



TETON COUNTY

COMMUNITY HEALTH
NEEDS ASSESSMENT-
IMPROVEMENT PLAN

2020



Public Health
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Teton County



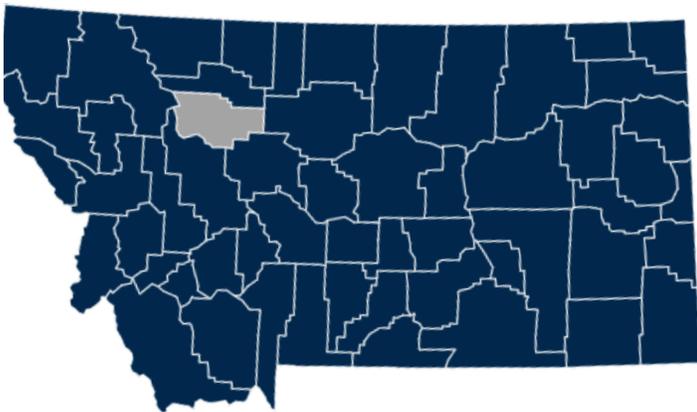
TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
VISION & VALUES	4
GOALS & OBJECTIVES	4
COLLABORATIONS & PARTNERSHIPS	5
METHODOLOGY	6
SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH	8
KEY INFORMANT SURVEY	9
FOCUS GROUPS FINDINGS	19
DEMOGRAPHICS	21
HOUSING AND DISABILITY STATUS	22
EMPLOYMENT	23
SUBSTANCE USE	24
MENTAL HEALTH AND TRAUMA	25
CHRONIC DISEASE	26
COMMUNICABLE DISEASE	30
MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH	31
INJURY	32
ACCESS TO CARE	33
OVERALL HEALTH STATUS	36
SUMMARY OF HEALTH ISSUES	37
CHIP INTRODUCTION & METHODOLOGY SUMMARY	38
STAKEHOLDERS & COMMUNITY RESOURCES	39
PRIORITIES, OBJECTIVES, & MEASURABLE	40
HEALTH OUTCOMES	40
ACTIVITIES & PERFORMANCE METRICS	43
ALIGNMENT WITH STATE & NATIONAL PRIORITIES	55
POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS	57
NEXT STEPS	58
REFERENCES	59

INTRODUCTION

Teton County's 2020 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) produces an overview of the current health status in Teton County, and community-based objectives and approaches for improving health and quality of life in our county. This report presents a broad examination of the many facets that relate to the health and well-being of the community and is a product of collaboration between Teton County Health Department (TCHD), Benefis Teton Medical Center (BTMC), and Teton County Community Alliance for Resiliency and Educational Support (Teton County C.A.R.E.S.).

This CHNA arranges information from a variety of direct sources including an online survey of local key informants, and community member focus groups in addition to secondary local, regional, state, and national data. Numerous community leaders, agency and organization partners, and community members have greatly contributed to this assessment and subsequent planning during 2019 and 2020.



Background

Teton County is a rural county in north central Montana, about 120 miles south of the Canadian border and 53 miles northwest of Great Falls. It is located along the Rocky Mountain Front, a widely known scenic area that encompasses both mountain and prairie landscapes, where vast agricultural prairie lands abruptly intersect the rugged country of the northern Rockies. Known for agriculture and recreational opportunities, this 2,293 square mile expanse includes distinct natural resources, including Lewis and Clark National Forest and other public lands, the local Sawtooth mountain range, the Teton River, several large irrigation and recreational reservoirs, and Freezeout Lake Wildlife Management area. Six communities are located in Teton County: Choteau (the county seat), Fairfield, Power, Dutton, Bynum, and Pendroy. Three elected county commissioners govern county programs and services. Each commissioner serves a 6-year term.

Teton County is considered a frontier county and also a medically underserved county by federal standards. With a 2018 total population of 6,080 residents and 2.7 people per square mile per the 2010 United States census, and a median age of almost 8 years greater than the US median, Teton County faces a number of unique challenges when it comes to the well-being of its residents.

VISION & VALUES

The Stakeholders Advisory Group from 2017 developed the following **vision** of health:

Our vision for Teton County is a clean, safe, and economically stable community that honors its local resources, culture, and natural environment. Opportunity, infrastructure, and people model healthy lifestyles. It is a place where all people are equally supported in their pursuit of happiness, health, and spirituality.

The Stakeholders Advisory Group from 2017 outlined **values** that all stakeholders working to improve health in Teton County should strive for:

Equality	Spirituality
Acceptance	Accessibility
Evidence-based	Sustainability
Generosity and kindness	Honesty and transparency
Openness	Honoring local culture and environment
Teamwork and shared vision	

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

A community health assessment can meet the goals of many organizations throughout Teton County. This Community Health Needs Assessment will meet the IRS requirements under the 2010 Affordable Care Act for non-profit hospitals, health system entities, and Critical Access Hospitals like Benefis Teton Medical Center; it can be used to achieve Public Health Accreditation for the Teton County Health Department; and it may be used for other entities required to conduct health assessments as federally funded health centers, such as Community Health Centers and Federally Qualified Health Centers. This Teton County CHNA is presented to provide an in-depth overview of the current health standing of Teton County for local health providers, government officials, key stakeholders, and the general public. This will in turn lead to organized objectives and strategies to improve local health services under the Community Health Improvement Planning (CHIP) in the future.

Goals of Health Needs Assessment

- Profiles the health status of Teton County.
- Establishes notable trends, indicators, or events that influence health status and quality of life.
- Provides a deeper understanding of the current issues important to community residents.
- Engages community partners within the county including those facing significant barriers to better health in the process of identification, data collection, interpretation of data, and dissemination of results.
- Meets IRS requirements of hospital and public health accreditation standards.

COLLABORATIONS & PARTNERSHIPS

Teton County has a strong history of promoting collaborative approaches to community projects. Teton County's CHNA process engaged a diverse array of community leaders and other agency and organizational partners, community coalitions, and advisory groups with a strong focus on engaging community members facing significant barriers to better health.

Sponsorship of and much of the guidance for this assessment was provided by Teton County Health Department and Benefis Teton Medical Center. In 2020 the Teton County Health Department (TCHD) applied for and received funding from the Montana Public Health Systems Improvement Office (PHSIO) of the Montana Department of Health and Human Services to develop a comprehensive health assessment of Teton County. These funds were made available by the Montana Healthcare Foundation.

Sponsors



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Teton County Health Department is a county department that provides health, wellness, and prevention services across Teton County. Programs include public health emergency preparedness, communicable disease surveillance and response, tobacco use prevention, Women, Infants, and Children Nutritional Supplement Program (WIC), cancer screening services, diabetes prevention, immunizations, and chronic disease self-management classes. The Teton County Health Department is governed by the Teton County Board of Health and Board of Commissioners.



Benefis Teton Medical Center is a 25-bed Critical Access Hospital located in Choteau. Services include a 24-7 emergency room, physical therapy, occupational therapy, lab, x-ray and CT, inpatient beds, long term care, and an outpatient clinic. Monthly special services include mammography, DEXA scan, general cardiology, women's health, pediatrics, podiatry and foot care. BTMC is a department of Benefis Health System, a large non-profit hospital system headquartered in Great Falls. The local hospital is overseen by president/CEO Louie King. The BTMC Board of Directors governs BTMC, and is composed of six at-large community members and two hospital administrators.



Teton County Community Alliance for Resiliency and Educational Support (Teton County C.A.R.E.S.) was created to confront Teton County's behavioral health challenges through comprehensive and evidence-based strategies that focus on resilience, education, prevention, access to treatment and reducing drug, alcohol and mental health related consequences, through community partnership and cultural change. This group was formed to address the concerns of the 2017 Teton County CHNA, and in 2019 merged with the Teton County Local Mental Health Advisory Council (LAC).

METHODOLOGY

Focus Groups

During the winter and spring of 2020, Teton County Health Department conducted a series of seven focus group discussions in four county communities. Each meeting targeted unique county population groups, including: high school students, people with chronic health conditions, a behavioral health cohort, members of a Hutterite Colony, low income families, a community sewing circle, and senior citizens. Forty-five community members participated in discussion groups ranging in size from four to fourteen. Each group was asked the same 8 questions, and data was compiled from their discussions and answers.

Secondary Data Sources

For the purposes of this CHNA, Teton County primarily relied on data sources compiled by the State of Montana, as well as the federal government. The Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) provided valuable information in their Community Health Assessment data by County and Region 2 (North Central Montana counties combined).

Regional data or state data was used when county-specific data was not available. Other data sources included American Community Survey (ACS), Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Youth Risk Behavior Surveys (YRBS), Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS), County Health Rankings, Johns Hopkins University, Montana Hospital Discharge Data System, Montana Communicable Disease Epidemiology Section, Montana WIC Program, and Montana Office of Vital Statistics. A full list of citations is available at the conclusion of this document.

Key Informant Survey

The key informant survey used in this 2020 CHNA was adapted from a version used in the 2017 CHNA, developed originally by Katie Loveland, in consultation with TCHD, BTMC, and LAC. In 2020, the information was disseminated and analyzed by independent contractor Yarrow. It was designed based on other model community health surveys, identified health indicators, and the specific issues relevant to the Teton County area. In November 2020, 266 “key informants,” members of the county with knowledge of and broad connection to community groups and special populations, were identified and sent electronic surveys. The electronic survey consisted of 22 questions. Represented in the contact list were health providers, educators, nonprofit leaders, retail business owners, public agency leaders, local government, senior services administrators, faith leaders, and community volunteers. Of the 266 surveys distributed, 14 surveys were sent back uncompleted due to email error, five individuals declined to answer, and 79 (40%) surveys were completed and returned.

Community Participants and Respondents

The following community partners and stakeholders provided valuable input towards understanding the health status of Teton County by filling out the Key Informant Survey for the 2020 CHNA:

Benefis Teton Medical Center	Montana State University Extension
Choteau Chamber of Commerce	Miller Hutterite Colony
Choteau Lions Club	New Life Community Church
Choteau Public School	Old Trail Museum
Choteau United Methodist Church	Power Senior Center
Choteau Soroptimists	St. Joseph Catholic Church
City of Choteau	Teton County Conservation District
Choteau Area Port Authority	Teton County Emergency Medical Services
Dutton/Brady Public School District	Teton County Food Pantry
Fairfield Chamber of Commerce	Teton County Planning Department
Fairfield Fire	Teton County Board of Health
Fairfield Public Schools	Teton County Health Department
Family Connections	Teton Pass Ski Area
Front Range Assisted Living	Trinity Lutheran Church
Head Start Early Childhood Centers	U.S. Forest Service

Limitations

While the CHNA identifies many critical issues pertaining to the community's health, it is not inclusive of all health-related issues in Teton County. As a result, it should not be considered a formal study or research document investigating the causes of each issue raised or providing a detailed analysis of the data.

Both primary and secondary data should be interpreted with caution and with an awareness that the low population of our county can easily skew indicators. In many cases, data is not available at the county level due to our very small population size. For this reason, regional data will be used throughout this assessment when local-level data are not available. In addition, more in-depth analysis may not be possible in many cases due to a lack of data stratification by more specific categories. It is important to note that available national and regional data may not reflect our local reality.

It should also be noted that comparing data across data sources should be done with caution as they may not be directly comparable. In some instances, comparison across data sources was done to provide insight into differences in health indicators between Teton County, Montana, and the US. Where possible, the same data sources were used to make comparisons. Specifically, the County Health Rankings indicate that caution should be used when comparing 2019 and 2020 data to previous years, as collection methods may have changed. These instances are denoted in data tables.

While much local data is readily available from state and national sources, it is additionally beneficial to develop consistent, local data collection that can more accurately represent the community, be managed and controlled by the community, and made easily accessible to drive health improvement projects.

SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

Social determinants of health are conditions in the environments in which people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks. Conditions (e.g., social, economic, and physical) in these various environments and settings (e.g., school, church, workplace, and neighborhood) have been referred to as “place.” In addition to the more material attributes of “place,” the patterns of social engagement and sense of security and well-being are also affected by where people live. Resources that enhance quality of life can have a significant influence on population health outcomes. Examples of these resources include safe and affordable housing, access to education, public safety, availability of healthy foods, local emergency/health services, and environments free of life-threatening toxins.

Understanding the relationship between how population groups experience “place” and the impact of “place” on health is fundamental to the social determinants of health—including both social and physical determinants.

In Teton County, the results from the Community Health Needs Assessment consistently show people who live at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level are more likely to experience poor health, less likely to have health insurance, and less likely to access medical and dental care. Many populations in Teton County display numerous factors that lead to subsequent disparities in health determinants:

- 24% of adults in Teton County have less than a high school education.
- 20% of children under 18 years old live below the federal poverty line.
- 10% of all individuals in Teton County are uninsured.

