

Guide for Community Health Data Analysis

Review of Health Status Indicators

Demographic/Education/Socioeconomic Indicators

Understanding a population's age distribution, race and ethnic composition, and income characteristics is essential to identifying health needs and planning health programs. Demographic and socioeconomic indicators reflect important population characteristics.

Age Analysis:

- **How does age distribution in your county compare with state percentages?**
- **Does your county have a higher than state average percentage of children, adolescents, middle age or citizens over 65? Have there been significant changes in the age distribution?**

Race/Ethnicity Analysis:

- **Are there racial, ethnic, immigrant, or refugee population groups that potentially experience disparity in health status, or barriers to accessing health care or preventive services?**
- **Is the number or overall percentage of population that is represented by special population groups increasing or decreasing?**

Other Demographic Features:

- **Is it possible that factors such low educational levels, family size and/or structure, or illiteracy contribute to increased health risks for some members of the community?**

Economic Indicators:

- **Identify features related to household income, employment opportunity, leading industry, and economic stability of the community.**
- **Are there age groups or other specific populations more severely affected by poverty?**

Environmental Health Risk Indicators

Conditions in the environment may pose health risks to members of a community. Industry, hazardous waste sites, failing sewage disposal or treatment systems, and indoor air quality are potentially environmental health threats.

Analysis of indicators related to housing:

- **What percentage of housing in your county was built before 1950?**
- **What is the geographic location of older housing and what are the demographics of populations living in these areas?**
- **Describe any lead abatement/renovation projects that have been undertaken.**
- **What percentage of children in your county are tested for lead poisoning?**
- **What percentage of those tested was found to have elevated blood levels?**
- **Where do these children live, e.g., are they close to a lead smelter/lead mine/historic lead smelter?**

Analysis of indicators related to water supply:

- **What is proximity of hazardous waste sites and sewage disposal systems to public/private water supply?**
- **Describe any hazardous substance events that have occurred recently.**
- **Do industrial or agricultural operations contribute to environmental health risks?**
- **Are public water supplies fluoridated?**

Public Safety/Domestic Violence

This section examines indicators of risks to the safety of residents and visitors to the county.

Analysis of indicators of public safety:

- **Analyze crime rates including homicide, assault, juvenile crime, and violent crimes.**

- **Are special circumstances, specific age groups, or populations involved?**
- **Are rates increasing or decreasing?**
- **Is there a problem with illegal drug use or alcohol abuse?**

Analysis of indicators related to abuse or neglect of vulnerable populations:

- **Identify and analyze indicators of maltreatment or neglect of vulnerable populations including the elderly and children. Is domestic violence a problem?**
- **Are trends worsening?**

Unintended Injury

Analysis of indicators related to injury:

- **What are the major types of injuries in your county, the causes, and the ages or population groups primarily involved?**
- **Is the rate of injury related hospitalization increasing or decreasing?**

Analysis of indicators related to traffic safety:

- **Analyze circumstances related to traffic safety including use of seat belts and child safety seats.**
- **To what extent is drug or alcohol use contributing to traffic accidents?**
- **What age groups are more likely to be involved in traffic accidents?**

Analysis of injuries at work:

- **What types of work-related injuries, and what industry or specific populations are primarily affected?**
- **Is the incidence of injury at work increasing?**

Maternal and Child Health Indicators

The purpose of the Maternal and Child health Indicators is to provide an overview of the key components of maternal, infant, and child health and the risk factors that contribute to ill health and poor outcomes. In addition to the infant mortality rate, these indicators include important measures of increased risk of death and disability, such as incidence of low birth weight and receipt of prenatal care. Early childhood mortality and child abuse/neglect indicators should be considered in analysis of this section.

Analysis of maternal and child health indicators

- **Discuss how your county compares with the rest of the state on maternal and child health indicators such as adequate prenatal care, births to teens, birth spacing, smoking during pregnancy, births to women without high school education, and infant mortality.**
- **Do trend lines show that problems are increasing or decreasing?**
- **Can poor birth outcomes be linked to poverty or to low education levels?**
- **Identify specific races or special populations that experience higher rates of infant mortality, low birth weight, or poor birth outcomes?**

Analyze indicators related to prenatal risks:

- **Are risks such as smoking, improper weight gain, teen pregnancy, birth spacing, late or no prenatal care more common within special populations?**

Analyze indicators of child well being:

- **Are the majority of children properly immunized and are they receiving periodic screenings?**
- **How do unintentional injury and death rates among children in the community compare with state averages? What are the leading causes? Are they preventable? Are trends improving?**

Prevalence of Infectious Disease

This section provides an overview of communicable diseases.

