



Community Health Assessment for San Juan County, Colorado

September 2022

Submitted to:
San Juan County Board of Health and County Commissioners
and
Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment

Prepared by:
Public Health Service
San Juan County, Colorado



COLORADO
Department of Public
Health & Environment

Letter from the Director

Dear San Juan County community,

We sincerely thank everyone for helping us with this Community Health Assessment. This assessment is not just a public health requirement every five years – it is an important step to shape the health priorities for our community. Your opinions and input really do make a difference!

The timing of this assessment was especially unique. We are just emerging from the worst pandemic of our lifetimes thus far. In the last two years, San Juan County Public Health staff have primarily focused on the COVID-19 pandemic response. Since spring of 2020, our community came together and demonstrated our grit, resilience and our sense of responsibility to one another. The majority rose up and showed up by following “Safer At Home” public health orders, getting vaccinated, and isolating and quarantining when necessary. During the 1918 influenza pandemic, San Juan County had the highest per capita death toll in the nation. This time around, San Juan County gained recognition nationwide with the highest immunization rates and very minimal hospitalizations or deaths. We could not have achieved this outcome without each other. It is something to be proud of and I will always be extremely grateful to our community for your support.

This Community Health Assessment will shape how we hope to provide the best and most equitable access to care as possible in our rural, frontier community. As this Community Health Assessment shows, we desperately need better access to medical and behavioral health care. We also need programs, structures, and supports to: live healthier lives with less dependence on substances; increase our consumption of healthy foods; improve the availability of stable and affordable housing; address mobility and physical health challenges in our environment; and decrease stress and social isolation, especially for our seniors and youth.

We can tackle these challenges. While the pandemic stretched us significantly, we learned that we can do hard things and we are not alone. Silvertonians have always been known to be tough and resilient and, even though we may not always see eye to eye, we truly care about each other's well-being.

Sincerely,

Becky Joyce, RN, BSN

Director

Acknowledgements

San Juan County Public Health Service would like to thank the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and the Colorado Office of Partnership and Planning for their financial and technical support. In particular, we thank Kelsey Robinson and Alison Grace Bui for providing direct support on this Community Health Assessment. We also thank the numerous community leaders and members who shared their time and experience with us so we could understand the unique health challenges, opportunities, and successes in San Juan County. The Board of Health, the County Commissioners have provided helpful support of health services for San Juan County residents. We also thank the Town and County Representatives, law enforcement officers, EMS and fire department representatives, medical and behavioral health providers, business owners, social service providers, parents, youth, teachers, seniors, and individuals from our Mexican community who gave their time and voice to this assessment.

San Juan County Public Health Service would lastly like to express our gratitude for Dayna Kranker's energy, expertise and focus to complete this project in a high quality and timely manner.

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Background

San Juan County is a rural, remote county situated in the heart of the San Juan Mountain Range in southwest Colorado. The vast majority of San Juan County's (approximately) 740 year-round residents live within the Town of Silverton, the county's only municipality, situated at 9,318 feet elevation.^{1,2} The county is in a rugged, mountainous area and most of its 389 square miles consists of federally managed land. With less than 2 people per square mile, it is the least populated county in Colorado. Services and amenities are limited. For Silverton residents, the nearest hospital, urgent care, pharmacy, airport, and full-service grocery store is 50 miles to the south in Durango or 60 miles to the north in Montrose. US highway 550, or the Million Dollar Highway, is the only road in and out of Silverton; crosses multiple high mountain passes; and is vulnerable to closures due to rock and mud slides, avalanches and snowstorms, car accidents, and other causes. Residents also experience internet, power and cell phone service disruption due to environmental events. There is one primary care clinic, open one day a week and the Public Health Service and Emergency Medical Service are the only other entities who offer limited local healthcare.

Population and demographics. San Juan County's population has aged in the last decade, with its 2019 median age increasing from 45 years in 2014 to 51 years in 2019.³ According to the local Area Agency on Aging representative, nearly one-third of residents in town are over the age of 60.⁴ The number of families with children increased between 2010 and 2019.⁵ Females make up 47 percent of the population and males account for 53 percent. Ninety-four percent of residents identify as White and 3 percent identify with two or more races. Fourteen percent of county residents claim Hispanic origin ethnicity and twenty-eight percent of residents over the age of five speak a language other than English at home.⁶

The poverty rate decreased, though it remains higher than surrounding areas; the US Census Bureau now estimates 11.3 percent of persons are in poverty in San Juan County (compared to 9.5 percent for Durango, 6.7 percent for Ouray or 12 percent nationwide).⁷ Many San Juan County residents used to work in the mining industry – now tourism is the main economic driver. Median household income in San Juan County is \$53,000/year (compared to \$75,000 for the state of Colorado) with the majority of residents employed in the retail and

San Juan County demographics

- 740 year-round residents
- Aging population: Median age increased to 51 years and 30 percent of residents with 60 years or older
- Fourteen percent Hispanic
- Twenty-eight percent of residents speak Spanish at home
- Median household income below state levels (\$53,000 versus \$75,000)

¹ US Census Bureau – Population Estimates Program. Colorado Health Information Dataset (COHID), Population Estimates, <https://cohealthviz.dphe.state.co.us/t/HealthInformaticsPublic/views/ColoradoPopulationEstimates/PopulationEstimates>. Accessed 8/31/22.

² The assessment will refer to both San Juan County and Silverton somewhat interchangeably since nearly all of county residents live in Silverton.

³ Region 9 Dashboard, Data Source: US Census American Community Survey, Table B01001 5-Year Estimates. <https://www.region9edd.org/dashboards>. Accessed 8/30/22.

⁴ Another data source is the US Census, which reports that 25 percent of the population is between the ages of 60 and 69.

⁵ Town Of Silverton, Housing Needs Assessment, Prepared by: Root Policy Research 2021.

<https://townofsilverton.colorado.gov/sites/townofsilverton/files/San%20Juan%20and%20Silverton%20Housing%20Needs%20Assessment%20August%202021.pdf>. Access 8/30/22. Data Source: 2010 and 2019 5-year ACS estimate.

⁶ United States Census. QuickFacts. San Juan County Colorado.

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/sanjuancountycolorado/IPE120220#IPE120220>. Accessed 9/8/2022.

⁷ United States Census. QuickFacts. San Juan County Colorado.

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/sanjuancountycolorado/IPE120220#IPE120220>. Accessed 9/8/2022.

accommodation/food services sector.⁸ According to a Housing Needs Assessment and the American Community Survey from the Census Bureau, San Juan County's median household income increased significantly between 2010 and 2019 (48 percent).⁹

Community Health Assessment for San Juan County. During the spring of 2022, San Juan County Public Health Service conducted a Community Health Assessment, funded by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE), to understand the top health priorities for San Juan County.¹⁰ This report summarizes the 2022 Community Health Assessment findings.

A previous Community Health Assessment from 2015 identified the following community health priorities:

1. Primary care, especially access to care
2. Mental health
3. Substance abuse
4. Senior services, including medical and social services
5. Environmental health¹¹

For the 2022 Community Health Assessment, we wanted to understand if these priorities had changed in the last seven years; what kind of progress had been made; what challenges and opportunities remained; and how the COVID-19 pandemic had affected health priorities. We gained important insights on the health needs of our community, the successes we can celebrate and the continued work we can do.

Have community health priorities changed in recent years?

Since our last assessment the community has made progress in the following areas:

- Added local behavioral health professionals
- Established new senior supports
- Built community trust in the public health infrastructure
- Increased access to telemedicine during COVID-19
- Established strong partnerships between community organizations during COVID-19 response
- Raised awareness around environmental health needs and water quality

During the 2022 assessment, we conducted four focus groups and seventeen in-depth interviews. We also collected quantitative data relevant to the community's health needs. The Appendix includes details about the 2022 Community Health Assessment's methodology.

⁸ Region 9 Dashboard, Data Source: US Census American Community Survey, Table B01001 5-Year Estimates. <https://www.region9edd.org/dashboards>. Accessed 8/30/22.

⁹ Town Of Silverton, Housing Needs Assessment, Prepared by: Root Policy Research 2021.

<https://townofsilverton.colorado.gov/sites/townofsilverton/files/San%20Juan%20and%20Silverton%20Housing%20Needs%20Assessment%20August%202021.pdf>. Access 8/30/22. Data Source: 2010 and 2019 5-year ACS estimate.

¹⁰ The Community Health Assessment was funded by the Centers for Disease Control through the Colorado Department of Health and Environment, Office of Public Health Practice, Planning, and Local Partnerships.

¹¹ Community Health Assessment 2015. San Juan County. <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1WH7qE8pU4hKByQnFta0qzpKy-2p4n4GS>. Accessed 9/21/22.

Community Health Assessment Key Findings

The 2022 San Juan County Community Health Assessment shows that **we have made progress in some areas** identified in our 2015 assessment, but **our priorities have not changed significantly**.

Considering the priorities from the 2015 assessment and the feedback from interviewees and focus group participants, three priorities emerged as the most important for improving the health of San Juan County residents in 2022:

1. **Access to Care.** More local health care professionals are needed to offer adequate levels of services to county residents and visitors.
2. **Behavioral Health.** Two local behavioral health providers improved access to services, made possible by COVID relief funding. But, behavioral health concerns remain top priorities according to respondents and we see higher rates of binge drinking, cigarette use, and depression than surrounding areas.
3. **Healthy living.** Various external factors that affect health remain community priorities. The environmental health concerns (like air quality), built environment, access to healthy foods, housing, organizational infrastructure, and social services arose as themes in this priority area.

Issues specific to **seniors and youth** remain crosscutting and **social determinants of health** (SDoH) surfaced as important for addressing these priorities. Respondents shared increasing needs for housing availability and affordability, organizational stability, and economic diversification—all common themes currently facing many Colorado mountain communities.

The COVID-19 pandemic brought some surprising benefits, including increased funding and capacity for public health to respond to the pandemic, improved coordination among stakeholder groups, and enhanced emergency preparedness and senior supports. However, the pandemic also contributed to significant isolation, social disconnection, depression, economic instability, increased disease burden and it distracted from other priorities.

The remainder of this report contains sections on each of the three priorities. For each priority, we explain the current need, discuss related services available to San Juan County residents, and identify gaps that remain between what the community needs and what is available, touching on the needs of seniors and youth or the role of SDoH where applicable.

What Are Social Determinants of Health (SDoH)?

SDoH are the conditions in the environments where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks.¹²

¹² Healthy People 2030, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. <https://health.gov/healthypeople/objectives-and-data/social-determinants-health>. Accessed 8/9/2022.

