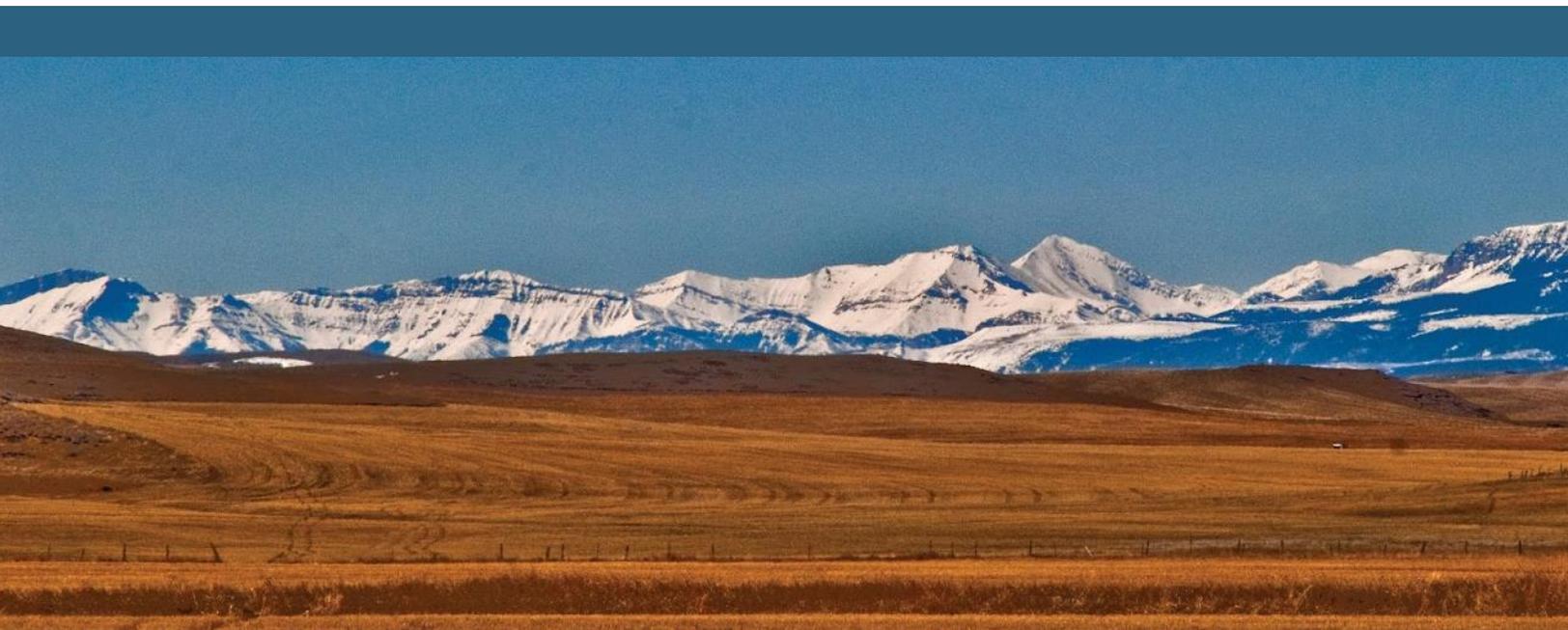


Teton County

Community Health Needs Assessment and Improvement Plan



2017

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Introduction

Teton County's 2017 Community Health Needs Assessment and Improvement Plan (CHNA-IP) provides an overview of the current health status in Teton County, and community-driven objectives and strategies for improving health and quality of life in our county. This report is unique from other community health needs assessments that have been done in Teton County, in that it provides a more comprehensive examination of the many facets that relate to the health and well-being of the community and is a product of collaboration among Teton County Mental Health Local Advisory Council (LAC), Teton County Health Department (TCHD) and Benefis Teton Medical Center (BTMC), the local hospital.

This CHNA-IP synthesizes information from a variety of direct sources including an online survey of local key informants, community member focus groups, and Stakeholders Advisory Committee meetings, in addition to secondary local, regional, state and national data collected specifically for the purpose of this assessment by Katie Loveland of Loveland Consulting, LLC. Numerous community leaders, agency and organization partners, and community members have contributed to this assessment and plan during 2016 and 2017.

What is health?

The World Health Organization defines health as a "state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity." In Teton County, we believe that health is not just about individuals, but includes families, communities, and systems, and is a result of the interaction of complex networks, conditions, and factors. Health starts long before illness occurs and is impacted by where and how we live, learn, work, play, and pray.

The Teton County CHNA-IP incorporates this definition of health by describing a wide array of information about the conditions and factors affecting people's health in Teton County as well as indicators of health status.

On behalf of LAC, TCHD, and BTMC, we thank all of the individuals and organizations who have taken the time to participate and collaborate in the completion of this document, and we hope that it will be used widely to help build healthier communities for the residents of Teton County.

Background

Teton County is a rural county in north central Montana, about 120 miles south of the Canadian border and 53 miles northwest of Great Falls. It is located along the Rocky Mountain Front, a widely known scenic area that encompasses both mountain and prairie landscapes, where vast agricultural prairie lands abruptly intersect the rugged country of the northern Rockies. Known for agriculture and recreational opportunities, this 2,293 square mile expanse includes distinct natural resources, including Lewis and Clark National Forest and other public lands, the local Teton mountain range, the Teton River, several large irrigation and recreational reservoirs, and Freezeout Lake Wildlife Management area. Five communities are located in Teton County: Choteau (the county seat), Fairfield, Power, Dutton, and Bynum. Three elected county commissioners govern county programs and services. Each commissioner serves a 6-year term.



Teton County is considered a frontier county and also a medically underserved county by federal standards. With a total population of 6,073 residents and 2.7 people per square mile, Teton County faces a number of unique challenges when it comes to the health of its residents.

Vision

The Stakeholders Advisory Group convened for this project developed the following vision of health.

Our vision for Teton County is a clean, safe, and economically stable community that honors its local resources, culture, and natural environment. Opportunity, infrastructure, and people model healthy lifestyles. It is a place where all people are equally supported in their pursuit of happiness, health, and spirituality.

Values

The Stakeholders Advisory Group also outlined values that all stakeholders working to improve health in Teton County should strive for.

- Equality
- Acceptance
- Honoring local culture and environment
- Generosity and kindness
- Openness
- Teamwork and shared vision
- Evidence-based
- Spirituality
- Accessibility
- Sustainability
- Honesty and transparency

Goals and Objectives

A community health assessment can meet the goals of many entities in Teton County. This Community Health Needs Assessment and Improvement Plan will meet the IRS requirements under the 2010 Affordable Care Act for non-profit hospitals, health system entities, and Critical Access Hospitals like Benefis Teton Medical Center; it can be used to achieve Public Health Accreditation for the Teton County Health Department; and it may be used for other entities required to conduct health assessments as federally funded health centers, such as Community Health Centers and Federally Qualified Health Centers. The Teton County CHNA-IP is intended to inform health providers, government officials, key stakeholders, and the general public of the current health status in Teton County, offer prioritized objectives and strategies to improve local health services, and serve as a basis for community health improvement planning and strategic planning in the future.

Goals of Health Needs Assessment

- Describes the health status of Teton County.
- Identifies trends, factors or events that influence health and quality of life.
- Provides a deeper understanding of the issues important to community residents.
- Engages community partners within the county including those facing significant barriers to better health in the process of issue identification, data collection, interpretation of data, and dissemination of results.
- Meets IRS requirements of hospital, and public health accreditation standards.

Goals of Health Improvement Plan

- Engages community members and organizations to identify the top 3 health issues in Teton County.
- Defines areas for health improvement, with a focus on identifying health inequities.
- Considers importance, changeability, and community eagerness for change in priority areas.
- Establishes objectives and potential strategies for achieving progress in priority areas
- Identifies organizational and community assets that can be mobilized to improve health for the entire county.

Collaborations and Partnerships

Teton County has a strong history of promoting collaborative approaches to community projects. Teton County's CHNA-IP process engaged a diverse array of community leaders and other agency and organizational partners, community coalitions and advisory groups with a strong focus on engaging community members facing significant barriers to better health.

Sponsorship of and much of the legwork for this assessment was provided by Teton County Health Department, Benefis Teton Medical Center, and Teton County Mental Health Local Advisory Council. In 2016 the Teton County Health Department (TCHD) applied for and received funding from the Montana Public Health and Safety Division of the Montana Department of Health and Human Services to develop a comprehensive health assessment of Teton County. Additionally, Benefis Teton Medical Center Foundation made a generous financial donation, without which this process would not have been possible. TCHD proposed conducting a collaborative community health needs assessment, approaching both the local hospital (BTMC) and the local mental health advisory council (LAC). The three organizations pooled resources and hired Katie Loveland of Loveland Consulting, LLC, who conducted and analyzed an online survey of key stakeholders, and also researched and compiled results from broader health data sources relevant to Teton County health issues.

Sponsors



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Teton County Health Department

Teton County Health Department is a county department that provides health, wellness, and prevention services across Teton County. Programs include communicable disease surveillance, tobacco use prevention, Women, Infants, and Children Nutritional Supplement Program (WIC), cancer screen services, diabetes prevention, immunizations, and chronic disease self-management classes. The Teton County Health Department is governed by the Teton County Board of Health and Board of Commissioners.



Benefis Teton Medical Center is a 10-bed Critical Access Hospital located in Choteau. Services include a 24-7 emergency room, physical therapy, occupational therapy, lab, x-ray and CT, inpatient beds, long term care, and an outpatient clinic. Monthly special services include mammography, dexascan, general cardiology, and foot care. BTMC is a department of Benefis Health System, a large nonprofit hospital system headquartered in Great Falls. The local hospital is overseen by president/CEO Louie King. The BTMC Board of Directors governs BTMC,

and is comprised of five at-large community members and three hospital administrators.



Teton County Mental Health Local Advisory Council (LAC) is a nonprofit group that meets monthly to explore the needs of the community and how to best increase awareness and reduce stigmas surrounding mental illness. The mission of the LAC is to promote individual, family and community mental health awareness and wellness by identifying resources, collaborating with local service providers, and advocating for resolution of the unmet needs of mental health consumers in Teton County. The LAC's vision is to promote mental health wellness and recovery as a positive, inclusive

experience and to work to enable families and consumers to be integral parts in the development and delivery of these services.

Methodology

Focus Groups

During the summer and fall of 2016 Teton County Health Department conducted a series of seven focus group discussions in three county communities. Each meeting targeted unique county population groups, including: high school students, people with chronic health conditions, mental health patients and advocates, low income families, faith community leaders, and senior citizens. Sixty-five community members participated in discussion groups ranging in size from five to 14. Each group was asked the same 7 questions, and data was compiled from their discussions and answers.

