



**Human Services System**

# The 2015 Human Services Needs Assessment

## *Summary of Findings: Community Outreach Information*

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The 2015 Human Services Needs Assessment is being conducted using a variety of data sources to include demographic and programmatic data as well as environmental and service trends. As part of the 2015 Human Services Needs Assessment data collection process, information was gathered from community members to capture feedback about their perception of needs within the community. A summary of the findings is outlined below.

### **Overview of Community Outreach Strategies**

Outreach for the Human Services Needs Assessment occurred through a variety of different mechanisms and locations throughout Fairfax County. General outreach was conducted using an online survey, manual surveys, focus groups, community meetings and interviews. Targeted outreach was conducted to include feedback from diverse populations and specific stakeholder groups. Through these efforts, over 2,000 responses were received. Information from the community outreach effort will be incorporated in the needs assessment report to acknowledge opinions shared by some community members. This information is helpful to understand community perceptions as we simultaneously analyze demographic, environmental and programmatic data. Perception data is important because it gives us perspective on what people believe, which can have a significant impact on community actions and activities. It provides information about what is happening in the environment around our system and allows us to compare this information to more definitive data points.

In addition to the community outreach effort, information from various recent initiatives across the county will be incorporated in the report. Many of them involved a community input process as well.

### **Overview of the Top Human Services Needs Identified and Their Most Affected Populations**

An overview of the top human services needs and their most affected populations as identified during the community outreach effort are summarized below. While it is recognized that many of these needs impact a variety of populations, the groups identified as most affected within each particular need characteristically experience a greater impact due to additional challenges.

➤ **Behavioral Health Services**

*Most affected populations identified:*

- Immigrants
- Younger adults and teens (especially those from immigrant families where children were separated from their parents for extended periods of time)
- Veterans
- Older adults
- Individuals with disabilities
- Families affected by domestic or sexual violence
- Homeless
- Incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals

➤ **Affordable Housing**

*Most affected populations identified:*

- Older adults
- Single parents
- Low-income residents
- Individuals with disabilities
- Families affected by domestic or sexual violence
- Children and youth
- Individuals with mental illness or substance use disorders

➤ **Case Management (to include the assessment, planning, coordination, and monitoring of an individual seeking or receiving services)**

*Most affected population identified:*

- Any population seeking assistance

➤ **Food Assistance/Emergency Financial Assistance**

*Most affected populations identified:*

- Low-income residents
- Older adults

➤ **Affordable Medical Care/Health Services**

*Most affected populations identified:*

- Children with intellectual and physical disabilities
- Low-income residents
- Older adults

➤ **Childcare and After-School Programs**

*Most affected populations identified:*

- Young families
- Single parents
- Families that include children with intellectual and physical disabilities

➤ **Other notable needs identified:**

- In-home services
- Employment assistance
- Assistance surrounding domestic violence matters
- Transportation for older adults and for children to after-school programs
- Specific needs of immigrant populations and non-English speakers

## Overview of Community Outreach Findings by Specific Activity Conducted

The following information summarizes findings from the specific outreach tools conducted as part of the 2015 Human Services Needs Assessment initiative. The mechanisms used to support these outreach efforts involved the administration of an online survey, the utilization of the Meetings On-the-Go Tool, and the facilitation of public forums and focus groups. Each effort and their outcomes are detailed below.

### ➤ **Online Survey**

An online survey was conducted requesting that individuals identify the top three needs facing Fairfax County residents. Residents, non-profit service providers, businesses, representatives from private and public schools, individuals serving on advisory boards and commissions, and faith organizations responded. The individuals using this tool identified the following as the top human services needs and their most affected populations:

#### ➤ **Affordable Housing**

*Most affected populations identified:*

- Families affected by domestic or sexual violence
- Children and youth
- People with serious mental health or substance use disorders

#### ➤ **Behavioral Health**

*Most affected populations identified:*

- Older adults
- Individuals with intellectual or physical disabilities
- Families affected by domestic or sexual violence

#### ➤ **Case Management**

*Most affected populations identified:*

- Families affected by domestic or sexual violence
- Children and youth
- Older adults

#### ➤ **Accessible Housing**

*Most affected populations identified:*

- Individuals with intellectual or physical disabilities
- Older adults

➤ **Meetings On-the-Go Tool**

The Meetings On-The-Go Tool was made available for groups interested in providing input on this effort. The tool was a pre-designed packet of materials that were used to help groups of all sizes and interest facilitate discussions about human services needs facing Fairfax County residents. Examples of groups who responded include individuals who are currently participating in a network, commission, committee, board, or club. The individuals using this tool identified the following as the top human services needs and their most affected populations:

➤ **Affordable Housing**

*Most affected populations identified:*

- Older adults
- Low-income residents
- Individuals with intellectual or physical disabilities

➤ **Food Assistance**

*Most affected populations identified:*

- Older adults
- Low-income residents

➤ **Behavioral Health Services**

*Most affected populations identified:*

- Younger adults and teens

➤ **Childcare and After-School Programs**

*Most affected populations identified:*

- All youth

➤ **Public Forums**

A series of four forums, open to the public, were conducted to gather insight and recommendations from county residents. The individuals participating in these events identified the following as the top human services needs and their most affected populations:

➤ **Affordable Housing**

*Most affected populations identified:*

- Older adults
- Low-income, working poor, and minimum-wage residents
- Immigrants and undocumented workers
- Single parent households
- Younger generations

➤ **Behavioral Health Services**

*Most affected populations identified:*

- Incarcerated and formally incarcerated individuals

- Older adults
- Youth
- Homeless
- Immigrants
- Veterans

➤ **Case Management**

*Most affected populations identified:*

- Any population seeking assistance

The top locations identified as most affected include:

- The Bailey's Crossroads area
- The Route 1 corridor near Southern Alexandria
- Seven Corners area in Falls Church
- Locations in the county that are in close proximity to D.C.
- Areas near metro stations
- Areas where there is little to no affordable housing nearby

Other notable needs identified:

- Emergency financial assistance
- Affordable medical care
- In-home services

➤ **Focus Groups**

Several focus groups were held across the county for residents who are currently receiving assistance or had previously received assistance from the county. The individuals participating in these discussions identified the following as the top human services needs:

➤ **Affordable Housing**

- Specifically, individuals are experiencing a variety of alternate needs primarily due to high housing costs dominating their budgets.

➤ **Behavioral Health Services**

- Specifically, individuals experiencing both domestic violence and behavioral health needs.

➤ **Case Management**

- Specifically, individuals having difficulty being able to connect to services or connect to the correct service seamlessly.