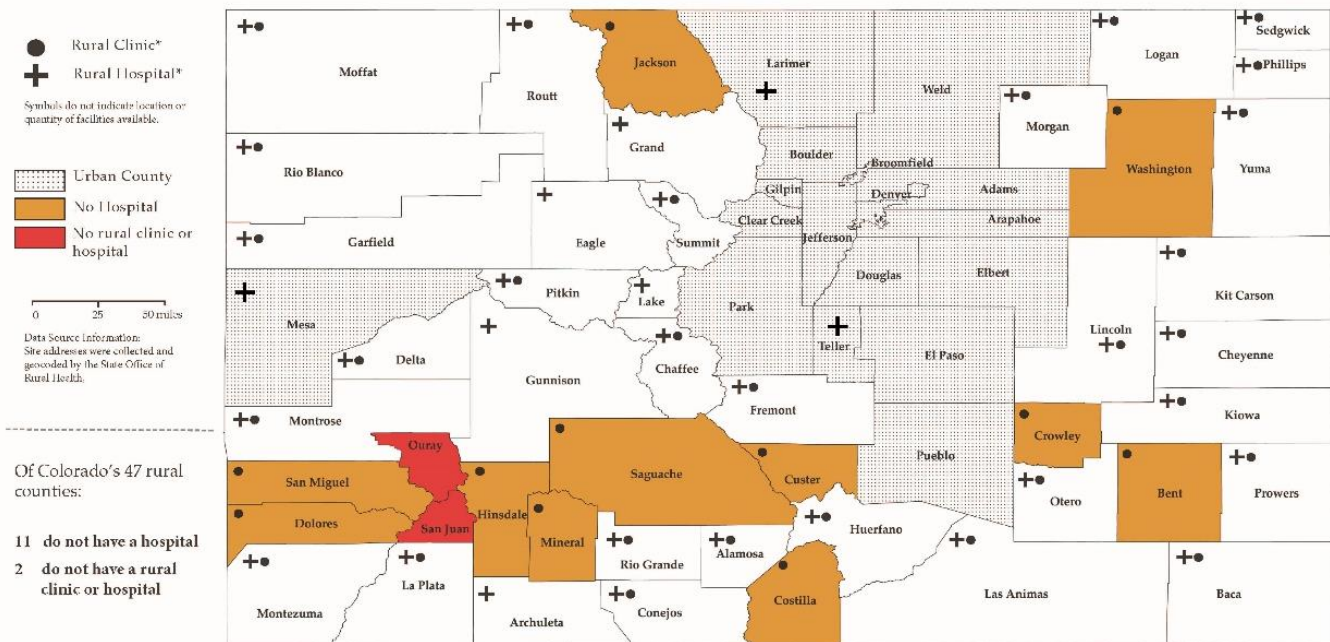
Priority 1: Access to Care

San Juan County is one of the most medically underserved counties in the state of Colorado. San Juan County is designated as both a Medically Underserved Area and a Health Professional Shortage Area, according to the US Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA).^{13,14} The map below demonstrates the absence of local providers for San Juan County (Figure 1). The county has limited primary care services, some behavioral health services, and some public health, senior, and social services through the county departments.

In all the interviews and focus groups, **access to care remained a top priority** for residents and community leaders. Residents often receive care outside the county, or delay or forgo care due to access challenges, especially screenings and preventive or routine care. Data from CDPHE corroborates this, estimating that 47 percent of adults in San Juan County did not have a medical checkup within the last year (compared to 37 percent statewide and 41 percent regionally).¹⁵ Many residents access care 50 miles away in Durango or Montrose and transportation challenges, especially for seniors, contribute to delayed or missed care. **Community members desire more extensive local health care services.**

Residents delay or forgo care, especially screenings and preventive or routine care, due to access challenges.

Figure 1: Access to health care in Colorado in 2021



Source: Colorado Rural Health Center. Map Resources. <https://coruralhealth.org/resources/maps-resource>

¹³ Health Resources & Services Administration. HPSA Find. <https://data.hrsa.gov/tools/shortage-area/hpsa-find>. Accessed 9/8/2022.

¹⁴ Health Resources & Services Administration. MUA Find. <https://data.hrsa.gov/tools/shortage-area/mua-find>. Accessed 9/8/2022.

¹⁵ CDPHE Community Level Estimates (2014-2017). Indicator: Percent of Adults with who did not have a regular Medical Checkup within the past year (Census Tracts). <https://data-cdphe.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/no-regular-medical-checkup-in-adults-cdphe-community-level-estimates-census-tracts/explore?location=38.999008%2C-105.585118%2C7.65>. Accessed 9/7/22.

Health Care Services in San Juan County

Some health services operate locally, but these have limited availability, as described below. The Miner’s Union Hospital building houses many of the services listed below. Since the 2015 Community Health Assessment, the Historic Society and San Juan County rehabilitated and renovated the Miner’s Union Hospital building and it now accommodates the public health offices; exam rooms used by the Silverton Clinic; and office space for the Office of Emergency Management and several non-medical private-practice providers.

The Miner’s Union Hospital building provides space to expand health services and is a significant new resource since the 2015 assessment.

San Juan County Public Health Service

San Juan County Public Health Service is a division of the county government and operates out of the Miner’s Union Hospital building. Public Health provides routine and limited travel vaccinations; COVID-19 testing and vaccinations; communicable disease surveillance; emergency preparedness and response; tobacco prevention programs; and environmental health programs (e.g., radon awareness, air and water quality monitoring, Gold King Mine spill stakeholder representation) and oversees the Silverton School nursing. Restaurant inspections and off-site well water inspection are provided by San Juan Basin Public Health in Durango. The three County Commissioners serve as the Board of Health. Public Health staff includes the Director and one full-time office manager who also supports grant programming. Both Public Health positions largely rely on grant funding.

Focus group and interview participants indicated **strong praise for the public health services during the COVID-19 pandemic**. Respondents were thankful for the strong leadership. As one local business-owner reported, “There’s a level of trust and confidence in the public health process that maybe they [residents] just weren’t too aware of more than two years ago.” Respondents referred to significant, crucial coordination during the COVID-19 pandemic between San Juan County Public Health, Silverton Public School nurse and Administration, the Office of Emergency Management, the Ambulance Association, law enforcement, the Town of Silverton, and San Juan County to provide testing, vaccines, social and health support, and financial assistance.

“For the most part the community was pretty united in their response [to the COVID-19 pandemic].” County Administrator

San Juan County saw one of the highest vaccination rates in the country during the early phases of vaccine roll-out, which indicates the strong trust of the community and participation in the public health response. As the Director of the Office of Emergency Management stated, “With COVID we had really good community engagement in getting vaccinated and to me, that’s a huge success. Because you take similar rural communities on the western slope, [and it is a] very different picture.” Federal funding for the COVID-19 pandemic response enabled local public health officials to provide a level of community health services not previously available.

Federal funding enabled a strong COVID-19 response

BUT

The local COVID-19 response distracted from other public health priorities.

Since spring 2020, San Juan County saw very few hospitalizations (8) related to COVID-19 and only one death attributed to COVID-19.

The strong public health response to the COVID-19 pandemic enabled residents to avoid severe disease and mortality, but it also **distracted from other public health priorities**. With only two full-time staff members, the public health office has been limited in implementing new or existing programs, pursuing new funding opportunities, and expanding services during the pandemic. Progress on tobacco prevention programs, air quality monitoring, radon mitigation, healthy foods promotion, and behavioral health education has been limited.

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020, San Juan County Public Health:

- Administered over 2,000 COVID-19 tests
- Distributed 9,000 COVID-19 home tests
- Coordinated 15 Mobile Vaccine Bus services in Silverton

“All our time and energy was dedicated to vaccines and epidemiological response to COVID for over 2 years. We did not want to repeat the 1918 Influenza pandemic, where San Juan County the highest death rate per capita in the country.” Director of Public Health

Silverton Clinic

Founded as a non-profit by a local physician and his wife, the Silverton Clinic has remained true to its mission to provide free health care to Silverton residents since 2014, including a very limited pharmacy. Many of those interviewed praised what the Silverton Clinic offers to the community as a free local clinic.

“We are very lucky to have the Silverton Clinic.” Clinic patient

A nurse practitioner and a nurse manager staff the clinic, which operates out of the Miner’s Union Hospital building, and they conducted over 470 patient visits in 2021. The dedicated staff provides high-touch primary care and follow-up on a shoe-string budget. It serves as a primary care provider for numerous residents and coordinates follow-up care, refers urgent care, coordinates telemedicine with outside providers, and works with specialists outside the county. The clinic offers blood draws for lab work through LabCorp, and over 200 blood draws were completed between January and July 2022. These blood draws reduce the number of trips residents must make outside Silverton for blood monitoring or pre-operative blood work. The Silverton Clinic also manages an Emergency Medical Fund, which includes nearly \$15,000 donated by community members to provide low or no-interest loans to residents for emergency medical expenses. This fund is not well advertised and has not been utilized by residents.

Silverton Clinic:

- Free clinic, open on most Thursdays
- 470 patient visits in 2021
- 95 percent of clinic patients have some form of health insurance
- Staffed by nurse practitioner and nurse manager
- Charitable organization, with funding from San Juan County and Mercy Regional Medical Center

Despite high praise for the benefits of the Silverton Clinic, multiple respondents expressed concerns about its restricted hours and its limitations to add new patients. The clinic typically sees 8 to 10 patients a day, whereas national averages for a full-time non-physician provider are typically 15 to 18 patients a day. Patients can only access the clinic on Thursdays, which is a prohibitive schedule for many residents. Many respondents stated they could not get an appointment and that the clinic was not convenient because of its limited hours. As one individual indicated, “It’s hard to get an appointment here [at the Silverton Clinic], because it is such a well utilized resource.” Many interviewees and focus groups participants felt that the current schedule for primary care was insufficient.

“It’s really just kind of a Band-Aid.” [Interviewee referring to our current primary care]

“Not all illness happens on a Thursday.” Nurse Practitioner, Silverton Clinic

Interviewees and focus groups participants also expressed **concerns about the clinic’s financial sustainability**. The clinic currently operates under a pro-bono medical license and cannot bill insurance for services provided. According to clinic records, 95 percent of clinic patients have insurance; however, the clinic neither receives insurance payments as a source of income nor charges patients for services as a “free clinic.” Instead, (1) San Juan County provides free clinic space at the Miner’s Union Hospital building and pays for the nurse manager’s salary, (2) Mercy Regional Medical Center (Mercy) in Durango provides the salary for the nurse practitioner, and (3) the clinic receives limited income through donations. The clinic operates as an IRS 501(c)(3) charitable organization with an independent board of directors, and its principal funders (San Juan County and Mercy) provide minimal operational guidance and oversight.

The clinic’s operations are also vulnerable to potential staffing changes. Over a year ago, the nurse manager requested to resign once a replacement was found. However, the clinic has not hired a new nurse in the time since, due in part to non-competitive compensation and limited housing availability. In addition, it is uncertain if Mercy would continue funding a provider if (or when) the nurse practitioner retires.

The clinic operates with paper medical charts, which creates inefficiencies and challenges for increasing patient volume and billing insurance. Respondents also indicated confusion about what the clinic currently offers and how it differs from San Juan County Public Health. The clinic does not market itself more extensively because its capacity for new patients is limited.

Silverton San Juan County Ambulance Association

Considering its small population, San Juan County maintains a robust Emergency Medical Services (EMS) team. Silverton’s EMS is a 501(c)(3) private, non-profit ambulance agency operating under the permissions of the San Juan County Board of County Commissioners. In 2012 and 2017 the voters in San Juan County approved additional sales tax collection to pay for Emergency Services coverage in San Juan County (1 percent tax in 2012, increased to 2.5 percent in 2017). As one local leader indicated:

“In a couple years, the Ambulance Association has gone from a struggling organization to a high quality operation with paramedics and 24-hour coverage—but this has cost money.”

The Ambulance Association has professional EMS staff: a paramedic and an EMT with intravenous therapy (IV) certification are on call 24 hours per day, 365 days a year. The Association also includes volunteers who are trainees and cannot respond to calls without oversight. While staffing levels are typically sufficient, Silverton can be without EMS

95 percent of clinic patients have insurance, but the clinic structure does not support charging insurance.

Sustainability challenges for Silverton Clinic

- Lack of revenue, without billing insurance
- Limited succession planning for key staff
- Inefficiencies from (1) paper charting and (2) below-average number of patients seen per day

Ambulance Association utilization

- 200 calls in 2021:
 - 94 calls resulted in patient transports by ambulance or Flight-for-Life helicopter to a hospital
 - 83 trauma patients
- 81 patients refused transport

coverage for over three hours if the crew is responding to a call that includes a medical transport to a hospital by ground.