Key Informant Survey

The key informant survey used in this CHNA-IP was developed by the three sponsors, LAC, TCHD, and BTMC, and disseminated and analyzed by independent contractor Katie Loveland. It was designed based on other model community health surveys, identified health indicators, and the specific issues relevant to the Teton County area. In April 2017, 300 “key informants,” members of the county with knowledge of and broad connection to community groups and special populations, were identified and sent on-line surveys. The on-line survey consisted of 16 questions. Represented in the contact list were health providers, educators, nonprofit leaders, retail business owners, public agency leaders, local government, senior services administrators, faith leaders, and community volunteers. 130 (43%) surveys were completed and returned.

Stakeholder Advisory Group

From the Key Informant contact list, 23 community members were invited to attend a series of seven weekly meetings, with several goals in mind:

- Draft a vision statement and a list of values that describe a healthy Teton County population.
- Review results of focus groups meetings, the Key Informant survey and the available secondary data.
- Identify and prioritize important and changeable local health issues.
- Draft goals, objectives, and strategies for addressing the top 3 most important local health issues in the county.

The following community partners and stakeholders served on the Stakeholder Advisory Group to give us as comprehensive understanding of the health status in Teton County.

Partner

Florence Anderson
Barbara Arensmeyer
Genny Barhaugh
Deborah Coverdell
Betty Louie Deuchler
Glenn Deuchler
Chuck Gameon
Christine Gascon
Julienne Gram
Zaneta Hirst
Louie King
Melissa Moyer
Jodi Rogers
Linda Sentz
Cathy Sessions
Barb Shaffer
Sherwin Smith
Connie Smith
Carmen Stagmiller
Dan Stott
Merrilee Stott
Paul Wick
Jane Wolery

Organization

Teton County DES
Community senior volunteer
Benefis Teton Medical Center
Teton County EMS
Trinity Lutheran Church
Teton County Health Department
Choteau Public Schools
Teton County Mental Health Local Advisory Council
Trinity Lutheran Preschool
Neighbors Helping Neighbors
Benefis Teton Medical Center
Teton County Health Department
Choteau City Government
Neighbors Helping Neighbors; Teton County Food Pantry
Teton County Schools
Dutton Senior Services
Choteau Lions Club
Community Member
Frontier Family Practice
LDS Church
Community Member
Teton County Planning Department
Teton County Extension

Secondary Data Sources

Due to limitations in workforce and other resources, Teton County does not maintain robust county-wide, health status reports. For the purposes of this CHNA-IP, Teton County primarily relied on data sources compiled by the State of Montana, as well as the federal government. The Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) provided valuable information in their Community Health Assessment data by County and Region 2 (North Central Montana counties combined).

Regional data or State data was used when county-specific data was not available. Other data sources included American Community Survey (ACS), Youth Risk Behavior Surveys (YRBS), Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS), County Health Rankings, Montana Hospital Discharge Data System, Montana Communicable Disease Bureau, Montana WIC Program, and Montana Office of Vital Statistics.

Katie Loveland compiled and analyzed secondary data for this report. She used the following sources of health data relevant to Teton County, Montana:

- **American Community Survey (ACS) – 5 year estimates, 2009-2014** is a survey conducted by the US Census every year. They combine the data to make five year estimates. It can be accessed at <https://factfinder.census.gov/>.
- **Youth Risk Behavior Surveys (YRBS), Choteau High School and Power High School, 2015** is an annual survey given to students at participating high schools. The survey is conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Office of Public Instruction (OPI).
- **Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS), 2014** is a CDC survey conducted in in partnership with DPHHS. It is collected every year. It can be accessed at <https://www.cdc.gov/brfss/index.html>.
- **County Health Rankings, 2016** is a project of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. It includes BRFSS and other types of data and some modeling of the data to develop small area estimates. The website includes a description of each of the indicators and how it is measured because they use many different sources. It can be accessed at <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org>
- **Montana Hospital Discharge Data System, DPHHS, 2011-2013** is hospital discharged data submitted to the Montana Hospital Association and analyzed by DPHHS. Most hospitals in the state participate.
- **Montana Communicable Disease Bureau, DPHHS, 2011-2013** is reportable disease data collected and analyzed by DPHHS
- **Montana WIC Program** includes DPHHS program data from the Women, Infants and Children Nutrition Supplement Program.
- **Montana Office of Vital Statistics, Birth Certificate Data, 2011-2013** includes birth and death records analyzed by DPHHS.

Limitations

While the CHNA-IP identifies many critical issues pertaining to our community’s health, it is not inclusive of all health related issues in Teton County. As a result, it should not be considered a formal study or research document investigating the causes of each issue raised or providing a detailed analysis of the data.

Both primary and secondary data should be interpreted with caution and an awareness that the low population of our county can easily skew indicators. In any study, larger numbers of participants increase the accuracy of results. In many cases, data are not available at the county level due to our very small population size. For this reason, regional data or state level data will be used many times in this assessment when local-level data are not available. In addition, more in-depth analysis may not be possible in many cases due to a lack of data stratification by more specific categories. It is important to note that available national and regional data may not reflect our local reality.

The need for more detailed local data is one important outcome of this assessment. As local partners continue to gather information to inform their practices and services, it is important to collect demographic data so that more accurate information can be used in future community health improvement planning and other public health initiatives.

Social Determinants of Health

Social determinants of health are conditions in the environments in which people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks. Conditions (e.g., social, economic, and physical) in these various environments and settings (e.g., school, church, workplace, and neighborhood) have been referred to as “place.” In addition to the more material attributes of “place,” the patterns of social engagement and sense of security and well-being are also affected by where people live. Resources that enhance quality of life can have a significant influence on population health outcomes. Examples of these resources include safe and affordable housing, access to education, public safety, availability of healthy foods, local emergency/health services, and environments free of life-threatening toxins.

Understanding the relationship between how population groups experience “place” and the impact of “place” on health is fundamental to the social determinants of health—including both social and physical determinants.



In Teton County, the results from the community health status assessment consistently show people who live at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level are more likely to experience poor health, less likely to have health insurance, and less likely to access medical and dental care. Many populations in Teton County experience disparities in access to insurance:

- 33% of 25 to 34-year olds in Teton County are uninsured
- 32% of unemployed individuals in Teton County are uninsured
- 25% of households making less than \$25,000 a year are uninsured.

These are just a few examples of how social determinants of health affect the health status of Teton County residents.

Examples of *social determinants* include:

- Availability of resources to meet daily needs (e.g., safe housing and local food markets)
- Access to educational, economic, and job opportunities
- Access to health care services (e.g., shortages in medical and mental health staff)
- Quality of education and job training
- Availability of community-based resources in support of community living and opportunities for recreational and leisure-time activities
- Transportation options or lack thereof
- Public safety
- Social support
- Social norms and attitudes (e.g., discrimination, racism, and distrust of government)
- Socioeconomic conditions (e.g., poverty and the stressful conditions that accompany it)
- Residential segregation
- Language/Literacy
- Access to mass media and emerging technologies (e.g., cell phones, the Internet, and social media)
- Culture

Key Informant Survey

In May, 2017 an electronic survey was sent to more than 300 stakeholder in Teton County. In all, 130 responses were received. The following pages detail the results of the survey. The top health concerns identified in major health categories include:

Access to Care

Mental Health Care, dental insurance and health insurance

Chronic Disease

High blood pressure, diabetes and Heart Disease

Mental Health

Depression and anxiety, stress

Unintentional injury

Motor vehicle injuries

Health behaviors

Alcohol and drug abuse (including prescription drugs), drinking and driving

Communicable Disease

Sexually Transmitted Diseases

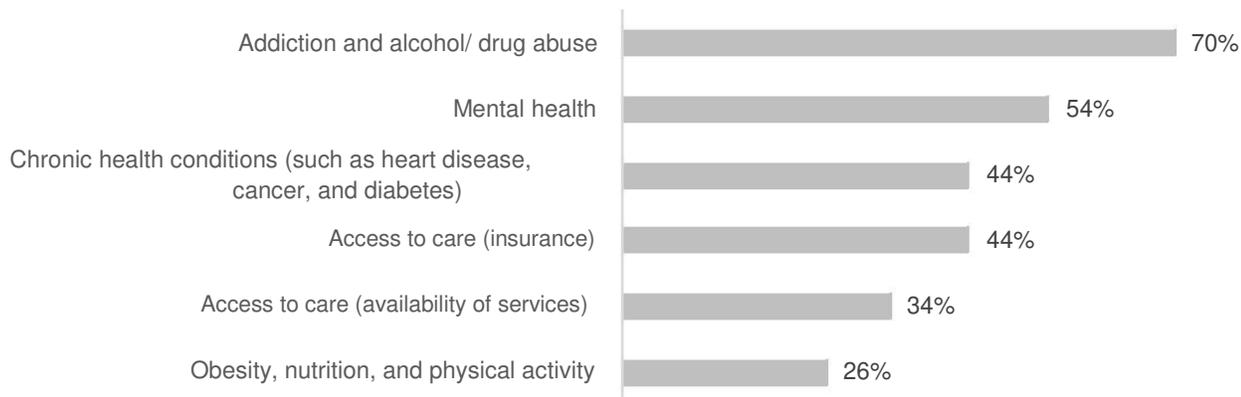
Environmental Health Issues

Water Quality

Most pressing concerns

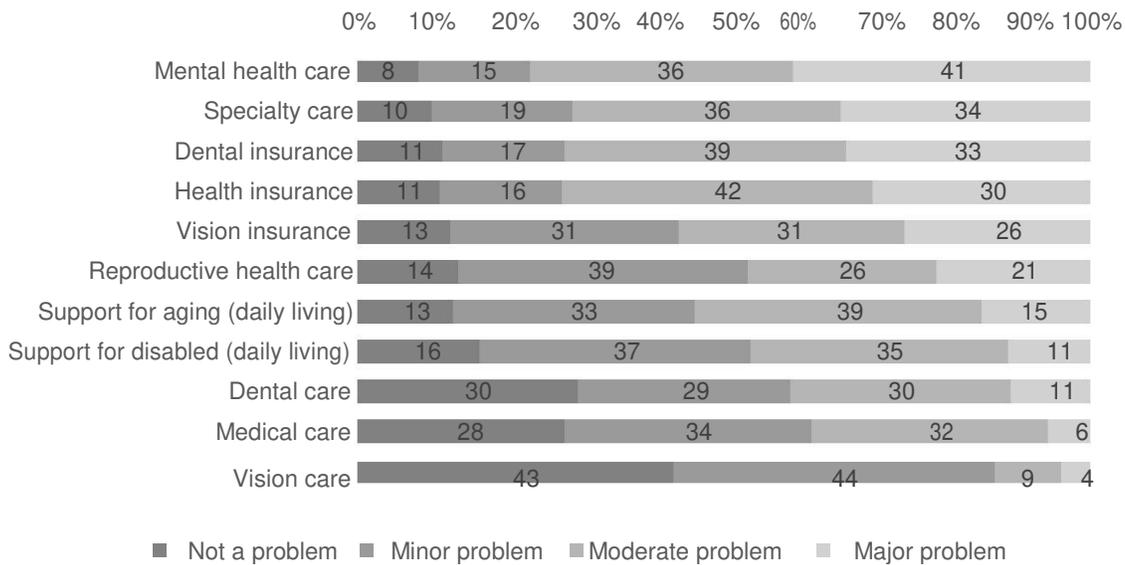
Survey respondents were asked to identify the three most pressing health concerns facing Teton County. Overwhelmingly, addiction, alcohol and drug abuse were selected as the top concern.

