

Community Health Needs Assessment

◆ Forces of Change Assessment ◆

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Forces of Change Assessment (FOCA) is a component of the Community Health Needs Assessment. The purpose of Forces of Change Assessment (FOCA) is to identify the trends, factors, and events that are likely to influence community health and quality of life, or impact the work of the local public health system in the Lane County region.

The Forces of Change brainstorming session focused on the following questions:

- What has occurred recently or may occur in the foreseeable future that may affect our local public health system or the health of our community? What are the trends occurring that will have an impact? What forces are occurring locally? Regionally? Nationally? Globally?
- What opportunities will be created for improving our public health system or the health of our community?
- What barriers exist in improving our public health system or the health of our community?

For the purpose of the Forces of Change exercise, forces include trends, events and factors:

- Trends: Patterns over time
- Events: One time occurrences
- Factors: Discrete elements or attributes of a community

The findings from the Forces of Change Assessment will ensure that the strategic issues identified later in the CHNA process are relevant to the changing environment and that the developed action plans are responsive to potential threats and opportunities.

Key Findings

Through the assessment process, the following health-impacting forces of change were identified:

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|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| • Collaboration | • Public Health workforce | • Affordable housing |
| • Access to primary care | • Political and leadership changes | • Poverty |
| • Funding for healthcare | • Economy | • Rural |
| • Affordable Care Act (ACA) | • Education funding | • Changing demographics |
| • Care delivery system | • Healthy schools | • Behavioral/mental health |
| • Technology in healthcare | • Environment | • Health behaviors |
| • Dental | • Community infrastructure | • Communicable disease |

Across the identified forces of change, common reoccurring threats and opportunities emerged:

Threats:

- The impact of poverty and economic shifts overwhelming the systems of: education, employment, and affordable housing
- Shortages of resources and funding shifts
- Increased costs
- System capacity and issue overload

Opportunities:

- Access to healthcare
- Health integration
- Collaboration, coordination, and innovation
- Emerging technology
- Focus on prevention



PROCESS

As one component of the 2015 Community Health Needs Assessment, community leaders from across the region convened on May 13, 2015 for the collaborative Forces of Change Assessment. The assessment objectives were to determine forces affecting the health of the community and local health system and to identify the associated threats and opportunities.

Facilitated by Karen Gaffney from Lane County Health and Human Services, the brainstorming session comprised of leaders representing 22 organizations from diverse sectors including local government, healthcare and public health, education, and social services. Utilizing a customization of the snow card technique, participants compiled a broad inventory of forces – events, trends, and factors – that are or will be influencing the health and quality of life of the community and the local public health system. Ideas spanned local, regional, national, and global concerns as well as community based issues.

Through the process, of the 21 named categories, eight of the most common key categories were selected for further in-session examination: 1) collaboration; 2) access to primary care; 3) Affordable Care Act; 4) technology in healthcare; 5) political and leadership changes; 6) economy; 7) rural; and 8) changing demographics. Small groups then discussed and recorded the potential threats and opportunities that could be generated by these forces of change. The planning committee later identified the threats and opportunities for the remaining 13 categories.

RESULTS

This report details the comprehensive findings from the May 2015 Forces of Change Assessment. The analysis of themes produced 21 categories of forces (trends, events, and factors) and associated potential threats and opportunities.

Collaboration

The Lane County region has a strong history of collaboration with community partners becoming increasingly interested in collective impact. In addition, there is a growing demand to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate and relevant services. With this increase in local, regional, and national collaboration comes both obstacles and opportunities.

Threats posed:

- Threats to individual organizations: relevance, revenue streams, and loss of identify
- Leadership changes threatening old partnerships
- Leadership at high levels does not reflect the diversity in our community
- Lag in results, inability to prioritize, and collaboration fatigue
- Lack of a universally accepted vision

Opportunities created:

- Development of non-traditional partnerships and coalitions with new strategies for managing cross sector collaboration and leadership
- Collaboration with multicultural organizations, local colleges and universities, and utilizing students as resources for impacts of change
- Better understanding of health integration and mobilizing the entire community to impact health
- Maximize use of resources and efforts; collaborative processes for sharing and analyzing data

Access to Primary Care

Adequate and easy access to local primary care, including the limited linguistic access to healthcare, is a growing issue impacting healthcare providers, individuals, and the overall community health status. As a result of the Affordable Care Act, there is an increasing gap between primary care supply and demand.