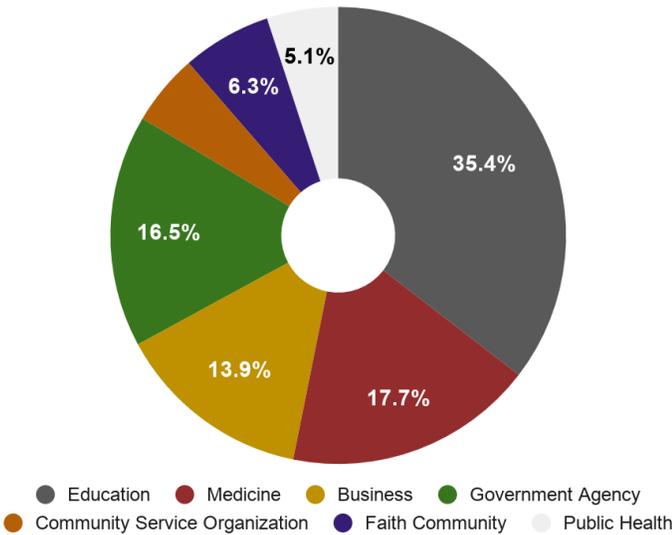
These are just a few examples of important social determinants of health that currently affect the health status of Teton County residents (ACS 2018 5YR Sub Estm, ACS 2018 5YR Estm Det).

KEY INFORMANT SURVEY

In November, 2020 an electronic survey was sent to more than 266 stakeholders in Teton County. In all, 79 responses were received. The following pages detail the results of the survey.

Respondent Demographics

Field of Respondents to Teton County Stakeholder Survey, 2020

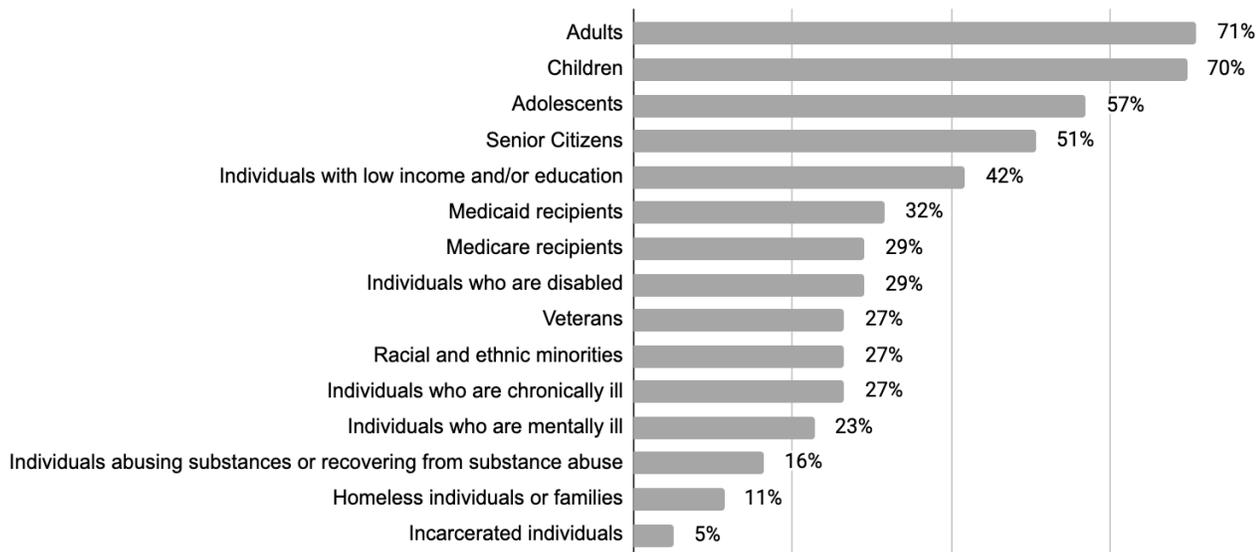


Respondents to the stakeholder survey were primarily from the fields of education, medicine, government and business, though a wide range of perspectives were captured, including faith communities. Responding key informants reported offices located in the following communities:

- 73% - Choteau Area
- 19% - Fairfield Area
- 8% - Other places in the county including Augusta, Dutton/Brady, Bynum areas

Community Groups Served by Respondents

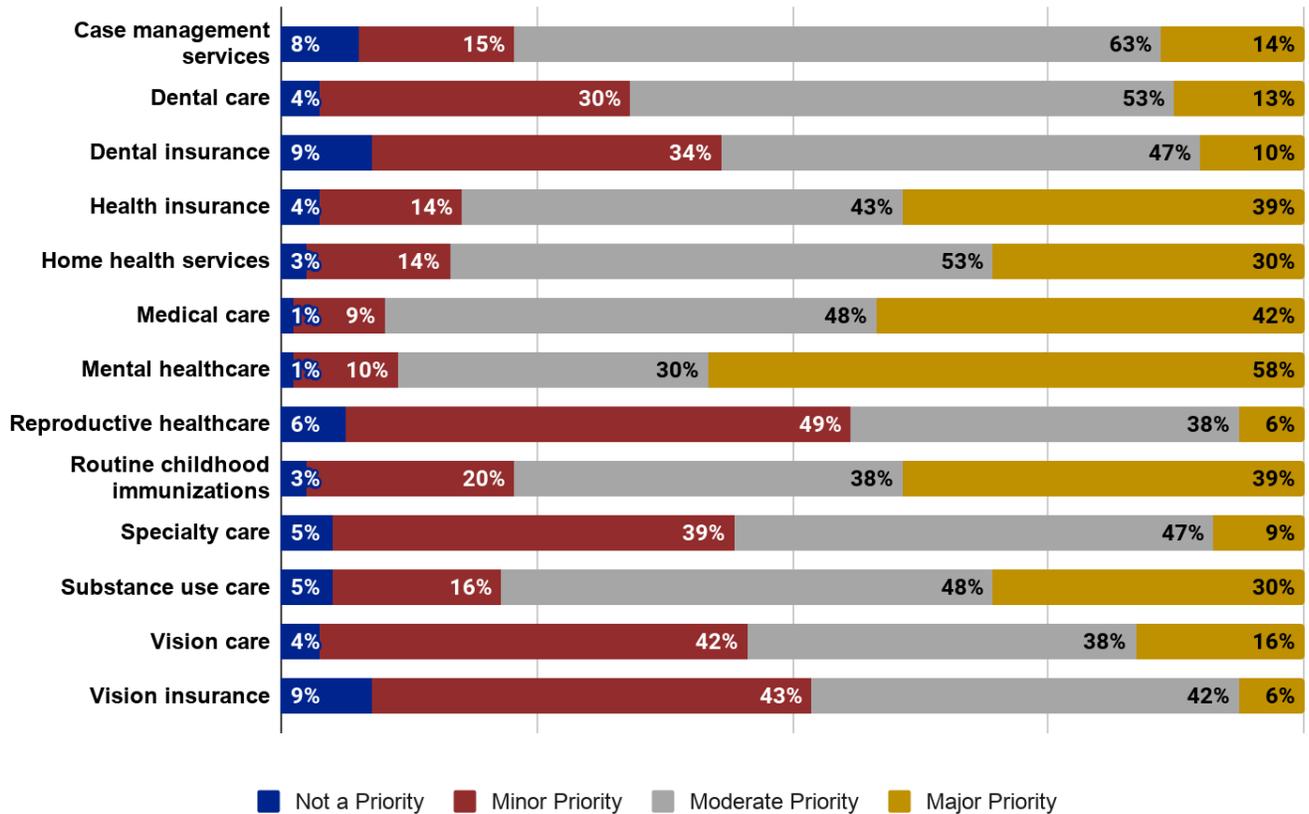
Teton County community groups served by survey respondents as a percentage



Respondents to the stakeholder survey were from groups that served mainly adults (71%), children (70%), adolescents (57%), and senior citizens (51%). The groups that were the least served by survey respondents included specific populations such as incarcerated individuals, homeless individuals, or individuals with substance abuse issues.

Access to Care

Access to care priorities in Teton County, ranked

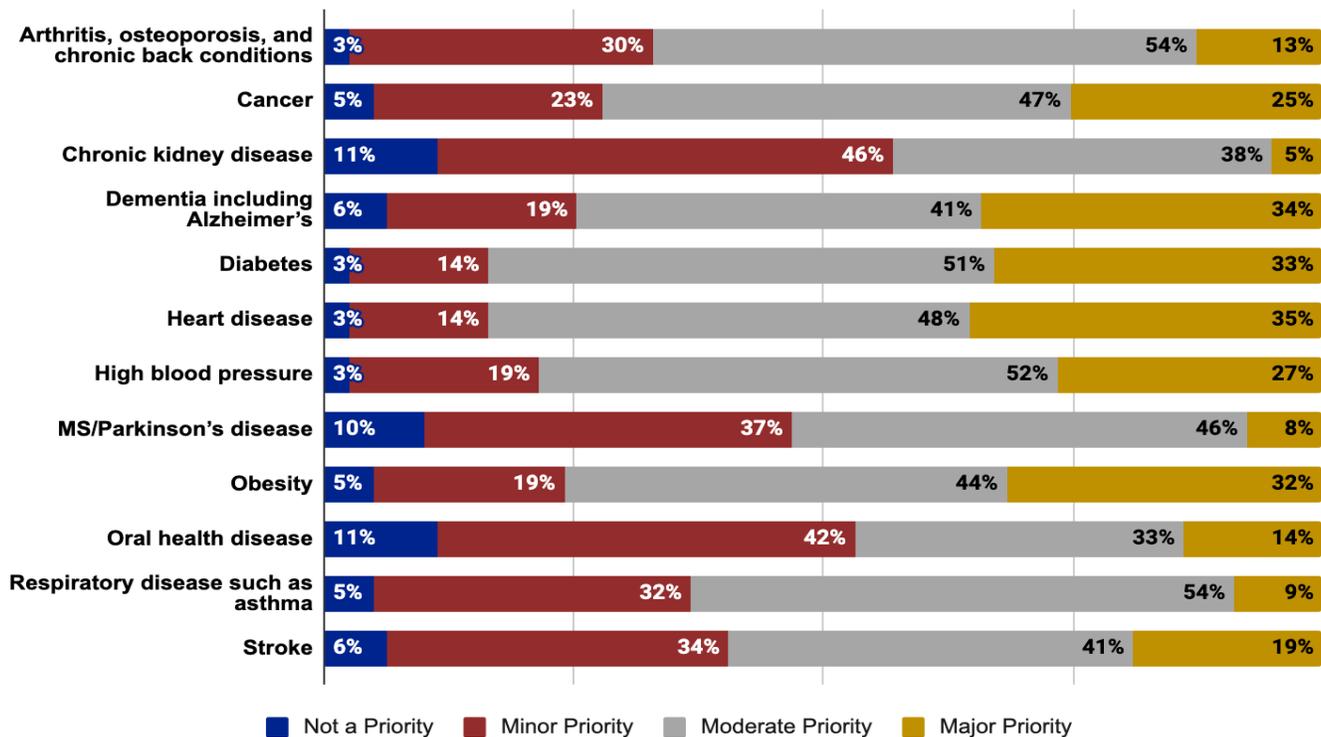


90% of these key informants deemed “medical care access” to be a major or moderate priority for Teton County. 88% of survey respondents believed that access to “mental healthcare” was a major or moderate priority issue.

The prioritization of care for “vision”, “dental”, and “home health services” over “reproductive healthcare” could be an indication of an aging population and the unique needs of that population. Access to mental healthcare, insurance, and the development of a more robust home health program were all identified in the 2017 Community Health Improvement Plan as areas for improvement.

