

FOCUS GROUP REPORT COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE ASSESSMENT

Freeman Regional Health Services (FRHS)
November 11, 2016

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to present the information obtained from a series of community focus groups. The document is divided into three sections:

- ✓ Organization and Setting
- ✓ Specific Responses
- ✓ Takeaways

This report provides an accurate representation of the focus group process and outcomes. The process followed a typical focus group format.

- Participants were invited to attend one of two sessions that best fit their schedule.
- Participants were limited to a number that would allow for a manageable discussion (less than 12 persons). A total of 12 persons were involved in the process.
- Participants were asked a limited number of identical questions.
- Participants were encouraged to respond based upon their own experiences.
- The focus groups were conducted on November 11, 2016 in the Freeman Regional Health Services Conference Room

Organization & Setting

Focus Group 1

Date/Time: 11/11/16; 11:30am
Location: FRHS Conference Room
Number of Participants: 7
Facilitators: Eric Ambroson
Refreshments: Lunch

Focus Group 2 (Senior Citizens)

Date/Time: 11/11/16; 2:30pm
Location: FRHS Conference Room
Number of Participants: 3
Facilitators: Eric Ambroson
Refreshments: Dessert and coffee

Demographic Data

Focus Group 1

Date/Time: 11/11/16; 11:30am

Participant	Sex	Age	Ethnicity
1	Male	64	White
2	Female	34	
3	Female	58	
4	Female	60	White
5	Female	87	White
6	Male	27	White
7	Male	28	

Male: 43% Female: 57%
Median Age: 58 years Average Age: 51 years
Ethnicity: 100% White

Focus Group 2

Date/Time: 11/11/16; 2:30pm

Participant	Sex	Age	Ethnicity
1	Female	29	White
2	Female	29	White
3	Female		

Male: 0% Female: 100%
Median Age: 29 years Average Age:
Ethnicity: 100% White

Specific Responses

Freeman Regional Health Services

Community Health Needs Assessment

Focus Group Results: 11:30am Group; November 11, 2016

1. What is your vision of a healthy community? What is healthy about Freeman? What is unhealthy?
 - New businesses
 - Better and more housing options (only 1 apartment, not great upkeep)
 - Health care/clinic....continue to grow
 - Therapy pool – Enclosed pool/rec center (City/hospital partnership)
 - Recreational facilities for young people (HS and up)
 - Skating rink
 - Wellness checks/screenings
 - Think outside the box
 - New ways of caring
 - Concept of wellness process...arts community, riding bikes, walking, etc.
 - Safe sidewalks!!!
 - Safer streets (i.e. 6th & Dewald; bushes block sight)
 - Restaurants could offer more options besides fried
 - Groceries have good options
 - Farmer's market offers local food
 - 2 pharmacies are good for a small town
 - Should promote what we have (shop locally)
 - Ace Hardware coming
 - Spiritual health...many churches
 - Good work-life balance
 - Adequate child care
 - Workforce is an issue...need more people
 - Organized fitness program for geriatric population
 - MD w/ geriatrics moved on...will be missed
 - More young people coming to town...more diverse
 - Great fire/police departments
 - Continue to support them and find volunteers
 - Dental and vision service in town
 - Good sense of volunteerism
 - Good library with programs for children and adults
 - Good senior center...need more members
 - Excellent education system; both public and Academy
 - Coop. Needed to fill football/sports
 - Industry supports healthy lifestyle
 - Uncertainty of health care in general
 - ACA...what's in store?

2. What is your perception of the Hospital? How is FRHS serving the community well? How could it serve the community better?

- Impressed with care at hospital; telemedicine screen
- Helicopter...ability to transfer if needed
- Emergency department scores high
- Good feedback...having services locally
- Taking care of family..knows family well
- Good maintenance department..will help out any way they can
- Are we meeting millenials' expectations?
- Uncertainty/fear of doing something new
 - Compete with the "big two"
- Social media works well
- Parkston has "Avera" tags. Where's Freeman?
 - Brand Freeman Regional
- Good to have pre-employment screening
- Good fundraising efforts/community support
- How do we retain the employees we have?
- Expand physical therapy into the schools
- Partnership possibilities with employment sector
 - Hearing screenings
 - Sponsor "5K" runs for wellness activities
- Readmission issue; how to address
 - Home health program

3. What is the most pressing health care related need in the community? In what ways can FRHS address these needs?

- Mental health is a huge need
 - Address children's issues
- School nurse
 - Way to build partnership
- Drugs/alcohol
 - Identification/partner with law enforcement and school
- Diabetes – FRHS offers classes...need to promote
- Cardio
- Transit; 100% increase in usage; good rates
 - Economies of scale
 - Room for growth
- Ambulance/EMS teaches lifesaving techniques
 - FRHS could coordinate education
- Rec. Center could offer classes /water aerobics
- Promote wellness in town with own equipment

- Wellness center/feasibility?
 - Swimming classes
 - Partner with City and schools
- Workforce...encourage people to go into health careers
- Afilitated with USD School of Med., DWU, SDSU
 - FRHS has great facility, great people
- Need to stay ahead of things and on top of issues
- Emergency preparedness: How do we keep everyone safe?

