

## **It is time for Yellowstone County's wellness check**

**By Amanda Zimmerman**

Yellowstone County is due for its wellness check, also known as the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). The goal of the CHNA is to identify major health problems, gaps in services and other factors that may contribute to healthcare needs for residents in our community.

The CHNA is completed every three years in partnership with Billings Clinic, RiverStone Health and Intermountain Health St. Vincent Regional Hospital. The data collected is public and available to anyone in the community to help drive better health outcomes. The CHNA helps local organizations make important decisions about their programs and helps us all decide where we, as a community, should focus our efforts and resources both big and small.

To accomplish this effort, we rely on our community to help in many ways.

- Representatives from Billings Clinic, RiverStone Health, Intermountain Health St. Vincent Regional Hospital, and in partnership with The Rehabilitation Hospital of Montana work with an advisory committee of approximately 40 community members and leaders to choose survey questions, health trends and new areas of concern to measure.
- An independent research firm, Professional Research Consultants (PRC) assists with the process by administering and analyzing survey results.
- Residents of Yellowstone County will have an opportunity to participate in the anonymous survey online. The aim is to get feedback from a large cross-section of Yellowstone County residents. Through this survey, participants provide feedback and experiences on various health topics and issues.
- There are also opportunities to participate in the survey through a randomized phone call starting in May. PRC may not show up on caller ID. We highly encourage residents to answer their phones during this time to participate in this important effort. PRC will not ask people for any identifying information.
- Approximately 300 community members who are involved in different sectors of Yellowstone County will be given an online key informant survey to provide their perception of greatest concerns in health for residents.
- Community health workers (CHWs) across Yellowstone County are partnered with organizations to reach historically under-resourced populations they serve. They can help identify the impacts of chronic disease such as obesity, health disease, mental illness, social isolation and more. The feedback from CHWs will provide valuable insight on the barriers many face in trying to improve their health outcomes.

All the information collected for the CHNA online and by phone is anonymous and does not include any identifying information like name or address.

After all this information is collected, there will be a community forum where anyone in the county is welcome to join and learn the results of the CHNA. This gives Yellowstone County residents the opportunity to help determine our greatest areas of opportunity as a community and health needs to focus on during the next three years. Keep an eye out for your opportunity to share your feedback through the survey and stay tuned for a community-wide invitation later this year.

For more information about how to get involved in the CHNA or community health improvement strategies, please visit [hbdyc.org](http://hbdyc.org) or contact us at [info@hbdyc.org](mailto:info@hbdyc.org).

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