Chronic Disease

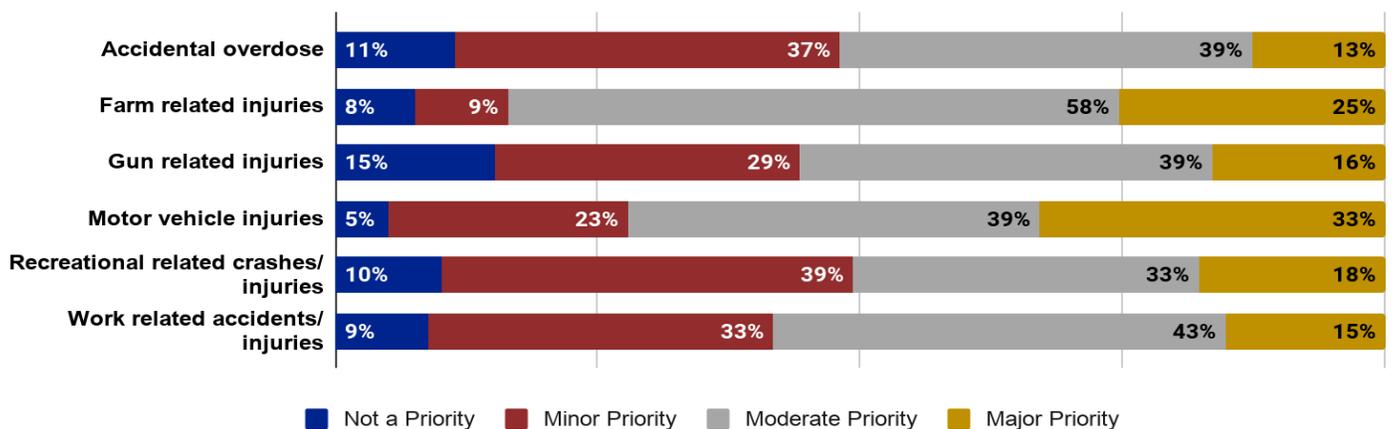
Chronic disease priorities in Teton County, ranked



“Heart disease”, “dementia (including Alzheimer’s)”, “diabetes”, and “obesity” were the top four chronic disease priorities identified by key informants for Teton County. These selections point to some of the preventable conditions affecting an aging population. “Chronic kidney disease”, “oral health disease”, and “MS/Parkinson’s” were deemed the lowest priority, which could be due to the low prevalence of these conditions.

Unintentional Injury

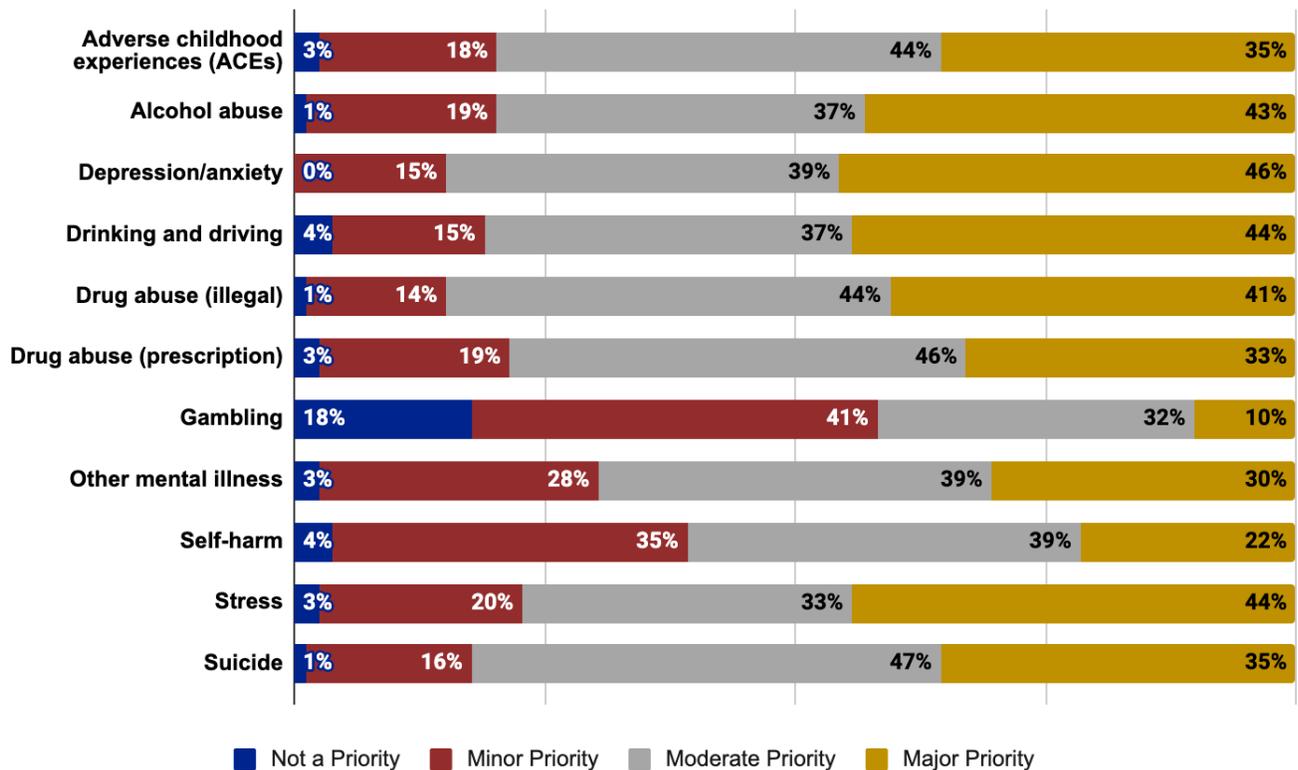
Unintentional injury priorities in Teton County, ranked



“Motor vehicle injuries” ranked highest as a major priority among respondents, followed by “farm related injuries”. Nearly 50% felt that “recreational related crashes/injuries”, “accidental overdose”, and “gun related injuries” were either not a priority or a minor priority.

Mental Health

Mental health priorities in Teton County, ranked



“Depression/anxiety”, “stress,” “drinking and driving,” and “alcohol abuse” were the top rated mental health priorities selected by Teton County CHNA survey respondents. These areas are also highlighted as important through focus group discussions and secondary data, as can be seen later in this report. “Gambling” was the issue considered least important to address.

COVID-19

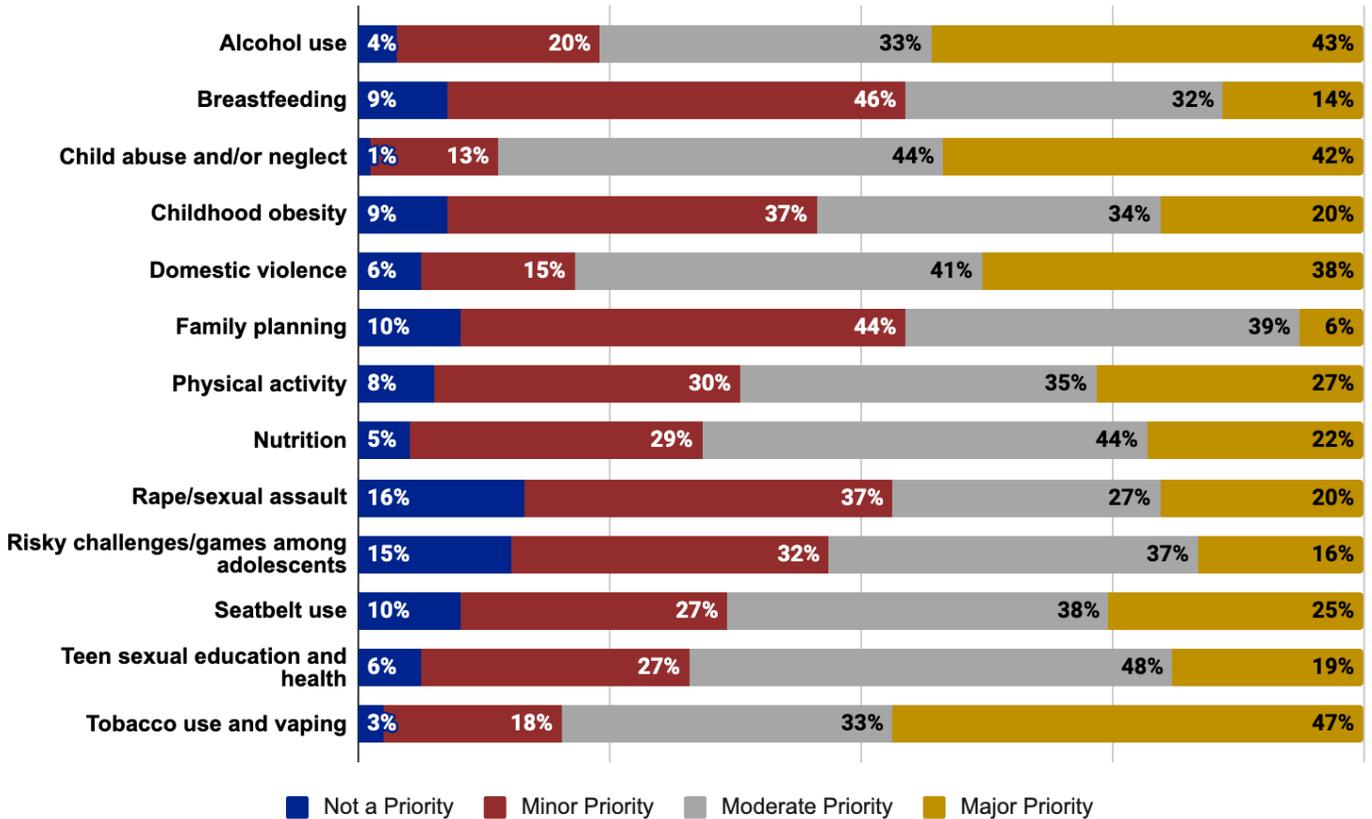
How much has COVID-19 affected the community’s mental and behavioral health?



The vast majority of respondents felt COVID-19 has affected the community’s mental and behavioral health. No respondent felt that COVID-19 had “Not at all” affected the community’s mental and behavioral health.

Health Behaviors

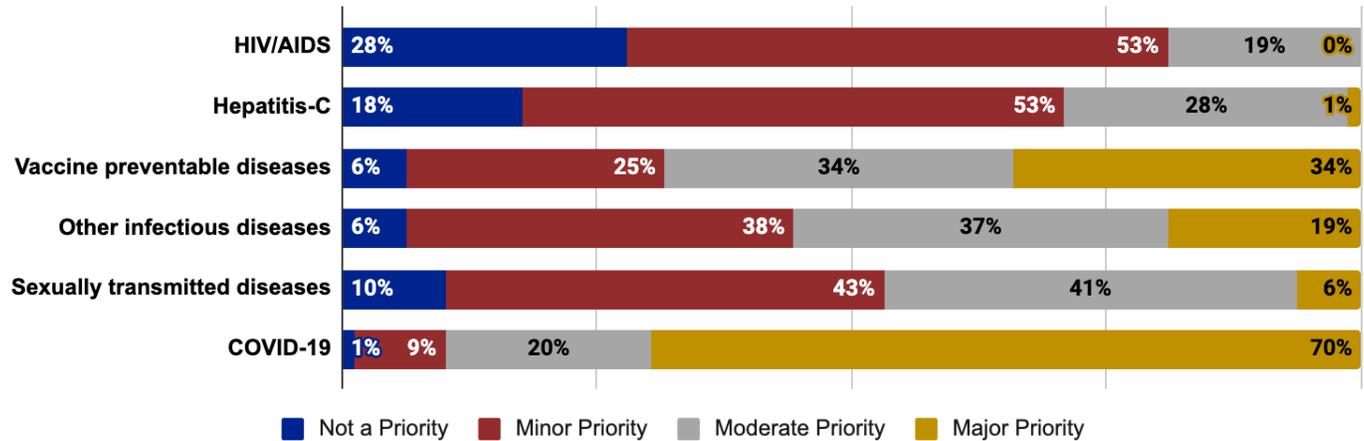
Health behavior priorities in Teton County, ranked



“Tobacco use and vaping” was the biggest priority for health behaviors. Respondents highlighted “child abuse and/or neglect”, with 86% reporting it as a moderate or major priority. Over half of respondents did not think “breastfeeding”, “family planning”, or “rape/sexual assault” were health behavior priorities. This could once again point to how priorities may change throughout the lifespan, with reproduction-related concerns decreasing in importance for an elderly population. This is similarly reflected in the results on access to care.