Ambulance Association leadership has expressed support for a community paramedicine approach in Silverton, which includes utilizing EMS staff for welfare/senior checks, oxygen monitoring, intravenous (IV) therapies, vital sign screenings, and other basic medical services when they are not responding to emergency calls. EMS staff currently provides some of these services. Interviewees and focus group participants expressed strong support for this idea, including the local sheriff who said: “It [community paramedicine] is a lot better than someone with a gun showing up because we're doing a welfare check because your aunt called and hasn't heard from you for a month.” Another respondent shared, “We do have some very talented, educated paramedics up here that no one even knows about. And so why aren't we utilizing them more?” Barriers to implementing a community paramedicine approach include recent changes in staffing, busy summer seasons, access to funds, and organizational capacity to institutionalize a new model.

The county and Ambulance Association could explore a community paramedicine approach.

Silverton Public School

The Silverton Public School serves nearly 80 children in kindergarten through 12th grade and the Silverton Family Learning Center serves 20 children, ages 5 months to 5 years. Sixty-five to 70 percent of children in the two schools qualify for free or reduced lunch and are covered by Medicaid or Child Health Plan Plus (CHP+), the state-funded health insurance for low-income children. To meet the physical and behavioral health needs of children and families, the school employs a part-time school nurse, school counselor and a licensed social worker who is the Family Resource Coordinator. The school was described by one respondent as the “heartbeat of the community” because of its role in facilitating social and health services for families and children.

The part-time school nurse coordinates routine well-child medical and dental services.¹⁶ In addition to typical school nurse duties, she also managed the school’s COVID-19 response, including conducting a robust COVID-19 testing program for students and staff.

The school nurse coordinates with Pediatric Partners of the Southwest in Durango to provide well-child checks and immunizations in the spring and fall at the school. Families are billed on a sliding scale and providers see nearly 50 children a year. San Juan Public Health also supports Pediatric Partners and the school nurse throughout the year to provide additional childhood vaccines in Silverton. Other families typically seek routine pediatric care on their own in Montrose or Durango. About five years ago, Pediatric Partners of the Southwest and San Juan Public Health established a robust a telehealth program, including Bluetooth-enabled otoscope, stethoscope, telemedicine screen, and testing supplies. This service ended during the COVID-19 pandemic as families began using their own phones and computers for telemedicine.

Silverton School & Silverton Family Learning Center:

- 80 children in kindergarten through 12th grade
- 20 children, ages 5 months to 5 years
- Employs a school nurse, school counselor and a licensed social worker

Spotlight on SDoH

The school serves a significant percentage of children from low-income families: nearly 70 percent of children qualify for free or reduced lunch and are covered by Medicaid or CHP+.

Services provided at the Silverton School

- 50 children receive well-child checks and immunizations
- 30 children receive twice a year dental screenings, cleanings, and referrals

¹⁶ In addition, two licensed mental health professionals work at the school; they will be discussed on the next section (Priority 2: Behavioral Health).

San Juan Basin Public Health in Durango sends a dental hygienist to the Silverton School twice a year to provide pediatric dental screenings, cleanings, fluoride treatment and referrals for nearly 30 children biannually.

Several interviewees indicated that they would be thrilled if adults were offered the same level of screening services and routine care that the school facilitates for children. Overall, respondents reported high levels of satisfaction with the support offered to children in San Juan County through the school. As one respondent indicated: ““It [the school] is a model to look up to and to try and strive towards that level of success as a community.” One respondent highlighted how telemedicine and coordination through Pediatric Partners of the Southwest connected their family to a therapist and psychiatrist in Durango for their child. Without this partnership and telemedicine option, this family’s needs would not have been met.

To address the needs of its Spanish-speaking students, the school recently established a cultural broker position, a local resident who speaks Spanish and English and who provides interpretation services for parenting workshops, communicates with families, and can help schedule medical or behavioral health appointments and follow-up care for families. While there was positive feedback from the Mexican community regarding this cultural broker program, this position was grant funded and its sustainability is uncertain.

Area Agency on Aging (AAA)

Since the last assessment in 2015, **the local Area Agency on Aging (AAA) has been established** and during the COVID-19 response, the AAA representative made significant progress in supporting seniors during emergency management. For example, she signed up seniors for emergency alerts; documented medicine and evacuation needs for seniors; established a protocol for a temporary emergency hospital with oxygen and generator support through a local hotel; and pushed to establish a senior center for community connection and support during rates of lower COVID-19 transmission.

The AAA representative also coordinates a snow shoveling program; social events for seniors; and partners with the school to use school vehicles for transporting seniors to Durango for social outings, errands, and medical appointments. Consequently, we’ve seen progress in the area of senior services in the last 7 years; but continued work remains as Silverton’s population ages. As one respondent indicated:

“Silverton isn’t a nice place for people as they get older.”

Local Private-Practice Providers

There are periodically massage therapists, acupuncturists, chiropractors or physical therapists who offer services in town. These services are paid for out of pocket by patients and are dependent on providers who are in town seasonally. Many practitioners operate from the historic Miner’s Union Hospital building, a recently renovated, county-owned building that was formerly a hospital and now contains office and examination rooms.

There are also two licensed behavioral health professionals in town. One operates a local private practice, the other provides school counseling services at the Silverton Public School (mentioned above) and offers private practice hours, both of whom will be discussed in the next section on behavioral health.

Health Services in the Miner’s Union Hospital Building:

- Public Health
- Silverton Clinic
- Behavioral health professionals (2)
- Massage therapists (periodic)
- Acupuncturists (periodic)
- Chiropractors (periodic)
- Physical therapists (periodic)

Receiving care outside the county

The county does not have any urgent, specialty, or dental care. A full-service pharmacy does not exist in Silverton, although the small grocery store and gas stations have limited medical supplies and over-the-counter medicines and the Silverton Clinic has a very small pharmacy for established patients and is only open on Thursdays.

Regionally, residents seek primary care, specialists, behavioral health, dental health providers and crisis care in Montrose, Durango, or Ouray through private practice providers, San Juan Basin Public Health, or Axis Health Systems. Pregnant women in Silverton also face unique challenges as they seek obstetric care regionally. Mountain passes can be closed during winter months and expectant mothers may need to stay in Durango or Montrose during forecasted storms to ensure access to labor and delivery services.

For emergencies, the nearest rural hospital is a 90-minute ambulance transfer or a Flight-for-Life helicopter ride away. Residents can also access urgent care at Mercy Urgent Care at Purgatory Resort (20 miles away) during the winter months. Durango and Montrose have full-service pharmacies, therapists, and other health professionals. Nonetheless, there are some health care needs that cannot be met regionally, and it is not uncommon for San Juan County residents to travel to Grand Junction, Denver, or other urban areas for care.

Of note, several focus group participants spoke highly of their experience receiving primary and dental care through Axis Health Systems in Durango. They had good experiences with their providers, and both were able to receive services without health coverage, paying an affordable rate through Axis's sliding scale fee structure. In spring 2022, a representative from Axis Health Systems expressed a willingness to consider expanding their locations and providing integrated health services in Silverton and San Juan County, **although this idea was not pursued by the county and remains an undeveloped concept.**

Accessing health care outside the county introduces a variety of challenges, including:

- Getting to and from appointments or to pick up prescriptions involves taking a whole day off work, which is inconvenient if you have a salaried job and costly if you work at an hourly job or are self-employed.
- With current gas prices at \$4.50/gallon, a trip to Durango can cost \$30 in gas.
- Many seniors do not have reliable transportation or are not comfortable driving the mountain passes to get to appointments and thus rely on family or neighbors.
- The highway can be closed, as noted previously, leaving residents with limited options.
- San Juan County's Mexican community faces additional challenges to accessing care due to language barriers, transportation issues, documentation status, and health coverage. A lack of Spanish-speaking providers regionally creates additional barriers for the Mexican community in San Juan County.¹⁷

Spotlight on SDoH

Transportation and time off work are significant barriers to accessing care, especially for seniors and our Mexican community members.

Language barriers and health coverage further limit access to care for the Mexican community in San Juan County

Please see the Appendix for a Health Resources Brochure for more information on local and regional services.

Telemedicine

Telemedicine has been one positive outcome of COVID-19, according to residents. As telemedicine became more available for medical and behavioral health services during the COVID-19 pandemic, access to regional and even national

¹⁷ The Hispanic and Spanish-speaking community in Silverton has expressed their desire to be called the "Mexican community" as opposed to Latin(o)(a) or Latin(x)

providers improved for San Juan County residents. The Silverton Clinic, Public Health, and the school all indicated that they have coordinated telemedicine support for residents to access care and the Miner’s Union Hospital building provides space and equipment for patients to access telemedicine outside their home.

Health Care Access Needs in San Juan County

In focus groups and interviews, residents indicated that they delay or forgo screenings, check-ups, or follow-up care primarily because of barriers to accessing care. As mentioned previously, an estimated 47 percent of adults in San Juan County did not have a medical check-up in the last year, compared to 37 percent of adults statewide.¹⁸ A large literature has linked access (proximity) to health care providers to the use of health care services and health outcomes.^{19 20} Further, a key goal for Healthy People 2030 is to: “Increase access to comprehensive, high-quality health care services.”²¹

When thinking about access to care, we want to understand if our current services are sufficient to meet expected demand. San Juan County is designated as both a Medically Underserved Area and a Health Professional Shortage Area by the Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA). According to HRSA, ***San Juan County lacks at least .17 FTE for primary care (14 hours/week) and .12 FTE for dental providers (10 hours/week).***^{22 23}

When asked if they thought people would use more health services (physical, behavioral, oral) if they were offered in town, participants resoundingly said, “Yes.” There is likely more demand for health services in town than is currently being met, as demonstrated by the data from Health Resources & Services Administration mentioned above, residents traveling outside the county to receive care, and interview respondents saying they cannot access primary care locally because the Silverton Clinic is booked out or unavailable.

Further, data shows that **cost and insurance status are not significant barriers to accessing care for most residents**, at least in comparison to other Colorado counties. Community Level Estimates from CDPHE indicate (Figure 2):

- The percent of adults in San Juan County who have any form of health insurance is higher than the rest of the state (94 percent for San Juan County versus 88 percent statewide)²⁴
- The percent of adults in San Juan County who delayed medical care due to costs is quite low (1.8 percent in San Juan County versus 12.4 percent statewide)²⁵

¹⁸ CDPHE Community Level Estimates (2014-2017). Indicator: Percent of Adults with who did not have a regular Medical Checkup within the past year (Census Tracts). <https://data-cdphe.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/no-regular-medical-checkup-in-adults-cdphe-community-level-estimates-census-tracts/explore?location=38.999008%2C-105.585118%2C7.65>. Accessed 9/7/22.

¹⁹ Healthcare Access in Rural Communities. Rural Health Information Hub. <https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/topics/healthcare-access#population-health>. Accessed 9/26/22.

²⁰ Elements of Access to Health Care: Services. Content last reviewed June 2018. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Rockville, MD. <https://www.ahrq.gov/research/findings/nhqrdr/chartbooks/access/elements2.html>. Accessed 9/26/22.

²¹ Health Care Access and Quality. Healthy People 2030. <https://health.gov/healthypeople/objectives-and-data/browse-objectives/health-care-access-and-quality>. Accessed 9/26/22.

²² Health Resources & Services Administration. HPSA Find. <https://data.hrsa.gov/tools/shortage-area/hpsa-find>. Accessed 9/8/2022.

