



Using Data to Drive Change: Maximizing Community Needs Assessments in Behavioral Health

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About Us



Third Horizon Strategies is a boutique advisory firm focused on shaping a future system that actualizes a sustainable culture of health nationwide. THS helps organizations advance solutions so that all individuals can access the services they need when and where they need them. The firm provides facilitation services, research, policy analysis, strategy, and data analytics that promote behavioral health, increase quality, and improve outcomes.

The THS behavioral health team helps stakeholders improve systems so that all individuals can access the care they need, when and where they need it. The firm provides facilitation services, research, policy analysis, strategy, alternative payment model design, and data analytics that promote behavioral health, increase quality, and improve outcomes.

Learn more at www.thirdhorizonstrategies.com.



Participants will gain best practices in conducting community needs assessments



Participants will identify opportunities to incorporate learnings from community needs assessments in their clinical and operational processes

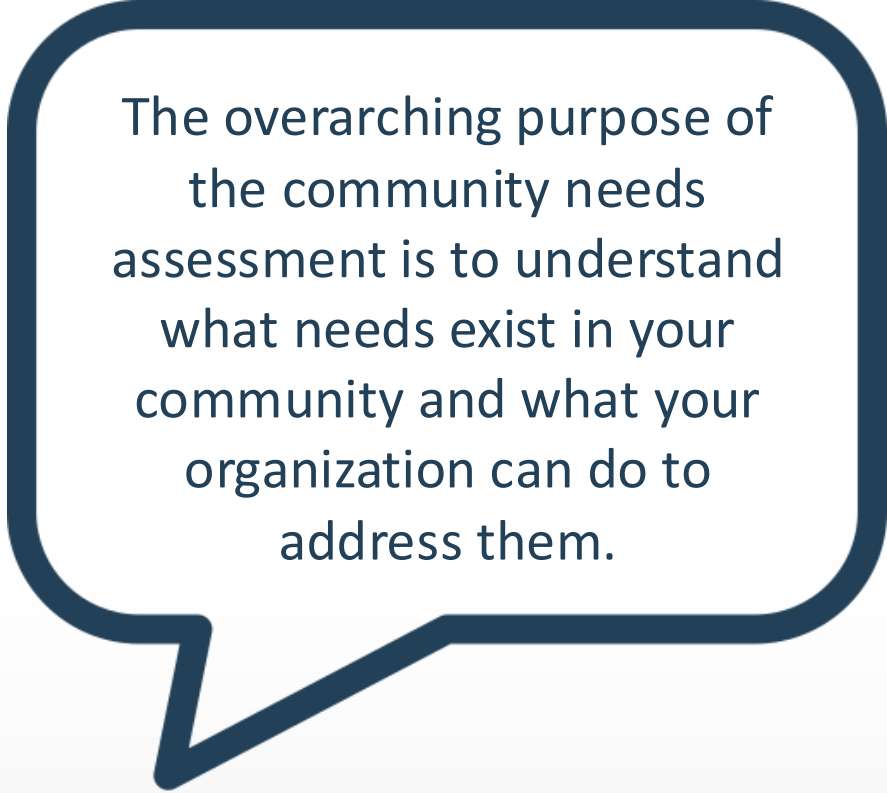


Participants will gain lessons learned from a case study from Axis Health System - La Plata County

Why Community Health Needs Assessments (CHNA) are beneficial to community behavioral health providers

Community Health Needs Assessments help to identify:

- Treatment and recovery needs in the community across lifespan and sub-populations
- Physical health and social needs
- Available services and notable gaps or workforce shortages
- Entry points to treatment and missed opportunities for engagement
- Those who may be in need of behavioral health services but are not engaging in them
- Unmet health-related social needs
- Barriers to accessing services and support
- Cultural and linguistic needs of populations of focus



The overarching purpose of the community needs assessment is to understand what needs exist in your community and what your organization can do to address them.