Communicable Disease

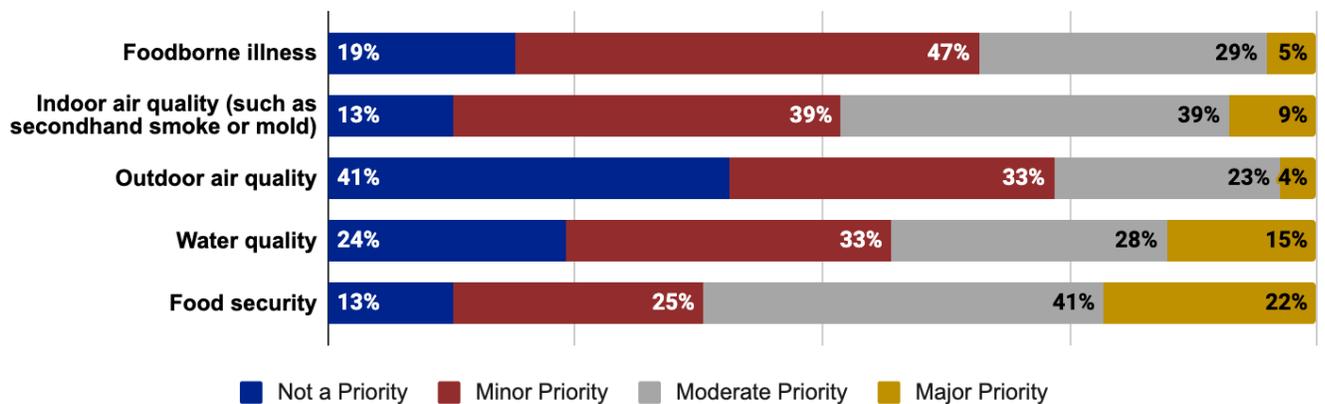
Communicable disease priorities in Teton County, ranked



The largest priority related to communicable diseases amongst respondents was “COVID-19”, with 90% saying it was a moderate or major priority. Many respondents also felt “vaccine preventable diseases” were a priority. Of lowest major or moderate concern amongst respondents was “HIV/AIDS”.

Environmental Health

Environmental health priorities in Teton County, ranked



The majority of environmental health issues were categorized as minor or moderate priority. However, this trend was flipped with regard to “food security”, with the majority of respondents marking it as a moderate or major priority.

Most Pressing Concerns

Top health concerns in Teton County

(percent of stakeholders that selected each category as a Top 3 concern), 2020

Rank	Health Indicator	Percent of Voters
1	COVID-19	49%
2	Alcohol abuse	23%
2	Child abuse and/or neglect	23%
2	Mental health care	23%
3	Depression/anxiety	19%
4	Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs)	16%
4	Drug abuse (illegal)	16%
5	Drinking and driving	14%
6	Health insurance	9%
7	Case management services	8%
7	Domestic violence	8%
7	Drug abuse (prescription)	8%
7	Suicide	8%
8	Cancer	6%
8	Heart disease	6%
8	Medical care	6%
8	Overweight and obesity	6%

Survey respondents were asked to identify the three most pressing health concerns facing Teton County. Overwhelmingly, “COVID-19” was selected as the top health concern in the community. The next top health priorities selected included “Alcohol abuse”, “Child abuse and/or neglect”, and “Mental health care”. These concerns are also reflected throughout the survey, focus group discussions, and secondary data.

Furthermore, there were 49 additional health indicators that scored 5% or less of the votes, including 30 indicators that scored 0 votes.

Barriers to Care

**Most significant barriers to accessing adequate healthcare in Teton County
(percent of stakeholders that selected each category as a Top 3 concern)**

Rank	Health Indicator	Percent of Voters
1	It costs too much	46%
2	Stigma around getting treatment	38%
3	No health insurance	35%
4	COVID-19	32%
5	Unsure if services are available	27%
6	Too nervous or afraid	23%
7	Have no one to care for their children	14%
8	Too long of a wait for an appointment	8%
9	Difficulty getting an appointment	5%
9	Transportation problems	5%
10	It is too far to go	3%
11	Not treated with respect	1%

Survey respondents were asked to identify the three most significant barriers to healthcare in Teton County. Nearly half selected cost as the main barrier to care in the community. The next top barriers included “stigma around getting treatment”, “no health insurance”, and “COVID-19”.

There were 6 additional barriers that scored 0%, including “insurance that doesn't cover services”, “don't like doctors/providers”, “can't get off work”, “don't know where to go”, “language”, and “provider hours don't work with [their] schedule”. This points to the accessibility and appropriateness of healthcare services provided in Teton County.

Improving Overall Health

Characteristics of a healthy community that Teton County should focus on to improve overall health (percent of stakeholders that selected each category as a Top 3 concern), 2020

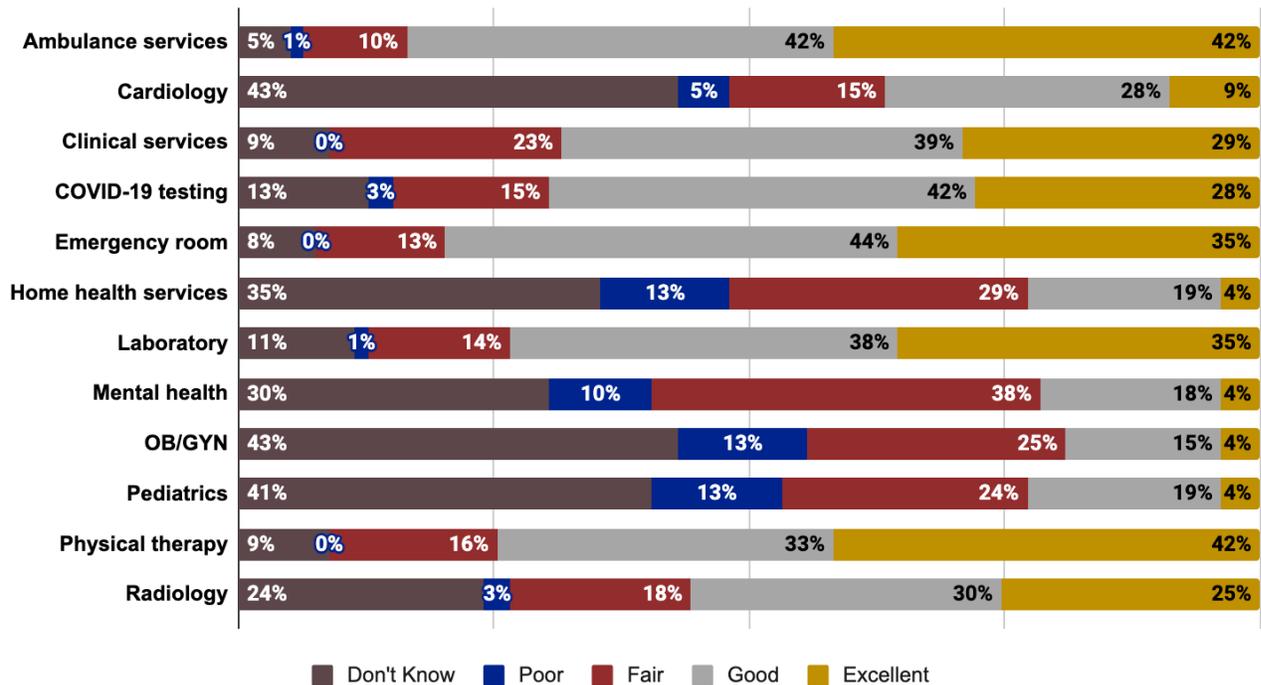
Rank	Health Indicator	Percent of Voters
1	Good paying job opportunities	41%
2	Access to healthcare and other services	38%
3	Good schools	33%
3	Good childcare	33%
4	Healthy lifestyle choices	30%
5	Support for good parenting	23%
6	Support for healthy families	18%
6	Affordable housing	18%
7	Community safety	15%
8	Strong family life	13%
9	Parks and recreational opportunities	10%
10	Opportunities for community involvement	8%
11	Lifelong educational opportunities	6%
12	Religious and spiritual values	5%

Survey respondents were asked to identify the three characteristics of a healthy community that Teton County should focus on to improve overall health. Nearly half identified “good paying jobs” as a key aspect to improving health in the community. “Access to healthcare and other services”, “good schools”, and “good childcare” were the next top selections. These results reflect observations from focus groups that highlighted concerns around the decreasing population and the need to retain residents in the area, especially younger ones.

There were 6 potential focus areas that scored lower than 5%. These included “tolerance for diversity”, “crime”, “arts and culture”, “clean environment”, “transportation”, and “low death and disease rates”.

Benefis Teton Medical Center and County EMS Services

Quality ratings of selected services provided by Benefis Teton Medical Center and Teton County EMS, 2020



“Ambulance” and “physical therapy” services ranked the highest for quality among selected services provided in Teton County. “Emergency room”, “laboratory”, “clinical services”, and “COVID-19 testing” all also ranked as high-quality services. As all of these services are involved in the COVID-19 response, this could point to county residents’ satisfaction with current healthcare services as they relate to the pandemic.

FOCUS GROUPS FINDINGS

From February through March 2020, the Teton County Health Department conducted 7 focus groups with targeted populations. A total of 45 community members participated in groups ranging in sizes from 4 to 14 participants. The populations targeted were high school students, individuals with chronic health conditions, behavioral health, low-income families, Hutterites, and senior citizens. Focus groups were conducted in the communities of Choteau, Fairfield, and Power.

What do you like most about living in Teton County?

Participants indicated that above all, they liked the “community feel” in Teton County – communities are small, safe, friendly, quiet, and family-oriented. Many participants also cited access to many good services and activities that are available, such as the hospital, great schools, and outdoor recreation.

“I have lived here my whole life, I feel supported, great families and great schools”

“There is everything that is needed already available like healthy food, healthcare, outside services”

What concerns you most about living here?

“There is a lack of childcare and mental health services, less so than in the past”

- Lack of childcare
- Frequent turnover of healthcare providers
- Lack of mental health services and support
- Lack of job opportunities and people needing to leave to find adequate pay
- Need for community/social events for teens as well as families

What health-related changes or trends have you noticed in Teton County in the last 5 years?

- Dental coverage
- Mental health issues in younger population
- More drug and alcohol addiction issues with no access to addiction counselors
- Closure of nursing home

“There is less rooms/beds for older people after the closing of the Teton County Nursing Home”

“There is a significant increase in depression and suicide in the younger people, especially in the freshman classes”

Major Barriers to Care

- Transportation
- Childcare
- Lack of knowledge regarding available resources
- Stigma of seeking mental health help in a small town
- Lack of resources for addiction help

What are some of the health services that people living here need and are not currently being offered?

- Mental health outreach and resource awareness education
- Childcare
- Child protective services
- Preventative education for nutrition and healthy habits
- Community exercise programs
- Sober family events
- MRI/Ultrasound
- Pediatric dentist
- Dermatologist
- Transportation
- Recycling

What have your experiences with the health system in Teton County been like?

“I have mental health needs and I have to travel to Great Falls for those needs. The current transportation available is only two times a month”

“I had to take my husband to the Emergency Room here and they were very empathetic. They were patient and not crabby. The doctor even took the time to reminisce with him”

“I don’t think we utilize our medical resources enough. Advertising is only virtual and not available for people who don’t use internet”

Major Health-Related Issues in Teton County

Youth

1. Technology/social media addiction
2. Mental health
3. Smoking/Vaping
4. No child protective services

Adults

1. Lack of exercise options/programs
2. Drug and alcohol abuse
3. Lack of opportunities for social interaction (isolation)
4. Need for financial stability (good paying jobs)

Seniors

1. No “in-home” help options
2. Lack of assisted living facility space
3. Lack of specialty care close by

The focus group participants spoke of Teton County with affection and pride. The participants expressed concern for retaining and attracting young families with adequate access to childcare and the presence of good paying jobs. They simultaneously expressed the need to support an aging population and ensure there is adequate access to their required healthcare. Throughout, there was concern of increased substance use and the need for high quality mental health care.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Table 1. Demographics				
	Teton County 2017	Teton County 2020	Montana	US
Population	6,064	6,080	1,041,732	322,903,030
Median age	45.80	44.6	39.8	37.90
<5	6%	7%	6%	6%
<18	23%	24%	22%	23%
≥65	22%	23%	18%	15%
Male	49%	49%	50%	49%
Female	51%	51%	50%	51%
White	96%	95%	89%	73%
American Indian	2%	0.9%	7%	1%

Source: ACS 2018 5YR Estm Det

Most demographics in Teton County stayed relatively the same between 2017 and 2020. Of note, the “median age”, “65 and older”, and “white” populations are all higher than Montana overall, making Teton County a generally older and less diverse population than can be found elsewhere in the state.

Table 2. Education, income, and employment				
Education, income, and employment	Teton County 2017	Teton County 2020	Montana	US
Less than high school education	25%	24%	13%	12%
Bachelor's degree or higher	25%	24%	31%	32%
3 and 4 year olds enrolled in preschool	37%	44%	43%	49%
15 to 17 year olds enrolled in schools	90%	100%	95%	97%
Median household income	\$ 43,327	\$ 51,862	\$ 52,559	\$60,293
Percent in poverty (all)	12%	13%	14%	14%
Poverty (under 18)	16%	20%	16%	20%
Poverty (65 and up)	7%	6%	8%	9%
Households receiving SNAP	8%	7%	10%	12%
Households receiving SNAP with children <18	46%	48%	48%	51%

Source: ACS 2018 5YR Estm Det

Nearly a quarter of Teton County residents have “less than a high school education”, nearly double what is seen in Montana and the US as a whole. However, the percent of “3 and 4 year olds enrolled in preschool” increased by 7% from 2017. The number of “households receiving SNAP benefits” in Teton County is lower than both the state and national levels. In early 2018, Teton County lost its local Office of Public Assistance facility, exacerbating the ability of residents to access SNAP, Medicaid, and other services.

