Overview: Adams County 2022 Community Health Assessment & Planning

Find the full report online at: https://adamscountyhealthdepartment.org/our-communities-health-status-and-priorities

November 17, 2022
2022 Community Health Assessment

Tri-County Health Department

Adams County, Colorado

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"Social ties can instill a sense of responsibility and concern for others that then lead individuals to engage in behaviors that protect the health of others, as well as their own health. Social ties provide information and create norms that further influence health habits. Thus, in a variety of ways, social ties may influence health habits that in turn affect physical health and mortality."

"Social connections and health" which are characterized by deteriorating economic, social and behavioral conditions, such as under-employment, stress, and hopelessness, isolation, family dysfunction, poor social support, and addiction. Enhancing social connection could have an effect in mitigating this increase in deaths of despair.

Social connections and health are important for mental and physical health, and overall wellbeing.

- Positive social relationships are important for mental and physical health, and overall wellbeing.
- The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the importance of social connection for many Adams County residents.
- In our community survey, we heard from residents who felt disconnected from each other and from social, political, and economic systems in the community.

Social connection is related to mental health in several ways. First, simply being around people who watch out for each other can reduce the risk of poor health outcomes occurring in the chance that an accident will lead to serious injury or death. There is safety in numbers. Second, connection and belonging can be protective against the development of certain behaviors that increase the risk of poor health outcomes. Social connection has long been recognized as an action that can reduce the chance that people will engage in non-healthy behaviors such as heavy drinking, sedentary use, and overeating or eating unhealthy foods. In fact, research shows that social connectedness increases the chances that children will be engaged in school, and that people who do not want to become parents will use effective birth control. It also reduces the risk of suicide attempt. Finally, connection reduces the chance of experiencing isolation and loneliness. In their 1985 article, House, Landis, and Umberson show the relationship between poor social connection and poor health outcomes.

"I would say one thing I need is having a support network. Family and friends where I can get help getting my needs met. Another thing that is incredibly valuable is a community that is inclusive, supportive, diverse, and healthy."
What is Health Assessment?

Assess and Monitor Population Health is one of the 10 Essential Public Health Services

- Maintaining an ongoing understanding of health in the jurisdiction by collecting, monitoring, and analyzing data on health and factors that influence health to identify threats, patterns, and emerging issues, with a particular emphasis on disproportionately affected populations.

- Using data and information to determine the root causes of health disparities and inequities.

- Working with the community to understand health status, needs, assets, key influences, and narrative.

- Collaborating and facilitating data sharing with partners, including multi-sector partners.

- Using innovative technologies, data collection methods, and data sets.

- Utilizing various methods and technology to interpret and communicate data to diverse audiences.

- Analyzing and using disaggregated data (e.g., by race) to track issues and inform equitable action.

- Engaging community members as experts and key partners.

[Link](https://www.cdc.gov/publichealthgateway/publichealthservices/essentialhealthservices.html)
Purpose
- A formal planning process mandated by state statute and Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB)
- Used to understand and plan to improve community health

Principles
- Guided by principles of inclusiveness and transparency
- Community engagement is a core tenet

Process
- Often uses an assessment and planning framework
- Requires the use of multiple data sources and multiple types of data (quantitative and qualitative)

Results
- Used in prioritizing and investing in evidence-based interventions, while allowing for innovative interventions that can improve health
  - Interventions may include services, policy/advocacy strategies, and systems-based solutions
  - Evaluating the results of investments and incorporating these results into an ongoing cycle of evidence-based assessment and improvement
CHA Cycle and Requirements
• Required every five years (Colorado state law; PHAB)
• Guided by the Colorado Health Assessment and Planning Process

CHAPS Process

 guidance from CDPHE Office of Public Health Practice, Planning and Local Partnerships (OPHP)

Phase 1: Plan the process
Phase 2: Equity and community engagement
Phase 3: Conduct a community health assessment
Phase 4: Assess capacity
Phase 5: Prioritize issues
Phase 6: Develop a plan (Public or Community Health Improvement Plan, PHIP/CHIP)
Phase 7: Implement, promote, and monitor
Phase 8: Participate in statewide public health improvement opportunities
Community Engagement

Qualitative Data

- Community Engagement
  - Focus groups
    - TCHD funded CBOs to conduct focus groups
  - Community member surveys
    - English and Spanish

