

West County HealthCare Foundation

REPORT OF THE  
COMMUNITY  
HEALTH  
ASSESSMENT

**Presented to the Board of Directors  
January 23, 2001**

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# West County HealthCare Foundation

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### RESULTS OF THE COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT

*CONDUCTED FROM OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2000*

From October 1 - December 20, 2000 almost 2,300 contacts were made with West Sonoma County community members through three separate venues: community meetings and focus groups, key stakeholder interviews, and written surveys. The California Endowment, the state's largest private health funder, awarded a grant to West County HealthCare Foundation to develop a plan to transform Palm Drive Hospital into a community-based health provider able to address the healthcare needs of remote West Sonoma County. The community health assessment is one part of this project. The community health assessment was conducted by consultants Bobbie Wunsch and Babs Kavanaugh of the Pacific Health Consulting Group, in collaboration with the West County HealthCare Foundation and a number of community sponsors.

A community assessment helps community members obtain the information needed to make decisions and to plan for change in their community. It is not designed to be an academic research process. From the beginning, the West County community health assessment process was conducted with an eye toward three strategic goals:

- To understand the current condition of health services in West County
- To evaluate the current service system's capacity to support the needs of community members
- To build community support for changes in the health care system.

By involving community residents, community leaders and services providers, the community assessment process will help to establish better understanding of changes that are needed across the community; ensure that new or proposed services respond to community specific needs; build trusting relationships between community residents and health providers; and help establish the credibility of the effort throughout the community.

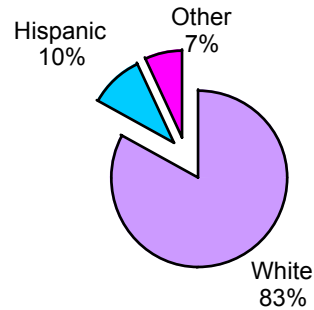
#### **Participant Demographics**

A total of 2,268 community members participated in the community health assessment project - 2,040 completed surveys, 203 participated in community meetings from throughout West County and 25 community leaders were interviewed. This represents

almost 10% of the total population of West County.<sup>1</sup> The ethnicity and race of the community health assessment participants mirror the population of West County in general. The age of the community health assessment participants is older than the population of West County as a whole.

### All Community Participants

Ethnicity	
White/Non-Hispanic	83%
Latino	10%
Mixed	3%
Native American	2%
Asian/Pacific Islander	0%
African American	0%
Other	1%



Residence	
Sebastopol/Freestone/ Hessel	41%
Guerneville/Rio Nido	17%
Forestville/Rio Dell	13%
Cazadero	5%
Bodega Bay	4%
Camp Meeker/Occidental	4%
Monte Rio	4%
Graton	3%
Duncan Mills/Jenner/Villa Grande	2%
Other	5%

Age			
		Community Meetings	
14 – 19	1%	under 18	32%
20 – 39	14%	18 – 25	8%
40 – 49	24%	26 – 45	18%
50 – 59	27%	46 – 69	38%
60 – 69	14%	70 or older	4%
70 or older	19%		

## Methodology

**Community Meetings and Focus Groups:** A total of twenty community meetings, co-sponsored by community-based agencies, were conducted from October 26 – December 5, 2000 throughout the communities of West Sonoma County. Community meetings were held in Bodega (1), Camp Meeker (1), Cazadero (1), Forestville (6), Graton (1), Guerneville (4), Occidental (1), and Sebastopol (5). Targeted focus groups were held with seniors; Hispanic parents, teens, and farm workers; non-Hispanic teens; and members of the gay and lesbian communities. Six of the targeted focus groups were conducted in Spanish. These meetings were organized specifically to hear the voices of individuals who are often not heard from in West County.

A total of 203 people attended the meetings. Of those, 52% of the participants were women, 48% were men, 44% were Caucasian, 39% were Hispanic, 5% identified themselves as multi-ethnic, 2% were African American and 1% were Native American.

<sup>1</sup> California Rural Health Policy Council. California Rural Demographics: Sonoma County.

**Stakeholder Interviews:** Twenty-five community leaders representing West County businesses, schools, the faith community, public safety, seniors, community-based service organizations, health providers, and others, participated in a series of telephone and in person interviews from October 26 – December 31, 2000. These leaders were identified in collaboration with Palm Drive Hospital and recommended by West County residents at community meetings.

**Surveys:** The community health survey was distributed community-wide. The surveys were printed in English and in Spanish. Surveys were inserted in local newspapers with accompanying articles: the *Russian River Monthly* (distributed to 10,000 readers on November 1, 2000), *Sonoma West Times* (distributed to 6,000 readers on November 19, 2000, and 4,000 readers on November 16, 2000), and the *Bodega Bay Navigator* (distributed to 1,300 readers on November 14, 2000).

Surveys were mailed with cover letters from the sponsoring organizations to members of the Sebastopol Area Chamber of Commerce (375 businesses in the West County Area), Advocacy Resource Center (75 West County families with children with special needs), and a Cazadero-based community organization (200 surveys). Surveys were also distributed at the Russian River Health Center, the Occidental Health Center, Palm Drive Hospital, Guerneville Mental Health Services, Integrative Medical Clinic of Santa Rosa, Spanish Workers Center, Fort Ross School and other locations throughout West County, as well as at all the community meetings and focus groups. Two Latino health outreach workers assisted in the effort to distribute and complete surveys within the Hispanic community.

### **Key Highlights**

- Of the survey respondents, 90% are covered by health insurance and 60% are covered by dental insurance with 54% covered by HMO, 24% by Medicare, 19% by PPO, 9% by Medi-Cal and 17% by other (respondents answered multiple times); 24% answered that there had been a time in the last three years when they had not had health insurance and 52% answered that they had not had dental insurance. This generally compares with UCLA Center for Health Policy Research estimating that, in 1998, 16% of Sonoma County residents 0-64 were uninsured.
- Of the survey respondents, the vast majority generally uses health services in West County when those services are available; 29% used Palm Drive Hospital in the last two years for services; and 30% used Palm Drive Hospital Emergency Room in the past year.
- In general, people who have used Palm Drive Hospital have been either extremely satisfied (38%) or very satisfied (42%) with the services there. They have also been satisfied (extremely or very = 77%) with the care they have received from their doctor or clinic.

- Over half (52%) of all survey respondents, 67% of respondents with children and 74% of Hispanic respondents, had used an emergency room in the past year. Almost a third (30%) of all respondents had used Palm Drive Hospital emergency room.
- While participants were generally covered by insurance, the difficulty they had in using insurance revolved around issues of expense (66%) or access (78% - wait too long for appointment, hours inconvenient, transportation, could not find a doctor to accept insurance, child care).
- Participants suggested that providers could improve their services by shortening the time to get an appointment (51%), making it easier to get advice when the office is closed (30%) or easier to get results or reschedule appointments (30%), adding evening hours (30%), and adding weekend hours (26%) – once again all issues of access.
- In each community, more than 60% of the respondents thought that there was a need for a part-time clinic in their community for themselves. A vastly lower percentage stated that they needed those services for their children (8-26% would use such a service).
- Most participants (71%) get their health information from their health care provider, 28% get their health information from books, newspapers, magazines, 27% from friends and family members and 22% from the Internet.
- Participants area-wide thought that the two most pressing health problems in West County were drug and alcohol abuse (50%) and access to services (30%).
- Seniors felt that transportation to services was extremely important.
- Hispanics felt that access to services was extremely important.

## **Community Strengths**

Across all of West County several common themes were heard regarding the region's assets and strengths. The natural beauty, access to the coast, the clean environment and endless opportunities for exercise and recreation are what draws people to the area. The remoteness of the area has created an independence and self-reliance that residents describe with pride.

The West County Health Centers, Palm Drive Hospital, the West County Community Services, the senior centers in Guerneville and Sebastopol, and local volunteer fire departments were most frequently mentioned as assets to the communities. Spanish-speaking health care providers are greatly appreciated and considered a strength.

Community members spoke often of the number of options available and the widespread acceptance of alternative medical care as an asset in their community.

Community Meetings & Key Informants	Community Surveys
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The West County Health Centers, Palm Drive Hospital, The West County Community Services, the senior centers in Guerneville and Sebastopol, and local volunteer fire departments that are well trained and equipped to address emergencies were most frequently mentioned as assets to the communities.</li> <li>• The natural beauty, access to the coast, the clean environment and endless opportunities for exercise and recreation are what draws people to the area.</li> <li>• The remoteness of the area has created an independence and self reliance that residents describe with pride.</li> <li>• Services and resources most often mentioned were well-trained HIV/AIDS specialists at the West County Health Centers and accessible low-income care and services. Spanish-speaking care providers are greatly appreciated and considered a strength.</li> <li>• Community members spoke often of the number of options available and the widespread acceptance of alternative medical care as an asset in their community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 77% are extremely or very satisfied with their health care</li> <li>• 74% are extremely or very satisfied with their dental care</li> </ul>

## Health Concerns

*"We are blessed with the health center but they can only offer so much." (From a key informant interview with a senior services provider.)*

*"We do not have enough care providers especially in the more rural areas. Most of the in home care providers are underpaid and undertrained." (From a key informant interview conducted with a senior services provider.)*

Across all of West County community voices expressed a need for emergency and urgent care services and services that address the growing number of seniors, Hispanic and migrant workers and those with limited resources (e.g. working poor). The populations identified as in most need of services were the seniors, Hispanic migrant workers, teens, those with limited resources and the homeless.

Access to health care services and a need for in-home services for HIV+ patients and seniors were most often mentioned as service needs. Alcohol and drug problems were mentioned most often as the biggest health problem across all of the West County communities.

Issues	Community Meetings	Key Informants	Community Surveys
Pressing community needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emergency care</li> <li>Urgent care</li> <li>Access to transportation</li> <li>Access to care, need for in home services for HIV+ patients &amp; seniors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transportation for the elderly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When asked about pressing community health needs</li> <li>50% named drug and alcohol abuse</li> <li>30% named access to health care</li> </ul>
Populations in need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aging population</li> <li>Spanish speaking migrant workers</li> <li>Working poor</li> <li>Teens</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health care services for the elderly</li> <li>The undocumented workers</li> <li>Children without insurance</li> <li>Fishing industry workers</li> <li>Children of migrant workers</li> </ul>	<p>When asked about populations in need of additional support or services,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>59% named low income/poor</li> <li>39% named seniors</li> <li>34% named teens and children</li> <li>30% named farm workers</li> <li>27% named people with special needs</li> <li>27% named single parents</li> </ul>
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Geriatric care</li> <li>No mental health care</li> <li>Drug/alcohol abuse treatment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The community is starting to see an increase in elder abuse and needs someone locally to follow up on those who are isolated</li> <li>Drug and alcohol abuse treatment</li> </ul>	

## **Healthcare Challenges**

*"There is a lot of diversity in the ability of residents in the West County to pay for health care services. We have the very poor to the very wealthy." (From a key informant interview conducted with local business person.)*

*"The migrant workers are afraid to use the services, because of their immigration status. They are afraid of anything that looks official." (From a key informant interview conducted with a Latino service provider.)*

Overall health-related challenges were described as affordability and access to healthcare services.

Insurance issues were identified across a broad range of concerns -- from lack of insurance to insurance policies that proscribe healthcare choice to travel outside of the community to access services. Insurance restrictions were added as challenges because they do not cover alternative care, some mental health services or dental care. The working poor are unable to afford insurance and the health care system is seen as too expensive for them as well as for the seniors.

There are limited transportation services in the West County and the distance to basic healthcare services was frequently named as a challenge. For anything other than basic

health needs (that can be handled at local health centers or physicians offices) people feel that they have to drive or be driven to Santa Rosa.

Limited mental health, dental and nutrition services were identified as challenges: many seniors are isolated and become depressed; low-cost dental services, including Medi-Cal dental services, are lacking; and nutrition education is a concern of many of the residents, who requested information about eating healthy.

Challenges	Community Meetings & Key Informants	Community Surveys
Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Affordability</li> <li>▪ Access to health care</li> <li>▪ Insurance restrictions</li> <li>▪ Facilities for senior care</li> <li>▪ Specialty services</li> <li>▪ Mental health services</li> <li>▪ Dental services</li> <li>▪ Nutrition services</li> <li>▪ Transportation</li> <li>▪ Undocumented people who are afraid to access health care services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When asked about barriers to access and about ways to improve health care</li> <li>• 51% wanted to shorten the time to get an appointment</li> <li>• 44% thought care was too expensive</li> <li>• 37% stated they had to wait too long to get an appointment</li> <li>• When asked what could be done to improve services,</li> <li>• 30% wanted providers to make it easier to phone the provider to reschedule or get test results</li> <li>• 30% wanted it to be easier to get advice after hours</li> <li>• 30% wanted more evening hours</li> <li>• 26% wanted more week-end hours</li> <li>• 25% wanted providers to make it easier to get advice after hours</li> </ul>

## **Priorities for New and Expanded Services**

*"We need to promote a better understanding of the connection between good dental care and overall improved health care." (From a key informant interview conducted with a Provider.)*

*"We could coordinate with some of the mobile health services. An adequate clinic, or rotating clinics of different types with a pharmacy component. This needs to be adequate facility-a big bus that is already equipped so you are not setting up in the Grange Hall." (From a key informant interview conducted with a local business person.)*

The West County communities lacking a health provider in their immediate vicinity identified a need of a local clinic or physician or mobile health care services to bring medical and screening services to their communities.

Priorities	Community Meetings	Key Informants	Community Surveys
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A mobile clinic to cover the Coastal communities</li> <li>• Transportation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A local clinic in areas without one</li> <li>• Mobile clinic</li> <li>• Regular screening services</li> <li>• Drug/alcohol treatment services</li> <li>• Mental health services</li> <li>• Oral health</li> <li>• HIV/AIDS services</li> </ul>	<p>When asked if they would use health care services in their community, 71% said they would use them for themselves or their children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When asked what services they would like to see added to their community,</li> <li>• 32% named complementary or alternative medicine</li> <li>• 25% named urgent care</li> <li>• 25% named health screening</li> </ul>
Populations in need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At-risk populations—low income; elderly</li> <li>• Hispanic population for bilingual care</li> <li>• Teens, preventive and mental health services</li> <li>• Fishing industry workers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seniors who need visiting nurses can't get them here. It is hard to find people to come and assist people physically in their home.</li> <li>• Resource for teens</li> <li>• Undocumented families</li> </ul>	
Education and prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Availability of health information where/how to access (e.g., phone triage for health information; advice nurse-Kaiser model)</li> <li>• Knowing about resources (e.g., publicize Fire District's Senior Security services)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Across the board prevention</li> </ul>	

## **Improving Overall Community Health**

*"If we are looking at expanding on improving health care services, we need to look at the assets that we have and collaborate. (From a key informant interview conducted with a CBO.)*

*"We need to have access to more information from a broader perspective of approaches that promotes and encourages an open minded discussion. There could be a public service web site with frequently asked questions about health care that would also offer tips on improving the overall health of the community." (From a key informant interview conducted with service provider.)*

Community members described the things they could do to improve the overall health of their community as supporting and strengthening the current services, encouraging linkages between services and more dialogue about alternative health care services.

## **Special Thanks**

The community health assessment would not have been possible without the assistance and support of the following organizations and businesses: Sebastopol Area Chamber of Commerce, United Way of Sonoma-Mendocino-Lake, *Russian River Monthly*, *Bodega Bay Navigator*, *Sonoma West Times and News*, Bodega Bay Community Association, Bodega Bay Fire Protection District, Bodega Bay Area Chamber of Commerce, Bodega Harbour Homeowners Association, Comp Meeker Community Builders, West County Health Centers in Guerneville and Occidental, Fort Ross Elementary School, Montgomery Elementary School, El Molino High School, Food for Thought, Mexico Lindo Café, River Child Care Services, Face-to-Face, Russian River Senior Center, West County Community Services, Occidental Chamber of Commerce, Occidental Community Council, Harmony School District, YMCA of Occidental, Analy High School, Healing Arts, Integrative Medical Clinic of Santa Rosa, Advocacy Resource Center, Catholic Charities, Spanish Workers Center and Migrant Childhood Education.

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# West County HealthCare Foundation

## REPORT OF THE Community HEALTH ASSESSMENT January 2001

### I. Background

The West County HealthCare Foundation (WCHF) is a community-based health care organization committed to providing quality health care in West Sonoma County. The WCHF operates Palm Drive Hospital, an emergency and acute care facility located in Sebastopol.

The WCHF was incorporated in December 1998 in response to the announcement by Columbia/HCA that it intended to close Palm Drive Hospital in January 1999. A group of concerned citizens, physicians and community leaders mobilized hundreds of volunteers to raise the funds to save the hospital. The hospital became a community asset on March 1, 1999.

In April 2000, a special election created the Palm Drive Health Care District and authorized general obligation bonds to provide financing options for the permanent stability of Palm Drive Hospital. Together with the WCHF, there is an effort to conduct joint strategic planning that will provide for quality health care services for all residents of West Sonoma County.

The WCHF's mission is to reach the residents of West Sonoma County so that the medically underserved population has improved access to quality health care. Guided by the communities served, it is dedicated to improving health care with quality and compassion.

The California Endowment, the state's largest private health funder, awarded a one-year \$429,760 grant to WCHF to develop a plan to transform Palm Drive Hospital into a community-based health provider able to address the healthcare needs of remote West Sonoma County in a systematic and integrated fashion.

The community health assessment is one part of this project. A community process was initiated to assess the health care needs of West Sonoma County residents and to identify the issues that could improve access to health care services, from October 1 to December 15, 2000.

This report focuses on the community health assessment as a first step to improving health for West County residents. It can be seen as a result of the WCHF's vision:

The West County HealthCare Foundation will be viewed by our communities as their health resource. WCHF will distinguish itself through

- Establishing itself as a trusted, community-governed and –sponsored resource accessible to everyone.
- Building an endowment fund to assure sufficient resources to carry out our mission.
- Continually assessing the health status of our people in order to be responsive to the needs of our communities.
- Developing alliances with other health care systems which assure access to a network of quality health care services.
- Optimizing resources to offer alternative medicine options, promote wellness and improve the health status of our communities.

## II. Purpose of Community Assessments

This community process has been a first step in the development of a better understanding of health care needs and concerns of West County. Community assessment can be an empowering experience for the people and communities involved, when it focuses on community capacity and actively involves community members as an integral part of the process. Community assessment also identifies those subpopulations most in need of services and determines the most acceptable and culturally sensitive way for services to be offered.

