



DESERT HEALTHCARE DISTRICT & FOUNDATION

North Shore Community Listening Forum (4 of 6)

April 4, 2019 (5:30 – 7:30 p.m.)

North Shore Beach and Yacht Club

99155 Sea View Drive, Mecca, CA 92254

Homelessness:

- Homeless are struggling to beat the cycle – they cannot keep jobs, so they are unable to keep a stable roof overhead or get proper medical care
- Residents felt that most of the homeless in the area are suffering from a substance abuse problem and services need to address the root causes
- One of the big issues is that there is currently no investment in the areas – no new construction to bring in new housing
- There have been instances of homeless people setting up camp in abandoned housing

Primary Care and Behavioral Health Access:

- Even those that are covered with insurance must travel significant distances to receive medical care
 - The distance for services is a barrier (Ex. Guy lives in North Shore and works in Thermal but must go to Indio for medical care)
- There is a need for service awareness - this group was not aware of Volunteers in Medicine because they don't see it in their community
- There is a high need for a clinic and many of the challenges/issues/barriers to care stem from the lack of nearby clinics
 - There used to be a more consistent mobile clinic; however, nowadays it is less frequent
 - Parents are unable to access ERs or get their children to pediatricians timely or at all
- Limited hours for pharmacy access
- Appointment scheduling is far out, and times are limited
 - There is a lack of supply of doctors but high demand, so you have to wait for someone to cancel or choose from limited time slots
 - Families are often seeking medical care in Mexico – you can see the doctor same day, almost right when you walk in and it is common with the families in this area (they even see their neighbors in the Mexican doctors' offices)
 - Even if it is more expensive in Mexico, they would prefer to go because there isn't an inconvenience of a long wait time
- Issues with medication - Individuals are experiencing difficulties getting medication that helps mitigate the issues and are traveling to Mexico to get new prescriptions
- If we can increase the access to behavioral health care locally, get more time with a doctor to have a conversation about health it would positively impact the body – if the body is well, the mind is well
- Mental health is seen as taboo
 - Some people are fearful of making appointments to discuss their mental health because they think that word will spread to their families and community – we need to normalize care
 - Sometimes, people don't want to seek help – the support is there but they don't want to look for it and take the extra step to get it; they want it right in front of them
- There needs to be more opportunities to talk about stress and other problems
 - Not only addressing them but finding ways to manage issues

- The social pressures faced by youth have evolved and they find it so important to maintain a certain status – more of a materialistic view on life
 - When we were young, our biggest concern was not having a ball to play with and now this generation is so addictive to materialistic goods – trying to appear a certain way and that they have more than they actually do (how do parents address this?)
- It's necessary for psychologists to be accessible and available in the communities and schools
- What are the issues that build up to suicide? Is it that kids do not have an outlet to talk about their problems?
 - If a child's parents are both out working full-time, and a child comes home to an empty house - What impact does this have on the mental health?
- Increased opportunities for mental health education
 - Forums for youth so they can identify with each other, peer-to-peer conversations and utilize the opportunity to educate and inform
 - Family unit and dynamics are changing – how do we evolve with changing times?
- Educational support to recognize problems – many of us know how to listen but we don't understand how to help

Healthy Eating, Active Living:

- Safety concerns limiting outside activities – stray dogs, no sidewalks or bike lanes, no lighting and no patrol vehicles
 - It would be beneficial to have a patrol car – North Shore is being utilized too much for inappropriate or dangerous behaviors because of the lack of patrolling
- The new park in North Shore was being utilized until the recent rain storms damaged it
 - There aren't any other places to utilize while the community waits for the park to be fixed
- There is limited access to fruit and vegetables making people less willing to invest in this area
- Community gardens would not be beneficial in this area because many families have their own land
- More group classes around fitness and healthy eating to help motivate people
 - Nutrition classes – how to cook healthier and learn about different healthy food options
 - Implement nutrition classes in the schools
- Grocery store access
 - You have to go to Coachella/Indio for groceries (20-25 minutes one way)
 - There is support for the local market; however, its options are limited, and prices are high
 - Access is significant but it means different things for different people – if you save the hour of gas and the time you might be more willing to buy a little more expensive food locally
- What are residents doing to manage with grocery access challenges?
 - People caravan to places like Costco
 - What do we have to change to get the access – bring in rideshare programs?
 - Residents are utilizing their only days off for errands and working to do everything in one trip a week because of the distance

Other Ideas:

- Transportation – currently the Sunline bus comes every three hours in front of the North Shore Beach and Yacht Club
 - Last route is at 8 p.m.
 - This SunLine has been a great help – this helped the elderly move around without children having to take time off work to take them to their appointments
 - Increasing the routes as they are limited and far apart
- Salton Sea – asthma and allergies on the skin (rashes), mosquitos, the smell, increased asthma cases
 - Residents are wondering what impact the new park has on the health due to the proximity to the Sea

Ranking of priorities from North Shore participants [please note not everyone returned the ranking sheet]:

1. Primary care and behavioral health access
2. Healthy eating, active living
3. Other ideas
4. Homelessness