



Behavioral Health

2021-2026

 **Alyss Smith | Casper, WY**
How to Find Balance

“The road to recovery from bipolar depression is long, bumpy, and a ton of work. Recovery isn't a destination though, it's a balancing act. It's an ephemeral space of stability, and reaching for it is a fulltime job.”

Alyss has experienced severe suicidal ideation. Since that experience, she has invested her energy into finding the best tools to support her mental wellness.

“Eating well, creating, getting outside, and meditation are things that I do daily if possible. Self-reflection gives me clues for how to cope with my current emotional state. Medication has changed my perspective dramatically. Caring for another sentient being (my cat) has given me purpose. All of these tools come together to prevent me from unraveling.”

Desired Future

A behavioral health system that produces access to quality care and recovery services; a cultural shift away from stigma; healthy and thriving citizens regardless of behavioral health status across the lifespan; conditions in the community that support mental wellness; and a reduction in trauma both for individuals and communities.

Existing Efforts

Residents across the state acknowledge and value behavioral health as a priority. There is increasing awareness of the importance of mental health in addition to physical health.

Agencies and coalitions are working to maintain and improve access to mental health and substance abuse services. They are implementing suicide prevention efforts in community-based settings, and improving data collection and use to inform future efforts.

Medical health care systems are beginning to incorporate more behavioral health efforts into their existing workflows.

What Else Can be Done

Continue and enhance efforts that address:

- Social supports
- Stigma
- Help-seeking
- Lethal means reduction
- Accessibility and affordability of quality behavioral health services
- Behavioral health provider shortages
- Policy and system changes, such as policies that strengthen the crisis system, including mobile responses and hotlines

Together, we can work toward a healthier future for all Wyomingites. Using our collective experiences and working together for change will help us get there.

What Influences Behavioral Health and Suicide in Wyoming?

Behavioral health is a broad term to describe the promotion of mental health, resilience and wellbeing; treatment of mental health and substance abuse or use disorders; and support for those who experience and/or are in recovery from these conditions ([SAMHSA](#)). If not treated and managed appropriately, behavioral health conditions can have deadly consequences. Additionally, Wyoming consistently ranks worst among states for suicide deaths. Notably, 65% of suicide deaths result from the use of a firearm (Wyoming Vital Statistics, 2007-2017).

The below graphic highlights some of the common factors that influence behavioral health challenges and suicide in Wyoming. This view allows us to see the social, economic, environmental, and access-to-care factors that can create barriers to prevention and treatment options, in addition to modifiable behavioral factors. Some populations experience a greater burden of or risk for behavioral health conditions and/or suicide. Those are also noted.



The contributing factors and populations were determined using the best available Wyoming data, scientific literature, and expert opinion.

Priority-Setting Process

To learn more about the priority-setting process and overall priority recommendations, please view the [Priority Recommendations document](#).

Contact

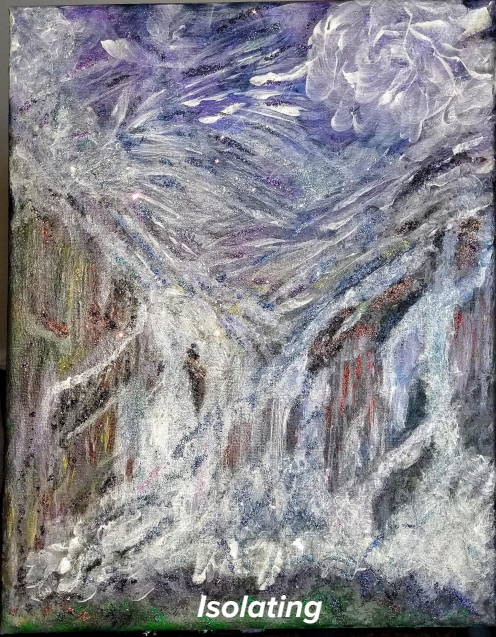
Holly Scheer, Performance Improvement Manager
holly.scheer1@wyo.gov



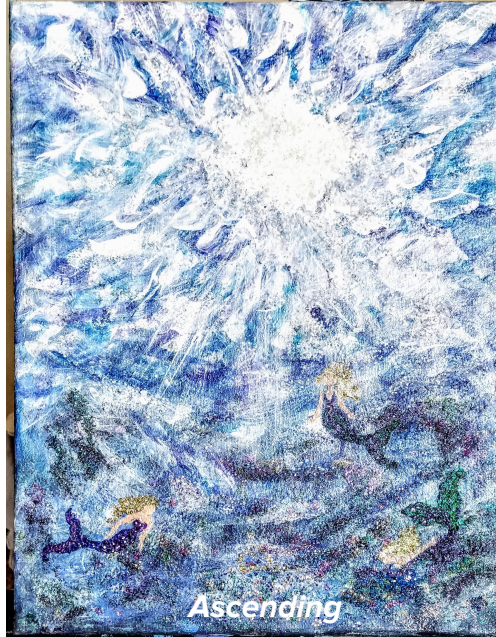
State Health Improvement
Steering Committee