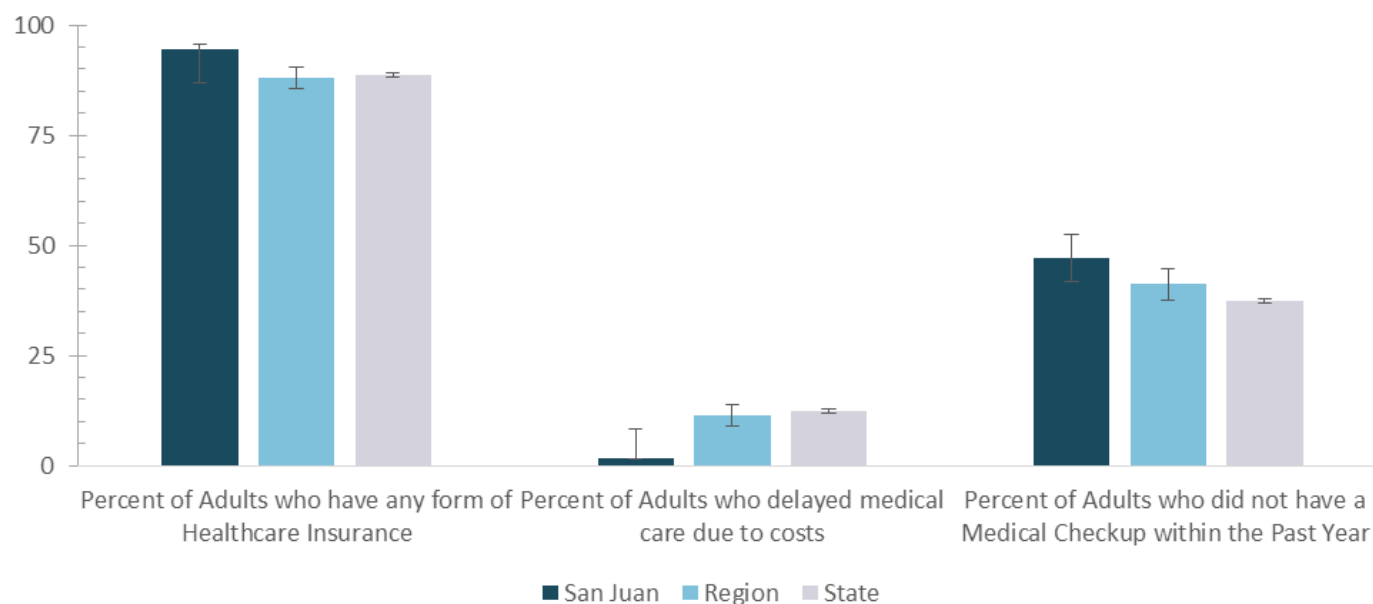
²³ HRSA data does not count Silverton Clinic because it is a free clinic, staffed by a nurse practitioner. However, Silverton Clinic is open at most one day a week and sees fewer patients per day than most health providers.

²⁴ CDPHE Community Level Estimates (2014-2017). Indicator Percent of Adults who have Health Insurance Coverage of any kind (Census Tracts). <https://data-cdphe.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/health-insurance-coverage-for-adults-cdphe-community-level-estimates-census-tract/explore?location=38.976022%2C-105.550600%2C7.65>. Accessed 9/7/22.

²⁵ CDPHE Community Level Estimates (2014-2017). Indicator Percent of Adults who delayed Medical Care because of Cost (Census Tracts). [https://data-cdphe.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/delayed-medical-care-in-adults-\\$-cdphe-community-level-estimates-census-tracts/about](https://data-cdphe.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/delayed-medical-care-in-adults-$-cdphe-community-level-estimates-census-tracts/about). Accessed 9/7/22.

Rather, **proximity to a doctor, hospital or clinic and transportation are major barriers for residents**. These estimates may not apply to the Mexican community in Silverton, many of whom indicated cost and insurance status as major barriers to accessing care during focus groups.

Figure 2: Health Access - San Juan County, Region, Statewide



Source: CDHPE Community Level Estimates (2014-2017). www.cohealthmaps.dphe.state.co.us/cdphe_community_level_estimates

Some interviewees and focus group participants raised the concern that long-time residents may not switch from their established providers in Montrose or Durango to local providers if local health care access were to increase. However, interviewees indicated that new residents might use local providers for primary care and long-time residents might use local services for routine care or screenings. One interviewee also mentioned that senior residents with established providers elsewhere may be forced to access local care as they age and increasingly face issues around transportation.

Multiple interviewees and focus group participants indicated a **need for more routine screenings** (blood pressure, cholesterol, mammograms, prostate exams, blood draws, etc.). These kinds of screenings are often delayed due to the access challenges discussed previously. San Juan County Public Health formally supported a Channel 9 Health Fair that offered many of these screenings to local residents, but this service was not offered recently due to COVID-19 and public health staffing challenges.

“I just think little things are going to add up to big things.” Area Agency on Aging representative

Overall, the interviews and focus groups strongly supported the idea that San Juan County needs additional health care services, including:

1. Sustainable, expanded primary care services
2. Periodic screenings
3. Periodic dental care
4. Community paramedicine
5. Continued and expanded behavioral health services

Priority 2: Behavioral Health

Behavioral health, which includes mental health and substance abuse, remains a top priority for San Juan County. We have made progress in this area with the addition of two behavioral health professionals in town and one social worker available through the school, but behavioral health continues to emerge as a top priority in the interviews and quantitative data. Silverton is an isolated, small mountain community with mining and skiing history, and its culture can include heavy alcohol consumption, isolation, and depression.

“There’s a lot of trauma in our community.” Nurse Practitioner at Silverton Clinic

CDPHE community-level estimates, covering 2014 to 2017, estimated binge drinking rates for adults in San Juan County at 33 percent of the population, compared to 20 percent statewide (Figure 3).²⁶ Further, smoking rates are higher in San Juan County than statewide (34 versus 15 percent of adults, respectively).²⁷ Interestingly, marijuana use is estimated to be lower in San Juan County compared to the state estimates (9.4 percent of adults who used marijuana at least 1 day out of the past 30 days in San Juan County versus 14 percent statewide).²⁸ Please see the Appendix Table 1. Community Level Estimates Data from CDPHE for more details.

Life can be a struggle as residents face economic uncertainty, natural disasters, limited local services, and complete isolation due to avalanches or mudslides. The rugged beauty of the surrounding San Juan Mountains can lift the soul and bring a harshness to daily life. As one interviewee expressed:

“Silverton is an easy place to isolate, drink, and get depressed.”

Community-level estimates from CDPHE estimate 23 percent of adults in San Juan County have been told they have a Depressive Disorder, compared to 18 percent statewide.²⁹ Several local employers reporting seeing mental health and substance abuse affect job performance and family life. Seniors and youth expressed similar concerns regarding isolation and depression since they have limited transportation options and social outlets.

Spotlight on Seniors and Youth

Seniors and youth share concerns regarding isolation and depression due to limited transportation options and social outlets

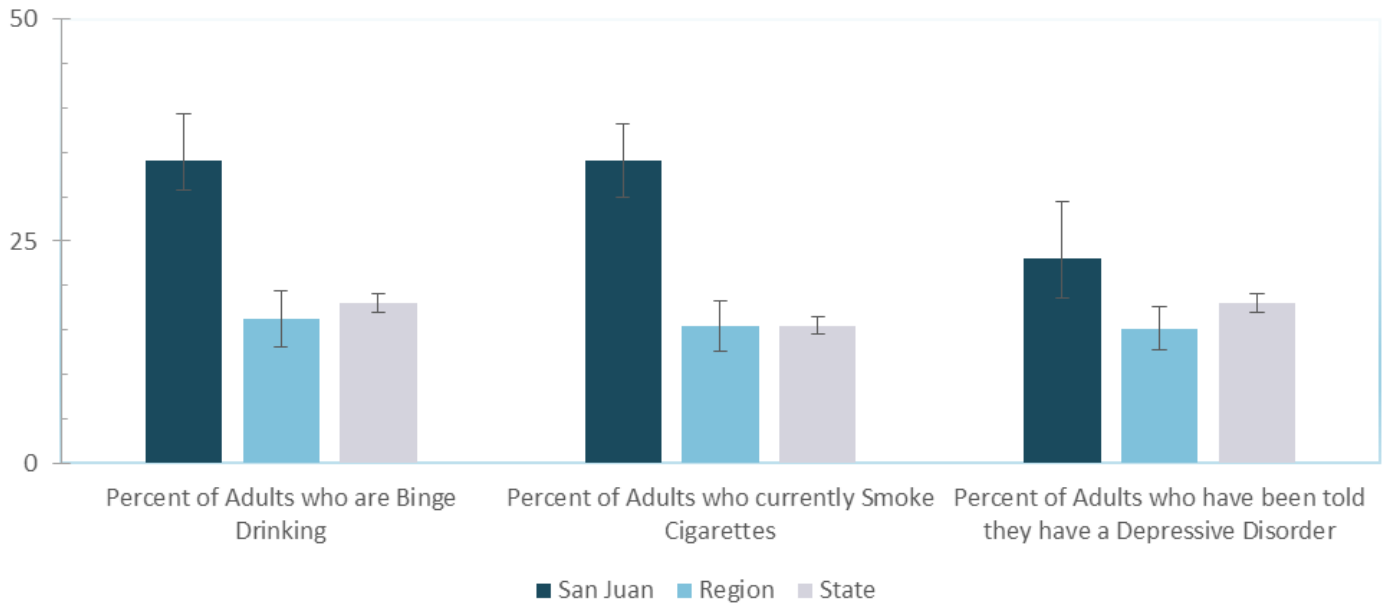
²⁶ CDPHE Community Level Estimates (2014-2017). Indicator: Alcohol Consumption: Adults Who Binge Drink - CDPHE Community Level Estimates (Census Tracts). <https://data-cdphe.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/alcohol-consumption-adults-who-binge-drink-cdphe-community-level-estimates-census-tracts/explore?location=38.979909%2C-105.550600%2C7.65>. Accessed 8/31/22.

²⁷ CDPHE Community Level Estimates (2014-2017). Indicator: Percent of Adults who currently Smoke Cigarettes (Census Tracts). <https://data-cdphe.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/cigarette-smoking-in-adults-cdphe-community-level-estimates-census-tracts/explore?location=38.976022%2C-105.550600%2C7.65>. Accessed 8/31/22.

²⁸ CDPHE Community Level Estimates (2014-2017). Indicator: Percent of Adults who used Marijuana 1+ days out of the past 30 days (Census Tracts). <https://data-cdphe.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/marijuana-use-in-adults-cdphe-community-level-estimates-census-tract/explore?location=38.976022%2C-105.550600%2C7.65>. Accessed 8/31/22.

²⁹ CDPHE Community Level Estimates (2014-2017). Indicator: Depression: Percent of Adults who have been told they have a Depressive Disorder. <https://data-cdphe.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/depression-in-adults-cdphe-community-level-estimates-census-tract/explore?location=39.316929%2C-102.480178%2C6.13>. Accessed 8/31/22.

Figure 3: Behavioral Health Indicators: San Juan County, Region, and Statewide



Interviewees and focus groups participants also indicated that behavioral health remains a top priority, and while access has improved with two local providers in town, the need for services remains significant. Since Silverton is a very small town, some interviewees expressed hesitation about the stigma of accessing local behavioral health services and fears around confidentiality and “small town gossip.” However, one local behavioral health provider indicated significant use of his services, even estimating treating up to 30 percent of the population over time. Further, interviewees noted a **decrease in stigma due to the COVID-19 pandemic**. As one individual put it, since the pandemic:

“It’s okay to not be okay.” Longtime resident

Behavioral Health Care Services in San Juan County

Some access to behavioral health care services exists in San Juan County, as described below.

Private-Practice Providers

San Juan County leadership has supported behavioral health services for many years. Since the late 1980s, San Juan County has provided free office space to a licensed therapist who commuted to Silverton from Durango. In the last two years, this behavioral health professional moved full-time to Silverton, provides private practice therapy and until recently, provided school-based behavioral health services. He also supervised another local therapist who was seeking licensure. This newly licensed therapist now works at the school and provides private practice therapy. Thus, San Juan County has gained two full-time licensed therapists in the last two years. Additionally, the school recently hired a licensed social worker to serve as a Family Resource Coordinator (discussed below). As one participant indicated, “We’ve gone from no local mental health providers to two local providers. That is significant.”

