

2023 Community Health Assessment Forest, Oneida, and Vilas Counties

Oneida County Theme Tables



Focus Group Results

Oneida County



Focus groups were held in Forest, Oneida, and Vilas counties during a one-week period in late January 2023. Participants were recruited using specialized outreach to a variety of sub populations. The focus group questions were meant to gain a deeper understanding of community health needs.

There was a total of 9 focus groups held, which were equally distributed across each of the three counties, with a total of 81 participants. Focus group discussions were recorded, then transcribed and combined for data analysis. Formal thematic analysis was used when analyzing qualitative data using QSR's NVivo. Two independent coders analyzed content to identify themes. Themes were then compared, and a final set of themes were established. Finalized themes were used to code all response data. The two coders then reviewed codes line-by-line so that there was an inter-rater reliability of at least 90%. Responses below are for Oneida County.

QUESTION 1: ONEIDA - WHAT CONCERNS OR ISSUES IN YOUR LIFE OR LIVES OF YOUR LOVED ONES MAKE IT HARD TO BE HEALTHY OR LIVE A HEALTHY LIFE?			
<i>EXAMPLES ARE UNEDITED OTHER THAN TO REMOVE REFERENCES TO SPECIFIC NAMES OR TITLES</i>			
THEME	DEFINITION	# OF OCCURRENCES	EXAMPLES
POOR COMMUNITY CARE	COMMENTS CITED THE NEED FOR MORE HEALTHCARE/ HUMAN SERVICE PROVIDERS AND LOCATIONS.	20 (47%)	<p>THE WAITING LIST TO GET INTO PLACES TO BE SEEN IS ASTRONOMICALLY RIDICULOUS. HEALTH CARE, SUBSTANCE ABUSE, KOHLER, ALL OF IT.</p> <p>ACCESS TO DOCTORS, NOT JUST PAS. PAS ARE NOT DOCTORS.</p> <p>I KNOW IN ONEIDA COUNTY TOO, THEY'VE BEEN WORKING REALLY HARD ON TRYING TO GET A CLEAN NEEDLE STATION. AND THEY GET SHUT DOWN EVERY SINGLE TIME BECAUSE THEY'RE LIKE WHY WOULD WE ENABLE THAT?</p>
HEALTHY FOOD	COMMENTS FOCUS ON THE NEED FOR REDUCE COST FOR HEALTHY FOOD AND PROGRAMING THAT EDUCATES INDIVIDUALS ABOUT HEALTHY LIVING	11 (26%)	<p>COST OF HEALTHY LIVING AND EATING. IT'S A FINANCIAL BURDEN AROUND HERE. NOT MANY PLACES PAY GOOD SALARIES. PEOPLE CAN'T AFFORD TO LIVE AND EAT HEALTHY.</p> <p>YOU CAN BUY A BIG MAC FOR LESS THAN YOU CAN BUY A CONTAINER OF FRUIT.</p> <p>EDUCATION OF YOUNGER KIDS AND HOW TO COOK. PARENTS DON'T HAVE TIME TO TEACH THEIR KIDS HOW TO COOK.</p>

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ACTIVITIES	COMMENTS FOCUS ON THE NEED FOR MORE ACTIVITIES FOR COMMUNITY MEMBERS.	8 (19%)	<p>THERE'S NOTHING ELSE REALLY AVAILABLE FOR SOCIALIZING AFTER HOURS THAT ISN'T ALCOHOL RELATED.</p> <p>A LOT OF PROGRAMS IN THE AREA ARE DURING WORK HOURS. HARD TO FIND THINGS OUTSIDE NORMAL WORKING HOURS</p> <p>I THINK HONESTLY THE KIDS WOULD BENEFIT FROM A PLACE OF THEIR OWN.</p>
OTHER	COMMENTS THAT DID NOT FIT INTO OTHER THEMES.	6 (14%)	<p>WINTER IS SO LONG HERE THAT SOMETIMES IT'S HARD TO GET OUTSIDE AND DO THINGS THAT ARE ENJOYABLE AS FAR AS EXERCISE, WALKING, THINGS LIKE THAT.</p> <p>I DON'T THINK THAT ONEIDA COUNTY PROMOTES ENOUGH RESOURCES THAT ARE ACTUALLY OUT THERE. NOBODY KNOWS HALF THE STUFF EXISTED.</p> <p>MORE TO DO HERE THAN OTHER LOCAL AREAS (CRANDON, PELICAN LAKE)</p>

QUESTION 2: ONEIDA - HAS THERE BEEN A CHANGE IN THE HEALTH OF PEOPLE CLOSE TO YOU IN THE LAST THREE TO FIVE YEARS? IF SO, PLEASE EXPLAIN/DESCRIBE.