Community assessments lay the foundation upon which programs or services as well as their organizational structure will be built. It helps provide community leaders and members with the information needed to make decisions and plan for change in their community. It is not designed to be an academic research process. From the beginning, the assessment process should be conducted with an eye toward three strategic goals:

1. To understand the current conditions of all families in the community
2. To evaluate the current service system's capacity or incapacity to support their health growth and development
3. To build community support for, and ownership of, a new intervention.

By involving community leaders, service providers, and most importantly, residents, in gathering data, the process helps to:

- Establish joint ownership for change across these groups
- Ensure that new or proposed services respond to community specific needs
- Build trusting relationships between community residents and service providers
- Help to establish the credibility of the project in the community.

The goal is to collect the information in order to design services and systems that are both of the community – built from the resources available in the community – and for the community --- designed to meet its specific needs.<sup>2</sup>

An important aspect of community assessment is asset mapping. The traditional techniques of needs assessments focusing on community problems often translate into activities that teach people the nature of the problems and the value of services as the answer to their problems. As a result, many low income neighborhoods are now environments of services where behaviors are affected because residents come to believe that their well-being depends upon being a client. Gradually they see themselves as people with special needs, become consumers of services and have no incentive to be producers.

Evidence shows that significant community development only takes place when local community members are committed to investing themselves and their resources in the effort.<sup>3</sup> While that means change won't come from the top down, or outside in, outside assistance can help communities to develop their own assets.

### III. Methodology of the West County Community Assessment

**Community Meetings:** A total of twenty community meetings, co-sponsored by community based agencies, were conducted from October 26 – December 5, 2000, throughout the communities of West Sonoma County. Community meetings were held in Bodega (1), Camp Meeker (1), Cazadero (1), Forestville (6), Graton (1), Guerneville (4), Occidental (1), and Sebastopol (5). As part of these community meetings, targeted focus groups were held with seniors; Hispanic parents, teens, and farm workers; non-Hispanic teens and members of the gay and lesbian communities. Six of the targeted focus groups were conducted in Spanish. These targeted focus groups were organized specifically to hear the voices of individuals who are often not heard from in West County.

A total of 203 people attended the community meetings: 52% of the participants were women and 48% were men; 44% were Caucasian, 39% were Hispanic, 5% identified themselves as multi-ethnic, 2% were African American and 1% were Native American. (See Attachment A – Report of Individual Community Meetings.)

**Stakeholder Interviews:** Twenty-five community leaders representing business, schools, the faith community, public safety, seniors, CBOs, health providers, and others,

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<sup>2</sup> Samuels, Bryan, et.al. Know Your Community: A Step-by-Step Guide to Community needs and Resources Assessment. Family Resource Coalition of America, 1995, p. vii.

<sup>3</sup> McKnight, John and Kretzman, John. *Mapping Community Capacity*. Center for Urban Affairs and Policy Research, Northwestern University, 1990.

participated in a series of telephone and in person interviews from October 26 – December 31, 2000. These leaders were identified in collaboration with Palm Drive Hospital and recommended at community meetings. (See Attachment B – List of Stakeholder Interviews and Report of Stakeholder Interviews.)

**Surveys:** The health assessment survey was distributed community-wide. (See Attachment C – Community Survey, English and Spanish.) The surveys were printed in English and in Spanish. Surveys were inserted in local newspapers with accompanying articles: the *Russian River Monthly* (distributed to 10,000 readers on November 1, 2000), *Sonoma West Times* (distributed to 6,000 readers on November 19, 2000 and 4,000 readers on November 16, 2000), and the *Bodega Bay Navigator* (distributed to 1,300 readers on November 14, 2000). (See Attachment D – Newspaper Inserts.)

Surveys were mailed with cover letters from the sponsoring organization to members of the Sebastopol Area Chamber of Commerce (375 businesses in the West County Area) (see Attachment E – Sebastopol Area Chamber of Commerce Letter), Advocacy Resource Center (75 West County families with special needs), and a community based organization in Cazadero (200 surveys). Surveys were also distributed at the Russian River Health Center, the Occidental Health Center, Palm Drive Hospital, Guerneville Mental Health Services, Integrative Medical Clinic of Santa Rosa, Spanish Workers Center, Fort Ross School and other central locations throughout West County, as well as at all the community meetings and focus groups. Two Hispanic health outreach workers assisted in the effort to distribute and compile surveys within the Hispanic community.

### **Collaborations:**

This community process could not have been possible without the collaboration of

- Sebastopol Area Chamber of Commerce
- *Bodega Bay Navigator*
- *Russian River Monthly*
- *Sonoma West Times & News*
- United Way Sonoma-Mendocino-Lake.

Each of these organizations went beyond the “call of duty” to assist in distributing surveys or co-sponsoring community meetings. They all wanted this community assessment process to succeed.

### **Special Thanks:**

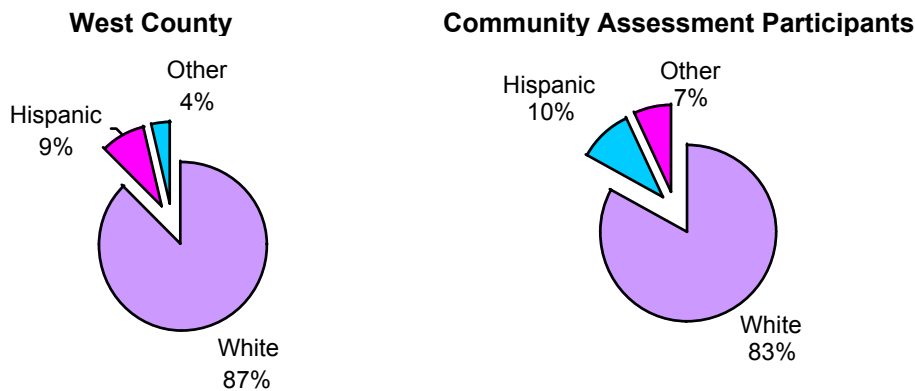
These people were instrumental in the widespread community input by organizing community meetings, participating in stakeholder interviews and distributing community surveys. This process could not have reached 2,300 West County residents without their assistance. Their contributions are much appreciated.

Jesus Aguado, Outreach Worker, County Health Department  
Alisa Albor, Healthy Families Outreach Worker, Alliance Medical Center  
Carol Alderman, River Child Care Services, Guerneville  
Bruce Alfano, Executive Director, West County Community Services, Guerneville  
Deberah Anderson, President, Occidental Chamber of Commerce, Occidental  
Frank Anderson, Principal, El Molino High School, Forestville  
Jane Barry, Outreach worker, Russian River Health Center, Cazadero  
Leon Beck, Bloomfield resident  
Dale and Heidi Bohan, Cazadero General Store, Cazadero  
Ernie Bozarth, Executive Director, Advocacy Resource Center, Santa Rosa  
Larry and Susan Capelis, Jewelry Factory, Graton  
Ron Carp, Food for Thought, Forestville  
Clark Champion, General Manager, Bodega Harbour Homeowners Association, Bodega Bay  
Diane Causey, Superintendent, Fort Ross Elementary School, Cazadero  
Ed Dechant, Bodega Bay Area Chamber of Commerce, Bodega Bay  
Kevin Farrell, Director of Client Services, Face-to-Face – Sonoma County Aids Network, Guerneville  
Mike Farrell, President, Bodega Harbour Homeowners Association, Bodega Bay  
Kathy Ficco, Executive Director, Medical Access Programs, St. Joseph's Health Foundation, Occidental  
Missy Freeman, Bodega Bay Community Association, Bodega Bay  
Dave Hamilton, Occidental Community Council, Occidental  
Dr. Allan Hill, Forestville  
Sheila Horowitz, Healing Arts, Sebastopol  
LeAnn James, Certified Nurse Midwife, Petaluma Health Center  
Skip Jirrels, Administrator, Integrative Medical Clinic of Santa Rosa, Sebastopol  
Ed Kehoe, Director, Spanish Workers Center, Santa Rosa  
Andrea Learned, Executive Director, Face-to-Face Sonoma County AIDS Network, Guerneville

Amy Lemmar, Camp Meeker Community Builders, Camp Meeker  
Daniel Lapsansky, Sonoma County AIDS Commission, Guerneville  
Frank and Kathleen Mayhew, Graton  
Vicky Mayster, Head of Immigration and Resettlement, Catholic Charities  
Jim McClure, El Molino High School, Forestville  
Jane McDonough, Superintendent, Harmony School District, Occidental  
Barbara McElhiney, Bodega Bay Fire Protection District  
Judy Mercieca, Superintendent, Montgomery Elementary School, Cazadero  
Nancy O'Brien, Resident, Bodega Bay, Certified Nurse Midwife at Petaluma Health Center  
Nick Ohaida, Migrant Childhood Education, Santa Rosa  
Michael Onstatt, Sonoma County AIDS Commissioner, Forestville  
*Press Democrat*  
Mario Ramos, Mexico Lindo Café, Graton  
Manual Rivera, Catholic Charities Legal Services Coordinator, Immigration Counselor, Catholic Charities, Santa Rosa  
Alma Roman, El Molino High School, Forestville  
Teresa Romando, Sebastopol Area Chamber of Commerce, Sebastopol  
*Russian River Times*  
Deborah Scheer, Sonoma County AIDS Commissioner, Forestville  
Carolyn Singer, Cazadero  
Diane Spain, Executive Director, Russian River Senior Center, Guerneville  
John Stevens, President, Sebastopol Area Chamber of Commerce, Sebastopol  
Lynn Stewart, Forestville  
Brian Stienstra, Chair, Sonoma County AIDS Commission, Guerneville  
Mary Szecsey, Executive Director, Russian River Health Center, Guerneville  
Rene Tolliver, United Way Sonoma-Mendocino-Lake, Santa Rosa  
Larry Wagner, Migrant Childhood Education.  
Marty Webb, Principal, Anly High School, Sebastopol  
Karen Wheeler, Guerneville Mental Health, Guerneville  
Brad Wollman, Director, YMCA of Occidental, Occidental  
Emma Zavala, Anly High School, Sebastopol.

## IV. West County and Participant Demographics

A total of 2,268 community members participated in the community health assessment project - 2,040 completed surveys, 203 participated in community meetings from throughout West County and 25 community leaders were interviewed. This represents almost 10% of the total population of West County. The ethnicity and race of the community health assessment participants mirror the population of West County in general. Whereas 87% of West County are white, 9% are Hispanic, and 4% are other ethnicities, the participants were 83% white, 10% Hispanic and 7% other ethnicities, showing the success of the outreach efforts to reach traditionally underserved populations.



The community assessment participants came from throughout West County, in percentages similar to the population. Sebastopol is under-represented, but still comprises a large portion of the participants. This was a deliberate decision, to assure that the surrounding rural communities were fully included.

Residence	West County	Community Assessment Participants
Sebastopol/Freestone/Hessel	57%	41%
Guerneville/Rio Nido	11%	17%
Forestville/Rio Dell	15%	13%
Cazadero	5%	5%
Bodega Bay	3%	4%
Camp Meeker/Occidental	4%	4%
Monte Rio	4%	4%
Graton	1%	3%
Duncan Mills/Jenner/Villa Grande	<1%	2%
Other	<1%	5%

Source: <http://www.census.gov/cgi-bin/gazetteer>.

The age of the community health assessment participants is older than the population of West County as a whole. Seniors were specifically targeted for the community survey and the response was significant: 33% of participants were over 60 compared to about 13% for the total population. This was an especially important group to reach, as people 85 and older will be the fastest growing population group in the county between 2000

and 2040, expected to grow by 250%. The population group from 65 to 84 is projected to grow by 150%.<sup>4</sup>

Age					
All West County		Community Meetings		Community Survey	
under 18	8%	under 18	32%	14 – 19	1%
18 - 64	80%	18 – 25	8%	20 – 39	14%
65+	13%	26 – 45	18%	40 – 49	24%
		46 – 69	38%	50 – 59	27%
		70 or older	4%	60 – 69	14%
				70 or older	19%

Source: California Rural Health Policy Council. California Rural Demographics: Sonoma County.

## V. Overall Findings and Key Highlights

### A. Key Highlights

- Of the survey respondents, 90% are covered by health insurance and 60% are covered by dental insurance with 54% covered by HMO, 24% by Medicare, 19% by PPO, 9% by Medi-Cal and 17% by other (respondents answered multiple times); 24% answered that there had been a time in the last three years when they had not had health insurance and 52% answered that they had not had dental insurance. This generally compares with UCLA Center for Health Policy Research estimating that in 1998, 16% of Sonoma County residents 0-64 were uninsured.<sup>5</sup>
- Of the survey respondents, the vast majority generally uses health services in West County when those services are available; 29% used Palm Drive Hospital in the last two years for services; and 30% used Palm Drive Hospital Emergency Room in the past year.
- In general, people who have used Palm Drive Hospital have been either extremely satisfied (38%) or very satisfied (42%) with the services there. They have also been satisfied (extremely or very = 77%) with the care they have received from their doctor or clinic.
- Over half (52%) of all survey respondents, 67% of respondents with children and 74% of Hispanic respondents, had used an emergency room in the past year. Almost a third (30%) of all respondents had used Palm Drive Hospital emergency room.

<sup>4</sup> Sonoma County Department of Public Health, *Sonoma County Health Profile 2000*.

<sup>5</sup> Sonoma County Health Profile 2000.

- While participants were generally covered by insurance, the difficulty they had in using insurance revolved around issues of expense (66%) or access (78% - wait too long for appointment, hours inconvenient, transportation, could not find a doctor to accept insurance, child care).
- Participants suggested that providers could improve their services by shortening the time to get an appointment (51%), making it easier to get advice when the office is closed (30%) or easier to get results or reschedule appointments (30%), adding evening hours (30%), and adding weekend hours (26%) – once again all issues of access.
- In each community, more than 60% of the respondents thought that there was a need for a part-time clinic in their community for themselves. A vastly lower percentage stated that they needed those services for their children (8-26% would use such a service).
- Most participants (71%) get their health information from their health care provider, 28% get their health information from books, newspapers, magazines, 27% from friends and family members and 22% from the Internet.
- Participants throughout West County thought that the two most pressing health problems were drug and alcohol abuse (50%) and access to services (30%).
- Seniors felt that transportation to services was extremely important.
- Hispanics felt that access to services was extremely important.

### **Respondents by Geographic Area**

	<b>Total Participants</b>	<b>Survey Respondents</b>	<b>Community Meetings and Focus Groups</b>	<b>Key Informants</b>
Bodega Bay	96	79	13	4
Cazadero	118	106	11	1
Forestville	330	286	12	2
Graton	64	49	13	2
Guerneville	394	357	34	3
Monte Rio	93	93		
Duncan Mills/Jenner/ Villa Grande	50	50		
Occidental/Camp Meeker	91	76	13	2
All Others/	75	75		
Sebastopol	925	855	65	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,236</b>	<b>2,026</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>19</b>

*Please note: Not everyone identified their home community.*



## **B. Overall Findings by Population and Town**

Survey responses for specific population groups and towns were analyzed in relation to the total response across key questions. Differences of more than 15% were noted (see Tables 1 and 2). These groups were the following:

- Hispanics
- Seniors
- People with children under 18
- People without health insurance
- People who commute outside West County for work

Hispanics and respondents from Graton had the most responses differing from the total. It is important to note that Graton's 49 surveys had the highest percentage completed in Spanish (37%) and the two sets of results are similar. The key areas of difference are as follows:

- 38% of the total survey respondents did not use an emergency room in the past year compared to 57% of the uninsured, 56% of Camp Meeker, 64% of Cazadero and 65% of Jenner respondents.
- 77% of the total were extremely or very satisfied with their medical care compared to 54% of Hispanics and 58% of the uninsured. Conversely, only 8% of the total were not very or at all satisfied with their medical care compared to 37% of the Hispanics.
- Differences in satisfaction with dental care was similar to medical care: while 75% of the total were extremely or very satisfied, only 38% of Hispanics, 56% of the uninsured and 55% of Graton respondents were. While 10% of the total expressed their strong dissatisfaction, almost four times the number of Hispanics (37%) did.
- When asked to provide reasons that posed barriers to medical care,
  - 44% of the total said the cost was too expensive compared to 82% of the uninsured, 68% of Hispanics, 26% of seniors, 64% of those from Graton, and 67% of respondents from Monte Rio and Jenner
  - 37% had to wait too long for an appointment compared to 13% of uninsured, 54% of Bodega Bay respondents and only 15% of those from Camp Meeker
  - 22% didn't have insurance compared to 69% of the uninsured, only 7% of seniors, but 38% of those from Cazadero and 39% from Graton
  - 11% didn't know where to go compared to 39% of Hispanics
  - 10% had no transportation compared to 32% of Hispanics and 33% of those from Graton
  - 6% of the total would have lost pay from work compared to 18% of those from outside the specified towns.
- When asked to name access barriers for dental care, there were similarities to barriers to medical care:

- 64% of the total thought the service was too expensive compared to 83% of uninsured and 86% of those from Graton
  - 29% of the total didn't have insurance compared to 64% of the uninsured
  - 15% didn't know where to go compared to 40% of Hispanics
  - more than three times as many Hispanics (28%) had no transportation as the total pool (8%)
  - while only 2% of the total pool raised the issue of disability access, 21% of those from Graton did.
- The most important thing health care providers could do to improve service for the total pool was to shorten the time to get an appointment (51%).
    - For Hispanics and those from areas not specified, the most important thing was to add evening hours (54% and 51% respectively).
    - Only 10% of respondents from Jenner were interested in adding more evening hours compared to 30% of the total pool.
    - Hispanics were nearly three times more interested in improving access to prescriptions (27%) than the total pool (11%).
    - While 31% of the uninsured agreed that shortening the time was important, they were less interested in making it easier to contact the provider.
- Significantly more uninsured (92%) and Hispanics (86%) saw the need for health services in the local community than the respondents overall (67%). Not surprisingly, significantly more people with children (50%) saw the need for such a local service for their children than the overall group (16%). The whole region of the Russian River Coastal Area is a designated Medical Manpower Shortage Area.
- There were slight differences among the uninsured, Hispanics and respondents from Camp Meeker in terms of the three most important services to add:
    - Far more uninsured and respondents from Camp Meeker (48% each) wanted alternative health services than the overall group (32%).
    - The uninsured by a margin of almost two to one wanted dental care.
    - Hispanics were almost three times as likely to want health classes, and four times as likely to want cardiac rehabilitation.
- Hispanics were the only population group which varied noticeably from the overall group in naming the most pressing community health problems. A number of communities identified different pressing needs.
    - Many fewer Hispanics named drug and alcohol abuse (33% compared to 50% overall), while many more named HIV/AIDS (43% compared to 23% overall), teen pregnancy (51% compared to 10%) and gun violence (20% compared to 4%). Of interest is the topic of access to health care: 30% overall named it as a pressing need compared to only 9% of Hispanics, but by 50% of respondents from Bodega Bay. Graton respondents also named teen pregnancy as an issue more often (30%). It is also important to note that while the teen birth rate is below the Healthy People 2000

objective for the county overall, Hispanic teens have the highest teen birth rate.

