

Forces of Change Assessment

PHASE Three

2018 Assessment

Forces of Change

The Forces of Change Assessment (FOCA) is centered around answering the questions:

“What is occurring or might occur that affects the well-being of our residents or the local system?”

“What specific threats or opportunities are generated by these occurrences?”

The FOCA was facilitated by the Impact DuPage Core Team, comprised of DuPage County Health Department staff. Facilitated brainstorming sessions were conducted with community leaders to identify forces such as trends, factors, or events that are influencing the quality of life and health of the community. To obtain wide-ranging input, the assessment was conducted with 11 distinct audiences during meetings held in the winter of 2018. The groups that participated in the brainstorming sessions were the Neighborhood Resource Centers, Community Hunger Network, Impact DuPage Steering Committee, Healthy Lombard, Willowbrook Corners Coalition, Bensenville Youth Services Coalition, Prevention Leadership Team, DuPage County Community Services Manager Meeting, the DuPage County Health Department (DCHD) Leadership staff, and the DCHD Board of Health.

Findings

The 11 groups of community leaders discussed forces, threats, and opportunities across eight categories: Social, Economic, Political, Technological, Environmental, Scientific, Legal, and Ethical. The results of the discussions were reviewed to determine the themes that were most commonly discussed within the groups.

These sections are meant to summarize the discussion and are not necessarily reflective of the positions of any participating agency. Statements are the perspectives and perception of the individuals who participated and have not been verified. The results of these discussions are listed below.

Employment and Wages:

There is a belief that unemployment rates are misleading and that more people are unemployed or not employed in the jobs they want or were trained for. People are taking part-time jobs because they cannot find a job in their field. There is a lack of jobs for young people, especially new grads, in DuPage County, which is leading to massive student debt. Another concern is that some jobs in DuPage are becoming obsolete and cannot grow towards the future. The problem with getting new industries in this area is the financial status of the state as well as the high taxes within the county.

Aging Population:

The population in DuPage County is aging which is creating new needs within the community. The aging population is putting stress on the local provider system. As individuals are aging, they are less likely to be financially prepared for their future. Older adults are getting laid off in prime earning years and replaced by younger employees. There are not enough resources for adults in the community to help them get the latest education and resources they need to come back into the workforce and compete for good jobs.

Affordable Housing:

Expensive housing and high taxes have made it difficult for people to find housing in DuPage County. The increased cost of living has caused people to be priced out of their communities, potentially moving out of the county. Affordable housing should not all be located in the same community because it will cause segregation and a concern about creating bad communities. There is less housing available for the elderly and what is available comes at a high cost.

Technology and Social Media Use:

Social media can have a large influence on a child's mental health and wellbeing. Bullying and other acts experienced through social media can cause trauma to children and may contribute to teen depression and anxiety. There are rarely repercussions for bullies on social media. These are new zones of a child's life that are difficult for adults to monitor or get involved in until there is a crisis and it is too late. Parents need more education about ways to monitor/ limit access to technology, as well as more awareness on how to see warning signs of problems. Increased use of social media has led to changes in the way that a community is built and interacts, given that young people's community is mostly online. Sedentary lifestyles brought on by too much screen time are common and lead to poor health outcomes. An additional concern regarding technology is that it is difficult for low-income individuals to access the internet and own technological devices.

Transportation:

Transportation services within DuPage County are limited and people cannot get the services that they need because they do not have access to transportation. There is no sense of a true transportation system within the county, and there are limited public transit routes. Car maintenance is expensive, and there are many families who cannot afford to have cars. It is difficult for families to find transportation for their children to get to and from activities and for the elderly to find transportation to and from their medical services. Transporting older family members can take a toll on families and their job productivity. There may be an opportunity for hospitals to partner with ride-share companies to transport patients with transportation barriers.

Mental health:

Due to the regional shortage of mental health care providers, the demand for care cannot be met within the community. Stigma regarding mental health as well as substance abuse treatment facilities is still present. There is a "not in my backyard" mentality within DuPage County regarding treatment facilities. Improvements seen regarding mental health include law enforcement Crisis Intervention Teams and more criminal justice and mental health efforts. It seems like it is becoming more acceptable to admit mental health issues and more people are willing to seek treatment.

Gun access and gun violence:

Mental health needs to be addressed regarding violence and access to guns. Gun access is leading to more domestic violence. Gun violence within the country is causing stress, anxiety, and an uncertainty of safety for students, parents, and faculty within DuPage. There needs to be a balance between

protecting individual rights and protecting the community. There is a lot of information in the media about guns and gun violence, and some of this information is misleading.

Funding:

The new tax plan is causing concern regarding how charitable contributions to nonprofits will be affected and whether there will be major cuts to federally funded programs. The impact of the tax plan will not be fully seen until late 2018 or in 2019. Funding for schools and property rates are being negatively affected by the state's budget/taxes. Lack of equity across schools and school districts' funding is a concern. Decreased financial support and grants for nonprofits leaves community organizations with fewer options to help fund essential programs. Local agencies are merging to do collaborative work that combines efforts and creates connections to overcome funding struggles.

Additional forces of change that were often discussed are included in Appendix A.

May 10, 2018

Appendix A

Forces of Change	Group Comments
Misconceptions in Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Misconceptions in media about health facts, news stories, and gun facts - Difficult to figure out what is reliable news - People are disregarding scientific evidence and believing information from untrustworthy sources - Companies are profiting off marketing products that may actually be harmful
Health System Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A need for more standardization of how to share health information - Big data allows for better diagnosing, but can also cause privacy concerns - Telehealth will allow more people to receive care
Diversity in DuPage & Demographic Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shifts have occurred that totally change the face of DuPage - Leaders in DuPage should echo the need for inclusion of diverse groups rather than taking an adversarial approach - Siloed communities: long-term residents vs. new migrants (racial disparities & stereotypes) - People moving to suburbs from the city without social supports or transportation - Several different languages being spoken in schools without effective resources - Earlier education settings can be a good place for intervention
Immigration Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People not willing to participate in community programs because of the fear that it will be used against them or is a trap - Misinformation about what happens if police are called on an immigrant - Immigrant community working together to heal and fight back - The immigrant population is a part of who DuPage is and we should celebrate that
Business Struggles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase in online shopping and less shopping locally - There is a loss of jobs for small businesses - Many new jobs are not located within this community
Opioid Crisis & Narcotic Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vast increase in the heroin/opioid epidemic over the past few years - Overprescribing of medications such as antibiotics, opioids, and psychotropics - Lack of treatment centers, especially those who offer low-cost options - Police and others using naloxone are open to liability - Awareness of the opioid crisis has allowed for broader conversations about addiction
Health Insurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is a disintegration of the payer mix within the community - Insurance changes disproportionately affect the low-income population - High cost of insurance and concerns about changes to Medicaid - Medicaid managed care is poorly done in Illinois. Reimbursements not accurate or timely - Currently, there is decreased investment in safety net systems, decreased access to care due to MCOs limiting networks of providers, and a risk of moving from fee for service to capitation - Not enough education on insurance and what it means to be insured
Marijuana Legalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Risks and benefits need to be identified - Will opioid prescriptions be reduced with use of medical marijuana? - How will it affect substance abuse, and mental health, alcohol use?

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- What are the underlying issues/causes of youth use?
- What mental health issues may be seen in 5-10 years (e.g. psychosis) due to it?
- Funding can be used for other services
- Pro-marijuana views are ignoring science and going off personal experience
- Huge threat to community on mental health issues caused by marijuana use (tied to lack of education)
- Road safety concerns as well as ER visits due to pediatric/adult overdose