

**Treasure County
Community
Health
Improvement
Plan**

2018



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Treasure County Health Department
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Acknowledgements

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- Treasure County Health Board
- Hysham Community Health Clinic
- Treasure County Senior Citizens
- Treasure County Emergency Medical Services
 - Jane Lamb, SEMTUPP

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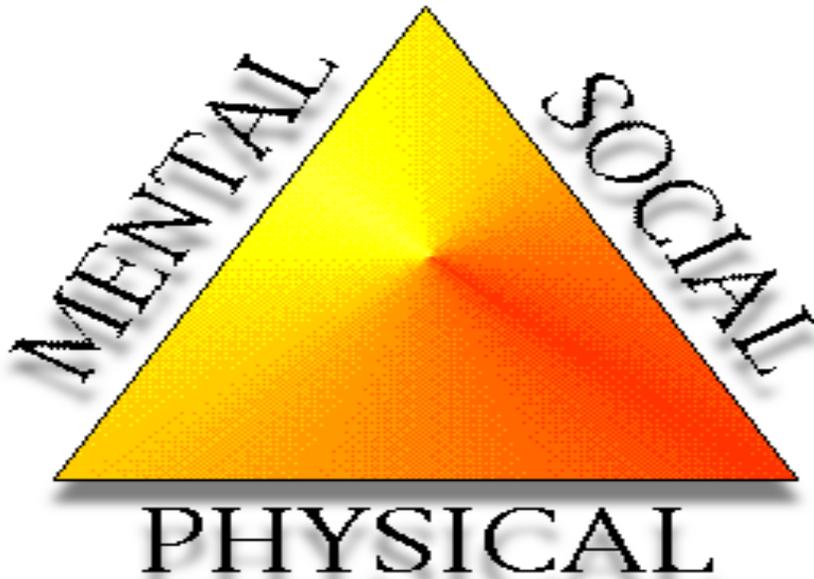


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Treasure County Health Vision Goals & Actions

“Treasure County Health Department seeks to empower, engage, promote, protect and improve the health and well-being of Treasure County residents. We believe that health is multi-faceted and is a state of complete physical, mental, and emotional well-being, not merely the absence of disease or sickness. We believe that individuals share the responsibility to be active and engaged in seeking and achieving the highest level of personal health possible.”



Treasure County Health Department will focus on this vision to improve the overall health and wellness of all Treasure County residents by addressing the following goals and actions:

- Maintain existing community partner relationships and collaborations
- Establishing and partnering with out of community resources and entities to provide periodic in-county services or increase awareness of out of county services available
- Promote inclusion of special populations (elderly, low-income, medical home, etc) into project/program planning efforts
- Utilize neighboring county transportation options to ensure access to care out of Treasure County
- Annually reassess the health and health care needs of Treasure County residents and adjust overall project/program planning.

Introduction & Background

Treasure County is truly a hidden treasure in the state of Montana. It encompasses an estimated 984 miles of territory which hosts portions of some of the best fishing, hunting, and outdoor recreational areas in Eastern Montana. With access to the Yellowstone and Bighorn Rivers as well as multiple creeks and streams, the county offers endless recreational opportunities and is within an hour's drive to Billings, Montana. The 2010 census indicates that Treasure County is the second-least populous county in Montana with a population of 718. Hysham is the county seat of Treasure County. The county is composed of several, smaller communities including Big Horn, Myers, Pease Bottom, Sanders and Sarpy Creek. Treasure County is primarily an agricultural county that offers residents the benefits of small town living with a variety of city living benefits.

Treasure County Health Department completed a Community Health Assessment in February 2017. The purpose was to provide a collaborative community assessment in assisting to evaluate the health status of Treasure County and its residents. That process provided useful information that assisted the Health Department in identifying projects and programs to target key shortcomings and issues.

Treasure County Health Department participated in the Community Health Improvement Plan project beginning in late 2017 to develop a strategic plan to address findings from the Community Health Assessment. This project was a shared responsibility with committee members from the local public health department, the local private practice health clinic, local health board members, elected officials, senior citizens organization, local emergency medical services, and a local prevention and healthy lifestyles representative as well as community members.

A review of Treasure County's CHA with stakeholders was completed and as a follow-up several alternative issues currently affecting county residents was discussed. We held 3 group meetings to share information, raise awareness, and invite participation from community members. In addition, many one on one encounters with individual community members were conducted over the last 9 months. In the end a consensus was reached on the priority issues to address. The priority issues that will be addressed over the next three years include:

- Mental Health and Behavioral Health Care needs
- Aging Population needs
- Access to Healthcare for all community members

Methodology

Treasure County Health Department utilized group meetings and individual meetings to assist in the prioritization of addressable priority issues. Secondly, we utilized Community Health Profiles, US Census Quick Facts, Treasure County CHA, and Treasure County Health rankings to provide insight during meetings to show how Treasure County differs from other regional counties.

