Morristown United for Healthy Living

Year 1 Data Summary

North Jersey Health Collaborative
your health matters

New Jersey Health Initiatives
Current Top Issues for Census Tact 435

*From the data and discussion previous meetings*

- Financial inequity
- Substance abuse
- Housing/built environment
- Access to care
- Obesity
Informed Decision-Making

- County-level Data via the Morris County Committee
- Community “Postcard” Surveys in the 435 (N = 163)
- Coalition Meetings/ Key Informant Surveys
- Resident Interviews (N = 42)
Source Key

1 – Community Interviews
2 – Postcard Survey
4 – Atlantic Health System internal data

Data links to source, when applicable
What Do You Like Best About Your Community?¹

- Proximity to restaurants, stores, banks, parks, churches, and other services
- People look out for one another
- Walkability and sidewalks
- Many organizations serve this area; social services are accessible and not overburdened

“I am close to the churches, the Hispanic bodegas. I can walk places.”

“There are many things [services] nearby. Many people speak my language and [practice] many of my native customs.”

“People are friendly. When someone needs something, people help them.”
Financial Inequity

Key Census Tract Data

Median household income in the 435 is $47,394 compared to $99,132 in Morris County.

24.1% of families in the 435 live in poverty (3% in Morris County).

39.2% of children in the 435 live in poverty (2% in Morris County).

Key County-Level Data

Income inequality in the county is worse than the NJ county average (GINI coefficient = .451).

51% of residents surveyed and 90% of residents interviewed said this is an issue.
Interview:
Income questions word cloud
Key Interview Themes\(^1\)
for Income Inequity

- **Housing costs** and difficulty finding **work** that pays a living wage as key drivers
  - Even more difficult for undocumented neighbors (being “taken advantage of”)
- Use of and need for **social services**
- Reliance on **loans & credit cards**
- Working **multiple jobs**

Representative Quotes

“Undocumented people have it hard. I would say the number of undocumented people seeking social assistance has really gone up in the past year. Earning an income is also hard for people with mental illness or who are struggling with substance abuse -- they can't hang on to their jobs.”

“Rent keeps going up rapidly and the salaries stay the same.”
Substance Abuse

Key County-Level Data

18.9% of adults drink excessively (worst than state average of 16.6%) \(^3\)

The rate of heroin deaths per 100,000 is 5.2, nearly twice the U.S. average \(^3\)

Key Census Tract Data

50.3% of residents surveyed\(^2\) and 95% of residents interviewed\(^1\) said this is an issue

The majority of residents interviewed said that alcohol was the substance that caused the most problems in the 435\(^1\)
Key Interview Themes¹ for Substance Abuse

- Seen as a general **social trend**
- **Alcohol** most frequently mentioned substance
- Substance use as **stress relief**
- Worry about the **youth**
- Recovery tied to **faith** and use of **support groups** (AA)
- Sense of **hopelessness**

**Representative Quotes**

“If you can’t make ends meet despite your best efforts, you can’t help but feel worthless and fail to see a way out, pushing you toward drugs and/or alcohol.”

“Nowadays you can find drugs on every corner. It’s the same with alcohol- it’s easy to find.”

“If they realize it [they have a problem], many people look to their faith for help. Others go to help groups like AA.”
Housing/Built Environment

Key County-Level Data

17.4% of county residents live with severe housing problems (worst quartile in the state)³

45.1% of residents pay more than 30% of income on rent³

Key Census Tract Data

45.1% of residents surveyed² and 100% of residents interviewed¹ said this is an issue

The majority of residents interviewed said housing costs were at the primary reason people couldn’t afford other basic needs¹
Interview: Housing/built environment questions word cloud
Key Interview Themes\textsuperscript{1}
For housing/built environment

- **Quality** and **cost** of housing
- Sense of **powerlessness**
  - Most frequent solution response, “nothing”
- **Discrimination** in housing
- **Unhealthy** housing
- Concerns about **youth**
- Housing as a **root cause** of other issues

Representative Quotes

“The houses are destroyed inside and the rent is very expensive. They aren’t maintained. Kids don’t have anywhere to live. Adults and young people are living in the same room. There needs to be more housing available.”

“Waiting lists for affordable housing are astronomically long. Some people can’t afford “affordable housing” ($700!). People should have something to live with after rent but don’t.”
Access to Care

Key County-Level Data

- 85.9% of county residents have at least one primary care/personal doctor[^3]
- 9.1% of residents county-wide are prohibited from going to the doctor due to cost[^3]

Key Census Tract Data

- 43% of residents surveyed[^2] and 81.3% of residents interviewed[^1] said this is an issue.
- 38.5% of community members in the 435 do not have health insurance[^4]
- 44.6% of ED visits from the 435 in 2015 were non-emergent, primary care treatable[^4]
Interview: Access to care questions word cloud
Key Interview Themes
For Access to Care

• Different understanding of “access” for healthcare professionals and residents
• Frequent use of clinics
• Use of self-diagnosis, home remedies & medication from country or origin
• Access limited by immigration status

Representative Quotes

“Access to care is problematic for undocumented people, veterans, and for people suffering from mental illness.”

“Some treat themselves with over the counter meds or homemade treatment. In an emergency, they go to the ER.”

“I think that they do [have access]. Those with insurance go to the doctor, those who don’t go to Zufall and clinics.”
Obesity

Key County-Level Data

18.1% of county low-income preschool kids are obese (worse quartile in the state)

16.9% of adults county-wide report engaging in no physical activity in the past month

Key Census Tract Data

42.3% of residents surveyed\(^2\) and 81.3% of residents interviewed\(^1\) said this is an issue

Many residents interviewed link obesity to financial and/or employment issues (can’t afford healthy food; work multiple jobs and have no time to cook)\(^1\)
Interview: Obesity

Questions

Word Cloud
Key Interview Themes

For Obesity

• Trying to make ends meeting = cheap unhealthy food and no time to exercise
• Seen as a personal problem and not a community issue
• Others say, not a problem (hunger)
• Obesity sometimes not linked to health
• Exercise and diet as primary solutions

Representative Quotes

“It is a problem that many struggle with because we can buy a salad for $8 or a burger for $1 except it isn’t really a choice when you need rent money and have a whole family to feed.”

“It really doesn’t matter what people look like.”

What Else Would You Like to Mention? 1

- Need more places to exercise (open soccer fields, free gym)
- Need for more mental health services
- Greater community involvement and agency
- More responsible community policing (no profiling)
- Better pedestrian safety
- People being displaced by high costs

“We really lack recreation areas where the kids can play and swim and go the gym.”

“We need to be more conscientious and report bad things.”

“Most people in this area move here after they've become successful and their focus is on their own families. For the rest, there's no easy path up the social ladder.”
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