Top health concerns in Teton County (percent of stakeholders that selected each category as a Top 3 concern), 2017



Access to Care

Access to care issues in Teton County, ranked

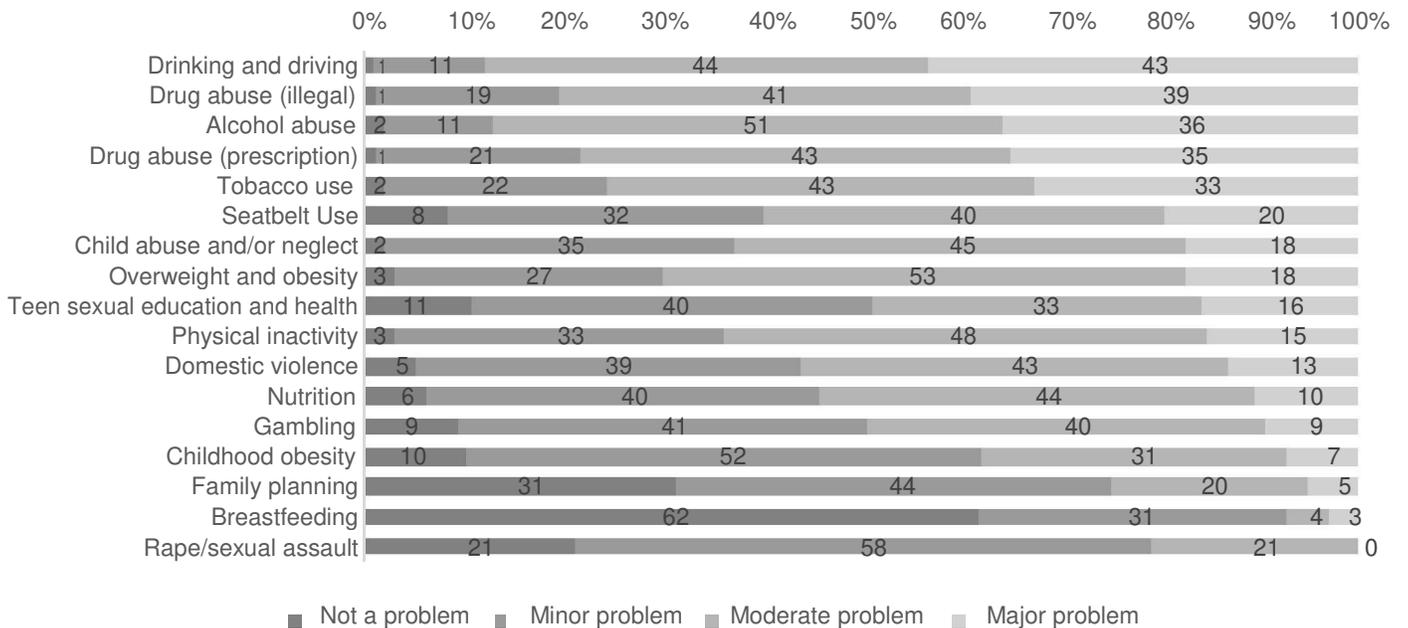


77% of key informants believe that access to mental health care is a major or moderate problem.

In terms of health behaviors, 43% of respondents believe drinking and driving is a major health concern, followed by illegal drug abuse (39%).

Health Behaviors

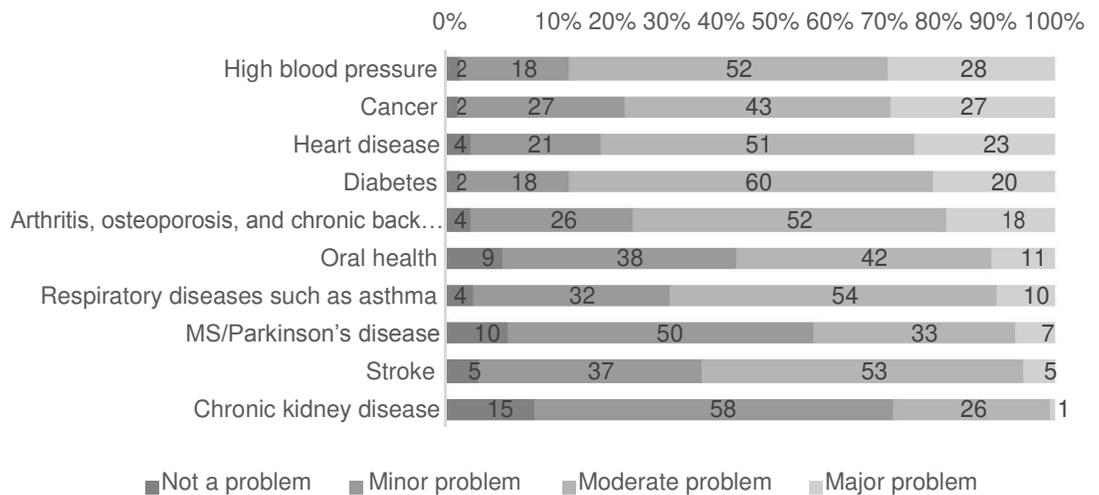
Health behaviors of concern in Teton County, ranked



Chronic Disease

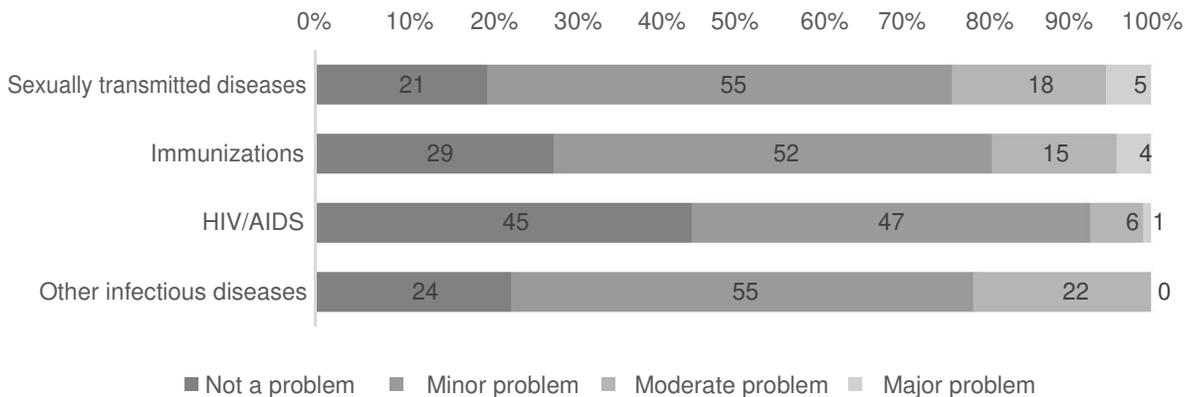
High blood pressure, cancer and heart disease were the top chronic disease issues in Teton County identified by key informants.

Chronic disease issues in Teton County, ranked



Communicable Disease

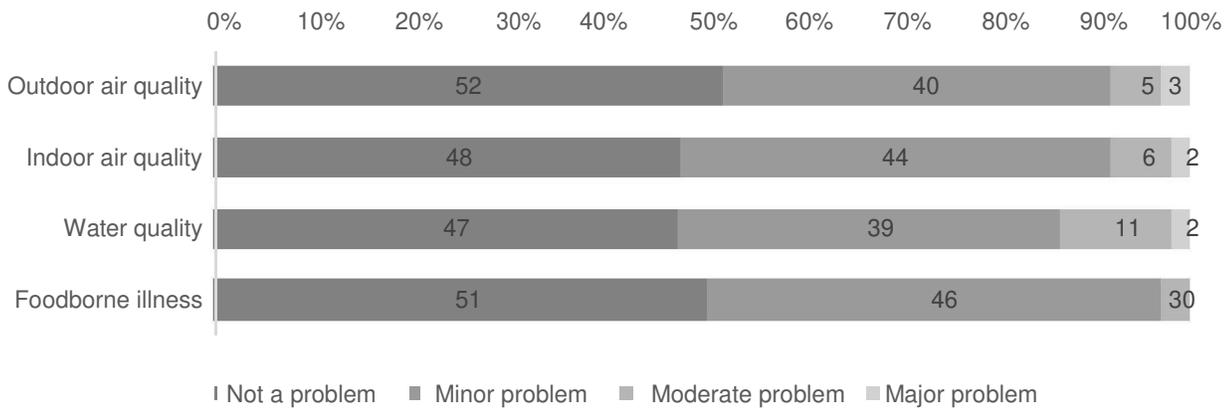
Communicable disease issues in Teton County, ranked



In terms of communicable disease, sexually transmitted infections were identified as a major or moderate health concern by 23% of respondents followed by immunizations (19%).

Environmental Health

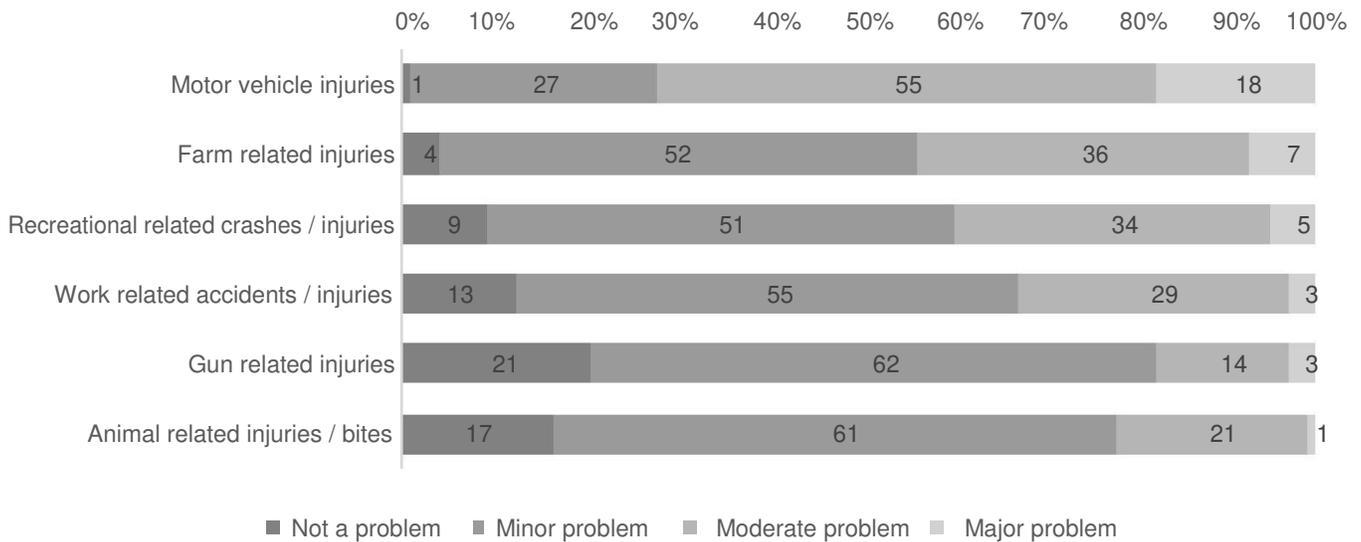
Environmental health issues in Teton County, ranked



Environmental health issues were less likely than other categories of health concerns to be ranked as “major problems”. However, 8% of respondents indicated that outdoor air quality is a major or moderate health problem.