- Many fewer people from Graton named drug abuse as one of the three pressing issues (34%), while 66% and 67% respectively of respondents from Monte Rio and Guerneville named it as a pressing issue.
  - HIV/AIDS was identified by 23% of the total, 6% of respondents from Bodega Bay, and 47% of those from Guerneville. Guerneville had a significantly higher cumulative incidence rate of AIDS from 1981 to 1999 compared to other locations in the county. The top five locations for cumulative incidence rates are all in West County; Guerneville has three times the rate of Monte Rio, followed by Forestville, Occidental and Sebastopol.
- When asked to name the groups in the community in need of additional support and health services, the overall group named the homeless, unemployed and low income as the group most in need (59%).
    - Among Hispanics, the group most in need was farm workers (75%), as it was in Graton and Guerneville (70% each).
    - Seniors named seniors by a margin of almost two to one, as did commuters and non-seniors. Compared to the overall total of 39%, 55% of those in Bodega Bay and only 21% of those in Graton did so.
    - While about a third of the total named teens and children, half of the people with children and respondents from Graton did so.
    - Only 42% of those from Bodega Bay identified the group with limited resources compared to 77% of those from Monte Rio.

**Table 1: Survey Responses Varying by More than 15%, By Population**

	Total	Uninsured	Senior	Non-senior	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic	Commuters	People with Children
	2,040	188	664	1,330	129	1,911	432	510
<b>Q9. Which of the following emergency rooms, if any, have you or your children used in the past year?</b>								
None	38%	57%						
<b>Q12A. How satisfied are you with the health care you received the last time you went to the doctor for an illness?</b>								
Extremely or very satisfied	77%	58%			54%			
Not very or not at all satisfied	8%				31%			
<b>Q12B. How satisfied are you with the health care you received the last time you went to the dentist?</b>								
Extremely or very satisfied	75%	56%			38%			
Not very or not at all satisfied	10%				37%			
<b>Q13A. Please check the statements that most closely match the reasons you had difficulty getting medical care when you needed it.</b>								
Too expensive	44%	82%	26%		68%			
Had to wait too long to get an appointment	37%	13%						
Didn't have insurance	22%	69%	7%					
Didn't know where to go	11%				39%			
No way to get there (transportation)	10%				32%			
<b>Q13B. Please check the statements that most closely match the reasons you had difficulty getting dental care when you needed it.</b>								
Too expensive	64%	83%						
Didn't have insurance	29%	64%						
Didn't know where to go	15%				40%			
No way to get there (transportation)	8%				28%			
<b>Q14. What are the three most important things health care providers could do to improve their services?</b>								
Shorten the time to get an appointment	51%	31%			17%			
Make it easier to phone the office/clinic to reschedule appointments, get test results	30%	18%						
Add evening hours	30%		11%		54%			
Make it easier to get prescriptions filled	11%				27%			
Other	6%	25%			20%			

	Total	Uninsured	Senior	Non-senior	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic	Commuters	People with Children
<b>Q15. Do you see a need for health services in your local community even if only on a part time basis?</b>								
Total responses	1,559	159	441	1,102	114	1,445	245	424
Total positive responses	1102	150	258	833	111	991	245	311
Yes, for myself	67%	92%			86%			
Yes for my children	16%							50%
No	29%	6%			3%			
<b>Q17. What are the three most important services you would like to see added in our community?</b>								
Complementary/alternative care	32%	48%						
Dental care	21%	41%						
Health classes	11%				30%			
Cardiac Rehab	6%				22%			
<b>Q18. What do you think are the three most pressing community health problems in our community?</b>								
Drug or alcohol abuse	50%				33%			
Access to health care services	30%				9%			
HIV/AIDS	23%				43%			
Teen pregnancy	10%				51%			
Gun Violence	4%				20%			
<b>Q19. Are there any groups in our community who need additional support and health services?</b>								
Homeless/ Unemployed/low income	59%				38%			
Seniors	39%		72%	77%	21%		79%	
Teens/Children	34%				64%			50%
Farm workers	30%		49%		75%			
Teens	23%				56%			

**Table 2: Survey Responses Varying by More than 15%, By Area**

By Geography	Total	Bodega Bay	Camp Meeker	Cazadero	Forestville	Graton	Guerneville	Monte Rio	Sebastopol	Jenner	Others
	2,040	79	76	106	286	49	357	93	855	50	75
<b>Q9. Which of the following emergency rooms, if any, have you or your children used in the past year?</b>											
None	38%		56%	64%						65%	
<b>Q12B. How satisfied are you with the health care you received the last time you went to the dentist?</b>											
Extremely or very satisfied	75%					55%					
<b>Q13A. Please check the statements that most closely match the reasons you had difficulty getting medical care when you needed it.</b>											
Too expensive	44%					64%		67%		67%	
Had to wait too long to get an appointment	37%	54%	15%							11%	
Didn't have insurance	22%			38%		39%					
No way to get there (transportation)	10%	4%				33%					
Would have lost pay from work	6%										18%
<b>Q13B. Please check the statements that most closely match the reasons you had difficulty getting dental care when you needed it.</b>											
Too expensive	64%					86%					
Office/clinic did not have disabled access	2%					21%					
<b>Q14. What are the three most important things health care providers could do to improve their services?</b>											
Add evening hours	30%									10%	51%
<b>Q17. What are the three most important services you would like to see added in our community?</b>											
Complementary/alternative care	32%		48%								
<b>Q18. What do you think are the three most pressing community health problems in our community?</b>											
Drug or alcohol abuse	50%					34%	67%	66%			
Access to health care services	30%	50%									
HIV/AIDS	23%	6%					47%				
Teen pregnancy	10%					30%					
<b>Q19. Are there any groups in our community who need additional support and health services?</b>											
Homeless/ Unemployed/low income	59%	42%						77%			
Seniors	39%	55%				21%					
Teens/Children	34%					49%					
Farm workers	30%					70%	70%				

## **C. Overall Findings Across West County**

Following is a summary across all of West County of residents' responses to these issues from community meetings and focus groups, interviews and surveys. After that follows a summary of the responses of Hispanics and seniors, analyzed separately. Because information about a community is crucial to understanding its health status, health status information from Sonoma County Health Profile 2000 is provided when appropriate. It is well known that disparities in health status exist between various ethnic and racial populations. In addition, poverty and near-poverty appear as underlying elements of many health problems. This section will examine various health status indicators for the region which are extracted from public use state data files.

### **Community Strengths**

Across all of West County were heard several common themes regarding the region's assets and strengths. The natural beauty, access to the coast, the clean environment and endless opportunities for exercise and recreation are what draws people to the area. The remoteness of the area has created an independence and self reliance that residents describe with pride.

The West County Health Centers, Palm Drive Hospital, the West County Community Services, the senior centers in Guerneville and Sebastopol, and local volunteer fire departments that are well trained and equipped to address emergencies were most frequently mentioned as assets to the communities.

Services and resources most often mentioned were well-trained HIV/AIDS specialists at the West County Health Centers and accessible health care services. Spanish-speaking care providers are greatly appreciated and considered a strength. Community members spoke often of the number of options available and the widespread acceptance of alternative medical care as an asset in their community.

For all of 1999, the average unemployment countywide was 2.7%, 3.2% in Sebastopol, and 2.4% in the Russian River-Coastal region, according to the Employment Development Department. By December, 2000, unemployment in the county had dropped to 2%, 4<sup>th</sup> lowest rate in the state.

Sonoma County has successfully met the Healthy People 2000 objectives for low birth weight, very low birth weight, infant deaths, primary cesarean deliveries, and teen births.

Community Meetings & Key Informants	Community Surveys
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The West County Health Centers, Palm Drive Hospital, The West County Community Services, the senior centers in Guerneville and Sebastopol, and local volunteer fire departments that are well trained and equipped to address emergencies were most frequently mentioned as assets to the communities.</li> <li>▪ The natural beauty, access to the coast, the clean environment and endless opportunities for exercise and recreation are what draws people to the area.</li> <li>▪ The remoteness of the area has created an independence and self reliance that residents describe with pride.</li> <li>▪ Services and resources most often mentioned were well-trained HIV/AIDS specialists at the West County Health Centers and accessible low-income care and services. Spanish-speaking care providers are greatly appreciated and considered a strength.</li> <li>▪ Community members spoke often of the number of options available and the widespread acceptance of alternative medical care as an asset in their community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 77% are extremely or very satisfied with their health care</li> <li>▪ 74% are extremely or very satisfied with their dental care</li> </ul>

## **Health Concerns**

*"We are blessed with the health center but they can only offer so much". (From a key informant interview with a senior services provider.)*

*"We do not have enough care providers especially in the more rural areas. Most of the in home care providers are underpaid and undertrained." (From a key informant interview conducted with a senior services provider.)*

Across all of West County the health concerns voiced were a need for emergency and urgent care services and services that address the growing number of seniors, Hispanic migrant workers and those with limited resources (e.g. working poor). The populations identified as in most need of services were the seniors, Hispanic migrant workers, teens, those with limited resources and the homeless.

Almost 10% of children under 18 live in poverty in the county compared to about 18% statewide. The percentage of single parent households is 23%, just slightly lower than the state's average. The average annual cost of child care for 2 – 5 year olds is over \$5,000, at least 10% higher than the state average.

Access to care and need for in home services for HIV+ patients and seniors were most often mentioned as needs in the west county. Alcohol and drug problems were mentioned most often as an unmet service need in the communities of the west county. Based on national estimates, approximately one in 17 (6%) of Sonoma County residents will experience a drug abuse or dependence disorder during their lifetime. The Sonoma County rate of juvenile alcohol-related arrests was 11 per 1,000 juvenile population (10 – 17 year olds) in 1997 compared to the California rate of 3.4. In 1997, 27% of sexual assaults reported among Sonoma County teens involved alcohol use by either the perpetrator or the victim. In 1999, this percentage more than doubled to 59%. The average age at first drink among Sonoma County teens is 12.3 years. In 1994, the

rate of binge drinking among 11<sup>th</sup> graders in the county was 36% compared to the statewide rate of 22%.<sup>6</sup>

Although AIDS cases and deaths are decreasing, Sonoma County still has one of the highest AIDS rates in the state. Guerneville had a significantly higher cumulative incidence rate of AIDS from 1981 to 1999 compared to other locations in the county. The top five locations for cumulative incidence rates are all in West County; Guerneville has three times the rate of Monte Rio, followed by Forestville, Occidental and Sebastopol.

At least 67% of Sonoma County seniors considered themselves at moderate or high risk for poor nutrition in 1997.<sup>7</sup> At the same time the number of elder abuse cases reported in the county has been increasing, paralleling a campaign to heighten awareness by the community. Based on national data, an estimated 5% of local seniors suffer some form of physical, emotional or financial abuse each year. About 70% of these reported cases involved a family member.<sup>8</sup>

Issues	Community Meetings	Key Informants	Community Surveys
Pressing community needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Emergency care</li> <li>▪ Urgent care</li> <li>▪ Access to transportation</li> <li>▪ Access to care and need for in home services for HIV+ patients and seniors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Transportation for the elderly</li> </ul>	When asked about pressing community health needs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 50% named drug and alcohol abuse</li> <li>▪ 30% named access to health care</li> </ul>
Populations in need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Aging population</li> <li>▪ Spanish speaking migrant workers</li> <li>▪ Working poor</li> <li>▪ Teens</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Health care services for the elderly</li> <li>▪ The undocumented workers</li> <li>▪ Children without insurance</li> <li>▪ Fishing industry workers</li> <li>▪ Children of migrant workers</li> </ul>	When asked about populations in need of additional support or services, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 59% named low income/poor</li> <li>▪ 39% named seniors</li> <li>▪ 34% named teens and children</li> <li>▪ 30% named farm workers</li> <li>▪ 27% named people with special needs</li> <li>▪ 27% named single parents</li> </ul>
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Geriatric care</li> <li>▪ No mental health care</li> <li>▪ Drug/alcohol abuse treatment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The community is starting to see an increase in elder abuse and needs someone locally to follow up on those who are isolated</li> <li>▪ Drug and alcohol abuse treatment</li> </ul>	

<sup>6</sup> Sonoma County Health Profiles 2000.

<sup>7</sup> Sonoma County Health Profiles 2000.

<sup>8</sup> *ibid.*

## **Healthcare Challenges**

*"There is a lot of diversity in the ability of residents in the West County to pay for health care services. We have the very poor to the very wealthy." (From a key informant interview conducted with local business person.)*

*"The migrant workers are afraid to use the services, because of their immigration status. They are afraid of anything that looks official." (From a key informant interview conducted with a Hispanic service provider.)*

Overall challenges were described as affordability and access to healthcare services.

Insurance issues were identified across a broad range of concerns -- from lack of insurance to insurance policies that dictate healthcare choice to having Kaiser insurance and needing to travel outside of the community to access services. Insurance restrictions were added as challenges because they do not cover alternative care, some mental or dental care. The working poor are unable to afford insurance and the health care system is too expensive for them as well as for the seniors.

There are limited transportation services in the West County and the distance to basic healthcare services was frequently named as a challenge. For anything other than basic health needs (that can be handled at the local health center) people feel that they have to drive or be driven to Santa Rosa. There are no facilities for seniors. No nursing homes or in-home care is available, especially long term in-home care.

Lack of specialty services were identified across all communities as a challenge, including specialty services of any kind of neurology, cancer physician, or a geriatrician.

Limited mental, dental and nutrition services were identified as challenges: many seniors are isolated and become depressed; dental, especially MediCal dental services are lacking; and nutrition education is a concern of many of the residents, who requested information about eating healthy. In 1997, mental disorders were the 8<sup>th</sup> leading cause of hospitalization in Sonoma County, but the leading cause among 25-344 year olds, and 2<sup>nd</sup> leading cause for 5 – 24 year olds. Formidable financial, stigma, and informational barriers limit access to mental health services. Based on national data, approximately one in five (21%) of Sonoma County adults experience a mental health disorder in any given year. According to the US Surgeon General, the mental health field is plagued by disparities in the availability of and access to its services, more disparate than any other field of medicine. A key access barrier for mental health services is a person's financial status: inadequate or no insurance creates an almost insurmountable barrier.

Challenges	Community Meetings & Key Informants	Community Surveys
Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Affordability</li> <li>▪ Access to health care</li> <li>▪ Insurance restrictions</li> <li>▪ Facilities for senior care</li> <li>▪ Specialty services</li> <li>▪ Mental health services</li> <li>▪ Dental services</li> <li>▪ Nutrition services</li> <li>▪ Transportation</li> <li>▪ Undocumented people who are afraid to access health care services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ When asked about barriers to access and about ways to improve health care</li> <li>▪ 51% wanted to shorten the time to get an appointment</li> <li>▪ 44% thought care was too expensive</li> <li>▪ 37% stated they had to wait too long to get an appointment</li> <li>▪ When asked what could be done to improve services</li> <li>▪ 30% wanted providers to make it easier to phone the provider to reschedule or get test results</li> <li>▪ 30% wanted it to be easier to get advice after hours</li> <li>▪ 30% wanted more evening hours</li> <li>▪ 26% wanted more week-end hours</li> <li>▪ 25% wanted providers to make it easier to get advice after hours</li> </ul>

## **Priorities For New And Expanded Health Care Services**

*"We need to promote a better understanding of the connection between good dental care and overall improved health care." (From a key informant interview conducted with a Provider.)*

*"We could coordinate with some of the mobile health services. An adequate clinic, or rotating clinics of different types with a pharmacy component. This needs to be adequate facility-a big bus that is already equipped so you are not setting up in the Grange Hall." (From a key informant interview conducted with a local business person.)*

Two of the most pressing needs identified are access to care and the lack of transportation services. The West County communities that do not have a health center located in their immediate vicinity identified a need for a local clinic or mobile health care services to bring medical and screening services to their communities.

Priorities	Community Meetings	Key Informants	Community Surveys
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A mobile clinic to cover the Coastal communities</li> <li>▪ Transportation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A local clinic in areas without one</li> <li>▪ Mobile clinic</li> <li>▪ Regular screening services</li> <li>▪ Drug/alcohol treatment services</li> <li>▪ Mental health services</li> <li>▪ Oral health</li> <li>▪ HIV/AIDS services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ When asked if they would use health care services in their community, 71% said they would use them for themselves or their children</li> </ul> <p>When asked what services they would like to see added to their community,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 32% named complementary or alternative medicine</li> <li>▪ 25% named urgent care</li> <li>▪ 25% named health screening</li> </ul>

Priorities	Community Meetings	Key Informants	Community Surveys
Populations in need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At-risk populations—low income; elderly</li> <li>Hispanic population for bilingual care</li> <li>Teens, preventive and mental health services</li> <li>Fishing industry workers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seniors who need visiting nurses can't get them here. It is hard to find people to come and assist people physically in their home.</li> <li>Resource for teens</li> <li>Undocumented families</li> </ul>	
Education and prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Availability of health information where/how to access (e.g., phone triage for health information; advice nurse-Kaiser model)</li> <li>Knowing about resources (e.g., publicize Fire District's Senior Security services)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Across the board prevention</li> </ul>	

## Improving Overall Community Health

*"If we are looking at expanding on improving health care services, we need to look at the assets that we have and collaborate. (From a key informant interview conducted with a CBO.)*

*"We need to have access to more information from a broader perspective of approaches that promotes and encourages an open minded discussion. There could be a public service web site with frequently asked questions about health care that would also offer tips on improving the overall health of the community." (From a key informant interview conducted with service provider.)*

Community members described the things they could do to improve the overall health of their community as supporting and strengthening the current services, encouraging linkages between services and more dialogue about alternative health care services.

Areas of Focus	Community Meetings	Key Informants
Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support and strengthen the current services, encourage linkages between services and more dialogue about alternative health care services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Better coordination of services</li> </ul>

## **VI. Findings for Population Groups: Hispanic Community and Seniors**

Two groups were singled out for closer analysis: Hispanics and seniors. Tables 3 and 4 summarize their answers to key survey questions compared to non-Hispanics and people younger than 60.

## A. Hispanic Community

Eighty-three individual Hispanic participants offered input through six community meetings conducted in Spanish and four key informant interviews. Of these participants, 46 were men, 34 were women, 40 were teens and 18 identified as farm workers. Four of the focus groups were located in Forestville, one in Sebastopol and one in Guerneville. Three of the four key informant interviewees represented service providers in the broader West County Hispanic community and one was a business owner in Graton.