San Juan County has gained two full-time licensed therapists in the last two years, along with a licensed social worker employed by the school.

These two licensed therapists are highly regarded by everyone from the Sheriff to the Chamber of Commerce members to parents and teachers. This increase in access to behavioral health services has been a major benefit for residents. Working together, these providers have:

- supported crisis services in town,
- established robust school-based counseling and family support, and
- provided individual therapy.

During COVID-19, the school and one of the local therapists received funding to administer a behavioral health program that included 10 free therapy sessions. According to the therapist, nearly 10 percent of the population took advantage of this free program during the pandemic. **Expanding or continuing this service could be a significant opportunity for behavioral health services in San Juan County.**

Nearly 10 percent of the local population received free behavioral health services during COVID.

School-Based Services

The Silverton School prioritizes social and emotional health for students and families and has two licensed behavioral health professionals on staff available to students and families. A licensed therapist (one of the two providers mentioned above) provides counseling services and classroom support to children and families. A licensed social worker serves as the Family Resource Coordinator and provides services to children and families, including: parent workshops, group sessions with youth, and other social services coordination.

Further, the school's curriculum emphasizes socio-emotional awareness and skill-building for emotional regulation. This curriculum is built into regular school activities and is principally provided to students by school staff (including but not limited to teachers.) In addition, staff and parents or caregivers can access training and support for meeting children's social-emotional needs. As mentioned above, the school also facilitated free therapy sessions for any Silverton resident during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Due to its small size, the school and its staff remain deeply connected to the social and familial lives of its students. As one respondent indicated, "The school is the mothership of the community" providing significant social supports to students and families. The school directly impacts social determinants of behavioral health for students and families as it provides food or rent assistance and crisis support. As mentioned in the access to care section, the school nurse or counselor also coordinate referrals to regional behavioral health providers who accept Medicaid.

Spotlight on SDoH

The school directly impacts social determinants of behavioral health for students and families as it provides food or rent assistance and crisis support

Crisis Services

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, **multiple respondents indicated increased collaboration** between San Juan Public Health, the Sheriff's Department, the Ambulance Association, the Area Agency on Aging, and the local behavioral health providers for crisis intervention. Some local staff also received crisis intervention training and these entities form an informal crisis response team, checking on locals as possible. The Sheriff also referenced a Crisis Intervention Team through Axis Health Systems in Durango. This team includes a medical professional and social worker who are dispatched from Durango for behavioral health crisis calls to San Juan County. This team may take up to four hours to arrive (a downside mentioned by the local therapist) but overall, law enforcement and public health indicated that this crisis intervention team benefits San Juan County residents. There have also been increased efforts to collaborate with Axis Health Systems and local partners around crisis response and vulnerable populations, though **initial conversations have not led to actual programs.**

Silverton Clinic

The Silverton Clinic nurse practitioner refers patients to the local private practice therapist (mentioned above) or a grief counselor as needed. The local therapist indicated a need for the Silverton Clinic provider to prescribe psychotropic medications for people who are in therapy. **More collaboration between the local behavioral health providers and primary care provider at the Silverton Clinic could benefit residents.**

Receiving care outside the county

Residents can access behavioral health professionals in the region (Durango and Montrose) through private practice, San Juan Basin Public Health (usually through local referrals) or Axis Health System. Some providers accept Medicaid, but we are only aware of one provider who speaks Spanish. Accessing care outside the county can be burdensome, as noted in the previous section. Interviewees noted increased availability of therapy and psychiatry through telemedicine since COVID-19 pandemic.

Behavioral Health Care Needs in San Juan County

Depression, anxiety, and isolation remain top concerns for San Juan County residents, according to both the qualitative research and available quantitative data. As mentioned earlier, binge drinking, tobacco use, and rates of depression are higher in San Juan County than the region or state. Some respondents also noted the weather and remote location of San Juan County may impact substance use. In the winter, residents are bored, isolated, and need something to entertain themselves. Summer is very busy, many residents work long hours or multiple jobs, and they may use substances to support these physical demands.

Respondents from law enforcement and the judicial system indicated that drug use was prevalent in the past, improved over the last 10 years, and now may be increasing again, though respondents did not elaborate on potential reasons for these recent trends. Individuals expressed skepticism on the effectiveness of local Alcoholics Anonymous programs due to stigma in accessing local services – interviewees speculated that residents did not want to be seen attending local substance abuse programs. There is no regional in-patient treatment center for substance abuse; individuals can, however, seek substance abuse treatment in Pueblo or Grand Junction.

Previous research led by a high school teacher indicated that **depression, anxiety, and isolation remain the root causes of all other challenges facing Silverton youth** and these issues were echoed in the interviews.³⁰ Despite availability of local behavioral health professionals, some youth expressed that their peers feel isolated and depressed. Young people we interviewed expressed difficulty in connecting to youth who are “like them” due to the small school population. Some progress has been made to connect youth with the Rainbow Youth Center in Durango, a youth center that specifically supports lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and/or questioning (LGBTQ+) young people, but both teachers and youth expressed the need to reopen the local youth center, which was closed during the COVID-19. Several youth also expressed divides for students who are able to access activities and play sports outside Silverton and those that are not, due to transportation, financial, or family challenges.

Top Issues for Youth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental health • Substance use (marijuana, vaping/nicotine, and alcohol) • Social issues (access to youth space, activities, and outside peers)

³⁰ Root Cause Analysis done through Social Justice Coalition at the Silverton School from 2017-2019, funded through the UpRise Coalition. Root cause analysis with youth in Silverton indicated that every issue facing youth in Silverton (substance abuse, alcohol use, tobacco use, suicidal thoughts, etc.) was connected to the root causes of depression, anxiety, and isolation.

Respondents also indicated that **youth and seniors share similar challenges regarding access to social outlets, isolation, and depression**. A historic culture of self-sufficiency may lead some older residents to resist asking for or receiving behavioral health or social supports, though the establishment of the Area Agency on Aging and Senior Center has improved senior services.

Spotlight on Seniors and Youth

Seniors and youth need events and gathering spaces (e.g., senior center, youth center, recreation center)

Nearly all respondents agreed that social connections remain highly important for a healthy community and behavioral health. Residents noticed the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant negative effect on social and civic connection, especially at the height of the pandemic when local-focused gatherings and events were cancelled. Multiple respondents indicated a need to combat isolation, depression, and substance abuse, especially for youth and seniors by restoring social events, public meetings, gatherings and keeping shared spaces (like the youth center and senior center) open.

Despite the availability of local behavioral health professionals, **financial barriers remain for residents to access behavioral health services**. The local behavioral health providers do not have the administrative support to charge insurance and they bill patients on a sliding scale. COVID-19 brought some additional funding for behavioral health services, but the county needs sustainable funding to continued services in future years. As mentioned earlier, **only one Spanish-speaking behavioral health professional exists in the entire region, leaving the Spanish-speaking community of San Juan County with very limited behavioral health support**. Interviewees also expressed confusion on what behavioral health services are available through local or regional providers, though a recently updated Health Resources Brochure from Public Health attempts to provide clarification. Please see the Appendix for this brochure.

Priority 3: Healthy Living

Respondents continue to prioritize factors in San Juan County that contribute to health. This priority area encompasses a wide range of issues. Though progress has been made, according to interview and focus group participants, more work is needed, especially in the areas of:

- Housing
- Physical activity
- Built environment
- Air quality
- Access to healthy foods

The following sections outline the themes that surfaced in qualitative interviews related to healthy living.

Housing

The lack of available or affordable housing means residents must spend more of their income on housing, making tradeoffs in areas of health expenditures or access to healthy foods. Renters may remain in older housing stock due to lack of additional housing options. Like many mountain communities in Colorado, Silverton has been facing a housing crisis, including a significant increase in the cost to purchase or rent a housing unit. According to a recent local housing study by Root Policy Research, “For sale home prices in San Juan County rose faster than in any other county between 2018 and 2020 at 59 percent. The median price of sold homes in the county was \$385,000 in 2021 compared to \$242,500 in 2018. The inventory of homes priced at less than \$250,000 declined by half, and were offset by a jump in homes priced at more than \$750,000.” The median rent in the Town of Silverton (where most residents live) doubled between 2010 and 2019 (\$575/month to \$1026/month). Importantly, the median income for renters also increased significantly, which meant that renters have somewhat kept up with rising rent prices.³¹

Workers have declined employment due to lack of housing (both availability and affordability) **and important health-care and non-health care positions remain unfilled** (paramedics, preschool and elementary teachers), partly due to housing. Even if someone can afford the increase in housing prices, a lack of housing inventory prohibits growth.

Considering these challenges, the Town of Silverton and San Juan County seek to support housing needs in the area. The Town and County have worked on affordable housing projects since the early 2000s, and the Town of Silverton recently purchased 1.2 acres, made possible through a state-level grant, to build future affordable housing. The town also

Spotlight on SDoH

Lack of affordable housing is a significant social determinant of health. Residents must spend more of their income on housing, making tradeoffs in areas of health expenditures or access to healthy foods.

Workers have declined employment due to lack of housing (both availability and affordability)

Much of the housing stock is older, with few units constructed since 2010

Older housing means maintenance or upkeep challenges, high heating costs and may contain lead pipes or lead paint.

³¹ Town Of Silverton, Housing Needs Assessment, Prepared by: Root Policy Research 2021.

<https://townofsilverton.colorado.gov/sites/townofsilverton/files/San%20Juan%20and%20Silverton%20Housing%20Needs%20Assessment%20August%202021.pdf>. Access 8/30/22. Data Source: 2010 and 2019 5-year ACS estimate.

received a grant to support the build-out of the Anvil Subdivision for workforce housing. Housing is a top priority for the Town Board of Trustees 2022-2023 goals.³²

Air Quality

Respondents mentioned air quality as a main environmental health concern, particularly related to the **continued presence of coal burning boilers and wood burning stoves for winter residential and commercial heating**. The Miners Hospital, which houses the San Juan County Public Health and The Silverton Clinic uses a coal burning boiler for heating, as do some other commercial buildings. One business owner indicated he could not open his doors or windows for better ventilation during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic due to fumes from a nearby business burning coal. Many residential homes are heated by wood-burning stoves and Silverton residents maintain a long-standing seasonal tradition of harvesting and processing wood for the winter. More work is needed to measure the air quality during the winter months, though **initial data from one air quality monitor indicate that air quality during winter months was double the recommended actionable level**. Air quality can affect all residents, and have especially negative consequence for children and those with lung or respiratory conditions.^{33 34 35 36} San Juan County also has the potential to experience diminished air quality more often during the summer months due to the **increased presence of wildfires in the nearby and distant areas**.

The presence of radon gas in homes emerged as another environmental health and air quality concern. Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas that can cause lung cancer. San Juan County Public Health has worked to raise awareness of radon in homes and to distribute radon tests to residents. High remediation costs remain a barrier to addressing indoor air quality.

Interviewees and focus groups raised the issue of dust from unpaved roads in the air, especially during the summer months when Silverton sees the most visitors. However, this is perceived as a diminishing concern. The town previously allowed Off Highway Vehicles (OHVs) on some town streets, until town residents voted in 2021 to confine OHVs to county roads (that is, outside of town). Several respondents believed the presence of dust particulates in town decreased after this change, although there has not been systematic monitoring of air quality in or out of town. Efforts by a local scientist to measure the air quality in town and county proved challenging because the dust particulates were too large to be measured by the air quality monitors. The town and county treat the dirt roads with water and magnesium-chloride to contain the dust.