Freeman Regional Health Services

Community Health Needs Assessment

Focus Group Results: 2pm Group; January 31, 2013

1. What is your vision of a healthy community? What is healthy about Freeman? What is unhealthy?
 - Kids leaving the area and not coming back
 - Keep kids involved/churches
 - Scrubs camp
 - People are coming back to Freeman who are in their 30s and 40s
 - Smaller school/class sizes (good)
 - Option of a private school [not common for a smaller town]
 - Offering an assisted living/nursing home
 - Menno is in desperate need of an assisted living
 - Longevity! People live longer [good thing, but challenge to health care?]
 - People want to live in their homes longer
 - Groceries that will deliver to homes
 - Transit service is great
 - "Unwelcome" atmosphere towards outsiders
 - Sidewalks are in rough shape or not present
 - Arboretum has great trails and outdoor activities
 - Ace Hardware/shop local
 - Outside management of local businesses a challenge
 - Dentist/chiropractors/pharmacists/restaurants make for a self-sustaining community
 - Goal for community health; bring back young people
 - Mobility is a challenge; it's nothing to drive to a larger town
 - People are unaware of services
 - Some day care but not enough
 - Some parents have to adapt for day care (parents/grandparents have to watch the kids)
 - Health care sector – huge day care needs
 - Filling CNAs is a huge challenge

2. What is your perception of the Hospital? How is FRHS serving the community well? How could it serve the community better?
 - ER is doing very well
 - Trouble is getting to see the doctor in a timely manner
 - Community is "selective" about who they see
 - Offer satellite clinics in Bridgewater, Marion, and Menno
 - Frustration between patients and clinician
 - Overall good perception
 - People would rather be in Freeman and not in Sioux Falls
 - Some patients "abuse" the ER usages
 - Need to be sensitive about how to handle ER/clinic issues

- Nurses have triage education
- Raise awareness of services
 - Tell providers of education/classes

- 3. What is the most pressing health care related need in the community? In what ways can FRHS address these needs?
 - Mental health
 - Patient stability
 - Depression/schizophrenia
 - Currently, Ages and Stages – Birth to 3 emotional/social needs
 - Partnerships with regional mental health providers possible
 - Community health
 - Tooth decay
 - Boys and girls education
 - Young people coming back to the community: Thought process of going out of town for pediatrician
 - Become a "referral" society/community
 - Freeman specializes in
 - Audiology
 - OB/Gyn come in
 - Core Orthopedics
 - Physical therapy
 - Cardiac rehab
 - Things are "better" in Sioux Falls
 - Freeman has the same quality of services
 - Let patients know how good it is in here
 - Staffing: Keeping people here to work
 - Doctor/patient relationship is key: Getting and retaining physicians is a priority

Freeman Regional Health Services
Community Health Needs Assessment
Participants' Written Comments; November 11, 2016

1. What is healthy about our community? Healthy Vision? What is Unhealthy?
 - Arboretum
 - Mind, body, spirit
 - Library
 - Restaurants
 - Wellness checks and screenings
 - Healthcare trends
 - New businesses
 - Better housing options
 - Continued health care system
 - Recreational arena for young people – ice skating
 - Community wellness program
 - Safe sidewalks and streets
 - Something for everyone – including some supervised activities for our young people like maybe an ice skating rink and something else in warmer weather
 - Active, health options for eating and outdoor activities
 - Facilities/activities for younger generation
2. What is your overall perception of the hospital? In what ways does it serve the community well? In what ways could it serve the community better?
 - Orthopedic and sports medicine
 - Very efficient – caring
 - Partnership with other like facilities
 - Resources to reach out to patients once they leave hospital but still need care
 - Good to have a place for pre-employment screenings, drug tests, injury treatment
3. What is the most pressing health care related need facing you , your family, or our community? In what ways do you think the hospital addresses this need?
 - Workforce – keeping them long term
 - Place to exercise
4. Any other comments?



