

**Community Health Needs Assessment Report  
Skagit County Public Hospital District No. 2  
DBA: Island Hospital  
Anacortes, Washington**

**Published December 19, 2013**



**Introduction**

Skagit County Public Hospital District No. 2 (DBA: Island Hospital) is the center for health and wellness in west Skagit County, also serving north Whidbey Island and the San Juan Islands since 1962. Recognized as one of the most innovative small hospitals in the U.S., and honored in 2006 as one of our nation’s “100 Top Hospitals” for performance improvement, Island Hospital is an integral part of the great quality of life on Fidalgo Island. Staffed by more than 190 physicians and healthcare providers, Island Hospital offers a quality and range of services typically found in a much larger facility. With 43 private beds, Island Hospital is one of the smallest hospitals in Washington providing Level III trauma care.

*Our Promise*

Your best healthcare experience begins at Island Hospital. We always place your emotional and medical needs first and foremost.

*Our Mission*

We will deliver quality, compassionate and personalized healthcare to the communities we serve.

*Our Vision*

Through collaboration with our physicians, staff and community we will develop innovative programs and provide medical services that enhance patient experiences and outcomes.

Our history began in 1958, when Skagit Public Hospital District No. 2 was founded. The first patients were admitted to Island Hospital in 1962. The hospital underwent significant expansion and/or renovations in 1990 (Emergency Department), 1996 (surgery, birth center and health resource center), 1998 (Medical Office Building), 2008 (renovation and expansion), 2009 (Sleep Wellness Center) and 2012 (Medical Arts Pavilion housing Cancer Care, Physical Therapy and Wound Care).

### *Services*

Island Hospital offers a full range of comprehensive medical services and support programs for your healthcare needs. Our medical staff is highly trained and specialized to provide the highest quality of care to our patients. In addition, as a commitment to the total well-being of each patient, Island Hospital offers a number of support programs to complement the medical services provided. Our Medical Services:

- Acute Care Nursing
- Birth Center
- Cancer Care
- Cardiac Rehabilitation
- Cardiology
- Critical Care Nursing
- Diabetes Education
- Diagnostic Imaging
- Emergency Services (Level III Trauma/Level II Stroke)
- Endoscopy
- Family Medicine
- Gynecology
- Home Health
- Infusion (Non-oncologic)
- Internal Medicine
- Interventional Radiology
- Laboratory
- Mental Health (outpatient)
- Neurology
- Nutritional services
- Obstetrics
- Occupational Therapy
- Ophthalmology
- Optometry
- Orthopedics
- Pastoral Care
- Pain Relief & Supportive Care
- Pediatrics
- Pharmacy (Inpatient)
- Pharmacy (Outpatient)
- Physical Therapy
- Plastic Surgery
- Prenatal Care
- Pulmonary Rehabilitation
- Pulmonology
- Respiratory Care (Inpatient & Outpatient)
- Sleep Medicine
- Speech Therapy
- Surgery (Inpatient & Outpatient)
- Teen Clinic
- Urgent Care
- Urology
- Wound Care (including Hyperbaric Medicine)

### *Honors*

Our goal at Island Hospital is to achieve the highest possible quality of care and continue to improve our patient, staff and physician satisfaction. Island Hospital will always work toward our highest levels of performance quality and safety. Island Hospital has won a number of awards for our quality of service, including the following in 2013:

- *Consumer Reports* ranked Island Hospital in the top ten of all Washington hospitals in their surgical-rating survey. The survey measured adverse effects suffered by surgical patients during hospital stays.
- Island Hospital Home Health received the HomeCare Elite designation based on patient-care performance measures. The HomeCare Elite honor is bestowed upon the top 25% of home-health agencies in the U.S.
- Our Nursing Department earned a Best Performance for Sustained Excellence Award from CALNOC, the Collaborative Alliance for Nursing Outcomes. The award recognized the Nursing Department for “reducing or preventing hospital-acquired conditions for two consecutive years (2011-2012).”
- Healthgrades 5-star rating for Outstanding Patient Experience.

Island Hospital is proud to be an accredited DNV hospital.

### *Other Facilities*



Island Hospital is the primary facility of Skagit County Public Hospital District No. 2, a government-owned Public Hospital District. Island Hospital operates seven family care clinics and seven specialty clinics offering a wide range of services to the communities we serve.

Family Care Clinics:

- Anacortes Family Medicine
- Fidalgo Medical Associates
- Island Prenatal Care Center
- Lopez Island Medical Clinic
- Orcas Medical Center
- Teen Clinic
- The Walk-In Clinic

Specialty Clinics:

- Center for Aesthetic, Reconstructive & Hand Surgery
- Island Surgeons
- Center for Pain Relief & Supportive Care
- Psychiatry & Behavioral Health
- Skagit Regional Clinics – Urology
- Sleep Wellness Center
- Wound Care & Hyperbaric Medicine

*Community Health Needs Assessment*

Island Hospital is pleased to submit this Community Health Needs Assessment. We do so both as a matter of compliance with Section 501(r)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, as mandated in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, and as an obligation to those we serve. As an organization, we have taken this change in law as an opportunity to improve our community service and continuously focus on meeting the changing health care needs of our community.

Consistent with the requirements of Section 501(r)(3), the Community Health Needs Assessment Report is organized as follows:

- Our Community
- Community Health Needs Assessment Methodology
- Prioritized Significant Community Health Needs
- Conclusion
- Appendices
  - I. Community Health Resources
  - II. Community Participation

## Our Community



Island Hospital is located in the city of Anacortes in Skagit County, Washington. However, we have historically defined our “community” as a broader area, including west Skagit County, north Whidbey Island and the San Juan Islands. Based on inpatient and outpatient usage in recent years, our primary service area includes the following zip codes:

- 98221
- 98232
- 98233
- 98239
- 98245
- 98250
- 98257
- 98261
- 98273
- 98277
- 98279
- 98280

Approximately 93% of our inpatient and outpatient usage is from individuals living within this primary service area. The additional 7% of our usage is from individuals living in the broader community as well as individuals vacationing near Anacortes. Throughout this document, all references to our community refer to these twelve zip codes.