- Elected Official and Government Leaders Engagement Survey

- Partner Engagement Survey

- Staff Survey (TCHD staff providing services in Adams County)

- Environmental scan and literature review
Secondary data analysis

30+ external data sources to provide comprehensive look at health indicators

- From state and national sources (e.g., Census Bureau, DOLA, CDOT, CDHS, CDPHE, CHA, CHI, EPA, etc.)
- Data sources have different cycles: some are annually, some are every-other-year
- Data are released at different times throughout the year
Community Engagement: Findings
COMMUNITY SURVEY

1250+ people living in or serving Adams County
- 968 residents
  - 20% responded in Spanish
- 13 elected officials and county leaders
- 248 TCHD staff
- 30 partners

FOCUS GROUPS

45 Adams County and Aurora residents
- Facilitated by CBOs funded by TCHD
- 7 focus groups
- English and Spanish-speaking
Community Engagement: Findings (all stakeholders)

What are the three most important characteristics of a happy, healthy, and thriving community? Adams County, 2021

Top Characteristics:
1. Social Factors
2. Safety
3. Access to Care
4. Economic Security
5. Environment
6. Housing
7. Food access
8. Freedom/Autonomy
9. Health Behaviors
10. Mental Health
What are the three most important health problems in your community? Adams County, 2021

Top Problems:
1. Health Behaviors
2. COVID-19
3. Substance Use
4. Access to Care
5. Mental Health
6. Housing
7. Environment
8. Safety
9. Economic Security
10. Social Factors
Secondary Data Analysis: Findings
Social Connections and Health
Social Connections and Health

- Positive social relationships are important for mental and physical health, and overall wellbeing.
- The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the importance of social connection for many Adams County residents.
- In our community survey, we heard from residents who felt disconnected from each other and from social, political, and economic systems in their communities.
- Not all youth have a trusted adult in their lives or feel like they can ask parents/guardians for help with a personal problem.

Source: Healthy Kids Colorado, CDPHE, 2019
Economic Security and Health
Economic Security and Health

- Income is a fundamental social determinant of health
- Economic security and income has a direct, positive relationship to mental and physical health and wellbeing.
- Income impacts nearly all aspects of a person’s life and, thus, their decision-making processes, opportunities, and the way they live their lives.

Source: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Colorado Dept. of Public Health and Environment, Analyzed by Tri-County Health Department
Economic Security and Health

- Income increases are not keeping pace with the increasing cost of living expenses, challenging upward economic mobility.
- Between 2012 and 2019, household income increased 36% while median home value increased 97%.
- The COVID-19 pandemic negatively impacted our economies and the economic security of our residents.

Source: American Community Survey (ACS), U.S. Census Bureau
Health and Housing
Community members and partners reported that finding affordable housing is a significant problem facing their communities.

The cost of housing is outpacing wages in Adams County.

More than half (55%) of renters in Adams County pay 30% or more of their monthly income on housing.

Homelessness and homeless camps were mentioned by community members when talking about “housing” as well as “safety.”

Source: American Community Survey, U.S Census Bureau,
Health and Housing

- Safe, stable, affordable, healthy housing is directly related to health.
- Unstable, unhealthy housing impacts health behaviors, outcomes, and access to care.
- There were 1.3 times the amount of persons experiencing sheltered homelessness in 2021 compared to 2020.*

Source: American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau
Metro Denver Homeless Initiative: https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/mdhi/viz/2021PITDashboard/Overview
*During point-in-time homeless survey
Health and Food
Health and Food

- As fixed costs increase, families can be left with less money to spend on healthy food.
- In 2020, approximately 1 in 8 people were food insecure in Adams County.
- In 2020, 17.3% of children were considered food insecure in Adams County (up from 11.6% in 2019)

Source: Feeding America (2021)
Food Insecurity Among Vulnerable Populations, Adams County, 2019

- 1 in 10 pregnant women and adults over the age of 65 were food insecure in 2019.
- As a result of COVID-19, 63% of the Women, Infants, and Children Program (WIC) clients in Colorado stated they experienced household food insecurity.

Health and Food

- Not all community members have access to nutritious, affordable food.
- There is a higher density of food deserts in minority neighborhoods in Adams County compared to White, Non-Hispanic neighborhoods.

