

# McHenry County Healthy Community 2017 Focus Group Findings



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# Methodology

- Two types of focus groups: target populations and community leaders
- Community leader groups replace key informants used in 2014
- Four target populations selected and 50 community leaders identified
- Questions developed by McHenry County Healthy Community focus group subcommittee with guidance from HSR. Two sets of questions, one for each type of focus group, but with similar topics
- Some questions repeated from 2014 and 2010

# Target Populations

<b>Group</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Meeting Location</b>	<b>Date</b>
Veterans	16	Transitional Living Services (TLS), McHenry	8/3
Parents of Low-Income Children	7	Verda Dierzen Early Learning Center, Woodstock	8/11
Parents/Persons with Mental Illness, Substance Abuse or Developmental/Intellectual Disabilities	12	McHenry County Mental Health Board, Crystal Lake	8/18
Hispanic/Latino(a)s	3	Harvard Area Community Health Center	8/11
Hispanic/Latino(a)s	21	Garden Quarter Neighborhood Resource Center, McHenry	9/19
<b>Total</b>	<b>59</b>		

# Community Leader Groups

<b>Meeting Place and Location</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Date</b>
McHenry County Department. of Health, Woodstock	11	8/16
McHenry County Mental Health Board, Crystal Lake	12	8/25
Harvard Area Community Health Center	6	9/15
<b>Total Community Leader Participants</b>	<b>29</b>	

In 2014, 21 key informant interviews (22 participants)

**Total Participants, All Focus Groups = 88**

# Best Aspects of Living in McHenry County

## Target Populations

- Small town atmosphere
- Available resources and services
- Rural environment
- Access to major cities
- Good schools
- Feel safe
- Available jobs

## Community Leaders

- Sense of community, feeling of belonging
- Green, open space
- Family-friendly atmosphere
- Proximity to Chicago and Milwaukee
- Acceptance of Latino and LGBTQ populations

# Best Aspects of Working in McHenry County

## Remarks by community leaders

- Attitude that favors working together. Local organizations and agencies collaborate
- Strong network of social service organizations
- Mental Health Board provides sense of cohesiveness among agencies they fund
- Ease of recruiting high-level professionals due to amenities and lifestyle
- Living and working in same community

# Aspects Not Liked in McHenry County

## Remarks by target populations

- Lack of public transportation
- High cost of housing, property taxes
- Road infrastructure, congestion
- Discrimination towards Hispanic population
- Community feels less safe
- Financial constraints due to state budget and funding cutbacks
- Lack of employment for veterans

# Groups Needing Community Attention

## **Named by Three Community Leader FGs and Subcommittee**

Persons with Mental Illness, Substance Abuse, Intellectual/  
Developmental Disabilities

Latino(a)s/Hispanic Population

Low-income, Uninsured/underinsured, Medicaid Population

## **Named by Two Community Leader FGs or Subcommittee**

Homeless Population

Seniors

Veterans

LGBTQ Persons

## **Named by One Focus Group**

Victims of Domestic Violence

Youth

Persons without Cars



# Persons with Mental Illness, Substance Abuse, Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities

## Service Needs

- Transition services (high school to adulthood, crisis to recovery)
- Psychiatric care for Medicaid patients
- Children's inpatient hospitalization unit
- More rehabilitation services
- Residential, suitable living arrangements for adolescents, young adults w. mental illness, disabilities
- Educating professionals about dealing with special-needs children

## Barriers

- Stigma attached to mental illness
- Inadequate supply of psychiatrists
- Lack of affordable care
- Limited awareness of existing services
- Geographic spread of county
- Long waiting lists for housing for persons with disabilities
- Limited funding and political issues

# Hispanic/Latino Population

## Service Needs

- Access to medical care, especially specialists
- Access to dental care, basic and orthodontics
- Access to vision care
- Bilingual health providers and police
- Mental health care including Spanish-speaking counselors

## Barriers

- Lack of health insurance  
Many Hispanics are undocumented
- Lack of bilingual providers for medical, dental, mental health care
- Inadequate transportation, especially in and around Harvard

# Low-income, Uninsured/underinsured, Medicaid Population

## Service Needs

- Insufficient number of primary care providers, especially serving Medicaid patients
- Hospital birthing and delivery inpatient care closer to home
- Better public transportation throughout county

## Barriers

- Transportation
- No coordinated approach to help low-income families
- Limited health literacy
- Newcomers to county are not familiar with the concept of “community” nor appreciate its value

# Homeless

## Service Needs

- Affordable housing
- No year-round shelter
- Options for youth who have no homes
- Safety concerns in congregate settings

## Barriers

- Inadequate supply of affordable homes
- Attitude to keep affordable housing out, NIMBY

# Seniors

## Service Needs

- Transportation
- Access to primary care and geriatric specialists
- Treatment for depression, substance abuse
- Supportive housing