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HEALTHCARE ISSUES	COMMENTS CITED THE POOR QUALITY OF TREATMENT RECEIVED DUE TO THE BURNOUT OF STAFF.	7 (41%)	<p>STIGMA FOR DRUG AND ALCOHOL USERS HAS GOTTEN WORSE. THEY (HEALTHCARE WORKERS) DON'T CARE ABOUT YOUR ISSUES AND DON'T WANT TO TREAT SOMEONE WHO IS USING.</p> <p>I DON'T KNOW IF CULTURALLY IT'S ACCEPTABLE TO JUST NOT BE COMPASSIONATE AND HAVE TERRIBLE BEDSIDE MANNER BECAUSE I'VE NOT HAD VERY GOOD EXPERIENCES AT ALL. SO THEN, YOU ADD SHORT STAFFING AND THAT'S SO YOU GET SOMEONE THAT'S ALREADY NOT THAT COMPASSIONATE AND THEN YOU GET THAT.</p> <p>HEALTH WORKERS ARE BURNOUT.</p>
HEALTHCARE ISSUES	COMMENTS FOCUS ON THE INCREASED COST FOR CARE AND THE LACK OF APPOINTMENT AVAILABILITY, SPECIALTY CARE OPTIONS AND LIMITED LOCATIONS	5 (29%)	<p>QUALITY OF HEALTHCARE HAS REALLY DECLINED.</p> <p>LACK OF SPECIALISTS HAS MADE IT MORE DIFFICULT (HUSBAND RECENTLY DIAGNOSED WITH RA BUT WAS DIFFICULT TO GET THAT DIAGNOSIS WITH SPECIALISTS AVAILABLE IN RHINELANDER)</p> <p>POLICY DRIVEN – BUT HOW EXPENSIVE NURSING HOMES ARE AND HOW MEDICARE FORCES LIQUIDATION PRIOR TO COVERING COSTS.</p>
OTHER	COMMENTS THAT DID NOT FIT INTO OTHER THEMES.	5 (29%)	<p>THE PRICES IN THE GROCERY STORES HAVE GONE WAY UP AND THE STOCK HAS GONE WAY DOWN AND THERE'S INTERRUPTIONS AND TIGHTENING.</p> <p>AND THE EDUCATION ON HOW TO GROW YOUR OWN HEALTHY FOOD WOULD BE A GOOD THING.</p> <p>INCREASE IN MENTAL HEALTH CHANGES, THAT WAS ALMOST IMMEDIATELY AFTER SHUT DOWN (WITHIN A MONTH).</p>

QUESTION 3: ONEIDA - WHAT ARE THE TOP THREE THINGS THAT NEED TO BE IMPROVED IN OUR COMMUNITY?

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COMMUNITY PROGRAMMING	COMMENTS FOCUS ON THE NEED TO BETTER THE ACCESSIBILITY OF INFORMATION ABOUT RESOURCES THROUGHOUT THE COMMUNITY.	11 (28%)	IS THE HEALTH DEPT ONLY FOR LOW-INCOME PEOPLE? WE'RE TAXPAYERS, WHY CAN'T WE ACCESS THOSE RESOURCES? CENTRALIZED KNOWLEDGE OF RESOURCES. ONEIDA COUNTY IS A HIGH ELDERLY POPULATION WHO WILL NOT BE ON THE INTERNET. HOW DO WE COMMUNICATE WITH THESE PEOPLE THAT ARE OFTEN ALSO STUCK IN THEIR HOMES?
HEALTHCARE ISSUES	COMMENTS CITED THE NEED FOR MORE HEALTHCARE INSURANCE PLANS, SPECIALTY CARE AND LOCATIONS.	10 (26%)	PEOPLE GOING TO THEIR HOMES VS. REHAB DUE TO LACK OF FACILITIES, COST, ETC. EAP MENTAL HEALTH SPECIALISTS – THROUGH LOCAL INSURANCE THERE ISN'T ANYONE AVAILABLE IN OUR AREA. INSURANCE AVAILABLE FOR UNEMPLOYED/LAID OFF
SUPPORT GROUPS	COMMENTS CITED THE NEED FOR MORE SUPPORT GROUPS.	10 (26%)	WE ALWAYS HAVE AA AND NA, ALL THOSE SUPPORT GROUPS BUT I THINK THE COMMUNITY REALLY NEEDS AND OA, WHICH IS OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS. GOING TO THE BACK TO THE LBGT. I WOULD LIKE TO SEE SOMETHING MORE OUT THERE FOR SUPPORT GROUPS FOR PARENTS. A LOT MORE SUPPORT GROUPS
COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT / ACTIVITIES (KIDS & ADULTS)	COMMENTS FOCUS ON THE NEED FOR MORE ACTIVITIES GEARED TOWARDS KIDS.	5 (13%)	SAFE PLACE FOR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT - SOME KIND OF STRUCTURE. THE MAYOR COULD HAVE EASILY OPENED UP A ROLLER RINK WITH AN ARCADE IN IT INSTEAD OF ANOTHER BAR THAT WE DIDN'T NEED. I THINK THAT THE YOUNGER KIDS NEED WAY MORE STUFF TO DO THAT IS GEARED TOWARDS THEM THAT THEY CAN GO TO.

