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**JUNEAU COUNTY RELEASES FIRST LOOK AT COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT RESULTS**

*Community partners start to redefine what health means to Juneau County*

**[Mauston, WI]** – Over 1,200 Juneau County residents responded to the 2021 community health survey during the spring. This survey is one part of the required Community Health Assessment all local health departments must complete every five years. The motto for this year’s process is: *Community First. Redefine Health.*

“Health is so much more than the absence of illness,” stated James O’Keefe, CEO of Mile Bluff Medical Center. “The Community Health Assessment is an important opportunity to learn what barriers our patients are experiencing to health. Safe, affordable housing, good paying jobs, and transportation are all things that impact the health of our community.”

Mile Bluff is one of the many agencies on the steering committee leading the community health assessment process. The committee is made up of representatives from many community organizations including Juneau County school districts, Aging & Disability Resource Center, and the regional planning commission.

“It was important to have *Community First* front and center for the health assessment. This would not have been possible without the work of the steering committee,” explained Tara Ennis, Community Health Supervisor. “The steering committee helped ensure there were many viewpoints and as many Juneau County residents as possible had access to the survey. We cannot thank them enough for all their continued work on this project.”

Juneau County residents identified their top community strengths and areas for improvement through the community survey. The next step is the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) which will narrow down from five areas of improvement to a couple key ones to focus efforts on in order to drive change. The CHIP process will launch in 2022 and the steering committee will expand their membership to include more community representatives and experts from the main focus areas.

Top 5 Areas for Improvement (identified from Community Health Survey Results):

1. Good Jobs & Strong Economy
2. Affordable Housing
3. Accessible Transportation
4. Access to Affordable Healthy Food
5. Access to Affordable Mental Health Services

The Steering Committee is looking for people to join the movement and help make change! Go to [www.co.juneau.wi.gov/health-assessment.html](http://www.co.juneau.wi.gov/health-assessment.html) to learn more and sign-up to join.