



DESERT HEALTHCARE DISTRICT & FOUNDATION

Indio Community Listening Forum (3 of 6)
March 28, 2019 (5:30 – 7:30 p.m.)
Employment Development Department Center
44199 Monroe St., Indio, CA 92201

Homelessness:

- More quality, affordable housing units
 - There needs to be more assistance programs addressing the precariously housed
- Develop a definitional understanding of homelessness across the valley while also addressing the different priorities faced by different geographic areas
 - Build awareness around the available data and the impact of a seasonal community – are the needs different by time of year?
 - The need to increase the understanding of causes of homelessness
- There needs to be more service awareness for the entire community
 - Helping equip residents with proper information to connect people accordingly
 - Understand the eligibility requirements of organizations before arriving for assistance
 - Figuring out how the homeless learn about available services and utilize platforms like CVHIP?
- Create a better tracking system for follow-up procedures once homeless individuals receive care or are referred
- Help build capacity of local nonprofits – not just for outreach but technical assistance and human resources
- Training for organizations/workers/volunteers to provide appropriate “bedside manner” and equitable treatment
 - How can we work to cultivate culturally competent services?
- Reduce the challenges around the Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (SPDAT) form
 - Often the homeless are not greeted positively or in a culturally competent way – makes the system more discouraging
 - Sometimes individuals are lying to say they are chronically homeless just to meet the requirement because homelessness has to be consecutive, if you have a temporary time of employment or housing then you have to restart the SPDAT process
 - Revamp the prioritization of services – those suffering from substance abuse should not be prioritized over other situations such as domestic violence
- More pet-friendly services
- Understanding what organizational requirements are before arriving for assistance
- Expedite bridge-housing opportunities
- Increase access to services for undocumented individuals
- Provide financial assistance on how to improve credit

Primary Care and Behavioral Health Access:

- Understanding primary care and behavioral health access-related legislation in the pipeline – how are those going to serve the Coachella valley? Will the Coachella Valley be impacted?
- Advance the definition of mental health – find ways to get away from the medicalization of issues
 - Address issues first with counseling
- Increase focus and education around the early onset of mental health issues – youth targeted

- Help schools build capacity for in-house student/family resources – how to address and cope with issues regardless of severity
 - Can we build relationships with universities to bring student interns in to schools?
- Bring in more mental health professionals – counselors should not have to take on 400 students
- Assess how we can bring in more funding for school districts
- How do we get services in the unincorporated areas to help the youth and families?
- Parents' first response to child issues is often the school because they see it as a safe, comfortable place; however, they are lost when the school cannot help
- Students are often unwilling to talk to counselors out of fear, they don't feel heard, or they are uncomfortable– how to be reduce fear?
 - How do schools and parents help address the increased social pressures of society?
- Encourage resource sharing among parents with children experiencing similar situations
- Can we improve eligibility requirements on certain services? – we need resource awareness of what is available for different needs based on different eligibility requirements
- There needs to be work around normalizing the idea of therapy – rather group or individual
 - Issues often resurface, there needs to be resources to manage challenges as they occur
- More availability of therapy session appointments or walk-ins – often limited
 - First things to come up when you research are therapists that are appointment-only with normal business hours
 - Improve the process of getting to a mental health professional – too much time is wasted going through a primary care provider first or waiting for insurance approval
- Currently, there is low support for parents – support classes should be made available for parenting
 - Parenting education – understanding that mental health issues are okay to address, we have to accept them and have to help people cope/manage
 - Teaching parents about symptoms of depression, suicide, etc.
- Solutions to addressing the stigma behind mental health:
 - Targeting school districts – ex. Promote things similarly to how the college fair was promoted across the valley (utilize their marketing strategies, flyers in the schools, social media)
 - Develop behavioral health workshops that students can attend with their age groups, defines behavioral health and promote resources, bullying awareness
 - Mental health classes integrated during the early schooling – showing the kids that it is okay/normal to get emotional, but you have to address it
- Transportation to medical appointments
- In society, it seems that if you are not suffering from a severe issue then you are less of a priority
- Are younger generations using social media as an outlet for their issues?
- Building awareness around the fact that mental health isn't always a forever thing – there are ways to mitigate or address symptoms
- Bring in more onsite services to the College of the Desert campuses
- We need to focus on the older generation as well – how do we educate them and reduce stigma?
- How can we capture the senior population – we cannot forget about their needs
 - Do the senior developments offer onsite behavioral services?
 - How can we provide families easily accessible information to help their elderly family members?
- Create a health fair that targets various age groups
 - Behavioral health fairs with resources and information
 - Address overall wellbeing – keeping a balanced work life
 - Create market savvy promotions to build awareness

Healthy Eating, Active Living:

- Increase inter-generational activities that target youth, families, and seniors
 - Utilize the available green spaces and find ways to bring in free classes/activities

- Increase park use to accommodate individuals outside of regular business hours – address safety concerns of being in the park outside of the middle of the day
- Indio hills – so many people bike on Dillion Road but there is not enough space for them to safely bike on the street
- Healthy education classes
 - Integrate home economics classes in schools and communities to learn about cooking healthy foods
 - Use cooking demonstrations to get people away from eating out
 - Create community cooking classes at local locations that follow health trends
 - Nutritional classes in homeless shelters and community settings
- Access to healthy food – and comparing costs with healthy and unhealthy food
 - Bring resources closer to the communities
 - Poverty stricken areas do not have access to the healthy foods
- Educating the parents so healthy habits are developed in the home
- Kids prefer the unhealthy options over healthy
 - What healthy options could we provide at schools that kids would eat?
 - Schools won't let you leave the lunch line if you don't have a fruit and vegetable on your tray but often times the kids will just throw them away
- Bring back the Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention program more wide spread – Rethink Your Drink, expanding successful programs that are evidence-based and show results
- More access to gyms or building more outdoor gyms that are publicly accessible
 - The ones that are available aren't in the safest spots
 - Increasing amenities in the parks that we have
- Healthy, environmentally -friendly produce resources in communities
 - Build partnerships with farms and create programs that if you compost you have access to free or cheaper produce

Other Ideas:

- Incorporate environmental justice across all focus areas
- Increase availability of public transportation – specifically unincorporated areas
 - Improve route frequency
 - Update posted route information, so it is readable
 - Have a transportation awareness campaign around the SunLine app
- Create a safe haven – 24 hours – until certain services are open, a place to go to no matter the situation
 - CVRM and Martha's have a limited intake time with rules regardless of situation
 - Help address the negative issues in the community
 - Mitigate safety concerns by having a person of authority there
- Create financial readiness workshops/classes targeting budgeting, resume building, and opportunities to get a professional wardrobe for interviews
- Organizations need to be more cognizant of the community's ability to access certain technologies when marketing and promoting events

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

1. Primary Care/Behavioral Health access
2. Homelessness
3. Healthy Eating, Active Living
4. Other Ideas
- 5.