

**Key Informant
Interviews
Dec. 2021-Feb 2022
Goodhue County
Community Health
Needs Assessment**

Demographic Information:

- 21 interviews were compiled. Participants indicated they were 35-74, with one interviewee 25-34.
- Thirteen were male, eight were female.
- Occupations listed included education, government, health care, business and service.
- All interviewees were white with one being Black, African, or African American, no Hispanic or Latino origin.

Interviewees were asked to complete online surveys before the interview:

Of the issues that impact health in our community, what are the top three that are the most important related to your sector? For each concern selected, please answer questions on who is affected, why you believe this is a concern, contributing factors, resources available and suggestions.

For the online survey, top three issues were selected from the Healthy People 2030 list, <https://health.gov/healthypeople/objectives-and-data/browse-objectives> .

A summary of the answers is as follows:

Mental Health and Mental Disorders was the clear concern including access and barriers to treatment. Affordability for treatment was also mentioned. Mental health issues related to an aging population were cited. Other top concerns included Housing and Homes, Drug and Alcohol Use, Overweight and Obesity, Economic Stability (Poverty), and Preventive Care.

Mental Health

Mental Health and Mental Disorders was the most frequently mentioned health concern by a wide margin. It was mentioned by 81% of key informants (17 of 21). Concerns around affordability and a lack of services were mentioned, with the COVID-19 pandemic having an effect. One informant said there should be more encouragement to our state government to budget more for mental health treatment, and that there needs to be insurance coverage for early intervention and help for mental health professionals to work with people.

Currently a person has to be at a critical point in their mental health crisis to get qualified for help that the insurance will cover.

Housing

Of 21 key informants, 6 (29%) chose Housing as one of their top three concerns, making it one of the most frequently mentioned health concerns. Concerns about homelessness numbers increasing, not enough housing, and housing not being affordable. One informant said there needs to be one central location for people experiencing homelessness to receive services.

Drug and Alcohol Use

Drug and Alcohol Use was one of the most frequently mentioned health concerns. Of 21 key informants, 6 (29%) chose Drug and Alcohol use as one of their top three concerns. Key informant interviews suggest the drug and alcohol issue could be measured by arrest reports, increasing alcohol sales, participation in drug court, participation in local recovery programs (AA), and the number of people talking to pastors about substance abuse concerns. Resources mentioned by key informants included adult substance abuse treatment providers, recovery groups, and drug court. Key informants identified gaps in adolescent treatment services, upstream interventions, and treatment and recovery groups in rural towns such as Lake City and Goodhue. Key informants suggested more support for adolescents and families of drug users, including more recovery groups.

Overweight and Obesity

Of 21 key informants, 6 (29%) chose Overweight and obesity as one of their top three concerns, making it one of the most frequently mentioned health concerns. Key informants mentioned sedentary lifestyles and technology, such as video games and video conferences, as a contributor to overweight and obesity. Key informants identified price of healthy foods as a barrier, as well as a lack of culturally diverse options at local food shelves.

Poverty

Of 21 key informants, 4 (19%) chose Economic Stability as a one of their top three concerns. Informants shared concerns around the community unable to afford to live on low wages, income rates going in the wrong direction, and the COVID-19 pandemic affecting the economy.

Preventive Care

Of 21 key informants, 4 (19%) chose Preventative Care as a one of their top three concerns. Key informants said some people may not see the value in it, but preventive care is important to catch illness early. Barriers to preventive care identified by key informants included accessibility, lack of healthcare education, a lack of financial means to access it, and a lack of understanding what is covered by insurance. Key informants also acknowledged that chronic disease prevention can be an expensive service to provide.

Discrimination and Social Connection

Of 21 key informants, 3 (14%) chose Social and Community Context as a one of their top three concerns. One informant stated that the COVID-19 pandemic has heightened the ability for individuals to become antagonistic and more of a "me" vs. "we" culture in our communities. This makes it hard to get various stakeholders to pull together and act as a community to help improve our inclusiveness. They also stated that as a state, we are focusing more on racial equality. This gives us an opportunity to do more at the local level as well. We need to show showcase areas of success and hope to build on that with private/public partnerships and find ways to continue to partner between non-profits.

Education Access and Quality

Of 21 key informants, 3 (14%) chose Education Access and Quality as a one of their top three concerns. One informant said with the changes in communication due to COVID-19, education needs to continue to expand and be offered over multiple platforms. There are ways to educate our youth through programs and virtual opportunities and these efforts needs to be supported in order to be effective in delivery.

Trust in Public Health

Of 21 key informants, 2 (10%) chose Emergency Preparedness as a one of their top three concerns. One informant said with the COVID-19 pandemic our community members are trusting us less, and not following preparedness guidance and are sick of hearing about it.

Physical Activity

Of 21 key informants, 2 (10%) chose Physical Activity as a one of their top three concerns. There were concerns around obesity with our children. One informant said, in a virtual world with video games and phone addictions, there needs to be more encouragement of physical activity.

Violent Crime and Child Abuse

Violence Prevention was mentioned as a top health concern by one key informant. The concern was around violence in many forms such as assault, domestic assault, threats, intimidation, etc. With increasing gun violence nationwide we would be wise to acknowledge and prevent before it escalates on a more local level.

Healthcare Access and Quality

Health Care Access and Quality was not selected as a top health concern by any key informants.