

DRAFT REPORT

City of Everett Findings from the Snohomish County Community Needs Assessment

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RESPONDENTS: WHO ARE THEY?

Gender and age

Survey respondents were more likely to be female (74%) than male (25%). Most respondents were between the ages of 25 and 64 (82%) with a median age of 44.

Sexuality

Eight percent (8%) of respondents identified themselves as gay, lesbian, bisexual or questioning.

Household composition

When asked to tally the number of people in their household by age group, just under half of respondents (44%) said there were youth under age 18 living in their home. One-fifth (19%) counted at least one member of the household age 65 or older.

Forty-three percent (43%) of respondents identified themselves as a single person household. One-fifth (20%) represented two-parent households and a similar figure represented one-parent households (23%). See Figure 1.

Figure 1. Which of the following best describes your household?

N=398

Race, ethnicity and language

Seventy percent (70%) of respondents identified as white. Sixteen percent (16%) identified as Hispanic and 12% were African American.

Figure 2 Race and ethnicity

N=396; Respondents could provide multiple answers, may total more than 100%

The large majority of respondents said they typically speak English at home (79%). Nine percent (9%) said they speak Spanish at home and 5% said they speak Russian or Ukrainian. Other languages represented by at least half a percent included Arabic and ASL.

Figure 3. Language usually spoken at home

N=397

Household location and duration of residence in Snohomish County

Respondents were asked how long they have lived in Snohomish County. Responses ranged up to 83 years, with a median of 43 years of residence. Table 2 shows that 23% of respondents were relative newcomers, having lived in Snohomish County for less than five years.

Table 2. How long have you lived in Snohomish County?

Duration of residence in Snohomish County		
	n	%
<5 years	90	23
5-19 years	160	41
20+ years	145	37

N=395

Respondents were asked for their city and zip code. Any respondents who referenced Everett were included in this analysis, regardless of how they responded to zip code. The largest segment said they live in the 98201 area.

Figure 4. Where do you live now?¹

N=385

Veteran status

Eleven percent of respondents (11%) reported either themselves or someone in their household has served in the military.

¹ Any respondents who referenced Everett were included in this analysis, regardless of zip code.

Prior foster care

Sixteen percent of respondents (16%) reported either themselves or someone in their household has ever been in foster care.

Disabilities

Fifty-seven percent of respondents (57%) reported either themselves or someone in their household having a disability.

FINDINGS

COMMUNITY SERVICES ASSESSMENT

Survey respondents rated both the importance and the availability of 20 categories of community-based services to their own household. This section of the report presents the consumer perspectives as a method of analyzing local low-income service gaps.

Importance of services

The services rated as most important to respondent households included services related to housing (affordable housing/rent assistance), medical care, dental care and food (help getting enough food).

Figure 5. Proportion of respondents who rated service categories as *extremely important* to them

The number of respondents who provided importance ratings ranged from 364 to 396

Availability of services

The services rated as most difficult to access included legal help, housing, and dental care.

Figure 6. Proportion of respondents who rated service categories as *very hard to get*

The number of respondents who provided availability ratings ranged from 177 to 362. The discrepancy between the number who provided importance ratings and the number rating service availability can be explained by people who responded *don't know*, likely because they have not tried to access them or do not know others who have tried to access the services.

Service gap analysis using importance-availability coordinate system

Because survey respondents rated these services on a five-point scale², another way to analyze the data is to calculate the average importance and availability scores for each service area. These data form the basis of an “importance-availability” coordinate rating system (Figure 7). The average importance and availability ratings were calculated and plotted on graphs. The lines making up the crosshairs of each graph represents the average importance score and the average availability score for the survey respondents that are represented.

The importance-availability charts are divided into quadrants that rate the services as follows:

Quadrant A: Above average importance and below average in availability

Quadrant B: Above average in importance and availability

Quadrant C: Below average in importance and availability

Quadrant D: Below average in importance and above average in availability

Individuals and organizations planning for future services may want to pay attention to the services that appear in the upper left quadrant (Quadrant A) of the graphs. These are services that are both more important than average, yet most challenging to access.

² Importance scale: Five points, ranging from *Extremely important* to *Not important*
Availability scale: Five points, ranging from *Very easy to get* to *Very hard to get*

Seven areas of service appear to be high priority service areas across the general population of low-income households surveyed:

- Affordable Housing/rent assistance³
- Dental care
- Food (help getting enough food)
- Help getting/keeping benefits (Social Security, TANF, Medicaid, SNAP etc.)
- Help with heating or electric bills
- Transportation that meets my needs
- Mental health services or counseling
- Services for individuals with disabilities

Help with basic finances and budgeting fell on the cusp. While it was rated below average in availability, it was rated as average importance among the various service areas.

Figure 7. Perspectives on low-income service importance and availability

³ Gap analysis comparing EHA respondents to non-EHA respondents. Housing tops the list in importance for both segments of the survey population but is perceived as harder to get for respondents who were not EHA clients.

The gap analysis was also conducted with the surveys from respondents with at least one senior (age 65+) living in the household. Figure 8 shows that among these households, the following four service areas fall into quadrant A, indicating they are service areas of high importance and low availability for seniors:

- Affordable Housing/rent assistance
- Dental care
- Senior services
- Medical care
- Help with heating or electric bills
- Services for people with disabilities
- Transportation
- Basic finance
- Legal help

Figure 8. Perspectives on low-income service importance and availability among households with seniors

The number of respondents with seniors in the household who provided importance ratings ranged from 64 to 73. The number who provided availability ratings ranged from 15 to 62. The discrepancy between the number who provided importance ratings and the number rating service availability can be explained by people who responded *don't know*, likely because they have not tried to access them or do not know others who have tried to access the services.