Threats posed:

- Limited skilled labor and lack of clinicians/physicians in Lane County; high cost to recruit and retain skilled physicians and staff
- High turnover due to burnout
- Phone interpretation is not always a culturally appropriate practice
- Increased bureaucracy

Opportunities created:

- New nurse practitioner (NP) and physician assistant (PA) programs locally and medical team expansion with PAs, NPs, and extended team members
- Increased need for more medical interpreters could result in job growth
- Rural health initiatives, loan forgiveness programs, and reimbursement programs
- Expansion in interdisciplinary services provision
- Nontraditional access points; group visits; TeleMed
- Improved staff and doctor disabled competency trainings
- Improved treatment of the mentally challenged through care and provider training
- Financing to patients (e.g. PeaceHealth's use of HealthFirst Financial)

Funding for Healthcare

Numerous concerns exist over the trend of decreased federal and state funding for healthcare, Coordinated Care Organizations (CCOs), preventative care, and governmental public health.

Threats posed:

- Partners' ability to collaborate and share resources will decrease, unraveling commitment to current efforts
- Transformation efforts and health gains could stall/fall short or new issues will not be tackled; system breaks down
- Decreased reimbursement levels will reduce access to care
- Fewer services available for people who are low income

Opportunities created:

- Strengthen local partnerships and identify local resources
- Strategies can be more tailored because there will not be outside funding requirements attached
- Pressure will demand improved efficiencies and focus on most effective interventions

Affordable Care Act (ACA)

The ACA is the largest health care legislation since Medicaid and Medicare were passed and will drastically change the way healthcare is delivered and received. There are issues regarding the legislation's public perception and how individuals may not understand how to navigate their newly acquired insurance. Additionally, there is a resulting influx of demand on providers and in the post ACA healthcare marketplace.

Threats posed:

- Confusion with consumers and providers
- Shortage of providers
- Negative impact on the delivery system and provider satisfaction/engagement
- Increased regulations increasing costs
- Lack of economic stability and volatility of market

Opportunities created:

- Collaboration and innovation: broadening health care to include more than just medical care
- Economies of scale
- \$2 billion prevention and public health fund will enable reach to upstream issues to advance prevention
- Educating households on tax credits to support affordability and stabilize cost
- CCO incentive metrics

Care Delivery System

The impact of the current care delivery system and its high costs and variations in care delivery are significant local concerns. On a positive note, there are strong safety net providers in Lane County. Also locally, the imminent sale of Trillium to Centene is a significant force that could have an impact on the community.

Threats posed:

- Change in ownership of PeaceHealth or McKenzie Willamette could change the focus on community health
- Cost escalation due to inefficiencies, government regulations and administrative burden, and designer drugs and treatments
- Aging and increasingly ill population further stresses the delivery system

Opportunities created:

- Develop community-wide practice standards and protocols for treatment
- Strengthen safety net coalition by networking and providing infrastructure support
- Advocate for payment reform shifts
- Improve care coordination capacity and leverage community health workers (CHW), Patient Navigators and Peer Support Specialists
- Enhance training and support for patient-centered medical home (PCMH) workforce
- Improve community wide information service directory, 211

Technology in Healthcare

Rapidly evolving technology and access to information are significant trends impacting healthcare delivery and outreach, health sector operating budgets, and personal health and fitness monitoring. The key Electronic Medical Records Mandate in ACA will result in an increased importance of cost-benefit analysis to maximize the return on technology spending.

