

2013 Community Needs Assessment – Sevier County



The Community Health Needs Assessment provides a roadmap to help communities reach their destination of a healthier place to call home. LeConte Medical Center is hopeful that this assessment will be a catalyst for meaningful collaboration and action as we address some of the most important health improvement opportunities facing Sevier County.

The Affordable Care Act requires not-for-profit hospitals to conduct a needs assessment every three years and to create an Implementation Plan to address the significant findings. This effort will assist us in “connecting the dots” between LeConte’s resources and the needs of the community, identifying additional resources, and engaging with community partners in initiatives that benefit the residents of Sevier County.

Our Assessment Partners

This process could not have been done without the following organizations and individuals who gave guidance and thoughtful input along the way. Their expertise and relationships helped us access the general population as well as the county’s most vulnerable residents and helped distill volumes of data into the most significant health issues in Sevier County. We deeply appreciate their commitment to the assessment process.

- Sevier County Health Department
- Sevier County Emergency Medical Services
- Mt. Hope Good Shepherd Clinic
- Sevier County Health Council
- Sevier County Schools
- East Tennessee State University, Quillen College of Medicine
- LeConte Medical Center
- Knox County Health Department, Department of Assessment and Planning
- Hispanic Health Advocate

Sevier County at a Glance

- 592.5 square miles
- 92,512 residents
- 30% increase in population since 2000
- Median age: 41 years
- 16% persons over 65
- 93.7% white
- 49.3% male
- \$40,353 median household income
- 8.7% unemployment
- 80% high school graduation
- 15% have bachelor's degree or higher, age 25+
- 27% uninsured adults
- 29% children in poverty
- 2,436:1 ratio of residents per primary care physician
- 3,645:1 ratio of residents per dentist
- 2,750:1 ratio of residents per mental health provider

For more demographic information about Sevier County:

<http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/#!/tennessee/2014/rankings/sevier/county/factors/overall/snapshot>

<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/47/47155.html>

http://www.tennessee.gov/tacir/County_Profile/sevier_profile.htm

Existing Healthcare Facilities and Resources

LeConte Medical Center

79-bed medical center offering a full array of medical specialties and technology in a mountain-modern setting. Services include 24-hour emergency care, surgery, and advanced imaging and diagnostics. The Dolly Parton Center for Women's Services offers mammography and bone density screenings, and the Dolly Parton Birthing Unit offers family-centered emergency care.

Sevier County Health Care Center

149-bed skilled nursing home

Mountain Home VA Medical Center

Primary care center for veterans

Sevier County Health Department

Provides an array of services including immunizations, well-child visits and health screenings, WIC and nutrition services, breast and cervical cancer screening, birth and death certificates, children's special services, HIV testing and counseling, sexually transmitted disease testing and treatment, and communicable disease control.

Mt. Hope Good Shepherd Clinic

Provides primary medical care, limited dental care, and help patients apply for pharmaceutical assistance. It is the only healthcare ministry in Sevier County that exclusively treats the medically uninsured.

Cherokee Health Systems

Located in Seymour, offering primary care and mental health services.

Assessment Data Process

To determine the health needs of the community, data were collected from various county, state and national sources; local hospital information, and data about homelessness. Additionally, we conducted research using face-to-face interviews, focus groups, and surveyed residents, both online and in person.

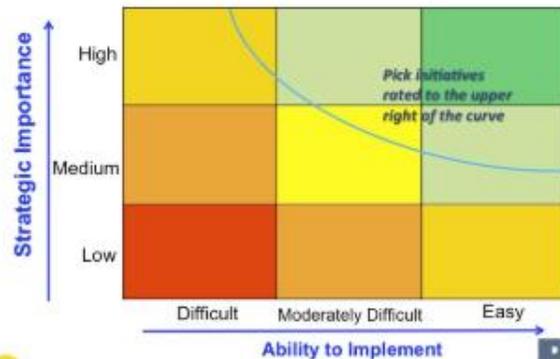
Our assessment partners helped determine a list of key stakeholders to participate in interviews and focus groups. Special attention was given to recruit those who serve the uninsured, chronically ill and minority populations. Medical students from Quillen College of Medicine at East Tennessee State University conducted many of the face-to-face interviews. Lancaster Market Research group conducted the focus groups, compiled the responses and did the data analysis.

