

Morgan County Healthcare Horizon Council

Community Input Meeting

Thursday, April 15, 2010 Morgan Community College

On Thursday, April 15, 2010, the Morgan County Healthcare Horizon Council hosted a public meeting at Morgan Community College. The meeting was held from 12:00 to 1:00; lunch was provided. Thirty-nine people attended. The facilitator provided a brief overview of the Council and the information they had gathered to date. Participants were then asked to provide input to the Council in preparation for their "visioning meeting" the next month. The input was guided by the following questions. Participants would share their responses verbally, or write them down and leave them at the end of the meeting.

What is working well in Morgan County?

- Lots of availability and supply of services
- Individually – the services meet community needs
- Large numbers of health providers
- Two beautiful hospitals with nice facilities
- Providers take time to find what more they can do for the community
- Good access to emergency care through emergency rooms
- Good continuity of care – from inpatient to outpatient to home health care
- Quick response by providers when issues become too large for them to handle
- Good quality of care
- Great groups (like this one) that get together to work out problems

- Comments made
- Written notes

Note: There was discussion regarding the accuracy of the directory listing "12 mental health clinics."

What could work better?

- Better hours for appointments and walk-in patients; availability on weekends and evenings
- "Morgan County has the highest rate of suicide in Northeast Colorado"
- Services don't collaborate well together. "We don't have a "healthcare neighborhood"
- More dentists are needed – according to survey - 30% of residents had not seen a dentist in past 24 months
- "Called to set up dental appointment for children – 3 month wait"
- Recruitment and retention of healthcare professionals

- Apparent disconnect between not having enough healthcare professionals or having plenty but no one knows it. We need to know if it's issue of supply or access; needs more organization
- Healthcare providers who may not be busy may not be known to people who need them
- Outmigration – people using hospitals/doctors outside Morgan County
- Difficulties in getting people with no insurance and limited income into primary care
- Significant amount of outmigration for lab services.
- Need to understand why insurance rates are so high for Morgan County
- Need better referral system to guide people to services
- Better access to or use of resources like 211 to get referrals for services
- Lots of therapists but not enough who can legally prescribe drugs or mental care
- 211 only works if the information in 211 is good; need to be continually updated

Note: A lot of discussion about 211 – how it worked; if it worked; what it was; etc.

- All services need an integrated site; something to link them all together
 - Efficiency – time and money
 - Perception – quality
 - Several years ago a group put together a loose leaf notebook which was a resource (United Way funded it). However, as with most printed books, keeping it current was a challenge. A website version would be an improvement
 - Improve billing accuracy
 - Improve the hours the providers are available to see patients
 - Dental availability – help with costs

What health issues should the Horizon Council focus on?

❖ ***See flip chart notes***

- Preventative care
- Lack of marketing/advertising of available physicians
- Physicals, routine dental, and vision care

- Physicians accepting new patients. When formerly uninsured patients start seeking healthcare, our physicians will be overwhelmed more than they already are
- Suicide prevention

How could the healthcare system in Morgan County be more collaborative or better integrated?

- Coordination between the 2 hospitals; they should refer patients “in-town” whenever possible instead of sending them out
- Physicians also need to refer to “in-town” services.
- Combine resources like lab services and share medical records
- Electronic records – integrated information system
- Redundancy – do we have more than we need of some services/resources because of competition
- Medical records should be shared; create shared electronic medical records system
- This begs the question that they are currently integrated; I don’t know that they are integrated
- The hospitals need to provide complementary services, instead of competitive services. It is insane that we have 2 systems within the county; we only need one hospital system.

Any general advice for the Horizon Council members as they work together to develop a vision for healthcare in Morgan County?

- Keep at this. We can’t fix it overnight so please keep at it
- Is Wiggins represented on Council?
- Prioritize.
- Show community that you are making progress
- Identify some smaller successes, while you focus on the long range plan
- Include community members with different ethnic backgrounds – particularly Hispanic
- Centralized medical facilities in Morgan County, excluding emergency rooms
- Look at Grand Junction for shared electronic medical records system

❖ **Issues of Focus for the Council**

After issues were identified, participants were asked to “vote” on their suggested priority/priorities for the Council by placing 3 dots next to the issue(s) on the list.

<i>Suicide</i>	<i>6 votes</i>
<i>Consumer Awareness; 211</i>	<i>3 votes</i>
<i>Availability of providers; number of providers; after-hour care</i>	<i>15 votes</i>
<i>Outmigration</i>	<i>6 votes</i>
<i>Silos (groups, providers, facilities not working collaboratively)</i>	<i>7 votes</i>
<i>Insurance coverage and availability</i>	<i>5 votes</i>
<i>Oral health</i>	<i>4 votes</i>
<i>Quality of care; perception</i>	<i>10 votes</i>
<i>Health education</i>	<i>7 votes</i>
<i>Healthy Aging</i>	<i>10 votes</i>
<i>Recreation center</i>	<i>10 votes</i>
<i>Recruitment and retention of healthcare professionals</i>	<i>18 votes</i>