

Community Needs Assessment Forum Notes May 18, 2017

Question 1: What do you think about when you see the information provided tonight? Is there anything significant or interesting?

- Not surprised at the dental result.
 - Only one facility takes Medicaid. Everyone else demands cash.
 - Even then dentists not interested in restorative work – Only want to do extractions
 - Backed up by another participant saying all they will do is pull teeth.
 - No preventative care.
- Interested to see that students wanted more financial education and budgeting help but adults wanted help with credit repair.
- Mental health / substance abuse low priority.
- Interesting that cooking classes and nutrition mentioned – people taking preventative measures around health.
- Lots of discussion on the details of the data:
 - Surprising that 50% of respondents are disabled.
 - Be interesting to separate needs across demographics.
E.g., separate out responses from homeless on the street and homeless who have some form of shelter – and connect to needs answers.
 - 98661 and 98663 low response rate. An area with low access to on-line form. Area with highest multi-cultural population, highest low income. Don't know that Churches or neighborhood association in that area saw the surveys. Thought it would impact the results.
 - Seemed like no one in the group had seen copies of the survey or heard them mentioned in their church or organizations – so even though the response rate was broad and cross-county, they tended to think survey outcomes biased.
 - Wanted to see the trends – whether answers had changed over time. Thought that analysis might reflect the impact of losing low/moderate housing.

Most everyone said “no” on being surprised

- Surprised youth were looking for budgeting/financial education because this isn't taught in school or family doesn't know/talk about it. Hard to know things you aren't exposed to.
- Is it about getting income or managing income? Can't manage what you don't have.
- Youth lacking in how to manage resources, but there is a correlation between employment and managing money.
- High school offers “personal finance” class but it's not for kids on a higher education track.
- A lot of families don't have parental guidance or support – they are on their own to figure out finances. Mentoring needed.
- Need the support and foundation for youth.

- Some NPs do offer youth mentoring for getting and keeping family wage jobs. Some schools offer life skills.
- When reviewing needs, was surprised at # of needs that were identified when there are programs to address these. Maybe need more connection to programs. NPs should partner together more so people don't have to apply at so many different places. Still more need than availability.
- NPs are afraid of partnering because they compete for donations.
- Outreach, not services!
 - Major healthcare providers have been pushing for free outreach dental care for everyone because of the impact on health. Kaiser, Providence, etc. have mobile dental care to get services to people –Surprised that it is a high need.
- Medicaid doesn't cover dentures. Medicaid dentists more apt to pull tooth than repair it.
- Surprised MH/SA not a higher need probably because self-identifying that is difficult.

Students wanted financial education/budget balance with credit repair.

Not separate but lw condition.

Not a lot of response from central Vancouver.

- Food assistance need was surprising. Curious if survey placement influenced data reporting. 414 responses came from food bank surveys.
- Timing for surveys especially considering school year start/end.
- How were surveys distributed? School mail? Bulletin boards?
- Cost of childcare was very surprising. Childcare options through local organizations? YWCA?
- Who is being left out through partner agencies? Illegal immigrants? Elderly?
- Any baseline data?
- Cost of living "out-of-control."
- Need to focus more on disability outreach.

Clarify:

- What is information being used for?
- Non-attribution conversation.
- Conversation will be used as part of qualitative portion of the report.
- Will it be used for financing other entities?
- We do the data in the report to inform our decisions.
- Youth response was really surprising – what stood out as concerning to them as compared to.
- Stands out about youth response – access to affordable health care.
- I appreciate the youth perspective and got their feedback.
- Why did youth respond as they did? Seeing it from their perspective. Clarification could have been the adult responding for the needs of the youth in the household.
- I appreciated how broad the level of needs were and the depth of the questions.

- Surprised by low need for substance abuse and mental health needs (possibly because the county provides these services successfully).
- Surprised by high needs of dental care.
- Dental care seems like a luxury item and it has to get pretty bad before the person seeks help.

Question 2: What do you think are the causes of poverty in our community?

- Loss of middle income jobs.
- Living wage ?
- Lack of affordable housing.
- Lack of basic 'living' skills – making affordable choices, choosing wisely between limited options, awareness of resources.
- Lack of financial management skills.
- Individualistic society – lack of social capital and a family network
 - Participant talked about the difference coming from the South where families helped families, church stepped in in times of need.
 - Linked to time, isolation, neighborhood.
 - Several mentioned measures that try to recreate this –
 - BG Connect - Welcome Wagon approach.
 - Family Community Resource Centers.
- #1 is lack of education – 6% of 18-24 have a bachelor's degree in Clark County. Portland is only 12% --one of the lowest in the country. Poverty households believe college is not for them. Unemployment rate: HS – 17%; Bachelors – 8%; Masters – 2%; no HS -35%. Jobs with no degree are minimum wage.
- Cost of housing.
- MH, physical health.
- Generational vs. situational.
- From 2008-2012, 1/3 of participants were situational poverty. Situational poverty hh can push generational poverty hh's out because they have experience/knowledge gen poverty doesn't have.
- Benchmark for mid-income hasn't changed since 1974 if adjusted for costs/inflation.
- 2008 crash not loss of jobs but worker's wages flattened because people would take anything.
- What used to be a \$60k job now pays \$35k, but at least it's a job.
- New Seasons was taking apps from Masters degrees during recession.
- Emphasis is put on food and housing instead of education so people cannot escape poverty – food/housing is just a Bandaid.

