Sheboygan County Health Needs Assessment

2012

A summary of key informant interviews

Prepared by:

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Introduction

This report presents a summary of public health priorities for Sheboygan County, as identified in 2012 by a range of providers, policy-makers, and other local experts and community members (“key informants”). These findings are a critical supplement to the Sheboygan County community health needs assessment (CHNA) survey conducted through a partnership between Aurora Health Care and Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin. The CHNA incorporates input from persons representing the broad community served by the hospitals, focusing on a range of public health issues relevant to the community at large.

Key informants in Sheboygan County were identified by Aurora Health Care. They also invited the informants to participate and conducted the interviews. The interviewers used a standard interview script that included the following elements:

- Ranking of up to five public health issues, based on the focus areas presented in Wisconsin’s State Health Plan, that are the most important issues for the County; and

- For those five public health issues:
  - Existing strategies to address the issue
  - Barriers/challenges to addressing the issue
  - Additional strategies needed
  - Key groups in the community that hospitals should partner with to improve community health

All informants were made aware that participation was voluntary and that responses would be shared with the Center for Urban Population Health for analysis and reporting. Based on the summaries provided to the Center for Urban Population Health, this report presents the results of the 2012 CHNA key informant interviews for Sheboygan County.

The report first presents a summary of the health issue rankings, including a list of the five issues which were ranked most frequently by respondents. The next section provides a summary of the strategies, barriers, and partners described by participants. Themes that crossed health topics are also presented.

Limitations: Sixteen key informant interviews were conducted in Sheboygan County. The report relies on the opinions and experiences of a limited number of experts identified as having the community’s pulse. However, responses may not be representative of the overall perception of community strengths and needs. It is possible that the results would have been substantially different if a different set of informants had been interviewed. Results should be interpreted with caution and in conjunction with other Sheboygan County data (e.g., CHNA surveys and secondary data reports).
A. Focus Area Ranking

A total of 16 key informants were asked to rank the 5 major health-related issues in their county from a list of 13 focus areas identified in the State Health Plan. The table below presents the results, including a summary of the number of times an issue was mentioned as a top five health issue, and the number of times an informant ranked the issue as the most important health issue. Importantly, not every informant ranked five issues (and one ranked six), and some did not include an order ranking (e.g., included check marks, but no numbers). Those without an order ranking are included as being ranked in the top five, but are excluded from the top issue ranking.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus Area</th>
<th># Key Informants Ranking Issue Among Top 5 Health Issues</th>
<th># Key Informants Who Ranked Health Issue as the Top (#1) Priority</th>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>Tobacco</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>Access</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injury and Violence</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. Top Five Health Issues

The five health issues ranked most consistently as a top five health issue for the County were:

1. Mental Health
2. Tie – Alcohol and Drug
   - Oral Health
   - Physical Activity
3. Tie – Nutrition
   - Tobacco
4. Nutrition
5. Tobacco
Summaries of themes for each issue are presented below in the order listed above. As a guide, issues ranked as the top five priorities for the County are marked with this thermometer symbol:

C. General Themes

Nearly all of the top ranked health issue priorities have large numbers of organizations already engaged in prevention, promotion, and treatment efforts, including existing inter-agency partnerships to address these issues. In contrast, fewer organizations were identified as working on Tobacco issues, although respondents pointed to regulations that have been important in preventing use. Moreover, while participants identified many dentists and health providers working on community Oral Health challenges, respondents sent a clear message that access to these resources is limited and that free or reduced-cost services need to be expanded. The Healthy Sheboygan County 2020 Coalition was named as a partner across many issues, which may serve as a galvanizing force across these complex and inter-related health issues.

Health issues face the Sheboygan community across all age groups. Schools, work places, and services for older adults are all critical partners in improving Sheboygan’s health. For many issues, responses about needed strategies focused on programs for the youth, although several responses also suggested leveraging these programs to reach adults as well. For example, schools can be a venue for community physical activity events for older adults during summers, and tobacco programs could work with parent groups associated with schools.

