Friends of Newtown Seniors (FONS)
Roundtable

January 28, 2024, **Discussion Highlights** Newtown Senior Center

Community Health Needs

A small group of seniors met at the Senior Center to discuss a presentation on the Nuvance Healht Community Health Needs Assessment. The presenters were Dawn Myles, MS, MSN, RN, Vice President, Community Health and Kristin Kipp, Strategic Planning Data Analyst.

Nuvance Health conducts a rolling three-year community health needs process: Assessment, Planning and Plan implementation. The health system is now moving from assessment to planning. Ms. Myles and Kipp presented data that has been collected.

The slide presentation can be found on https://friendsofnewtownseniors.org/roundtable-meetings/

Newtown and Sandy Hook are in Danbury Hospital Primary Service Area (PSA). A PSA is defined group of zip codes from which a hospital draws most of their patients. For the PSA data was gathered from many sources including American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, CDC Places Report, County Health Rankings Report, Medicare Fee-for-Service Standard Analytic File, and their Community Health Experience Survey.

Some of the data collected at a town level is summarized below:

- 19.4% of the population in Newtown is aged 65 or older. This is a higher percentage than both the Sandy Hook (17.3%) and the Danbury Hospital PSA.
- The number of Healthcare Providers (per 10,000 people) in Newtown exceeds the National benchmark but falls short of the State benchmark. For the zip code of Sandy Hook, the number of Healthcare Providers per 10,000 people is below both the National and State benchmarks.
- Both Newtown and Sandy Hook have higher median housing costs (owner/renter) than the Nation and State.
- Both Newtown and Sandy Hook report a lower public transportation index compared to Nation and State.

Substantial data is collected at the county level

- Drug overdose death rates in Fairfield County are increasing but are below the National and State benchmarks.
- Alcohol driving deaths in Fairfield County are above both the State and National benchmarks.
- Suicide rates in Fairfield County are below both the National and State benchmarks.
- The prevalence in Medicare patients of the most common chronic diseases is slightly less than in Fairfield County and the state.
- The prevalence in Medicare patients of certain cancers (Breast, Colorectal, and Prostate) is higher than in Fairfield County and the state.
- The median annual income, while notably greater than the rest of Connecticut and the nation, shows disparities between White, Black, and Hispanic households in Fairfield County.

Data related to Health-Related Social Needs (HRSN) shows some arears that are worse in Newtown/Sandy Hook highlighted in **BOLD RED**. As in other data, Transportation is a problem in Newtown/Sandy Hook.

Measure Name	Answer	All Nuvance PSA	Danbury Hospital PSA	Newtown (n=353)	Sandy Hook (n=196)
Food did not last	Often True	1.0%	**0.9%**	**1.7%**	**4.7%**
	Sometimes True	3.5%	**2.9%**	**1.4%**	**0.0%**
	Never True	95.6%	**96.2%**	**96.8%**	**95.3%**
Worry food will run out	Often True	1.1%	**1.0%**	**1.8%**	**0.0%**
	Sometimes True	4.1%	**3.5%**	**2.1%**	**3.0%**
	Never True	94.8%	**95.5%**	**96.2%**	**95.3%**
Steady place to live	No	0.5%	**0.3%**	**0.3%**	**0.5%**
	Yes, but worried about losing it in the future	1.4%	**1.4%**	**1.5%**	**0.5%**
	Yes	98.1%	**98.3%**	**97.4%**	**99.0%**
Threat of utility shut off	Already shut off	0.0%	**0.1%**	**0.0%**	**0.0%**
	Yes	2.5%	**2.4%**	**2.3%**	**3.0%**
	No	97.5%	**97.5%**	**97.7%**	**97.0%**
Physical injury by another	Frequently	0.0%	**0.0%**	**0.6%**	**0.4%**
	Fairly Often	0.0%	**0.0%**	**0.3%**	**0.2%**
	Sometimes	0.1%	**0.1%**	**0.0%**	**0.0%**
	Rarely	0.2%	**0.2%**	**0.6%**	**0.6%**
	Never	99.6%	**99.6%**	**98.4%**	**99.4%**
Transportation barrier	Yes	2.3%	**2.3%**	**3.2%**	**2.6%**
	No	97.7%	**97.7%**	**96.8%**	**97.4%**

Last fall a Community Health Experience survey was conducted. 69 people form Newtown and Sandy Hook responded.

- The top health concerns for respondents and their families are access to healthcare (47.8%), care for the elderly (27.5%), cognitive impairment(26.1%), and mental health (24.6%).

- The top needs to improve the health of the community according to respondents are access to transportation (47.8%), affordable housing (44.9%), home care options (40.6%), and mental health services (31.9%).
- The top barriers identified by survey respondents that prevent them from obtaining needed healthcare are: lack of appointment availability (55.1%), lack of available healthcare clinicians/providers in the community (34.8%), and cost of care (13.0%).
- In addition to healthcare access, residents reported issues in areas such as utilities, transportation, housing, medicine, food, etc.

The group discussed challenges to health in Newtown which has been described as a "health desert"

- Transportation
- Time to get an appointment to see a provider
    - Health systems are actively trying to recruit physicians and other health providers to our area
    - There is a national shortage of physicians and other health providers
    - Health systems are looking to more midlevel providers (Physician Assistants, Nurses, etc.) and increasing what midlevel providers can do
- Housing becomes a challenge to health in the community