Lack of connectedness or plan when graduate.

Separatist type of culture in the north to make money.

Lack of individual housing.

Lack wages.

Lack family support network nurturing family.

- Minimum wage is too low.
 - Fastest rising rent in nation for 2-3 years.
 - Need renter protection.
 - Builders develop more expensive homes.
 - Building boom backlash in Camas—the more you build, the less of a small town feel remains. Yet, if housing growth is restricted, prices go up.
 - We are five years behind on building houses/living space.
 - No safety net: divorce, domestic violence, lost incoming.
 - Healthcare costs –various private/public coverage plans.
 - Economic difficulties.
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- Difficult to thrive if you are stuck in survival mode.
 - The income level may be one thing, but then you look at all the rising costs that impact the available income. People aren't necessarily living beyond their means, but that costs are rising while income is not.
 - Lack of employment opportunities and a true living wage. The costs are increasing but income is not.
 - Structural and systemic discrimination.
 - Not everyone has the same educational opportunities.
 - Lack of transportation and services that keep people from getting out of poverty.
 - How can students engage in their education if they are worried about housing and food? And then, how will they get a good job without the education?
 - When you think about generational poverty, what additional tools and skills do youth need to be successful? Maybe schools are not teaching real skills – there could be changes in the education system.

Question 3: What programs/services do you think will help lift people out of poverty?

- Mentorship programs.
- Build transitional skills – housing, budget, parenting.
- Training trauma informed services.
- Work on health relationships.
- Couple mentioned Dave Ramsey financial course.
- Comprehensive support services – CRMH, Molina Health Care.
- Peer support.
- Warm line.
- Effective housing program case managers.

Comment: “Can’t institutionalize ourselves out of problems”:

Need to build capacity for social networking, creating relationships, building trust to reach into the untapped capacity in community to work alongside families to be care ‘guiders.’

Need ‘out-of-the-box’ housing options

e.g., the roommate match program and other innovations.

Finding / educating / incentivizing understanding landlords.

Partnering with mediation services around landlord-tenant issues (not expecting service staff to be the mediators).

Education around low income / poverty / tenants with special needs to overcome the projected “fear factor that stops things moving ahead.”

Engage elderly population for multi-generational involvement in skill/partnering/roles.

Noted: David Bilby refugee integration program re housing?

- Education.
- Childcare services.
- Money for education – funding for education bigger barrier than poverty. HHs not thinking they can go. Student loan debt is too much to take on.
- Need more outreach on college funding programs.
- Mentoring.
- Trade schools and apprenticeships.
- WorkSource-WIOA youth services to find employment.
- Skill Center, vocational schooling.
- How to get the information out to people who need it? Food Banks are a good place to outreach.
- What about adults? Adults need the same thing as youth – education/mentoring, professional development.
- Housing – communal/collaborative living to help educate adults. Center for independent living.

Mentorship peer support in the areas identified, especially housing – utilize the elderly roommate match.

Get agencies to support-wraps support.

Utilize meditation.

- Correcting misconceptions.
- Education.
- Success stories/marketing role models.
- Provide hope to the hopeless.
 - Treat people with respect.
 - People working with people.
 - Build people up.
- Mental Health services.
- School supplies for educational success.
- Worker retraining.
 - National spending is far lower than average developed countries’ investments.
 - Skill sets to keep up with times/tech.
- Provide information/life skills (Life 101).
 - How to get a driver’s license?

- Preschool: How much? Space? Times?
- Have someone look people eye-to-eye and support them through struggles.
- Increasing hope – increased outcome.
- Other paths for youth to get into a different path than the one that leads to low paying job.
- There's a certain level of relationship that has to go along with the services – people need to feel comfortable accessing the services.
- It would be good to have more private/public partnerships – eliminating systemic and structural discrimination.
- Transportation – customers who live in east or north county need better access to transportation.
- Access to medical and other services.
- Getting health care providers to accept Medicaid.
- How many people will not do well in interviews because they had meth mouth?
- More programs to increase asset building – get them out of the debt cycle.
- Providing basic banking services.
- Providing education about credit and credit score (Higher expenses for higher risk clients).

Question 4: Is there anything you think is missing from the information/discussion provided tonight?

Group felt answers to question 4 had been discussed in earlier comments

- What is the political dimension? How can poor people advocate for themselves or organize to communicate to politicians that direct funding? How are politicians receptive or educated or innovative for poverty solutions?
- There are some people who do not want housing. You can't force someone to take their medication.
- Have meals like stone soup so that you can converse with the homeless not just serve them.
- Bring children in and integrated in services.
- 55+ chart.
- Important to gather information, but need to gather best practices to solve issues.
- Look at communities around the country to see what programs work.
- Clark County 14-16% poverty population; Los Angeles only 9%. Clark County had largest growth of poverty on entire west coast.
- County programs are not based on best practices. Usually a one and done thing.
- Why? Is it because of elected?
- What are housing needs based on zip code?

How do we weave the grass roots program?

Narratives.

Defining type/level of homelessness—actually on the street vs. couch surfing.

** Visibility of this survey in the community.

- I can't think of anything missing.
- I think the thoroughness and depth is impressive.
- How will we be able to share this out in the community?
- Very comprehensive.
- Did you reach out to the blind community?
- Making sure we're reaching out to emerging language speakers, people with disabilities, and any other subgroups that are under-represented or not represented.
- Cupcakes!