Unintentional Injury

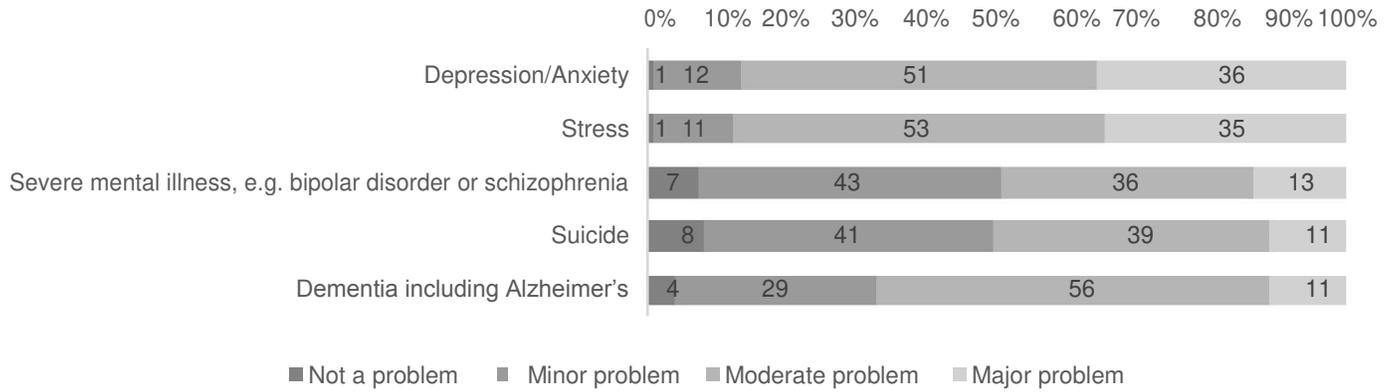
Unintentional injury issues in Teton County, ranked



Motor vehicle injuries were by far the largest health concern in the category of unintentional injuries with 73% of respondents identifying them as a major or moderate health concern.

Mental Health

Mental health issues in Teton County, ranked

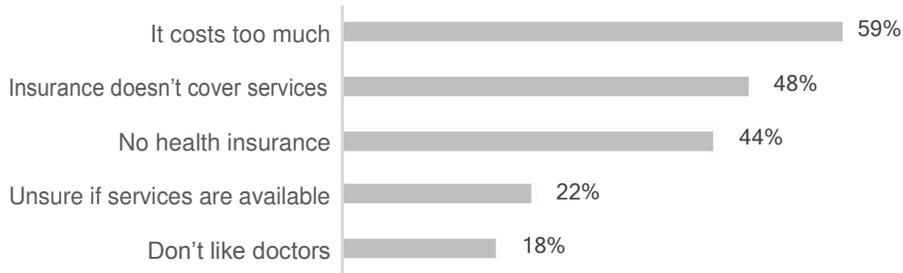


Depression, anxiety and stress were the top rated health problems in all categories with 35% of respondents identifying them as a major health concern. Severe mental illness and suicide were also of concern for respondents.

Barriers to Care

Survey respondents were asked to identify the top three barriers to accessing adequate healthcare in Teton County. The top responses were related to the cost of care and insurance.

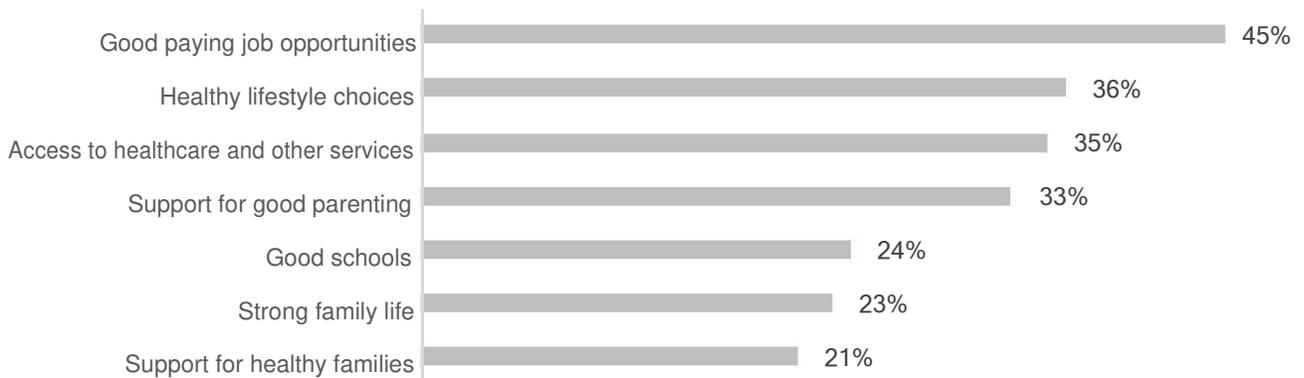
Most significant barriers to accessing adequate healthcare in Teton County (percent of stakeholders that selected each category as a Top 3 concern), 2017



Improving overall health

Stakeholders were asked to identify the top three characteristics they believe Teton County should focus on to improve the overall health of our population. Support for families, jobs and schools were included in the top selections.

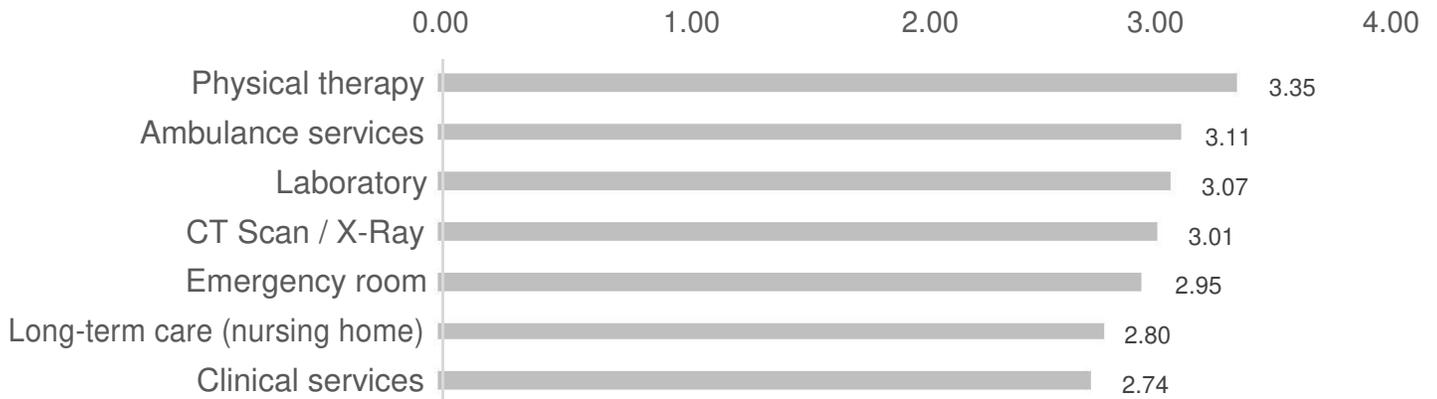
Characteristics of a healthy community Teton County should focus on to improve overall health (percent of stakeholders that selected each category as a Top 3 concern), 2017



Benefis Teton Medical Center and County EMS Services

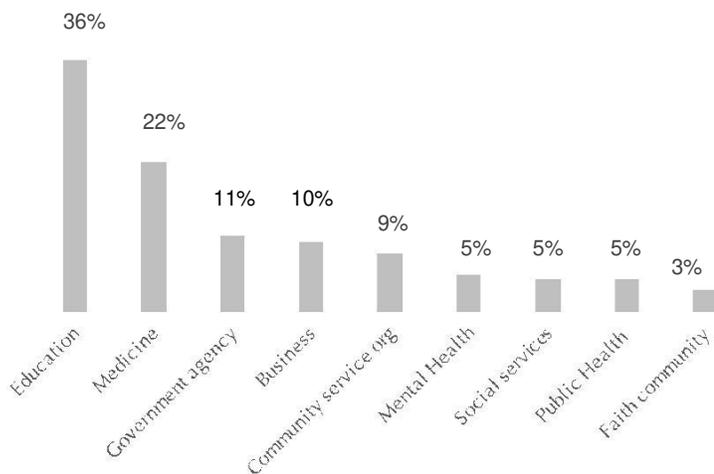
Respondents rated the overall quality of the following services provided at Teton Medical Center on a scale of 1 (Poor), 2 (Fair), 3 (Good) and 4 (Excellent). The highest rated service was physical therapy followed by ambulance services and laboratory services. Most of the services were rated between good and excellent.

Average overall quality rating for health services offered at Benefis Teton Medical Center and EMS, 2017



Respondent demographics

Field of respondent to Teton County Stakeholder Survey, 2017



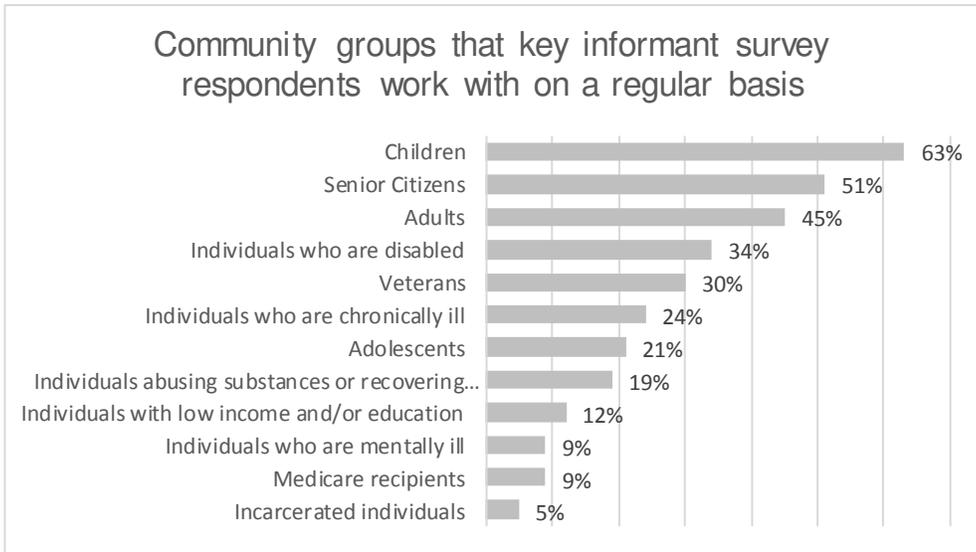
Respondents to the stakeholder survey were primarily from the fields of education, medicine, government and business, though a wide range of perspectives were captured, including faith communities. 69% of the responding key informants reported working in the Choteau area, 20% in Fairfield and the remaining 11% in Augusta, Dutton/ Brady, Pendroy and Power.

