Overview

In fiscal year 2021 the Wisconsin Partnership Program (WPP) awarded 11 new grants and supported the progress of 74 active grants and 36 concluded grants. These activities and expenditures are covered in the Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2021.

In addition to the annual report, the Wisconsin Partnership Program publishes Outcome Reports for grants that concluded in the fiscal year. The outcome reports highlight the achievements, progress toward health improvement, knowledge gained and impact of concluded grants. These reports can be viewed at med.wisc.edu/wpp-funded-projects.

Outcome and Achievement Highlights

Researchers and community partners led projects that focused on a wide range of approaches to solving complex and urgent health challenges. Following is a snapshot of some of the WPP-funded projects that concluded in FY21. Please visit our website for full outcome reports of grants that concluded this year.

Responding to COVID-19

As our state grappled with the health challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, WPP grantees got to work. COVID-19 Response Grants that concluded in fiscal year 2021 supported work related to pandemic-driven food insecurity, homelessness, access to healthcare, safe masking and COVID-19 prevention, genetic epidemiology and surveillance, culturally relevant education and more. View the outcome reports on our Funded Projects webpage for projects including the following:

- **Genetic Epidemiology of SARS-CoV-2 in Hospitals and Care Facilities**: This project sought to provide insight into the nature of SARS-CoV-2 transmission in healthcare settings. Its findings suggest the majority of healthcare worker infections are acquired through community exposure, not through healthcare associated SARS-CoV-2 infections. The sequencing results were also used to inform infection control guidelines.

- **Bilingual (English/Spanish) Short- and Long-Term Assistance to Vulnerable Populations**: This project supported a social services agency’s ability to adapt to continue its assistance to community members hardest hit by the pandemic. The grantee helped address the immediate needs of its English and Spanish-speaking clients by promoting access to food and hygiene supplies and employment assistance.
Propelling Research

In fiscal year 2021, WPP grantees and collaborators conducted research to fuel knowledge and discovery on significant health issues including cancer, wound healing, addiction and cardiac pathophysiology. View our Funded Projects webpage for Outcome Reports on projects including:

- **Autologous Regeneration in Burn-Injured Patients:** This project established new human skin models for wound healing that will benefit wound healing research and further understanding of human wound healing.

- **Identifying the Mechanisms of Nerve Regulation of Heart Regeneration:** This grant supported a team of investigators who provided new knowledge that will inform future research and interventions to help restore cardiac function after a heart attack.

Strengthening Communities

Health is inextricably linked to community support and social connection, and this year’s concluded projects worked to strengthen communities by addressing a range of health needs in diverse populations. They completed projects including:

- **Farmer Suicide Prevention:** The project developed comprehensive community-based education and intervention tools that were integrated into the Southwestern Wisconsin farming community to address the immediate crisis of suicide and support farmers’ overall mental health. As a result of the success of this project, the grant team has received additional funding to replicate the work in Iowa, LaFayette, Grant, Green and Richland counties.

- **PATHS: Preventing Youth Homelessness for Youth Aging Out of Foster Care:** This Milwaukee-based project expanded Pathfinders’ innovative model of service delivery to help prevent homelessness in youth aging out of foster care, a problem nearly half this population faces by age 21. The success of the pilot has led to the expansion of the PATHS model in Wisconsin, with increased allocation of state funding for PATHS in Milwaukee County and in northern Wisconsin, and additional awards secured by Pathfinders to double its housing efforts using PATHS as the framework.

Improving Access to Quality Healthcare

Accessible, affordable and quality healthcare are essential to improving the health of the state’s population. Grantees understand the need to share knowledge and build capacity so communities across the state, including the hardest-to-reach populations have access to quality care. Below are examples of two projects that undertook this important charge:

- **Improving Access to High Quality Surgical Care in Wisconsin Communities:** This strategic grant established the Surgical Collaborative of Wisconsin (SCW), an innovative collaboration to engage Wisconsin hospitals in a highly feasible surgical care improvement initiative for breast and colorectal cancer patients across the state. To date, SCW has engaged 85 hospitals and 200 surgeons. Nearly 75 percent of breast and colorectal procedures are performed in an SCW engaged hospital, and hospitals that participated in SCW saw a significant reduction in reoperations as a result of the high level of engagement with the collaborative.

- **Increasing Access to Quality Healthcare in Correctional Settings by Expanding Health Workforce Capacity:** The project assembled a cross-campus multidisciplinary class on correctional healthcare to provide an overview of the complicated criminal justice system and match future graduates to mentors delivering healthcare to criminal justice-involved individuals. Due to the success of this project, the course Medicine 809-Intersection of Health Care and Incarceration will be offered each spring and is open to medical, nursing, pharmacy and PA students interested in how their careers might address the specific health challenges of the criminal justice system.

Economic Impact

One important indicator of success and impact is the amount of extramural funding leveraged by grantees to sustain or enhance their work. In FY 2021, grantees leveraged $23.3 million from external funders, bringing the total to date to $643.6 million leveraged since 2004 for projects that were initiated with WPP support.

For more information on how the Wisconsin Partnership Program is working to improve health and advance health equity, please visit med.wisc.edu/partnership.

View our Outcome Reports at med.wisc.edu/wpp-funded-projects.
Wisconsin Partnership Program at a Glance

550 grants awarded since 2004 to propel medical and public health research and discovery; prepare future physicians and public health leaders; and improve population health and advance health equity across Wisconsin communities

$23.3 million leveraged by grantees in extramural grant funds between July 1, 2020 and June 30, 2021 based on the success of their WPP-funded work

$643.6 million leveraged by grantees since 2004 in new grant funds to sustain and enhance their projects initiated with WPP grant support

468 times grantees disseminated information, including peer-reviewed publications, presentations and popular media in fiscal year 2021

8,335 times grantees disseminated information, including peer-reviewed publications, presentations and popular media since 2004

$5.9 million awarded in 40 grants to target COVID-19 research, response and recovery

Wisconsin counties were impacted by Wisconsin Partnership Program funding as a result of the work of WPP-funded grants that were active in the fiscal year 2021.

- 14 Wisconsin counties were home to organizations that had active projects in FY21
- 48 counties had grant activity that occurred as a result of projects that were active in FY21
- 29 Wisconsin counties were home to collaborating organizations engaged in projects funded in FY21

Since 2004, the Wisconsin Partnership Program has supported initiatives and projects that have reached every county in state.