HOUSING AND DISABILITY STATUS

Table 3. Housing				
	Teton County 2017	Teton County 2020	Montana	US
Owner occupied housing	74%	70%	68%	64%
Renter occupied housing	26%	30%	32%	36%
Vacant housing	20%	16%	16%	12%
Housing built in year 2000 or later	7%	9%	20%	19%
No vehicle available	4%	5%	5%	9%
Housing lacks complete plumbing facilities	2%	1%	1%	0.4%
No telephone service	1%	1%	3%	2%

Source: ACS 2018 5YR Estm Det

“Owner occupied housing” and “vacant housing” decreased from 2017 to 2020, while “renter occupied housing” increased, showing a shift in the housing market. Only 9% of homes in Teton County were built after the year 2000, compared to 20% for the rest of Montana.

Table 4: Disability				
	Teton County 2017	Teton County 2020	Montana	US
Disability status	16%	16%	14%	13%
Disability 5-17 years	4%	9%	4.1%	4%
Disability ≥65 years	15%	36%	34%	35%
Adults having cognitive difficulty, age-adjusted (North Central)	--	13%	10%	11%

Source: ACS 2018 5YR Estm Det, CDC BRFSS Prev Report 2018, MT BRFSS Report 2015-2018

Teton County and the North Central Region of Montana reports having higher percentages of residents with “disability statuses” across all groups when compared to the rest of the state. The proportion of the population with disability ages 5-17 and 65 and over saw high increases from 2017.

EMPLOYMENT

Table 5. Employment by industry				
	Teton County 2017	Teton County 2020	Montana	US
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	--	98%	96%	94%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	24%	23%	23%	23%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	18%	19%	7%	2%
Retail trade	13%	11%	12%	11%
Construction	6%	9%	8%	7%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	6%	7%	11%	10%
Public administration	6%	6%	6%	5%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	5%	5%	6%	7%
Other services, except public administration	4%	3%	5%	5%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	4%	5%	8%	11%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	4%	5%	5%	5%
Information	4%	4%	2%	2%
Manufacturing	3%	2%	5%	10%
Wholesale trade	2%	2%	2%	3%

Source: ACS 2018 5YR Estm Det

Teton County has a much higher percentage of residents working in “agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining” compared to the rest of the state and nation. There are fewer Teton County residents employed in “arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services” than there are in Montana and the US as a whole. This is reflected in the survey, where few residents selected arts and culture as a characteristic the community should focus on. This is also true for “professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services” and “manufacturing”.

SUBSTANCE USE

Youth

Table 6. Illicit drug use among youth				
	Teton County 2017	Teton County 2020	Montana	US
Lifetime marijuana use	27%	24%	40%	36%
Lifetime cocaine use	4%	2%	4%	5%
Lifetime inhalant use	9%	9%	8%	6%
Lifetime heroin use	2%	1%	2%	2%
Lifetime methamphetamine use	3%	0.4%	2%	2%
Lifetime ecstasy use	5%	2%	4%	4%
Lifetime misuse of prescription drugs	19%	10%	13%	14%

Source: YRBSS TC & MT & US 2019

“Lifetime marijuana use” among youth in Teton County decreased 3% since 2017 and is much lower than the average for the state of Montana and the US. Drug use as a whole is lower among youth in Teton County than the state and nation, excepting “lifetime inhalant use”. Lifetime methamphetamine, ecstasy, and prescription drug use all decreased between 2017 and 2020 in Teton County.

Adults

Table 7. Alcohol use among youth				
	Teton County 2017	Teton County 2020	Montana	US
Lifetime alcohol use	78%	57%	61%	60%
Current alcohol use	28%	24%	33%	30%
Binge drinking in the last month	14%	16%	18%	14%

Source: YRBSS TC & MT & US 2019

“Lifetime alcohol use” was reported as 21% lower amongst youth compared to 2017 and is lower in Teton County than both Montana and the US.

Table 8. Alcohol use among adults				
	Teton County 2017	Teton County 2020	Montana	US**
Excessive drinking	18%	21%	13%	13%
Alcohol impaired driving deaths	50%	40%	45%	11%

Source: County Health Rankings 2020

**Top US Performers: Counties setting a benchmark 10th/9th percentile

“Excessive drinking” is 8% higher than the rest of the state and the US. “Alcohol impaired driving deaths” are lower in Teton County compared to Montana, where both are much higher than the US.

MENTAL HEALTH AND TRAUMA

Youth

Table 9. Mental health and trauma among youth				
	Teton County 2017	Teton County 2020	Montana	US
Symptoms of depression in the last year	19%	26%	37%	32%
Suicide attempts in the last year	8%	12%	10%	7%
Carried a weapon in the last 30 days	30%	27%	23%	16%
In a physical fight in the past year	21%	22%	24%	24%
Physically forced to have sexual intercourse	5%	7%	10%	7%
Experienced dating violence	4%	3%	5%	8%
Experienced sexual violence	4%	3%	4%	7%
Bullied on school property in the last year	18%	16%	22%	19%
Electronically bullied in the last year	12%	12%	18%	15%

Source: YRBSS TC & MT & US 2019

Of Teton County youths, there was an increase in reporting “symptoms of depression in the last year” and “suicide attempts in the last year” as compared to 2017. While “symptoms of depression in the last year” are lower in the county than the state and nation, “suicide attempts in the last year” are higher. Carrying a weapon remains higher than the state and national averages. However, dating and sexual violence is lower in Teton County than elsewhere. In addition, fewer Teton County youth report being bullied, whether at school or electronically, than the state and US.

Adults

Table 10. Mental health among adults				
	Teton County 2017	Teton County 2020	Montana	US
Poor mental health days in the last month	3	3.5	3.7	3.4**
Felt depressed all or most of last 30 days, Age-adjusted (North Central)	--	18%	15%	N/A
Diagnosed with depression (North Central)	--	22%	20%	20%
Population to mental health providers ratio	1,520:1	1,030:1	330:1	290:1**

Source: County Health Rankings 2020, MT BRFSS Report 2015-2018

**Top US Performers: Counties setting a benchmark 10th/9th percentile

Larger percentages of North Central Region adult residents report having “felt depressed all or most of the last 30 days” and “diagnosed with depression” compared to Montana. There are more than three times the number of people per mental health provider than in the wider state and in the US.

CHRONIC DISEASE

Tobacco Use

Table 11. Tobacco use among youth				
	Teton County 2017	Teton County 2020	Montana	US
Current cigarette use	7%	9%	8%	9%
Current chewing tobacco use	15%	11%	6%	6%
Lifetime e-cigarette/vape use	46%	48%	58%	42%
Current e-cigarette/vape use	19%	26%	30%	13%

Source: YRBSS TC & MT & US 2019

Chewing tobacco is used more by youth in Teton County than the state, and is nearly double that of the US. However, the percent of youth who report “current chewing tobacco use” decreased from 2017 to 2020. “Current e-cigarette/vape use” increased by 7% from 2017 to 2020. This may show a shift in preferred tobacco use among Teton County youth.

Table 12. Tobacco use among adults				
	Teton County 2017	Teton County 2020	Montana	US**
Current cigarette use	19%	15%	17%	14%

Source: County Health Rankings 2020

**Top US Performers: Counties setting a benchmark 10th/9th percentile

Adult "current cigarette use" in Teton County is slightly lower compared to all of Montana but is analogous with the US.

Table 13. Chewing tobacco use among adults			
	North Central Region	Montana	US
Current chewing tobacco use	8%	8%	4%

Source: MT BRFSS Report 2015-2018

The North Central Region reports the same percentage of “current chewing tobacco use” as the state of Montana, both of which are double that of the US.

Nutrition and Physical Activity

Table 14. Nutrition and physical activity among youth				
	Teton County 2017	Teton County 2020	Montana	US
Self-described overweight	32%	22%	31%	32%
Did not eat fruit in the last 7 days	10%	9%	11%	6%
Drank pop in the last 7 days	18%	67%	72%	72%

Source: YRBSS TC & MT & US 2019

Fewer Teton County youth self-reported as overweight than in the 2017 assessment, a percentage that is currently lower than the rest of the state and the US. Similarly, fewer youth reported “drinking pop in the last 7 days” in Teton County compared to Montana.

Table 15. Nutrition and physical activity among adults				
	Teton County 2017	Teton County 2020	Montana	US*
Overweight or obese	26%	24%	26%	26%
Limited access to healthy foods	21%	13%	8%	2%
Access to exercise opportunities	35%	27%	75%	91%
Physical inactivity	26%	28%	22%	20%

Source: County Health Rankings 2020

*Top US Performers: Counties setting a benchmark 10th/9th percentile

Far fewer Teton County adults have “access to exercise opportunities” than do those in Montana more broadly and the US. More adults have “limited access to healthy foods” in Teton County than elsewhere. These two indicators could place residents at higher risk of chronic diseases.

Table 16. Screen time among youth				
	Teton County 2017	Teton County 2020	Montana	US
Watched TV \geq 3 hours per day	25%	15%	19%	21%
\geq 3 hours of video games/computer time per day	29%	31%	37%	43%

Source: YRBSS TC & MT & US 2019

Only 15% of Teton County youth report having “watched TV three or more hours per day” compared to 25% in the 2017 assessment. In addition, the overall screen time for Teton County youth is less than that of Montana and the US.

Chronic Disease Prevalence

Table 17. Chronic disease prevalence				
	Teton County 2017	Teton County 2020	Montana	US
Asthma (youth)	21%	21%	22%	12%
Asthma (Adults-North Central Montana)*	9%	11%	9%	9%
Diabetes (Adults-North Central Montana)*	9%	9%	8%	11%
Arthritis (Adults-North Central Montana)*	29%	27%	27%	25%

Source: MT IBIS Chronic Conditions System Report 2012-2016, MT IBIS System Report/BRFSS 2016-2018, CDC Summary Health Stats - Asthma 2018

*Age-Adjusted

Teton County and the North Central Region of Montana report similar chronic disease prevalences when compared to Montana and the US. Of note, the percentage of youth with asthma is much higher in Teton County and Montana than the US.

Table 18. Cancer incidence				
	Teton County 2017	Teton County 2020	Montana	US
Overall	390.9	389.6	441.6	444.0
Breast (female)	180.8	135.1	125.0	124.1

Source: MT IBIS Chronic Conditions System Report 2012-2016

Rate per 100,000

The incidence of cancer “overall” is lower in Teton County compared to Montana and the US. However, the incidence of breast cancer in females is higher in Teton County than in Montana and the US.

Emergency Department and Inpatient Admissions

Table 19. Chronic disease inpatient hospital admissions*			
	Teton County 2017	Teton County 2020	Montana
Asthma	--	313.64	333.67
COPD	1,435.60	1,237.29	1,934.21
Cardiovascular disease	3,823.47	5,310.63	3,055.76
Diabetes (types 1 and 2)	539.42	623.62	1,031.63

Source: MT EPI Chronic Disease Hospital Admissions Report 2013-2019
Rate per 100,000
*Age-Adjusted

“COPD” rates in Teton County declined between 2017 and 2019 while “Cardiovascular disease” and “Diabetes (types 1 and 2)” increased. “Cardiovascular disease” rates in Teton County now exceed the rate in Montana.

Table 20. Chronic disease emergency department visit*			
	Teton County 2017	Teton County 2020	Montana
Asthma	514.46	429.01	922.06
COPD	756.26	1,246.12	2,434.20
Cardiovascular disease	1,763.04	3,296.68	4,808.06
Diabetes (types 1 and 2)	517.85	785.53	1,958.55

Source: MT EPI Chronic Disease Emergency Room Report 2013-2019
Rate per 100,000
*Age-Adjusted

Between 2017 and 2019, emergency department visits for “COPD”, “Cardiovascular disease”, and “Diabetes” increased, but in all cases have lower rates of admission than seen throughout the rest of the state.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

Sexual Risk Behaviors

Table 21. Sexual risk behaviors among youth				
	Teton County 2017	Teton County 2020	Montana	US
Ever had sexual intercourse	52%	41%	44%	40%
Currently sexually active - last three months	34%	27%	32%	29%
Did not use a condom at last intercourse (among currently sexually active highschool students)	25%	18%	19%	46%

Source: YRBSS TC & MT & US 2019

Fewer Teton County youth in 2020 have “ever had sexual intercourse”, are “currently sexually active - last three months” and “did not use a condom at last intercourse” than in 2017. Far fewer Teton County youth report that they “did not use a condom at last intercourse” compared to the US.