## Barriers

- Lack of comfort with common behaviors among elderly
- Inadequate supply of personal care assistants
- Lack of respite care for caregivers
- Some elderly suffer from elder abuse and exploitation

# Veterans

## Service Needs

- Medical services, esp. specialty care
- Better transition after military discharge
- Housing for homeless vets
- Substance abuse/addiction counselors

## Barriers

- Agencies serving vets do not always coordinate with each other
- Limited awareness of services
- Transportation to medical care, including door-to-door pick-up

# LGBTQ

## Service Needs

- Inadequate resources. No agency, service dedicated to serving them
- Number is growing, more visible now
- Educating personnel (police, hospital, emergency) about dealing with transgender persons
- Local clinicians who can treat transgender persons with hormones

## Barriers

- Inadequate training for providers to understand and help this population
- Failure to recognize and feel comfortable with transgender population

# McHenry County Health and Human Services Strengths

- Wealth of services, more resources than many counties
- Good quality and committed leadership
- High degree of collaboration
- Family Health Partnership and two FQHCs, Harvard Area Community Health Center and McHenry Community Health Center
- Mental Health Board has resources, works effectively to distribute them, maintains connectivity among agencies they fund
- 2-1-1 information and referral, yet more awareness needed

# McHenry County Health and Human Services

## Weaknesses and Gaps

- Lack of dental services for low-income, uninsured, Medicaid
- State budget problems have curtailed services
- Disconnect between social service providers and hospital/health systems about disease management and population health
- Lack of integrated health record for agencies serving same patient
- Not enough providers for underserved
- Delivery of care occurs as two-class system, depending on whether you have money/insurance or not
- Inadequate awareness, communication about available services

# McHenry County Health and Human Services Barriers

## Barriers that Keep People from Using Existing Services

- Inadequate public transportation to health services, treatment centers
- Language
- Not enough bilingual providers
- Lack of awareness and information about available services among providers and residents

## Operational Barriers to Sustainability for Providers

- State budget problems and cutbacks
- More competition for private grant monies
- Lack of support for health department, including core services
- Volunteer fatigue



# Effects of New Insurance Options

## Affordable Care Act

- More people covered due to Medicaid expansion or purchased insurance through state's exchange
- Elimination of pre-existing conditions to deny coverage
- Fewer providers accept insurance plans offered through state's exchanges
- High deductibles on most affordable plans

## Medicaid

- Limited number of providers accept this form of coverage
- Tests and procedures limited
- Travel farther for services now
- Adults harder hit than children, most of whom qualify for AllKids (immigration status not asked for AllKids)

# Challenges to Living Healthy Lifestyle

- Misuse of opioids, more heroin use
- Lack of awareness of existing services
- Water resources (quantity) threatened in southeast corner of county; chloride levels up affecting water quality
- Affordable housing
- Non-profits are suffering due to lack of support
- Diet and lifestyle choices
- Veterans with disabilities (fitness factors)
- Hispanics face discrimination

# Biggest Health and Human Needs

- Dentists to serve low-income, esp. adults on Medicaid
- Mental health care, specifically counseling for Medicaid population. Hispanics lack help for mental health problems
- Language barriers of Hispanic population for care, most importantly, mental health and dentistry
- Heroin use in county

