Community Health Assessment

Sandoval County Health Council

June 2014

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Executive Summary

The purpose of this document is for the Sandoval County Health Council to fulfill the New Mexico Department of Health (NMDOH) requirements for council capacity building, sharing of the Sandoval County Health Profile, and delivering a final community assessment by the end of Fiscal Year 2014. The community health assessment allows for learning about the health status of the county, supporting grant proposals and planning, and initiating recommendations for strategic actions. This preliminary community health assessment discusses the process for conducting the community health assessment, community input, challenges, strengths and resources in the community.

The Sandoval County Health Council (SCHC) and its predecessor organizations have been in existence since 1991. The key objective has been to advocate for the health improvement of Sandoval County residents. It is a fifteen (15) member council appointed by the County Commission, and comprising of members with a diversity of backgrounds and experiences. SCHC appointed an Ad Hoc Committee to oversee the implementation of the community health assessment. The Ad Hoc Committee comprised of council and non-council members, including the NMDOH Health Promotions Specialist assigned to support the council. The Committee began by examining and sharing the Sandoval County Health Profile, and then conducted key informant interviews and focus groups in various communities, organizations and institutions. The committee sought to gain insight into the challenges, strengths, and resources across the different communities represented in the county.

The launch of this preliminary community health assessment has triggered capacity building and collaboration between the council and various community groups, institutions and organizations. SCHC hopes that sharing this report will foster planning, policy and strategic actions that benefit the community. SCHC also intends to continue to build on the foundation of this report during Fiscal Year 2015.

Description of Sandoval County

Sandoval County encompasses three thousand seven hundred and sixteen (3,716) square miles of diverse geography and people. It includes the incorporated municipalities of Bernalillo, Cuba, Corrales, Jemez Springs, Rio Rancho and San Ysidro, numerous unincorporated communities, the chartered community of Cochiti Lake, all or portions of nine Indian pueblos, three Navajo Chapters and part of the Jicarilla Apache Reservation. The County has evolved from a primarily rural and sparsely populated area to being the home of more than one hundred and thirty thousand (130,000) people. Ninety (90) percent of the populations live in three (3) incorporated communities, Rio Rancho, Bernalillo and Corrales. These communities are located in the southeast corner of the county. These characteristics present some unique obstacles to providing health and transportation services to the less inhabited sections of Sandoval County. Sandoval County also strives to coordinate quality health services with sovereign American Indian entities within the county.

Description of the Sandoval County Health Council

The Sandoval County Health Council (SCHC) and its predecessor organizations have been in existence since 1991. The primary goal has been to advocate for the health improvement of Sandoval County residents. It is a fifteen (15) member council appointed by the County Commission, and comprising of members with a diversity of backgrounds and experiences. The Council intends to use the information generated from the community health assessment to create an improvement plan. Past Successes of the Sandoval County Health Council include:

- Bernalillo Health Commons
- Dental Services
- Sandoval County Transportation System
- County-wide Health Indicator Survey

Purpose of the Community Health Assessment

The purpose of the community health assessment is to learn about the health status of the county, support grant proposals and planning, and to initiate recommendations for strategic actions. The community health assessment is also intended to generate capacity building and collaboration between the council and various community groups, institutions and organizations. The

information garnered will be utilized in educating and mobilizing communities, developing priorities, and planning actions to improve population health. The Sandoval County Health Council (SCHC) anticipates that sharing this report will foster planning and policy efforts that benefit the community, and aims to continue to build on the groundwork of this report.

Process

The Sandoval County Health Council (SCHC) appointed an Ad Hoc Committee to oversee the implementation of the community health assessment. The Ad Hoc Committee comprised of council and non-council members, including the NMDOH Health Promotions Specialist assigned to support the council. The Committee initiated the development of the community health assessment by disseminating the Sandoval County Health Profile to key informants in the community. After examining and sharing the Sandoval County Health Profile indicators, key informant interviews and focus groups were conducted in various communities, organizations and institutions. The Committee sought to engage a wide range of community involvement and representation from various sectors of the county. The Sandoval County Health Profile was shared with hospitals, health centers, schools, non-profit organizations, state/city departments and community groups. Using a collaborative process, the Committee developed five (5) open-ended questions to ask each key informant and focus group. The full council voted and approved these questions. The Committee wanted to gain insight into the strengths, resources and challenges across the different communities represented in the county.