Communicable Disease Incidence

Table 22. Communicable disease case rates			
	Teton County 2017	Teton County 2020	Montana
Chlamydia	126.5	227.8	444.7
Hepatitis C (acute and chronic)*	38.5	77.0	93.4
Vaccine-preventable diseases	--	87.8	91.5
Enteric diseases	--	93.3	80.1

Source: MT Com Disease Epi Annual Report 2018, MT Com Disease Bureau IBIS STD System Report 2015-2017, MT Com Disease Bureau IBIS HEP C System Report 2015-2017
Rate per 100,000
*Age-adjusted

Rares of chlamydia and Hepatitis C increased in Teton County between 2017 and 2020. However, compared to the rest of the state, Teton County has lower rates of “chlamydia”, “Hepatitis C”, and “vaccine-preventable diseases”. There is a larger rate of “enteric diseases” in Teton County compared to Montana.

Table 23. Total SARS-CoV-2 cases 2020			
	Teton County	Montana	US
COVID-19 case count	275	73,303	12,300,00
COVID-19 death count	3	818	300,032

Source: JHU CSSE COVID-19

Teton County “COVID-19 deaths” account for roughly 0.4% of the state’s deaths and the state of Montana’s deaths account for roughly 0.3% of the nation’s deaths, as of December 15th, 2020.

MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH

Table 24. Birth rates				
	Teton County 2017	Teton County 2020	Montana	US
Number of births	80	80	11,515	3,788,235
Birth rate overall*	13	13	11	12

Source: MT Vital Stats 2017
*Rate per 1,000

The “number of births” and the “birth rate overall” in Teton County has remained the same since the 2017 assessment and is currently slightly higher than the rate for both Montana and the US.

Table 25. Maternal and child nutrition				
	Teton County 2017	Teton County 2020	Montana	US
Children 2-4 years on WIC who are overweight or obese	14%	19%	27%	30%
Breastfeeding at discharge from hospital	91%	81%	79%	84%

Source: MT DPHHS WIC Reports 2019, USDA WIC PC Data 2018

The percentage of “children 2-4 years on WIC who are overweight or obese” has increased in Teton County since 2017 but remains lower than the state and national averages. The percentage of Teton County mothers who are “breastfeeding at discharge from hospital” has dropped 10% since the 2017 assessment.

Table 26. Maternal and child health indicators				
	Teton County 2017	Teton County 2020	Montana	US
Women entering prenatal care after first trimester	37%	38%	27%	23%
Women whose Kotelchuck Index is ≥80%	56%	59%	74%	76%
Born <37 weeks	10%	10%	9%	10%
Adolescent births*	--	14	23	17

Source: MT Vital Stats Report 2017 & 2018, CDC Vital Stats 2018, CDC Prenatal Care 2016, MT IBIS Prenatal System Report 2018
*Rate per 1,000 women 15-19 years

Teton County reports more women entering prenatal care later than Montana and the US. Similarly, the percentage of women with adequate prenatal care is much lower in Teton County compared to Montana and the US.

INJURY

Table 27. Driving risk behaviors among youth				
	Teton County 2017	Teton County 2020	Montana	US
Never or rarely wears a seatbelt when driving in a car driven by someone else	11%	4%	8%	7%
In a vehicle driven by someone who had been drinking alcohol in the last month	22%	14%	19%	17%
Text or email while driving in last month	61%	45%	40%	39%

Source: YRBSS TC & MT & US 2019

Across the board, Teton County youth report less risky driving behaviors in 2020 than in 2017. Teton County youth report lower risky behavior in regards to seatbelt use and riding with a drunk driver than the state and US. However, more Teton County youth report “texting or emailing while driving in the last month” than Montana and the US.

Table 28. Emergency room visits for injury			
	Teton County 2017	Teton County 2020	Montana
ER visits for all unintentional injury	5,332	2,256	5,185
ER visits for unintentional falls	1,708	632	1,834
ER visits for motor vehicle injuries	392	190	418
ER visits for traumatic brain injury	118	200	678

Source: MT IBIS Injury System Report 2016-2017
Rate per 100,000

Teton County has lower rates of emergency room visits for all injuries compared to Montana.

ACCESS TO CARE

Insurance

Table 29. Insurance type				
	Teton County 2017	Teton County 2020	Montana	US
Medicaid	18%	22%	18%	20%
Medicare	24%	24%	20%	17%
Veteran's affairs	5%	5%	4%	2%
Direct purchase	26%	23%	19%	14%
Employment based	46%	42%	49%	55%
Uninsured	16%	10%	10%	9%

Source: ACS 2018 5YR Sub Estm

Teton County has a higher percentage of people enrolled on “Medicaid”, “Medicare”, “Veteran’s affairs”, and “direct purchase” insurances than both Montana and the US but less enrolled in “employment based” insurance.

Table 30. Uninsured by age				
	Teton County 2017	Teton County 2020	Montana	US
<19 years	8%	12%	12%	10%
19-25 years	26%	21%	18%	16%
26-34 years	33%	19%	18%	17%
35-44 years	29%	20%	14%	14%
45-54 years	18%	12%	13%	11%
55-64 years	18%	11%	11%	8%
≥65 years	0.1%	0.1%	0.4%	0.8%

Source: ACS 2018 5YR Sub Estm

The highest percentage of uninsured persons in Teton County are between 19-25 years old. Percent uninsured decreased or stayed the same between 2017 and 2020 across all ages except those under 19. Across all ages, except for 65 and older and 45-54 years old, Teton County has a higher percentage of uninsured residents than Montana or the US.

Access to Dental Care

Table 31. Dental care				
	Teton County 2017	Teton County 2020	Montana	US*
Did not see a dentist during the past year (youth)	35%	20%	23%	N/A
Population to dentist ratio	3,030:1	2,050:1	1,390:1	1,240:1

Source: YRBSS TC & MT 2019, County Health Rankings 2020

*Top US Performers: Counties setting a benchmark 10th/9th percentile

The percent of youth who “did not see a dentist during the past year” decreased between 2017 and 2020. However, the “population to dentist ratio” is worse in Teton County compared to Montana and the US, which highlights a gap in dental care access.

Access to Primary Care

Table 32. Access to primary care				
	Teton County 2017	Teton County 2020	Montana	US*
Unable to get needed medical care due to cost, age-adjusted (North Central)	--	11%	12%	12%
Population to primary care physician ratio	6,070:1	6,090:1	1,250:1	1,030:1

Source: County Health Rankings 2020, MT BRFSS Report 2015-2018

*Top US Performers: Counties setting a benchmark 10th/9th percentile

The much higher "population to primary care physician ratio" in Teton County highlights a large gap in medical care access in Teton County compared to Montana and the US.

Healthcare Resources

Locally available healthcare resources have an important impact on access to services and the overall health of Teton County residents. The following table highlights what resources are available.

Table 33. Healthcare assets		
	Teton County 2017	Teton County 2020
Healthcare facilities		
Critical access hospital	1 (10 beds)	1 (25 beds*)
Outpatient clinics	4	3
Primary care providers		
Doctors (MDs & DOs)	1	1
Nurse practitioners (NP)	6	5
Physician assistants	2	2
Dentists	4	3
Optometrists	1	1
Chiropractic doctors	1	1
Mental health providers	3	5
Physical / Occupational therapists	5	4
Daily living services		
Nursing homes	1 (25 beds)	0*
Assisted living	2 (39 beds)	3 (47 beds)
Independent senior living housing	1 (54 beds)	1 (48 beds)
Adult day care licenses	1	1
Senior centers	4	4
Developmentally disabled adult living program	1	1 (25 beds)

Source: Benefis Teton Medical Center, MT Office of Rural Health 2020

There are 1,350 critical access hospitals in the US, 49 of which are in Montana and 1 in Teton County. Of the 1,141 doctors in Montana, 1 provides services in Teton County. Since 2017 the local hospital and assisted living facilities have increased beds available.

*On May 1, 2017 BTMC converted to a 25 bed Critical Access Hospital (CAH). Up to 22 of those beds are used for Long Term Care.

OVERALL HEALTH STATUS

Table 34. Overall health status				
	Teton County 2017	Teton County 2020	Montana	US*
Self-rated fair or poor health (adults)	13%	12%	15%	12%
Poor physical health days per month (adults)	3.5	3.5	3.8	3.1
Years potential life lost (YPLL rate)	5,100	7,700	7,200	5,500

Source: County Health Rankings 2020

*Top US Performers: Counties setting a benchmark 10th/9th percentile

Teton County adults report fewer “poor physical health days per month” and “self-rated fair or poor health” than in Montana. Yet, both Teton County and Montana report more YPLL than the US.

Median Age of Death

Table 35. Median age of death by gender				
	Teton County 2017*	Teton County 2020	Montana	US
Males	79.5	76.5	75	77
Females	86.5	82	80	81

Source: MT Vital Stats 2018, CDC Vital Stats 2018

*2017 data included only “white” residents

Overall, Teton County has a higher “median age of death” than both Montana and the US, signifying that Teton County residents are living slightly longer.

SUMMARY OF HEALTH ISSUES

Community health assessments are one step in the process towards improving the health of a community. This assessment serves to show the current health status of Teton County through analysis of the available secondary public health data and primary data compiled through the key informant survey and focus groups. Respondents to the survey identified COVID-19, alcohol abuse, child abuse and/or neglect, and mental health care as the top health concerns for their county. Participants in the focus group discussions also highlighted mental health, lack of child protective services, drug and alcohol abuse, among others as top health concerns. It is important to note that the focus group discussions occurred prior to COVID-19 appearing in Teton County, thereby explaining their lack of mention of the pandemic.

Of the secondary data, many of the most striking health indicators are also related to substance abuse and mental health. Excessive drinking is higher in Teton County than in Montana and the US, and local youth use chewing tobacco at nearly double the rate of the US. More youth are reporting symptoms of depression and suicide attempts, while more adults are reporting feeling depressed or having been diagnosed with depression. Concerns of rising mental health issues were noted in the focus group discussions as well, showing that residents have a fair understanding of the current health status in their community. One area that residents did not reflect the data was in regards to reproductive health. Many women in Teton County do not start prenatal care on time nor do they receive adequate prenatal care. Additionally, the amount of mothers who are breastfeeding at discharge from hospital has dropped. Breast cancer rates are also higher for females in Teton County than in Montana and the US. Related to each of these indicators is the high ratio of people to healthcare providers. With such high ratios it is unlikely that residents will be able to receive the care they need in a timely manner or even within their own county. This issue is reflected in a reduction of local outpatient clinics, Nurse Practitioners, dentists, and physical / occupational therapists providing services in the area. Of course, the COVID-19 pandemic is also of paramount importance, and until it passes it is likely to affect all other aspects of healthcare.

While there is always more work to be accomplished, Teton County has already made many strides towards improving the health of the community since the last CHA was conducted in 2017. These are largely centered around improvements in youth health, including an increase in preschool enrollment, a decrease in reported risky sexual and driving behaviors, a decrease in reported substance use, lower rates of screen time and pop consumption. Additionally, less youth did not visit the dentist in the last year. The population to mental health provider ratio, while still in need of improvement, did decrease between 2017 and 2020. Other healthcare assets that improved include more bed availability at the local hospital and an additional assisted living facility. All these may play a part in why Teton County residents have a longer life expectancy than both Montana and the US.

Armed with the knowledge contained in this report, Teton County will be able to continue towards improving their community's health by conducting a community health improvement plan.

CHIP INTRODUCTION & METHODOLOGY SUMMARY

This Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) addresses top health concerns for Teton County, as identified from the previous CHIP conducted in 2017, the 2020 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA), and the CHIP Stakeholder group. In late 2020, Teton County Health Department contracted with Yarrow, LLC to help facilitate the CHIP planning process following the completion of the 2020 CHNA. Facilitators and representatives from 20 local agencies convened as stakeholders for six sessions via Zoom between January and March 2021. The purpose of these meetings was to review the information collected in the CHNA, prioritize health topics for this CHIP, and determine appropriate courses of action to effectively address these health topics in Teton County according to available resources. During the first Stakeholder meeting on January 28, the Yarrow facilitators shared the Vision and Values established during the 2017 CHNA and CHIP and outlined the role of the Stakeholders during the CHIP planning process. The primary objective of the first meeting was to prioritize the county’s top health issues.

