



Caring for Our Communities: *A partnership for a healthy future*

Findings from a Community Health Needs Assessment for Saint Peter's University Hospital and Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital

About the Community Needs Assessment:

- The Community Needs Assessment is supported by a generous \$249,000 grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's New Jersey Health Initiatives Program
- A total of six grants were issued, including the RWJUH and SPUH proposal
- The purpose of the Community Needs Assessment is to identify critical health issues affecting Middlesex and Somerset County residents and plan future health initiatives to address them.
- For more information, visit <https://www.rwjuh.edu/about/2012-Community-Needs-Assessment.html> or <http://www.saintpetershcs.com/saintpetersuh/2012-community-needs-assessment>

Information collected through:

- Bilingual telephone interviews with county residents
- Bilingual focus groups
- Interviews with key "informants" and partners such as local health departments and community-based organizations

Key findings and trends:

Access to care and health information

- Lack of trained medical staff and health care providers in areas such as cultural competency, mental health, substance abuse, domestic violence and developmental disabilities
- Multiple language and cultural barriers due to diverse population within areas surveyed; lack of providers who speak the languages of patient populations
- Lack of health insurance
- Emergency room overuse
- Inconvenient medical office/clinic hours; lack of knowledge regarding navigation of health care system; long wait times for appointments

Healthy behaviors

- "Risky" behaviors identified (lack of seat belt use, binge drinking, smoking, lack of sleep)
- Increased tobacco use (especially among youths, the poor and uninsured populations)
- Lack of HIV/AIDS testing
- Overuse/inappropriate use of prescription medication; high incidence of prescription medication use by children

Disease-specific issues of concern:

- Asthma
- Mental health • Diabetes • Dental health services
- Obesity (adult and childhood) • Cardiovascular disease

What's next?

- Integrate assessment findings into both health care systems' strategic plans
- Use information to target and develop new community outreach efforts
- Address needs through development of key hospital services
- SPUH and RWJ Health Systems will continue to meet jointly and with community partners to develop new programs that address priority areas
- Develop joint programming among all partners to address diabetes, obesity, access to reliable health information and access to preventive health services/screenings
- Expand existing outreach programs with the survey areas