With consultation from the Knox County Health Department, Department of Assessment and Planning, a survey instrument was developed for use in the Covenant Health hospital assessments. This survey asked residents about the health and quality of life in their community/county. There were questions about what creates health and what are the most important health issues and contributing factors. Survey sampling was matched with the counties' population for the attributes of age, education, income and ethnicity. Surveys were available at the Mt. Hope Good Shepherd Clinic, the Sevier County Health Department, LeConte Medical Center, Walter State Community College, large employers, and online using Survey Monkey.

Hundreds of health indicators were reviewed from the Tennessee Department of Public Health, County Health Rankings from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Tennessee Kids Count, as well as data from the US Census, hospital discharge data, and local homelessness data.

Notebooks containing all the health indicator data, focus group and community survey information were compiled.

Setting Implementation Priorities for Initiatives or Performance Measures



Suggested Priority Setting Criteria	
Strategic Importance	Ability to Implement
<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Likelihood to "move the needle" on performance measures for this goal or objective➤ Likelihood to drive performance of other goal(s) or objective(s) on the strategy map (usually higher on the map)➤ Implementation will be noticed; generate visibility to increase support➤ Urgency: Important to implement soon, e.g.,<ul style="list-style-type: none">➢ Other things depend on it, enables things to happen➢ Will lose an opportunity if not done soon➤ Severity of problem addressed, which can have at least two dimensions, e.g.,<ul style="list-style-type: none">➢ Number of people affected➢ Severity of the problem for those people who are affected➤ Number of people who will benefit from the initiative being considered➤ Strength of data supporting strategic importance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Availability of needed resources, or ability to get themAbility to get needed approvals or agreements, if any, to fully implement this initiative, e.g.,<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Agreement from organizations needed to participate in the initiative○ Administrative, regulatory, or legal approvals (e.g., permits, licenses, official legal opinions) from organizations that regulate or oversee activities that are part of the initiative○ Adoption of new policies or legislation by people in authority to do so, whether that involves approval by an administrative authority or governing body➤ Level of technical difficulty to properly implement the initiative

A Data Synthesis Team comprising 10-12 members was formed. The team included representatives from LeConte Medical Center, the health department, school system, Mt Hope Clinic, a minority health advocate, local emergency management services, and health educators. Team members were each given a data notebook and then met several times to discuss the health issues. The team began to list, categorize, and prioritize the assessment findings. Using a Setting Priorities Tool developed by the Public Health Foundation, the team was able to further reduce its list of issues by rating each health issue's strategic importance relative to its ability to implement an effective intervention.

The health issues that were selected from the Setting Priorities Tool were then voted on to determine the most significant issues.

Data gaps identified by the Team included county specific information of the incidence of neonatal abstinence syndrome and mental health data. In both cases state and regional data were available, but it was difficult to determine the data implications at the county level. Additionally, homelessness data is limited to one episodic event each year.

Key Assessment Findings

When asked to rate the overall health of Sevier County, focus group participants' responses ranged from 'poor' to 'excellent'. Putting it in terms of a grade, the average grade was a C+. In determining the most significant issues to improve the health of Sevier County we kept posing the question, "What improvements are needed to attain a B+ ?" Ultimately, the assessment group determined the following to be priority areas for Sevier County:

- Prescription Drug Abuse
- Chronic Conditions related to Obesity
- Childhood Obesity
- Teen Pregnancy
- Dental Care for the Uninsured

Other Findings

What the residents told us:

The three most important factors for a healthy Sevier County are:

- Low crime / safe neighborhoods (response 50%)
- Good jobs and healthy economy (response 43%)
- Access to healthcare (response 35%)

The three most important health problems in Sevier County are:

- Obesity (response 52%)
- Heart disease and stroke (response 33%)
- Cancers (response 28%)

The three most important "risky behaviors" in Sevier County are:

- Drug abuse (response 82%)
- Alcohol abuse (response 52%)
- Tobacco use (response 43%)

Areas of Strengths and Opportunities

Quality of Life

Strengths

- 86% of respondents are 'satisfied to very satisfied' with the quality of life in Sevier County.
- 79% of respondents are 'satisfied to very satisfied' with Sevier County as a place to grow old and as a place to raise a family.
- Lower prevalence of violent crime than the state average, but not lower than US benchmarks.

Opportunities

- Only 50% of respondents are satisfied with economic opportunities in Sevier County.
- High School graduation rate (80%) is lower than the state average (86%).
- Children in poverty (29%) is higher than the statewide rate and double that of US benchmark (14%).

Overall Health

Strengths

- Sevier County is ranked 25th healthiest county in Tennessee out of 95 counties.
- Sevier County is one of the fastest growing counties in Tennessee. Its population has increased by 30% since 2000, and has become more ethnically diverse.

Opportunities

- Teen birth rate higher than Tennessee and US benchmarks.
- Adult smoking rates are higher than the Tennessee rate and double the national benchmark.

Health Care

Strengths

- Preventable hospital stays are considerably below the statewide average.
- 68% of survey respondents are 'satisfied' to very satisfied' with healthcare resources (access, cost, availability and options) in Sevier County

Opportunities

- The uninsured adult rate for Sevier County is 27%. Many jobs are in the service industry and do not offer health benefits.
- The number of physicians, dentists and mental health providers is quite low based on the need of Sevier County's population.
- Access to affordable dental care and mental health counseling for mild to moderate conditions is lacking.
- The percentage of adults who could not see a doctor in the previous 12 months due to cost was 26% in Sevier County, compared to 16% for Tennessee.

Healthy Behaviors

Strengths

- Most adults are receiving recommended screenings.
- Sexually transmitted infections are 52% fewer than the statewide rate.

Opportunities

- Prescription drug abuse is a significant issue in Sevier County. The number of infants born addicted to drugs has increased markedly over previous years.
- Adult obesity is slightly below the state average, but is a growing concern for adolescents in Sevier County.
- 29% percent of adults report getting no physical activity.

Data Sources

Community Themes & Strengths Assessment from Key Informant Interviews in Sevier County, TN
Community Health Survey
countyhealthrankings.org
tennessee.gov
census.gov
kidscount.org
tvhomeless.org
hit.tate.tn.us
hrsa.gov

Acknowledgments

Even before the assessment process was completed, its value was becoming evident. This process has expanded our network of community partners and has given us the chance to work with organizations that are new to us. The assessment outcomes have focused our efforts and resources on what is important to the community and what has the potential to meaningfully and measurably improve the health of Sevier County.

We wish to acknowledge the following individuals for assisting us in our first assessment process. These partners provided valuable expertise and important perspectives in helping us reach the important conclusions of the assessment.

- Ellen Wilhoit – President & CAO, (retired) LeConte Medical Center
- Garnett Angelos – Community Health Coordinator, LeConte Medical Center
- Mary Vance – Director of Mt. Hope Good Shepherd Clinic
- Gloria Christiansen – Hispanic Health Advocate
- Rick Valentine – Emergency Medical Services
- Jana Chambers – Director, Sevier County Health Department
- Kathy Scruggs – Health Educator, Sevier County Health Department
- Don Best – Sevier County School System

Many thanks to all the community organizations who helped us distribute the survey throughout Sevier County and to those leaders who participated in interviews.

Additionally, we thank the hundreds of residents who took the time to share their perspectives and experiences in the community health survey. LeConte Medical Center and Covenant Health remain committed to improving the health and quality of life in our communities.