Funding and, more specifically, budget cuts were named as critical challenges to the community. Many issues also suffered from general lack of community as well as provider awareness. For many issues, respondents identified many treatment and response resources, but listed fewer prevention resources.

Community-wide education was recommended as a strategy for every issue, with many respondents also identifying targeted education needs (e.g., employers understand pollution regulation). Community-wide screening was named as an important strategy to address Access challenges, and as a way to intervene earlier with drug and alcohol use (e.g., SBIRT).

D. Issue Summaries

Alcohol and Drug

Nine key informants included Alcohol and Drug as a top five health issue.

Existing Strategies: Programs such as the Tavern Safety Coalition, Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), and the Healthy Sheboygan County Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Committee have been addressing this issue. Education provided in schools and across the community, law enforcement,
and medical care through clinics and hospitals (inpatient treatment at Aurora Sheboygan Memorial Medical Center, screening with SBIRT) were also included as strategies addressing alcohol and drug use. One respondent noted permanent disposal sites for prescription drugs as a prevention strategy.

**Barriers and Challenges:** Interviewees reported that the information given is often outdated. Also, cultural acceptance of drinking remains a challenge. “The alcohol culture in Wisconsin is pervasive.”

**Needed Strategies:** New methods of teaching high school students and the broader community are needed. For example, respondents suggested educating students about prescription drug abuse and proper disposal might help reduce the use of alcohol and drug use (magnets or cards with disposal site information were also mentioned). Respondents were looking for environmental or community-level strategies to decrease exposure to and participation in related risky behaviors.

**Key Community Partners to Improve Health:** Hospitals should be partnering with families, teachers, medical professionals, law enforcement, and other local organizations that are working to address this issue in the community. Two individuals were also named as experts: Dr. Richard Brown (SBIRT) and Sandy Albinger.

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**Chronic Disease**

Three informants included Chronic Disease in their top health issues for the County.

**Existing Strategies:** Case management, home care, and other medical professionals are active within the community. Pharmacies and medical management programs are available.

**Barriers and Challenges:** Patients, doctors, and families were all cited for their lack of follow-up to improve chronic disease. It is a challenge to ask people to change behaviors that they do not perceive as harmful. Funds are limited which means coordination across services is limited. Additionally, challenges to accessing healthy food were noted.

**Needed Strategies:** The entire family, as well as community care providers, should receive more education.

**Key Community Partners to Improve Health:** Hospitals should be partnering with home care agencies, public health personnel, schools, and pharmacies. Healthy Sheboygan 2020 was noted as a key ally.

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**Communicable Disease**

One informant ranked Communicable Disease as a top health issue for the County.
Existing Strategies: The participant reported education and vaccinations given by clinics, hospitals, and public health organizations as existing strategies.

Barriers and Challenges: Overall, there is a lack of knowledge about communicable diseases. There is also a resurgence of parents opposed to vaccinations.

Needed Strategies: The respondent broadly recommended education, awareness, and prevention efforts.

Key Community Partners to Improve Health: Hospitals should be partnering with clinics and public health.

Environmental and Occupational Health

One informant ranked Environmental and Occupational Health as a top health issue for the County.

Existing Strategies: Oversight by the Wisconsin State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) was one noted strategy.

Barriers and Challenges: Budget cuts have reduced staffing.

Needed Strategies: Studies investigating possible links between major disease concerns and local industries are needed in order to address concerns directly with the companies involved in those industries. Employers should be required to attend meetings to discuss these issues.

Key Community Partners to Improve Health: Hospitals should be partnering with OSHA and DNR.

Growth and Development

Growth and Development was ranked as a top health issue by two key informants.

Existing Strategies: Interviewees reported a broad range of youth and child development services in the community. However, these services face several challenges.

Barriers and Challenges: Cost, staff capacity and time are the biggest barriers to addressing this issue. Lack of interest in the topic was also cited as a challenge.

Needed Strategies: Responses about needed strategies were very broad. More programs are needed. 2-1-1 was noted as a potential resource.

