

FY2019 Community Health Needs Assessment Facts and Conclusions

Methodology

- In January 2018, the Washington County Health Improvement Coalition or WCHIC known as Healthy Washington County, announced the intention to conduct a CHNA. As the local not-for-profit hospitals, Meritus Medical Center and Brook Lane Health Services worked collaboratively through the Healthy Washington County coalition to conduct the CHNA, as required of all not-for-profit hospitals in accordance with the ACA of 2010 and the final regulations published in the Federal Register by the Internal Revenue Service and the Treasury Department on Dec. 31, 2014.
- Collection and review of secondary data began in February 2018, and continued through May 2018. Principal secondary data sources included use of the Maryland Department of Health or MDOH, State Health Improvement Plan or SHIP data and resources, the Centers for Disease Control or CDC data and Maryland Vital Statistics.
- A representative sample of 1,514 Washington County adults responded and completed the survey questionnaire from June 25-Sept. 14, 2018. The survey sample response provides a +/- 3.2% margin of error.
- To help ensure that key persons with unique knowledge of community needs and health topics were included in the study, a series of four community focus groups was conducted to obtain more specific information on the following topics: nutrition and physical activity, mental health and substance abuse, seniors' health issues and men's health issues.
- Two focus groups regarding access to health care were conducted with Meritus Medical Center care management employees. Based on direct care experience, these health care providers shared unique insights and barriers.
- Multiple focused interviews were conducted at the Zion Baptist Church and during the Hispanic Festival to learn more about the unique needs of our Black and Hispanic/Latino populations and how to best engage with these growing communities.
- On Nov. 20, 2018, Healthy Washington County sponsored a public forum for the community to review the data, findings, needs and issues identified and participate in a directed exercise to rank and prioritize the community's health needs.
- Brook Lane, Meritus Medical Center and Healthy Washington County developed plans of action based on the identified health needs, community strengths, resources, service gaps

and new collaborative initiatives to be implemented. Plans were reviewed and approved by the organizations' boards and the coalition.

Health Status Indicators

Environment

- The leading causes of death among adults in Washington County are heart disease, 24% and cancer, 21%.
- The most frequent health concerns reported include being overweight (48.2%), joint or back pain (31.6%), high blood pressure (35.1%), high cholesterol (25.4%), sleep problems (21.4%), diabetes (19.7%), and mental health (18.6%).
- Other areas of concern include dental care, smoking, heart disease, cancer and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease or COPD.
- Only 20% of health outcomes are attributed to the quality of clinical care provided.
- When combined, health behaviors (30%), social and economic determinants (40%) account for 70% of the community's health ranking.
- A majority of residents view the health status of people living in Washington County as "fair" or "poor" (59.7%).

Access to Quality Health Care

- The primary barriers to accessing health care include the cost of care (27%), including inability to afford co-pays and health insurance deductibles (13.3%) and convenience (14.5%).
- The majority of Washington County residents have health insurance (93%) largely subsidized by their employer (59.6%) or the government (19.1%).
- Approximately 7% of Washington County residents do not have health insurance.
- About 12% of residents report being unable to afford prescription medications.



For more information, please call 301-790-8296.



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Healthy Lifestyle

- With higher than average rates for physical inactivity and being overweight and obese in the community, residents are at a higher risk for pre-diabetes and developing diabetes in the future.
- More than 68% of the adult population is overweight or obese.
- There was a 2.6% decrease in the percentage of persons who maintained a healthy weight during the past three years.
- More than 26% of adults received no dental care in the past 12 months due to cost or the lack of insurance coverage.

Chronic Disease

- The report of high blood pressure (31.5%) has increased 4.1% from three years ago.
- While diabetes prevalence at 11.3% is similar to the rest of the state, Washington County has the second highest rate of diabetes mortality (following Baltimore City) in Maryland.
- Emergency department visits for diabetes have increased 29% during the past three years.
- There are higher rates of readmission to the hospital for Congestive Heart Failure or CHF and COPD than other chronic health disorders.
- There is a health disparity among the Black population observed in a higher rate of emergency department visits for chronic health issues including diabetes and respiratory illness. Visits for hypertension have declined by 8.6% during the past three years.
- While a higher number of cancer cases are being diagnosed, they are being identified earlier in stages I and II, which often results in improved prognosis and outcomes. The mortality rate for cancer decreased 3% since the last measurement period in 2016.

Mental Health

- Washington County experiences 40% more emergency department visits for mental health and crisis services than the state of Maryland average.
- Mental health emergency crisis visits decreased 6.6% in 2018 from the past five-year average.
- Among survey respondents, 27.3% had a positive response to depression screening questions, a 5% increase compared to survey data from three years ago.
- During a four-year duration, the rate of suicide has increased significantly in Washington County while the state average has remained flat.

- An inability to access mental health treatment when they needed it was reported by 11.7% of survey respondents.

Substance Abuse

- In 2018, there was a 55% increase in opioid-related deaths (80) and the overall opioid-related death rate increased by 5%.
- There is a steady increase of drug overdose attributed to heroin, opioids, and fentanyl during the past eight years, at a rate that is slightly higher than the state of Maryland average.
- There is a five-year increased trend in the number of addictions-related visits to the emergency department for drugs and alcohol.

Healthy Children

- The childhood rate of obesity has increased 2.3% since measured in 2013, slightly higher than the state average.
- For Washington County, the reported rate of child maltreatment has declined since 2012, but is higher than the state average.
- The rate of teenage births is trending down in a positive direction; however, it remains higher than the rest of the state.

Tobacco Use

- Rates of tobacco use among adults have decreased in the county, but remain above state of Maryland averages.

Prioritization of Needs

Upon review and analysis of all data, the top health priorities identified for Washington County were ranked as:

1. Substance abuse
2. Mental health
3. Obesity/weight loss
4. Wellness
5. Diabetes
6. Heart disease and hypertension



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