

MONROE COUNTY COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT

COMMUNITY MEMBER RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHANGE

PRIORITY AREAS

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE



AFFORDABLE HOUSING, HOMELESSNESS, AND HOUSING INSECURITY



POVERTY, AND NAVIGATING HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES



INEQUITY, DISCRIMINATION & BIAS



During the 2021 Monroe County Community Health Assessment process, community members helped identify key health issues within the community and provided numerous recommendations for change. Community members also helped identify four priority health issues: Poverty, and Navigating Health & Social Services; Inequity, Discrimination & Bias; Behavioral Health and Substance Use; and Affordable Housing, Homelessness, and Housing Insecurity.

The community is in the process of recruiting members for Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) action teams, who will consider community recommendations in the development of detailed plans for action to address these issues. CHIP action teams will be formed to address three of these priority issues. Affordable Housing, Homelessness, and Housing Insecurity will be addressed by the United Way of Monroe County and the Community Foundation of Bloomington and Monroe County led Heading Home initiative. The work of the CHIP action teams will be guided by staff from the Monroe County Health Department, City of Bloomington Parks and Recreation, and IU Health Bloomington Hospital.

Recommendations for change from community members related to these four priority issues have included:

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE

Community members would like to see enhanced services and less stigma around behavioral health and substance use.

- * Reducing stigma through education regarding behavioral health and substance use disorder
- * Addressing mistrust of medications for treatment
- * Engaging with residents to develop better treatment options
- * Improving mental health resources, particularly for individuals who are incarcerated, individuals experiencing homelessness, and children born with substance use issues
- * Continued use of police personnel trained to work with individuals living with mental health issues
- * Expanding services offered
- * Collaborative system of mental healthcare to improve patient services
- * Engaging community members to identify barriers to seeking behavioral health services

AFFORDABLE HOUSING, HOMELESSNESS, AND HOUSING INSECURITY

Community members would like to see more affordable housing options, expanded services for individuals who are housing insecure, and less stigma around housing insecurity.

- * Adoption of a local Housing First policy
- * Need for public restroom, particularly for individuals experiencing homelessness
- * More affordable housing and expansion of programs that reduce risks for landlords who accept housing vouchers
- * Addressing barriers to housing, such as credit scores, finances, physical and behavioral health issues, former incarceration, and limited number of Section 8 housing units
- * More housing rentals by room
- * Encouraging discussions around housing issues
- * Increasing education and compassion around housing insecurity



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POVERTY, AND NAVIGATING HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Community members experiencing poverty need help understanding health and social services available to them and need services to be expanded to better meet their needs.

- * Advocates to help residents receive needed care and insurance coverage
- * Use of navigators to connect residents with services
- * Training for advocates and navigators to increase knowledge of current resources
- * Education of residents on existing resources, specifically walk-in clinics, HealthNet, and STRIDE Center
- * Map of health and social services by neighborhood and improved outreach on services
- * Guidance on use of Aunt Bertha website
- * Enhanced collaboration between nonprofits
- * Improved education on self-care and preventative care
- * Community-based health fairs based in townships
- * Health insurance sign-ups at convenient locations
- * Connecting people in each neighborhood in need with those who want to help, particularly through neighborhood associations and faith-based communities
- * Greater transparency around healthcare costs
- * More choices for healthcare providers
- * Additional walk-in health clinics that provide IU School of Medicine students opportunities for experience
- * Extended weekend office hours for healthcare and social service providers
- * Expansion of existing services, particularly those offered by Area 10 Agency on Aging, Thriving Connections, STRIDE Center, HealthNet, and El Centro Comunal Latino
- * Expanded programs for food insecurity, including expansion of Banneker backyard garden, more food pantries with fresh fruit and vegetables, mobile farmers markets that accept EBT, additional cooking classes for adults and children, and expansion of community garden plots
- * Improvements to broadband services and transportation

INEQUITY, DISCRIMINATION & BIAS

Community members expressed concerns regarding unfair and unequal treatment of some residents.

- * Considering decisions through an equity lens
- * Addressing accessibility issues on social media, such as providing descriptions of images and accessible forms
- * Health insurance for all, including immigrants
- * Better health insurance, such as Medicare type coverage for all, universal healthcare decoupled from employment, income-based insurance that includes dental and vision coverage, or discounted group plans for local organizations
- * Improved access to community resources for individuals with disabilities through person-centered planning
- * More collaborative system of healthcare to provide better care for patients
- * Increased attention to climate change impacts
- * Improvements to provider care, including better explanations of health conditions, more empathy and compassion in healthcare systems, cultural competence training for providers, more diversity among healthcare providers, and greater support for residents with fears of healthcare providers
- * More support for individuals recently incarcerated
- * More support for the LGBTQ+ community, including education for healthcare personnel
- * Assistance for individuals with mobility issues using public transportation
- * Expanding transportation to rural areas
- * Translation of more documents into multiple languages
- * Expanding translation services
- * Use of poverty simulations to enhance empathy among decision makers and service providers
- * Trainings for first responders to de-escalate crises
- * Policy changes to help individuals who are uninsured, to encourage healthy food choices, and establish a living wage
- * More advocacy around health issues



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