Of the 2,040 community surveys completed, 278 identified themselves as non-white, 143 of whom identified themselves as Hispanic. Almost a third (51%) live in Sebastopol, Freestone or Hessel. There were 129 people who completed the survey in Spanish.

The following information was gathered during the community meetings, interviews and from the written surveys.

### Summary of Findings

#### 1. Community Strengths

**West County** 64% of non-white community residents and 54% of those who completed the community survey in Spanish were either extremely or very satisfied with their medical care. This compares to 76% overall.

**Forestville** Hispanic community members identified the strengths that positively affect the health of their community to be Spanish-speaking care providers, accessible low-income care and services, a free clinic and emergency care available to low income residents.

**Graton** Hispanic participants identified services that are working in their community to be outreach and education about AIDS and assistance for low income workers. *"We have someone delivering condoms for the men-they offer free HIV testing if they want to take it. I had a worker who could not see. I sent him to the Mobile Van and he got his glasses paid for."*

**Guerneville** Hispanic community members identified their community strengths to be local access and affordability of healthcare services offered by the Russian River Health Center.

**Sebastopol** Hispanic community members identified their community strengths to be those services and programs that help Hispanic low-income families.

## **2. Health Concerns**

**West County** The need identified by Hispanic community members as most important was dental care. Health insurance, especially for children was also of vital importance to participants. Many Hispanics do not know where to obtain services. Access is further complicated by fear of damaging their immigration status if they use services. There was discussion and concern about the increase in diabetes and asthma within the Hispanic community.

Transportation is a major issue facing this community. People in isolated areas, women who are pregnant, and children often cannot get to the services they need. People requested more mobile services or more outreach, to bring services to them or take them to the services.

People also wanted to strengthen the community-based clinics. The clinics are closest to the community and appear to have the most trust and confidence of the community.

When asked to identify the community's most pressing health needs, of those completing the Spanish survey, 51% named teen pregnancy, 43% named HIV/AIDS, 33% named drug or alcohol abuse and 27% named domestic violence. Of the non-white survey respondents, 44% named drug or alcohol abuse, 31% named HIV/AIDS.

When asked to name the populations in need of addition support or services, 75% of Spanish language survey respondents named farm workers (compared to 30% overall), 56% named teens, 38% named low income people, and 35% named people with special needs. Of the non-white respondents, 49% named farm workers and low income people, 38% named teens, and 35% named seniors.

**Forestville** Hispanic community members identified the most pressing health concerns for their community to be lack of local healthcare and emergency services, substance abuse and a number of specific health issues such as diabetes, HIV, cancer, and parasites.

**Graton** Hispanic community members identified the need for dental care and affordable, accessible health care, especially for the children as great concerns. *"Health insurance is not available because a family cannot afford it or they are undocumented. Where they work they may have insurance but it is not available for their families. There is confusion on what services are available."*

**Guerneville** Hispanic participants identified the most pressing health concerns for their community to be chronic, life-threatening and episodic illnesses.

**Sebastopol** Hispanic community members identified the most pressing health concerns for their community to be lack of health insurance and access to affordable, culturally competent health and mental health services. Populations within the community

identified as most in need of services are the farm workers, pregnant women and children and an increasing homeless population.

Specific health concerns identified in the community were diabetes, asthma, cancer and exposure to agricultural pesticides.

### **3. Healthcare Challenges**

**West County** Hispanic respondents identified access to services as a serious challenge for Hispanic families with no insurance or for those who are undocumented. *“People are so afraid to go because they have no insurance and the care is too expensive.” “If a father goes to a vision clinic, he can lose a half day of work.”* Participants expressed a need for more accessible services at a time that does not impact the work day.

The Hispanic senior groups (age 55+) are a forgotten part of the population. Especially since the amnesty, many families brought their grandparents to this county. Elderly people who do not speak English and do not drive are in need of support services and ways to keep from being isolated.

Migrant families participating in the community meetings identified the following areas of concern: asthma, high cholesterol, high blood pressure and diabetes. The community is observing an increase in asthma in children, which many attribute to the agricultural use of pesticides. Farm workers and their families are especially exposed to this danger.

A serious challenge to families is lack of access to preventive dental and medical care. Participants expressed a need for education about health issues and understanding the importance of good nutrition.

When asked to identify barriers to receiving care, of the Spanish-language survey respondents, 68% said the cost was too high, 39% did not know where to go, 33% didn't have insurance, and 32% had no transportation. Of the non-white respondents, 59% said it was too expensive and 32% didn't have insurance.

**Forestville** Hispanic community members identified the following challenges to getting healthcare: lack of local providers for prenatal, dental, and emergency care, lack of information about available services and problems with transportation. They also mentioned problems related to trust and confidence in providers.

**Graton** Hispanic community members identified cost to be a significant challenge to getting the care they need. It was reiterated that dental and vision care are major concerns for families with children. *“The workers need all kinds of assistance. The migrant workers are afraid to use the services, because of their immigration status. They are afraid of anything that looks official.”*

**Guerneville** Hispanic community members identified high costs, lack of culturally competent providers, limited knowledge about services and concern about immigration status as challenges to accessing health care services.

**Sebastopol** Hispanic residents identified the lack of Spanish speaking medical providers, transportation, high cost of services, lack of preventive care, women's healthcare locally, access to any public benefit programs, and information about where to go and how to complete the forms to be eligible for the services as challenges to accessing health care services.

#### **4. Priorities For New And Expanded Health Care Services**

**West County** *"We need more services that are affordable, accessible and culturally appropriate to meet the health needs of the adults."*

Hispanic participants identified strengthening the community clinics; expanding services into areas without local health care services, providing mobile screening services; and increasing outreach, education and prevention efforts about AIDS and drug abuse to the Hispanic population as priorities for new and expanded services. *"Find the right places where the Hispanic population gathers (i.e. Graton, churches) so Hispanics can find the services."*

Participants identified a need for after hour services for the workers. *"Because the adults are here to work, services need to be available during non-work hours"*.

When asked how to improve services, of the Spanish survey respondents, 54% wanted evening hours (compared to only 30% of the respondents overall), 42% wanted week-end hours (compared to 26% overall), and 38% wanted providers to make it easier for patients to get medical advice after hours. Of the non-white survey respondents, 46% wanted evening hours, 33% wanted week-end hours, 36% recommended shortening the time to get an appointment, and 32% suggested making it easier to get advice after hours.

When asked if they or their children would use a local clinic, even if available only on a part time basis, 97% of Spanish survey respondents and 88% of the non-white respondents noted that they would compared to 71% overall.

When asked to name three services they thought should be added, of the Spanish survey respondents, 30% named health education classes compared to 11% overall, whereas 29% of the non-white respondents named alternative medicine and dental care as their top priorities.

**Forestville** Hispanic community members identified expanded hours in the local clinics, a mobile clinic, more Spanish-speaking services and providers, better access to information about available services, and more services for Hispanic teens as priorities for services.

**Graton** Hispanic community members identified services to seniors, those with limited income, and children; more services for alcohol and drug abuse; and information and education about the prevention of HIV/AIDS as priorities for services. *"We need more links between people and services. We need to deal with social and health care needs in an organized fashion."*

**Guerneville** Hispanic community members identified bilingual health education classes and information on access to health services as priorities.

**Sebastopol** Hispanic community members identified more affordable health and emergency care, more Spanish speaking providers and translators, and labor and delivery services at Palm Drive Hospital as priorities for services.

## **5. Improving Overall Community Health**

**West County** Hispanic participants recommended the following improvements: more innovation around education; improvement in community education about accessing primary care services rather than relying on the emergency room; encouragement of Hispanic men to seek services and increase awareness of health care risks; offer more person-to-person services; attract Hispanics to meetings and information opportunities; and the formation of a coalition of people ('natural leaders') who are interested in these issues and who would encourage an ongoing community dialogue for addressing them.

**Forestville** Hispanic community members described the things they could do to improve the overall health of their community as becoming involved in volunteer efforts within the community and in the clinic that focus on health and prevention education as well as being neighborly and environmentally conscientious.

**Graton** Hispanic community members described increases in services for immigrants as important for improving the overall health. They noted needs for more information and education about HIV prevention, to include teenagers and seniors as part of the solution, and to provide seniors with a place to play cards, dominoes, etc.

**Guerneville** Hispanic community members said increasing their knowledge about taking care of themselves could improve the overall health of their community.

**Sebastopol** Hispanic community members suggested the creation of a special board of Hispanic leaders to address the health conditions and health care in West County and more education to reduce the cultural barriers to mental health services for the Hispanic community as ways to improve the overall health of the community.

**Table 3: Survey Responses to Key Questions for Hispanic/Non-Hispanic**

	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>1,911</b>
<b>Q9. Which of the following emergency rooms, if any, have you or your children used in the past year?</b>		
Palm Drive Hospital	33%	30%
Kaiser Santa Rosa	21%	13%
Sutter Community Hospital	34%	6%
None	26%	50%
<b>Q12A. How satisfied are you with the health care you received the last time you went to the doctor for an illness?</b>		
Extremely or very satisfied	54%	78%
Not very or not at all satisfied	31%	7%
<b>Q12B. How satisfied are you with the health care you received the last time you went to the dentist?</b>		
Extremely or very satisfied	38%	76%
Not very or not at all satisfied	37%	8%
<b>Q13A. Please check the statements that most closely match the reasons you had difficulty getting medical care when you needed it.</b>		
Too expensive	68%	40%
Had to wait too long to get an appointment	25%	39%
Didn't have insurance	33%	21%
Hours inconvenient	26%	16%
Didn't know where to go	39%	7%
No way to get there (transportation)	32%	7%
Couldn't find a doctor or clinic who would accept my insurance	6%	10%
Would have lost pay from work	17%	7%
Other	8%	13%
<b>Q13B. Please check the statements that most closely match the reasons you had difficulty getting dental care when you needed it.</b>		
Too expensive	69%	63%
Didn't have insurance	27%	29%
Had to wait too long to get an appointment	16%	25%
Didn't know where to go	40%	11%
Hours inconvenient	19%	11%
No way to get there (transportation)	28%	5%
Would have lost pay from work	13%	7%
Could not get child care	12%	2%
Office/clinic did not have disabled access	15%	1%
There were no staff members of my ethnicity at the office or clinic	10%	0%
<b>Q14. What are the three most important things health care providers could do to improve their services?</b>		
Shorten the time to get an appointment	17%	53%
Have better trained and more friendly staff	27%	18%
Make it easier to get medical/dental advice when the office/clinic is closed	38%	29%
Make it easier to phone the office/clinic to reschedule appointments, get test results	21%	30%
Make it easier to get prescriptions filled	27%	10%
Add hours	69%	38%
Add evening hours	54%	28%
Add more week-end hours	42%	24%
Other	20%	8%

	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic
<b>Q15. Do you see a need for health services in your local community even if only on a part time basis?</b>		
Yes, for myself	86%	65%
Yes for my children	27%	15%
No	3%	31%
<b>Q17. What are the three most important services you would like to see added in our community?</b>		
Complementary/alternative care	27%	33%
Health screening	19%	26%
Urgent care	21%	25%
Wellness programs	10%	24%
Exercise programs	11%	23%
Dental care	33%	20%
Drug and alcohol treatment services	14%	16%
Women's health services	13%	16%
Pain management	11%	14%
Depression/suicide services	16%	12%
Mammograms/breast care	21%	11%
Health classes	30%	9%
Smoking cessation programs	15%	8%
Pediatric or specialty children's care	18%	7%
Services for children who are anxious or hyperactive	10%	6%
Cardiac Rehab	22%	5%
<b>Q18. What do you think are the three most pressing community health problems in our community?</b>		
Drug or alcohol abuse	33%	51%
Access to health care services	9%	32%
HIV/AIDS	43%	22%
Child abuse or neglect	12%	19%
Domestic violence	27%	17%
Cancer	8%	18%
Tobacco use	18%	17%
Pesticides	14%	15%
Depression	5%	16%
Poor nutrition	8%	15%
Dental health	18%	11%
Children's health issues	13%	11%
Teen pregnancy	51%	7%
Gun Violence	20%	3%
<b>Q19. Are there any groups in our community who need additional support and health services?</b>		
Homeless/ Unemployed/ low income	38%	60%
Teens/Children	64%	32%
Teens	56%	21%
People with special needs	35%	26%
Seniors	21%	40%
Farm workers	75%	27%
Single parents	16%	27%

## B. Seniors

Ten individual participants offered input through one community meeting and five key-informant interviews. Of these respondents, three were men, and seven were women. Two of the five key informant interviewees represented the Bodega coastal community, one represented Sebastopol, one represented Jenner and one represented Guerneville. The community meeting was held at the Russian River Senior Center. In addition, 664 people of the 2,040 community survey respondents (35%) were 60 and older. The following information was gathered during the community meeting, interviews and surveys.

### Summary of Findings

While virtually every community expressed a concern for their seniors, this summary document reports the findings of the community meeting and key informant interviews that were specifically focused on seniors' issues and the senior respondents to the survey.

#### 1. Community Strengths

Senior community members identify community strengths as a strong sense of connection throughout the area and the quality of the local health and human services available in the West County.

Services most often mentioned were:

- West County Health Centers offer a low cost dental clinic and mental health counseling services. *"The health center does a good job in serving the community"*.
- The Russian River Senior Center offers monthly screening, trainings and support for care givers, and provides home-delivered meals to seniors. In addition, the Russian River Senior Center publishes a monthly newsletter (900 copies/month) which includes a health-related article by a local MD.
- Sonoma County Mental health services and outreach are offered in Guerneville.
- The Occidental volunteer transportation program is an asset to the community.

When asked how satisfied they were with their medical and dental care, 85% of senior survey respondents (compared to 77% overall) were either extremely or very satisfied with their medical care, while 80% felt the same about their dental care.

**Bodega Bay** residents say that there are adequate resources for those who can afford them and who have their own transportation. They identify the local fire department as an important resource to their community.

- *"As long as you are healthy and you can drive you can access anything you need. If you lack transportation or have no money, you have real difficulty in affording and accessing the care you need."*

- *“We have a fantastic fire department with services specifically for seniors (Senior Security) and an ambulance. We are fortunate in that respect.”*
- *“Palm Drive is a great urgent care service. This meets our needs.”*

## **2. Health Challenges And Concerns**

When asked to identify the community’s most pressing health needs, 50% of senior survey respondents named drug or alcohol abuse and 26% named access to health care services. When asked to name the populations in need of additional support or services, 57% named low income people and 49% named seniors. When asked to identify barriers to receiving care, 46% said they had to wait too long to get an appointment and 26% said the care was too expensive (compared to 44% overall). When asked about barriers to dental care, 62% of senior survey respondents said the cost was too high compared to only 26% finding medical costs too high.

**Bodega Bay** seniors identify access to care as the most important health issue facing the senior community. Second to access is ensuring that there are services available to meet the health care needs of the community. Early detection of problems was highlighted as important to the community's seniors.

- *The seniors say, “I can stay in the harbor until I cannot drive, then I will have to leave. No matter where you go for medical care you have to leave our community and go to Sebastopol or further into Santa Rosa. We have one bus a day that goes to Sebastopol and comes back late in the afternoon.”*
- *“There are a high percentage of retired people in our community. We have the traditional health problems that are associated with an aging population (e.g. heart problems, cancer, major viruses & flu). We need to place more emphasis on finding the problems earlier.”*
- *“I know that there are a lot of problems with doctors leaving their practices and going to work at Kaiser. This will have a negative effect on our communities because we will have fewer choices.”*
- *“It is important that Palm Drive stays in business after all this work to keep it in the community. It is a fine health care center. My preference is to use Palm Drive over the hospitals in Santa Rosa.”*

**Guerneville** senior community members describe the most important health issues facing the community as the lack of in-home assistance, transportation, poverty among the elderly, increasing needs for medical, specialty and human services.

- *“Not many in-home care providers; no oversight of current caregivers. People are living longer and wanting to stay in their homes and we are finding they need more help (transportation, preparation of meals etc.) There is not any help available unless you are low income. A lot of people can pay something so they are not eligible for in-home support.”*
- *“Transportation. We are blessed with the Russian River Health Center but they can only offer so much. There is a high need for services other than basic health needs*

*(that can be handled at the local health center) and people have to be driven to Santa Rosa. There are very few transportation options in West County."*

- *"We do not have doctors who deal specifically with elder issues (e.g. Alzheimer and dementia support). We need more specialty services (neurology, cancer, etc)."*
- *"I see the need to address the health care issues for the elderly as getting worse over time. Many of our seniors are isolated and become depressed and the mental health outreach is very limited. We need activities and food to keep people healthy mentally."*
- *"Some older people lack money to buy propane or pay heating bills, so they stay in bed all day to keep warm."*
- *"We do not have enough care providers for people in their homes, especially in the more rural areas. Most of the in home care providers are underpaid and undertrained. Many of them have as many or more problems than the people they take care of."*

**Jenner** senior community members describe the most important health issues facing the community as increased access, affordable services, assisted living and long term care facilities, and local mental health services.

- *"The health care system is too expensive, especially for seniors. We are way behind other countries in our medical system. A single payor system would be preferable to what we have now."*
- *"We are dependent on getting inland for medical care. Transportation is an issue. The closest medical services are in Guerneville."*
- *"I think that possibly a health center in Bodega even on a part time basis or at least a referral center would improve the health of our community."*
- *"There is no in home care on the coast. There are no facilities for seniors, no nursing homes or in home care available, especially long term in home care."*
- *"Probably the mental health services are the most needed."*

**Sebastopol** senior community members describe the most important health issues facing the community as transportation to basic healthcare services (access), specialty services, lack of in-home services, and information on nutrition.

- *"Many of the seniors in this area have lived here for a long time and they don't incur housing costs but there is never any extra money for medical expenses. The medicines are expensive and insurance co-pays are frightening. Most of the seniors we see who cannot afford the medicines will go without because of the expense."*
- *"Most of my seniors are happy with the local doctors but leave for specialty services."*
- *"Nutrition education is a concern of many of the seniors. They have requested information about healthy eating."*

### **3. Priorities For New & Expanded Health Care Services**

When asked how to improve services, 51% recommended shortening the time it takes to get an appointment, 32% suggested making it easier to reach the clinic or provider by phone to make appointments, and 26% wanted providers to make it easier to reach them for medical advice after hours. When asked if they would use a local clinic, even if available only on a part time basis, 59% of senior survey respondents would compared to 71% of respondents overall. When asked to name services they thought should be added, 32% named health screening.

**Bodega Bay** senior community members identify the need for local medical services and affordable in home assistance for seniors as priorities for their community.