The graphic below shows an overview of potential priority areas that were identified as areas of health disparities or areas requiring some kind of health improvement in Teton County according to the sources used to build the CHNA and those specifically identified by the CHIP Stakeholders. The top eight identified potential priority areas are listed on the left hand side, and data sources from which potential priority areas emerged, listed along the top. Within each area of focus, more specific potential health objectives were identified and provided as a comprehensive list of potential priority areas and potential health objectives to the Stakeholder group. A prioritization exercise was undertaken in which Stakeholders ranked potential objectives according to feasibility and need. These results were discussed, regrouped, and the CHIP’s priority areas emerged, populated with their highest-ranked potential objectives. The three priority areas identified from this process were: Mental Health, Thriving Families, and Health Communications.

Four subsequent stakeholder meetings were conducted, in which participants reviewed the CHIP priorities and identified a series of goals, objectives, activities, performance metrics, time frames, activity leaders, and the tactics/action plans necessary to achieve the goals of each priority area. This process involved breaking into discussion groups according to priority areas and utilizing stakeholder expertise to shape the direction of the CHIP. A final meeting was held on March 25, 2021, to finalize the CHIP and determine the means by which the results would be shared widely with the community.

Potential Priority Areas	Data Sources				
	Key Informant Survey	Focus Group Discussions	Secondary Data	Previous CHIP	Stakeholder
Substance Use					
Mental Health					
Access to Healthcare					
Healthy Aging for Seniors					
Child Welfare					
Chronic Disease					
Maternal & Child Health					
Economic					

STAKEHOLDERS & COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Stakeholder Participants

The following community members provided time, energy, and expertise to shape the CHIP:

Ann Verplogen	Big Sky Special Needs Cooperative
Annie Olson	Benefis Teton Medical Center
Barb Shaffer	Council on Aging
Carla Pfeifle	Community of Power
Carmen Staigmilller	Frontier Family Practice
Cathy Sessions	Teton County Schools
Cheri Peterson	Eastern Front Counseling
Chuck Gameon	Choteau Public Schools
Connie Smith	Community Member
Dawn Gunderson	Teton County Health Department, Teton County CARES
Deb Coverdell	Teton County DES and EMS
Heather McCartney-Duty	Family Connections
Ingrid Hill	Mental Health Systems Consultant
Jane Wolery	Teton County MSU Extension
Judy Borland	Benefis Teton Medical Center
Katie Adams	Opportunities Inc., Food Pantry Board
Keith VanSetten	Teton County Sheriff's Office
Kim Peterson	Trinity Lutheran Church
Loren Tacke	Fairfield Schools, CARES
Melissa Moyer	Teton County Health Department
Melody Martinsen	Choteau Acantha
Paul Wick	Teton County Planning Department, CARES, Choteau Lions Club
Penny Smoot	Benefis Teton Medical Center
Sherwin Smith	Teton County DES and EMS, Volunteer Fire Department, Choteau Lions Club
Steve Dogiakos	City of Choteau, Choteau Area Port Authority, Chamber of Commerce, Choteau Boy Scouts, Choteau Lions Club
Whitney Brewer	Power Schools

As part of the CHIP process, the Stakeholders identified community resources available locally that could support the achievement of selected activities and act as a general resource for the community. Resources were identified in the areas of primary, behavioral, and public health; dental and vision care; physical therapy; emergency services; child care and schools; family, social, and legal services; home health care; senior living; community service, faith based, and government organizations. **To see a full list of community resources, including telephone numbers, [visit this link](#).**

PRIORITIES, OBJECTIVES, & MEASURABLE HEALTH OUTCOMES

While the CHNA planning process identified numerous Teton County health challenges, contributing causes of these challenges, health disparities, and community assets, the goal of the CHIP process was to prioritize and target a smaller, achievable number of public health system challenges or needs. Each priority area has one overarching goal, as well as a series of achievable objectives and measurable health outcomes to assess progress towards outcomes. The results are outlined below.

PRIORITY AREA 1: MENTAL HEALTH



GOAL Support access to & improve utilization of mental health resources among residents of Teton County.

Objective 1

Reduce the average number of "poor mental health days" in the past 30 days among people in Teton County from 3.5 (2017) over the next 3 years as measured by the MT BRFSS. *The 2020 County Health Rankings/BRFSS used data from 2017 for this measure.*

➔ **Measurable Health Outcome:**
The number of "poor mental health days" in Teton County as reported by MT BRFSS in 2023.

Objective 2

At the next CHNA Key Informant Survey, 50% of respondents will indicate that they have seen an increase in awareness around mental health issues and types of mental health services available in the community over the past 3 years.

➔ **Measurable Health Outcome:**
Increase in awareness around mental health issues and types of mental health services available as measured in the next CHNA Key Informant Survey.

Objective 3

At the next CHNA Key Informant Survey, 50% of respondents will indicate that there are more opportunities for people to be connected in the community and less socially isolated than in 2021.

➔ **Measurable Health Outcome:**
Increase in perception of additional opportunities for people to be connected to the community when asked at the next CHNA Key Informant Survey.

Objective 4

Each year, increase the number of referrals to behavioral health professionals initiated by a law enforcement officer from an established baseline in 2021.

➔ **Measurable Health Outcome:**
Number of referrals initiated by law enforcement officers to mental health providers each year between 2021 and 2024.

PRIORITY AREA 2: THRIVING FAMILIES



GOAL

Community-wide support for decreasing ACEs and increasing resiliency among families & youth so they can thrive mentally, physically, & emotionally.

Objective 1

At the next CHNA Key Informant Survey, at least 50% of respondents who indicate that they work with parents and/or children will indicate that more parenting support resources are available than there were in 2021.

Measurable Health Outcome:

Availability of parenting support resources as measured by the CHNA Key Informant Survey.

Objective 2

At the next CHNA Key Informant Survey, at least 50% of respondents will indicate an increase in awareness of healthy vs. unhealthy parenting tactics than in 2021.

Measurable Health Outcome:

Awareness of healthy parenting tactics as measured by the CHNA Key Informant Survey.

Objective 3

By 2022, maintain or increase the percent of students with high protection (students with 5 or more protective factors) on the Prevention Needs Assessment (PNA).

Measurable Health Outcome:

Percent of Teton County youth reporting protective factors on the PNA.

PRIORITY AREA 3: HEALTH COMMUNICATIONS



GOAL

Empower community members to engage with their health through clear, consistent, collaborative, and culturally appropriate health messaging.

Objective 1

By January 2022, 75% of the members of an established Health Information Committee will indicate in a survey that they have an increased understanding of how Teton County residents interact with health information

➔ *Measurable Health Outcome:*

Percent of members displaying an increased understanding of local issues around accessing health information.

Objective 2

By June 2023, implement an accurate and collaborative health information campaign that engages 500 individuals using strategies commonly accessed by "hard to reach" populations and at least 1,000 Teton County residents overall.

➔ *Measurable Health Outcome:*

Teton County residents engaging in health campaigns.

Objective 3

At the next CHNA Key Informant Survey, 50% of respondents indicate that many or all of the people they serve are able to access health information electronically, including scheduling appointments, accessing health records, utilizing telehealth services, and finding reliable and accurate health information.

➔ *Measurable Health Outcome:*

Community ability to access health information as measured by the CHNA Key Informant Survey.

Objective 4

Increase utilization of CONNECT Referral System to an average of 10 referrals per month by July 2022.

➔ *Measurable Health Outcome:*

Number of referrals sent via CONNECT.

ACTIVITIES & PERFORMANCE METRICS

Teton County Stakeholders collaborated to identify the activities necessary to achieve the objectives of each priority area. Various individuals and organizations within the community will serve as the activity leader/partner for ensuring the completion of each activity within a specified time frame.

The activities, performance metrics, time frames, and activity leaders/partners for each priority area are described below. **Additional specifics, including detailed tactics and action plans, can be found at the Teton County CHIP spreadsheet, available online by clicking [here](#).**



PRIORITY AREA 1: MENTAL HEALTH

Mental Health Objective 1: Reduce the average number of "poor mental health days" in the past 30 days among people in Teton County from 3.5 (2017) over the next 3 years as measured by the MT BRFSS. *The 2020 County Health Rankings/BRFSS used data from 2017 for this measure.*

Activity 1.1

Implement use of standardized screening tool for anxiety and depression, such as PHQ-2 or PHQ-9, among local faith leaders.

Performance Metric

>8 faith organizations will implement standardized screening protocol with referral to mental health professionals.

Activity Leader

Teton County Health Department; CARES; Choteau Ministerial Association

Activity 1.2

Implement use of standardized screening tool for anxiety and depression, such as PHQ-2 or PHQ-9, among PCPs and health-focused service providers.

Performance Metric

>15 health-focused organizations will implement standardized screening protocol with referral to mental health professionals. (WIC, PHN, dentists, chiropractors, optometrist, physical therapy, food pantry, home health, hospice, law enforcement, EMS, etc.)

Activity Leader

Teton County Health Department; CARES

Activity 1.3

Create a crisis response system plan so that family members have clear direction for getting family in need to a mental health professional.

Performance Metric

Yes/No — Crisis Response System created.

Activity Leader

CARES; Dispatch; EMS

Activity 1.4

Increase availability of grief support groups and other types of non-counseling support groups in the county.

Performance Metric

Increase the number of people who attend support groups by 15% from baseline of April 2021.

Activity Leader

CARES; AA/NA/ALANON; Public Health Department

Mental Health Objective 2: At the next CHNA Key Informant Survey, 50% of respondents will indicate that they have seen an increase in awareness around mental health issues and types of mental health services available in the community over the past 3 years.

Activity 2.1

Create a campaign around mental health to help residents understand the importance of mental health, when counseling is appropriate, and how to access services in the county.

Performance Metric

Run a mental health campaign that provides at least 2 pieces of mental health information each month to Teton County residents through a variety of media platforms.

Activity Leader

Teton County Health Department; CARES; CHIP Health Communications Group; Area Mental Health Professionals; Schools

Activity 2.2

Spreading the "Teton County Wellness Resources" flyer with the list of Teton County mental health providers to various outlets around the community. (aka "Posting Palooza")

Performance Metric

Annually, post or provide at least 20 area businesses/service organizations with the "Teton County Wellness Resources" flyer.

Activity Leader

CARES; Health Communications Group; Area Mental Health Professionals; Schools

Mental Health Objective 3:

At the next CHNA Key Informant Survey, 50% of respondents will indicate that there are more opportunities for people to be connected in the community and less socially isolated than in 2021.

Activity 3.1

Connecting senior citizens and high school students through completion of school community volunteer hours.

Performance Metric

15 high school students each year will complete volunteer hours that involve social interaction with senior citizens.

Activity Leader: Schools; Senior Centers

Activity 3.2

More people engaged in social groups like Lions and Soroptimists.

Performance Metric

Increase Lion's Club membership by 25% in both Fairfield and Choteau; Increase Soroptimist membership by 25%.

Activity Leader

Lions; Soroptimists

Activity 3.3

Create and/or expand a Community Service Volunteer (such as Neighbors Helping Neighbors) group that could provide basic supports to people in the community.

Performance Metric

Provide supportive services to 20 residents annually.

Activity Leader

Lions; Soroptimists; Church groups; Choteau Area Port Authority; Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Mental Health Objective 4:

Each year, increase the number of referrals to behavioral health professionals initiated by a law enforcement officer from an established baseline in 2021.

Activity 4.1

Determine tracking mechanism to determine the number of referrals sent by law enforcement officers to mental health professionals.

Performance Metric

Yes/No — Process established.

Activity Leader

Teton County Sheriff Office; CONNECT Coordinator

Activity 4.2

Conduct "Meet and Greet" between mental health professionals in the area and local law enforcement and court officers.

Performance Metric

Annually, 80% of law enforcement and court officers will attend a "Meet & Greet" session with mental health professionals.

Activity Leader

Teton County Sheriff Office; Teton County Courts; CARES; Area Mental Health Professionals; Substance Use Treatment (Gateway Community Services - Great Falls)

Activity 4.3

All Teton County Courts increase referrals among participants with crimes involving substance use, interpersonal violence, abuse, or other mental health-related issues to behavioral health-related programs, where applicable and appropriate.

Performance Metric

100% of Justice, City, and District Court eligible participants are referred to behavioral health programs for counseling and support in appropriate situations.

Activity Leader

All Teton County Courts; Teton County Sheriff Office; CONNECT Coordinator

Activity 4.4

Train law enforcement in CIT.

Performance Metric

Within 1 year of hire, 90% of law enforcement officers will be trained in CIT.

Activity Leader

Teton County Sheriff Office

PRIORITY AREA 2: THRIVING FAMILIES

Thriving Families Objective 1:

At the next CHNA Key Informant Survey, at least 50% of respondents who indicate that they work with parents and/or children will indicate that more parenting support resources are available than there were in 2021.