Best practices in conducting a community needs assessment



Use existing data sets



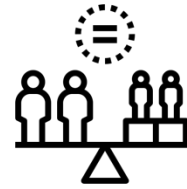
Define research questions



Augment existing research through qualitative research



Engage community stakeholders



Engage the community in equitable ways through qualitative research



Apply community needs assessment to help refine programs and services offered

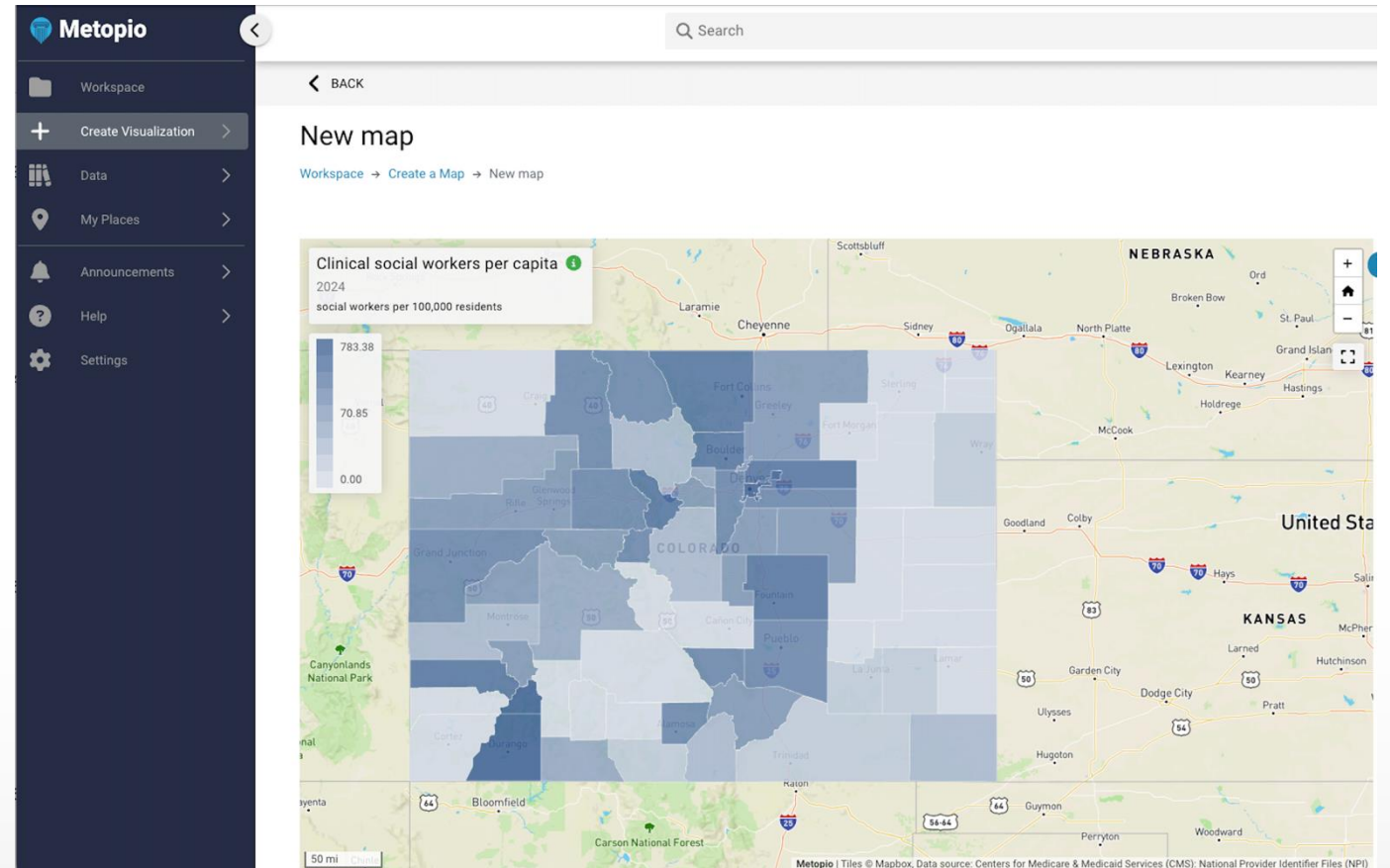


Utilize someone outside your organization to conduct the needs assessment with a more objective perspective

Common publicly available data sources: National

National data sources:

- American Community Survey
- Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey
- National Center for Education Statistics
- Common Core of Data
- National Survey on Drug Use and Health
- National Vital Statistics System-Mortality
- United States Census Bureau
- Metopio
- THS/Duke Margolis Opioid Abatement Tool



Common publicly available data sources: Colorado

- Colorado Health Institute Health Access Survey
- Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment Vital Statistics Program
- County Health Rankings
- Behavioral Health Administration Performance Hub
- Regional opioid abatement studies
- Local hospital community needs assessments
- Local public health department community needs assessments



COLORADO
Department of Human Services



[Home](#) > [2020 behavioral health needs assessment](#)

2020 behavioral health needs assessment

The Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS), Office of Behavioral Health (OBH) partnered with Health Management Associates, Inc. (HMA) to conduct a statewide behavioral health needs assessment.