- *“We need a local clinic of some sort. We are without medical providers and dentists. Our population is not large enough to support a facility and yet the residents need some kind of accessible and local medical care.”*
- *“If you need visiting nurses they are not available here. It is hard to find people to come and assist you in your home. Some of the problems are that there are some services available for the very poor but there are limited to no services for people with limited incomes who do not meet the eligibility criteria.”*

**Guerneville** senior community members identify transportation, patient advocates, mental and dental health services, and training and support for in home services providers as the priorities for new and expanded services to their community.

- *“Transportation is needed desperately for West County seniors for doctor/dentist appointments. There is need for a handicap accessible van, a paid driver for at least 2 days a week; and reimbursement for volunteer mileage.”*
- *“We are never going to meet the transportation needs in our area. But we could have a volunteer pool to transport and accompany people to their appointments. (Occidental has a wonderful volunteer driver pool and we could replicate that service here in Guerneville).”*
- *“A priority is an escort services to doctor appointment- someone to hear what the doctor has to say and to be an advocate for the patient.”*
- *“Depression is a big issue out here. Winters are tough. We need services or just someone to talk to.”*
- *“We could use more dental services. We have services for low income but we need dental services for the entire community.”*
- *“We get a lot of calls from people looking for providers. I would like to offer what the County offers, such as a resource and referral service for in home care providers. The Russian River Senior Center could provide care giver training, education and oversight for the providers. This would standardize the services and also create a safety net for the seniors.”*

**Sebastopol** senior community members identify the need for more providers who specialize in senior health care, services in more convenient locations, transportation,

more training for in home providers, mental, and dental services as the priorities for their community.

- *"A senior transportation service is number one for improving the health of our seniors. Even with cataract surgery transportation is offered one time only and then transportation for the follow up visits becomes a problem."*
- *"There is a lot of publicity about what is offered. Seniors know of the services, they just cannot get to them."*
- *"We need more doctors who specialize in Geriatrics."*
- *"More available flu shots and regular screenings in more familiar and convenient places. Seniors do best when they receive their care in a setting that is familiar to them."*
- *"Dental, especially MediCal dental services."*
- *"I would like to see more training for in home care providers."*
- *"There is a strong need for mental health services in this community. We see a lot of depression. I refer a lot of seniors to peer counselors. We need more services for coping with transitions in life."*

#### **4. Improving Overall Community Health**

**Bodega Bay** senior residents identify prevention services and strengthening relationships with physicians as important to improving the overall community health.

- *"To develop a good relationship with your own physician. People need access to health care providers who know them."*
- *"We need more work in prevention to find problems earlier.."*

**Guerneville** senior residents identify collaboration among providers and services as the key to improving the health of their community.

- *"It is important that the doctors look at the whole situation-I like the idea of agencies working together. By working together, we can better understand what is really going on with the patients."*

**Jenner** senior community members identify advocating for strengthening the current health care system as a way to improve the overall health of the community.

- *"Seniors are more in need than others in this community. There are more poor seniors than there are poor young people because of the high cost of housing in our area. Let's support the current health care system with more government money and resources in order to better meet the health needs of the seniors."*

**Sebastopol** senior community members identify increasing information on healthy lifestyles and alternative medicine as ways to improve the health of their community.

- *"Seniors are really looking at alternative medicine, vitamins and ways to promote their health. They want information to help themselves. Information on exercise,*

*nutrition, diet and fall reduction. A lot of our seniors are in need of a fall reduction training. There are some trainings but they are expensive.”*

**Table 4: Survey Responses to Key Questions for Seniors/Non-Seniors (Younger than 60 Years)**

	Senior	Non-senior
Total Respondents	664	1,330
<b>Q9. Which of the following emergency rooms, if any, have you or your children used in the past year?</b>		
Palm Drive Hospital	29%	30%
Kaiser Santa Rosa	15%	12%
None	50%	47%
<b>Q12A. How satisfied are you with the health care you received the last time you went to the doctor for an illness?</b>		
Extremely or very satisfied	86%	72%
Not very or not at all satisfied	5%	9%
<b>Q12B. How satisfied are you with the health care you received the last time you went to the dentist?</b>		
Extremely or very satisfied	79%	72%
Not very or not at all satisfied	9%	9%
<b>Q13A. Please check the statements that most closely match the reasons you had difficulty getting medical care when you needed it.</b>		
Too expensive	26%	47%
Had to wait too long to get an appointment	42%	36%
Didn't have insurance	7%	26%
Hours inconvenient	9%	19%
Didn't know where to go	4%	12%
No way to get there (transportation)	12%	9%
Other	17%	14%
<b>Q13B. Please check the statements that most closely match the reasons you had difficulty getting dental care when you needed it.</b>		
Too expensive	62%	65%
Didn't have insurance	25%	30%
Had to wait too long to get an appointment	15%	25%
Didn't know where to go	12%	16%
Hours inconvenient	3%	14%
<b>Q14. What are the three most important things health care providers could do to improve their services?</b>		
Shorten the time to get an appointment	51%	51%
Have better trained and more friendly staff	10%	22%
Make it easier to get medical/dental advice when the office/clinic is closed	26%	31%
Make it easier to phone the office/clinic to reschedule appointments, get test results	32%	29%
Make it easier to get prescriptions filled	9%	12%
Add hours	21%	48%
Add evening hours	11%	37%
Add more week-end hours	16%	30%
Other	6%	10%
<b>Q15. Do you see a need for health services in your local community even if only on a part time basis?</b>		
Yes, for myself	57%	71%
Yes for my children	2%	22%
No	41%	24%

	Senior	Non-senior
<b>Q17. What are the three most important services you would like to see added in our community?</b>		
Complementary/alternative care	20%	25%
Health screening	31%	22%
Urgent care	21%	27%
Wellness programs	21%	23%
Exercise programs	24%	22%
Dental care	22%	21%
Drug and alcohol treatment services	15%	16%
Women's health services	8%	18%
Pain management	16%	14%
Depression/suicide services	11%	13%
Mammograms/breast care	10%	12%
Health classes	12%	10%
<b>Q18. What do you think are the three most pressing community health problems in our community?</b>		
Drug or alcohol abuse	50%	50%
Access to health care services	26%	32%
HIV/AIDS	20%	24%
Child abuse or neglect	16%	20%
Domestic violence	16%	19%
Cancer	24%	15%
Tobacco use	19%	16%
Pesticides	12%	16%
Depression	11%	17%
Poor nutrition	13%	15%
Dental health	9%	13%
Children's health issues	10%	12%
Teen pregnancy	9%	10%
<b>Q19. Are there any groups in our community who need additional support and health services?</b>		
Homeless/ Unemployed/ low income	57%	59%
Teens/Children	23%	38%
Teens	13%	27%
People with special needs	31%	25%
Seniors	72%	77%
Farm workers	49%	34%
Single parents	22%	34%

## VII. Findings by Community

*Following is a summary by topical areas of the issues brought up at the community meetings, in the key informant interview, and by the surveys, by community.*

## A. Bodega Coastal Area

A total of 96 people provided feedback in the Bodega Coast Area. 79 were survey respondents, 13 attended the community meetings and 4 key informant interviews were conducted in Bodega Bay.

### 1. Community Strengths

*"As long as you are fairly healthy and you can drive you can access anything you need."  
(From key informant Interview conducted with a senior resident)*

Bodega Bay residents at the community meeting and those interviewed describe their community strengths as a clean, healthy environment and a tight-knit community. Most often mentioned as an asset are the services provided by the fire district as well as Palm Drive hospital.

Community Meetings	Key Informants	Community Surveys
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Small community—sense of community support</li> <li>▪ Clean healthy environment</li> <li>▪ Fire District: Disaster-preparedness is in place</li> <li>▪ Fire District's Senior Security services—a check-in service provided by the Fire District to seniors in the community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ As a whole this is a fairly healthy community</li> <li>▪ The fire department is fantastic with an ambulance</li> <li>▪ Palm Drive is a great urgent care service. It meets the community's needs and it is important that Palm Drive stays in business</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 81% are extremely or very satisfied with their health care</li> <li>▪ 80% are extremely or very satisfied with their dental care</li> </ul>

### 2. Health Concerns

*"If you lack transportation or have no money than you have real difficulty is getting and affording the care you need." (From key informant Interview conducted with a senior resident.)*

The most pressing health concern identified is the remoteness of the community, a lack of local health care services for the uninsured, no clinic for emergency services and no transportation. During the tourist season (May through October) the increased fluctuation in the population places a further demand on the need for emergency services. Access to health care was also the major concern of the community's survey respondents, in which half named it as the most pressing need, followed by drug and alcohol abuse (39%).

Both community members and key informants identified the seniors and the Hispanic families as being in need of services and resources that are not currently available. In addition the key informants highlighted concern for children without insurance and the workers in the fishing industry. Services of need are geriatric care, mental health services and resources for drug and alcohol abuse.

Issues	Community Meetings	Key Informants	Community Surveys
Pressing community needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Health care for uninsured community</li> <li>▪ Lack of transportation to access health care services</li> <li>▪ No clinic for emergencies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Access to health care is the most important health issue facing our community. It is very isolated here.</li> <li>▪ Transportation for the elderly is the biggest issue</li> <li>▪ The community needs emergency care</li> <li>▪ Tourism creates grid lock on Hwy. 1 and a strain on the services.</li> </ul>	<p>When asked about pressing community health needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 50% named access to health care</li> <li>▪ 39% named drug and alcohol abuse</li> </ul>
Populations in need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Aging population</li> <li>▪ Spanish speaking health care services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Health care services for the elderly</li> <li>▪ The undocumented workers</li> <li>▪ Children without insurance</li> <li>▪ Fishing industry workers</li> </ul>	<p>When asked about populations in need of additional support or services,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 55% named seniors</li> <li>▪ 42% named low income/poor</li> <li>▪ 33% named teens and children</li> <li>▪ 28% named farm workers</li> </ul>
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Geriatric care</li> <li>▪ No mental health care</li> <li>▪ No drug/alcohol abuse services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The community is starting to see an increase in elder abuse and needs someone locally to follow up on those who are isolated</li> <li>▪ Drug and alcohol abuse does exist in Bodega Bay</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪</li> </ul>

### 3. Healthcare Challenges

Residents of Bodega Coastal Area most often mentioned the lack of local medical, dental and specialty services and no public transportation as their challenges to getting health care services. In addition, lack of insurance or inadequate insurance for covering services (e.g. transportation costs) were identified as challenges.

Community members added that Kaiser members have to travel beyond West County for care and key informants added fears of undocumented workers about accessing services.

Challenges	Community Meetings	Key Informants	Community Surveys
Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to doctors covered by insurance</li> <li>• Distance to hospital covered by insurance (e.g. Kaiser patients must go farther. Kaiser will not allow patient to use Palm Drive for “minor” emergencies.)</li> <li>• Distance to health care services</li> <li>• No specialty care nearby</li> <li>• Unique geography—flooding can isolate residents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People leave the community for medical care because there are no local services. Any kind of a semi rural community has terrible access problems</li> <li>• There are no dentists, no nurses, no hearing places, no clinics for little kids.</li> <li>• The community has a tremendous amount of undocumented people who are afraid to access health care services</li> </ul>	<p>When asked about barriers to access and about ways to improve health care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 57% wanted to shorten the time to get an appointment</li> <li>• 54% stated they had to wait too long to get an appointment</li> <li>• 38% wanted providers to make it easier to phone the provider to reschedule or get test results</li> <li>• 31% thought care was too expensive</li> </ul> <p>When asked what could be done to improve services,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 29% wanted to add hours</li> <li>• 25% wanted providers to make it easier to get advice after hours</li> </ul>

#### 4. Priorities For New And Expanded Health Care Services In Your Community

Residents of Bodega Coastal Area most often mentioned bringing medical services to the area as their top priority for services. Most often mentioned was a mobile clinic to cover the coastal areas and offer screening and low cost services. In home care and support for seniors was identified by all groups as a priority for services to the Bodega Coastal Area.

Priorities	Community Meetings	Key Informants	Community Surveys
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A mobile clinic to cover the Coastal communities; Rotating Physician/Nurse practitioner;</li> <li>▪ Family practice locally; Low-cost clinic</li> <li>▪ Pharmaceutical services—antibiotics; access to medicines</li> <li>▪ Age-specific medical screening for common health problems for children, elderly, Hispanic community (Spanish-speaking)</li> <li>▪ Programs with nearby health centers—Petaluma Health Center/Occidental Area Health Center/Palm Drive</li> <li>▪ Senior home care to meet basic needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A local clinic of some sort to offer clinical services, well baby, preventive, some screening programs, emergency services, mobile health services.</li> <li>▪ Availability of in home service-some hospital based in home services</li> </ul>	<p>When asked if they would use health care services in their community, 73% said they would use them for themselves or their children</p> <p>When asked what services they would like to see added to their community,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 36% named urgent care</li> <li>▪ 30% named complementary or alternative medicine</li> <li>▪ 30% named health screening</li> <li>▪ 28% named wellness programs</li> </ul>

Priorities	Community Meetings	Key Informants	Community Surveys
Populations in need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At-risk populations—low income; elderly</li> <li>Hispanic population for bilingual care</li> <li>Teens, preventive and mental health services</li> <li>Fishing industry workers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seniors - If they need visiting nurses, none are available here. It is hard to find people to come and assist people physically in their own home.</li> <li>Resource for teens</li> </ul>	
Education and prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Availability of health information where/how to access (e.g., phone triage for health information; advice nurse-Kaiser model)</li> <li>Knowing about resources (e.g., publicize Fire District's Senior Security services)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The community needs more work in prevention to find problems earlier</li> </ul>	

## 5. Improving Overall Community Health

Residents of Bodega Coastal Area described the things they could do to improve the overall health of their community as advocating for local healthcare resources and transportation to services.

Areas of Focus	Community Meetings	Key Informants
Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be a voice for health care issues in community conversations about growth</li> <li>Work to obtain a Rural Health Designation for Bodega Bay</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We need transportation services. It is a distance to get to the services. One of the big things we hear is how am I going to get home once I go to the hospital.</li> </ul>

## B. Cazadero

A total of 118 people provided feedback in Cazadero. 106 were survey respondents, 11 attended one community meeting and one key informant interview was conducted.

### 1. Community Strengths

Residents of Cazadero describe their community strengths as a well-equipped and trained volunteer fire department capable of responding to local needs. As a relatively isolated community, they felt that self-reliance, a neighborly attitude and disaster preparedness are essential community strengths.

Community Meetings	Key Informants	Community Surveys
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteer Fire Departments are well-supplied and well trained</li> <li>Self-reliance. Neighbors help each other with transportation &amp; other needs; People have first aid supplies; Fire &amp; Flood power outages have trained us in psychological and physical self-reliance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Palm Drive could be a resource for the community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>80% are extremely or very satisfied with their health care</li> <li>88% are extremely or very satisfied with their dental care</li> </ul>

## 2. Health Concerns

Residents of Cazadero described the most pressing health concerns for their community as affordability of healthcare and insurance for the increasing numbers of low-income residents. Also, they expressed concerns that the remoteness and isolation of the community threatens their ability to act effectively in emergency situations.

Community members and key informants identified Increased needs for services for the elderly, and those with limited income, and the migrant workers.

Issues	Community Meetings	Key Informants	Community Surveys
Pressing community needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Affordability of quality health insurance; Too many uninsured and under-insured</li> <li>Fire Department is transportation to services; Increased low-income residents with limited resources—cut off from services because of lack of transportation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The most important health issue facing the residents of this area is that they are brought swiftly and reliably to a hospital that can meet their needs. Either patients are taken by helicopter or by ambulance.</li> </ul>	<p>When asked about pressing community health needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>63% named drug and alcohol abuse</li> <li>29% named access to health care</li> <li>28% named HIV/AIDS</li> </ul>
Populations in need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We see an increase in the working poor; farm workers and illegal immigrants;</li> <li>Aging population living in remote areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All the vineyards have a lot of Mexican workers and their health care needs remain unmet.</li> <li>The population is aging and there are more and more senior citizens who need additional services.</li> </ul>	

Issues	Community Meetings	Key Informants	Community Surveys
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alcohol and drug related social and physical problems; Drugs &amp; drinking-and-driving; Access to addiction awareness and recovery services</li> <li>Can the community survive a major emergency if it is isolated for a prolonged period? (major earthquake, blackout or fire); effect on all utilities and roads with major disasters/phones down/need supplies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a need for assisted living and residential services for senior citizens.</li> </ul>	

### 3. Healthcare Challenges

Community members described challenges to getting healthcare as the high cost of services, and the remoteness of their community creating barriers for access and scheduling timely appointments to see doctors.

Key informants identified the lack of dental and mental health services as the biggest challenges for the community.

Challenges	Community Meetings	Key Informants	Community Surveys
Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The high cost for services</li> <li>Isolation; hard to access healthcare services; hard to schedule short-notice appointments</li> <li>Coordinating alternative health care modes with traditional western medicine</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of dental and mental health services in the community.</li> </ul>	<p>When asked about barriers to access and about ways to improve health care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>56% thought care was too expensive</li> <li>38% didn't have insurance</li> <li>25% stated they had to wait too long to get an appointment</li> </ul> <p>When asked what could be done to improve services,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>47% wanted to shorten the time to get an appointment</li> <li>38% wanted to add hours</li> <li>36% wanted providers to make it easier to get advice after hours</li> <li>28% wanted providers to make it easier to phone the provider to reschedule or get test results</li> </ul>

#### 4. Priorities For New And Expanded Health Care Services In Your Community

Cazadero Community members described priorities for new and expanded healthcare services as a local clinic or doctor to offer services to the community. All groups identified seniors as a group in need of additional services.

Community members prioritized linking current insurances with service providers as well as increasing insurance for the poor. Community members also want to see more resources that address the isolation and remoteness of the area.

Key informants identified priorities for dental and mental health services.

Priorities	Community Meetings	Key Informants	Community Surveys
Affordable and accessible health care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Rural health clinic-24 hour facility &amp; personnel; Vaccinations; flu shots; other services for children &amp; seniors (twice/year)</li> <li>▪ Link insurances to Palm drive (e.g., HPR referrals for mammograms)</li> <li>▪ Insurance for the poor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ There is a need for a clinic or doctor on a part time basis.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ When asked if they would use health care services in their community, 59% said they would use them for themselves or their children</li> </ul>
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lifelines for the elderly / links to resources; Transportation for elderly</li> <li>▪ Advise nurse at Palm Drive</li> <li>▪ Resource system for children (neighbors helping neighbors); Teach children basic medical care and access (all systems)</li> <li>▪ Teen clinic where they can feel safe to talk about issues: birth control, condom dispenser, education in STDs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ There is a need for living facilities and assisted living for senior citizens</li> <li>▪ Dental-there is nothing available</li> <li>▪ Need for mental health services close by for the residents in our area.</li> </ul>	<p>When asked what services they would like to see added to their community,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 36% named complementary or alternative medicine</li> <li>▪ 33% named health screening</li> <li>▪ 27% named urgent care</li> </ul>
Populations in need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Seniors, teens, and young children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The population up here is aging and there are more and more senior citizens who need additional services.</li> </ul>	<p>When asked about populations in need of additional support or services,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 60% named low income/poor</li> <li>▪ 49% named seniors</li> <li>▪ 38% named teens and children</li> <li>▪ 26% named people with special needs</li> <li>▪ 25% named farm workers</li> </ul>

## 5. Improving Overall Community Health

Residents of Cazadero described the things they could do to improve the overall health of their community as offering education on specific health issues and promoting a healthy life style for teens.

