

Attachment E
South Heartland District Health Department
Summary of Community Health Assessment- Focus Group Results,
2024

Adams County Community Health Focus Group

July 29th, 2024 - Peace Lutheran Church

Participant Demographics

# of Participants*	Ages	Income	Education	Insurance	Household size
8 (5 Female, 3 Male)	25-34 = 0 35-44 = 2 45-54 = 2 55-64 = 2 65-74 = 1 75-84 = 1	25K-39K - 2 40K-59K - 3 60K - 79K - 1, 80K - 99K - 0 100K+ - 2	Some College -2 Assoc. - 1 Bachelor's - 3 Master's - 2	5 Private 3 Public	1 person = 1 2-3 = 5 4-5 = 2

**All white, English Speakers. See Focus Group Demographic data [here](#).
Summary of all counties demographics [here](#).*

Transcript: The recording for this group was garbled and unintelligible due to background noise and another group meeting nearby.

Summary

The group conversation revealed very passionate responses, specifically driven by health needs of participants' family members. The group recognized the general wealth of opportunities available in the Hastings community compared to more rural parts of the region while simultaneously noting disparities exist between economic classes.

1. Top health concerns in the community/Experiences accessing health care services (the first question bled into the 3rd question so they are combined below)

- Lack of specialists
- Mental health - not enough providers
- Vaping among middle school students
- Phone usage among adolescents
- Distracted driving
- Nursing shortages are causing burnout and diminished care by the few who are overworked
 - *Follow-up - why so critical?*
 - The people who have the most overwhelm are in a healthcare system that adds to the overwhelm
 - Middle school is such a critical time and vaping takes kids off their path

South Heartland District Health Department Community Health Assessment- Focus Group Meetings, 2024

2. Impact of social conditions on health:

- Affordable and low-income housing options are limited, so people are paying more than half their income on rent, causing family stress
- Food insecurity in the summer impacts kids disproportionately
- Vaping among teens then leads to discipline problems and instability in the middle school
 - *Follow-up: what kind of support would make the biggest difference?*
 - Give people assistance in navigating housing options - hard to know where to look
 - Seems to be many food pantries/programs that do not work together, so if they collaborated they could be more efficient
 - Parent education

3. Experiences accessing healthcare services

- Dental care and Eye care are very difficult to access if on Medicaid
- Very long waitlists for mental health care
- Poverty discrimination for providers who do accept Medicaid
- Challenging to access services as a single parent with multiple kids - don't have time, and services are only offered during working hours
 - *Follow-up - did not elicit further discussion*

5. Programs or resources seen elsewhere that could benefit the community:

- Bridging Forward (poverty alleviation program that many participants are in) could benefit others
- A non-emergency part of the ER where people could go on the weekends/evenings
- A community welcome center - new people have to figure things out on their own
- Retired citizens driving 'pool' - to help get people to far-away specialists

6. County specific: What do you think would help people make healthier food choices? What is a common barrier for people not to exercise?

- It is too easy to door-dash or go through fast-food. Make a grocery store that convenient.
- We see overweight people everywhere so it makes it normal.
- Not enough time to exercise

7. Hopes for future health and well-being of the community:

- More people take advantage of Bridging Forward
- Rental prices stop going up
- We get a better transportation system

South Heartland District Health Department Community Health Assessment- Focus Group Meetings, 2024

Nuckolls County Community Health Focus Group

July 18th, 2024 - Brodstone Community Hospital

Participant Demographics

# of Participants	Ages	Income	Education	Insurance	Household size
6 (3 Female, 3 Male)	25-34 = 1 45-54 = 1 55-64 = 1 65-74 = 1 75-84 = 2	Income range between 60K - 79K (3), 80K - 99K (2)	Some College - 1 Bachelor's - 4 Master's - 1	4 Private 2 Public	1 person = 1 2-3 = 3 4-5 = 2

*All white, English Speakers. See Focus Group Demographic data [here](#).
Summary of all counties demographics [here](#).

[Transcript Link:](#)

Summary

The group conversation reveals a community grappling with interconnected challenges related to healthcare, economic opportunity, and social support systems, while also showing a spirit of collaboration and hope for addressing these issues. Response summaries for each question include:

1. Top health concerns in the community:
 - Affordability of healthcare (*critical = we are missing people who are not signed up for Medicaid and so they are not getting preventative services*)
 - Staffing shortages in healthcare and education (*critical = senior staffers have to cover shifts and so they are not working on the larger systemic issues affecting the hospital*)
 - Access to services, particularly for those traveling from farther away

2. Impact of social conditions on health:
 - Mental health strain due to financial stress
 - Food insecurity, including for working families
 - Difficulty accessing fresh produce
 - Poor housing conditions affecting health
 - Low financial literacy contributing to poor health choices
 - People who are struggling need help establishing some pride or ownership

South Heartland District Health Department Community Health Assessment- Focus Group Meetings, 2024

