

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

Banff Mineral Springs Hospital conducted a health needs assessment in order to provide objective, dependable data regarding the health and well-being of the Banff community. The purpose of the assessment is to link identified health needs with resources to achieve positive health outcomes, highlight priorities from the community, assist in mapping out links and opportunities to collaborate with other sectors and be a catalyst for action. The intent is to use the recommendations from this assessment as input to the strategic planning process for 2007-2008 and future years.

METHODOLOGY

A Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) is a planned approach to collect information about population health needs, issues, and resources. The purpose of the CHNA is to gather information that will guide health service planning that is responsive to the health needs of the community of Banff.

To gather the data necessary to fulfill the project objectives, a multi-stage research methodology was conducted during March-October 2006. The specific activities were:

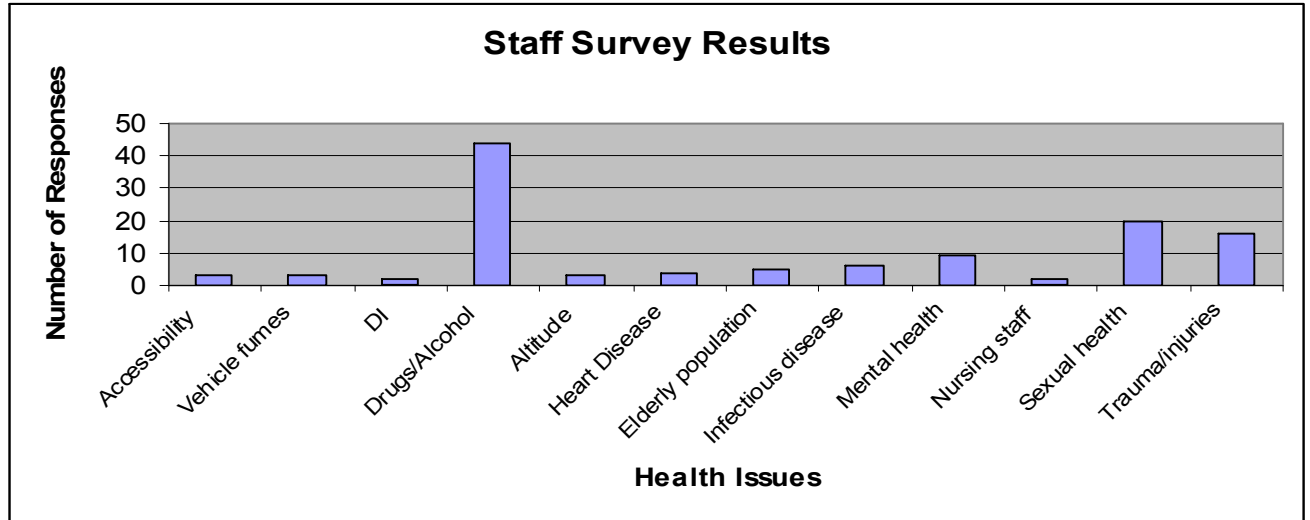
- ❑ *Hospital Staff Survey*
A paper survey distributed to individuals employed at the BMSH hospital and Physicians. The survey included 5 short questions and then asked respondents to rate 11 issues according to importance.
- ❑ *Key Informant Interviews*
A series of scheduled, face to face or telephone interviews with Banff based professionals whose occupations had a direct relationship to the health needs in Banff. The interviews incorporated 6 questions about key health issues, potential solutions, trends and future suggestions.
- ❑ *Focus Groups*
Face to face discussions with groups including, the department supervisors, family physicians, Living Room, and the Hotel / Motel Human Resources group. Formal questions were not presented but discussions were guided by using the questions from the key informant interviews.

DATA COLLECTION and OVERVIEW of RESULTS

This section summarizes the results and provides highlights and the factors that impact health.

Staff Survey

A total of 80 surveys were distributed to staff. 38 or 48% of the surveys were completed.



Hospital staff and physicians surveyed identified the following as the three most serious issues in the community:

1. Substance abuse
2. Injuries
3. Sexual health issues

Key Informant and Focus Group Results

A total of 28 key informants from the community were interviewed and 6 diverse focus groups were conducted. Key informants and focus groups responses were consistent with the survey results as substance abuse and sexual health were key issues. Hospital staff indicated that trauma/injuries were the third most prevalent issue, however, key informants and focus groups felt that mental health issues were issues that needed to be addressed. While services for mental health issues have been enhanced in the past year, it is ranked as the fourth highest need among hospital staff. The following summarizes the responses from the key informant interviews and focus groups.

What are the local health issues/needs facing this community?

- An overwhelming majority perceived substance abuse as a serious issues
- Several respondents identified sexual health as an issue
- Several identified injuries
- Access to health care services and knowledge of how and where to access services was identified as a community health need.
- Single respondents were concerned with AIDS as a major issue in Banff as well as tourist related incidents in regards to attacks by local wildlife.
- A single respondents noted that the immigrant population may also need special attention; more specifically women's annual health needs for immigrants being a priority
- Mental health issues were identified as needing attention.

What has happened that makes you believe this is a local issue/need?

- Lack of general awareness of the factors that cause these issues
- The transient population that comes to Banff was a comment made by several respondents
- The issues affect everyone within the community whether it is temporary people working within the Bow Valley or young locals that have lived here their entire life.
- Banff is a tourist town and the average age of people within the community is 25-26 years old.
- Lack of guidance from the parents
- Making ill-informed decisions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

While soliciting recommendations was not the focus of the staff survey, respondents did offer suggestions on how to solve the issues. Key informant interviews and focus groups were asked specifically how they would solve the issues. The following bullets summarize the solutions put forth:

Hospital Initiatives

- ❖ Provide hospital information and education of services and access to services (via BMSH website) to the population including immigrants and foreign workers living in Banff.
- ❖ Encourage the BMSH Board Community Engagement committee to assist with actions to further develop appropriate liaison structures with the community where opportunities to support the health needs of the community may exist.
- ❖ Explore future solutions that will help to address addictions, mental health and sexual health issues in Banff.
- ❖ Improve accessibility of the mental health workers.
- ❖ Explore options to help build community capacity through health promotion projects.
- ❖ Create tools or indicators to monitor and evaluate initiatives undertaken as a result of the community health need assessment.
- ❖ Review how hospital data is collected from the Emergency department to identify substance abuse, sexual health or mental health as secondary diagnoses.
- ❖ Share results of the community health needs assessment with the community and key providers of health services in the Bow Valley.

Community Collaborations

- ❖ Work with the Banff Community Health Programs and services to address the needs of the community.
- ❖ Develop strategies to inform those in the 18-34 age group of community health resources,
- ❖ Identify opportunities to develop relationships between the Calgary Health Region and the BMS hospital where there is a common agenda around the health needs of the community.

CONCLUSION

This report is a tangible result of the assessment process, but does not present a comprehensive picture of the community's health. Instead this report is a tool for planning and setting priorities

for health programs and services. An updated assessment should be conducted every three- five years to collect data on services and the community where gaps currently exist and to examine any changes in population health.