



Goodhue County
Health and Human Services

426 West Avenue
 (651) 385-3200 • Fax (651) 267-4882

REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION

Requested Board Date:	April 16, 2024	Staff Lead:	Kris Johnson & Nina Arneson
Consent Agenda:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	Attachments:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Action Requested:	Review and approval of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Health Educator - Communication Specialist (1.0 FTE) • Community Health Worker (.4 FTE) 		

BACKGROUND:

The following requests will be brought forward for the Goodhue County Personnel Committee’s review on April 16, 2024 at 7:30am with the new - Public Health ongoing Foundational Public Health Responsibility (FPHR) and Response Sustainability Grant (RSG) funding, please see attached memo for the details.

NEW – 2 Positions:

- **Public Health Educator - Communication Specialist (1.0 FTE)**
- **Community Health Worker (.4 FTE)**

RECOMMENDATION: GCHHS Department recommends approval as requested.

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April 10, 2024

TO: Goodhue County Personnel Committee

FROM: Nina Arneson, HHS Director
Kris Johnson, HHS Deputy Director

RE: **GCHHS New – Ongoing Public Health Foundational Responsibilities -
2 NEW Permanent Position Requests -**

- **Public Health Educator - Communication Specialist (1.0 FTE)**
- **Community Health Worker (.4 FTE)**

Goodhue County Health and Human Services has received new, ongoing state funding to better address [foundational public health responsibilities](#) in Goodhue County.

The Foundational Public Health Responsibility (FPHR) fund allocated \$188,716 per year and the Response Sustainability grant (RSG) allocated \$103,872 per year.

Through our public health accreditation work, our agency is very familiar with the national standards, including areas in which we do well, and areas we need to continue to improve. With this background, and having our staff and an HHS Board member provide feedback about areas of focus, it is clear that the following new strategic investments will help our agency build and improve our capacity to meet our mission: ***To Promote, Strengthen and Protect the Health of Individuals, Families and Communities.***

BACKGROUND:

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated a push for the state of Minnesota, and the US as a whole, to build and strengthen the capacity of the Public Health System. In December 2022, the joint leadership team, including members of [State Community Health Services Advisory Committee](#) (SCHSAC), [Local Public Health Association](#) (LPHA), and [Minnesota Department of Health](#) (MDH) wrote a report called - [Transforming Minnesota's Public Health System for the 21st Century](#) identifying the goals of [Public Health Transformation](#).

These efforts have undergone many iterations, and the framework has been updated since the 2022 report to match the national Foundational Public Health Services framework.

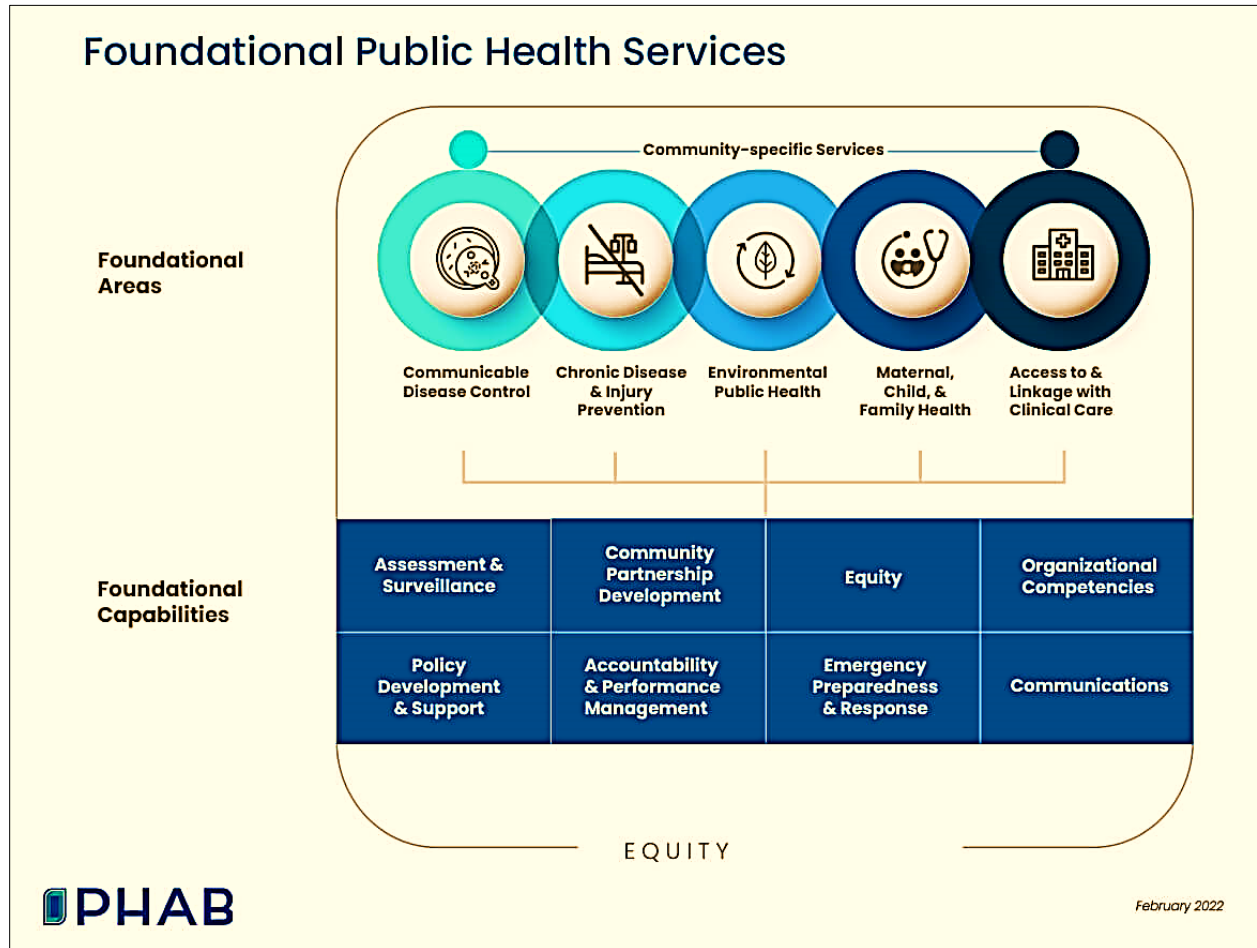
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To support Community Health Boards in implementing this transformation on the local level, in 2023 the Minnesota State Legislature allocated [Foundational Public Health Responsibility](#) (FPHR) funds. Goodhue County's ongoing annual allocation is **\$188,716**.