Threats posed:

- Inaccessible to certain populations (i.e. elderly, homeless, and low income)
- Confidentiality, privacy concerns, and data breaches
- Financial costs associated with new technology, training, implementation, and infrastructure improvements
- Providers and individuals may be resistant to change
- Lack of personalization of care

Opportunities created:

- Accessible to the younger generations; efficient way to reach more people
- Collaborative processes for sharing and analyzing data
- Emergence and integration of self-health monitoring technology
- Electronic health records, shared electronic medical system, health information exchange, Telehealth, telecommuting, mobile/kiosk health care units, patient portals

Dental

The lack of unified focus on oral health within medicine, inadequate local dental care access (including restorative), lack of coordination in care delivery, and low oral hygiene knowledge and instructions are major local dental factors affecting the local public health system and community.

Threats posed:

- Increased cost for delayed care
- State budget shortfall and resulting cut in Medicaid adult dental
- Ongoing anti-fluoride propaganda

Opportunities created:

- Link with Early Learning Alliance initiatives
- Tele-dentistry to serve rural areas
- Great focus on oral health with a new State Dental Director to lead efforts

Public Health Workforce

The local public health authority was reported as being very engaged, with positive leadership, training, and cross-disciplinary capabilities.

Threats posed:

- New requirements might divert energy or focus away from current priorities and traditional services; funds may be insufficient
- Could create more disconnect between the clinical care system and public health, or between different types of public health services
- Could create more scrutiny or bureaucracy from the state that would limit local control

Opportunities created:

- Sufficient funding for core public health functions
- Increased effectiveness for Public Health interventions, resulting in decreased costs and pressure on the clinical care system
- More focus on prevention and population health strategies
- Higher awareness about the role of public health and more local investment

Political and Leadership Changes

Participants pointed to the impact of upcoming state and national elections of a new governor and president. Additional concerns surround the forces of political and leadership change: leadership transitions in key organizations and institutions, uncertain governmental public health structure, increased regulations and mandates, federal and state healthcare policy, Rivlin-Ryan, and the Public Health Modernization Bill.

Threats posed:

- Problems growing with no long-term vision on solutions
- Transition in leadership and stagnation with change

- Loss of institutional memory
- Translation of policy to practice; Continuity of policy priorities
- Rising costs

Opportunities created:

- Innovation and positive change; longer-term perspectives and investments
- Oregon Task Force on future of public health
- Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement monies given for health improvement (CHNA, CHIP, Prevention efforts)
- Payment reform through legislation/policy leadership

Economy

Local economic concerns include personal and family financial security, the challenge of recruiting and retaining quality employees, the lack of economic opportunity in rural communities leading to high poverty rates, stagnant wages, Oregon budget issues, and high medical bills. Noted economic factors of encouragement included the recent economic development, increase of good jobs and decrease in unemployment rate. Also of concern is the predicted 2019 recession.

Threats posed:

- Poverty (hot spots, generational, etc.); cost of living; income inequality/inequity
- Education: increased cost and declining funds
- Employment: increased job outsources, lack of qualified employees, livable wage jobs, declining benefits offered by employers, unequal opportunities
- Legislative limits
- Rates of incarceration

Opportunities created:

- New growing and sustainable industries; job growth
- Economic growth environment – push health agenda now!
- Minimum wage increases
- Education as critical to economic stability
- Reduction in “silos” at state level

Education Funding

The state funding challenges, current low funding for education, and the privatization of education are significant concerns. Optimistically, there is an increased focus, especially locally, on investing in early childhood and the related impact on long-term public health outcomes. A particular example is the newly launched Lane Early Learning Alliance.

Threats posed:

- Lack of tax base to adequately fund education
- Need for additional revenue not to spread resources thinner
- Competition for funding between early childhood, K-12, and higher education
- Shortage of skilled labor in needed trades
- Oregon’s outcomes for education could continue to slip below national averages, impacting our economic and social future

Opportunities created:

- Going upstream and the future impacts on educational career, long term health and lifespan
- Community awareness and action to create political will
- Professionalism of early education field building momentum for higher quality care
- Leveraging resources and momentum around a P-20 continuum

Healthy Schools

Numerous healthy school forces include the great school nutrition programs, increased funding for Farm to School, new 2017 PE instructional time mandates, behavioral health education, and programs for kids to engage in healthy lifestyles. Noteworthy concerns include the lack of mental health supports and nurses in schools, increasing number of homeless students, and dramatic rise of children with life threatening illnesses. Also highlighted is the necessity of strong school support and infrastructure for Safe Routes to School.

