



Spokane Alliance Healthcare Research Action Team

Community Needs Assessment





Background

The Spokane Alliance is a non-partisan organization of religious institutions, educators, unions and other civic non-profits organizing for the common good in Spokane. We believe that by working together we have the power to change our communities for the better.

The Spokane Alliance's Healthcare Research Action Team (HRAT) was formed in response to alliance members saying that healthcare is a significant stress in their lives.





Background

To best understand how the team could impact health in Spokane, the Spokane Alliance's Healthcare Research Action Team decided to conduct a health needs assessment of its member organizations.

The Founding Dean of the WSU Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine agreed to a partnership with the Spokane Alliance and to incorporate the findings of the needs assessment into the development of their mobile clinic program.





Methods

1. Each active HRAT team member committed to connecting with 2-3 Spokane Alliance member organizations.
2. ~2 HRAT team members were assigned to each organization.
3. Listening sessions were held with member organizations this past summer: An opportunity to hear stories from community members.
4. Data was compiled; HRAT leads wrote the needs assessment.
5. Document was provided to WSU for use in planning of mobile clinic, aiming to serve Spokane and other communities.





Who Participated?

- 13 Spokane institutions and 111 community members!
- Participating institutions: Covenant United Methodist Church, Firefighters Local 29, Global Neighborhood, Health Equity Circle - Spokane WSU Riverpoint Campus, Independent Grassroots, SEIU 1199NW, SEIU Healthcare 775NW, SEIU Local 6 - Spokane, Unitarian Universalist Church of Spokane, Washington State Nurses Association - Spokane, West Central Episcopal Mission, Westminster Congregational United Church of Christ, NAACP (*not member organization*).





Findings: Healthcare System Complexity

Many Spokane Alliance members shared stories of difficulties they encountered as a result of the complexity of the healthcare system, particularly relating to the following topics:

- Insurance system complexity
- Health system navigation
- Difficulty accessing care





Findings: Affordability

- Frequent themes:
 - Healthcare costs.
 - Insurance costs (premiums).
 - Medications costs (copays).
- Regardless of insurance status, individuals expressed difficulty covering costs of prescriptions, ER visits, and hospital stays.
- Medicare/Medicaid: Gap between qualifying for state services and affording cost of care; lack of coverage for home care at night.





Findings: Mental Health

Participants shared stories relating to challenges with accessing mental health services and their experience of stigma around mental health care. The two topics discussed the most in this theme were:

- Difficulty accessing mental health care due to lack of services
- Reluctance to seek care due to concerns over stigma and anonymity





Requests for WSU Mobile Clinic

- Target efforts to specific communities:
 - Use pre-established institutions (i.e., churches and schools).
 - Easy access to lower-income neighborhoods.
 - Elderly communities.
- Requested services include:
 - Primary care.
 - Reproductive healthcare (pre- and postnatal support).
- Care coordination:
 - Local providers; patient navigators to improve access; patient anonymity.





Other Emerging Themes

- Dental care:
 - Access, including costs and long wait times.
 - System complexity.
- Urgent/ER care:
 - Reduced diagnostic capabilities in Urgent Care.
 - ER frustrations include costs and long wait times.
- Respect for others:
 - Ageism; cultural barriers; language barriers; treating those with disabilities; respect for transgender patients; stereotyping.





Update on WSU Mobile Medicine Program

- Goal: Mobile clinic operating in August 2019.
- Provision of primary care, urgent care, and preventive services.





Recommendations and Next Steps

- A continuing partnership with the City Council.
- HRAT is researching how cities/organizations have addressed outlined issues/concerns; recommendations may follow.





Questions?



SPOKANE ALLIANCE
Organizing for the Common Good.