in this document.

Top priorities included in community health improvement plans as of 2025:

1. Mental health (46 CHBs, 90%)
2. General substance use (22 CHBs, 43%)
3. Access to health care services (17 CHBs, 33%)
4. Economic stability (10 CHBs, 19%)³
5. Neighborhood and built environment (10 CHBs, 19%)

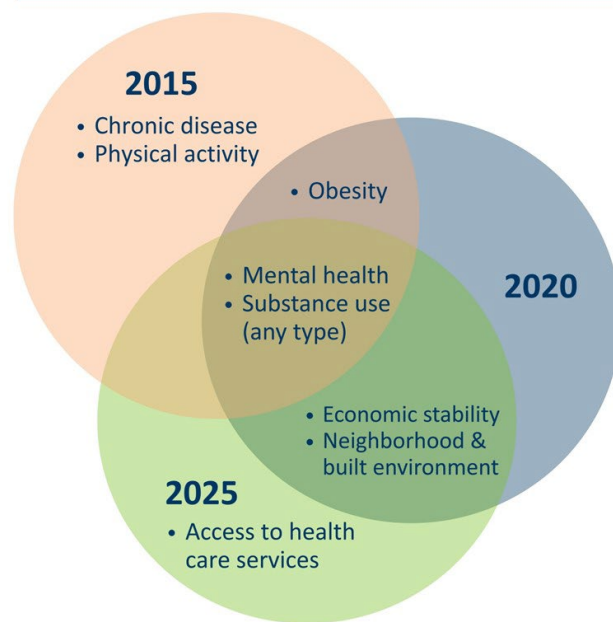
Most CHBs choose approximately two to four health issues that they focus on in their CHIP. For more information on what health issues community health boards are working on and links the improvement plans, visit: [What are community health boards working on right now?](#)

Mental health

- Mental health is the most frequently prioritized issue in 2025 - 46 out of 51 (90%) CHBs have included it in their CHIP.
- The share of CHBs reporting mental health as a priority issue decreased slightly from 2020 (96%) to 2025 (90%).
- Six CHBs also included access to mental health services as a priority issue.
- In addition to prioritizing mental health and access to mental health care, many community health boards identified related priority health issues such as adverse childhood experiences, parenting-family systems, suicide, and social connectedness.

PRIORITY HEALTH ISSUES IDENTIFIED BY COMMUNITY HEALTH BOARDS OVER TIME

2015 – 2020 – 2025



³ Economic stability and neighborhood and built environment are listed alphabetically, in no particular order, as they were prioritized by the same number of CHBs in their CHIPs.

Community health boards that identified mental health as a priority health issue in 2025 include: Anoka, Beltrami, Benton, Bloomington, Blue Earth, Brown-Nicollet, Carlton-Cook-Lake-St. Louis, Cass, Chisago, Countryside, Crow Wing, Dakota County, Des Moines Valley (Cottonwood Jackson), Dodge-Steele, Edina, Faribault-Martin, Freeborn, Goodhue, Hennepin, Horizon, Isanti, Kanabec, Kandiyohi-Renville, Le Sueur-Waseca, Meeker-McLeod-Sibley, Mille Lacs, Minneapolis, Morrison-Todd-Wadena, Mower, North Country (Clearwater, Hubbard, Lake of the Woods), Olmsted, Partnership4Health, Pine, Polk-Norman-Mahnomen, Quin, Rice, Richfield, Sherburne, St. Paul-Ramsey, Stearns, Southwest Health and Human Services (SWHHS), Wabasha, Washington, Watonwan, Winona, Wright

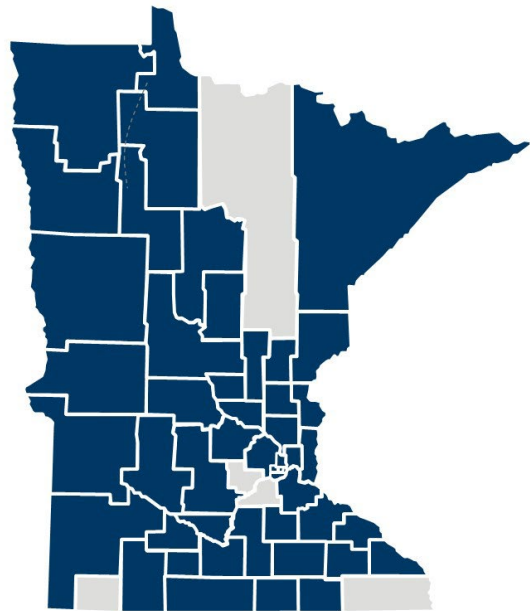
Community health boards that identified access to mental health services as a priority health issue in 2025 include: Aitkin-Itasca-Koochiching, Cass, Horizon, Olmsted, Polk-Norman-Mahnomen, SWHHS