The purpose of the assessment is to be responsive to the requirements of the state's Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) block grants and to inform a long-term strategic plan for addressing the current and projected behavioral health needs of Coloradans.

The goal of the assessment was to identify mental health and substance use prevention and treatment needs for Coloradans across the state. All populations were included regardless of insurance type, location and level of need. The needs assessment focused on behavioral health disparities and prioritized 12 sub-populations with disparities to understand root causes of their disparities and solutions. Additionally, regional variation in behavioral health need and location of services was a central part of the analysis.

Colorado's behavioral health system is in the process of transformation. Click to learn more.

Tactics to Gain Community Input (Qualitative Research)

Form a community advisory board

Work with community partners to include questions in their community health needs assessments

Conduct a local survey

Facilitate focus groups

Conduct key informant interviews

THS believes stakeholders should be engaged in a meaningful way in mental health and wellness system improvement and design, and in accordance with the seven core values for the practice of public participation, as defined by the International Association for Public Participation:

- Public participation is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process.
- Public participation includes the promise that the public's contribution will influence the decision.
- Public participation promotes sustainable decisions by recognizing and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including decision-makers.
- Public participation seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision.
- Public participation seeks input from participants in designing how they participate.
- Public participation provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.
- Public participation communicates to participants how their input affected the decision

Required elements of community health needs assessment under the Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHC) Model

- The CCBHC Community Needs Assessment Toolkit outlines elements that are required as part of the needs assessment, which include but are not limited to:
 - Description of physical boundaries and size of the service area
 - Information about the prevalence of mental health and substance use conditions in the service area
 - Economic factors and social determinants of health
 - Cultures and languages of the populations residing in the service area
 - Identification of underserved populations
 - Description of how the staffing plan will address findings
 - Plans to update the needs assessment every 3 years



Required input for community health needs assessment under the CCBHC Model

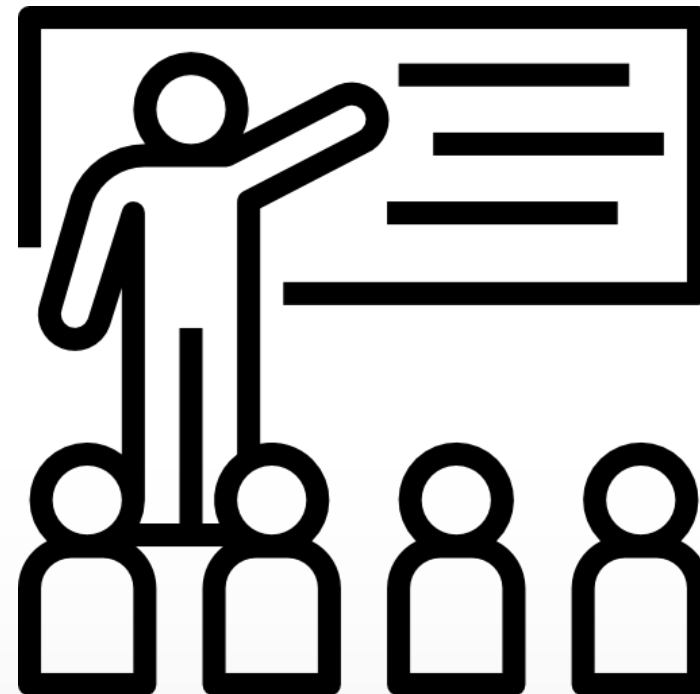
- Input should come from the following entities if they are in the CCBHC service area:
 - People with lived experience
 - Health centers
 - Local health departments
 - Inpatient psychiatric facilities, acute care hospitals, and outpatient clinics
 - Veterans Affairs facilities
 - Representatives from local school systems
 - Crisis response partners



CCBHCs must also engage with other community partners, especially those who also work with people receiving services from the CCBHC and populations that historically are not engaging with health services

Best practices for sharing the CHNA

- **Make the CHNA report widely accessible:** Post the CHNA on the organization's website and disseminate the results through appropriate venues, such as community meetings or policy briefs.
- **Raise awareness and promote engagement:** Publicizing CHNA findings increases awareness of community health issues and fosters collaboration among hospitals, partners, and potential collaborators.
- **Share data and action plans with contributors:** Provide the assessment results to community leaders and organizations that contributed to the needs assessment.