Priorities	Community Meetings	Key Informants
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Education on diabetes, hypertension, weight loss, chronic disease; blood pressure day in the community</li> <li>▪ Parents teaching teens about abstinence, drugs and alcohol abuse</li> <li>▪ Need to know more about available services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A closer clinic would improve the current health care services.</li> </ul>

## C. Forestville

A total of 330 people provided feedback in Forestville. 286 were survey respondents, 12 attended the community meetings and two key informant interviews were conducted. Four community meetings were conducted in Spanish.

### 1. Community Strengths

*"I have seen people come from SF General's population. They come here for a social support system (gay and straight) and for the quality of the medical services." (From key informant interview with Forestville business leader)*

Residents of Forestville described their community strengths as good access to local services, an awareness of benefits of alternative healthcare services and a commitment to maintaining local services (Palm Drive Hospital). The gay community identified availability of well-trained HIV/AIDS specialists at the West County Health Centers as a strength. Hispanics identified Spanish-speaking care providers and accessible low-income care and services.

Community Meetings	Key Informants	Community Surveys
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Loyalty to West County-community closeness, wanting health care this side of 101</li> <li>▪ West County Community Health Centers; Good appointment availability for doctors and dentists; responsive to HIV/AIDS needs; RRHC has medical director for HIV services – all providers do HIV services</li> <li>▪ Palm Drive emergency closer than SR: Small in-patient long-term care; SNF for low income; same-day surgery; Out-patient services for rehab</li> <li>▪ Social Services has office in Guerneville</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Healthy Families program looks like it is solving some of these issues.</li> <li>▪ People have MediCal, employer based insurance, and high deductible insurance for self-employed people.</li> <li>▪ Overall the HIV/AIDS population is well taken care. Community has very current and progressive providers with a lot of expertise (e.g. Marshall Kabota). There is tremendous outreach for the population that is served. The community is doing pretty well regarding treatment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 76% are extremely or very satisfied with their health care</li> <li>▪ 72% are extremely or very satisfied with their dental care</li> </ul>

## 2. Health Concerns

Community members of Forestville described the most pressing health concerns for their community as limited access to primary care, dental and vision services. The gay community identified the most pressing health concerns for their community as poor linking of services between healthcare entities (labs, clinics, hospitals, etc.). They also cited issues with associated HIV and substance abuse as major concerns. Hispanic community members (teens & parents) of Forestville described the most pressing health concerns for their community as lack of local healthcare and emergency services as well as substance abuse and a number of specific afflictions such as HIV, cancer, parasites and diabetes. Teenagers of Forestville described the most pressing health concerns for their community as staying healthy.

Issues	Community Meetings	Key Informants	Community Surveys
Pressing community needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lack of medical insurance</li> <li>▪ Access to emergency care; Emergency response, especially at night; there are no ambulances to respond to this part of the county, only the fire department</li> <li>▪ Lack of eye doctors and dentists we can go to, for regular checkups and treatment</li> <li>▪ Lack of transportation, volunteer or paid, for rural patients to access even West Co. services, much less SR providers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continued need for more clinics</li> <li>▪ It is people who are dropping through the cracks who do not get adequate health care. There are people who do not know that they have options for services.</li> </ul>	When asked about pressing community health needs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 52% named drug and alcohol abuse</li> <li>▪ 26% named access to health care</li> <li>▪ 25% named HIV/AIDS</li> </ul>
Populations in need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Migrant workers</li> <li>▪ Seniors</li> <li>▪ HIV/AIDS community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Kids without resources in the schools</li> <li>▪ Teens</li> <li>▪ Families with no insurance</li> <li>▪ Larger composition of HIV+ in our population</li> </ul>	
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ HIV-Depression and isolation / broader mental health issues / as men grow older with HIV, self-esteem issues</li> <li>▪ Lack of community outreach in West Co., for dual-diagnosed patients</li> <li>▪ Better communication between healthcare entities – e.g. Palm Drive unfamiliar with services of EIC – e.g. Adherence Program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Services for seniors- Senile dementia and Alzheimer’s disease</li> <li>▪ Need for services for substance abuse. There is a rich harvest in this community-both grapes and marijuana. The community loses sight of the issues. Kids are coming to school stoned and distracted.</li> </ul>	When asked what could be done to improve services, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 52% wanted to shorten the time to get an appointment</li> <li>▪ 37% wanted to add evening hours</li> <li>▪ 35% wanted providers to make it easier to phone the provider to reschedule or get test results</li> <li>▪ 33% wanted providers to make it easier to get advice after hours</li> <li>▪ 32% wanted to add more week-end hours</li> </ul>

Issues	Community Meetings	Key Informants	Community Surveys
Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The need for more education services prevention</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Issue of drug abuse and use of marijuana. The problem specific to marijuana is the easy access to it in our community and the accepting attitude around using pot.</li> </ul>	

### 3. Healthcare Challenges

*"There is a lot of diversity in the ability of residents in the West County to pay for health care services. We have the very poor to the very wealthy." (From key informant Interview with a member of the business community)*

*"Appointments with Dentist within the month (as opposed to 3 months from now). I can & want to pay for access to Dental services, but they are primarily available for Medi-Cal patients." (From community meeting participant-11/15/00).*

Community members of Forestville described challenges to getting healthcare as affordability and understanding of health insurance as well as not having enough information about local services.

Members of the gay community of Forestville described challenges to getting healthcare as lack of local dentists and doctors who accept new patients and/or particular insurance. They also have challenges with providers giving personal attention that is considerate and respectful.

Hispanic community members of Forestville described challenges to getting healthcare as lack of local providers for pre-natal, dental, and emergency care; lack of information about available services and problems with transportation. They also mentioned problems related to building trust and confidence in providers.

Teenagers of Forestville described challenges to getting healthcare as affordability and access.

Challenges	Community Meetings	Key Informants	Community Surveys
Affordable, accessible health care services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Affordable health insurance and understanding it</li> <li>▪ Lack of a primary care doctors- Getting a timely appointment</li> <li>▪ Lack of Dental Care</li> <li>▪ Distance to services; transportation—Difficult for residents to get anywhere</li> <li>▪ High cost of Mental Health treatment/lack of reimbursement/3rd party payer</li> <li>▪ No pre-natal care nearby-have to go to Santa Rosa for care and to deliver</li> <li>▪ Lack of information about services, what exists and where</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ There are no specialty services in the West County</li> <li>▪ The ratio of dentists to the population seems low</li> <li>▪ Mental Health services - parents are frustrated and don't know where to go to get help</li> <li>▪ The seniors cannot afford the drugs</li> </ul>	<p>When asked about barriers to access and about ways to improve health care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 51% thought care was too expensive</li> <li>▪ 41% thought the wait was too long for an appointment</li> <li>▪ 30% didn't have insurance</li> </ul>

#### **4. Priorities For New And Expanded Health Care Services In Your Community**

Residents of Forestville described priorities for new and expanded healthcare services as affordable health care insurance, access to care, and more information about resources and available services.

Members of the gay community of Forestville added priorities for new and expanded healthcare services as dental, vision and HIV specialist services and a local walk-in clinic.

Hispanic community members of Forestville described priorities for new and expanded healthcare services as expanded hours in the local clinics; a mobile clinic; more Spanish-speaking services and access to information about available services.

Priorities	Community Meetings	Key Informants	Community Surveys
Affordable and accessible health care services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Perhaps a "walk-in" 24-hr emergency treatment center—staffing by Palm Drive in rural area; medical service for clients who have doctor in San Francisco for cold, flu, etc.</li> <li>▪ Clinic for young people (teen clinic); young women's clinic; more condoms; more sex education</li> <li>▪ Maybe one more doctor/HIV specialist with RRHC</li> <li>▪ Quality dental care; maybe one more MediCal dentist with RRHC</li> <li>▪ Eye/Vision services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ More Hispanic providers, more Spanish speakers</li> <li>▪ Services are needed up and down the coast. A health van to travel to various communities on a regular basis to perform basic healthcare services; mobile clinic; volunteer bus</li> <li>▪ An adequate clinic, or rotating clinics of different types</li> <li>▪ Have the Occidental clinic open Saturday and Sunday so residents don't have to go all the way to Santa Rosa</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ When asked if they would use health care services in their community, 61% said they would use them for themselves or their children</li> </ul>
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ West County-based dementia care &amp; unwell elderly programs: residential or day care</li> <li>▪ Alcohol/drug treatment; Healthcare for substance abuse</li> <li>▪ Services available more conveniently, in Spanish, and advertised so that everyone knows about them (i.e., via radio, etc.)</li> <li>▪ More counseling services for young people; Spanish-speaking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Dental for the Migrant families; People always wait until there is a dental crisis before they seek services and care. They take care of their medical needs before they take care of their dental needs.</li> <li>▪ More health screening - for diabetes specifically focused on young children and the elderly.</li> <li>▪ Improve the mental health services offered in the West County. Mental health problems are addressed as urgent rather than looking at long term solutions.</li> </ul>	<p>When asked what services they would like to see added to their community,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 39% named complementary or alternative medicine</li> <li>▪ 26% named dental care</li> <li>▪ 26% named health screening</li> </ul>
Populations in need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Seniors</li> <li>▪ Hispanic/bilingual workers</li> <li>▪ Transients/homeless-better sanitation facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Seniors</li> <li>▪ The people at the bottom of the economic ladder are always going to be in need of services that are not local</li> <li>▪ The migrant population</li> <li>▪ 'At risk' teenagers</li> </ul>	<p>When asked about populations in need of additional support or services,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 60% named low income/poor</li> <li>▪ 40% named teens and children</li> <li>▪ 37% named farm workers</li> <li>▪ 35% named seniors</li> <li>▪ 33% named single parents</li> <li>▪ 25% named people with special needs</li> </ul>

Priorities	Community Meetings	Key Informants	Community Surveys
Education and prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Need better communication from Palm Drive to the community, i.e., newsletters, advertisements in the newspaper</li> <li>▪ Return of the Needle Exchange Program in Guerneville</li> <li>▪ Information about drug-related consequences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Need to get more information about existing programs. There is the mobile clinic that is little publicized and could be utilized better.</li> <li>▪ Prevention services that are targeted to the young people (teen and pre-teen) to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS</li> </ul>	

## 5. Improving Overall Community Health

Residents of Forestville described the things they could do to improve the overall health of their community as continuing the dialogue and supporting local resources working together to address the health care needs of the residents.

Priorities	Community Meetings	Key Informants
Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Build-in mechanisms for ongoing feedback to ensure ongoing dialogue within community</li> <li>▪ Identifying a West County consortium of interested persons to work with local resources and political community to develop better access; to include volunteers, providers, elected officials—perhaps for PR reasons—underwritten by Palm Drive</li> <li>▪ Better laws for immigrant health care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Consumer Advisory Committee is always looking for people (RRHC) to volunteer for different services</li> <li>▪ More local services and financial resources dedicated to improving the health care</li> </ul>

## D. Graton

A total of 64 people provided feedback in Graton. 49 were survey respondents, 13 attended the one community meeting and 2 key informant interviews were conducted.

### 1. Community Strengths

Residents of Graton describe their community strengths as pro-active community involvement, availability of free and low-cost care, availability and acceptance of alternative medical care and a clean environment.

Key informants added strengths as those services that meet the needs of the Hispanic population (e.g. vision services and education about healthy life styles).

Community Meetings	Key Informants	Community Surveys
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Groups that work together to address problems:</li> <li>▪ Mobile Health Clinic – 2 times a month; Existence of free clinic—St. Stephens; Occidental Health Center—low cost/free</li> <li>▪ Availability and greater acceptance of alternative health care</li> <li>▪ Healthy food available</li> <li>▪ Environmental awareness; open space—wonderful, beautiful</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Residents go to Occidental for affordable care.</li> <li>▪ The mobile van comes every 2 weeks on Mondays.</li> <li>▪ (Note-these are services that have worked) Someone delivers condoms for the men-they offer free HIV testing if they want to take it.</li> <li>▪ Mobile van helps with glasses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 69% are extremely or very satisfied with their health care</li> <li>▪ 54% are extremely or very satisfied with their dental care</li> </ul>

## 2. Health Concerns

Residents of Graton described the most pressing health concerns for their community as affordability of healthcare, access to medical, dental and mental health services, and issues related to low-income families, seniors, Hispanics and migrant workers and the impact of pesticides.

Issues	Community Meetings	Key Informants	Community Surveys
Pressing community needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Health for our Hispanic community; Cost of health care; Uninsured people; Those who don't have or can't afford health insurance; Working poor have no national safety-net</li> <li>▪ Dental care</li> <li>▪ Low cost/confidential mental health care for all; Drug abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Affordable health care services. Physical access to health care.</li> </ul>	<p>When asked about pressing community health needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 34% named drug and alcohol abuse</li> <li>▪ 34% named access to health care</li> <li>▪ 30% named teen pregnancy</li> <li>▪ 25% named HIV/AIDS</li> </ul>
Populations in need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Shelter for farm workers during rain and harsh weather</li> <li>▪ Prenatal &amp; children's health care; teen pregnancy</li> <li>▪ Lack of well-designed senior services; lack of quality assisted living; end-of-life care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Hispanic farm workers</li> <li>▪ The workers need all kinds of assistance because of their status. They work hours for cash-do not keep jobs for a long time. They are staying in the area without their families.</li> </ul>	

Issues	Community Meetings
Public Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Practices of agribusiness, e.g., Chemical use; groundwater draw-down; Use of pesticides close to schools; pesticides &amp; vineyard over-development</li> <li>▪ Facilities for bathing &amp; hand-washing could be expanded</li> <li>▪ Farm workers' issues Safety for farm workers—all the OSHA regulations not covered for day workers</li> </ul>

### 3. Healthcare Challenges

Residents of Graton described challenges to getting healthcare as affordability of healthcare and health insurance; availability & access of services; and public & environmental health issues related to agricultural use of pesticides.

Key informants added the challenges of providing services for the migrant workers because of fear of the effect it might have on their immigration status.

Challenges	Community Meetings	Key Informants	Community Surveys
Affordable, accessible health care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cost and quality of medical and dental insurance coverage for “regular” medicine, then paying for alternative practitioners (not covered)</li> <li>▪ Getting appointments in a timely fashion (not enough doctors or variety of specialties in West County)</li> <li>▪ Is good care close? Are you getting the best care locally?</li> <li>▪ High cost of pharmaceuticals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We have to figure out how to deal with no money and with little money</li> <li>▪ The migrant workers are afraid to use the services, because of their immigration status. They are afraid of anything that looks official</li> <li>▪ We need to deal with transportation for addressing access to health care</li> </ul>	<p>When asked about barriers to access and about ways to improve health care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 64% thought care was too expensive</li> <li>▪ 39% didn't have insurance</li> <li>▪ 36% stated they had to wait too long to get an appointment</li> <li>▪ 33% had no transportation to the provider</li> </ul>
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Not a close trauma center</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Hispanics need medical and mental health services</li> </ul>	<p>When asked what could be done to improve services,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 43% wanted to shorten the time to get an appointment</li> <li>▪ 38% wanted providers to make it easier to get advice after hours</li> <li>▪ 38% wanted to add evening hours</li> <li>▪ 38% wanted to add more week-end hours</li> </ul>

#### 4. Priorities For New And Expanded Health Care Services In Your Community

Residents of Graton described priorities for new and expanded healthcare services as readily available access to health care for uninsured/underinsured, with additional emphasis on Hispanic, teen, senior community members, drug & alcohol treatment and preventative services.

Key informants identified the need to address the drug and alcohol abuse and HIV prevention education in a more organized manner.

Priorities	Community Meetings	Key Informants	Community Surveys
Affordable, accessible health care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A community health clinic in Graton like Occidental for low-income and urgent care; readily available access to health care for uninsured/underinsured</li> <li>Address the rising cost of pharmaceuticals for seniors</li> <li>A thriving, well publicized alternative medicine clinic—working together with traditional medical community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Affordable health care.</li> <li>A van for the 1<sup>st</sup> point of service, 1 or 2 times a week</li> <li>More ways to link people to services-to know where to go</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When asked if they would use health care services in their community, 81% said they would use them for themselves or their children</li> </ul>
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low cost/confidential mental health care</li> <li>Local dental care</li> <li>Access for seniors; end-of-life care; hospice outreach</li> <li>Increased outreach to Hispanic community; drug treatment program; alcohol treatment and education i.e. AA in Español</li> <li>Continued HIV infection screening</li> <li>Palm Drive should have a free advise line in ER</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage people to fix drug dealing happening in broad daylight</li> <li>Focus on prevention for alcohol and drug abuse.</li> <li>Shot clinics and prophylactic care for kids, elderly and the poor.</li> </ul>	<p>When asked what services they would like to see added to their community,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>45% named complementary or alternative medicine</li> <li>36% named dental care</li> </ul>
Education and prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preventative care services in Graton aimed at Hispanic/transient lower-income &amp; less-mobile populations</li> <li>Nutritional education; Integration of nutritional guidance and alternative care with traditional care</li> <li>Counseling for teens re: sex education and pregnancy; education on health issues; parenting classes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Education regarding HIV prevention, AIDS and drugs, so people can make healthy choices.</li> </ul>	
Populations in need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hispanic</li> <li>Seniors and less-mobile populations</li> <li>Transient lower-income</li> <li>Teens</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hispanic workers</li> <li>Teenagers</li> <li>Seniors</li> </ul>	<p>When asked about populations in need of additional support or services,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>70% named farm workers</li> <li>51% named low income/poor</li> <li>49% named teens and children</li> <li>35% named single parents</li> <li>26% named people with special needs</li> </ul>

## 5. Improving Overall Community Health

Residents of Graton described the things they could do to improve the overall health of their community as advocating for environmental best-practices, affordable housing and for those populations most in need of services.