One special aspect of our community is its location on Puget Sound. The San Juan Islands lie within a rain shadow cast by the nearby Cascade Mountains on the Olympic Peninsula. The result is that the islands receive approximately half of the annual rainfall of Seattle, which is only 80 miles south, and experience about 250 sunny days per year. Because of this, our coastal region and islands are a popular vacation destination and retirement area. In addition to the beautiful weather, the islands are relatively undeveloped and sparsely populated. The islands area primarily accessible by boat, although travel by plane or helicopter is also possible. For those who travel by ferry, the primary access location is Anacortes. The islands and coast are a sharp contrast to the inland community, including the relatively large city of Mount Vernon, whose economy is largely based on manufacturing and agriculture.

For demographic information, Skagit and San Juan Counties are a close approximation of our community. In 2010, the U.S. Census Bureau conducted the nation's most recent census and published that data by state, county and city. Similarly the Population Health Institute collects

and reports health data and demographic data by county on an annual basis. U.S. census data is as of 2010 while Population Health Institute data is as of 2013.

	<b>Washington</b>	<b>Skagit County</b>	<b>San Juan County</b>
Population	6,724,543	116,901	15,769
Age < 18	23.0%	23.2%	14.6%
Age 65+	13.2%	17.4%	26.3%
Female	50.1%	50.4%	51.5%
Caucasian	81.6%	91.3%	94.8%
African American	3.9%	0.9%	0.6%
American Indian	1.8%	2.7%	0.8%
Asian	7.7%	2.0%	1.4%
Hispanic	11.7%	17.3%	5.6%
Rural	16.0%	29.0%	100.0%
Median Household Income	\$58,890	\$55,555	\$51,395
Per Capita Health Care Cost	\$7,782	\$7,831	\$6,257
Uninsured Adults	19.7%	22.9%	21.4%
Children in Poverty	18.5%	22.6%	19.6%
Unemployment Rate	9.2%	10.1%	7.1%

San Juan County comprises the four largest of the San Juan Islands as well as many other smaller islands. As previously indicated, part of the islands' unique nature is their low population density and underdeveloped environment. Skagit County includes Anacortes on the western edge approximately 95 miles inland into the Cascade Mountains. While Skagit County has a much larger population than San Juan County, approximately half of that population lives in and around Mount Vernon, on the edge of our community. Because Skagit County Hospital District No. 1 (DBA: Skagit Valley Hospital) is based in Mount Vernon, many of the individuals in that area tend to utilize Skagit Valley Hospital as their primary healthcare resource.

Economically, both counties are fairly similar to Washington State, although Skagit County's unemployment rate is above the state average while San Juan County's unemployment rate is well below the state average. The employment disparity may relate to Skagit County's heavier reliance on manufacturing, which has been hit particularly hard by the economic downturn in the last decade.

While Skagit County's age distribution is similar to that of Washington State, San Juan County has significantly fewer youth and significantly more elderly individuals. This is likely due to San Juan County's popularity as a retirement area as well as its extremely rural nature that limits social, cultural and educational opportunities for youth.

Both counties have less cultural diversity than Washington State, especially in their African American and Asian populations. San Juan County also has a much smaller Hispanic population, although Skagit County's Hispanic population is greater than the state average. Finally, Skagit County also has a larger Native American population than the state average.

The Native American population in Skagit County is comprised primarily of three tribes—Samish, Swinomish and Upper Skagit—although the Upper Skagit Tribe is generally outside of our community. While the Swinomish and Upper Skagit Tribes each have a reservation that provides a geographic center for their culture, the Samish do not have a reservation. The Samish Tribe has struggled with the United States government in obtaining and maintaining its status as a Federally Recognized Tribe, which has impacted its ability to gather as a cultural group. From the Samish Indian Nation website:

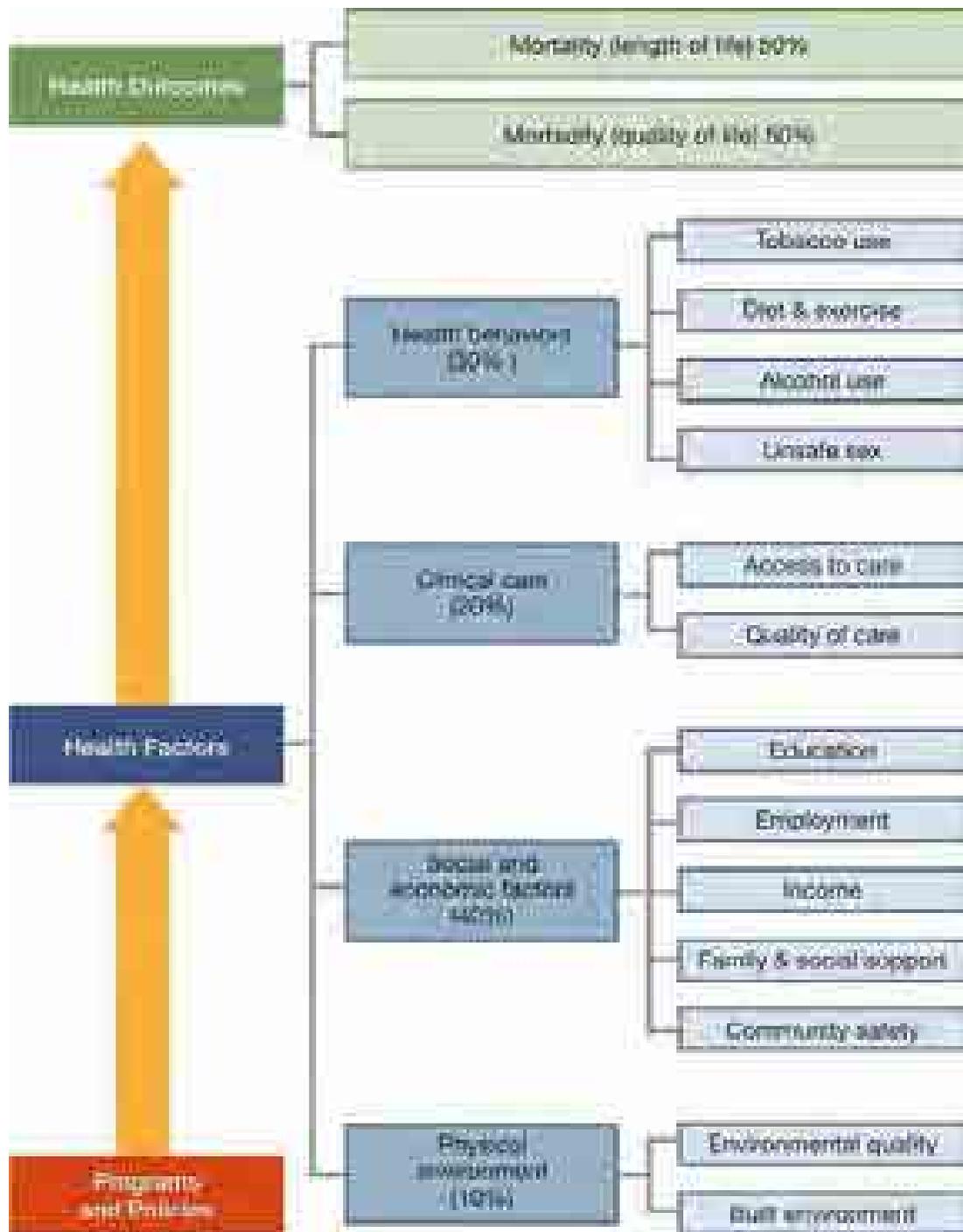
“[The] Samish’s status as a federally recognized Indian tribe was lost when through a clerical error in 1969 we were simply left off the list when the Bureau of Indian Affairs republished it. This is assumed to have been an oversight very similar to the one that again happened to the Samish in the late 1960’s when a BIA clerk left them off the list of Federally Recognized Tribes. It took over 26 year’s administrative and federal court proceedings to finally regain recognition for the Samish Indian Nation in April of 1996.”

Information about the tribes in our community is available online:

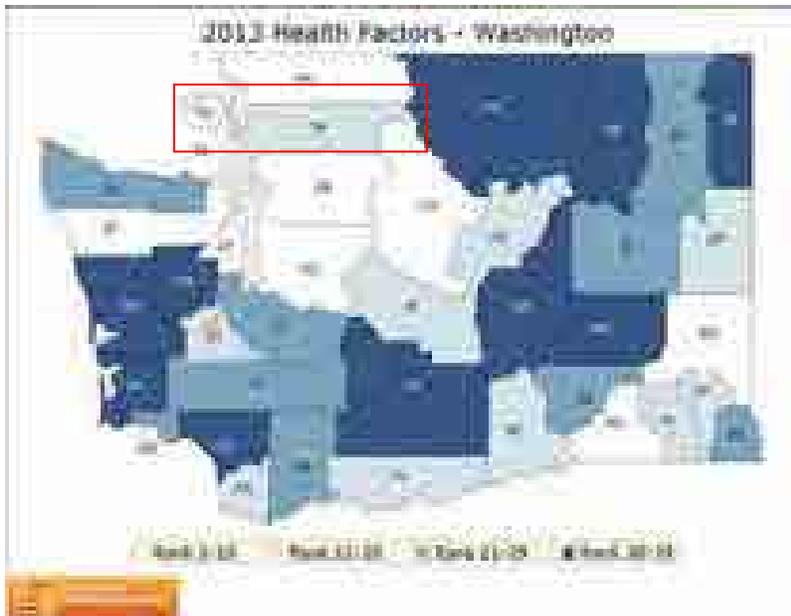
- Samish Indian Nation: [www.samishtribe.nsn.us](http://www.samishtribe.nsn.us)
- Swinomish Indian Tribal Community: [www.swinomish-nsn.gov](http://www.swinomish-nsn.gov)

The Hispanic population in our community tends to focus around Mount Vernon. This is likely related to the higher prevalence of agricultural work in that area as well. However, there is also a small Hispanic community on the San Juan Islands. The Hispanic community is comprised of both legal and illegal immigrants. The community also includes many individuals who speak fluent English and many individuals who speak little to no English. As indicated above, Skagit Valley Hospital tends to be the primary healthcare resource for the Hispanic individuals in that area.

The Population Health Institute (“PHI”) publishes annual health data for every county in the United States. The data is aggregated into *health outcomes* and *health factors*. The PHI separates health outcomes into mortality (length of life) and morbidity (quality of life). Health factors are separated into four factors that largely influence the health outcomes: physical environment, society and economics, clinical care, and health behaviors.



Source: University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute



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Source: University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute

In 2013, San Juan County’s health factors ranked 1<sup>st</sup> out of 39 counties in Washington and Skagit County’s health factors ranked 18<sup>th</sup>. In the same year, San Juan County’s health outcomes ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> while Skagit County’s health outcomes ranked 14<sup>th</sup>. The extremely positive rankings for San Juan County reflect the local culture of a natural, outdoor lifestyle. The islands are well known for this environment, so they attract individuals with a similar mindset.

