Cameron Foundation
Service Area
Health Needs Assessment

Forces of Change:
Dinwiddie

THE
CAMERON
FOUNDATION

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The Forces of Change Assessment (FOCA) identifies trends, factors, and events that are occurring or will occur that affect the health and quality of life of the community or the effectiveness of the local public health system.
- Trends are patterns overtime
- Factors are discrete elements of a community
- Events are one-time occurrences

This report summarizes the FOCA in Dinwiddie County, Virginia that occurred on Friday, October 13, 2017 with a diverse group of community stakeholders. The forces are grouped into the categories: Legal and Political, Health Factors, Access to Care, Environmental, Cultural and Economic, Social, and Education. This assessment was facilitated by Karen Cameron, an Independent Healthcare and Strategic Planning Consultant, recorded by Khalida Willoughby, Population Health Trainer with the Virginia Department of Health, and organized by Valerie Liggins, Program Officer with the Cameron Foundation.

FOCA participants responded to the following questions:

i. What is occurring or might occur that affects the health of the community or the local public health system?
ii. What are specific threats or opportunities generated by these occurrences?

The findings compiled into the attached report represent a comprehensive matrix of key forces and their associated impact upon the health of the Dinwiddie community. Those forces that appeared to be particularly significant include:
- Health policy changes and cuts to human services programs, particularly at the Federal level, and the impact on local budgets, and consequently needed services
- The current strengths of the local educational system and recreational assets and the opportunities presented by these community assets
- Growing impact of substance abuse and mental illness on the community
- Geographic and social isolation and the role increased communication and collaboration represents in addressing these

The information gathered from the FOCA is an important component of the Community Health Assessment Process (CHA). The findings in this report, in conjunction with the results from other assessments, will identify key strategic issues and priorities for community health improvement.

2017 Forces of Change Assessment, Dinwiddie County, Virginia
**Strengths**
- County leadership supports health & fitness
- Long-term, stable County leadership
- Safe environment
- Dinwiddie County financially supports recreational services at a proportionally higher rate than other localities

**Weaknesses**
- Public policy restricts or complicates access to services to low-income areas and seniors
- Lack of special education funding
- Ethnic minorities have difficulty navigating services

**Opportunities**
- Recognition of the need for other language access for ethnic groups
- Engagement of Medical Corps volunteers at the health department

**Threats**
- Limited access to health insurance by working poor
- Growing opioid crisis
- Cuts to federal funding
**Strengths**
- Community communication platforms exist to target messaging regarding health

**Weaknesses**
- Few medical providers and no specialists
- Limited health knowledge of services to access
- Limited adolescent behavioral health and substance abuse services

**Opportunities**
- Increase use of free or limited cost recreation
- Faith communities explore the use of lay health workers
- Use existing communication platforms

**Threats**
- Not enough attention focused on the health outcomes of younger populations
- Opioid crisis in neighboring counties
**Access to Care**

**Strengths**
- County has a Federal Qualified Health Center
- County has dedicated private practice community doctors

**Weaknesses**
- Aging healthcare providers
- Lack of transportation
- Limited behavioral health providers & services
- Lack of dental health providers
- Uninsured using EMS and school nurses for care
- Lack of advocacy around public health issues

**Opportunities**
- Expand existing medical practices
- Expand broadband for telemedicine use
- Recruit physicians

**Threats**
- Federal health insurance policy may increase cost with the elimination of subsidies
- Lack of public transportation for seniors and low income populations

2017 Forces of Change Assessment, Dinwiddie County, Virginia
**Strengths**
- Emergency preparedness is in place
- Relatively low residential housing costs
- Lots of available land

**Weaknesses**
- Lack of affordable and available transportation
- Limited broadband services
- Lack of diversity of housing options
- Large, dispersed county
- Lack of resources for mental health services (especially for adolescents)

**Opportunities**
- Behavioral health resources for prevention and treatment from D19 CSB
- Expansion of broadband
- Housing availability options

**Threats**
- Opioid epidemic
**Strengths**
- Youth Workforce development program
- Stakeholders aware of community needs
- Low tax rate
- Small town atmosphere
- Amazon distribution center offers a good source for jobs

**Weaknesses**
- Most job opportunities don't pay living wage
- Health is not valued or a priority because of lack of education
- A lot of "working poor" not eligible for services and have few resources
- Limited services and education for Spanish speaking populations

**Opportunities**
- Financial education for kids and parents
- Opportunities for employment and economic growth through business industries and workforce development
- School and business community partnership to improve youth employment pipeline

**Threats**
- Substance abuse is a major barrier to employment
- Need for additional local funding for special education
- County could have difficulty retaining people of different cultures
**Force SOCIAL**

**Strengths**
- Recreation centers do good outreach
- Relatively safe
- Welcoming atmosphere
- "Can do" attitude toward addressing needs / collaborative partnerships are goal oriented
- Robocall system reaches citizens effectively

**Weaknesses**
- Social isolation of older and rural populations
- Large land area makes communication difficult

**Opportunities**
- Expand outreach of recreation programs
- Tap into volunteers to address school and county needs
- Continue to find methods to increase communication
- Providers work with EMS to address social isolation issues
- Engage faith community to work collectively to improve health outcomes

**Threats**
- Age related social isolation
- Opioid epidemic

2017 Forces of Change Assessment, Dinwiddie County, Virginia
**Strengths**

- Collaboration between community agencies
- Identifying and providing support for vulnerable kids that may be at risk of dropping out of school
- A lot of federal funding for programs and services at elementary level
- Good education system that attracts families to the area
- Strong athletic programs at school system

**Weaknesses**

- Limited early childhood experiences for young children
- Special education funding is not keeping pace with the need
- Reliance on school nurses for medical care and diagnosis
- Loss of career coaches who were a benefit to the schools

**Opportunities**

- Collaborate with D19 CSB to address opioid/substance abuse through education programs
- Collaboration with Smart Beginnings to increase grant funding
- Collaborate with John Tyler Community College (JTCC) to reinstate job/career coaches
- Tap into volunteers (retired teachers) to address needs

**Threats**

- Lack of understanding of health prevention as a priority
- Kids dropping out of school
- Ability to attract and retain quality teachers
- Use of provisional teachers due to teacher shortage

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2017 Forces of Change Assessment, Dinwiddie County, Virginia
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