



KANSAS RURAL HEALTH WORKS

John Leatherman, K-State Research and Extension
Chris Tilden, KDHE Office of Local & Rural Health
Jane Faubion, KDHE Office of Local & Rural Health
Chad Austin, Kansas Hospital Association

Sponsored by Kansas Rural Health Options Project

Program Agenda

- Overview – progress to date
- Community concerns revisited
- Summary
- Open discussion
- Next steps...

Program Overview

- Help foster sustainable rural community health care system
- Community-driven process
- 5-6 one-hour working meetings over 5-6 months
- Emphasis is on development of information products
 - Economic impact of health care system
 - Health services directory
 - Community health care survey
 - Data and information reports
- Summary meeting at conclusion
 - Discuss tentative action plan at the final formal KRHW meeting

Preliminary Community Concerns

- What are the Major Health-Related Concerns in Trego County?
 - Lack of local dental practice
 - Lack of affordable health care
 - Children without health insurance
 - Need for better mental health services
 - Transportation for reoccurring treatment
 - Childhood obesity

Preliminary Community Concerns

- What needs to be done to improve the local health care system?
 - Determining to proper role for local government in providing health-related services
 - Address community recreation access (winter)
 - Address issues of catastrophic illness
- What are the Greatest Barriers to Achieving Health Care Goals?
 - Cost of technologies for diagnosis and treatment

Conclusions from Economic Impact

- Health services is a major economic driver and a “must have” service for economic viability
- Rural communities face major challenges in sustaining accessible, quality health services
- Sustaining health services won’t happen by itself; local people need to step up

Overall Conclusions from Data

- Population trends and income levels are creating challenges
- Accessing state/federal assistance is essential
- Community-based services for those elderly, alone
- Improvement needed in preventable problems – neonatal care, tobacco, alcohol, seatbelt use

Community Health Directories

- Trego County Health Services Directory
 - 39 pages of resources
 - 24 local health service providers
 - 29 local government, community and social service providers
 - 140 state and national service providers
- Distribution through primary care providers, pharmacy

Survey Conclusions

- Approximately 25%-35% of primary health care market “leaks” from the county
- Most who use local services are satisfied
- 50% employer insurance, 25% self-pay, 41% need government assistance, 5% w/o any
- 76% of Trego County residents use Trego Hospital services and are very satisfied
- 60% of T.C. residents believe more I&E needed on suicide prevention and most other topics

Action Strategies

- An overarching issue
 - hospital organization or finance
- Health services feasibility
 - market analysis; budget analysis
- General health environment enhancement
 - EMS recruitment & training; I&E initiatives

Action Strategies

- It only takes one person to start
- Multiple discrete initiatives
 - what issues can attract community passion?
 - who is available to network?
 - where are available resources?
 - near-term success builds long-term momentum
- It's up to you

Open Discussion

- Your impressions, reactions to the information provided?
- How satisfied are you with the direction of local healthcare trends?
- What can be done to improve the local situation?
- What do you care enough about to be willing to do something?