Skagit County’s less positive rankings indicate that, relative to the islands, our inland residents are currently suffering from unhealthy historic behaviors, insufficient medical care, social factors and environmental factors. Because health factors lead to health outcomes, Skagit County’s

lower ranking in health factors indicates that those community members are likely to continue this pattern in the future unless we can make significant changes their health factors.

See Appendix I for a list of medical resources and similar locations currently available in our community.

### **Community Health Needs Assessment Methodology**

Island Hospital's executives led the planning, conduct and reporting of the community health needs assessment. We contracted with CliftonLarsonAllen LLP, one of the nation's top 10 certified public accounting and consulting firms, to assist with the community health needs assessment. A team of CliftonLarsonAllen experts assisted us through the community health needs assessment process, including:

- Identifying our community
- identifying individuals for interviews and conducting those interviews
- Assisting in understanding and prioritizing identified community health needs
- Drafting the Community Health Needs Assessment Report
- Assisting in making all information widely available to the community

We began by identifying our community based on inpatient and outpatient services by zip code. We then gathered both quantitative and qualitative data about the health needs of our community. Qualitative data was collected through interviews and small group meetings. Quantitative data included national, state and county health studies and our own records. All data was collected between October and December, 2013.

#### *Interviews*

In October and November 2013, we gathered qualitative information and perspectives on community health needs through one-on-one interviews and small group meetings with key community stakeholders. The primary goal of these interviews was to ascertain a range of perspectives on the community's health needs. We gathered information from the following specified groups within our community:

- People with special knowledge or expertise in public health
- Health officials from both San Juan and Skagit County health departments, as well as a Native American tribal health worker
- Representatives of medically underserved populations
- Representatives of low-income populations
- Representatives of minority populations

See Appendix II for a list of organizations and agencies that participated in our assessment process through interviews and small group meetings.

We believe the individuals qualify as representative of the minority, low-income and/or medically underserved groups because the nature of their work brings them into contact with

those groups on a regular basis. For many of the individuals, the nature of their occupation *requires* them to consider the special needs of the groups identified.

#### *Analytical Methods Applied*

We applied various analytical methods to the available data. During interviews and small group meetings, we asked participants for their input regarding both health needs and possible solutions to identified health needs. We analyzed the historic prevalence of various health issues in our community and compared those with county, state and national averages. Finally, we reviewed previously identified health priorities as identified by national, state and county health organizations.

#### *Process and Criteria for Prioritizing Identified Health Needs*

The executive leadership of Island Hospital determined our prioritization based on the consistency of indications by participants and its agreement with historic quantitative data, our mission, and preventative impact.

#### *Process and Criteria for Determining Significant Health Needs*

This report does not discuss every health need identified by community participants. Instead, it focuses on those needs that are deemed significant by Island Hospital’s executive leadership. We classified an identified need as significant if it was regularly identified as a concern by various community participants and if those qualitative assessments are supported by historic quantitative data.

### **Prioritized Significant Community Health Needs**

Based on our interviews and small group meetings, as well as reviews of hospital, county, state and national health data, we identified the following community health needs.

#### **Primary Health Needs:**

- Mental Health
- Substance Abuse

#### **Secondary Health Needs:**

- Access to Health Care
- Obesity

#### *Mental Health*

Mental health was identified consistently as a top priority by community participants. According to the Population Health Institute, Washington State’s average for “mentally unhealthy days” is 3.3 per month. San Juan County’s average is slightly better at 2.9 days per month, but Skagit County’s is worse at 3.8 days per month. Consistent with this, individuals in San Juan County expressed concern about mental health but consider it less of a problem. The individuals in San Juan County expressed more concern with being able to physically access mental health providers (see *Access to Health Care* below).

The mental health disparity between Skagit and San Juan Counties has many causes and factors, but some of the difference can be attributable to economic stress. Skagit County’s unemployment rate of 10.1% and percentage of children in poverty, 23%, are both above the state averages of 9.2% and 19%, respectively. Additionally, the culture of the San Juan Islands

encourages and somewhat necessitates a healthy lifestyle and routine. It may be that individuals with better mental and physical health tend to move to San Juan County while individuals with worse health issues tend to leave the area.

Many of our community's mental health concerns relate closely to access issues. According to the Population Health Institute, Washington State has a mental health provider ratio of approximately 2,500 people per provider (Psychiatrist, Psychologist, Clinical Social Worker, Psychiatric Nurse, Marriage & Family Therapist, or Licensed Professional Counselor). San Juan County's average is better at approximately 1,500 people per provider, but Skagit County's average is much worse at approximately 6,000 people per provider. In April 2010, the Skagit County Alliance for Healthcare Access (SCAHA), which includes Island Hospital, issued a Community Assessment Report based on interviews of 105 community stakeholders. Among its findings:

“Recent state budget cuts for behavioral health and chemical dependency services seem to have created much chaos in the community. Most interviewees expressed the opinion that there are really no services available at all anymore, or that what few services still exist have waiting lists that are so long there is no reason to even refer a patient. There were also concerns expressed about the quality of services available at some behavioral health providers. Emergency Departments, especially at Skagit Valley Hospital, see many patients with mental health crises that have very long lengths of stay while waiting for placement in an appropriate level of care, with some being discharged without appropriate placement. Finally, while public (Medicaid and county) funding does exist for some crisis and high level services, there is almost no availability of routine behavioral health services such as counseling and ongoing medication management for low income individuals.”

The community members we interviewed expressed similar concerns. Government budget cuts have caused and continue to cause significant down-sizing and/or termination of important programs. For many of these programs, research has proven that the costs that arise from lack of treatment (emergency medical care, incarceration, social damages, etc.) are far greater than the cost of maintaining the program. Additionally, community participants indicated an insufficient number of mental health providers, especially psychiatrists, in our area. Those who are available cannot keep up with demand, even for those with insurance and ability to pay, which leads to long wait times. One expert on the topic indicated that a psychiatrist in the area has a waiting list of nine months. Skagit Valley Hospital in Mount Vernon recently opened a 14-bed psychiatric unit but has been unable to fully utilize it because they can't staff it sufficiently. Additionally, the unit will not house children, adolescents or geriatrics.