Physical Activity

Access to the natural environment and the outdoors remains an important component of a healthy community for San Juan County residents, according to nearly all interviewees and focus group participants. Individuals indicated that many residents take advantage of the diverse recreational opportunities available in the area, including a variety of sports and activities (mountain biking, alpine/backcountry skiing, paragliding, rock climbing, rafting, hiking/trekking,

³² Town of Silverton. Trustee Goals 2022-24. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1fmFsWOSyitg5U2CBPWKc3BGzm9eu-1Jq/view>. Accessed 9/8/2022.

³³ American Academy of Pediatrics Committee on Environmental Health, Ambient Air Pollution: Health hazards to children. Pediatrics. 2004; 114: 1699-1707. Statement was reaffirmed in 2010. Dietert RR, Etzel RA, Chen D, et al. Workshop to identify critical windows of exposure for children's health: Immune and respiratory systems workgroup summary. Environ Health Perspect. 2000; 108 (supp 3): 483-490.

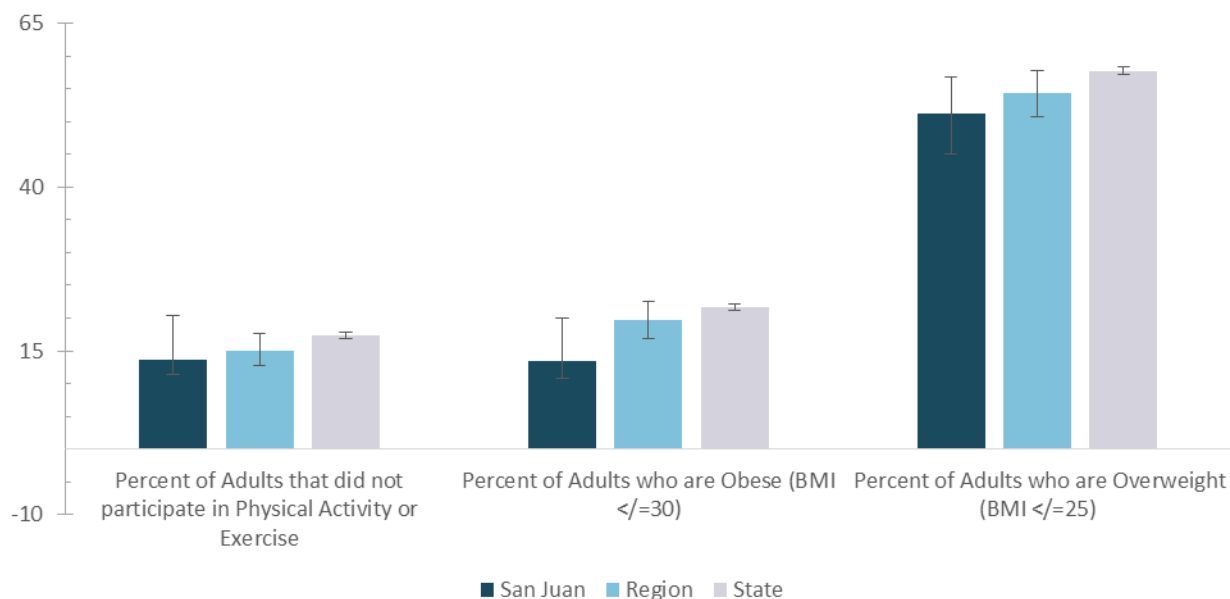
³⁴ Gauderman WJ, Urman R, Avol E, Berhane K, McConnell R, Rapport E, Chang R, Lurmann F, Gilliland F. Association of improved air quality with lung development in children. N Eng J Med. 2015; 372: 905-913.

³⁵ Gilliland F, Avol E, McConnell R, Berhane K, Gauderman WJ, Lurmann FW, et al. 2017. The Effects of Policy-Driven Air Quality Improvements on Children's Respiratory Health. Research Report 190. Boston, MA:Health Effects Institute.

³⁶ Kurt OK, Zhang J, Pinkerton KE. Pulmonary health effects of air pollution. Curr Opin Pulm Med. 2016 Mar;22(2):138-43. doi: 10.1097/MCP.000000000000248. PMID: 26761628; PMCID: PMC4776742.

trail-running, walking, snow-shoeing or Nordic skiing). The town hosts many sports events (such as the Iron Horse Bicycle Classic and Hardrock Hundred Mile Run) and the local ski area, Silverton Mountain is one of the only lift-assisted back country terrain options in the nation. Multiple sponsored athletes (skiers, runners, cyclists) live or train in San Juan County and a culture of physical fitness exists. Data from CDPHE Community Level Estimates supports the qualitative data, indicating San Juan County residents experience greater physical activity and lower rates of obesity than statewide estimates (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Physical Health and Activity Indicators: San Juan County, Region, and Statewide



Source: CDHPE Community Level Estimates (2014-2017). www.cohealthmaps.dphe.state.co.us/cdphe_community_level_estimates

Built and Natural Environment

The built environment of San Juan County and Silverton strongly relates to physical activity discussed above. While many residents maintain high levels of physical activity, **the built environment of the town remains less accessible to seniors or those with mobility needs**: few sidewalks exist in town and the majority of roads are unpaved, and are thus icy in the winter, muddy in the spring and fall, and uneven in the summer. All of these factors contribute to risk for injuries or falls for seniors and residents with limited mobility.

While the town and county contain significant natural beauty, there are few trails or sidewalks that provide connected access around town and residents frequently walk on streets or share trails with motorized traffic. As the town and county considers future growth and traffic movement, pedestrian and bicycle safety should be considered.

Walkability and pedestrian/bicycle safety will be important for future planning in Silverton and San Juan County

The altitude and climate also bring challenges, especially for seniors.

Silverton is at 9,318 feet elevation and diminished oxygen levels can affect residents recovering from illness, pregnant mothers, and those with respiratory conditions. Many seniors also live in older homes, where heating is expensive and maintenance is difficult. Further, older homes often do not accommodate wheelchairs or walkers and several of the historic town and county buildings are not ADA compliant.

As mentioned previously, seniors also face transportation constraints to access doctors, therapists, and pharmacies. Altogether, aging in place is challenging for seniors in Silverton.

Respondents frequently referenced the need for indoor recreation spaces, especially for seniors and youth.

Youth and teachers indicated that young people need recreational opportunities outside of skiing, hiking or biking and need indoor spaces, like a gym, pool, or youth center. Youth can use the school gym for exercise and weight lifting and respondents cited this as an important benefit. Adults and seniors previously had access to the school gymnasium, although this was discontinued during COVID-19 and has not been reestablished. Respondents emphasized the unmet need for indoor recreation spaces for seniors, including a gym, pool, and community space. The library and senior center have offered Tai Chi, yoga, and some senior exercise programs. Overall, residents were asking for more events that support local recreation and social connection.

Access to Healthy Foods

Silverton remains a food desert, especially in the winter, due to its remote location.³⁷ One well-stocked but small grocery store is open year-round with limited affordable fresh produce available. Stocking fresh items at an affordable price remains difficult due to supply chain, inflation, and transportation challenges. The nearest large supermarket is 50 miles away. A trip to Durango for groceries can cost up to 30 dollars in gas round trip.

Beyond the local grocery store, residents have access to healthy foods as follows:

- **School meals:** During the school year, all students receive free lunch and breakfast and the school café manager provides a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables.
- **Farmer's Market and produce stand:** A weekly farmers market and produce stand bring fresh items to residents in the summer months and goods are often sold out, indicating strong demand.
- **Local gardens:** Some locals have seasonal gardens and a school community garden supplies summer produce to the county food bank and WIC/SNAP participants. The Area Agency on Aging representative is working to erect a grow-dome for gardening access for seniors.
- **Produce delivery:** Some residents utilize produce delivery services, through UPS or FedEx. However, these options are not accessible for all low-income households.
- **Food bank:** According to the school garden manager, we have a solid food bank for such a small town, though the county social services representative indicated that the commodities distribution does not easily accommodate special diets (e.g., low-sodium, gluten free, vegetarian) and some individuals are reluctant to receive grocery items due to stigma.

Spotlight on Seniors

Seniors face particular challenges in Silverton's environment:

- High elevation and lack of oxygen
- Ice and snow
- Older homes with maintenance challenges
- Transportation barriers to doctors, therapists and pharmacies

Spotlight on Seniors and Youth

Interviewees and focus group participants often mention the need for an indoor recreation space, especially for youth and seniors

³⁷ Economic Research Service (ERS), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Food Environment Atlas. <https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-environment-atlas/>. Accessed 8/31/22.

More details on the commodities distribution and SNAP participation is found in the Social Services section below.

Overall, access to healthy foods and fresh produce in rural areas like San Juan County is limited and often higher priced.

Social Services

The median income in San Juan County is below state levels (\$53,000 versus \$75,000). Persons in poverty is estimated at 11.3 percent (compared to 9.5 percent for Durango, 6.7 percent for Ouray or 12 percent nationwide), according to the U.S. Census.³⁸ Many residents struggle with economic security as most jobs remain seasonal and tourism dependent. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture Food Environment Atlas, 8 percent of the San Juan County population receives SNAP benefits and nearly 80 percent of those eligible actually receive food assistance.³⁹

Spotlight on SDoH

- Median income in San Juan County is below state levels
- Persons in poverty in San Juan County is higher than the surrounding regions
- Eight percent of the San Juan County population receives SNAP benefits

San Juan County has one staff member who coordinates the San Juan County Department of Social Services. The County provides:

- Food and medical assistance, processing applications for:
 - SNAP,
 - WIC, and
 - Medicaid
- Energy assistance (through Energy Outreach Colorado)
- Heating assistance (through LEAP November – April)
- Food commodities (including fresh produce from school garden in the summer)
- Snow shoveling program for seniors (60 years and older)
- Affordable housing property management

According to those interviewed, the snow shoveling program for seniors (coordinated by the AAA) has been successful and interviewees praised the local food bank. Some indicated that local residents may not realize they qualify for the heating or energy assistance, especially due to seasonal employment status. **More work is needed to advertise and promote the available social services.**

Some respondents noted that the county's social services department is not typically involved in regional stakeholder discussions, grant writing, or programming. **More collaboration and initiative could potentially bring additional funding or services for residents.**

Organizational Infrastructure

Though not directly related to health, organizational infrastructure came up frequently in the interviews because of its impact on the ability to recruit and retain staff, establish systems and processes to support effective governance and town or county planning, and its overall impact on residents' health and wellbeing. For example:

- The Ambulance Association cannot support a community paramedicine program if they cannot fill key roles due to housing shortages.

³⁸ United States Census. QuickFacts. San Juan County Colorado.

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/sanjuancountycolorado/PE120220#PE120220>. Accessed 9/8/2022.

³⁹ Economic Research Service (ERS), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Food Environment Atlas.

<https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-environment-atlas/>. Accessed 8/31/22.

- The Silverton Clinic faces challenges in recruiting new providers when the current nurse manager and nurse practitioner retire.
- The preschool and K-12 school cannot fill staff positions, which puts additional burden on existing staff and limits staff time to pursue additional behavioral health or youth programming.
- Historically, frequent changes in town administration and limited county capacity leads to inefficiencies in local government, which hampers the region’s ability to seek grant funding to support the health and wellbeing of residents.

The Town of Silverton and San Juan County are well-positioned to seek grant funding or partnerships for a variety of projects that could support the physical and behavioral health of residents such as:

- Expanded local clinic services
- Community paramedicine
- Senior transportation and supports
- Expanded public health services (community health services or screening, improved air quality monitoring, increased radon mitigation, substance abuse prevention)
- Affordable housing
- Expanded recreational opportunities for residents (recreation center, trails systems, playgrounds or parks)
- Expanded school programming and behavioral health support
- Youth services and programming
- Free early childhood education and childcare
- Social events and activities for local residents

The town and county, the schools, and local organizations have historically been well-positioned to acquire grant funding to establish innovative and successful programs, facilities, and services. However, writing and managing grants often requires more capacity than these institutions have. As one key stakeholder indicated in a focus group:

“We know money is out there and we have lots of ideas, but we don’t have the organizational capacity or infrastructure to maintain progress.”