Furthermore, in 2023 the Minnesota State Legislature allocated additional funds to support Emergency Preparedness and Response, known as the Response Sustainability Grant (RSG). Goodhue County's ongoing allocation is **\$103,872**. Both of these funds carry expectations that will be monitored through budgets, work plans, reporting requirements and MDH grant monitoring.



On March 1, 2024, GCHHS convened professionals that included GCHHS Public Health Educators, Public Nurses, leadership including Susan Johnson, appointed by the GCHHS Board, and Goodhue County Environmental Health Sanitarian Benjamin Hoyt. The purpose of this meeting was to review the Foundational Public Health Responsibilities, and examine the current capacity of GCHHS to meet these foundational responsibilities. The group reviewed the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in each foundational area and foundational capability and came up with a set of recommendations for how to utilize the increased funds. (Note that funding has already been approved and committed by the HHS Board, and committed to the Public Planner-Data Analyst position, and this person was hired in February, 2024).

1. Increase focus on **Environmental Health**, especially in the areas of communication and community outreach.
2. Continue to build capacity for **Maternal, Child and Family Health**, especially in the Hispanic community and in at-risk communities.

3. Continue to invest in **workforce** - salaries, retention, training, manageable workloads.
4. Build **community trust** in public health.
5. Expand **communication and outreach**, especially to marginalized communities.

Utilizing this feedback, our knowledge with national standards, local needs, and the directive to continue to transform public health system in Minnesota along with GCHHS leadership agreed that the most effective way to address many of these identified needs was to hire a Public Health Educator - Communication Specialist and a Community Health Worker.

The Communication Specialist will be focused on Emergency Preparedness/Response duties, Environmental Health communication and community awareness, and various other HHS communication needs and projects including collaboration on the Goodhue County communications plan. This position will be funded by some FPHR funds and some RSG funds.

The Community Health Worker (CHW) is a .4 FTE position that will focus on building connections with the Hispanic Community, and build GCHHS capacity for Emergency Preparedness Response and Recovery.

According to the American Public Health Association, a Community Health Worker (CHW) is a frontline public health worker who is a trusted member of and/or has an unusually close understanding of the community served. This trusting relationship enables the CHW to serve as a liaison/link/intermediary between health/social services and the community to facilitate access to services and improve the quality and cultural competency of service delivery. A CHW also builds individual and community capacity by increasing health knowledge and self-sufficiency through a range of activities such as outreach, community education, informal counseling, social support and advocacy.

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/facilities/ruralhealth/emerging/chw/index.html>

The CHW position will be funded with the RSG grant. There may be some very limited capacity to bill Medical Assistance for these services.

Foundational Public Health Responsibility (FPHR) Fund—Calendar Year

	2024	2025
Planner: Data Specialist	\$47,472 (.5 paid thru I-fund grant)	\$101,589
PHE (.6 FTE): Communications Specialist	\$28,472	\$30,477
Other staff time	\$64,805	\$12,494
Equip/Supplies	\$5,800	\$2,000
Contract: CARE Clinic	\$10,000	\$10,000
Contract: Cultural Liaison	\$15,000	\$15,000
Indirect Costs	\$17,156	\$17,156
	\$188,716	\$188,716

Response Sustainability Grant (RSG)—Fiscal Year

	2024-25	2025-26
PHE (.4 FTE): Communications Specialist	\$37,977	\$40,636
Community Health Worker	\$29,527	\$31,594
Other staff time	\$26,925	\$22,199
Indirect costs	\$9,443	\$9,443

	\$103,872	\$103,872
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RECOMMENDATION:

The HHS Department recommends approving the following:

1. Move forward immediately utilizing the MN Merit System to hire **1.0 FTE Public Health Educator-Communication Specialist**, and **.4 FTE Community Health Worker**, and back fill as needed.
2. Hire after GCHHS Board’s review and approval.