Respondent organizations

Responses to the survey were received from the following organizations:

- Trinity Lutheran Preschool
- Teton County Health Department
- Frontier Family Practice
- Choteau Schools
- Benefis Teton Medical Center
- Acadia of Montana (Altacare)
- Choteau Public Schools
- Big Sky Special Needs Cooperative
- Heart and Mind Counseling
- Double Arrow Veterinary Clinic
- Teton County EMS
- Lewis and Clark County Health Department
- Child and Family Services
- Pendroy QRU
- Power School
- Court Appointed Special Advocates
- Lions International
- Harvest Bible Church
- Tourism and Economic Development
- Front Range Assisted Living
- Choteau Ambulance and Fire
- Teton County Emergency Medical Services
- Teton Conservation District
- Mountain View Coop
- Fairfield Emergency Medical Services
- Teton County Search and Rescue
- MT Fish, Wildlife & Parks
- Trex Agate Shop
- After school and summer program
- Teton County Food Pantry Choteau
- Lions Club
- Town of Fairfield
- Teton County Council on Aging
- City of Choteau
- Dutton/Brady Public Schools
- Teton County Disaster and Emergency Services
- Skyline Lodge
- Choteau Activities, Inc.
- Magpie Montessori of Montana
- Fairfield Chamber of Commerce
- Fairfield Clinic
- MSU Extension Mental health
- Choteau Senior Citizens
- Fairfield High School
- Teton County
- Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Community groups served by respondents



Respondents to the survey reported working regularly with a diverse group of community residents from across the lifespan.

Findings from focus groups

From June through September 2016, the Teton County Health Department conducted 7 focus groups with targeted populations. A total of 65 community members participated, with focus group sizes ranging from 5 to 14. The populations targeted were high school students, individuals with chronic health conditions, mental health services users and advocates, low-income families, the faith community, and senior citizens. Focus groups were conducted in the communities of Choteau, Fairfield, and Power.

What do you like most about living in Teton County?

Participants indicated that above all, they liked the “community feel” in Teton County – communities are small, safe, friendly, quiet, and family-oriented. Many participants also cited access to many good services and activities that are available, such as emergency medical services, the hospital, great schools, and outdoor recreation.

“It has a small town atmosphere, with all that you want and nothing you don’t want.”

“I need to see a specialist in Great Falls for my care, and I don’t drive. There is no transportation.”

What concerns you most about living here?

- Declining population
- Aging population
- Limited job opportunities and the economy
- Cost of housing
- Lack of public transportation

What are some of the health services that people need that are not currently being offered?

- Transportation to access services in Great Falls
- Mental Health providers
- Services for the elderly, support for caregivers
- More options and more hours: nursing home, dentists, pharmacies
- Home health
- More affordable exercise options, such as bike lanes and walking path
- Services for kids with special needs

What have your experiences with the health care system been like?

“There are limited services here, but they have been positive. I had to use the emergency room for my daughter here, and their care was excellent. The whole attitude of the hospital has changed dramatically since Benefis took over. It feels much better than before.”

“Many years ago, health care was more complete. Babies were born here and you had more access to a family physician. This has changed for the worse. Now you don’t have a dedicated personal physician, you don’t know who you will see, and providers don’t stay as long.”

“People don’t know what is available here. Advertising is just word of mouth.”

Major barriers to care

- Cost
- Transportation
- Wait times and clinic hours
- Lack of knowledge of resources or complex system
- Stigma of seeking help in a small town, especially with mental health
- Personal responsibility

Major health related issues in Teton County

Youth

1. Injuries
2. Drugs and Alcohol
3. Mental Health
4. Physical Activity and Screen Time

Adults

1. Mental Health
2. Drugs and Alcohol
3. Obesity and Exercise
4. Access to Care – cost and insurance

Seniors

1. Access to Care – cost and travel
2. Daily Activities and Isolation
3. Transportation

What barriers do people face that prevent them from improving their quality of life?

Nearly every group mentioned pride, attitude, motivation, or personal choice as a barrier for improving quality of life. As one participant put it *“Our Scandinavian and German heritage keeps us isolated, stubborn, and unwilling to ask for help.”* Additionally, participants mentioned the economy and a lack of time a major players affecting their ability to improve quality of life.

Demographics

Table 1. Demographics	Teton County	MT
Population	6,064	1,006,370
Median Age	45.8	38.8
Under 5	6%	6%
Under 18	23%	23%
65 and Older	22%	15%
Male	49%	50%
Female	51%	50%
White	96%	89%
American Indian	2%	6%

Teton County residents are older, on average than other Montanans, with a median age 7 years higher than the state average. One in five residents in Teton County is 65 or older, while almost one in four is 18 or younger. Most county residents are white.

In terms of socioeconomic status, the median household income in our county is more than \$3,000 less than that in Montana. One in four county residents does not have a high school degree and only 25% have a bachelor's degree or higher. One in ten 15 to 17 year olds is not enrolled in school, a rate lower than the state average.

Table 2. Education, income, and employment	Teton County	MT
Less than a high school education	25%	15%
Bachelor's degree or higher	25%	29%
3 and 4 year olds enrolled in preschool	37%	41%
15 to 17 year olds enrolled in schools	90%	96%
Median household income	\$43,327	\$46,766
Households with no workers in the past year	14%	15%
Percent in poverty (all)	12%	15%
Poverty (under 18)	16%	20%
Poverty (65 and up)	7%	8%
Households receiving SNAP	8%	11%
Households with children under 18 receiving SNAP	46%	52%

Housing and disability status

Table 3. Housing	Teton County	MT
Owner occupied housing	74%	68%
Renter occupied housing	26%	32%
Vacant housing	20%	16%
Housing built in year 2000 or later	7%	17%
No vehicle available	4%	5%
Housing lacks complete plumbing facilities	2%	1%
No telephone service	1%	3%

Residents of Teton County are more likely to own their homes than elsewhere in Montana, but one in five homes in the county is vacant.

Housing stock is also older in our county, with only 7% of the houses built after the year 2000. One in twenty five households have no vehicle available, a significant barrier in a rural county like ours.

Disabilities are also a concern in our community, with one in six residents, including one out of every 25 children, reporting a disability.

Table 4. Disability	Teton County	MT
Disability status	16%	13%
Disability aged 5-17	4%	5%
Disability 65 and over	15%	36%

Employment by Industry

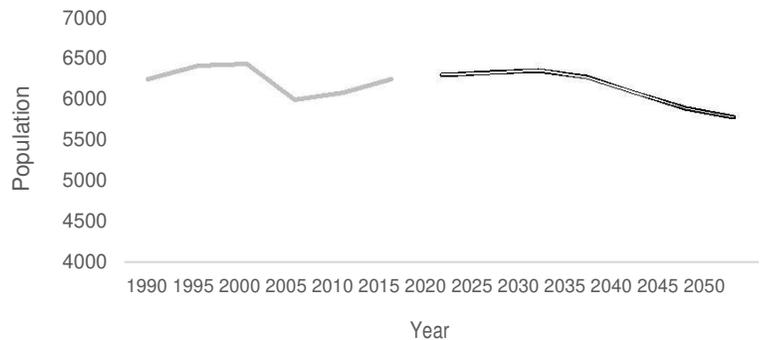
Employment by Industry			
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	2,720	Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	5%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	24%	Other services, except public administration	4%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	18%	Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	4%
Retail trade	13%	Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	4%
Construction	6%	Information	4%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	6%	Manufacturing	3%
Public administration	6%	Wholesale trade	2%

More than a quarter of all workers in Teton County are employed in education, healthcare or social assistance. One in five workers is in agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting or mining.

Population Forecast

The population of Teton County has remained fairly steady over the last thirty years. It is expected to decline slightly in the coming years, dropping below 6000 by 2043.

Population change and forecast for Teton County, 1990-2050



Substance Use

Youth

Youth in Teton County are more likely to have tried alcohol than their peers in Montana or the US as a whole, however they are less likely to report current use or binge drinking behavior. Illicit drug use is also of concern, with more than one in four high school students reporting marijuana use, one in five reporting misuse of prescription drugs and almost one in ten reporting the use of inhalants.

Table 5. Alcohol Use Among Youth	Teton County	MT	US
Lifetime alcohol use	78%	70%	63%
Current alcohol use	28%	34%	33%
Binge drinking in the last month	14%	21%	18%

Table 6. Illicit Drug Use Among Youth	Teton County	MT	US
Lifetime marijuana use	27%	38%	39%
Lifetime cocaine use	4%	5%	5%
Lifetime inhalant use	9%	8%	7%
Lifetime heroin use	2%	2%	2%
Lifetime methamphetamine use	3%	3%	3%
Lifetime ecstasy use	5%	6%	5%
Lifetime misuse of prescription drugs	19%	16%	17%

Adults

Almost one in five adults in Teton County report excessive drinking. The percent of driving fatalities that are attributable to alcohol is also elevated in Teton County compared to the US and Montana. Half of all driving fatalities involve alcohol.

Table 7. Alcohol Use Among Adults	Teton County	MT	US
Excessive drinking	18%	12%	15%
Alcohol impaired driving deaths	50%	47%	31%

Source: Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), 2015
Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS), 2014
County Health Rankings 2016

Mental Health and Trauma

Youth

Table 8. Mental Health and Trauma among Youth	Teton County	MT	US
Symptoms of depression in the last year	19%	29%	30%
Suicide attempts in the last year	8%	9%	9%
Carried a weapon in the past 30 days	30%	26%	16%
In a physical fight in the past year	21%	22%	23%
Physically forced to have sexual intercourse	5%	9%	7%
Experienced dating violence	4%	8%	10%
Experienced sexual dating violence	4%	10%	11%
Bullied on school property in the last year	18%	25%	20%
Electronically bullied in the last year	12%	19%	16%

Youth in Teton County are less likely than their peers in Montana or the US to report symptoms of depression in the last year. However they are just as likely to report attempting suicide. In terms of violence and bullying, almost one in three high school students in Teton County reports carrying a weapon in the last month and one in 5 has been in a fight in the last year. Students in Teton County are slightly less likely than their peers in the US and Montana at large to report bullying and dating violence.

Adults

Table 9. Mental Health among Adults	Teton County	MT	US
Poor mental health days in the last month	3.4	3.4	3.4
Ratio of population to mental health providers	1520:1	399:1	529:1

Adults in Teton County report an average of 3.4 poor mental health days in the last month. However, there is a severe shortage of access to mental health providers in our county relative to Montana and the US as a whole.