3. Experiences accessing healthcare services:

- Generally good experiences for those with insurance
- Difficulties accessing dental care for Medicaid patients
- Challenges with mental health access, especially for children
- Concerns about privacy and stigma in seeking care in small communities

Follow-up - Challenges faced when accessing healthcare:

- Long travel times for specialized care
- Hesitancy to use emergency services due to cost
- Lack of after-hours care options
- Difficulty finding providers who accept Medicaid, especially for dental care

5. Programs or resources seen elsewhere that could benefit the community:

- Free clinics (though acknowledged as unlikely in small areas)
- Health fairs with low-cost screenings
- Day and night clinics or nurse hotlines for medical advice
- Community centers with free access to fitness equipment

6. County specific:

Support groups needed in the county:

- Arthritis support groups
- Activities and social groups for the elderly
- Dementia support groups
- Caregiver support groups
- Parenting support groups

Barriers to population stability or growth:

- Lack of childcare
- Limited housing options
- Scarcity of job opportunities

7. Hopes for future health and well-being of the community:

- Attracting new businesses to create jobs
- Developing affordable housing options
- Fostering community collaboration to address complex issues
- Improving overall access to healthcare services

South Heartland District Health Department Community Health Assessment- Focus Group Meetings, 2024

Clay County Community Health Focus Group

August 6, 2024 - Nolde Community Center, Sutton, NE

Participant Demographics

# of Participants*	Ages	Income	Education	Insurance	Household size
14 (11 Female, 3 Male)	25-34 = 0 35-44 = 0 45-54 = 0 55-64 = 1 65-74 = 4 75-84 = 5 85+ = 4	Less than 25K - 5 25K-39K - 2 40K-59K - 3 60K - 79K - 2 80K - 99K - 0 100K+ - 0 Prefer not to say: 2	High School - 8 Some College - 5 Assoc. - 0 Bachelor's - 1 Master's - 0	2 Private 12 Public	1 person = 12 2-3 = 2 4-5 =

*13 white, 1Hispanic, all English Speakers. See Focus Group Demographic data [here](#).
Summary of all counties demographics [here](#).

Transcript: Available [here](#)

Summary

The group conversation revealed very passionate responses, specifically driven by health needs of participants' family members. The group recognized the general wealth of opportunities available in the Hastings community compared to more rural parts of the region while simultaneously noting disparities exist between economic classes.

1. Top health concerns in the community/Experiences accessing health care services (the first question bled into the 3rd question so they are combined below)

- Drug abuse (across all age groups)
- Cancer - seems to be so prevalent
- Diabetes
- Transportation issues for medical appointments
- Shortage of EMTs and ambulance services
- Lack of affordable in-home care
- Potential closure of the county health department
- Challenges with insurance and Medicare reimbursements, including challenges understanding insurance

■ Follow-up - why so critical?

South Heartland District Health Department Community Health Assessment- Focus Group Meetings, 2024

- If we can't get to medical appointments easily, people don't go and then it gets worse

2. Impact of social conditions on health:

- High housing costs making it difficult for young couples to afford homes
- Increasing grocery prices affecting food security, especially for those on fixed incomes
- Poor sidewalk conditions making it difficult for people with mobility issues to get around
- Lack of affordable housing options

|

- *Follow-up: what kind of support would make the biggest difference?*

- No clear answer to this question

3. Experiences accessing healthcare services

- No local dentists, requiring travel to other towns
- Two medical clinics, a pharmacy, and physical therapist available locally
- Some mental health services available, but limited
- Transportation to out-of-town services is a challenge
- Local pharmacy offers delivery services, which is helpful

- *Follow-up - did not elicit further discussion*

5. Programs or resources seen elsewhere that could benefit the community:

- Participants know about and use: foot clinic, hearing aid services, immunizations for pre-schoolers, helping support a blood drive.
- Importance of maintaining it: unanimously considered very important, provides essential services otherwise not available
- If there was no health department, people would not get the services because of the time or cost of getting in Hastings or Superior, the lack of familiarity with the providers there

7. Hopes for future health and well-being of the community:

- Keeping local businesses (grocery stores, pharmacies) open to serve aging population
- Improved cancer care
- More affordable and accessible in-home care and assisted living options

South Heartland District Health Department Community Health Assessment- Focus Group Meetings, 2024

Webster County Community Health Focus Group

July 30th, 2024 - Blue Hill Community Center

Participant Demographics

# of Participants*	Ages	Income	Education	Insurance	Household size
8 (5 Female, 3 Male)	25-34 = 0 35-44 = 2 45-54 = 0 55-64 = 1 65-74 = 2 75-84 = 3	> 24K - 1 25K-39K - 0 40K-59K - 2 60K - 79K - 1 80K - 99K - 2 100K+ - 2	Some College - 2 Assoc. - 1 Bachelor's - 2 Master's - 1 Doc. or Prof - 1	3 Private 5 Public	1 person = 1 2-3 = 5 4-5 = 2

*All white, English Speakers. See Focus Group Demographic data [here](#).
Summary of all counties demographics [here](#).

