

# GRAYS HARBOR COUNTY



JULY 2022

## COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT + COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN

To identify and best plan how to address public health needs, Grays Harbor County Public Health partnered with Rede Group to perform a community health assessment (CHA) and create a community health improvement plan (CHIP) to provide actionable priorities, goals, and strategies. This body of work will help guide GHCPH's work to improve community health.

Access the [full report here](#) or contact Dan Hammock at [dan.hammock@co.grays-harbor.wa.us](mailto:dan.hammock@co.grays-harbor.wa.us).

### CHA Key Findings

#### COMMUNITY STRENGTHS

- Proximity to nature, including access to outdoor recreational activities
- Small town community feel and cohesion
- Individual and health services provided by local organizations

**"The nature that surrounds the county provides residents great opportunities to be outside and stay active."**

—Community survey respondent

**"I really love the people here. I've had the privilege of being born and raised here, and I found my career here. So, I was able to stay, and see the growth of the community and the connectivity."**

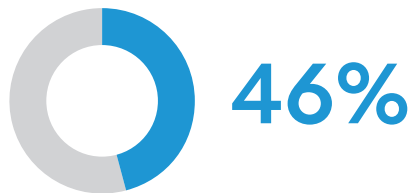
—Focus group participant

## COMMUNITY NEEDS

- Increased access to and affordability of health care providers (barriers include travel distance, culturally appropriate care, lack of health insurance)
- Access to behavioral health care resources
- Resources for youth experiencing depression and anxiety (high concern among Spanish speaking participants)



**77%** of community survey respondents indicated reduced stigma related to behavioral health conditions as a high need



**46%** of community focus group participants identified behavioral health as a need in the county

## BARRIERS TO HEALTH

- Some cultural norms were a barrier to health; including generational habits around eating unhealthy and sedentary lifestyles
- Physical health + healthy activities (cost + location of gyms, weather, opportunity for healthy social engagement)
- Availability and affordability of housing
- Inequities; health resources more difficult to access for low income and non-English speaking community members

**“Many [medical] offices do not use interpreters and paperwork is not translated.”**

—Community survey respondent

**“I think the lack of housing is every bit a public health issue and concern. We are sorely, like so many other places, lacking in housing, especially for low income, no income, and people needing transitional housing.”**

—Community leader interviewee

## OTHER THEMES OF NOTE:

- Need for availability and affordability of childcare
- Need for accessibility to and availability of public transportation (especially to medical appointments)
- COVID: benefits included remote services, increased use of outdoor recreation, community grew with remote work options. Threats included isolation, political divisiveness, increased anger and depression
- Lack of employment opportunities and competitive wages
- Ability to address substance misuse for youth, adults, and low income
- Difficult to access and afford healthy foods

**“Childcare is a huge issue, we don’t have enough capacity to handle the children and the kids that need daycare.”**

—Focus group participant

## CHIP Findings

The CHA offers critical insights for the development of a CHIP, while the CHIP is used as a base to build community work to address health priorities in the community.



Provide strategic leadership to increase community members' access to health care.

- Increase access to behavioral and physical health providers, understanding this includes those without access to transportation and those in rural and remote areas
- Provide culturally appropriate care and translated materials
- Prioritize access to services to address youth mental well-being

Improve access to physical activity and positive social engagement.

- Expanded access to activities outside of school sports and safe, welcoming places healthy social engagement
- Access to additional indoor physical activities that are affordable and accessible for all community members, with a focus on services that are not already available in the county
- Expanded services to rural/remote areas
- Culturally specific engagement and social opportunities for the community, with an emphasis on activities for the Hispanic or Latino/a/x youth

Collaborate with community partners to focus on housing as a Social Determinant of Health.

- Housing to attract new workers, particularly health care providers
- Availability of rental housing for students and those in recovery
- General availability, affordability, and conditions of housing

Increase the availability of culturally appropriate mass-reach health communications and health education materials for non-white and Spanish speaking community members.