

A Health Needs Assessment Study of the Minority Population in Floyd County

by the

Indiana Minority Health Coalition

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May 2005

Executive Summary

This report presents results of a comprehensive community health needs assessment for minority populations in Floyd County, directed by the Indiana Minority Health Coalition with technical assistance from the Indiana University Bowen Research Center. Initial project planning activities began in 2003, with most of the data collected in 2004. The purpose of this needs assessment study was to:

- Perform a comprehensive, community-based health needs assessment of minority populations in Floyd County
- Identify the real and perceived health-related issues of minority groups across age, gender, socio-economic, and geographic categories
- Examine the wide spectrum of factors impacting the health and well being of the minority populations in Floyd County
- Identify opportunities and initiatives to better meet the health needs of the minority populations

Data for the health needs assessment were collected from existing data containing health indicators, targeted population surveys, focus groups, and key informant surveys.

Existing data from birth and death certificates were gathered and analyzed for minority groups. The analysis of these existing data for Floyd County indicated that disparities exist by race and ethnic group. It also revealed that most rates need to be improved to meet the Healthy People 2010 Objectives.

Targeted surveys were developed and administered to 104 local residents in a variety of settings (i.e. churches, community centers, ethnic food markets, grocery stores, health fairs, neighborhood events, and retail stores) to obtain community input on important health issues, needs, values, and beliefs. The results from the surveys highlighted that Blacks perceive high blood pressure/stroke, diabetes, cancer, heart disease, and substance abuse as part of the top five worst health problems in their neighborhood. These results indicated that eighteen percent of Blacks indicated they had difficulty obtaining the services of a doctor, nurse or other health professional in the past year. For Blacks, the top five barriers attributed to accessing healthcare included: lack of insurance, lack of money, had to wait too long for an appointment, medical care not covered by insurance, and no transportation available.

Local residents from selected minority populations with an understanding of significant needs, solutions, and expectations were identified to participate in key informant interviews. Results from key informant interviews highlighted that the most frequently noted barriers to accessing healthcare encountered by minority residents in Floyd County were: personal economic barriers, system improvement, provider behavior, and consumer awareness of services. Additionally, the findings provided information on what some minority residents of Floyd County perceive as ways to improve both healthcare access and health status. Suggestions for improving healthcare access and/or health status for minority residents included: improve education and linguistic communication, improve personal economic barriers, and change personal behaviors.

It is hoped that the findings in this report will provide the catalyst to bring communities together to discuss existing differences in health indicators and ultimately to better develop strategies to reduce them so that all Floyd County residents can achieve the highest possible level of health status. In addition, this report can be used by policy makers, providers and program administrators to focus interventions on those areas that are of most concern to the minority population.