Community Health Assessment Key Informant/Focus Group Questions
1: What do you see as the positive aspects of this community?
2: What are the major gaps or needs of the community?
3: What changes would you like to see in your community?
4: What are you or others are doing or plan to do to address the gaps or build on the successes?
5: In what manner do you or your organization reach out to share with or communicate with the community to inform them of your activities?

Participants were not limited to only respond to the questions above. The questions were open-ended and broad enough for the participants to discuss any health indicators or community issues not present in the Sandoval County Health Profile.

Findings

Sandoval County is rich in cultural and geographic diversity. Therefore, it is important to reach and engage key informants from the non-metropolitan municipalities of the county, in order to gain a comprehensive viewpoint of the county. In each focus group and key informant interview, participants were asked a set of open-ended questions to gather information regarding the strengths and challenges of the community.

Challenges

Access to care and services: Inadequate behavioral/mental health services and substance abuse services were cited most frequently among key informants. This indicator was of particular concern to key informants working with the youth population. Although there are some behavioral health facilities in the county, they are limited in resources and sometimes limited in specialized care (particularly in pediatric and acute mental health services). Loss of funding to non-profit organizations was also a frequently cited concern for community key informants. Many of such organizations play a key role in supporting the marginalized members of the community in a variety of ways, from providing food and clothing, to subsidizing electricity costs. In smaller communities limited access to local pharmacy stores, physical therapy and dental care services was also a concern.

Transportation: Lack of consistent and efficient transportation system was of concern. This was a consistent theme across the continuum of the diverse communities. Key informants raised concern regarding hazardous roads conditions in the winter months and delayed clearing roadways leading to the hospitals and schools. Others mentioned poor utilization of hospital-based buses for patients. Slow economic growth has also contributed to the transportation issues such as a lack of signage issues (City/County) and inadequate GPS navigation and coordinates for hospitals.

Resource directory: The need for an inclusive compilation of the resources and services offered in the county was a major concern voiced throughout interviews and focus groups, regardless of the community's geographical location. Several key informants voiced the need for not only a county-wide resource directory but also one reflecting the needs in their respective communities. Therefore, a step-wise approach to collecting resources per community, then building them into a county-wide resource directory will be beneficial to the community.

Education: Expensive educational programs (GED), financial literacy, lack of continuity with school administration, and culturally sensitive and competent home care training for Native families was needed.

Others: Geographic isolation from services and amenities, water scarcity (drought) and slow economic development in rural areas.

Strengths

Community involvement: Strong community relationships and involvement were cited as strengths as well. Both community residents and various organizations/institutions have been active participants of broad community outreach efforts. Area hospitals place high priorities in providing care and giving back to the community. Some retired residents self-reported volunteering at local schools, hospitals and long-term care centers. In other communities, activities tend to center around youth and youth empowerment (Cuba). The establishment of the two (2) new hospitals in the county has provided health care services, employment and community outreach to the community. Other major employers in the community have also provided a variety of services and community outreach efforts also.

Diversity and culture: Among key informants that serve and work with Native communities, language and cultural values were mentioned. Hospitals place high priorities on employee health, quality of care and interpretation services. In the town of Bernalillo, there are strong cultural practices and festivals with strong ties to the Catholic Church. Family-centeredness was also cited most of the communities visited.

Access to amenities (in incorporated municipalities): key informants representing the major incorporated and urban regions of the county, stated close proximity and access to the surrounding hospitals, urgent care services, and city amenities, as a strong positive characteristics of their community. Cuba, an unincorporated municipality cited walking trails and sidewalks, open spaces, a dialysis center (opening soon), and the County fairgrounds amenities that add value to the characteristics of their community.