Transcript: Available [here](#)

Summary

The group conversation revealed very passionate responses, specifically driven by health needs of participants' family members. The group recognized the general wealth of opportunities available in the Hastings community compared to more rural parts of the region while simultaneously noting disparities exist between economic classes.

1. Top health concerns in the community

- Lack of EMTs and ambulance drivers, causing long wait times for emergency transport
 - This response was very detailed with data
 - Scholarship program did not see much return
 - Training and different schedule scenarios have been practiced
- Limited dental care access, especially for children - kids are not receiving care
- Mental health services, particularly for families and elderly and students (school needs more than 2 days of LMHP care)
- Potential closure of nursing homes, leading to lack of care for elderly population
- Shortage of home health care services -
- Aging pharmacist (70 years old) with no replacement lined up
- Limited access to fresh produce
- Kids are vaping more than we think

Follow-up - why so critical?

South Heartland District Health Department Community Health Assessment- Focus Group Meetings, 2024

■ If the pharmacist closes, the clinic will likely close

2. Impact of social conditions on health:

- Some unsafe housing conditions, like families living without heat or water
- Hidden poverty that may be more prevalent than realized
- Lack of assisted living facilities
- Transportation issues, especially for elderly to access healthcare
- For awhile we did not have Healthy Beginnings (group did not know that program was continuing on under SHDHD)

Follow-up - did not elicit further discussion

3. Experiences accessing healthcare services

- Very limited eye care options locally
- Challenges navigating Medicare/Medicaid, especially for elderly
- Lack of education/information about available health programs and benefits
- Difficulty accessing specialists or urgent care due to distance/transportation

Follow-up - did not elicit further discussion

4. Programs or resources seen elsewhere that could benefit the community:

- Lions Club that does eye-checks

6. County specific: No prompt

7. Other issues mentioned:

- Drug issues, especially with youth vaping
- Need for more health education starting at younger ages
- Lack of fresh food options locally
- Challenges with summer food programs for children

8. Hopes for future health and well-being of the community:

- More people take advantage of Bridging Forward
- Rental prices stop going up
- We get a better transportation system

South Heartland District Health Department
Community Health Assessment- Focus Group Meetings, 2024

Spanish Community Health Focus Group

July 9th, 2024 – South Heartland District Health Department

Participant Demographics

# of Participants	Ages	Income	Education	Insurance	Household size
6 Females 1 Male	18-24=0 25-34 = 2 35-44 = 1 45-54 = 1 55-64 = 2 65-74 = 1 75-84 = 0	Less than 25K = 1 25-40K = 1 100K = 1 Prefer not to say = 4	Less than high 2 Associate degree = 1 High school diploma = 3 Bachelor's = 1	3 Uninsured 4 insured	2-3 = 5 4-5 = 1 6 or more =1

* See Focus Group Demographic data [here](#).

Summary of all county focus group demographics [here](#).

Summary of CHA Focus Group Meeting – 07/09/2024

1. Top Health Concerns:

- Key issues identified by the community include obesity, alcoholism, depression, diabetes, dental issues, mental health, suicide, sedentarism, and cancer.
- Reasons for concern: Emphasis on early prevention starting in childhood, free access to healthcare, housing, food, and education. Concerns about junk food advertisements and a lack of healthy lifestyle promotion.
- Access issues: Lack of affordable healthcare, challenges in qualifying for assistance programs, and difficulty accessing vaccines locally. Some residents are fearful of healthcare due to perceived risks, like Guillain-Barre syndrome.

2. Family Support Resources and Social Determinants of Health (SDOH):

- Housing and employment are significant health determinants; difficulties include expensive and poor-quality housing conditions (e.g., infestations).

South Heartland District Health Department

Community Health Assessment- Focus Group Meetings, 2024

- Needed support: Access to decent jobs and less bureaucratic support programs that are inclusive of immigrants, regardless of their work permit status.
- Encouragement for community solidarity, trust, and non-judgmental attitudes in assisting those in need.

3. Access to Care:

- Challenges in accessing medical, dental, optical, and mental health services. Lack of low-resource clinics for children and teenagers.
- Language barriers due to insufficient Spanish-speaking staff and lack of culturally competent care providers.
- Long wait times for appointments and the high cost of convenient care deter people from seeking necessary medical attention.

4. Gaps, Needs, and Solutions:

- Suggestions for new programs and resources include replicating models like One World in Omaha to provide comprehensive healthcare services and introducing initiatives like Project Homeless Care to address local needs.

Overall, the group highlighted critical health concerns, social determinants affecting health, and gaps in accessing healthcare services, proposing solutions to improve the community's health and well-being.