Takeaways

The following includes the facilitator's review of the focus groups; their similarities, unique comments, and overall impressions.

What is Healthy?

Both groups believe that Freeman is a regional resource with lots of services to offer and a sense of volunteerism in the community. The community is fortunate to have two pharmacies in town as well as have both public and private schools. Both schools have a smaller student-to-teacher ratio, which provides a better learning experience. There are also two grocery stores that offer delivery services. The groups think that the transit service is a healthy amenity to have in town.

The availability of the services at the hospital is also a healthy aspect of Freeman. Both groups think Freeman Regional Health Services provides excellent medical care. The doctors are very personable and they get to know the patients on a first-name basis and learn their family history; which is a huge benefit to medical service. There is also dental and vision services in town, making Freeman a regional center for care. Improved health care means that people have more longevity.

Freeman is also a spiritual community with several churches to meet residents' religious needs. The newer library on Main Street is a great community resource.

What is Unhealthy?

One concern that was noted is that youth are leaving Freeman when they graduate High School and most do not return. However, Freeman has witnessed a return of people in their 30s and 40s to the community. While their return is beneficial, most of them have already completed their families so the chances of having more children among this cohort are lower.

While longevity is beneficial for generations in Freeman, the challenge rests on the health care system to provide the best care for the elderly.

On the other side of the age equation, the challenge for youth is keeping them involved in community activities and providing facilities for their enjoyment. Day care, especially for hospital staff, is a huge challenge. The community must also find ways to attract youth that leave town back sooner.

Both groups believe that Freeman would benefit from investing in safer streets and sidewalks. Many citizens enjoy walking around town, but it is unsafe and unhealthy for pedestrians to compete with motor vehicles and other traffic.

Most Pressing Need

The groups tended to focus on mental health and workforce issues as the most pressing health-care needs in Freeman.

Mental health needs to be addressed in Freeman. The earlier group believed that children's issues are not being addressed effectively. The later group agreed and added that early stages of mental health, such as

birth-to-three should be addressed. Patient stability and depression have surfaced as pressing mental health issues recently.

Workforce issues centered on the need to attract persons interested in health careers to Freeman. Attracting and retaining good help is a challenge. Other workforce needs included the need to do pre-employment screenings and educate the public on drugs and alcohol issues.

A few comments were recorded regarding the need for community facilities in Freeman. A recreation center could offer classes such as water aerobics if the facility had an indoor pool. A partnership could emerge between FRHS, the City of Freeman, and the School Districts to develop a wellness center if it is feasible. FRHS' own wellness equipment could be utilized by the general public if partnerships could be developed.

How FRHS Serves the Community Well

Both groups are very impressed with the hospital in general; but specifically the emergency room earns high marks. They agree that the hospital's ER accessibility and care is top notch. The medical staff is excellent and the equipment and telemedicine used by the hospital is useful. Both groups were appreciative of the fact that the medical staff is not afraid to refer patients on if there is an issue that cannot be dealt with effectively at the local level. The groups also liked the fact that FRHS has satellite locations in Menno, Bridgewater, and Marion.

Ways FRHS Can Improve the Way it Serves the Community

Each group had a different focus when asked about ways that FRHS could improve the way it serves the community. The earlier group focused on improving the message that FRHS communicates to the region while the later group had more comments related to the specific operations of the hospital.

The early group believed that the "big two" health systems in the State of South Dakota have such a presence that it is difficult to brand FRHS as a competitor in the rural health care market. The early group believed that one way FRHS can increase its profile is to become more involved with employment and community health screenings. Another way to increase awareness of FRHS services is to provide physical therapy services in the schools. There are also some partnership possibilities to sponsor health-related community activities such as 5K runs and other wellness activities.

The later group felt that, due to some patients abusing the use of the emergency room, FRHS can provide more community education on handling ER and clinic issues.

Conclusion

The main themes that emerged from the focus group meetings and their responses were Promotion and Relationships. The hospital can raise its profile in the region by branding its services to identify with health consumers that FRHS is THE place to go for their health care needs. Several actions could help promote FRHS, but two goals that could be readily achieved are to conduct pre-employment screenings with area employers and provide physical therapy services for area schools.

One key to achieving many goals is developing and maintaining relationships. One relationship that should be explored or enhanced is one with one of the regional mental health agencies in order to better address the mental health needs of the community. Relationships with the School Districts and the City of Freeman can

also achieve other goals. A major community facility such as an indoor pool and recreation center can only be done with partnerships. Relationships can also address the need for organized activities for children. Community activities for children and sponsored wellness activities such as a 5K race can have an indirect benefit of attracting new residents to town.