Chronic Disease

Tobacco Use

Table 10. Tobacco Use among Youth	Teton County	MT	US
Current cigarette use	7%	13%	11%
Current chewing tobacco use	15%	12%	7%
Lifetime e-cigarette use	46%	45%	45%
Current e-cigarette use	19%	30%	24%

Students in Teton County are less likely to report current cigarette or e-cigarette use than teens in Montana or the US, but are more likely to report chewing tobacco use. One in five adults in Teton County is a current smoker.

Table 11. Tobacco Use among Adults	Teton County	MT	US
Current cigarette use	19%	20%	20%

Nutrition and Physical Activity

Almost one in three teens in Teton County describes themselves as overweight and one in ten high school students report not eating any fruit in the last 7 days.

One in four adults in our county is obese and physically inactive, in part driven by a lack of access to exercise opportunities in our rural county.

Of concern, one in four high school students watches more than three hours of TV a day and one in three spends 3 or more hours playing video games or on the computer.

Table 12. Nutrition and Physical Activity Among Youth	Teton County	MT	US
Self-described overweight	32%	30%	32%
Did not eat fruit in the past 7 days	10%	5%	5%
Drank pop every day in last 7 days	18%	19%	20%

Table 14. Nutrition and Physical Activity Among Adults	Teton County	MT	US
Overweight or obese	26%	25%	27%
Limited access to healthy foods	21%	9%	N/A
Access to exercise opportunities	35%	67%	N/A
Physical inactivity	26%	21%	23%

Table 14. Screen Time Among Youth	Teton County	MT	US
Watched TV three or more hours per day	25%	22%	25%
3 or more hours of video games or computer time per day	29%	34%	42%

Chronic Disease Prevalence and ER and Inpatient Admissions

Table 15. Chronic Disease Prevalence	Teton County	MT	US
Asthma (youth)	21%	22%	22%
Asthma (adults-North Central Montana)	9%	9%	9%
Diabetes (adults-North Central Montana)	9%	8%	10%
Arthritis (adults-North Central Montana)	29%	27%	26%

More than one in five youth in Teton County reports that they currently have asthma. The rates of chronic illnesses in North Central Montana are similar to those in Montana as a whole.

The overall cancer incidence rates in Teton County are slightly lower than the rate in Montana as a whole, but the female breast cancer rate is slightly elevated. Because of our small population, rates for other types of cancers cannot be calculated.

Table 16. Cancer Incidence*	Teton County	MT
Overall	390.9	439.8
Breast (female)	180.8	115.7

*Rate per 100,000, Teton County 2011-2013

Table 17. Chronic Disease Inpatient Hospital Admissions*	Teton County	MT
Asthma	No data	47.7
COPD	602.3	716.8
Cardiovascular disease	629.1	746.7
Diabetes (types 1 and 2)	539.9	822.5

Teton County has slightly lower hospital admission rates for COPD and Cardiovascular Disease than the rest of the state and a significantly lower rate of admissions for Type 1 and 2 Diabetes.

* Rate per 100,000 Teton County 2011-2013

Chronic disease admission rates for asthma, COPD and Cardiovascular Disease in our county are similar to those seen in Montana. Our ER admission rate for diabetes, like the hospital rate, is significantly lower than the rest of the state.

Table 18. Chronic Disease Emergency Room Admissions*	Teton County	MT
Asthma	186.1	260.0
COPD	810.0	804.9
Cardiovascular disease	339.8	372.7
Diabetes (types 1 and 2)	678.6	1235.6

* Rate per 100,000 Teton County 2011-2013

Communicable Disease

Sexual Risk Behaviors

Table 19. Sexual risk behaviors among youth	Teton County	MT	US
Ever had sexual intercourse	52%	44%	41%
Currently sexually active-last three months	34%	32%	30%
Did not use a condom at last intercourse (among currently sexually active HS students)	25%	41%	43%

High school students in Teton County are more likely to report ever having sexual intercourse than their peers in Montana and the US. Sexually active teens in Teton County are also more likely to report using a condom.

Communicable Disease Incidence

Table 20. Communicable disease case rates*	Teton County	MT
Chlamydia	126.5	366.2
Hepatitis C	38.5	123.0
Pertussis	11.0	44.6
Campylobacteriosis	27.5	22.2

*Rates per 100,000, DPHHS 2011-2013

Communicable disease rates for Chlamydia, Hepatitis C and Pertussis in Teton County are significantly lower than the rates in Montana as a whole.

Maternal and Child Health

Birth Rates

Table 21. Birth Rates*	Teton County	MT
Number of births (2015)	80	12,578
Birth rate overall	13.1	12.2

* Rates per 1000 population 2015

About 80 babies are born in Teton County annually and our birth rate is similar to the state as a whole. Nine out of ten infants are breastfed when discharged from the hospital and children on WIC in Teton County are less likely to be overweight or obese than their counterparts statewide.

Table 22. Maternal and Child Nutrition*	Teton County	MT
Children aged 2-5 years on WIC who are overweight or obese	14%	28%
Breastfeeding at discharge from hospital	91%	89%

One in four babies is born to a mother with less than a high school education, and mothers in Teton County are less likely to have insurance than women in Montana as a whole. Of concern, more than 1/3 of women enter prenatal care after the first trimester and almost half do not have adequate prenatal care based on their Kotelchuck index score. One in ten births in the county is preterm (less than 37 weeks).

Table 23. Maternal Child Health Indicators*	Teton County	MT
Women entering prenatal care after first trimester	37%	27%
Women whose Kotelchuck Index is $\geq 80\%$	56%	75%
Born less than 37 weeks	10%	9%
Mother's education less than high school graduate	25%	12%
Any insurance	78%	92%
Receiving WIC	24%	35%

Injury

Driving Risk Behaviors

Table 24. Driving risk behaviors among youth	Teton County	MT	US
Never or rarely wears a seat belt when driving in a car driven by someone else	11%	10%	6%
In a vehicle driven by someone who had been drinking alcohol in last month	22%	23%	20%
Text or email while driving in last month	61%	55%	42%

Seat belt use among high school students in Teton County is lower than that in the US as a whole and more than half of the teens in Teton County report texting or emailing while driving in the last month.

ER visits for Injury

Emergency room visit rates for injury are lower in Teton County than in Montana as a whole.

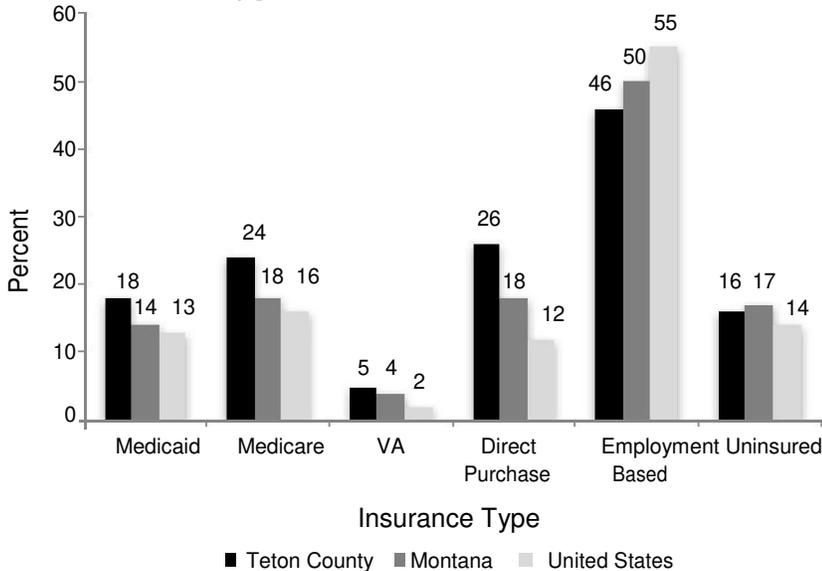
Table 26. Emergency room visits for injury*	Teton County	MT
ER visits for all unintentional injury	5331.5	5901.8
ER visits for falls	1708.0	2020.0
ER visits for motor vehicle injuries	392.0	520.0
ER visits for Intentional self-harm	No data	104.5
ER visits for Traumatic Brain Injury	118.0	649.9

*Rates per 100,000, 2011-2013

Access to Care

Insurance Type

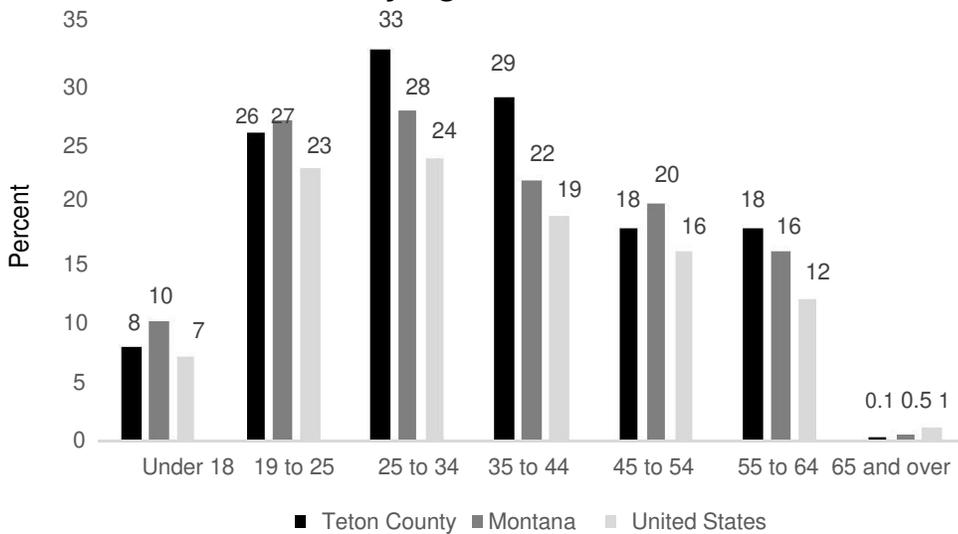
Insurance Type, ACS 5 Year Estimates 2014



In terms of insurance, Teton County residents are more likely to have Medicare, Medicaid or direct purchase insurance than other Montanans. They are less likely to have employment based insurance. One in six residents is uninsured, though this number is likely changing due to the Affordable Care Act.

Uninsured

Percent Uninsured, by Age, ACS 5 Year Estimates 2014



Teton County residents who are aged 25-34, 35-44 and 55 to 64 are more likely to be uninsured than their peers in Montana or the US.

A number of populations in Teton County experience disparities in access to insurance:

- 33% of 25 to 34 year olds in Teton County are uninsured
- 32% of unemployed individuals in Teton County are uninsured
- 25% of households making less than \$25,000 a year are uninsured

Access to Dental Care

Table 26. Dental care	Teton County	MT	US
Did not see a dentist during the past year (youth)	35%	25%	26%
Population to dentist ratio	3030:1	1480:1	1583:1

More than one third of high school students report not seeing a dentist in the past year. The lack of dental visits is likely exacerbated by the high population to dentist ratio in Teton County.