Threats posed:

- High burnout rate among school nurses; rapid turnover of staff
- Untreated mental health issues at early stages due to limited/stigmatized access
- Education funding cuts and state regulations impacting school based health center's (SBHC) capacity
- Negative impacts of technology, such as children being more sedentary
- PE mandate remains unfunded and eventually not implemented

Opportunities created:

- Mental wellness, healthy lifestyles, and prosocial behaviors are the norm
- Easier access to non-stigmatizing behavioral health services
- Awareness of physical literacy and movement being incorporated into classroom learning; setting the stage for healthy behaviors reduces obesity rates
- Utilizing schools to share information and connect with entire families
- Potential created for SBHCs to become PCPCH
- State funds to allow SBHCs to stay open with quality staffing and care

Environment

As a physical determinant of health, there is a great need to protect and improve the environment. The recent challenges surrounding climate change and the potential for a cataclysmic event highlight the importance of community emergency preparedness.

Threats posed:

- Lack of common language and understanding
- Extreme weather conditions, increased energy and water resources, and adverse impact on agriculture
- Lack of cohesive community wide disaster plan

Opportunities created:

- Public policy
- Education and awareness; creation of a community wide disaster plan
- Support the Community Organizations Active in Disasters (COAD)
- Utilization of 211 to support infrastructure

Community Infrastructure

There is a great community need to protect and improve upon community planning and design, transportation (especially outside the metro area), parks and recreation, disabled considerations and access to facilities, and housing as they serve as both social and physical determinants of health.

Threats posed:

- Provincialism
- Unavailable low income housing and high cost of housing relative to income

- Unsafe parks
- Lack of rural public transportation

Opportunities created:

- Regional community planning and collaboration
- Collaboration with city planners and other officials to improve roadway safety, expand parks and recreational venues
- Community gardens, safe parks, and access to food

Affordable Housing

Unease exists regarding the local patterns reinforcing the growing housing stability issues. These issues result from the increasing housing costs, declining incomes, loss of affordable and safe housing options, and decrease in state funding for housing programs.

Threats posed:

- Disparity between housing costs and income earned
- Shortage of housing for those with mental health issues, which increases homelessness and medical needs
- Lack of emergency shelter impacts emergency room services
- Housing application fees
- Low housing vacancy rates pushes up prices and keeps people out of market

Opportunities created:

- Lane County Poverty and Homeless board developing strategic plan for individuals that overlap multiple systems; collaboration to address issues
- Re-entry for ex-offenders
- DHS Child Welfare (CW) Strengthening, Preserving and Reunifying Families (SPRF) Housing for homeless families to maintain children with families
- Beds for homeless; coordinated entry and database
- Behavioral/physical health integration
- Emerald Village; Housing First

Poverty

Economic factors in the areas of education, employment, housing, and access to health care have caused a local increase in poverty and income disparity. Specific regional trends and factors include the decreasing median salary, more people with limited incomes surviving on social security or disability benefits, and a continued lack of economic opportunity in rural areas of the county.

Threats posed:

- Lane County has the third highest poverty rate of the counties in the state, which creates greater demand for health and other social services
- Dependency on system support
- Disparity in the cost of living and wages is especially impactful on the growing elderly and disabled population and young families
- Competition for low income employment with students limits access to labor market
- High cost of child care can lead to placement of children into unhealthy environments

Opportunities created:

- Program for job seekers (Worksource Lane, Prosperity Centers, JOBS Program)
- Employment rate increases

- Lane Workforce Partnership (LWP) convening sector strategy, education, and economic groups
- Established tax aid sites
- Food distribution system
- Access to health care

Rural

Outside of the Eugene-Springfield metro area, much of the region consists of rural populations. Concerns surround the continued lack of local rural economic opportunity, the impacts of climate change, and the challenge to find and identify people left out of coverage and the resources to serve them.