Activity 1.2

Increase sense of belonging through family involvement in community and school programs/organizations.

Performance Metric

Online community connection survey conducted by 2024 and completed by at least 75 people showing an increased sense of belonging in the community.

Activity Leader

Schools; Faith Communities; Civic Organizations

Activity 1.3

Establish intergenerational parent peer learning events.

Performance Metric

Successfully hold at least one intergenerational parent peer learning event by 2022.

Activity Leader

Faith Communities (Faith Formation); Senior Living Facilities/Centers

Activity 1.4

Support the continued implementation of evidence-based strategies for addressing the impact of ACES among youth by bringing relevant trainings and programs to parents.

Performance Metric

Bring at least one currently used, evidence-based youth mental health curriculum to parents by 2022.

Activity Leader

Family Connections; CARES

Thriving Families Objective 2:

At the next CHNA Key Informant Survey, at least 50% of respondents will indicate an increase in awareness of healthy vs unhealthy parenting tactics than in 2021.

Activity 2.1

Collaborate with the health information committee and CARES team to run a community awareness campaign on healthy parenting tactics for the general community.

Performance Metric

Run at least one campaign on healthy parenting in Teton County by 2022.

Activity Leader

Teton County CARES; Health Information Committee

Activity 2.2

Hold an annual resource event to provide families with resources to increase awareness of healthy and unhealthy parenting, including abuse and neglect.

Performance Metric

Hold at least one resource event on healthy and unhealthy parenting, including abuse and neglect by 2022.

Activity Leader

Schools; Big Sky Special Needs Cooperative

Activity 2.3

Collaborate with schools, PCPs, community leaders, and other people that care for children to increase the ability to recognize and report child abuse and neglect.

Performance Metric

Train at least 50% of the local formal childcare providers in recognizing and reporting child abuse and neglect by 2023.

Activity Leader

Preschools / Child Care Providers; Faith Communities / Choteau Ministerial Association; Child Protective Services

Thriving Families Objective 3:

By 2022, maintain or increase the percent of students with high protection (students with 5 or more protective factors) on the Prevention Needs Assessment (PNA).

Activity 3.1

Collaborate with the health information committee and CARES teams to increase awareness of ACEs and how to help foster resiliency in children.

Performance Metric

In conjunction with CARES, by the end of 2023, offer 5 community-based educational opportunities to increase awareness of ACEs in the general population AND expose 95% of educators and school staff to ACEs awareness education.

Activity Leader

Teton County CARES; Schools; Health Information Committee

Activity 3.2

Support the continued implementation of evidence based strategies for addressing the impact of ACEs among youth (PAX, YAM, Signs of Suicide, Youth Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)).

Performance Metric

In conjunction with CARES, by the end of 2023, 90% of elementary schools and high schools are using evidence-based programs.

Activity Leader

Teton County CARES; Schools

Activity 3.3

Provide information and resources to youth organizations on youth mental health.

Performance Metric

50% of youth organization leaders / adult volunteers are trained in an evidence-based youth mental health curriculum by 2024.

Activity Leader

Faith Communities / Choteau Ministerial Association; 4H; Schools, Scouts

PRIORITY AREA 3: HEALTH COMMUNICATIONS

Health Communications Objective 1: By January 2022, 75% of the members of an established Health Information Committee will indicate in a survey that they have an increased understanding of how Teton County residents interact with health information.

Activity 1.1

Formally establish a cross-sectoral Health Information Committee (HIC) (with MOU) to hold regular meetings and provide leadership for improving Health Information strategies in Teton County.

Performance Metric

Hold at least 8 meetings annually.

Activity Leader

Benefis Teton Medical Center; Teton County Health Department; Chambers of Commerce; Local Newspapers; Libraries; Choteau Area Port Authority

Activity 1.2

Investigate how the community accesses health information.

Performance Metric

Yes/No — Baseline survey in 2021 conducted

Yes/No — Follow-up survey in Feb 2023 conducted

Activity Leader

Health Information Committee

Activity 1.3

Share results from community health information access survey.

Performance Metric

Yes/No — Report on baseline data created
>2 of presentations to stakeholders/public

Activity Leader

Health Information Committee

Health Communications Objective 2: By June 2023, implement an accurate and collaborative health information campaign that engages 500 individuals using strategies commonly accessed by "hard to reach" populations, and at least 1,000 Teton County residents overall.

Activity 2.1

Develop a process for the effective dissemination of health information campaigns.

Performance Metric

Yes/No — Written health information campaign process/template

Activity Leader: Health Information Committee

Activity 2.2

Identification and development of health information campaigns.

Performance Metric

At least 4 health information campaign topics developed by 2022

Activity Leader

Health Information Committee; CARES; Schools; Other identified communications partners

Activity 2.3

Implementation of pre-planned health information campaigns.

Performance Metric

Yes/No — 2 campaigns per year, through pre-established information outlets

Activity Leader

Health Information Committee; Determined information outlets

Health Communications Objective 3: At the next CHNA Key Informant Survey, 50% of respondents indicate that many or all of the people they serve are able to access health information electronically, including scheduling appointments, accessing health records, utilizing telehealth services, and finding reliable and accurate health information.

Activity 3.1

Identify populations of concern that will benefit from direct health information educational opportunities.

Performance Metric

Yes/No — Summary report of populations of concern

Activity Leader

Health Information Committee

Activity 3.2

Work with organizations invested in health information and technology in Teton County to partner with local schools to provide adult education opportunities on specific technology and health information related topics, targeted toward populations of concern.

Performance Metric

At least 3 educational opportunities offered

Activity Leader

Health Information Committee; 3Rivers; Benefis Teton Medical Center; Teton County Health Department; Schools

Health Communications Objective 4: Increase utilization of CONNECT Referral System to an average of 10 referrals per month by July 2022.

Activity 4.1

Conduct regular test referrals using CONNECT to encourage frequent engagement with the system.

Performance Metric

>1 tests conducted each quarter. At least 75% of tests receive a successful response each quarter.

Activity Leader

CONNECT Coordinator

Activity 4.2

Promote CONNECT at regular meetings.

Performance Metric

CONNECT Champions attend and discuss CONNECT at >2 meetings quarterly

Activity Leader

CONNECT Coordinator + Referral Partners

Activity 4.3

Provide ongoing technical assistance and support for users of the CONNECT system.

Performance Metric

At least 1 organization is provided with technical assistance each quarter.

Activity Leader

CONNECT Coordinator

Activity 4.4

Distribute a quarterly newsletter to the public about CONNECT in order to promote use of the CONNECT Referral System.

Performance Metric

Information about CONNECT shared at least quarterly.

Activity Leader

CONNECT Coordinator

Activity 4.5

Encourage CONNECT referral partners to identify individuals who need assistance accessing health information electronically and make appropriate referrals to existing organizations that are able to assist in these topics.

Performance Metric

At least 6 referrals made each year for technology related services

At least 2 groups/organizations identified that can assist with technology needs

Activity Leader

CONNECT Referral Partners

ALIGNMENT WITH STATE & NATIONAL PRIORITIES

As illustrated below, many of the priority areas and objectives identified during the Teton County CHIP process align with state and national priorities, as measured by the 2019–2023 Montana State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) and Healthy People (HP) 2030, the federal government’s prevention agenda for building a healthier nation.

Priority Area Alignment of Teton County CHIP, Montana SHIP, US Healthy People 2030

TETON COUNTY Priority Area	MT SHIP Priority Area	HEALTHY PEOPLE 2030 Overarching Objective Areas
Mental Health	Behavioral Health	Mental Health and Mental Disorders
Thriving Families	Adverse Childhood Experiences	Violence Prevention
Health Communications	--	Health Communication

Objective Alignment of Teton County CHIP, Montana SHIP, US Healthy People 2030

TETON COUNTY OBJECTIVE	MT SHIP Alignment	HP 2030 Alignment
Reduce the average number of "poor mental health days" in the past 30 days among people in Teton County from 3.5 (2017) over the next 3 years as measured by the MT BRFSS. <i>The 2020 County Health Rankings/BRFSS used data from 2017 for this measure.</i>	X	X
At the next CHNA Key Informant Survey, 50% of respondents will indicate that they have seen an increase in awareness around mental health issues and types of mental health services available in the community over the past 3 years.	X	
At the next CHNA Key Informant Survey, 50% of respondents will indicate that there are more opportunities for people to be connected in the community and less socially isolated than in 2021.		X
Each year, increase the number of referrals to behavioral health professionals initiated by a law enforcement officer from an established baseline in 2021.		
At the next CHNA Key Informant Survey, at least 50% of respondents who indicate that they work with parents and/or children will indicate that more parenting support resources are available than there were in 2021.	X	
At the next CHNA Key Informant Survey, at least 50% of respondents will indicate an increase in awareness of healthy vs. unhealthy parenting tactics than in 2021.	X	X
By 2022, maintain or increase the percent of students with high protection (students with 5 or more protective factors) on the Prevention Needs Assessment (PNA).		X
By January 2022, 75% of the members of an established Health Information Committee will indicate in a survey that they have an increased understanding of how Teton County residents interact with health information.		
By June 2023, implement an accurate and collaborative health information campaign that engages 500 individuals using strategies commonly accessed by "hard to reach" populations, and at least 1,000 Teton County residents overall.	X	X
At the next CHNA Key Informant Survey, 50% of respondents indicate that many or all of the people they serve are able to access health information electronically, including scheduling appointments, accessing health records, utilizing telehealth services, and finding reliable and accurate health information.		X
Increase utilization of CONNECT Referral System to an average of 10 referrals per month by July 2022.		

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The following policy recommendations are listed in the Montana State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) 2019–2023, and also overlap with Objectives identified in the Teton County CHIP.

1. Develop strategies to work across Montana’s behavioral health system (mental health and SUD) to align payment reform, address workforce shortages, identify access barriers, ensure rapid and effective crisis response, and provide treatment in the least restrictive environment.
2. Increase collaboration and successful "warm handoffs" for individuals admitted to and discharged from state-operated facilities, hospitals, residential behavioral health / psychiatric facilities, and community-based healthcare providers to lower annual readmission rates and to serve individuals in their own communities whenever possible.
3. Increase direct collaboration and coordination of services between the SUD and mental health care system and the criminal justice and corrections system.
4. Annually examine existing requirements for licensed childcare facilities and update as necessary to align, as feasible, with the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices.
5. Integrate knowledge about the wide-spread effects of ACEs and trauma into policies, procedures, practices, and environments of health, human service, education, and other organizations serving children, with the goals of providing trauma-informed approaches and reducing re-traumatization. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) provides direction in implementing trauma-informed approaches across 10 organizational domains in its publication, “Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach.” Those domains are: governance and leadership, policy, physical environment, engagement and involvement, cross-sector collaboration, screening, assessment and treatment services, training and workforce development, progress monitoring and quality assurance, financing, and evaluation
6. Promote improvement and implementation of school wellness policies, including smoke-free and tobacco-free environments in communities and on reservations, access to nutritious food, active transportation, physical education, recreation facilities open to the community, and reduced screen time use.

In addition, to achieve the health communications related objectives under Priority Area 3, it is recommended that Teton County create, adapt, and / or adopt policies and protocols that will facilitate effective, technology-based communications across the county and State.

NEXT STEPS

Stakeholders will continue to meet three to four times a year so as to ensure that Teton County achieves its vision; “...*Teton County is a clean, safe, and economically stable community that honors its local resources, culture, and natural environment. Opportunity, infrastructure, and people model healthy lifestyles. It is a place where all people are equally supported in their pursuit of happiness, health, and spirituality.*” These meetings will be conducted to monitor progress towards each of the priority areas, goals, objectives, health outcomes, activities, performance metrics, and tactics identified during the CHIP process. If progress is not being made, these meetings will provide an opportunity to learn from challenges and adapt the plan accordingly. This CHIP has been closely aligned with Teton County CARES strategic plan, and CHIP stakeholders will regularly attend CARES meetings to ensure collaborative attainment of aligned activities.

This CHIP will be presented and distributed to county and city leadership, as well as local organizations and community members. It will also be made publicly available on the Teton County Health Department website. County Commissioners and involved organizations will be able to request periodic updates on progress toward achieving the goals of this CHIP.

The next stage in the improvement process is to incorporate the various aspects of this CHIP into the Strategic Plans of the supporting organizations across Teton County. This entire three part process is cyclical and should be repeated every three to five years, providing for continual updates to each step: the Community Health Assessment, Community Health Improvement Plan, and updated Strategic Plans in organizations supporting the CHIP. Through diligent monitoring and adherence to the strategies developed in this process, the health of Teton County and its residents will continue to improve.

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