Others: Food pantry/farmers' market, room for economic growth, land expansion, safe neighborhoods and good public education (Rio Rancho)

Resources

During key informant interviews and focus groups the committee sought to gather assets and resources that can be utilized and employed to address health and social determinants of health. These resources specifically pertain to community outreach and communication. The following is a non-exhaustive list of assets per community visited:

Bernalillo

- Sheriffs Possé – Civil community involvement
- City website, Facebook, digital marquee, El Zocolo (newspaper) - communicating of events and resources throughout the community
- Health fairs
- Alegria Connection (monthly publication) – communicating events and resources to the community at Del Webb/Alegria Housing

Corrales

- Corrales Main Street News, Corrales Comment(weekly publication) - communicating events and resources throughout the community
- Community gardens
- School-based health and environmental programs i.e. Roll to School program

Cuba

- Step Into Cuba – promoting physical activity
- Community garden – promoting the consumption of healthy foods
- Health fairs
- Nacimiento Community Foundation (NCF) - addressing elderly literacy issues, assisting with electricity and heat
- Cuba News (newspaper) – communicating events and resources throughout the community

Jemez Springs

- Jemez Springs Thunder (newspaper) - communicating events and resources throughout the community

Torreon

- Torreon Tribes (newspaper) - communicating events and resources throughout the community

Rio Rancho

- Health and wellness fairs
- Pro-active law enforcement programs
- City website, Rio Rancho Observer (newspaper), Rio Annual Manual - communicating events and resources throughout the community

Prospective Plans

Moving forward to the new funding cycle, it is vital that strategies to continue county capacity building are in place. The recommended plans allow for following-up and developing on the foundation of this community assessment report. The following are strategies recommended for the Sandoval County Health Council:

1. Set priorities for health indicators
2. Implement the Collective Impact Training for Large Scale Social Change by United Way Central of New Mexico
3. Collaborate with and help coordinate groups to build public will to address the lack of mental health care in schools and communities
4. Engage more rural/unincorporated municipalities
5. Broaden key informant respondents such as spiritual leaders, business leaders, middle/high school students, school administrators, and other community groups
6. Assist with the development of an accessible and complete county-wide resource directory (collaboration with Share New Mexico)
7. Collaborate and partner with non-profit and community-based organizations
8. Utilize community newspapers (i.e. writing articles)
9. Continued collaboration regarding differentiated activities with other agencies doing assessments in Sandoval County (i.e. United Way of Central New Mexico, Presbyterian Healthcare Services Community Health, etc.)
10. Continued sharing about Sandoval County Health Council and it’s work with the community

Conclusion

The community health assessment supports the Sandoval County Health Council's purpose to health improvements and community advocacy. Although the findings from the community health assessment were guided by the Sandoval County Health Profile, community input reflected a focus on social determinants of health. A compilation of key informant interviews and focus groups led to three key issues to be addressed: behavioral/mental health services, transportation services and a comprehensive county-wide resource directory. The findings and key issues will be taken into consideration when initiating recommendations for strategic actions. The Sandoval County Health Council intends to use the information generated from the community health assessment to create an improvement plan and advocate on behalf of the community at-large on issues pertaining to health and social determinants of health. The Ad Hoc Committee appreciates the input freely given by all community participants in order to reach the conclusions of this report, and the given direction for future community assessment planning and action plans.

Appendix

Appendix A: List of Participants

Hospitals

Jeff McBee, Administrator, Presbyterian Rust Medical Center

Ferron Sneed, CEO, Lovelace West Side Hospital

Jamie Silva-Steele, Interim President and CEO, A. Bartkaus, B. Cushnyr, G. Garcia, M. Romine, P. Demarest, E. Redwine, and C. Thompson (Administrators), University of New Mexico Sandoval Regional Medical Center (UNM SRMC)

Community Health Centers

Dr. Toni Price, Presbyterian Medical Services (PMS) Rio Rancho

Agnes Trujillo; PMS Jemez Springs Clinic

Teresa Woodfill, Administrator, PMS/CAHS

Helene, FNP, Santo Domingo Clinic

Karolyn Shaefer, RN, Cuba Public Health

Community Non-profit Organizations

Sara Keller, United Way of Central New Mexico

Leigh Caswell, Presbyterian Healthcare Services, Community Health

Jeanette Linville, Executive Director, Nacimiento Community Foundation (NCF)

