

City of Tacoma Mental Health and Chemical Dependency Assessment

**Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department's
Office of Assessment, Planning, and Improvement
Jan. 10, 2013**

Meet the Mental Health and Chemical Dependency (MHCD) Assessment Team:

- ❖ **Susan Pfeifer:** Project Manager and data collection;
- ❖ **Trish Coloma:** Qualitative data collection, data analysis and report writing;
- ❖ **Seema Untawale:** Epidemiologist, literature research, data collection and analysis;
- ❖ **Human Rights and Human Services Department:** Linda Bremer, Kim Dodds and David Stewart; and
- ❖ Other Health Department staff also contributed to the data collection.

2012 MHCD Assessment Process

Using guidance from the MHCD advisory group and the City of Tacoma Human Rights and Human Services staff, the assessment team used the following steps to identify MHCD needs, resources and gaps in services:

1. Reviewed and evaluated results of past assessments;
2. Conducted interviews and collected statistical data;
3. Reviewed and summarized the collected data;
4. Identified the common themes, gaps and resources;
5. Conducted literature searches to identify best practices; and
6. Reported findings.

How we organized and reported the data

City of Tacoma Demographics



MHCD Data/Information:
people, programs, and community impacts



Identification of Vulnerable Populations



Identification of Top Themes from all Data Sources:
qualitative, quantitative, and literature searches

Using the top community MHCD themes

Identification of Resources and Gaps




Determining Costs/Impact of Unmet Needs
(if data was available)



Identification of Best Practices and
Return on Investments

City of Tacoma MHCD primary themes

1. Lack of coordinated/integrated services among service silos
 2. Access to, and availability of, quality MHCD services and treatment
 3. Crime and incarceration among populations with MHCD needs
 4. Disparities in representation and in meeting needs
 5. Co-occurring (having chemical dependency **and** mental health issues)
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Providing snapshots of each theme

Theme			
Local resources to address issue and gaps in resources	Impact/costs of issue	Best practices and innovative approaches to address issue	Estimated ROI

Identification of vulnerable populations and reoccurring themes

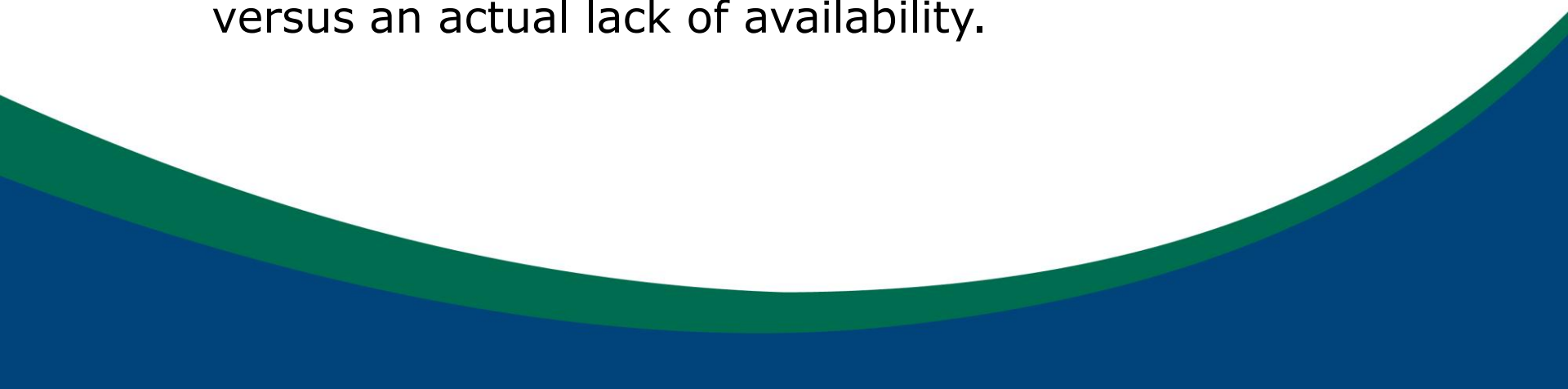
Vulnerable populations were identified as:


- Individuals experiencing homelessness
- Youth (ages 14 to 24)
- Military and veterans
- African Americans

Reoccurring themes across multiple groups:

- Individuals with co-occurring disorders; and
- Individuals experiencing homelessness

Conclusions

1. There were a number of reoccurring themes that emerged when summarizing the collected data.
 2. The assessment process identified several vulnerable populations who are at higher risk of either having mental health and/or chemical dependency issues or not having access to treatment services.
 3. There appeared to be a discrepancy between perceived lack of availability of MHCD resources versus an actual lack of availability.
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4. As is, the MHCD treatment and social service delivery system in the City of Tacoma is fragmented and does not currently provide a continuum of care approach, especially for vulnerable populations and those with co-occurring disorders.
 5. Many of the MHCD issues are cross-divisional, in that multiple service sectors are impacted or deal with the same MHCD issues (e.g., homelessness, youth in need of services, lack of collaboration, lack of services, and co-occurring disorders).
 6. Organizations that are involved with, or impacted by, individuals who have MHCD needs are key to further identifying system gaps and solutions to these gaps.
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Contact information

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