Community participants expressed a desire for various additional services to serve individuals with mental health needs:

- Increased access to preventive care for mental health issues
- Additional follow-up after psychiatric evaluations
- Longer appointments that would allow professionals to determine root problems

- Transitional housing to help individuals work toward independent living
- Reach out to other medical providers to encourage greater collaboration in treating the health needs of individuals with mental health issues

### *Substance Abuse*

Substance abuse covers a broad range of health issues, including tobacco, alcohol, prescription drugs and illicit drugs. Although community participants did not indicate substance abuse as their highest concern, they did express concern for the significant negative consequences of substance abuse. Significant substance abuse in our community falls within several categories:

- Heroin
- Methamphetamines
- Alcohol
- Marijuana

Participants—including law enforcement officials, county health officials, social service workers and medical professionals—indicated concern over the prevalence of heroin and methamphetamines (“meth”) in our community. According to the Risk and Protection Profile for Substance Abuse Prevention in Skagit County, published in April 2013 by the Washington State Department of Social & Health Services:

- While the rate of arrests for drug law violators has remained fairly constant in the United States in the last decade and decreased in Washington State over the same period, the rate in Skagit County has increased from 3.8 arrests per 1,000 individuals in 2000 to 4.4 arrests in 2011.
- The number of adults receiving state-funded alcohol or drug treatment services has long been higher than the state and national average, but the rate has increased in Skagit County much faster over the last decade than either the state or national average.
- The rate of youth (ages 10-14) arrests for alcohol- or drug-related crimes is higher in Skagit County than either the Washington State or United States average. In 2010, Skagit County experienced 4.6 arrests per 1,000 youth, compared to 2.8 in Washington State and 2.0 in the United States. In 2011, the rate in Skagit County jumped to 8.4 while the state rate remained constant.
- Similarly, the rate of youth (ages 10-17) arrests for alcohol and drug violations is higher in Skagit County than either the Washington State or United States average. The arrest rate for alcohol violations have decreased in all three groups over the last decade while the drug arrest rate has increased in Skagit County.

According to Skagit County health officials, the United States Drug Enforcement Agency has identified Skagit county as a drug distribution corridor, primarily because of its location on Interstate 5 between Mexico and Canada.

Community participants indicated that meth and heroin use are approximately the same in our community although the long-term personal impact of meth use is much more severe than the personal impact of heroin use. The physical, mental and psychological damage caused by meth

and other synthetic drugs is simply worse than the damage caused by many other illicit drugs, including heroin.

In 2012, Washington became one of the first states to legalize the use of marijuana for recreational purposes. As a result, the use of marijuana in our community has increased. While marijuana use is generally less damaging than other drugs to an individual's mind and body, community participants expressed concern over the lack of education and general knowledge concerning marijuana use. For example, participants indicated that individuals, especially youth and young adults, may not understand how marijuana use may impact physical and mental capabilities. The lack of understanding could impact an individual's decision-making, choices about driving, and general level of use. In general, community members expressed a desire for increased education on the practical implications of marijuana use.

Community members also indicated that alcohol abuse is fairly common in our community across all demographics. Although San Juan County's health is generally better than the Washington and national averages, San Juan County ranked toward the bottom of Washington Counties in the percentage of adults who drink excessively (34<sup>th</sup> out of 39 counties) while Skagit County ranked 23<sup>rd</sup>. The Native American population appears to struggle even more in this regard. Given the various problems that are caused by alcohol—drinking and driving, depression, fights, abuse, etc.—the common occurrence of alcohol abuse was frequently expressed as a concern.

#### *Access to Care*

Our community members consistently indicated high satisfaction with access to healthcare in our community. In general, participants are happy with the number of hospitals, clinics, pharmacies and similar medical facilities in our area, as well as with the variety of specialists and services. This sentiment was also reflected in the SCAHA Community Assessment Report published in April 2010. However, a few significant exceptions currently exist that pose challenges for our community members. As previously discussed, access to mental health (see *Mental Health* above) and substance abuse (see *Substance Abuse* above) treatment is a concern.

For individuals living on the San Juan Islands, accessing healthcare is a significant concern. The access problems are primarily caused by the transportation limitations inherent to living on an island with no bridges to the mainland. Although helicopter and plane travel are possible for the wealthy, the primary method of transportation to and from the islands is by boat, with only one public transportation system available through the Washington State Department of Transportation. Ferries arrive at and leave Anacortes approximately once per hour with travel taking anywhere from 45 minutes to 2 hours, one way. Limitations on the number of vehicles necessitate arriving approximately 30 minutes early if you wish to bring a vehicle. The limited number of trips combined with the length of the ride each way means a single medical appointment frequently requires an entire day of travel; participants indicated that the fastest possible would be approximately half a day. For individuals with frequent medical appointments, such as physical therapy and radiology, the travel can be extremely stressful, demanding and possibly prohibitive.

In addition to the time requirements, the cost of travel can also be prohibitive for individuals living on the islands. A round-trip ticket from the islands to the mainland is approximately \$6 for youth and seniors and \$13 for adults. With a vehicle, a round-trip ticket is approximately \$35. For low-income individuals, the monetary cost of frequent trips can be extremely stressful and prohibitive. Each island has a local organization that can transport individuals by plane or private boat for emergencies and other limited medical situations. However, these organizations are not able to fill the demand for medical travel of San Juan County residents.

