

## Suicide Prevention in Eau Claire County

- Suicide Prevention is a public health priority for Eau Claire County.
  - In 2015, Eau Claire's suicides spiked to 22 deaths for the year. This was the highest ever recorded for the county.
    - Many prevention activities have been initiated since 2018 and there has been a gradual decline noted with only 17 deaths by suicide in 2018.
  - What we know about suicides from 2015-2018:
    - Nearly 82% of suicides were male
    - Average age of persons who died was 46
    - Firearms accounted for 56% of these deaths
  - To date, there have been 11 confirmed suicides in Eau Claire County.
    - 8 of the 11 suicide deaths have been by firearm
- In 2015, the Community Health Assessment recognized Mental Health as one of the top three health priorities, then in 2018 mental health was identified as the top health priority.
  - Healthy Communities Mental Health Action Team (MHAT) was formed in 2015 and assisted with the development and implementation of the Community Health Improvement Plan.
- ECCCHD serves as a collaborative table and partner in many community mental health and suicide prevention efforts.
  - Mental Health Action Team
    - The team's goal is to increase strong, healthy social connections among Eau Claire County residents across all life stages to promote mental wellness through education, programming, outreach and policies.
      - Working to implement strategies to build resilience and expand mental health support for youth and adults.
      - Work on stigma reduction and improve mental well-being.
      - Collaborate with other coalitions and originations to strengthen partnerships and community initiatives/programming.
    - One of the greatest successes of the MHAT in partnership with The Health Department is the Question, Persuade, Refer suicide prevention programming; Since grant funding was received in 2015, 1,832 adults have received this training. In 2016, the programming expanded to include adolescents. To date, 2,441 adolescents have received this training.
    - The Health Department and MHAT have worked hard at building relationships with the schools to be able to align the training with their Mental Health units during student's health class. As of 2019, each school in Eau Claire County is receiving QPR Training either in their middle or high school health classes
  - Mental Health Matters-
    - A collaborative project between Chippewa and Eau Claire Counties which aligns with the State Suicide Prevention Strategy's key recommendation to increase and enhance protective factors.



review by healthcare professionals would be even more beneficial when trying to identify opportunities for intervention.

- There are other suicide death review teams throughout the state.
  - Currently, information obtained during case reviews is kept local and a variety of databases are being utilized.
  - Having a centralized database, like the Child Death Review/Fetal Mortality Review or Overdose Fatality Review teams have, would create consistent data reporting throughout the state as well as a larger database to notice commonalities and themes for possible upstream prevention approaches.