Lorraine Saxton, Community Walking Champion (NCF)

Paul Cordova, Intel Fellow at NCF

Sarah Baca, Executive Director, New Mexico Autism Society

Julie Karl, Lifestyle Director, Del Webb/Alegria Senior Housing

County/City Departments

Peggy Cote, Executive Director, Community Services for Sandoval County

Jack Torres, Mayor of Bernalillo

Diane Irwin, Executive Administrator, DWI program

Diana Lopez, Certified Prevention Specialist, DWI program

Officer John Harlan & Officer Valdez, Rio Rancho Police Department

Carlton Liggins, Chief, Sandoval County Juvenile Probation

Schools

Lee Carn, School Nurse Administrator, Rio Rancho Schools

Paula Duprey, School Nurse Administrator, Bernalillo Schools

Karen Ludi, RN, Bernalillo High School

Anjanette Serna, RN, School Nurse, Santo Domingo Elementary School (k-8)

Alissa Ganje, Counselor, Corrales Elementary School

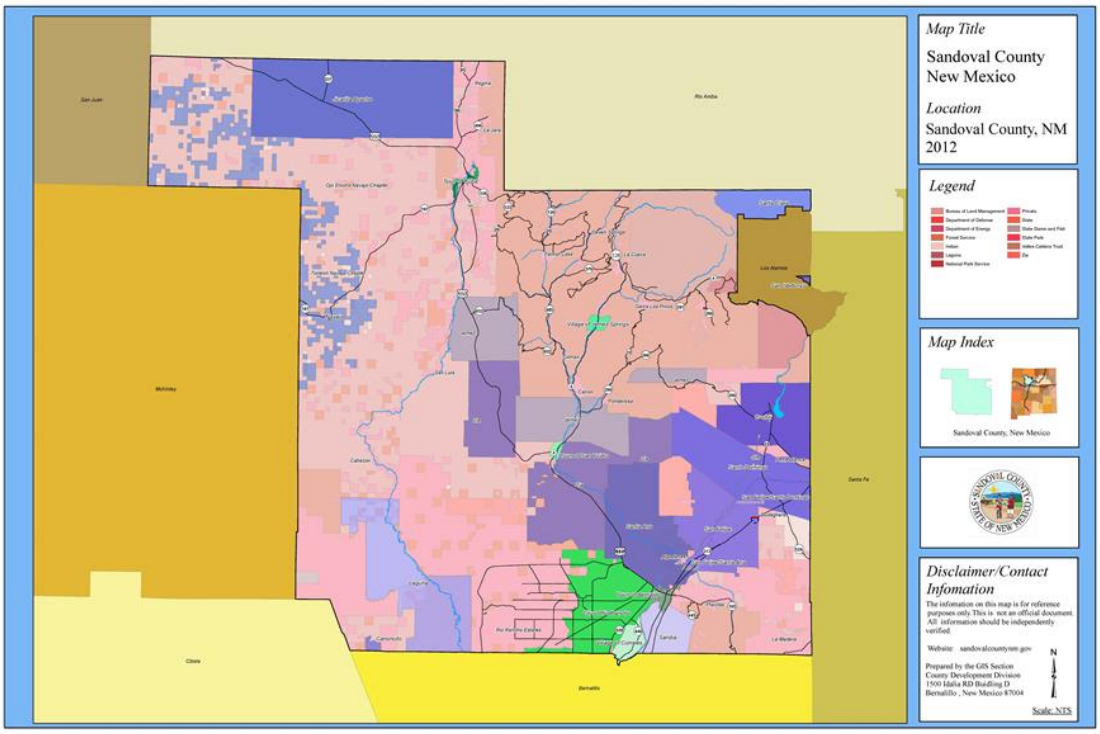
Patricia Steiner, Principal, Corrales Elementary School

Maria Elena Rivera, Health Assistant, Corrales Elementary School

*Please contact the Sandoval County Health Council for more information

http://www.sandovalcounty.com/healthcouncil

Appendix B: Map of Sandoval County



http://www.sandovalcountynm.gov/uploads/Downloads/Divisions/GISMapping/maps/general/SandovalCountyNM2012.pdf