Each island has its own medical facilities and providers although specialist services tend to be very limited. The largest population in the San Juan Islands resides on San Juan Island in and around Friday Harbor, which enjoys several clinics and facilities. Recently, a small critical access hospital was opened in Friday Harbor to provide additional services to the community. San Juan Island residents expressed concern over increased costs when using the new emergency room at the hospital. The hospital has taken steps to alleviate the problem by opening a walk-in clinic.

### *Obesity*

Obesity, resulting from both poor nutrition and lack of physical activity, is a major problem in the United States and in Washington. According to the Washington Department of Health, in 2011:

- More than 2/3 of U.S. adults and over 1/4 of Washington adults were overweight or obese in 2009.
- Obesity rates were higher in populations with lower income and lower education.
- The obesity rate was highest in American Indian populations (44%), although the rate for Hispanics (32%) is also higher than the rate for Caucasians (27%).
- Although obesity rates were lower for children, the trend by race was consistent.
- Obesity rates were higher in Hispanic populations than in Caucasian populations.
- The highest prevalence of obesity is in adults ages 45-74, but the fastest growing group is adults ages 18-34.
- Since 1990, the percentage of obese adults has more than doubled from 10% to 27%.

According to the Washington State Department of Health, the obesity trends among the races “probably reflect a combined effect of differential access to health care and to social and economic opportunities, and experiences of racial discrimination, in addition to cultural and genetic factors.”

In the areas of diet and exercise, both San Juan and Skagit Counties rank favorable in Washington State: San Juan County is 1<sup>st</sup> and Skagit County is 8<sup>th</sup> out of 39 counties. As previously mentioned, San Juan County’s residents tend to live a healthier lifestyle. This is reflected in the lower obesity rate in San Juan County (19.2%) than in Skagit County (27.3%) or Washington State (27.4%). It is similarly reflected in the lower rate of physical inactivity in San Juan County (14.0%) than in Skagit County (17.8%) or Washington State (18.9%). However at a rate of 1-out-of-5, obesity is still a significant issue in San Juan County.

The high obesity rates in our community probably have many causes. In general, our society has trended over several decades towards more sedentary occupations and fast and convenient foods that may be less nutritious. Finally, obesity is impacted by genetics, over which we have little to no control.

Community members frequently expressed concern that we, as a community, are choosing a life of poor nutrition and physical inactivity, leading to an obese society. Our location between the Cascade Mountains and Puget Sound provides an abundance of outdoor opportunities, but community members may choose to not enjoy those opportunities. Similarly, although healthy eating opportunities are available in both grocery stores and restaurants, individuals may choose less healthy alternatives. Where healthy food is available, it is often bypassed in favor of less healthy choices. Community members feel that we, as a community, have adopted a culture of inactivity.



One likely factor in individual choice is cost. Healthy foods like fruits, vegetables and meats tend to cost more than carbohydrates and sugars. Similarly, healthy meals at restaurants tend to cost more than less healthy fast-food alternatives. The cost to participate in physical activities may also be a reason why individuals choose not to participate. Similarly, individuals may not feel they have the time to devote to physical activity as economic stress leads to increasingly longer workdays.

### *Special Concerns for Low-Income, Minority and other Medically Underserved Populations*

For all of the health needs identified above, the needs are more pronounced for our medically underserved individuals, including low-income individuals, Native Americans, Hispanics, the elderly and the young.

The Native Americans in our community have the same health needs and concerns as the rest of the community, but some of those needs are even more pronounced. We recognize that Native Americans in general, and those who live within our community, face special circumstances across all aspects of their lives, including health. The special health concerns include:

- Above-average rates of most diseases, including diabetes, heart disease and strokes
- High incidence of substance abuse including alcohol, tobacco and drugs
- High incidence of depression
- High incidence of obesity, coinciding with limited nutrition and physical activity

The Swinomish Tribe has many health resources exclusively available to tribal members in and around their reservation. Lacking a reservation, the Samish Tribe has enacted a variety of creative efforts to provide health and wellness resources to meet the diverse needs of their widespread membership through healthy lifestyle newsletters, wellness gatherings, an informative website and assisting eligible members with medical bills. While we will continue to work with our Native American partners in treating their health needs, we also recognize and applaud their efforts to treat their own needs.

The primary concern for Hispanic individuals is the ability to access healthcare for those who don't speak English. Community participants indicated general satisfaction with interpretive services and translated documents when they are needed.

As the statistics indicate, we have a large population of low-income individuals. Although this problem spans all demographics, two groups that particularly struggle are our Native American and elderly communities.

Low-income community members have the same health needs as others in our community, but they may face additional struggles in receiving effective and thorough health care. They face all of the same health risks—obesity, substance abuse, heart disease, diabetes, etc.—as other community members, but low-income individuals have fewer opportunities to receive treatment. For example, those who are uninsured, underinsured and low-income may not be able to receive regular preventive care, meaning small health problems may develop into major health problems. This is manifest by high usage rates of the E.R. by low-income individuals to treat problems that could have been more effectively prevented through a regular doctor's appointment at an earlier time.

Additionally, low-income individuals may struggle with the time required to receive effective healthcare if they are working longer hours or multiple jobs to make ends meet. The costs, both in dollars and time, of transportation are also likely to be more significant for low-income individuals. This may also exacerbate problems for children (or elderly individuals) that rely on low-income parents (or children) for assistance with medical issues.

With the economic downturn, individuals have less money available for prescriptions and non-emergency medical treatments. However, when preventive medical treatments are neglected, the result is an increase in emergency medical cases. Similarly, individuals have less money available for gas and transportation. Finally, working adults have fewer days off for the necessary travel and appointment time, either for themselves, their children or elderly family members.



Our community has an especially high prevalence of individuals age 65 and over—26.3% in San Juan County and 17.4% in Skagit County—compared to a state average of 13.2%. The large elderly population is primarily the result of two factors. First, our area is a popular retirement destination. Second, the struggling economy and high cost of living around the coast and islands means more younger adults have left the area than have moved in.