# Ratings (Mean Scores)

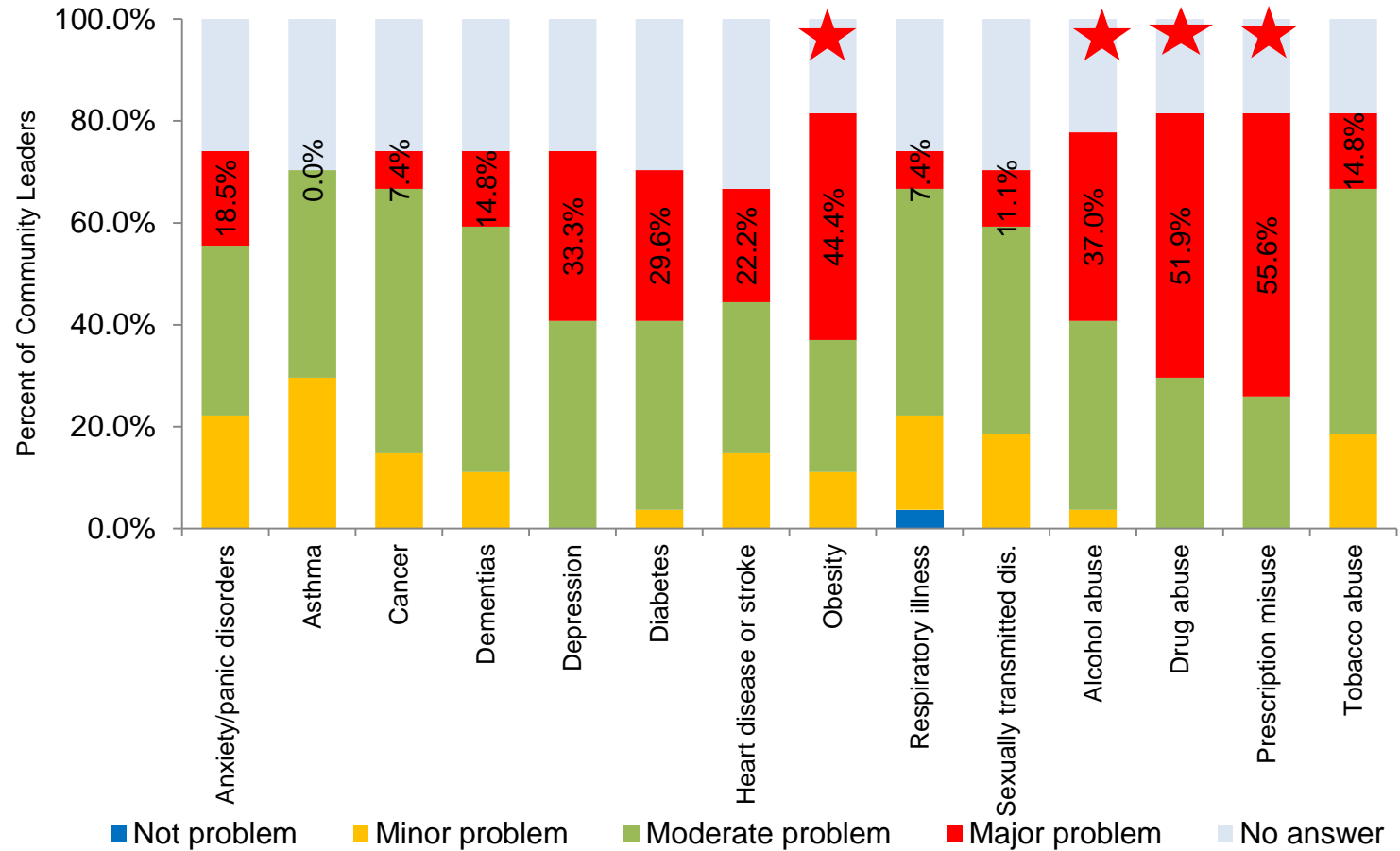
Rank	Health Condition	Mean <sup>1</sup>
1	Prescription misuse	3.68
2	Drug abuse	3.64
3	Depression	3.45
4	Alcohol abuse	3.43
5	Obesity	3.41
6	Diabetes	3.37
7	Heart disease or stroke	3.11
8	Dementias	3.05
9	Tobacco abuse	2.95
10	Anxiety/panic disorders	2.95
11	Cancer	2.90
12	Sexually transmitted dis.	2.89
13	Respiratory illness	2.75
14	Asthma	2.58

Rank	Availability of	Mean <sup>1</sup>
1	Substance abuse	3.61
2	Mental health	3.50
3	Dental/oral health	3.18
4	Primary health care	3.00

Rank	Health Factor	Mean <sup>1</sup>
1	Affordable housing	3.81
2	Public transportation	3.67
3	Employment opportunities	2.81
4	Environmental issues	2.33
5	Crime, violence, safety	2.25
6	Education	2.12

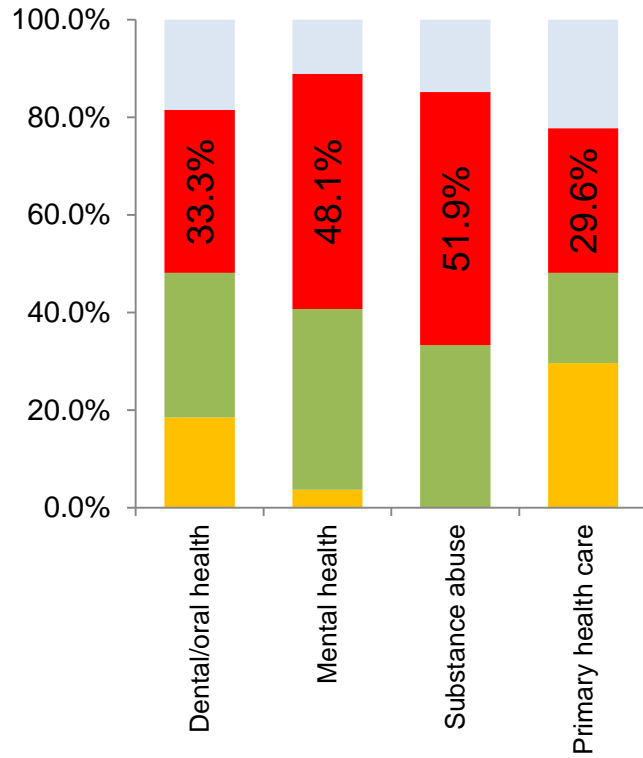
<sup>1</sup>Scale of problem severity 1=none, 2= minor, 3=moderate, 4=major problem.

# Ratings of Health Conditions



# Ratings

## Health Services



## Health Factors