General substance use

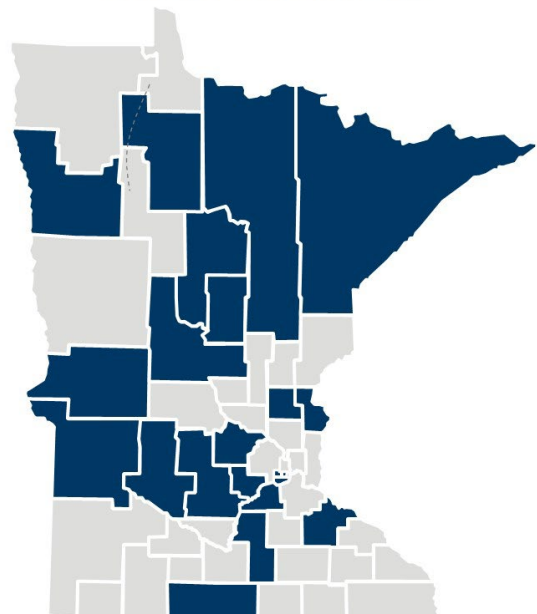
- General substance use includes e-cigarette use, tobacco and secondhand smoke, alcohol, illicit drugs such as meth and cocaine, opioids (prescription and non-prescription), and other substances listed below.
- Twenty-two (43%) CHBs included general substance use as a priority in their CHIP.
- Other CHBs focused on one specific substance:
 - E-cigarettes: 1 CHB
 - Marijuana 1 CHB
 - Opioids: 3 CHBs
 - Commercial tobacco and secondhand smoke: 4 CHBs
 - Other illicit drugs (meth, cocaine): 1 CHB
 - Other prescription drugs: 1 CHB
- A total of 33 out of 51 CHBs (64%) are working on some type of substance use in 2025. This is down compared to 2020 when 41 out of 51 (80%) reported working on substance use.

Community health boards that identified substance use: general as a priority health issue in 2025 include: Aitkin-Itasca-Koochiching, Beltrami, Bloomington, Carlton-Cook-Lake-St. Louis, Carver, Cass, Chisago, Countryside, Crow Wing, Edina, Faribault-Martin, Goodhue,

COMMUNITY HEALTH BOARDS THAT IDENTIFIED MENTAL HEALTH AS A TOP PRIORITY, 2025



COMMUNITY HEALTH BOARDS THAT IDENTIFIED GENERAL SUBSTANCE ABUSE AS A TOP PRIORITY, 2025



Horizon, Isanti, Kandiyohi-Renville, Le Sueur-Waseca, Meeker-McLeod-Sibley, Morrison-Todd-Wadena, Polk-Norman-Mahnomen, Richfield, Scott, Wright