Key Community Partners to Improve Health: Hospitals should be partnering with secondary education institutions, Boy Scouts of America, Big Brother – Big Sister, the Boys and Girls Club,
Lutheran Social Services, Family Resource Centers, Sheboygan County Interfaith Organization, Rainbow Kids, the Salvation Army, Hmong Mutual Assistance Association, 4-H, and the YMCA.

**Mental Health**

Eleven respondents ranked Mental Health as a top health issue for the County.

*Existing Strategies:* Many respondents mentioned Mental Health America, with one respondent describing the organization as very active in local schools. Healthy Sheboygan County 2020 was also noted as a partner, as was the inpatient unit at Aurora Sheboygan Memorial Medical Center. Other means of support such as outreach services, disaster services, counseling services, behavioral health services, and grief counseling were noted as important resources for Sheboygan County.

*Barriers and Challenges:* Lack of financial resources and providers, as well as community awareness, were challenges noted by many informants. Interviewees also indicated that there are far too many patients and not enough therapists. Respondents suggested stigma and avoidance of the issue have been challenges for the County.

*Needed Strategies:* Education needs to be shared with adults and children alike. Greater awareness and access to care are needed, with respondents noting the importance of additional funding to support these efforts.

*Key Community Partners to Improve Health:* Hospitals should be partnering with community providers, Healthy Sheboygan County 2020, and home visitation programs. Respondents also suggested working with many community agencies and initiatives, including Mental Health America, Alzheimer’s Association, American Red Cross, Hmong Mutual Association, Rainbow Kids, Sheboygan County Interfaith Organization, Salvation Army, United Way and Team Blue Ribbon.

**Nutrition**

Five respondents included Nutrition as a top health issue for the County.

*Existing Strategies:* Community gardens, Meals on Wheels, meal sites, and adult daycares are existing strategies addressing the issue. The Parents as Teachers program and the United Way were also mentioned as partners focused on nutrition.

*Barriers and Challenges:* Funding and waiting lists for programs described above are seen as challenges. Limited access to nutritious foods is another barrier.
Needed Strategies: Respondents felt the entire community needs education. School lunches were noted as needing improvement.

Key Community Partners to Improve Health: Hospitals should be partnering with Sheboygan County Interfaith Organization, Salvation Army, American Red Cross, Meals on Wheels, Hmong Mutual Assistance Association, grocers and other businesses, dieticians, and fitness centers.

Oral Health

Nine key informants included Oral Health as a top health issue for the County.

Existing Strategies: Respondents pointed to a wide range of community clinics and other dentists and hygienists who provide care and teach children how to properly brush and floss.

Barriers and Challenges: Despite these resources, respondents felt that many professionals are unwilling to care for Medicaid and uninsured clients. Lack of awareness of existing resources was also named as a challenge.

Needed Strategies: Interviewees commented that more grant opportunities, access to free or sliding scale care, longer clinical hours, and more education to parents and children about hygiene would help address this issue.

Key Community Partners to Improve Health: Hospitals should be partnering with community clinics, dental associations, individual dentists and hygienists, Lakeshore Health Center, and the Salvation Army.

Physical Activity

Nine key informants included Physical Activity as a top health issue for the County.

Existing Strategies: Wellness classes, after school activities, community recreation departments, bike trails, and other strategies are in place. Respondents noted schools and businesses have wellness programs. Respondents also noted the Sheboygan County Activity and Nutrition Coalition as a key partner. Aurora Health Care’s partnership with the YMCA was also noted as a “great start.”

Barriers and Challenges: Many cannot afford or find transportation to activities in the community. Individual behaviors (related to eating fast food or choosing not to participate) were also noted as challenges. For example, older adults may feel they are “too old” to participate.

Needed Strategies: Respondents felt more education was needed. One respondent suggested merging nutrition education with physical activity information. More promotion of activities is
needed: the County needs to “energize activities to stimulate the elderly and get them moving.” Incentives through employee wellness programs were also mentioned.