While our community has many facilities available to treat elderly individuals who ask for assistance, our community members are still concerned for the health and safety of our older residents. First, they are concerned for those individuals who are living independently and possibly unsupervised. These individuals face several challenges in remaining healthy. When an older individual lives alone, they may lack guidance concerning their medical needs or daily living needs. Transportation can also be problematic in our community, as discussed above related to access. Finally, health information is increasingly shared through Internet-based methods that older individuals may not utilize or have access to.

Second, community members are concerned that the increasing numbers of elderly individuals are quickly overwhelming the facilities and resources that currently exist. Participants indicated that our elderly population requires more home health services, delivery of meals, and more nursing home beds and facilities.

Besides the problems that specially trouble the elderly, they also suffer from many of the same problems as the rest of our community. The elderly may be receiving less routine medical care than they should. Depression is also an issue in the elderly, whether due to economic problems, loneliness, coping with the death of loved ones, or decline in standard of living. Obesity is common in the elderly, as are high blood pressure and lack of knowledge concerning proper healthcare.

The health issues facing adults, as discussed throughout this report, also apply to our children (birth to 17 years old). However, the children are even more of a concern because health decisions are frequently made by adults on their behalf and because our children are still developing their health habits that will impact the rest of their lives. Community members frequently expressed concern over whether parents are taking adequate care of their children's health needs. Specific problems identified were

- Parents struggling with substance abuse, which may lead to child neglect
- Stress and/or substance abuse that may lead to child abuse
- Uninsured and underinsured families that may postpone preventive care due to cost

### **Conclusion**

Island Hospital reached out to community participants in 2013 to identify those health needs that are viewed as most significant and highest priority by our community members. The health needs identified by participants were mental health, substance abuse, access to healthcare, and obesity.

We are committed to improving the health of our community, both in the short-term and in the distant future. We are developing an Implementation Strategy that responds to these health needs. We hope that our efforts, combined with those of government agencies, other nonprofits and local organizations, will lead to a healthier and happier community.

## **Appendix I Community Health Resources**

Island Hospital serves individuals in both Skagit and San Juan Counties. The Skagit County Public Health Department and San Juan County Department of Health and Community Services support our community members in numerous ways, including community health, mental health, substance abuse, violence prevention, child welfare, elderly services, veteran services and financial support. Each department can and should be used by residents as a primary resource when determining available services in their area. For a complete list of their activities, we recommend visiting their offices or websites:

### **Skagit County Public Health Department**

- 700 South Second, Room 301, Mount Vernon
- [www.skagitcounty.net/Common/asp/default.asp?d=Health&c=General&p=main.htm](http://www.skagitcounty.net/Common/asp/default.asp?d=Health&c=General&p=main.htm)

### **San Juan County Department of Health and Community Services**

- 145 Rhone Street, Friday Harbor
- [sanjuanco.com/health/](http://sanjuanco.com/health/)

In addition to governmental support, the following health care facilities and related organizations are currently available within our community.

### *Hospitals*

Island Hospital, located at 1211 24<sup>th</sup> Street in Anacortes is one of several hospitals in our community.

- Skagit Valley Hospital – 1415 East Kincaid Street, Mt. Vernon
- Peacehealth Peace Island Medical Center – 1117 Spring Street, Friday Harbor
- Whidbey General Hospital – 101 North Main Street, Coupeville
- Naval Hospital Oak Harbor – 3475 North Saratoga Street, Oak Harbor

### *Clinics*

- Anacortes Health Care – 1220 22<sup>nd</sup> Street, Anacortes
- Cascade Medical Group – 1019 24<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite B, Anacortes
- Fidalgo Medical Associates – 1213 24<sup>th</sup> Street, #100, Anacortes
- Fidalgo Island Walk-In Clinic – 1500 Commercial Avenue, Anacortes
- Sea-Mar Community Health Center – 1004 M Avenue, Suite 107, Anacortes
- Skagit Regional Clinic – Anacortes – 2511 M Avenue, Suite D, Anacortes
- Inter-Island Medical Center – 550 Spring Street, Friday Harbor
- Planned Parenthood – Friday Harbor Health Center – 535 Market Street, Suite E, Friday Harbor
- San Juan Healthcare – 689 Airport Center, Suite B, Friday Harbor
- North Whidbey Community Clinic – 1300 Goldie Road, Oak Harbor
- Skagit Regional Clinic – Oak Harbor – 275 SE Cabot Drive, Suite B, Oak Harbor

- Triwest Healthcare – 3475 North Saratoga Street, Oak Harbor
- Orcas Family Health Center – 1286 Mt. Baker Road, Eastsound
- Orcas Island Family Medicine – 33 Ulmer Street, Suite 5, Eastsound
- Orcas Medical Center – 7 Deye Lane, Eastsound
- Lopez Island Medical Clinic – 103 Washburn Place, Lopez Village
- Counseling and Health Center – 2500 East College Way, Suite 2, Mt. Vernon
- Mount Vernon Women’s Clinic – 111 North 17<sup>th</sup> Street, Mt. Vernon
- North Cascade Family Physicians – 2116 East Section Street, Mt. Vernon
- North Cascade Women’s Clinic – 125 North 18<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite A, Mt. Vernon
- Planned Parenthood – Mt. Vernon Health Center – 1805 East Division Street, Mt. Vernon
- Sea-Mar Behavioral Health Center – 1010 East College Way, Mt. Vernon
- Sea-Mar Community Health Center – 1400 North Laventure Road, Mt. Vernon
- Sea-Mar Mt. Vernon Healthcare for Homeless – 2426 East College Way, Mt. Vernon
- Skagit Island Orthopedic Center – 1401 South Laventure Road, Mt. Vernon
- Skagit Island Orthopedics – 217 South 13<sup>th</sup> Street, Mt. Vernon
- Skagit Regional Clinic – Mount Vernon – 1400 East Kincaid Street, Mt. Vernon
- Skagit Valley Hospital Regional Cancer Care Center – 307 South 13<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 100, Mt. Vernon
- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Mount Vernon Community-Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) – 307 South 13<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 200, Mt. Vernon

Our community also includes numerous specialty clinics serving various needs.