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HOUSING	COMMENTS CITED THE NEED FOR MORE HOUSING OPTIONS.	3 (8%)	MORE AFFORDABLE HOUSING RENTAL / UTILITY ASSISTANCE LOTS OF PEOPLE LIVING IN THEIR HOMES WELL PAST WHEN THEY SHOULD BE BECAUSE THERE'S NO PLACE FOR THEM TO GO DUE TO THE NUMBER OF BEDS AND AFFORDABILITY.
OTHER	COMMENTS THAT DID NOT FIT INTO OTHER THEMES.	5 (13%)	TEACH KIDS THE BASICS OF HOW TO COOK AND COOK HEALTHY. CHILDCARE IS A BIG ISSUE. MOMS ARE TALKING ABOUT MAJOR ISSUES GETTING CHILDCARE AND A LOT END UP STAYING HOME BECAUSE THEY CAN'T FIND ANYTHING OR IS IT SO EXPENSIVE, THE WAGE THEY MAKE DIDN'T COVER THE CHILDCARE COST. PEOPLE NEED TO REALIZE THAT THEY WANT TO MAKE HIGHER WAGES AND THAT'S WHAT DRIVES THE COSTS UP EVERYWHERE ELSE. FOR YOU TO MAKE MORE, CHILDCARE, GOOD, SERVICES, ETC. COSTS NEED TO BE INCREASED AND THAT COMES BACK TO US TO PAY.

QUESTION 4: ONEIDA - WHAT ARE THE TOP THREE STRENGTHS OF OUR COMMUNITY?

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HEALTH CARE	COMMENTS CITED VARIOUS RESOURCES THAT HAVE ASSISTED THE COMMUNITY MEMBERS WITH PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH.	7 (33%)	<p>I FEEL VERY GRATEFUL, NOT ONLY THE COVID VACCINATION IS ALL FREE AND I CAN JUST BOOK MY APPOINTMENT THROUGH WALGREENS APP. AND ALSO THE MONKEYPOX VACCINATION THAT HAPPENED LAST YEAR.</p> <p>THE POLICE HERE ARE VERY UNDERSTANDING AND COMPASSIONATE WITH MENTAL HEALTH.</p> <p>TELEHEALTH. GETTING MORE ANSWERS VIA SPIRUS TELEHEALTH WHEN MESSAGING WITH THEM VS. AN IN-PERSON VISIT.</p>
COMMUNITY PROGRAMMING	COMMENT CITED THE NEED FOR INCREASED MARKETING ABOUT AVAILABLE RESOURCES.	5 (24%)	<p>SILVER SNEAKERS WAS PRE-COVID BUT NOT SURE IT'S AROUND ANYMORE.</p> <p>IT SEEMS LIKE WE DO HAVE A LOTS OF RESOURCES, BUT THE KNOWLEDGE OF THOSE RESOURCES AND THEN THE ACCESSIBILITY IS REALLY CHALLENGING.</p> <p>THERE'S A LOT OUT THERE TO HELP OUR COMMUNITY (JUST NEED TO COMMUNICATE THE RESOURCES AND PROGRAMS AND MARKET IT EFFECTIVELY).</p>
ASSISTANCE	COMMENTS FOCUS VARIOUS ASSISTANT PROGRAMS	4 (19%)	<p>THE FOOD PANTRY OUT HERE IS PHENOMENAL, IT'S JUST IT'S AWESOME.</p> <p>THE ENERGY ASSISTANCE IS AMAZING. THAT IS DEFINITELY HELPFUL.</p> <p>HOMELESS SHELTER.</p>
OTHER	COMMENTS THAT DID NOT FIT INTO OTHER THEMES.	3 (14%)	<p>SAFETY OF COMMUNITY</p> <p>NUMBER OF PEOPLE THAT ARE WILLING TO HELP OTHERS (CHRISTMAS GIFTS, MEALS AT VARIOUS PLACES AROUND TOWN)</p> <p>PRINTPACK IS A GOOD PAYING COMPANY. GOOD TO HAVE THIS OPTION (AS WELL AS A FEW OTHERS) IN RHINELANDER.</p>