Wyoming
Department of
Health



Isolating



Ascending



Living

Access to Health Care 2021-2026

 **Maxi Yates | Glenrock, WY**
Art Heals

“Recovery was unimaginable, dehumanizing, and isolating.”

After a fall at home, Maxi also suffered a stroke. The medical events left her physically, mentally, and emotionally devastated.

With no family to assist in her daily living challenges, she found herself alone in her recovery.

She began to paint. “The canvas was unbiased. It didn’t judge my shaky hands, or length of time; day or night, I could create.”

Art was her saving grace.

Desired Future

A health care system that produces affordable and available quality health care for all residents, especially those at greatest risk for access-to-care challenges; innovative solutions that make health care services more accessible; conditions in the community that reduce barriers to care; and investments in our existing health care workforce.

Existing Efforts

Residents across the state acknowledge that challenges persist in accessing health care, and there is both demand and support for improving that access.

Health care systems are continually working to meet the needs of Wyoming residents. Many are adopting telehealth practices to expand access. Community paramedicine efforts aim to address gaps in health care. Provider recruitment and retention efforts exist to reduce provider shortages.

Moreover, a statewide broadband enhancement initiative is underway that could further support telehealth as an option for care.

What Else Can be Done

Continue and enhance efforts that address:

- Telehealth adoption
- Community paramedicine
- Provider shortages
- Policy and system changes, such as policies that would ensure affordable insurance options for residents

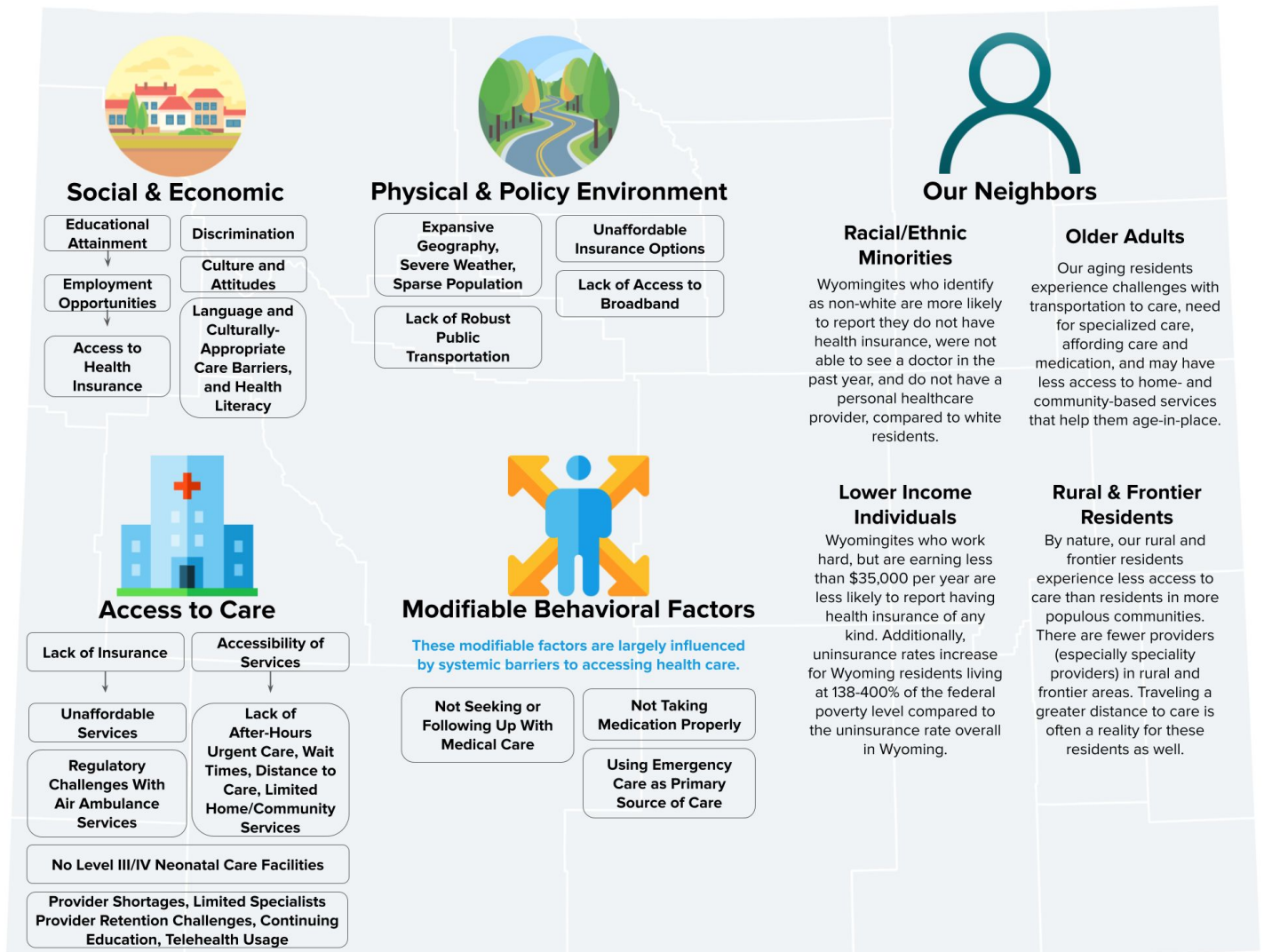
Innovative solutions to address other barriers, such as transportation or language and literacy barriers, could improve access to and quality of health care for residents as well.