Health and the Environment
Health and the Environment

- Climate change poses a significant threat to health and safety.
- Experts predict the number of excessive heat days to increase as well as the frequency of other extreme weather events.
- Increasingly poor air quality poses health risks, especially older adults, young children, and people with respiratory and cardiovascular health problems.
- Drought and low-humidity increase wildfire risk in Adams County and throughout the metro area.

Mental Health
Mental Health

- Mental health helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices.
- Poor mental health can increase the risk for other chronic health problems such as stroke, diabetes, and heart disease.
- Nearly 1 in 4 (23%) Adams residents reported they were in poor mental health in 2021.
- One-third (32%) of high school students report mental health distress in 2019.

Source: Colorado Health Access Survey, 2021, Colorado Health Institute
Mental Health

- One-third of high school students report mental health distress.

- Mental health is impacted by a complex combination of experiences, biology, and social conditions including exposure to racism, discrimination, violence, and poverty.

- Connectedness to individuals, family, community, and social institutions are protective factors for positive mental health.

Source: Healthy Kids Colorado, 2019, CDPHE
Substance Use

- Like other diseases, a combination of behavioral and biological factors, as well as one’s environment, increase the risk for developing addiction or engaging in substance abuse or misuse.

- Overdose deaths due to opioids are increasing, but there are many actions communities can take to prevent further loss.

- Between 2019 and 2020, mortality from prescription opioids (+89%), fentanyl (+198%), heroin (+5%), and methamphetamine (+66%) increased.

Source: Vital Statistics Section, CDPHE
Substance Use

- Alcohol is the most commonly used substance among teens and adults in Colorado and Adams County.
- Use and misuse of alcohol, marijuana, and tobacco all increase in communities with more retailers and advertisements for substances.
- Impaired driving is responsible for over a third of deaths in fatal car crashes. These deaths are fully preventable.
  - 6% of HS students reported drinking and driving within the past month; 11% reported using marijuana and driving (2019)
  - 16% of HS students reported riding in a car driven by someone who had been drinking alcohol (2019)
  - 18% of HS students reported riding in a car driven by someone who had been using marijuana (2019)

Sources: Healthy Kids Colorado, 2017 and 2019, CDPHE; Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), CDPHE
Access to Care
Access to Care

- Cost remains a primary reason people go without care or services.
- Specialty care, oral health care, and mental and behavioral health care services are less utilized and less accessible than primary physical health care.

Source: Colorado Health Access Survey, Colorado Health Institute

Percent of people unable to obtain certain types of care *due to cost* in past 12 months (regardless of insurance status), 2021
15% of people who needed mental health services did not receive them.

- 54% said they had a hard time getting an appointment
- 52% said it was because of cost
- 50% said it was because they didn't feel comfortable talking about personal problems
- 31% said they were concerned what would happen if someone found out

The better systems and services are connected, the more able people are to use them well and appropriately.

Specialty care, oral health care, and mental and behavioral health services are less utilized and less accessible than primary physical health care.

**Access to Care**

Source: Colorado Health Access Survey, Colorado Health Institute
What happens next?

**CHAPS Process**
*guidance from CDPHE Office of Public Health Practice, Planning and Local Partnerships (OPHP)*

Phase 1: Plan the process
Phase 2: Equity and community engagement
Phase 3: Conduct a community health assessment
**Phase 4: Assess capacity**
**Phase 5: Prioritize issues**
**Phase 6: Develop a plan (Community Health Improvement Plan, CHIP)**
Phase 7: Implement, promote, and monitor
Phase 8: Participate in statewide public health improvement opportunities
What happens next?

Funds from Office of Public Health Practice, Planning, & Local Partnerships (OPHP)

- ACHD awarded funds from OPHP at CDPHE
- Work through Phase 4-5 which include capacity assessment and prioritization
- Partnering with Arapahoe County Public Health on the shared area of the City of Aurora
- Contracting with three community-based organizations (on Adams County side) to conduct focus groups and/or surveys related to prioritization and capacity assessment as well as diving deeper into the needs and wants of the community.

Develop Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)

- In coordination and partnership with organizational partners, colleagues, and community members
- CHIPs are typically 5-year plans that prioritize 1-4 health issues
- Health issues are prioritized based on need, community momentum, opportunity, and in order to elevate the issue
Questions?

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