QUESTION 5: ONEIDA - LOOKING AHEAD 10 OR 20 YEARS... IF YOU HAD A MAGIC WAND, WHAT WOULD YOUR COMMUNITY LOOK LIKE TO MAKE IT EASIER FOR YOU TO LIVE A HEALTHY LIFE? (WHAT WOULD BE IN PLACE, WHAT WOULD YOU SEE, WHAT OPPORTUNITIES WOULD BE AVAILABLE, WHAT BARRIERS WOULD NO LONGER BE THERE....?)

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MORE RESOURCES FOR COMMUNITY	COMMENTS CITED THE NEED FOR HOUSING OPTIONS.	6 (26%)	<p>I THINK THERE SHOULD BE MORE OPTIONS FOR SAFE PLACES LIKE THE WOMEN'S SEXUAL ASSAULT.</p> <p>I'VE SAID I'VE SEEN A LOT OF PEOPLE SLEEPING IN LAUNDROMATS BECAUSE IT'S THE ONLY THING OPEN AT NIGHT, SO MAYBE ACCESSIBILITY THE OF THE HOMELESS SHELTER THAT IS IN TOWN NEEDS TO BE RELOOKED AT AS FAR AS SIZE.</p> <p>ANOTHER THING THAT'S REALLY GOOD IS ALL OF THE SUPPORT THAT THEY GIVE FOR REFIXING YOUR HOUSE AND DOING ALL THAT, IT'S GREAT.</p>
BETTER ADVERTISING OF RESOURCES/ SERVICES	COMMENTS FOCUS ON THE NEED FOR INCREASED COMMUNICATE ABOUT RESOURCES THAT ARE AVAILABLE.	4 (17%)	<p>USE THE TV AND/OR RADIO TO COMMUNICATE SERVICES & RESOURCES. WHAT HEALTH SERVICES ARE, WHERE PEOPLE CAN GO, ETC. (THE GROUP DID ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THE THINGS THEY WANT ARE MORE BIG CITY...AND THEY KNOW THEY DON'T WANT BIG CITY LIVING.)</p> <p>80% OF COMMUNITY MAKES AT LEAST A WEEKLY TRIP TO WALMART - "ADVERTISE" THE RESOURCES/SERVICES THERE OR PUT FLYERS IN THE BAGS</p> <p>I AM REALLY FRUSTRATED THAT THINGS ARE GOING UP SO MUCH IN PRICE NOW TO FIX ANYTHING OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT, BUT THE COMMUNITY DOES HAVE A GOOD OUTREACH FOR YOU IF YOU NEED A HOT WATER TANK OR YOU NEED TO GET YOUR WATER SYSTEM FIGURED OUT BECAUSE IT'S TOO HARD OR WHATEVER.</p>