Priority Issue #1

Mental Health & Behavioral Health Care Needs

Lack of access to behavioral health services and in-county mental health providers is one of the major issues facing our community. Multiple community members reported that they would seek mental health and behavioral health assistance if it was provided within the county. Residents report difficulty keeping mental health appointments in neighboring Yellowstone (70 miles), limited services or providers in Rosebud (35 miles), and Custer Counties (75 miles) due to lack of transportation to these alternate providers. The inability to access behavioral health services and mental health professionals can result in health disparities especially affecting our lowest income populations and youth. The effect of poor mental health on physical health is well documented and diminishes overall quality of life and wellness.

Mental health and suicides remain prominent issues across the state and Treasure County is following suit. Current statistics are not indicative of the trend recently seen in Treasure County. Community members have raised awareness on this issue by pointing to 2 suicides within the last 6 months within Treasure County. A review of the data indicates that county residents reported:

- Poor mental health days in 3.6% of the population which equals the overall Montana state percentages.
- Tobacco use is currently at 18% which is slightly below the state average at 19%.
- Alcohol use is currently at 18% which is below the state average at 22%.

Goals/Objectives

Treasure County Health Department seeks to improve the access to behavioral health care and mental health services in the county. Our goals for this priority issue are to:

- is to decrease the number of Treasure County residents who self-reported poor mental health days as 3.6% of our population to 3.0% by 2020.
- Increase the availability of mental health services and/or providers within Treasure County by 2019.

Strategies/Activities

- Assess current mental health/behavioral health resources available in Treasure County through private clinics, local schools, faith-based organizations, senior citizen centers, regional mental health organizations and public health.
- Increase availability of “visiting” mental health specialists in Treasure County.
- Increase mental health education and outreach via community groups and speaking engagements regarding mental health. Invite speakers into the community to discuss depression and suicide. Remove the negative connotation of mental health.
- Seek training on suicide prevention training (Train the trainer programs). Provide suicide prevention education and recognition of mental health escalations and triggers to community members.
- Partner with local prevention resources in promoting healthy lifestyles. Raise awareness of current topics and trends in tobacco, drug, and alcohol addictions and their effects on mental health.
- Participate in any State of Montana efforts at suicide prevention as they occur.

Evaluation/Impacts

- Evaluate # of community members attending training on suicide prevention, recognition, or mental health workshops in Treasure County
- Evaluate # of occurrences that health education and resources are distributed to community members and groups in Treasure County
- Evaluate the percentage of Treasure County residents self-reporting poor mental health days on the next community health indicators survey
- Evaluate # of residents receiving in-county mental health/behavioral health services. Investigate potential Tele-health or group encounters.

Priority #2

Aging Population Needs

A top concern for Treasure County residents involved the aging population, the care required, and the difficulty in providing/receiving this care. This issue was the number one deficit noted in Treasure County CHA. As of 4/3/2018, 27.1% of Treasure County residents are age 65 or greater. This is approximately 10% higher than the state average. With limited healthcare services available in the county (1 public health department and 1 local private practice clinic), the majority of our senior citizens must seek healthcare outside of Treasure County. Issues surrounding this problem are primarily centered around the lack of public transportation and the ability to reliably get to medical appointments. Compounding this issue is the lack of available family members to assist the senior citizens in this primarily agricultural community.

Additional areas of concern regarding Treasure County seniors include the lack of access to online resources that are becoming more and more a part of everyday life. From ordering medications online, signing up for assistive resources, applying for Medicare and Medicaid benefits, registering for Medicare Part D pharmacy plans to finding affordable supplemental insurance plans, the world has moved online but many of our seniors do not have access to the internet, computer access or lack the basic education to be able to utilize the technology.

Treasure County CHA identified potential areas for improvement which included expanding efforts to collaborate with groups providing a variety of services to this age cohort, seeking out resources from out of the county to provide local periodic services, improving opportunities for senior citizen education on pertinent topics, ADL assistance, and promoting social interactions, exercise, and travel assistance.

Health department staff has had some limited success in this priority already. We have offered Stepping On classes to promote fall prevention, offered Walk with Ease classes to increase activity levels with the seniors, and offered several satellite type medical clinics (mammogram van-health fairs, etc).

Goals/Objectives

Treasure County Health Department seeks to improve Aging services in the county. The over-arching objective is to allow Treasure County senior citizens to continue to live in their own homes with appropriate services and supports in place to make that a safe option. Our goals for this priority issue are to:

- Increase the number of public and private duty in home care providers that assist with Activities of Daily Living (ADL's)
- Increase the number of Treasure County residents who self-report the ability to access and utilize online service portals to perform routine tasks (with or without assistance) by 2020.

- Increase the availability of geriatric mental health services and/or providers within Treasure County by 2019. This goal aligns with Priority #1 and seeks to address social isolation and depression in our senior citizen population.
- Increase the number of Treasure County residents who access and utilize the Transportation Services available from Rosebud Healthcare Center in Forsyth, MT by 2019. RHCC will stop in Hysham and provides transportation for no cost-low donation cost depending on the ability of the senior to pay.