*Key Community Partners to Improve Health:* Hospitals should be partnering with gyms, personal trainers, nursing homes, 4-H Sheboygan County, and the YMCA. A wide range of other youth-oriented programs was mentioned.

**Reproductive and Sexual Health**

Reproductive and sexual was not ranked as one of the top health related priorities for the County. Neither strategies nor barriers were described.

**Tobacco**

Five key informants included Tobacco as a top health priority for the County.

*Existing Strategies:* Education and public awareness are needed across the lifespan, starting early and continuing into work settings. Tobacco free policies for restaurants and bars were touted as a key strategy. One respondent also noted the strong support from the American Lung and Heart Associations in the community.

*Barriers and Challenges:* Smoking is perceived by youngsters as “cool” and tobacco remains accessible.

*Needed Strategies:* Respondents felt promising strategies included educating youth on consequences of smoking, potentially through the use of a black lung simulator (available in the community). Other community education for adults is also needed, as are cessation programs.

*Key Community Partners to Improve Health:* Hospitals should be partnering with schools (including parent associations), factories, community coalitions and the Healthy Sheboygan County 2020.

**Access**

Access was ranked as a top five health issue by two key informants.

*Existing Strategies:* The respondents noted free clinics in the community.

*Barriers and Challenges:* Language and cultural barriers and large demand for services were noted challenges.
**Needed Strategies**: Education to promote healthy behaviors is needed. Free screenings are a promising strategy for the community.

**Key Community Partners to Improve Health**: Hospitals should be partnering with home care agencies and public health organizations and with each other.

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**Injury and Violence**

Injury and Violence was ranked as a top five health issue by two key informants.

**Existing Strategies**: Domestic and sexual abuse services are available. The County also has behavioral health providers who can address violence issues.

**Barriers and Challenges**: One respondent identified a link between increasing mental health concerns and violent crimes in the County. Wait lists and lack of awareness are other challenges.

**Needed Strategies**: Respondents felt more resources are needed, as is community education and promotion of resources.

**Key Community Partners to Improve Health**: Hospitals should be partnering with the Safe Harbor shelter, Salvation Army, Lutheran Social Services, Sheboygan Interfaith Organization, Hmong Mutual Assistance Association, Mental Health America, and the police department.
Appendix A

Sheboygan County Key Informants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mary Brasseaux, FACHE</td>
<td>Hospice Administrator</td>
<td>Sharon S. Richardson Community Hospice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Patty Damon</td>
<td>Social Worker</td>
<td>Sheboygan County Department of Health and Human Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jeri Dreikosen, RN, BSN</td>
<td>EAP/Wellness Coordinator</td>
<td>Sheboygan Area School District</td>
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<tr>
<td>Philip Duket, BA</td>
<td>Program Coordinator</td>
<td>Family Resource Centers of Sheboygan County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nichol Fidler</td>
<td>Clinic Manager</td>
<td>Prevea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Becky Kern, BBA</td>
<td>Administrator</td>
<td>Plymouth Care Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tammy Kulow</td>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Plymouth High School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christine Larson, RN</td>
<td>Director of Clinic Operations</td>
<td>Aurora Sheboygan Clinic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donna Mayer, RN, MSN, APNP</td>
<td>Lead Community Educator</td>
<td>Aurora Sheboygan Memorial Medical Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deneen Mueller, BA</td>
<td>Community Impact Director</td>
<td>United Way of Sheboygan County</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joyce Osieczanek</td>
<td>Immunization Coordinator</td>
<td>Aurora Sheboygan Clinic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sandy Rohrick, MS</td>
<td>Human Resources Manager</td>
<td>City of Sheboygan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rachel Rupnik, BA</td>
<td>Volunteer Recruiter and Coordinator</td>
<td>The Volunteer Center of Sheboygan County</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sherri Samuels-Fuerst, BSN, MHRLR</td>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>Sargento Foods</td>
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<tr>
<td>Luann Travis</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Family Resource Centers of Sheboygan County</td>
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