Priorities	Community Meetings	Key Informants
Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Serve on West County Health Care Foundation; Publicize what's available</li> <li>▪ Ongoing environmental education, eclectic approach to what is healthiest</li> <li>▪ Support monitoring of farm worker working conditions and pesticide application</li> <li>▪ Address the lack of affordable Senior Housing &amp; Farm worker housing</li> <li>▪ Increasing fees paid to health care providers - California has one of the lowest reimbursement rate; trend toward capitation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Advocate for kids, seniors and the poor.</li> <li>▪ We need a better bus system. It is more expensive to move a doctor than to move a patient, even to Palm Drive.</li> </ul>

## E. **Guerneville**

A total of 394 people provided feedback in Guerneville. 357 were survey respondents, 34 attended the community meetings and three key informant interviews were conducted. One of the community meetings was conducted in Spanish.

### 1. Community Strengths

*"Senior Center provides home-delivered meals to shut-ins, and the drivers delivering them function as the eyes of the community, checking to see if someone is failing". (From a community meeting held on 11/2/00)*

Residents of Guerneville describe their community strengths as cooperation among local agencies, a strong sense of community, and tolerance of diverse lifestyles.

Key informants and community meeting participants identified the local, affordable health care and social services as valuable resources. Most often mentioned are the West County Health Centers (RRHC & OAHC), the West County Community Services, The Senior Center, Face to Face and the food banks.

Community Meetings	Key Informants	Community Surveys
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strong sense of community—support of one another; concerned citizenry, for those not as fortunate</li> <li>▪ Tolerance about complementary/alternative health options</li> <li>▪ Local agencies: West County Community Services, RRHC, Senior Center, Mental Health Services, food banks, Face-to-Face, public safety and the local faith community</li> <li>▪ Russian River Health Center has a sliding scale program</li> <li>▪ Positive experience with school administration (Guerneville, Monte Rio)</li> <li>▪ Fire departments very responsive, volunteer assistance</li> <li>▪ Business community is active in community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ RRHC/OAHC has a good group of doctors. Patients do well the and are well cared for. RRHC does a good job-they offer affordable, sensible health care. The physicians and all the staff are highly competent. The HIV program is excellent.</li> <li>▪ The local ambulance service. A lot of people are afraid of losing this valuable resource</li> <li>▪ Sebastopol/Palm Drive is reaching out and is excellent. The emphases on out-patient care is essential.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 73% are extremely or very satisfied with their health care</li> <li>▪ 69% are extremely or very satisfied with their dental care</li> </ul>

## 2. Health Concerns

*"We are blessed with the health center but they can only offer so much." (From a key informant interview with a senior services provider)*

Community members of Guerneville identified an increased need for mental health services and services to address alcohol and drug abuse as the most pressing health concerns. Access to services was identified as the next most pressing concern followed by affordable health care. Other services needs mentioned include dental care and preventative healthcare.

Senior community members of Guerneville described the most pressing health concerns for their community as a limited number of in-home care providers, poverty among the elderly and insufficient care for HIV positive people.

Hispanic community members of Guerneville identified chronic, life threatening and episodic illnesses as the most pressing health concerns for their community.

Issues	Community Meetings	Key Informants	Community Surveys
Pressing community needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Access ( transportation and knowledge) to available services</li> <li>▪ Cost of healthcare; affordability; many providers will not accept MediCal for payment</li> <li>▪ Children and adults with severe disabilities have difficulty accessing adequate medical and dental care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Access to affordable health care (medical, mental, dental and drug and alcohol treatment).</li> <li>▪ No centralized or satellite services offering 24 -hour emergency care. No outpatient services such as same day surgery</li> <li>▪ Kaiser patients have to travel outside of their local community for care</li> <li>▪ With an aging population there is a need for affordable and quality long term care</li> </ul>	<p>When asked about pressing community health needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 67% named drug and alcohol abuse</li> <li>▪ 47% named HIV/AIDS</li> <li>▪ 28% named access to health care</li> </ul>
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Alcohol/drug abuse; drug &amp; alcohol treatment services—preferably residential</li> <li>▪ Mental health care services</li> <li>▪ Dental health services for children/adults -- people who are homeless have really bad teeth problems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Services for substance abuse and recovery are the most important issues facing West County residents</li> <li>▪ There is a drug and alcohol epidemic. There is a lot of denial about this. The local culture makes it easy to be an addict. Long term health consequences of these behaviors place stress on the health care system.</li> </ul>	
Populations in need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Seniors</li> <li>▪ Care for HIV+ people</li> <li>▪ AIDS—lack of information &amp; support &amp; training for caregivers of HIV/AIDS patients and seniors</li> <li>▪ Homeless people with alcohol &amp; drug problems</li> <li>▪ Teen education and health needs</li> <li>▪ Preventive care for low income children, families and seniors</li> <li>▪ Severely disabled adults</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Seniors</li> <li>▪ The HIV community and dual diagnosed</li> <li>▪ Young families with babies, young children</li> <li>▪ Hispanic migrant workers in need of health care services and bilingual providers</li> <li>▪ Economically disadvantaged people, the homeless</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ When asked about populations in need of additional support or services,</li> <li>▪ 71% named low income/poor</li> <li>▪ 36% named seniors</li> <li>▪ 33% named teens and children</li> <li>▪ 29% named people with special needs</li> <li>▪ 27% named single parents</li> </ul>

### 3. Healthcare Challenges

Community members of Guerneville described challenges to getting healthcare as affordability and access; lack of local 24 hour urgent care resources, a limited number of in home services for seniors, need for mental health services, transportation and translation and lack of knowledge about available services.

Key informants added the challenges of meeting the needs of the HIV/AIDS clients.

Challenges	Community Meetings	Key Informants	Community Surveys
Affordable, accessible health care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Affordability of healthcare and lack of insurance</li> <li>No urgent care clinic for limited ER needs</li> <li>Better emergency care and cardiac care at Palm Drive</li> <li>Confidentiality—stigmas around certain conditions</li> <li>Prompt mental health care—same-day response to problems</li> <li>Transportation—there is very little in West County</li> <li>Language barriers—providers do not speak Spanish and patients do not speak English</li> <li>Ignorance of services and symptoms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most people do not seek assistance until they really need care - partially because of the culture and partially because of affordability and access issues</li> <li>The health care system is too expensive, especially for seniors</li> <li>For the insured population patients are steered by their insurers (Kaiser and HPR); the insured population is underserved here in the West County for dental services</li> <li>The micro population of HIV requires on going care and monitoring</li> <li>Affordability and transportation to hospital care for our HIV/AIDS clients</li> <li>Transportation to services. In home assistance for seniors</li> <li>The change from transient to full time residents will require more services</li> </ul>	<p>When asked about barriers to access</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>38% thought care was too expensive</li> <li>43% stated they had to wait too long to get an appointment</li> </ul>
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not many in-home care providers; no oversight of current caregivers</li> <li>Treatment for multiply-diagnosed people (i.e., alcohol/mental illness, etc.); more treatment facilities and easier access to drug and alcohol treatment; more resources for substance abuse rehabilitation; inpatient mental health facility in this area</li> <li>Helping children get care they need (i.e., dental, hearing) when the parents won't cooperate</li> <li>Vision coverage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Doctors who deal specifically with elder issues (e.g. Alzheimer and dementia support)</li> <li>Mental health outreach is very limited. A lot of seniors are isolated and become depressed</li> <li>There is no in-home care on the coast. There are no facilities for seniors, especially long term in home care</li> <li>Some kind of oversight for the in-home providers. The community is dependent on getting inland for medical care. Transportation is an issue.</li> <li>Need to increase dental services</li> <li>Specialty services-any kind of neurology, cancer doctor.</li> </ul>	<p>When asked what could be done to improve services,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>49% wanted to shorten the time to get an appointment</li> <li>29% wanted providers to make it easier to get advice after hours</li> <li>29% wanted providers to make it easier to phone the provider to reschedule or get test results</li> <li>35% wanted to add evening hours</li> <li>29% wanted to add more week-end hours</li> </ul>

#### 4. Priorities For New And Expanded Health Care Services In Your Community

*"I think it is important that the doctors look at the whole situation-I like the idea of agencies working together. By working together we can enlighten the doctor on what is really going on with their patients." (From a key informant interview with a senior services provider).*

Increased resources for alcohol and drug abuse were most often mentioned as priority needs by residents of Guerneville. Increased coordination among all community resources, dental services, mental health services; more HIV specialists; and more readily available health information were also frequently mentioned. Hispanic community members described priorities for new and expanded healthcare services as bilingual health education classes and information on access to health services.

Senior community members of Guerneville described priorities as transportation to health facilities and more in home care providers.

Priorities	Community Meetings	Key Informants	Community Surveys
Affordable, accessible health care services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Dental care</li> <li>▪ Dental and mental health services for children and adolescents</li> <li>▪ Access to services-transportation needed desperately for West County seniors for doctor/dentist appointments</li> <li>▪ Education on how to access health care in this county</li> <li>▪ Better emergency care and cardiac care at Palm Drive; minor emergency center</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Satellite Clinic-there are existing facilities that could partner with Palm Drive.</li> <li>▪ Need urgent care services in the outer areas</li> <li>▪ Increase the affiliations with Palm Drive to address the HIV/AIDS needs</li> <li>▪ Access to affordable/sliding scale mental health care with an emphasis on the large addictive population in West County</li> <li>▪ Medical, affordable dental, mental health</li> <li>▪ Transportation needs in our area could be helped by a volunteer pool that could transport and accompany people to appointments</li> <li>▪ Families need access to more dental care (i.e. MediCal)</li> </ul>	When asked if they would use health care services in their community, 72% said they would use them for themselves or their children
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To reduce illegal drug use in West County by making education and treatment easily available</li> <li>▪ Alcohol and substance use programs that reach out to specific populations such as gay men and IV drug users, etc.</li> <li>▪ Treatment for multiple-diagnosed people (i.e., alcohol/mental illness, etc.); more treatment facilities and easier access to drug and alcohol treatment</li> <li>▪ Greater HIV expertise—especially in West County; possible hospice facility</li> <li>▪ Addressing the absence of a service infrastructure in rural areas</li> <li>▪ Clinic/center for teens to feel safe</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ There is a need for a Geriatrician-improved collaboration among agencies for providing services to seniors</li> <li>▪ A resource referral service to find in home providers</li> <li>▪ Explore collaboration with subspecialty doctors for same day surgery at Palm Drive Hospital</li> <li>▪ Look at some non-traditional use of the hospital beds at Palm Drive.</li> <li>▪ Diabetes teaching and monitoring, dietician based training</li> <li>▪ We need more bi-lingual providers</li> <li>▪ Well baby checks, immunizations in more convenient places</li> <li>▪ More specialized pediatric care</li> </ul>	When asked what services they would like to see added to their community, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 29% named complementary or alternative medicine</li> <li>▪ 29% named exercise programs</li> <li>▪ 26% named dental care</li> <li>▪ 26% named urgent care</li> </ul>

Priorities	Community Meetings	Key Informants
Education and prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Need for centralized resource services to connect existing services to all parts of community</li> <li>ESL classes with health education for diabetes, STD, nutrition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We need basic outreach and education before you can deal with the real deep health problems that exist.</li> </ul>

## 5. Improving Overall Community Health

Community members of Guerneville described the things they could do to improve the overall health of their community as bringing all the resources together to discuss the health care issues, linking resources, advocating for increased low cost health care services and supporting and strengthening the existing services.

Priorities	Community Meetings	Key Informants
Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteer; Talk to others; Share knowledge; Help support healthy lifestyles</li> <li>Expand inter-agency coalition link public-private efforts; creative coalitions</li> <li>An organization to bring people together– to move past differences and work for common purposes</li> <li>Advocate for environmental health</li> <li>Support resources that are available</li> <li>Assist with transitional housing; Improve inadequate housing (old, non-insulated, poorly maintained) affordable housing; well-maintained and safe apartments or homes; our most susceptible clients are living in sub-standard conditions; housing &amp; safe living space for young families with children</li> <li>Need facilities for homeless families</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We need a comprehensive view of health that includes medical, mental, dental, Vision, Physical; hard to get all people who are working on community health concerns to the table</li> <li>Escort services to doctor appointments- to have someone with you who can hear what the doctor has to say and to be an advocate.</li> <li>Let's support the current health care system that we have now with more government money and resources</li> <li>Our agency is working on improving the housing situation. This will improve the health. We are seeing a lot more young families with respiratory problems. Some of these families have no houses or substandard housing.</li> </ul>

## F. Occidental and Camp Meeker

A total of 91 people provided feedback in Occidental and Camp Meeker. 76 were survey respondents, 13 attended the community meetings and two key informant interviews were conducted.

### 1. Community Strengths

Occidental and Camp Meeker residents describe their community strengths as a strong sense of community and experienced and responsive local community services. Assets they identified were grassroots, community based organizations and in particular the Occidental Area Healthcare Center and Palm Drive as important resources to the health of their community.

Community Meetings	Key Informants	Community Surveys
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Resources: Occidental Area Health Center, Occidental Community Council, Volunteer Wheels, Camp Meeker Community Builders</li> <li>▪ Volunteer Fire Dept/ Emergency services funded by community</li> <li>▪ People dedicated to support youth/families in need; we pay attention to our teens</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Community is extremely well served by the OCHC.</li> <li>▪ If the community did not have Palm Drive, it would be hard to get emergency services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 68% are extremely or very satisfied with their health care</li> <li>▪ 69% are extremely or very satisfied with their dental care</li> </ul>

## 2. Health Concerns

The most pressing health concerns identified by residents of Occidental and Camp Meeker were the lack of insurance and the high cost of services, a growing need for mental health services and drug and alcohol treatment. Community members of Occidental described the most pressing health concerns for their community are transportation for seniors and the disabled; homelessness and education about available healthcare services and insurance. Concerns were voiced about the impact of exposure to agricultural pesticides. Key informants highlighted concern about the need for earlier planning to address health care needs as well as mental health needs that are not being addressed.

Issues	Community Meetings	Key Informants	Community Surveys
Pressing community needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lack of insurance</li> <li>▪ Lack of information and advice about access to all health services (medical, mental, dental, etc)</li> <li>▪ Affordability; Middle income working family or working poor being able to afford health care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We are in a huge demographic shift-People are priced out of this place. It is affordable for wealthy people. The long time community members are mostly low and middle income and cannot afford to stay here.</li> <li>▪ Mental health issues are growing especially amongst teens and seniors.</li> <li>▪ Need assurance that Palm Drive can meet the needs of the community.</li> </ul>	<p>When asked about pressing community health needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 40% named drug and alcohol abuse</li> <li>▪ 27% named access to health care</li> <li>▪ 25% named poor nutrition</li> </ul>
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Affordable and effective drug rehabilitation or treatment programs/facilities</li> <li>▪ Transportation for seniors, sick, disabled</li> <li>▪ Mental health services</li> <li>▪ Addressing agricultural industrial use of toxins—a threat to local health; Need specialists locally to diagnose &amp; care for those affected by toxins</li> <li>▪ Drug/alcohol problems; Not knowing how to help or who to refer them to (as a close community, we identify problems, but it is not easy to resolve them)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Need for senior services in general</li> <li>▪ Dental and mental health services especially for low-income populations.</li> <li>▪ Presence of the vineyards. Environmental illnesses may become more prevalent with more vineyard development.</li> <li>▪ Prevention services are not as developed as they could be.</li> </ul>	

Issues	Community Meetings	Key Informants
Populations in need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seniors</li> <li>Homeless</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seniors</li> <li>Homeless</li> <li>Teens</li> <li>Hispanics</li> </ul>

### 3. Healthcare Challenges

Residents of Occidental and Camp Meeker most often identified the lack of insurance, limits imposed by insurance providers (HMO's and Kaiser) and challenges with a confusing and fragmented health care delivery system.

Key informants identified the challenges as a lack of specialized medicine locally and a need for information and education about available healthcare resources.

Challenges	Community Meetings	Key Informants	Community Surveys
Affordable Accessible health care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of health insurance</li> <li>It's confusing! What can one apply for? What is one eligible for?</li> <li>Better health plan options, insurance is limited in providers</li> <li>Lots of locals have Kaiser and can't get services out here</li> <li>Resources—knowing what's available Information: How to identify the expertise?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cost containment is the biggest battle</li> <li>Plans: There is a lack of planning for taking care of health problems until there are real problems.</li> </ul>	<p>When asked about barriers to access and about ways to improve health care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>41% thought care was too expensive</li> </ul>
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specialized medicine not available in West County</li> <li>Dental care and orthodontist—for people on MediCal</li> <li>No labor and delivery at Palm Drive, no birthing center locally</li> <li>Lack of transportation &amp; access to services for seniors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are no intensive specialist services.</li> <li>Mental health services are increasingly sought after and difficult to find (or impossible) to find for Spanish-speaking clients.</li> <li>I have families that cannot take care of their children and yet there are not enough services to help them.</li> </ul>	<p>When asked what could be done to improve services,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>49% wanted to shorten the time to get an appointment</li> <li>33% wanted providers to make it easier to get advice after hours</li> <li>30% wanted providers to make it easier to phone the provider to reschedule or get test results</li> <li>30% wanted to add more week-end hours</li> <li>32% wanted to add evening hours</li> </ul>

#### 4. Priorities For New And Expanded Health Care Services In Your Community

Community members of Occidental and Camp Meeker identify priorities as strengthening the linkages between the health centers and Palm Drive Hospital, and improving access to services, and specialty services. More services for the elderly, including transportation, were highlighted by both community members and key informants.

Community members Identified more affordable and accessible alternative health care as a priority, strengthening telecommunication options and more locally available specialized technical/medical services, particularly diagnostic services. Community members also identified a need for increased support and training for their volunteer fire department.

Priority populations in need of additional services are the seniors, teens, Hispanics and homeless.