Access to Primary Care

Table 27. Access to Primary Care	Teton County	MT	US
Population to primary care physician ratio	6070:1	1310:1	1342:1

Access to primary care physicians is also limited in Teton County. The population to primary care doctor ratio is almost 5 times that in Montana and the US as a whole.

Healthcare Resources

Locally available healthcare resources have an important impact on access to services and the overall health of Teton County residents.

Table 28. Healthcare Assets		DAILY LIVING SERVICES	
HEALTH CARE FACILITIES		Nursing Homes	1 (25 beds)
Critical Access Hospital	1 (10 beds)	Assisted Living	2 (39 beds)
Outpatient Clinics	4	Independent Senior Housing	1 (54 beds)
PRIMARY CARE PROVIDERS		Adult Day Care Licenses	1
Doctors (MDs and DOs)	1	Senior Centers	4
Nurse Practitioners (NP)	6	Developmentally Disabled Adult Living Program	1
Physician Assistants (PA-C)	2		
Dentists	4		
Optometrists	1		
Chiropractic Doctors	1		
Mental Health Providers	3		
Physical/Occupational Therapists	5		

Overall Health Status

Overall

Table 28. Overall health status	Teton County	MT	US
Self-rated fair or poor health (adults)	13%	14%	16%
Poor physical health days per month (adults)	3.5	3.9	3.7
Years of Potential Life Lost Rate*	5,100	7,307	6,622

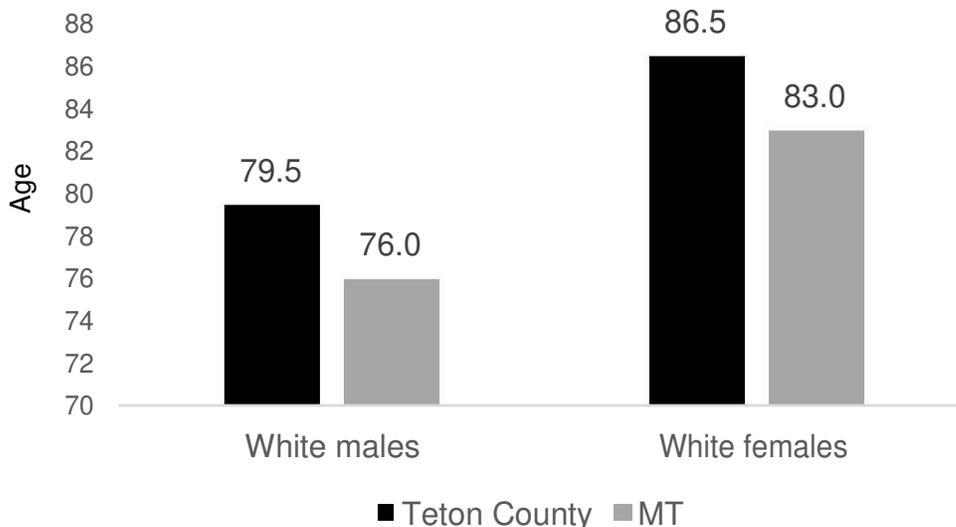
*Age-adjusted years of potential life lost before aged 75 per 100,000 population

One in 7 adults rate their health as poor or fair and, on average, adults report three and a half days per month of poor physical health. Compared to the US and Montana as a whole, adults in Teton County experience fewer years of potential life lost.

The 2015 age-adjusted all cause death rate per 100,000 in Teton County was 531.6 In Montana, it was 762.0

Median Age of Death

Median age of death, by age and gender in Teton County and Montana, 2011-2013



Males and females in Teton County have a life expectancy that is 3.5 years higher than all Montanans. Females have median age of death that is 7 years higher than men.

Summary of Health Issues

There are many pressing health concerns facing the residents of Teton County. This document quantifies, using the available public health data, some of the needs that our community currently faces. This report is the result of a collaborative effort by stakeholders to paint a picture of the overall health of our community. According to this analysis of secondary data, as well as public opinion compiled through the key informant survey, focus groups, and stakeholder advisory group discussions the following indicators of health are of concern in Teton County:

	Focus Groups	Key Informant Survey	Secondary Data	Stakeholder Advisory Group
Substance Abuse				
Mental Health				
Chronic Health Conditions				
Access to Health Care				
Obesity, nutrition, & physical activity				
Injuries				
Healthy Aging for Seniors				
Transportation				
Tobacco				
Medical Workforce				
Food Security				
Sexual Health				
Affordable Housing				
Knowledge of Available Resources				

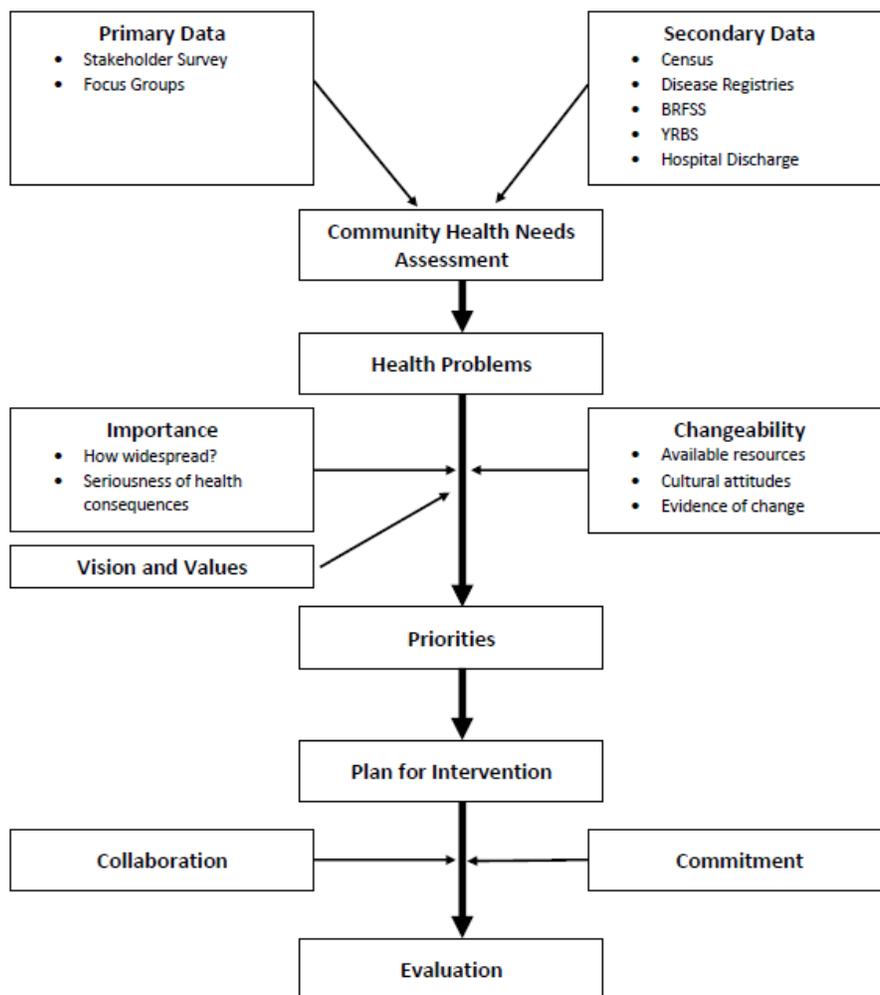
Clearly there is much work that can be done to improve the health of the residents of Teton County, and with the strong partnerships and many organizations working together to improve our community's health, we are confident that we can reduce risk factors and increase the quality of life for all of our residents. The next phase of this assessment was to determine health priorities for Teton County.

Determining Health Priorities

This Community Health Improvement Plan addresses top health concerns for Teton County. This is the first health Improvement Plan (IP) that has been conducted in Teton County. The priorities, objectives, and strategies for this IP are based on data gathered during the Community Health Needs Assessment including: key informant survey, focus groups, census data, disease registries, behavior risk factor surveys, and hospital discharge data.

Following the assessment of available data sources, representatives from 21 local agencies convened in a Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) for seven weekly sessions in the months of June and July 2017. The purpose of this group was to review the information collected in the needs assessment and determine the health priorities of this Community Health Improvement Plan.

The process for prioritizing health issues is summarized in the graphic below. It was essential that the Stakeholder Advisory Group consider not only health issues as were indicated by the data, but also public opinion, the overall importance of an issue, and also the community's ability to impact that health issue. This was a complex process that required a lot of in-depth discussion and prioritization exercises. Ultimately, the SAG selected 3 health priorities for the county at this time: Access to Health Care, Healthy Aging for Seniors, and Mental Health.



Priority Issue #1: Access to Health Care

In this priority area, Access to Health Care refers to the ease with which an individual or family can obtain needed medical care. The ability to access health services has a profound effect on a person's needs, yet Teton County residents face a range of challenges when it comes to accessing care. Access to care is unquestionably a high priority for the residents of Teton County. 44% of respondents in the 2017 Key Informant Survey in Teton County identified access to care regarding health insurance as a top priority, and 34% identified access to care regarding available services as a top priority. The most significant barriers to accessing adequate healthcare in Teton County were identified as costs too much, insurance doesn't cover services, no health insurance, unsure if services are available, and don't like doctors.

According to the 2009-2014 American Community Survey Estimates, 16 percent of Teton County residents are uninsured, and that number rises to 33 percent for adults ages 25 to 34. People without insurance are more likely to have a primary care provider and are more likely to skip regular medical care due to financial strains. This increases their risk for serious and disabling health conditions. When uninsured

individuals do access health services, people often have large medical bills and out of pocket expenses.

As a rural Montana community, people of Teton County face many unique challenges beyond health insurance when it comes to accessing health care. Through focus groups and Stakeholder Advisory Group meetings, additional challenges around access to health care were identified as transportation, patient navigation, stigma, cost, lack of locally available services, limited workforce, long wait times and clinic hours, lack of knowledge of available services, and personal responsibility.

The Stakeholder Advisory Group explored these issues in great detail, accounting for impact and changeability, and developed the following goal, objectives, and strategies. Additionally, they reviewed existing resources available to our community to help address these objectives.

Goal: Increase the ease of access to healthcare for Teton County Residents.

Objective 1: Increase recruitment of new graduates in health care fields

Intervention Strategies:

- a. Increase student internships, practicums, rotations opportunities in Teton County
- b. Develop collaborative student internship projects, that allow students to experience a wide-range of skills
- c. Improve relationship with local universities and advertise job openings directly to students
- d. Seek out nurses that have a few years of experience
- e. Increase shift trading through Benefis
- f. Recruit more high school students into health care fields through mentorship and job shadowing
- g. Reach out to AHEC to learn about possible opportunities
- h. Increase mentorship with existing providers, so new grads can learn skills on the job.
- i. Explore opportunities to bring AmeriCorps Volunteer to Teton County.
- j. Look into recruiting psyche nurse practitioners (Nurse practitioners who have specialized in psychology)
- k. Re-explore tele-health services at BTMC
- l. Explore Benefis psychology services and staff

Measurable Outcomes:

- A community recruitment committee will be established and meet on a regular basis by 2020.
- BTMC's use of locums in all positions will decrease to 0 by 2020.
- 15 Teton County high school students will job shadow in a healthcare profession by 2020.