Together, we can work toward a healthier future for all Wyomingites. Using our collective experiences and working together for change will help us get there.

What Influences Access to Health Care in Wyoming?

Access to medical and behavioral health care means having services be both available and affordable. That access allows individuals to enter the health care system, find available and affordable care, and have their health needs met. Health insurance helps people access care, but alone does not ensure access. Uninsured adults have higher rates of mortality and premature death than insured adults. Provider type and availability, cost (even with insurance), and distance to care can also greatly impact access.

The below graphic highlights some of the common factors that influence access-to-care challenges in Wyoming. This view allows us to see the social, economic, environmental, and access-to-care factors that can create barriers to accessing care. Such systemic barriers can influence individuals' health care decisions, as highlighted under modifiable behavioral factors. Some populations experience less access to care. Those are also noted.



The contributing factors and populations were determined using the best available Wyoming data, scientific literature, and expert opinion.

Priority-Setting Process

To learn more about the priority-setting process and overall priority recommendations, please view the [Priority Recommendations document](#).

Contact

Holly Scheer, Performance Improvement Manager
holly.scheer1@wyo.gov




State Health Improvement
Steering Committee



Wyoming
Department
of Health

Unintentional Injury

2021-2026

 **Elizabeth Walsh | Salt Lake City, UT**
(originally from Casper, WY)
Big Sky

“The memory is burned into my mind. I know where I was, what I was doing, and how I fell apart when I got the call that my best friend had died in a car accident. Nothing can prepare you for the shock of death, of a life lost far too early.”

Elizabeth turned to painting to help her cope. It was meditative, repetitive, and healing. *Big Sky* reflects the journey of overcoming loss and transitioning into new growth.



Desired Future

A system that produces a reduction in preventable deaths and hospitalizations due to unintentional injury, especially for those at highest risk; timely emergency response and injury rehabilitation services; superb workplace safety measures, and a shift away from social acceptability of risky behaviors that contribute to preventable injury.

Existing Efforts

Residents across the state acknowledge unintentional injury as a health priority.

Ongoing state and community-level efforts are aimed at reducing impaired and distracted driving, improving seat belt use, and reducing drug poisoning and falls, especially for residents that experience a greater burden of injury.

Emergency medical services and trauma systems are continually working to provide and improve services.

Industry-led and coalition-based efforts to address workplace safety are ongoing, as are efforts to expand technical assistance to employers and workers.

What Else Can be Done

Continue and enhance efforts that address:

- The leading causes of unintentional injuries and deaths
- Modifiable behaviors (e.g., distracted driving)
- Emergency and trauma services
- Workplace safety
- Policy and system changes, such as best-practice motor vehicle safety policies