Successful programming is often dependent on one or two qualified and passionate individuals and the programming or services end if these individuals leave (due to housing challenges, “burn out”, or life changes). In contrast, some leadership positions have not changed in many years and, as one participant described, decision making can get stuck in a mindset that can limit change and progress. Themes of: “The good old days,” or “This is the way we’ve always done it” can hamper growth. Further, many town and county leaders must assume multiple leadership roles, which decreases their capacity to address priorities. Also, **a history of deferred maintenance due to financial constraints in the town and county distracts from other important health-related priorities.**

Local organizations or institutions can suffer from the loss of dedicated leaders or get stuck in “The way we’ve always done it.”

Water Quality

In 2015, the Gold King Mine spill brought increased attention to legacy mining and natural metal loading in water and soils around San Juan County. Environmental health and water quality featured as a top priority in 2015 Community Health Assessment.

Since the Gold King Mine spill, areas in San Juan County have since been designated an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Superfund site, called the Bonita Peak Mining District, which consists of 48 historic mines or mining-related

sources where ongoing releases of metal-laden water and sediments are occurring within the Mineral Creek, Cement Creek and Upper Animas River drainages in San Juan County. Clean-up through the EPA has been ongoing.⁴⁰ A Citizens Advisory Group was established in 2018 to disseminate information about activities at the Bonita Peak Mining District site to the community and to provide community input back to EPA.⁴¹

Despite this situation, water quality from the municipal water sources (Bear and Boulder Creeks) remains strong, meeting or exceeding state standards as measured through our water treatment plant.⁴² In contrast to the 2015 assessment, water quality did not arise as a high priority in the interviews and focus groups. This difference is likely due to the recent occurrence of the Gold King spill at the time of the previous assessment, including the media and community attention given to water and soil quality in San Juan County in 2015.

Presence of lead pipes in some older homes remains a concern and San Juan Public Health would benefit from additional resources for lead testing and water quality education.

⁴⁰ United State Environmental Protection Agency. Superfund Site: Bonita Peak Mining District. <https://cumulis.epa.gov/supercpad/cursites/csitinfo.cfm?id=0802497>. Accessed 9/8/2022.

Bonita Peak Mining District Info Map Tool. <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/collections/e34d136ea58242f68ec12bd2a04acf8c>. Accessed 9/8/2022.

⁴¹ Bonita Peak Mining District Community Advisory Group (CAG) Official Site. <https://www.bonitapeakcag.org/>. Accessed 9/8/2022

⁴² Town of Silverton. Department of Public Works. 2021 Drinking Water Consumer Confidence Report. https://drive.google.com/file/d/1okKeksNb_86-OA5lpLA_HgtG7ANfCj9/view. Accessed 9/8/2022.

Conclusions and next steps

San Juan County has experienced successes and challenges since the last health assessment in 2015. We have added local behavioral health professionals, established new senior supports, and raised awareness around environmental health needs. Increased use of telemedicine during COVID-19 improved residents' access to health care services. Rates of obesity remain lower than our surrounding region and rates of physical activity remain higher. Community trust in the public health infrastructure remains high and can be leveraged for future programming.

However, access to expanded, integrated health care remains elusive as the Silverton Clinic faces sustainability challenges. Rates of binge drinking, cigarette use, and depression remain higher than our neighboring counties. Youth and seniors expressed feelings of isolation, anxiety and lack of social support. Housing availability and affordability represents a new challenge for social determinants of health and local organizations struggle to recruit and retain staff.

Overall, we've made progress in some areas, but our priorities have not changed significantly. Based on the 2022 Community Health Assessment, the three priorities for improving the health of San Juan County residents are:

1. **Access To Care**
2. **Behavioral Health (Mental Health and Substance Abuse)**
3. **Healthy Living**

Social determinants of health surfaced as important for addressing these priorities. Issues specific to seniors and youth remain crosscutting. Children appear to be the best-served cohort within the county, with relatively better access to health care services and behavioral health programming through the Silverton School.

Future programs and services to address health care needs in San Juan County should focus on the three identified priorities and seek stable funding, staffing, and organizational support to sustain programming.

The next step to addressing health care priorities in San Juan County is the development of a Public Health Improvement Plan (PHIP). San Juan County Public Health secured grant funding from CDPHE for 2022-2023 to support a local part-time Health Planner. The Health Planner will develop the Public Health Improvement Plan and will focus on next steps to address the priorities identified in this assessment. Table 1 and Table 2 highlight key successes to build on and key gaps that could be addressed in the Public Health Improvement Plan, based on the finding of this Community Health Assessment.

Table 1. Successes to Celebrate

Area	Items of note
Health Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free one-day clinic in Silverton • Stable Emergency Medical Service (through grants and tax funding) • High health insurance coverage in county • Telehealth availability • Local blood draws for lab work • IV therapy or some welfare checks from EMS
Public Health Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community engagement and trust • Established teams and coordination • COVID funding enabled robust pandemic response • Community awareness of services offered
Behavioral Health Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three local behavioral health providers • Free behavioral health therapy (during COVID) • School-based behavioral health services • Increase awareness of behavioral health needs, decreased stigma, and increased use • Second Chance program (eliminates school suspension for possession of illicit substance) • Crisis Intervention Team through AXIS
Senior Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Center and Area Agency on Aging (AAA) established • AAA representative offering senior programming and some senior transportation • COVID prompted creation of lists of vulnerable seniors • Seniors signed up for emergency alerts
Youth Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavioral health support through school • Success in reducing substance use, truancy, juvenile delinquency since early 2000s • School gym access for youth • Connection with Rainbow Youth Center for LGBTQ+ support
Child Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School-based services, including oral and well-child checks • Low or no-cost childcare and preschool • Strong social supports for kids and families through school • Cultural broker through school to support Mexican community
Social Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong local food bank • Shoveling program and energy assistance
Town and County Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renovation of Miner’s Union Hospital building • New town administrator and staff • Acquisition of affordable housing funding • Strong partnerships between groups during COVID • Strong community connections

Table 2. Gaps to Address

Area	Items of note
Health Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More local health providers • Sustainability or transition plan for Silverton Clinic • Promotion and distribution of Emergency Loan Fund through Silverton Clinic • Establishment of non-emergency or crisis response teams • Awareness of current services • Community paramedicine to provide welfare checks and other health care services using local providers (EMS, AAA, Silverton Clinic) • Spanish-speaking services • Access to some local or online prescriptions • Transportation to outside providers • Utilization of Axis Peer Navigator for care coordination
Public Health Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of local screening services: Health Fair, vital clinics, dental screenings • Development of air quality monitoring strategy and plan • Continued education on radon mitigation and expanded education on lead exposure
Behavioral Health Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding to continue free or reduced cost behavioral health services • Promotion of available behavioral health services • Spanish-speaking providers • Spanish language materials and information • Tobacco prevention programming • Alcohol abuse prevention programming • Decrease in stigma for accessing local care • Establishment of a Public Behavioral Health Officer
Senior Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of a plan or team for most vulnerable seniors • Support for community spaces for social connection (senior center, Kendall Recreation Center, Youth Center, future recreation center) • Funding to sustain current successful programming
Youth Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-establishment of Youth Center • Support for other common community spaces for social connection (Kendall Recreation Center, Youth Center, future recreation center) • Funding to sustain current successful programming
Child Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued funding low-cost preschool • Continued school-based health programming
Social Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of current social services • Connection of social services to other stakeholder groups/funding
Town and County Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable and available housing • Funding or stipends for housing (especially to attract/retain medical providers) • Funding to preserve open space and build trails • Investment in community spaces, especially for seniors and youth • Effective staff recruitment and retention at town, county and local organizations • Establish radon mitigation in town or county building code

Appendix

A. Methodology

Focus groups and interviews were the primary means of qualitative data collection for the Community Health Assessment. The Health Planner and Public Health Director created a list of Key Informant interviews and Focus Groups, as outlined below:

Focus groups

1. Key Stakeholders/Service Providers (5 individuals)
 - a. Many of the priorities deal with health services or access to care, thus we sought feedback from local service providers at EMS, Silverton Clinic, the Silverton School, senior center, and social services.
2. Spanish-speaking population (5 individuals)
 - a. We wanted to understand the unique needs of our Mexican community since they predominantly work in the service industry, are more likely to be uninsured, and face unique barriers to accessing care.
3. Chamber of Commerce Board members (5 individuals)
 - a. Since many of our local residents own or work in local businesses we wanted to hear from the Chamber of Commerce members who provided feedback both as community members and employers.
4. Silverton Clinic Board members (6 individuals)

Key Informant Interviews

We conducted Key Informant interviews with 17 individuals, representing a variety of perspectives, including:

1. Town and county elected officials
2. Parents
3. Youth
4. Teachers
5. Seniors
6. Behavioral health professionals
7. Municipal judge and EPA communication liaison
8. Health Services providers/First responders
 - a. Sheriff
 - b. Fire Department Chief
 - c. Office of Emergency Management (OEM) Director
 - d. Public Health Director
 - e. Nurse Practitioner at Silverton Clinic
 - f. Social Services coordinator
 - g. Senior Services representative

Interviews lasted between 20 and 40 minutes and were recorded and transcribed using Otter.ai software. The interviews included common questions across all interviews, with some variation depending on interviewee role. We also conducted a short open-ended survey with a small group of middle school girls for insight on issues facing youth.

In the research, we also reviewed two sources of existing qualitative data on Silverton, including a Quality-of-Life Survey that the Town of Silverton administered in August 2020 and qualitative data from a Master Plan process by the Town of Silverton. We reviewed these sources for themes related to local health care access and comments on health needs.^{43 44}

Coding Interviews and Focus Groups

To analyze the interviews and focus groups, we used the template approach to coding, which involves developing an *a priori* template, then making modifications during the data collection and coding process.^{45 46 47} The Health Planner reviewed all interviews for common themes based on the research questions.

Research Questions:

- Have the health priorities changed in the last 7 years?
- What are the barriers to address the priorities?
- What are the strengths to address the priorities?
- What progress have we made?

Based on these themes and the research questions, an a priori codebook was developed to test on four interviews. The codebook contained six high-level domains and thirty specific codes. The Health Planner coded the four interviews with the codebook and made additions or revisions to the codebook based on the four test interviews. The codebook was revised and the remaining interviews were coded with the revised codebook. The domains and codes include:

Domains:

- Access to Care
- Substance Use
- Mental Health
- Senior Services
- Environmental Health
- Social Determinants of Health

Codes:

- Health Priorities
- Preventive care
- Healthy Community
- Silverton Clinic
- Public health
- Barriers (individual barriers)
- Challenges (institutional challenges)
- Opportunities
- Success
- Strengths
- Health Services
- Primary Care
- Dental care
- Social Services
- Youth
- Seniors
- Covid-19
- Healthy foods
- Obesity
- Air quality
- Housing
- Organizational capacity
- Alcohol
- Drug use
- Tobacco use
- Marijuana
- Telehealth
- School-based services
- Urgent care
- Prescriptions

⁴³ Quality of Life Survey, Town of Silverton. <https://townofsilverton.colorado.gov/qol>. Accessed July 2022.

⁴⁴ Silverton Master Plan Draft, Town of Silverton. <https://express.adobe.com/page/0ahs5069CWCjf/>. Accessed August 2022

⁴⁵ Keith, R.E., Crosson, J.C., O'Malley, A.S. et al. Using the Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research (CFIR) to produce actionable findings: a rapid-cycle evaluation approach to improving implementation. *Implementation Sci* 12, 15 (2017). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13012-017-0550-7>. Accessed May 2022

⁴⁶ King, N. (2012). Doing template analysis. In G. Symon, & C. Cassell *Qualitative organizational research* (pp. 426-450). SAGE Publications, Inc., <https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781526435620.n24>. Accessed May 2022.