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SAFETY / INFRASTRUCTURE	COMMENTS CITED THE NEED TO MAINTAIN OR REBUILD INFRASTRUCTURE	4 (17%)	<p>UPKEPT BUILDINGS AND ROADS SO LIVING STAYS NICE.</p> <p>MORE TRANSPORTATION FOR PEOPLE OF ALL AGES. IF PEOPLE DON'T HAVE A CAR, YOU CAN'T GO ANYWHERE. THERE'S CITY TRANSIT AND ONE OTHER ORGANIZATION BUT YOU HAVE TO GIVE THEM 24-HOUR NOTICE TO GET PICKED UP. THERE ARE CABS, BUT THEY'RE PRETTY "GROSS".</p> <p>ADDRESS ISSUES WITH PFAS IN CITY WATER.</p>
COMMUNITY - SUPPORTIVE PEOPLE	COMMENTS FOCUS ON THE NEED FOR ACCEPTANCE, INCLUSION AND CONNECTION WITH OTHERS.	3 (13%)	<p>ACCEPTANCE FOR ALL PEOPLE. MORE OPEN MINDEDNESS. I THINK BOTH OF THAT COMES IN PART THROUGH CONNECTION, FACILITATING CONNECTION, HAVING ACTUAL COMMUNITY, WHICH WE HAVE A LOT OF MINOR COMMUNITIES BUT NOTHING COHESIVE.</p> <p>LIFE ISN'T ABOUT ALL OF THE STIMULATION THAT'S OUT IN THOSE BIG CITIES. IT'S MORE OF WHAT NATURE AND GOD OFFERS HERE IN THE NORTHWOODS.</p> <p>WHAT YOU SAID THAT'S ASPERGERS, LGBT, ALCOHOLIC, AND DRUG ADDICTION. ALL OF THOSE THINGS HAVE SUCH A NEGATIVE, INSTEAD OF LIFTING UP.</p>
OTHER	COMMENTS THAT DID NOT FIT INTO OTHER THEMES.	6 (26%)	<p>PAY TEACHERS AND CHILDCARE PROVIDERS MORE. YES, THEIR BENEFITS MIGHT BE A LITTLE BETTER, BUT IT TAKES A SPECIAL KIND OF PERSON TO BE IN THESE PROFESSIONS SO THEY SHOULD BE REWARDED.</p> <p>AVAILABILITY OF DOCTORS, NURSES AND THE WHOLE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM.</p> <p>WE HAVE BEEN TRYING TO FIND A HOUSE TO BUY FOR SIX YEARS AND WE CAN'T DO IT BECAUSE AS SOON AS IT GOES ON THE MARKET IT'S SOLD BECAUSE ALL THESE BIG TIME PEOPLE ARE COMING IN AND BUYING UP ALL THE REAL ESTATE SO IT MAKES IT ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE FOR ANYONE ELSE, AND THEN IT JUST RAISES EVERYTHING ELSE UP. NOW OUR RENTS MORE, OR THIS IS MORE, EVERYTHING IS COSTING AN ASTRONOMICAL AMOUNT.</p>

Focus Group Protocol

FACILITATOR GROUND RULES/INTRODUCTION

Before we begin, I'd like to briefly go through some ground rules:

1. First, this conversation is confidential. Please keep what is said here, along with the names of who were here, private.
2. This conversation will be recorded (audio only) and transcribed for data collection purposes. Once the transcription has been completed, the recording will be deleted. All data will be reported in aggregate, so no names will be associated with any reports.
3. Your participation is completely voluntary. If you wish to end your participation, you should feel free to leave the meeting at any time.
4. Please speak one at a time. I may ask some of you to shorten your comments or conclude what you are saying so other people can speak.
5. We encourage everyone to speak freely, but please use respectful, professional language.
6. Any questions before we get started?

Most of the questions we have today will focus on the needs of people in our community. We ask that you include your own perspective in your response but to also think about the greater community.

First we'll start off with introductions. Please share your first name and one thing you like most about living in our community.

Next we'll cover five questions regarding healthy living in our community.

7. What concerns or issues in your life or lives of your loved ones make it hard to be healthy or live a healthy life?
8. Has there been a change in the health of people close to you in the last three to five years? If so, please explain/describe. a. Better or worse?
9. What are the top three things that need to be improved in our community?
10. What are the top three strengths of our community?
11. Looking ahead 10 or 20 years... If you had a magic wand, what would our community look like to make it easier for you to live a healthy life?
 - a. What would be in place?
 - b. What would you see?
 - c. What opportunities would be available?
 - d. What barriers would no longer be there?

Those are all of the questions we had for you today. Is there anything anyone would like to add, or didn't have a chance to say during the discussion?

Thank you again for your participation.

If you would like to serve on a coalition that helps meet the aims of this report, or have another comment on this assessment, please contact one of the participating health departments for more information.

Participating Health Departments:

Forest County Health Department
200 E. Madison St.
Crandon, WI 54520
Phone: 715-478-3371

Oneida County Health Department
100 West Keenan St.
Rhinelander, WI 54501
Phone: 715-369-6111

Vilas County Health Department
330 Court St.
Eagle River, WI 54521
Phone: 715-479-3656

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