Access to health care services

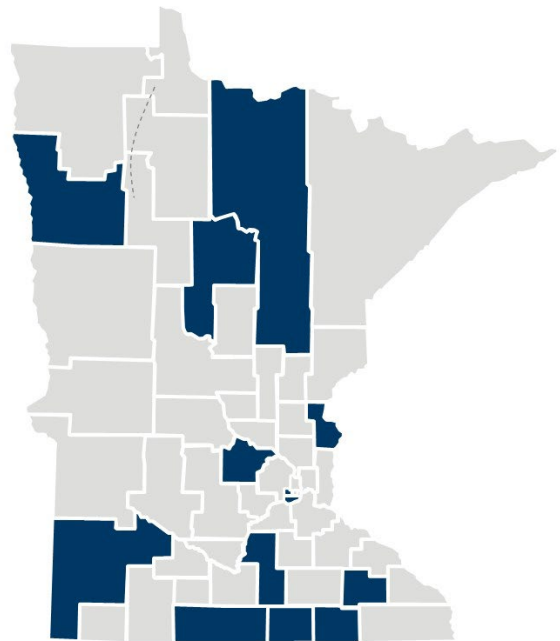
- Access to health care services includes the availability of services, affordability, acceptability and cultural competence, accessibility, and health literacy and system navigation.
- Seventeen (33%) CHBs listed access to health care services as a priority they plan to work on in their CHIP.
- Other CHBs identified more specific health services as top priorities, including access to dental care (8 CHBs) and access to mental health services (6 CHBs) for their communities.
- Access to health care services was not a top five priority in 2020. This reflects a notable shift in priorities since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Community health boards that identified access to health care services as a priority health issue in 2025 include: Aitkin-Itasca-Koochiching, Bloomington, Cass, Chisago, Edina, Faribault-Martin, Freeborn, Le Sueur-Waseca, Mower, Olmsted, Polk-Norman-Mahnomen, Richfield, Scott, St. Paul-Ramsey, SWHHS, Washington, Watonwan

Community health boards that identified access to dental care services as a priority health issue in 2025 include: Cass, Horizon, Nobles, Olmsted, Partnership4Health, Polk-Norman-Mahnomen, SWHHS, Wright

Community health boards that identified access to mental health services as a priority health issue in 2025 include: Aitkin-Itasca-Koochiching, Cass, Horizon, Olmsted, Polk-Norman-Mahnomen, SWHHS

COMMUNITY HEALTH BOARDS THAT IDENTIFIED ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE SERVICES AS A TOP PRIORITY, 2025



Economic stability

- Economic stability includes issues such as poverty, unemployment, food insecurity, and affordable housing.
- Ten CHBs (19%) included economic stability as a top priority for their community in 2025.
- Approximately the same proportion of CHBs identified economic stability as a priority in their CHIP in 2025 (19%) as they did in 2020 (18%).

Community health boards that identified economic stability as a priority health issue in 2025 include: Aitkin-Itasca-Koochiching, Cass, Hennepin, Horizon, Kanabec, Pine, Polk-Norman-Mahnomen, Rice, SWHHS, Washington.

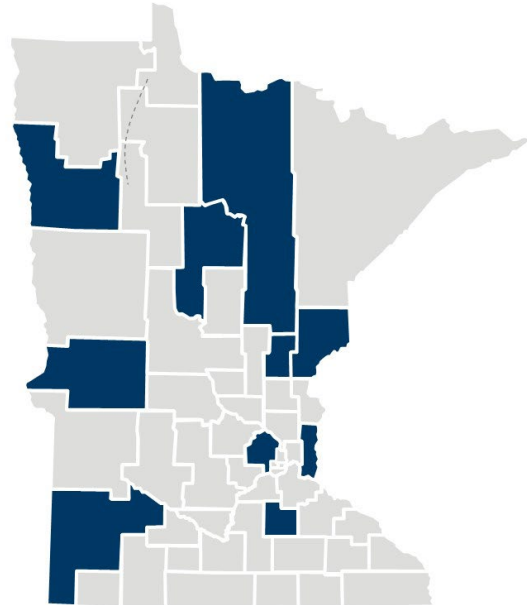
Neighborhood & built environment

- Neighborhood and built environment include transportation accessibility, quality of housing, access to healthy foods, safe neighborhoods, and easy access to services (for people of all abilities).
- Ten CHBs (19%) included neighborhood and built environment as a top priority for their community in 2025.
- Approximately the same proportion of CHBs identified neighborhood and built environment as a priority in their CHIP in 2025 (19%) as in 2020 (20%).

Community health boards that identified neighborhood and built environment as a priority health issue in 2025 include: Cass, Chisago, Des Moines Valley (Cottonwood Jackson), Fillmore-Houston, Freeborn, Le Sueur-Waseca, Mille Lacs, Minneapolis, SWHHS, Washington.

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COMMUNITY HEALTH BOARDS THAT IDENTIFIED ECONOMIC STABILITY AS A TOP PRIORITY, 2025



COMMUNITY HEALTH BOARDS THAT IDENTIFIED NEIGHBORHOOD & BUILT ENVIRONMENT AS A TOP PRIORITY, 2025