Additional Resources

- [CCBHC Community Needs Assessment Toolkit](#)
- [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration \(SAMHSA\) Behavioral Health Treatment Needs Assessment Toolkit](#)
- [The George Washington University Principals to Consider for the Implementation of CHNA](#)
- [The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
- [ACHI CHNA Toolkit](#)

Questions?

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Axis Health System CCBHC Needs Assessment Lessons Learned

Tina Riendeau, MBA, PMP, Director of Project Management



What Worked Well Third Horizons Strategies

- Very professional
- Challenged our approach when needed
- Assisted with questions for Focus Groups
- Quick to pivoted when needed
- Gathered Data from National, State, and Local entities
- Presented findings efficiently and in a professional manner
- Met all deadlines

Background



CCBHC Grant Narrative

Used community needs assessments from partners in LaPlata County to determine our areas of focus



Needs Assessment Qualitative Research (Focus Groups)

Focused on the 3 areas we pre-determined in our CCBHC Grant Narrative
LGBTQIA+ LatinX Veterans

Current Projects

Implementation of integrated Electronic Health Record

Coleman Associates - Dramatic Performance Improvement© (DPI)

Research on Call Center Implementation

CCBHC



Implementation of Qualitative Focus Group Findings

WHICH ONE ARE YOU?



Not fully engaged listening?

Curious listening but with Biases?

All in listening?

What Worked Well

Developed a workgroup to go through the Needs Assessment Qualitative Findings



Presented the Needs Assessment to the core team

- PowerPoint
- Categorized qualitative feedback into a digestible format



Outlined identified areas for growth

- Want to address as much as possible, although not required to implement everything in the report

Summarize the Results - Categories



- ▶ Access to Care
- ▶ Perception
- ▶ Scheduling/Appointments/Hours of Operation
- ▶ Customer Service
- ▶ Training
- ▶ Services
- ▶ Staffing Suggestions
- ▶ Outreach
- ▶ Housing
- ▶ Transportation
- ▶ Paying for Care

What Worked Well (Continued)

Developed a Strategic Equity Program Plan for three focus areas

Convened a small workgroup to digest SAMHSA's comments to the results of the needs assessment and determined how they would be addressed

Areas of Improvement



Developed a small workgroup

- Needed stakeholders that had boots on the ground (managers/supervisors)
- Subject Matter Experts to brainstorm the findings if we go too high (front desk/therapists)
- Understand how it works and then determine what needs to be improved



Needed to set expectations (listen to feedback without biases)



Went into the Needs Assessment planning with pre-determined needs based on our grant narrative

Areas of Improvement (Continued)



Misinterpreted the goal of the CCBHC Needs Assessment



Needed to align with what we were able to and not able to do



Needed to be open to hearing the feedback, even if we don't agree

- Individuals' and community perception



Use the Needs Assessment/Focus Groups as an opportunity to continue to connect with individuals and groups that participated

- Build relationships
- Ask follow-up questions/check for clarity
- Provide ongoing feedback for progress

Areas of Improvement (Continued)



Needed to be honest in what we know about the needs of our community vs what we can learn from the Needs Assessment

Made assumptions that our current projects (EHR, DPI, Call Center) would solve most of the growth areas from the Needs Assessment

Did not discuss what would bridge the gaps identified in the Needs Assessment until our larger projects were implemented

Needs Assessment Analysis



ANALYZE NEEDS
ASSESSMENT



BRAINSTORM
CONTRIBUTING FACTORS



ROOT CAUSE ANALYSIS



DETERMINE NEXT STEPS
FOR IMPROVEMENT

Final Takeaways

- Be open to including all perspectives
- Be willing to listen and not focus on the past but listen in the present, and listen for the future
- Don't get defensive;
- Don't assume you know the "why"
- Include managers/supervisors and subject matter experts in the analysis and recommendations
- Use the information gained to analyze systems and deficiencies deeper



Questions?

References

- The 3 musketeers - meme by damusicgamer :) memedroid. (n.d.). <https://www.memedroid.com/memes/detail/3250475/the-3-musketeers>
- YouTube. (2021, June 8). *Introduction for Needs Assessment Toolkit*. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wNOeRFt_PK0