#### *Mental Health and Substance Abuse*

While the county health departments and many of the hospitals and clinics identified above provide mental health services and treatment for substance abuse, the following facilities are also available in our community:

- Dellamas & Associates – 1008 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite A, Anacortes
- Inside Passage Counseling – 619 Commercial Avenue, #26, Anacortes
- Northwest ESD 189 Program for Success – 1601 R Avenue, Anacortes
- Samish Indian Nation Wellness Program – 1809 Commercial Avenue, Anacortes
- Allied Counseling Services – 470 Argyle Avenue, Friday Harbor
- Compass Health – 520 Spring Street, Friday Harbor
- Island Assessment & Counseling – 520 East Whidbey Avenue, Suite 205, Oak Harbor
- Tri-Essence Care – 1121 SE Dock Street, Oak Harbor
- Island Psychiatric Services – 374 North Beach Road, #D4, Eastsound
- Orcas Island Prevention Partnership – 715 School Road, Eastsound
- Bitterroot Assessment and Counseling – 100 East College Way, Mt. Vernon
- Catholic Community Services – 320 Pacific Place, Mt. Vernon
- Community Mental Health Services – 1329 North Laventure Road, Mt. Vernon
- Compass Health – 1100 South 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Mt. Vernon
- North Sound Mental Health – 117 North 1<sup>st</sup> Street, #8, Mt. Vernon
- Phoenix Recovery Services – 1601 East College Way, Suite A, Mt. Vernon

- Samish Indian Nation Wellness Program – 1934 East College Way, Mt. Vernon
- Sea-Mar CHC – Mount Vernon Behavioral Health Center – 1010 East College Way, Mt. Vernon
- Shifa Health – 1103 Cleveland Avenue, Mt. Vernon
- Skagit Behavioral Health – 406 South 1<sup>st</sup> Street, #30008, Mt. Vernon
- Skagit Recovery Center – 1905 Continental Place, Mt. Vernon
- Skagit Valley Reach Center – 1413 East College Way, Mt. Vernon
- Sunrise Community Mental Health – 2500 East College Way, Mt. Vernon

#### *Pharmacies and Medical Equipment*

Although prescriptions and durable medical equipment are available through the community's hospitals and medical clinics, the following locations are also available:

- Accu-Med Services – 1601 R Avenue, Anacortes
- Medicap Pharmacy – 1415 Commercial Avenue, Anacortes
- Rite Aid Pharmacy – 1517 Commercial Avenue, Anacortes
- Safeway Food & Drug – 911 11<sup>th</sup> Street, Anacortes
- Walgreens Pharmacy – 909 17<sup>th</sup> Street, Anacortes
- A & H Stores – 210 Spring Street West, Friday Harbor
- Friday Harbor Drug – 210 Spring Street West, Friday Harbor
- Island Drug – 230 SE Pioneer Way, Oak Harbor
- Kmart – 32165 State Route 20, Oak Harbor
- Rite Aid Pharmacy – 31645 State Route 20, Oak Harbor
- Saar's Market Place Food & Drug – 32199 State Route 20, Oak Harbor
- Sav-On Pharmacy – 1450 SW Erie Street, Oak Harbor
- Walgreens Pharmacy – 31490 State Route 20, Oak Harbor
- Wal-Mart Pharmacy – 1250 SW Erie Street, Oak Harbor
- Lopez Island Pharmacy – 352 Lopez Road, Lopez Island
- Ray's Pharmacy – 68 North Beach Road, Eastsound
- Haggen Food & Pharmacy – 2601 East Division Street, Mt. Vernon
- Hilltop Pharmacy – 1223 East Division Street, Mt. Vernon
- Rite Aid Pharmacy – 242 East College Way, Mt. Vernon
- Safeway Food & Drug – 315 East College Way, Mt. Vernon
- Valley Compounding Pharmacy – 221 South 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Mt. Vernon
- Wal-Mart Pharmacy – 2301 Freeway Drive, Mt. Vernon

#### *Skilled Nursing, Assisted Living, Nursing Care and Retirement Facilities*

- Fidalgo Care Center and Rosario Assisted Living – 1105 27<sup>th</sup> Street, Anacortes
- San Juan Rehab & Care Center – 911 21<sup>st</sup> Street, Anacortes
- Blossom House Adult Family – 135 Marguerite Place, Friday Harbor
- Gentle Joy Services – 105 Grover Street, Friday Harbor
- Life Care Center of San Juan Islands – 660 Spring Street, Friday Harbor
- October House Adult Family Home – 520 Hemlock Court, Friday Harbor
- Village At the Harbor – 543 Spring Street, Friday Harbor

- Hamlet House – 273 Village Road, Lopez Village
- Ashley Gardens – 3807 East College Way, Mt. Vernon
- The Bridge At Mount Vernon – 301 South Laventure Road, Mt. Vernon
- Life Care Center of Mount Vernon – 2120 East Division Street, Mt. Vernon
- Mira Vista Care Center – 300 South 18<sup>th</sup> Street, Mt. Vernon
- Mountain Glen Retirement Community – Mt. Vernon

## **Appendix II Community Participation**

Island Hospital would like to thank the following governments, agencies and organizations for their input and participation in our community health needs assessment:

- Skagit County Public Health Department
- San Juan County Department of Health and Community Services
- Samish Indian Nation
- The City of Anacortes
- Anacortes School District
- Lopez Island Medical Clinic
- Island Family Physicians
- Island Hospital employees