

Community Health Assessment – 2019

Purpose

A thorough Community Health Assessment is a customary practice and core function of public health. Every Minnesota Community Health Board (CHB) must submit its Ten Most Important Community Health Issues to the Minnesota Department of Health every 5 years.

Partners

- Local policy makers
- Hospital & clinics, other health care and long term care providers
- Human Services, service organizations and agencies
- City and county government
- Schools
- Foundations, churches and civic groups
- Health plans
- Community members

Preparation

The Kandiyohi-Renville Community Health Assessment was prepared under a KaRe to Achieve leadership team and the Kandiyohi-Renville CHB, using data from MDH, CDC, student and PACT for Families surveys, SW Regional Adult Health Survey, U.S. Census, and local hospital and clinics. The Health Assessment was written in sections with a lens of social determinants of health and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs):

- People
- Opportunity
- Nature
- Belonging

Process

Phase 1: Initial Planning Meetings

The KaRe to Achieve Leadership group worked over a year to compile, find gaps in and critique data. Additional data was gathered from surveys to targeted populations and a Health Equity Data Analysis (HEDA) study.

Phase 2: Other Analysis

The Public Health Advisory Committee compiled a “Strength and Assets” and “Forces of Change” analysis of our communities.

Phase 3: Other Community Input

Both Kandiyohi and Renville Counties hosted community conversation meetings with over 110 community members to share findings of the Community Health Assessment and Health Equity Data Analysis. The community groups selected top health issues and priorities for each county.

Phase 4: Identify Top Ten Issues

The Public Health Advisory Committee and the Kandiyohi-Renville CHB reviewed the top priorities identified by the community groups and made the final selection based on specific criteria: size of the problem, if some groups were affected more than others, community support, and if there were solutions and resources available to impact the problem.

Plan

The Kandiyohi-Renville CHB identified Mental Health as an issue to address for both counties in the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). Community groups from Kandiyohi County selected ATOD and Renville County selected ACEs as additional issues to address with local partners.



Kandiyohi-Renville
Community Health Board
Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Top Ten Health Issues 2019

Priority: Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

2/3 of children in Kandiyohi and Renville Counties have experienced at least one ACE and 1 in 8 have experienced 4 or more ACEs. Research shows that the adversity experienced as children can affect us into adulthood. The adversity we experience as a child can affect how our stress response functions, leading to long-term changes in our brains and bodies and leading to health problems and unhealthy coping. Early identification, support and understanding can build resiliency in children and adults who experienced early trauma.

Priority: Aging Population / Chronic Diseases

By 2035, the projected over 60-year-old population in Kandiyohi County is expected to be 31% of the total population while for Renville County, the projection is over 34%. The projected state average will be 26%. This shift in demographics will slow the work force growth and increase the demand for government and other support services. Even though aging brings with it cumulative effects of chronic diseases, there are also prevention opportunities to improve or maintain health in this population.

Priority: Alcohol, Tobacco & Other Drugs (ATOD)

Vaping usage with teens has skyrocketed and methamphetamine has made a comeback. While the rates for binge drinking and cigarette smoking in teenagers has shown a decline, there is still concern about teenage use and adult abuse. Marketing continues to target new users. Smoking remains the leading cause of death in the nation and state, thus efforts need to continue to reduce smoking rates across all populations.

Priority: Child Care Access

There are about 200 licensed child care providers in our counties. Despite these numbers, access to quality child care is difficult to find, with limited spots for infants. Without adequate and affordable day care access, families are finding barriers to employment. Income is one of the strongest and most consistent predictors of health and disease. Also, studies show that children who receive quality child care enter school with better math, language, and social skills.

Priority: Health Care Access and Cost

Residents of Kandiyohi and Renville Counties see healthcare as an important problem facing our counties. National polls repeatedly also show this as a concern. This includes total cost of health insurance and co-pays, prescription drugs, choosing care, and government benefits like Medicare and Medical Assistance. Dental and mental health access were also noted specifically.

Priority: Housing

33% of homes in Kandiyohi County and 57% in Renville were built before 1960. Many apartments and homes are aging and in need of repairs. Aspects of housing quality include air quality, home safety, space per individual and presence of mold, asbestos, or lead. Poor-quality housing is associated with various health issues, including chronic disease and injury and poor mental health. Low income families are more likely to live in poor-quality housing that can affect health.

Priority: Movement/ Lack of Physical Activity

Only 25% of male teens and 17% of female teens get recommended amount of physical activity each day. People of all ages from early childhood to elders are less active than recommended for optimal physical and mental health. When less physically active, individuals are more likely to develop heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and increased risk of a stroke. A unique barrier for residents are our extended winters. Regular movement can produce long term health benefits including adequate sleep, more energy, stronger muscles and bones, and less depression.

Priority: Mental Health (Illness and Well-being)

Mental illness and well-being were ranked number one over all issues for both counties, as it is tied to and affected by almost every other priority issue identified. 28% of adults in Kandiyohi and Renville Counties stated that their mental health was not good for 1-9 days of the month. Between 26-30% of our high school students felt sad or hopeless for 2 weeks or more in the past year. Mental and emotional health struggles can place significant strains on relationships, affect the ability to learn, work and be physically active, and can lead to self-harm. There is a growing interest and need for building community, family and individual mental well-being and resilience.

Priority: Obesity / Overweight

41.9% of Kandiyohi County adults are overweight and 26.3% are obese; while 36.2% of Renville County adults are overweight and 35.9% are obese. Nearly 60% of pregnant WIC participants in both counties are overweight or obese, along with about 30% of WIC children age 2-5. Obesity leads to long-term health complications (heart disease, diabetes, depression, arthritis, some cancers, etc.) Preventing obesity in children helps adolescents maintain a healthy weight into adulthood.

Priority: Transportation

Living in a rural area, it is recognized that having reliable transportation is a necessity for the quality of life. Most people own cars to get to work, school, appointments, entertainment, and shopping. CCT is the only public transit system covering 1,849 square miles in our counties, with gap areas of limited availability. Public transit has higher costs per ride in rural areas, due to long travel distances and low population densities. For some, longer commute times and lack of transportation options are barriers to employment.