Strategies/Activities

- Assess current in-home care resources available in Treasure County through private clinics, senior citizen centers, regional health organizations and public health.
- Increase availability of “visiting” health specialists and outreach programs in Treasure County.
- Educate community members and senior citizen groups regarding services that may be available to assist them with remaining in their own homes with support.
- Continue existing collaboration with aging services director and Action for Eastern Montana
- Consider an “adopt a grandparent” program to decrease potential for social isolation
- Encourage and promote senior citizen volunteerism within the county to reduce social isolation and depression.
- Provide health department one on one appointments to assist seniors needing help with internet/computer related issues, or monitoring/ordering prescriptions, or updating and enrolling in Medicare/Medicaid plans/services.
- Educate seniors and community residents on the availability of transportation services through Rosebud Healthcare Center. Establish a hardship fund to assist with transportation needs for low-income residents unable (donations).

Evaluation/Impacts

- Evaluate # of “visiting health services/providers” each quarter providing services in Treasure County
- Evaluate # of health education outreach meetings and presentations on available services and resources that are available in Treasure County
- Evaluate # of senior citizen volunteer opportunities that are accepted by community residents.
- Evaluate # of residents requesting and receiving one on one assistance with internet/computer based education and/or services quarterly.
- Evaluate # of residents utilizing neighboring county transportation services
- Evaluate # and amount of spending on transportation assistance to Treasure County seniors.

Priority #3

Access to Healthcare for all community members

Access to care is a stubborn issue in Treasure County. We previously addressed many of the issues in seeking behavioral/mental health care and also services for the elderly. Access to primary care in Treasure County is limited to a weekly family practice clinic, the local public health department and a visiting Personal Assisted Living Program (PALS) in county. County Nurses provide phone consults and home visits to the population as needed but a significant gap remains. The health care system in Treasure County is equipped to provide wellness and preventative services, basic emergency and clinical care, and manage uncomplicated acute and chronic disease.

Treasure County Health Department attempts to offer satellite services in family planning, WIC and women's health and wellness with minimal effect. With limited providers, no public transportation, inclement weather during winter, and low-income populations, traveling to a neighboring county to seek services is sometimes not feasible. Access to services and care is of paramount importance in all communities and is difficult at best in frontier Eastern Montana. Data from Treasure County CHA indicates that 11.8% of population is below the Federal Poverty level. Males (18-24 years old) are the largest demographic population living in poverty at 18.1% which is higher than the national average.

Goals/Objectives/Strategies/Activities

Treasure County Health Department seeks to improve Access to Care services in Treasure county. Our goals for this priority issue are to:

- Increase the number of Treasure County residents who self-report the ability to access and utilize online service portals (Medicaid, low-income support programs) to perform routine tasks (with or without assistance) by 2020.
- Increase the availability of in-county services through the use of periodic health fairs, mammogram vans, podiatry specialist, "visiting" specialists, and mental health providers.
- Increase education to all community members regarding services. Utilize social media as a community notification tool as there is no local newspaper/radio. Utilize flyers and informative booths or group interactions to share the information with groups in the county.
- Increase the availability of mental health services and/or providers within Treasure County by 2019. This goal aligns with Priority #1 and seeks to address mental illness, suicide, and depression in our population.
- Increase the number of Treasure County residents who access and utilize the Transportation Services available from Rosebud Healthcare Center in Forsyth, MT by 2019. RHCC will stop in Hysham and provides transportation for no cost-low donation cost depending on the ability of the travel recipient to pay.

Evaluation/Impacts

- Evaluate # of “visiting health services/providers” each quarter providing services in Treasure County
- Evaluate # of health education outreach meetings and presentations on available services and resources that are available in Treasure County
- Evaluate # of residents requesting and receiving one on one assistance with internet/computer based education and/or services quarterly.
- Evaluate # of residents utilizing neighboring county transportation services
- Evaluate # and amount of spending on transportation assistance to Treasure County seniors.

Action Plan

Treasure County Health Department will continue to collaborate with our community partners, groups, and county residents to implement the Treasure County Community Health Improvement Plan. Health department staff will update Treasure County Health Board members, County Commissioners, and the local Medical Officer of the status of our interventions on a quarterly basis.

Treasure County's Community Health Improvement Plan is a living document and areas may be revised and/or updated as progress is noted. We will follow our evaluation criteria in establishing improvements or areas needing improvement. This plan is flexible and designed to fit the Treasure County community needs.

Sustainability is vital to any planning efforts and by incorporating this plan and the quarterly evaluations into routine review keeps the plan and any necessary modifications in the forefront. Copies of this plan will be made available to any and all community members. Interested parties should contact:

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hyshamclinic@rangeweb.net

Resources

Treasure County Community Health Assessment (2017)

Montana Public Health Data Guides (2017)

Forces of Change Assessment (2017)

US Census Quick Facts website

MSU Office of Rural Health website

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