Priorities	Community Meetings	Key Informants	Community Surveys
Affordable, accessible health care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Expanded/stronger links with West County Health Centers and Palm Drive Hospital</li> <li>▪ Collaboration with community based organizations</li> <li>▪ Alternative health care treatments that are affordable and accessible</li> <li>▪ Transportation for seniors, handicapped, those without access</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Maintain and expand the services</li> <li>▪ Some of the existing services could be made more available through a more user-friendly transportation services</li> </ul>	When asked if they would use health care services in their community, 69% said they would use them for themselves or their children
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Home visits for elderly, sick</li> <li>▪ Alternative treatments and expansion for addressing substance abuse</li> <li>▪ Financial support &amp; training for volunteer fire department services</li> <li>▪ Peer-counseling support groups for chronic diseases</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ More services for seniors</li> <li>▪ Need for most medical specialties</li> </ul>	When asked what services they would like to see added to their community, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 48% named complementary or alternative medicine</li> <li>▪ 29% named dental care</li> </ul>
Outreach and education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ More accessible, unbiased information about vaccinations (it is polarized now)</li> <li>▪ Ongoing education at Heath Center about self-help strategies, e.g., diabetes, asthma, overview of alternative medicines, etc.</li> <li>▪ Internet as local health-information access; Need funding for doctors &amp; specialists “at other end of line” to answer questions, etc.</li> <li>▪ Prevention-based youth services</li> <li>▪ Consumer advocate</li> <li>▪ Suggestion: Palm Drive to have a “health library” accessible to the public</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increasing prevention. Ensure the front line screening are proliferate throughout the system-address the problems.</li> </ul>	

Priorities	Community Meetings	Key Informants	Community Surveys
Populations in need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hispanic relationships</li> <li>Support the kids, seniors, teen parents</li> <li>Homeless</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spanish-speaking clients</li> <li>Teens</li> <li>Seniors</li> <li>Homeless invisible population</li> </ul>	<p>When asked about populations in need of additional support or services,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>63% named low income/poor</li> <li>35% named teens and children</li> <li>33% named farm workers</li> <li>28% named single parents</li> <li>5% named seniors</li> </ul>

## 5. Improving Overall Community Health

Residents of Occidental and Camp Meeker described the things they could do to improve the overall health of their community as improving linkages between existing resources and continuing collaborative community dialogue.

Areas of Focus	Community Meetings	Key Informants
Support and collaboration of community services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integration; Comprehensiveness; linking resources; Funding for community development in healthcare</li> <li>Continue this process—community council/collaboration to support the dialogue</li> <li>Support local resources; learn about services—talk about them to others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Better coordination of West County services amongst providers &amp; social service agencies</li> <li>Letting people know about the resources.</li> </ul>

## G. Sebastopol

A total of 925 people provided feedback in Sebastopol. 855 were survey respondents, 65 attended 5 community meetings and 5 key informant interviews were conducted. Four of the community meetings were conducted in Spanish.

### 1. Community Strengths

Key informants and community members of Sebastopol describe their strengths as competent providers, local community clinics and Palm Drive Hospital, a proactive and politically progressive community with excellent talent and resources as well as a clean, beautiful environment. Community members highlighted the community assets as a range of traditional and alternative medical and mental health services. Hispanics describe their community strengths as programs that help low-income families and Hispanic speakers receive healthcare and information. Lesbians describe their

community strengths as a strong sense of community and available local healthcare—both traditional and complementary medical services.

Community Meetings	Key Informants	Community Surveys
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Politically informed community-Community is socially responsible</li> <li>▪ Excellent physicians &amp; higher number of family doctors; high quality PA's; NP's; midwives;</li> <li>▪ Rich in mental health providers</li> <li>▪ Palm Drive Hospital</li> <li>▪ Wide range of services. There is a dialogue between the traditional providers aware of complementary service providers</li> <li>▪ Large number of well-organized community based services; active non-profits</li> <li>▪ The mobile unit of Memorial Hospital.</li> <li>▪ The Healthy Families program</li> <li>▪ Clean air; great climate; natural beauty; location—close to ocean</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The West County Health Clinics- The clinics are closest to the community and have the most trust and confidence of the community.</li> <li>▪ Most of the seniors are happy with the local doctors but leave for specialty services</li> <li>▪ There are lots of therapists but not enough resources for the people who cannot afford to pay for therapy</li> <li>▪ There is a lot of publicity of what is offered so the seniors know of the services, they just cannot get to them</li> <li>▪ Very happy with Palm Drive.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 80% are extremely or very satisfied with their health care</li> <li>▪ 78% are extremely or very satisfied with their dental care</li> </ul>

## 2. Health Concerns

*"We need greater access and a greater network. Especially for those people who cannot help themselves." (From key informant interview with a Sebastopol service provider.)*

*"Communication with the health industry is somewhat condescending to seniors. You have to be a good consumer, know the questions to ask and be an advocate. A lot of seniors do not know how to do this or are not able to be a voice for themselves." (From key informant interview with the business community.)*

Community members and key informants described the most pressing health concerns for their community as lack of affordable, accessible healthcare services and insurance; emergency/urgent care as well as health issues for seniors and migrant workers.

Lesbian community members described the most pressing health concerns for their community as affordable insurance coverage, a lack of educational resources for women's health issues and a need for more complementary/preventative medicines. They also expressed concern about the hazards of agricultural pesticide use.

Key informants highlighted a need for more trained in home health care services for seniors as well as transportation.

Issues	Community Meetings	Key Informants	Community Surveys
Pressing community needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Affordable health Insurance</li> <li>▪ Affordable dental and mental health services Not enough insurance coverage for alternative/preventative medicine</li> <li>▪ Lack of a clinic in Sebastopol</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lack of insurance coverage and the raising costs of health care</li> <li>▪ Access to health and dental care specifically for the elderly and the young (under 18 and young college students)</li> <li>▪ Care providers for people in their homes, especially in the more rural areas. Most of the in home care providers are underpaid and under trained.</li> <li>▪ Transportation</li> <li>▪ Access to any public benefit programs</li> </ul>	<p>When asked about pressing community health needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 41% named drug and alcohol abuse</li> <li>▪ 32% named access to health care</li> </ul>
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Urgent care</li> <li>▪ Emergency care</li> <li>▪ Exercise and nutrition</li> <li>▪ Diabetes, Menopause, Cancer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lack of specialties-pediatrics, oncology, other specialty services</li> <li>▪ Nutrition education is a concern of many of the seniors.</li> <li>▪ We are concerned about the increase of the people in need of support and the growing # of working poor</li> </ul>	
Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Affordable education and information concerning health issues and understanding long term effects of choices</li> <li>▪ Solid, reliable, current health information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We need better preventive education throughout the labor force and at work sites. This could happen with good interaction between Palm Drive and the local employers</li> <li>▪ Address great increase in use of drugs</li> <li>▪ Pesticide use on the apple orchards</li> </ul>	

### 3. Healthcare Challenges

Community members of Sebastopol described challenges to getting healthcare as cost of care and limitations with kinds of insurance; lack of specialized medicine locally and a need for information and education about healthcare resources.

Hispanic community members of Sebastopol described challenges to getting healthcare as lack of medical providers who speak Spanish, transportation, and the high cost of services.

Lesbian community members of Sebastopol described challenges to getting healthcare as lack of basic insurance (affordability); lack of affordable health care that goes beyond traditional medicine; and discrimination directed toward lesbians (attitude).

Challenges	Community Meetings	Key Informants	Community Surveys
Affordable, accessible health care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lack of basic insurance-cost of adequate care insurance, especially with chronic conditions</li> <li>▪ Lack of choice of primary health providers due to insurance restrictions</li> <li>▪ Getting an appointment with good practitioners of complementary medicine</li> <li>▪ Affordable health care that goes beyond traditional medicine</li> <li>▪ Transportation-buses run to different parts of the county, but not often enough</li> <li>▪ Lack of Spanish-speaking providers and Spanish educational materials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Access to medical services primarily because of the insurance issues</li> <li>▪ The medicines are expensive. Insurance co-pays are frightening. Seniors have lived in this area for a long time and they don't incur housing costs but there is never any extra money for medical expenses.</li> <li>▪ Better access to health care services for Hispanics to decrease the use of the ER for services</li> <li>▪ Language and immigration status are 2 barriers that affect the Hispanic population.</li> <li>▪ The one hard thing is hospital care for our HIV/AIDS related clients. Issues are affordability and transportation.</li> <li>▪ People who have Kaiser sometimes cannot get affordable care that is close to where they live</li> </ul>	<p>When asked about barriers to access and about ways to improve health care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 38% thought care was too expensive</li> <li>▪ 37% thought the wait was too long for an appointment</li> </ul>
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lack of specialists</li> <li>▪ Not easy to find places for women to get annual gynecological exams</li> <li>▪ Lack of preventive medical care (yearly exams, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Dental, especially MediCal dental services</li> <li>▪ Mental Health services are not provided to the Hispanic community</li> <li>▪ It would be good if Palm Drive had a center for alternative health</li> </ul>	<p>When asked what could be done to improve services,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 50% wanted to shorten the time to get an appointment</li> <li>▪ 35% wanted to add hours</li> <li>▪ 28% wanted providers to make it easier to phone the provider to reschedule or get test results</li> <li>▪ 27% wanted providers to make it easier to get advice after hours</li> </ul>
Populations in need of services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Seniors Women with limited incomes; the working poor</li> <li>▪ Single moms and kids with no insurance/limited resources</li> <li>▪ Discrimination directed toward lesbians</li> <li>▪ Culturally appropriate health care for migrant farm workers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Senior health care services</li> <li>▪ Children who cannot get the services</li> <li>▪ Services for people who have limited resources</li> <li>▪ Hispanics: pregnant women and migrant farm workers</li> <li>▪ The Hispanic homeless population is grossly undercounted</li> </ul>	<p>When asked about populations in need of additional support or services,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 52% named low income/poor</li> <li>▪ 41% named seniors</li> <li>▪ 34% named farm workers</li> <li>▪ 31% named teens and children</li> <li>▪ 27% named people with special needs</li> <li>▪ 26% named single parents</li> </ul>

Priorities	Community Meetings	Key Informants
Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of health education</li> <li>Not being respected, heard or involved in exploring health problems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of information on prevention</li> <li>Lack of preventive care for pregnant women and children (Hispanic). Better community education and access services rather than using the ER.</li> </ul>

#### 4. Priorities For New And Expanded Health Care Services In Your Community

*"Access to care should be improved. We need more satellite clinics in the outlying areas- specifically in the farther edges of the county. I know we have the Occidental and Russian River Clinics but we could use services that reach the outer regions of the County that are staffed on a more limited basis" (From a key informant interview with a member of the business community)*

Community members and key informants identified priorities for new and expanded healthcare services as maintaining local emergency care; mobile clinic and/or outreach services to serve the more remote communities as well as increasing access to care; more healthcare and support services for seniors more access to and education about alternative and preventative healthcare.

Hispanic community members of Sebastopol described priorities for new and expanded healthcare services as labor and delivery at Palm Drive; more Spanish speaking doctors and nurses; and more affordable health and emergency care.

Lesbian community members of Sebastopol described priorities for new and expanded healthcare services access to alternative/complimentary therapies, support groups, classes and informational resources on health-related topics.

Priorities	Community Meetings	Key Informants	Community Surveys
Affordability and access to health care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Easily affordable and accessible health care for all</li> <li>Free clinic at Palm Drive with complimentary therapies; attract the kind of doctors that fit the profile of our community at Palm Drive</li> <li>They would like all health centers providing services for under-served people to have night and week end clinics</li> <li>Mobile Clinic—to visit outlying communities and address isolated community members</li> <li>Better mental health care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add a mobile dental clinic to reach the more remote parts of the West Sonoma County</li> <li>Strengthen the community based clinics</li> <li>More convenient locations for services for seniors, children and Hispanics</li> <li>More doctors who specialize in Geriatrics; more access and affordable mental health services for seniors</li> <li>Increase in culturally competent services for Hispanics- addressing the cultural barriers to accessing mental health services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When asked if they would use health care services in their community, 74% said they would use them for themselves or their children</li> </ul>

Priorities	Community Meetings	Key Informants	Community Surveys
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More incorporation of holistic and alternative health care and education</li> <li>Support groups for health care problems (e.g. chronic fatigue, menopause, breast cancer)</li> <li>Services for the elderly- more assisted living in West County</li> <li>Spanish-speaking providers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A senior transportation service is number one, in-home care</li> <li>Seniors are really looking at alternative medicine-vitamins, and ways to promote health. Exercise and diet, fall reduction. They want information to help themselves</li> <li>Health screening, birth control services-easier access to these services at one location</li> </ul>	<p>When asked what services they would like to see added to their community,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>29% named complementary or alternative medicine</li> <li>28% named health screening</li> </ul>
Education and prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public education—wellness lectures; broad communication about resources and services; publicity, raising awareness in community</li> <li>Preventative medicine classes; more education about the connection between diet, exercise, life-style and breast cancer</li> <li>Library of resources—quality, reliable information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We need to have access to more information from a broader perspective of approaches that promotes and encourages an open minded discussion</li> <li>A continued education about drug and the dangers of teenage pregnancy, prevention at a young age</li> <li>More regular screenings in more convenient locations for people who cannot afford to have them so we can identify health needs before they become problem</li> <li>Education for seniors concerning alternative medicine and health promotion</li> <li>Promote a better understanding of the connection between good dental care and overall improved health care</li> <li>Knowledge for how to get through the system</li> </ul>	

## 5. Improving Overall Community Health

*"We need to have more education with a focus on prevention. If we can take care of ourselves before there is a need we will be better off." (From key informant Interview with business leader.)*

*"People can do a lot for themselves in a supportive environment" (From key informant interview with member of the lesbian community.)*

Community members and key informants described the things they could do to improve the overall health of their community as working on communication and getting involved; advocating for community health and self-help.

Hispanic community members of Sebastopol described the things they could do to improve the overall health of their community as creating a special board of Hispanics to better the health conditions and health care in West County.

Priorities	Community Meetings	Key Informants
Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Come to these meetings—get involved; To work more on communication—to let people know how they can get involved</li> <li>▪ Support the West County HealthCare Foundation</li> <li>▪ Need to address the issue of employers not providing health insurance for their employees (whether they are documented or not)</li> <li>▪ Patient advocates-to accompany a patient to support/ask the right questions about how to work/understand the system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continue to spawn a more intelligent and free flowing debate about how to take care of themselves and maintain a healthy life style</li> <li>▪ Create a "Mesa Directiva" (Board of Directors) of Hispanics to better the health conditions and health care here in West County, cooperate, work together to accomplish change</li> <li>▪ Social issues such as domestic violence and gangs need to be addressed in this health needs assessment.</li> <li>▪ Our dental society is trying to promote a program where one day a year is donated from providers in the county focused on dental care for the kids</li> <li>▪ More innovation around education</li> <li>▪ There could be a public service web site with frequently asked questions about health care that would also offer tips on improving the overall health of the community</li> </ul>

## H. West County Services

*Four key informant interviews were conducted with agencies serving all west county residents. Two of the interviews were with agencies that specifically offer services to Hispanics.*

### 1. Community Strengths

*"I have been impressed with the staying power of the Russian River Health Center and Palm Drive Hospital. I have heard good things about the Occidental Health Center."  
(From community meeting held on 12/5/00)*

*The Fire Halls and the schools are the community centers and can be used as a resource in working to meet the health care needs within these communities that make up the West County. (From key informant interview with Public Safety)*

Community strengths mentioned were the West County Health Centers, Palm Drive Hospital, and community facilities.

### 2. Health Concerns

The health concerns identified are the lack of local health care services and limited transportation to services. All West County Services identified the seniors as needing services. Services, specifically dental care for children, were mentioned most often.

Concerns	West County	Hispanics
Affordable health care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access and transportation to services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health insurance for individuals and families</li> <li>Dental services to Hispanic families with no insurance or undocumented</li> </ul>
Populations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seniors</li> <li>Children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Hispanic senior groups (age 55+)</li> <li>Young children</li> </ul>
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prevention work in the schools and in the area of Maternal and Child Health. West County has fewer resources in the than other parts of the county.</li> <li>In home health care for seniors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The most important need is dental services for young children</li> <li>Vision services</li> <li>Health concerns for migrant families are: asthma, high cholesterol, high blood pressure and diabetes</li> </ul>

### 3. Healthcare Challenges

The West County Service providers described the challenges as access to care because of the remoteness of West County, services for drug and alcohol abuse and lack of in home care for seniors. Key informants identified access and affordability as the challenges to getting health care in the Hispanic community.

Challenges	West County	Hispanics
Affordable, accessible health care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accessing care from the remote areas of the West County.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hispanics are afraid to use even the free services because they have no insurance and they cannot afford the follow up care.</li> <li>Lack of knowledge of the services</li> </ul>
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Issues about drug and alcohol are very keen issues because of the diversity of problems that exist in West County.</li> <li>Specialty services and physical therapy less available in the West County.</li> <li>In home health care for seniors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work is the priority for the migrant farm workers so they are less likely to take care of their health.</li> </ul>

### 4. Priorities For New And Expanded Health Care Services In Your Community

All West County participants identified a need for more affordable services as a top priority, with a focus on services for the elderly and children and increased nutrition education. West County service providers added priorities for services to HIV/AIDS patients as a need. Hispanic providers identified addressing barriers to access as well as increasing dental and vision services to the Hispanics.

<b>Priorities</b>	<b>West County</b>	<b>Hispanics</b>
Affordable and accessible health care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a need for more services for the working poor and those who cannot afford to pay for the service.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offer more services for low fee</li> <li>Provide transportation and translation. We need to have more services that are affordable, accessible and culturally appropriate.</li> <li>Address fears about accessing services.</li> <li>Offer services where the Hispanic population gathers (i.e. Graton, churches).</li> </ul>
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training to provide services to the elderly- physical therapy services.</li> <li>Nutrition services could be improved</li> <li>Services for HIV+ or AIDS patients. I do not know whether this population is receiving adequate services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support services for the elderly who do not speak English and do not drive-do not know how to complete forms.</li> <li>Education on good nutrition and the connection of nutrition with high cholesterol and high blood pressure.</li> <li>Dental and vision service</li> </ul>
Populations in need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seniors</li> <li>The children</li> <li>HIV/AIDS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elderly people</li> <li>The children</li> <li>Women at risk for domestic violence</li> </ul>

## 5. Improving Overall Community Health

All West County providers identified needing mechanisms to mobilize the community to address the health care needs in the rural areas of West County. Continuing to do prevention work and ensuring that the outreach is effective were highlighted as means of improving the overall community health.

<b>Priorities</b>	<b>West County</b>	<b>Hispanics</b>
Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There have been ongoing issues of non-emergency medical transportation and using volunteer based services (e.g. mobilizing the community around access issues-where resources are few and it is a rural community).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To form a coalition of people ('natural leaders') who are interested in these issues. Meet every three months and see if there are any improvements.</li> </ul>
Outreach and Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Across the board-prevention work in collaboration with work that is already in operation in the West County communities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offer more person to person services. Very important to learn to attract Hispanics to meetings and information opportunities.</li> </ul>

## **VI. Attachments**

Attachment A – Report of Individual Community Meetings

Attachment B – List of Stakeholder Interviews and Report of Stakeholder Interviews

Attachment C – Community Survey and Survey Results

Attachment D – Newspaper Inserts

Attachment E – Sebastopol Area Chamber of Commerce Letter

**Attachment A – Report of Individual Community Meetings**

**Attachment B – List of Stakeholder Interviews and Report of  
Stakeholder Interviews**

## **Attachment C – Community Survey and Survey Results**

**Attachment D – Newspaper Inserts**

**Attachment E – Sebastopol Area Chamber of Commerce Letter**