⁴⁷ Brooks, J., McCluskey, S., Turley, E., & King, N. (2015). The Utility of Template Analysis in Qualitative Psychology Research. *Qualitative research in psychology*, 12(2), 202–222. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14780887.2014.955224>. Accessed May 2022.

The Health Planner then created summaries of themes related to each code and domain in the interviews and extracted quotes related to the code themes.

Finally, pertinent quantitative data were collected from CDPHE and various US agencies. Refer to the figures and chapter footnotes for details. Additional data are presented in Appendix Table 1. Community Level Estimates Data from CDPHE.

B. Appendix Table 1. Community Level Estimates Data from CDPHE

Indicator	San Juan County		Region		Colorado	
	Estimate	Confidence Interval	Estimate	Confidence Interval	Estimate	Confidence Interval
Percent of Adults who currently have Asthma	7.8	6.4 - 9.4	9.2	7.2 - 11.2	8.9	8.5-9.2
Percent of Adults who are Binge Drinking	34.0	30.8 - 39.3	16.2	13.1 - 19.4	18.0	17.8-18.8
Percent of Adults who currently Smoke Cigarettes	34.0	30 - 38.2	15.5	12.6 - 18.3	15.5	14.9 - 15.9
Percent of Adults who have been told they have a Depressive Disorder	23.1	18.6 - 29.5	15.1	12.7 - 17.6	18.0	17.6 - 18.5
Percent of Adults with Fair or Poor Health Status	6.1	4.9 - 10.9	12.4	10.2 - 14.6	14.0	13.6 - 14.4
Percent of Adults who have any form of Healthcare Insurance	94.6	87 - 95.5	88.0	85.5 - 90.5	88.7	88.3 - 89.1
Percent of Adults who Drink Heavily	7.0	4.9 - 13.4	9.0	6.8 - 11.2	6.5	6.2 - 6.8
Percent of Adults ever diagnosed with Coronary Heart Disease	3.1	2.3 - 15.4	2.7	1.8 - 3.5	2.9	2.7 - 3.0
Percent of Adults who used Marijuana 1+ days out of the past 30 days	9.4	7.6 - 15.6	19.2	15.7 - 22.6	14.0	13.5 - 14.5
Percent of Adults with Frequent Mental Distress	1.5	1.1 - 8.4	9.6	7.5 - 11.7	9.9	9.5 - 10.3
Percent of Adults who did not have a Medical Checkup within the Past Year	47.0	41.9 - 52.4	41.2	37.6 - 44.7	37.4	36.8 - 38.0
Percent of Adults that did not participate in Physical Activity or Exercise	13.6	11.3 - 20.3	15.1	12.7 - 17.6	17.3	16.9 - 17.8
Percent of Adults who are Obese (BMI \leq 30)	13.4	10.7 - 19.9	19.7	16.9 - 22.5	21.6	21.1 - 22.1
Percent of Adults who are Overweight (BMI \leq 25)	51.3	45.1 - 56.9	54.3	50.7 - 57.8	57.7	57.1 - 58.3
Percent of Adults with Frequent Physical Distress	5.1	4.1 - 10.5	9.5	7.6 - 11.4	9.4	9.0 - 9.7
Percent of Adults who delayed medical care due to costs	1.8	1.4 - 8.3	11.4	9.1 - 13.7	12.4	12.0 - 12.8
Percent of Adults ever diagnosed with Diabetes	1.1	0.7 - 6.5	6.3	4.8 - 7.8	7	6.8 - 7.3
Estimated Percent of Adults who have received a Flu Vaccine within the past 12 months	25.8	21.4 - 32.9	35.4	32.2 - 38.7	44	43.3 - 44.6

Source: CDHPE Community Level Estimates (2014-2017). (Census Tracts). https://www.cohealthmaps.dphe.state.co.us/cdphe_community_level_estimates

C. Health Resources Brochure

HEALTH PROMOTIONS

Primary Care

Silverton Clinic: Agnes Eytchison, DNP and Lois Mackenzie, RN. The Silverton Clinic is open on Thursdays and offers primary care services, DOT physicals, school/sports physicals, lab work, and has options for hospice care. There is no cost for San Juan County residents, but a donation is appreciated. Please call (970) 387-5114 to schedule an appointment.

San Juan County Public Health: Provides routine immunizations for children and adults, COVID-19 vaccines for eligible children/adults, and COVID-19 testing. Please call (970) 387-0242 for more information.

Axis Health System: (970) 247-5245. Axis Health System provides crisis care, primary care, mental health services, substance use treatment, dental care, and care coordination.

Pediatric Partners of the Southwest, Durango, CO: (970) 375-0100.

Pediatric Associates of Durango: (970) 759-7337.

Silverton San Juan County Ambulance Association (EMS): (970) 387-5887

Dental Services Accepting Medicaid or Medicare in Durango:

Durango Kids Pediatric Dentistry: Pediatrics Dentistry. (970) 259-0600.

Four Corners Oral Surgery: General dentistry and hygiene services. (970) 335-2442.

Four Corners Dental and Dentures: General dentistry, dentures, partials, and hygiene services. (970) 259-2264.

COVID-19 Resources

Testing: Free COVID-19 tests are available on most Mondays-Fridays from 9AM-12PM at 1315 Snowden Street. Please call (970) 387-0242 to schedule an appointment.

COVID Vaccines: San Juan County Public Health is offering a variety of COVID-19 Vaccines. Please call (970) 387-0242 to schedule an appointment.

1315 SNOWDEN STREET
SILVERTON, COLORADO 81433
(970) 387-0242

SAN JUAN COUNTY
PUBLIC HEALTH

preventive health at its peak

SILVERTON

San Juan County

HEALTH RESOURCE BROCHURE

SAN JUAN COUNTY
PUBLIC HEALTH

preventive health at its peak

SILVERTON

Care Coordination

Health Insurance at San Juan Basin Public Health: San Juan Basin Public Health in Durango, Colorado.

Emma Tomlinson: (970) 335-2028

<https://sjbpublichealth.org/healthinsurance/>

Nurse-Family Partnership through San Juan Basin Public Health

Nurse-Family Partnership is available to first-time mothers who enroll during pregnancy or before the child turns 1 month old. Nurse Family Partnership works empower first-time moms to transform their lives and create better futures for themselves and their babies.

WIC (women, infants and children) at San Juan Basin Public Health:

WIC makes it easy to learn about nutrition and breastfeeding and provides a debit card to buy healthy foods.

Call (970)335-2026 <https://sjbpublichealth.org/wic/>

Safecare at San Juan Basin Public Health:

The SafeCare Colorado program offers a free, voluntary service that supports families in gaining additional skills to provide a safe home, address child health needs, and engage in positive interactions with their children ages five and under. Call (970)335-2041 for more information.

<https://sjbpublichealth.org/safecare-colorado>

Sexual Health Clinic at San Juan Basin Public Health:

The Sexual Health Clinic provides STD testing and treatment as well as birth control pills, depo shots and IUD and Nexplanon inserts. Call to set up an appointment: (970)335-2013

Women's Wellness Connection (WWC) at San Juan Basin Public Health

provides well woman exams including free breast and cervical cancer screenings, diagnostic testing, and health navigation for women who are uninsured, underinsured, or low-income because everyone should have access to healthcare allowing the prevention and early detection of breast and cervical cancer. <https://cdphe.colorado.gov/wwc>

Tobacco Prevention and Cessation: San Juan County has funding to help residents with tobacco cessation. Call Amie Bicocchi at (970)387-0242 for more information. -

Colorado Quit Line: 1.800.QUIT.NOW / 1-800-784-8669 / www.COQuitLine.org

My Life My Quit: Quitline specifically designed for youth under 18. Text "start" to:36072 or Call 855.891.9989

AAA, Area Agency on Aging: Offers various services for community members 60 years of age and older. Please contact Keri Metzler at (970) 946-9383 for more information.

San Juan Basin Area on Aging & 9Health:365: Offers seniors free, unlimited three-month subscriptions to 9Health:365 TeleHealth. Call 800.332.32078 or register online at <https://www.9healthfair.org/telehealth>

HEALTH PROMOTIONS

CONTINUED

Financial Assistance

Colorado Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LEAP): is a federally funded program that helps eligible hard-working Colorado families, seniors and individuals pay a portion of their winter home heating costs. LEAP only accepts applications between November and April. If you're looking for assistance outside of LEAP season, it may be available. Please call 1-866-HEAT-HELP (1-866-432-8435) for more information.

San Juan County Assistance: Please call Krissy Rhoades at (970) 387-5631.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP): is part of a federal nutrition program to help low-income households purchase food. It provides a monthly benefit that helps families and individuals buy the food they need for good health. Please call 1-800-536-5298 for more information.

Activities

Silverton Public Library

1111 Reese Street. (970-387-5770)

Open Tuesday-Thursday 11-8, Friday-Saturday 10-5

Zumba: Monday and Wednesday 6:00pm at the school basketball court.

Silverton Single Track Society (SSS)

Email: info@silvertonsingletracksociety.org / Facebook: [@silvertonsingletrack](https://www.facebook.com/silvertonsingletrack)

Silverton Threads Quilting Club

Contact Barbara Renowden (970)946-8094 or Anita Fields (623) 640-1691

Silverton Senior Center: Please Call Keri Metzler at (970) 946-9383 for more information.

Environmental Services

Free Radon Test Kits Available: Call SJCPH at (970) 387-0242 for more information.

Purple Air Monitor: To monitor air quality in San Juan County, go to www2.purpleair.com, and search 81433.

Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems: San Juan Basin Public Health (SJBPH) is the regulatory authority for on-site wastewater treatment system (OWTS) permitting in San Juan County. <https://sjbpublichealth.org/septic>

Retail Food Inspections: Colorado Dept of Health and Environment. Troy Huffman. 303.692.3664. troy.huffman@state.co.us

Health and Wellness

Beth Weathersby: Massage Therapy (970) 778-0505.

Molly Gibson: Thrive Acupuncture: Licensed Acupuncturist and Chinese Medicine Practitioner. (970) 403-5202.

MOVE Yoga + Fitness: Located at 124 E 13th Street, MOVE's mission is to provide accessible, year-round fitness, movement, and mindfulness to Silverton and its visitors, with the intent of offering yoga, pilates, personal training, fitness classes and gym memberships. Visit MOVESilverton.com for more information including current class schedules, gym hours, and more. Contact MOVE Yoga + Fitness on Instagram @Move.Silverton, or send an email to MOVE.silverton@gmail.com.

Mental Health Resources

Silverton Mental Health Services: Bruce Haring, MA LPC and Rob Roof, MS LPC-C. Our counselors are licensed professionals who live and work in Silverton. For more information or to schedule an appointment, please call (970) 799-2760.

Axis Health System (970)247-5245: Axis Health System provides crisis care, mental health services, and substance use treatment.

Cross Roads at Grandview: 1125 Three Springs Blvd. Durango, CO. (970) 403-0180.

Colorado Crisis Services: Confidential help for mental health, substance abuse, or emotional crisis. 1-844-4938255.

Spanish translation available to Axis Crisis Line, Colorado Crisis Services, and Crossroads at Grandview.

Maria Call, LPC, NPI: 70 Stafford Ln, Delta, CO 81416. (970) 874-0104.

Alternative Horizons (AH) : Domestic Violence support and advocacy. Call (970) 247-5245 for their 24/7 care line.

AA Meetings are being held on Wednesday nights at 7PM. Please call 1-888-333-9649 for location.

Office of Emergency Management

Sign up for San Juan County Colorado, Nixle "Emergency Alerts"

Text 81433 to 888-777