Threats posed:

- Isolation and detachment
- Fewer opportunities for employment, healthcare access, quality early childhood education and childcare, funding, transportation, public safety, drug abuse/addiction treatment, and other services
- Receive the first funding cuts and are slower to recover
- Most new clinics/points of healthcare access continue to be built in the metro areas of Lane County

Opportunities created:

- Lessons learned from CCO work; RAC/CAC of Trillium
- Integration health related supports for stability
- Recruitment and incentives (loan forgiveness)
- Connect patients to existing resources
- Telehealth

Changing Demographics

With the Baby Boomer generation retiring, the population is rapidly aging. The population is also growing and becoming increasingly diverse, with the Latino population growing faster than other ethnic groups. There is also an increase in immigration and migration, as well as an increase in undocumented individuals. This continued population growth has potential to surpass current infrastructure capabilities. In addition, there is concern regarding the changing family structure trend toward smaller households, more single parents, and more families dispersed.

Threats posed:

- Shortage of resources and access to healthcare and public services
- Lack of cultural competency in medical community
- Increase in job competition and housing costs
- High numbers in retirement leading to more government debt, resulting in an increase in taxes
- Increasing gaps in socioeconomic status groups

Opportunities created:

- Changing focus on upstream population (i.e. early education)
- Public health programs to serve diverse range of needs
- Address disparity in workforce and generational workplace transitions
- Technology to provide access and language translation
- Access points to reach different populations
- Improved conditions for deaf, poor vision to blind, and elderly population

Behavioral/Mental Health

There is a growing need for behavioral and mental healthcare, and concerns over the limited access to existing services (especially for rural residents and ethnic minorities) and a lack of support in schools. Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and the county's high substance and alcohol abuse rates are significant issues. Integration of drug and alcohol treatment with mental and physical healthcare and a focus on early intervention are becoming more imperative.

Threats posed:

- Community norms support alcohol industry and marijuana legalization
- Addiction and poor health caused by substance use
- Youth mental health issues untreated; increased youth suicides, self-harm, substance use; risky behaviors; sexual activity
- ACEs; trauma and PTSD; emotional instability
- Decreased need for specialty care
- Provider shortage (especially bilingual and multicultural) and inadequacies

Opportunities created:

- Develop systems to recruit, hire, support, and train diverse providers
- Workforce development in social services
- Integrated care, clinics, and services for adolescents and adults
- Trauma informed care
- Tobacco cessation programs
- Screening, Brief Intervention, Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) in PCP clinics; SUDS treatment; detox; methadone/suboxone and ORT; medications for addiction

Health Behaviors

The upward trend of childhood and adult obesity, increase in electronic cigarette use, health impacts of limited time and money, and lack of individual ownership over health are community concerns. On a statewide level, the passage of Measure 91 legalizing the recreational use of cannabis is a recent event to have a future impact. Encouragingly, the community is embodying an increasingly positive culture of wellness.

Threats posed:

- Burden of health impacts of legalized marijuana
- Loss of momentum for public health efforts with budget changes or lack of community engagement
- Healthy community venues threatened by funding shifts
- Food deserts expand
- Big business resources for advertising and policy influence increase
- New technology that further decreases need for activity

Opportunities created:

- Local and organic food movement; nutrition awareness; outdoor recreation
- Partnerships to create healthy workforces and grow consumer education programs
- School-based programs to improve health behavior choices and provide physical education in schools; expand summer activity opportunities for children
- Use of advertising to more effectively promote healthy choices
- Advocate for policies to limit tobacco and cannabis smoke exposure
- Expand data systems and leverage technology

Communicable Disease

The increase in unimmunized children and certain STDs in the region is of high concern. In addition, the recent University of Oregon meningitis outbreak and other emerging infectious diseases that have the potential to overwhelm current systems are issues to the health system.

Threats posed:

- Increased death, disease, and other long-term health impacts from largely preventable illnesses
- Disease burden and outbreak response costs to health delivery system, social services, public health, and other institutions; diversion of strategic bandwidth
- Lost workforce productivity

Opportunities created:

- Underscore community interconnectedness
- Create new partnerships to strengthen community response
- Increase public awareness about the importance of public health, prevention strategies, and early detection