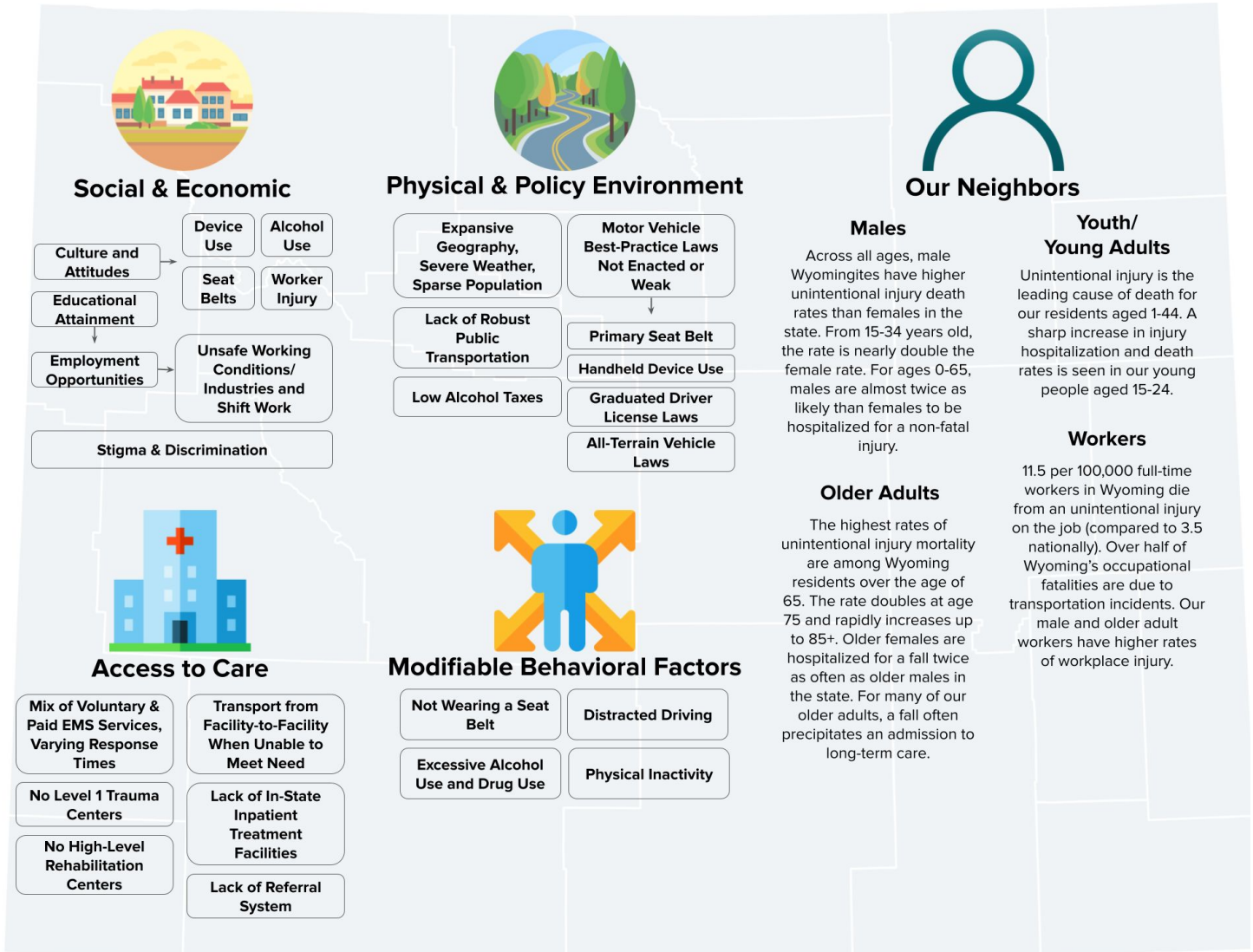
Further, shifting cultural norms and attitudes can reduce risk for injury.

Together, we can work toward a healthier future for all Wyomingites. Using our collective experiences and working together for change will help us get there.

What Influences Unintentional Injury in Wyoming?

Unintentional injuries are a leading cause of death. From 2007-2017, the leading mechanisms of unintentional injury deaths in Wyoming were motor vehicle crashes (1,153 deaths), unintentional poisoning (852), and falls (651). Falls are the leading cause of unintentional injury hospitalizations, followed by motor vehicle crashes. Additionally, Wyoming's occupational injury fatality rate is the highest in the country (2018).

The below graphic highlights some of the common factors that influence unintentional injury in Wyoming. This view allows us to see the social, economic, environmental, and access-to-care factors that may contribute to both fatal and nonfatal unintentional injuries, in addition to modifiable behavioral factors. Some populations experience a greater burden of or risk for unintentional injury. Those are also noted.



The contributing factors and populations were determined using the best available Wyoming data, scientific literature, and expert opinion.

Priority-Setting Process

To learn more about the priority-setting process and overall priority recommendations, please view the [Priority Recommendations document](#).

Contact
 Holly Scheer, Performance Improvement Manager
holly.scheer1@wyo.gov



State Health Improvement
 Steering Committee