Analysis of communicable disease rates:

- **Discuss how your county compares with the rest of the state on infectious disease indicators. (Rates of Tuberculosis, sexually transmitted diseases, etc.)**

- **Identify and include information unique to races or special populations.**
- **What circumstances surround any recent outbreaks or extraordinary incidence of enteric diseases? Was food, water, or vector determined to be an origin?**

Analysis of vaccine preventable disease:

- **Discuss circumstances surrounding any vaccine preventable disease cases among children.**
- **Are morbidity/mortality rates for influenza and pneumonia higher than in other areas?**
- **Note county adult and childhood immunization rates for vaccine preventable disease.**

Prevalence of Chronic Disease Risk Factors

The chronic disease indicators illustrate the prevalence of risk factors controllable by individuals that can play an important role in the prevention and management of disease

- **Discuss behavioral risk factors such as tobacco use, physical inactivity, and obesity that contribute to chronic disease rates.**
- **Analyze indicators of obesity and inadequate diet by particular age groups, race, or special populations.**
- **Review causes of preventable hospitalization related to chronic disease and identify the most prevalent. Are causes of hospitalization consistent with risk behaviors?**
- **Discuss chronic disease behavioral risks of youth such as tobacco use, exposure to second hand smoke, obesity, and fruit and vegetable consumption.**
- **Discuss how the county compares with the state on chronic disease indicators. Identify and include information unique to races or special populations.**
- **Are screenings for early detection and diagnosis of diseases utilized by a majority at age appropriate intervals?**

Leading Causes of Mortality

Analysis of leading causes of mortality:

- Discuss causes of mortality where rates are higher than the state.
- Are trends for leading causes of death improving or worsening?
- How do rates compare with other cities or counties of similar size and/or demographics?
- To what extent do mortality rates reflect premature deaths?
- Are rates of mortality that are higher than the state rate consistent with behavioral risk factors for such diseases (Ex: obesity, smoking, physical inactivity)?
- Are rates of mortality that are higher than the state rate consistent with rates of screening tests for early detection, or other risk factors like high blood pressure or high cholesterol?

B. Community Health Improvement Capacity Indicators

Section 13. Health Care System Indicators

Indicators in this section attempt to quantify the availability and use of basic health services and barriers to health care access.

Analysis of the Community's Health Care System:

- Are there an adequate number of health care providers in your area?
- What other barriers besides physician/patient ratios limit access to health care for certain populations?
- Is there adequate access to emergency services, inpatient acute care, and skilled long-term care?
- What percentage of your population lacks health insurance coverage? Are there particular segments of the population without health insurance?
- Is there an adequate supply of dental health and mental health services?
- Is there a choice of primary care providers in your community?

- **Are there an adequate number of primary care providers that are Medicaid participants?**
- **Are Medicaid participating dentists available to your community?**
- **Are there any populations not served by language-specific or culturally knowledgeable service providers?**
- **Are resources available to provide transportation for health care access?**
- **Do resources accommodate those needing sight and hearing impaired services or other assisting technology?**
- **What health care resource gaps exist in your community?**

Section 14. Community Health Resource Indicators

This section analyzes resources available in the community to address problems and needs identified in previous sections. Health resources can be prevention programs, health education, treatment programs, services for screening and early diagnosis, support groups for behavior modification, nutrition programs, support for smoking cessation, etc.

Analysis of health resources that are available to address leading causes of mortality, especially premature deaths, and risk factors that contribute to leading health problems in the community:

- **Considering the leading health problems that were identified in previous sections, discuss the presence or absence of health resources that would support improvement in indicators.**

Community Health Assessment Summary of Findings

For _____ County

A) Review of community health status indicators, including primary and secondary data, reveals the following problems:

B) Review of Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System County Level Data reveals the following problems:

C) The 3 most significant problems affecting the health status of population within the jurisdiction of the local public health agency are (public health priorities):

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____