Objective 2: Increase access and knowledge of existing insurance navigation services.

Intervention Strategies:

- Educate the public about insurance navigation services available in Teton County
- Educate health care providers and service organizations about insurance navigation services available in Teton County
- Educate employers about insurance navigation services available in Teton County
- Increase the number of opportunities for insurance navigators serving Teton County to interact face to face with public, providers, employers, etc.
- Facilitate one-on-one visits with the navigator, i.e. scheduled appointments
- Explore the possibility to a local insurance navigator
- Offer ongoing, regularly scheduled navigator visits

Measurable Outcomes:

- At least 10 local business will be provided with information for employees about insurance help resources in print or digital forms by 2020.
- Regular professional navigation help sessions will be scheduled in county locations at least 4 times per year by 2020.

Objective 3: Explore home health opportunities and feasibility

Intervention Strategies:

- Conduct a needs assessment
- Explore grant opportunities
- Use student volunteers to help with basic tasks to alleviate need for “home health”
- Work with churches and youth groups
- Seek opportunities for reimbursement through organizations such as ResCare HomeCare.

Measurable Outcomes:

- A community assessment of the need and feasibility of a professional home health program will be completed by 2020.

Available Resources:

- BTMC
- TCHD
- Some mental health services (an office in town)
- Teton County Extension
- Primary Care Clinics
- Pharmacies
- ER
- EMS
- Training through agencies
- CNA training program
- School community service requirement
- Senior Living options
- Hospice
- AHEC
- WAMI medical school connection
- Loan repayment plan for providers and nurses
- Grants
- “Medically underserved” county label– funding available

Priority Issue #2: Healthy Aging for Seniors

Teton County is home to an aging population. Approximately twenty-two percent of the population of Teton County is over the age of 65 years compared to fifteen percent across that state, and population projections anticipate that this will continue to increase in our county. The aging population was a top concern for the focus groups, and many community members participating on the Stakeholder Advisory Group emphasized a need to address the situation of an aging population, coupled with a reduction in services programs in our area.

The elderly in our population can be disproportionately impacted by certain barriers and challenges, such as the lack of public transportation, distance to specialty care providers, that complexities of insurance system, and high housing costs. Additionally, as more and more senior citizens choose to stay in their own homes longer, the risk of isolation and the need for assistance with day-to-day living activities has increased. Fifty-four percent of respondents in the Key Informant Survey indicated that they felt support for the aging population was a moderate or major problem in Teton County. The

focus groups, two of which were targeted towards the senior population, found the major health-related issues for seniors in Teton County to be access to health care (particularly the cost and travel), daily activities and isolation, and transportation.

The Stakeholder Advisory Group explored this issues in great detail, accounting for impact and changeability, and developed the following goal, objectives, and strategies. Additionally, they reviewed existing resources available to our community to help address these objectives.

Goal: Enable older adults to age in their place of choice with appropriate services and support.

Objective 1: Reduce stigma and increase resource awareness among senior citizens and those who serve them associated with seeking services and support

Intervention Strategies:

- Educate the public about services available to senior citizens in Teton County
- Develop and implement a campaign that promotes broader understanding of the needs of aging adults
- Create a local database that is easily updated that retains current senior service resources and information. Make a brochure that would complement an online resource, to be more accessible to seniors with limited computer skills.
- Advertise senior citizen resources in a wider net of locations, including MSU Extension Office resources.
- Provide ongoing education classes at Skyline, senior centers, and assisted living facilities.
- Explore the possibility of a Seniors Hotline, that could provide connection to resources
- Implement a public campaign through newspaper, social media, and radio that would encourage the public to “Ask a Senior” how they are doing or if they need anything.
- Provide computer classes geared towards seniors, which will teach them useful skills, such as online shopping and online safety. This could be taught by high school students.
- Improve the cross-referral process between organizations that assist senior citizens such as Neighbors Helping Neighbors, Food Pantry, Opportunities, Inc., etc. Implement process where a referral leads to a phone call from one of the organization’s volunteers.
- Allow for seniors who are not low-income to contribute more to their well-being, through increased donations to meals on wheels, etc.

Measurable Outcomes:

- At least 50% of the population of Teton County will be reached by a senior citizen resource awareness campaign through print and social media.
- A resource database will be compiled and made public in both digital and print forms by 2020.

Objective 2: Establish a volunteer work program to assist senior citizens in Teton County with non-medical daily activities.

Intervention Strategies:

- Recruit high school students through school volunteer programs to participate.
- Recruit church groups to participate.
- Establish a list serve to communicate individual needs to volunteer workforce
- Explore Opportunities Inc. Welfare to Work program for volunteers.
- Explore Home Care Res Care opportunities
- Explore the possibility of volunteer transportation assistance or ridesharing for seniors.
- Create a formalized volunteer process to ensure safety of volunteers and of seniors.
- Conduct a current resource assessment.
- Explore potential opportunities for a Senior transportation program through resources such as Deb Deshaw, the county nursing home van, Medicaid mileage programs, or a mill levy to fund a local transportation system.
- Reach out to high school woodshop classes to see if they could do projects that would assist seniors.
- Partner with Neighbors Helping Neighbors to fund home repairs and adaptations for seniors.

Measurable Outcomes:

- At least one local organization will have a home assistance program for seniors in place by 2020.
- A community assessment of public transportation needs and feasibility will be completed by 2020.
- 10 high school students will complete required community service work hours, at least in part, by assisting senior citizens in Teton County by 2020.

Available Resources:

- BTMC Clinic and ER
- Healthcare providers
- Assisted and skilled nursing housing facilities
- Food Pantry
- Neighbors Helping Neighbors
- Meals on Wheels
- Senior Centers
- Senior commodity program
- Local dental, vision, and mental health providers
- Opportunity for All Scholarship program
- Healthy Tracks program
- Health Department
- Library
- Adult Protective Services
- MSU Extension Office
- Hospice
- Skyline Lodge senior chats program
- Rex’s grocery delivery
- Choteau and Fairfield Pharmacy delivery
- Church groups
- Youth community service program

Priority Issue #3: Mental Health

It is widely accepted that mental health and physical health are intertwined. For example, poor mental health has been associated with increased risk of disease, illness, injury, decrease immune functioning, and shortened life expectancy. Mental health is a complex issue. It permeates every corner of our well-being – emotional, psychological and social – as well as our physical health. The importance of good mental health is no exception in Teton County. Substance abuse and mental health were the highest two areas of concern identified in the Key Informant Survey; seventy percent of respondents identified addiction and alcohol abuse as a top priority and fifty-four percent of the respondents identified mental health. Additionally, mental health was frequently brought up during the focus groups, in terms of the barriers people face in accessing mental health services, and the subsequent challenges to a healthy lifestyle that result.

Mental health and suicide are prominent issues across the state of Montana, and Teton County generally follows suit. The average number of poor mental health days for adults is 3.4 for both Teton County residents

and Montanans. Mental health statistics among youth in Teton County, including suicide attempts, also tend to be similar to those seen across the state.

The Stakeholder Advisory Group identified many challenges to accessing adequate mental health services including lack of funding and reimbursement for providers, low numbers of local mental health providers, social stigma associated with seeking care, gaps in the referral process with primary care providers, and a lack of public awareness around mental health issues and available services.

The Stakeholder Advisory Group explored these issues in great detail, accounting for impact and changeability, and developed the following goal, objectives, and strategies. Additionally, they reviewed existing resources available to our community to help address these objectives.

Goal: Decrease barriers to mental health and addiction services among residents of Teton County.

Objective 1: Decrease social stigma and increase awareness of mental health issues and available resources

Intervention Strategies:

- Educate the public about mental services available in Teton County
- Develop and implement a mental health campaign that promotes broader understanding of the signs and root causes of mental illness, and increases awareness of mental health issues and available resources.
- Create a local database that is easily updated that retains current mental health resources information, possibly on the county website.
- Advertise mental health resources in a wider net of locations, such as the Full Circle.
- Design and implement a public campaign to increase awareness of suicide and available resources.
- Reach students through Teton County Extension 4-week youth mental health awareness program to 9th grade students this fall.
- Extension also offers a cognitive behavior therapy program called “Thrive” to adults through on-line resources.
- Bring more Mental Health First Aid classes to Teton County, and target key populations to participate.
- Explore to reinstatement of Compassionate Friends, a local support group for parents who have lost children.
- AMDD can arrange presentations in schools.

Measurable Outcomes:

- 50% of high school students in Teton County will have participated in a suicide awareness program through school by 2020.
- The LAC will provide 10 business in Teton County with information regarding mental health services available in Teton County by 2020.
- At least 50% of the population of Teton County will be reached by a mental health awareness campaign through print and social media.

Objective 2: Increase funding for mental health services through local, state, or federal lobbying and activism.

Intervention Strategies:

- Develop lobbying priorities for the Teton County LAC.
- Represent Teton County at the state LAC.
- Represent Teton County mental health interests at other lobbying organizations.
- Reach out and educate local elected officials on mental health issues.
- Recruit mental health clients who are willing to share their story with the community in a lobbying setting.

Measurable Outcomes:

- A representative for Teton County LAC will attend the CSAA meetings in Helena, starting in 2017.
- Teton County LAC priorities will be available to the public by 2019.
- Five elected officials in Teton County will participate in a Mental Health First Aid course by 2020.
- The Teton County LAC will collect stories from at least 2 mental health clients or family members for lobbying purposes by 2019.

Available Resources:

- Teton County Mental Health Local Advisory Council
- Center for Mental Health
- Private mental health providers
- MSU Extension Office
- Teton County Webpage
- Neighbors Helping Neighbors
- Churches
- Support Groups
- Library
- School Counselors
- Healthcare Providers
- BTMC
- Central Service Area Agency (CSAA)
- Addictive and Mental Health Disorder Department (AMDD)
- Sheriff
- EMS
- MISFITS
- CASA
- DFS/CPS/Teton County CPT
- OPA
- Warm Line
- Suicide Hot Line
- Choteau Activities
- Food Pantry
- Rex's

Putting the Plan into Action

Now that the CHNA-IP is complete, community members will move to the Action Phase. This part of the cycle consists of planning, implementing, and evaluation initiatives and interventions to reach measurable objectives for each issue. Community agencies, such as the hospital, health department, and mental health council will use the health priorities, objectives, and strategies identified in this plan to create agency strategic plans. As this is a public document, other community agencies will be encouraged to review and participate in the implementation of the strategies outlined here. Evaluation will be an integral part of the process, and the members of the Stakeholder Advisory Group will periodically be called upon to convene and review the progress toward the goals set here.

The Health Improvement Plan is designed to be a living document, meaning it can and should be modified as progress is made and new community partners contribute. Community members will work on the strategies in the plan to improve the health and well-being of Teton County.

All community residents and organizations are invited to join the health improvement effort. For more information or to become involved, please contact the Teton County Health Department.



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