Respondents were presented with a list of common barriers to accessing services and asked to identify which (if any) barriers had posed a problem. Over half (62%) picked at least one barrier from the list. The top barrier identified was lack of a computer (35%), followed by transportation (27%).

Figure 9. Do you or anyone in your household have difficulty accessing services for any of the following reasons?

N=380; Respondents could provide multiple answers, may total more than 100%

Thirteen percent (13%) of respondents said they have experienced discrimination when receiving services. Another 13% were not sure if they have.

Figure 10. When receiving or trying to receive services in the past three years, have you or anyone in your household experienced discrimination due to language, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or gender identity?

N=401

HOUSING

When asked about current living arrangements, the largest portion of respondents said they were living in rental housing (75%). Seven percent (7%) identified themselves as homeless, either with or without shelter and another 6% indicated that they were sharing with another household (doubling up).

Figure 11. Which best describes the place where you are living this week?

N=403

It should be noted that 40% of Everett respondents were recruited to participate from the Everett Housing Authority, which means they may be somewhat over-represented in the sample. Analysis noted that among respondents recruited by the Everett Housing Authority (n=159) 94% were in rental housing compared to about 62% of respondents recruited through other types of services. Their high rate of housing access drives up the proportion of respondents reporting rental housing.

Respondents were asked how often they have needed to choose between paying rent and paying for other basic needs. Just under one-third said this was something they face every month (32%). The same proportion said they have not had to make this choice in the past 12 months, or they were not sure.

Figure 12. In the last 12 months, how often did you have to choose between paying rent/mortgage and paying for other basic needs (like food, medical care, or transportation)?

N=403

Respondents were presented with a list of potential housing struggles and asked to identify which (if any) their household had experienced in the past year. Forty-five percent identified at least one challenge. The most common challenges were receiving a shut-off notice for utilities (17%), sharing housing with another person/household in order to make it affordable (15%), and receiving a three day notice to pay or vacate (15%).

Figure 13. In the last 12 months, have any of the following things happened to your household?

N= 393; Respondents could provide multiple answers, may total more than 100%

EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME

Just over one in five of people surveyed indicated that they are unemployed due to a disability and are not seeking work (21%). A slightly smaller proportion are unemployed and seeking work or employed full time (both 17%).

Figure 14. Which of the following best describes your employment status?

N= 402; Respondents could provide multiple answers, may total more than 100%

The mean monthly household income from all sources for survey respondents was \$1,343 and the median was \$1,100. The median income ranged from \$891 for single person households to \$2,261 for households with five people.

Adjusting for family size, the proportion of survey respondents who report household income at or below the federal poverty level (FPL) is 63%.

Table 3. Respondent households by poverty status and household size

Household size	Number of households	Mean monthly income	Median monthly income	% below 100% of poverty level	% below 125% of poverty level
1	147	\$891	\$858	62.6%	78.2%
2	47	\$1,498	\$1,205	55.3%	72.3%
3	47	\$1,516	\$1,086	63.8%	72.3%
4	29	\$1,746	\$1,800	62.1%	75.9%
5	26	\$2,261	\$2,088	65.4%	76.9%
6	10	\$2,060	\$1,750	80.0%	80.0%
7+	9	\$2,254	\$2,400	66.7%	77.8%
Total	315	\$1,343	\$1,100	62.5%	76.2%

Nearly one-third of respondents (32%) said that they (or someone in their household) needed help getting or keeping food stamps through SNAP/WIC in the past 12 months. Nineteen percent (19%) needed help with Medicaid benefits.

Figure 15. In the last 12 months, did you or anyone in your household need help getting or keeping any of the following benefits?

N= 368; Respondents could provide multiple answers, may total more than 100%

Thirty-nine percent (39%) of respondents said that getting or keeping a job has been difficult for themselves or someone in their household.

Figure 16. In the last 12 months, has getting or keeping a job been hard for you or anyone in your household?

N=382

Respondents who have had difficulties with getting or keeping a job were asked to identify the problems that they have faced. Disabilities topped the list (41%), followed by transportation needs (35%).

Figure 17. If YES, what's been hard about getting or keeping a good job?

N=382; Respondents could provide multiple answers, may total more than 100%

Just over half of respondents (53%) said that their household has problems with debt.

Figure 18. Does anyone in your household have problems with debt?

N=395

Those with debt issues were asked to specify which types of debt. Medical and dental bills topped the list (54%) followed by credit card (42%).

Figure 19. If YES, what kind of debt?

N=205; Respondents could provide multiple answers, may total more than 100%

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Forty-nine percent (49%) said that someone in their household has skipped meals in the past 12 months because there was not enough money for food. Nearly one-third (30%) said someone at home went hungry for lack of food.

Figure 20. In the last 12 months, have you or anyone in your household gone hungry because you were not able to get enough food? Did you ever skip or cut the size of your meals because there wasn't enough money for food?

N=395

Thirty-nine percent of respondents (39%) said there were health services they (or someone in their household) needed in the past year that they were unable to get.

Figure 21. In the last 12 months, were there any health services you or anyone in your household needed but were unable to get (e.g. medical, prescriptions, dental, mental health, or drug/alcohol treatment or counseling)?

N=399

Respondents were asked to identify barriers that they faced in four health service areas: medical care and prescriptions, dental care, mental health services, as well as drug & alcohol treatment/counseling. Over half the respondents (55%) cited at least one barrier as a reason they did not get needed health services. Responses are illustrated in Figures 22 through 25.

Respondents who ran into problems accessing medical care/prescriptions indicated that the top barrier was cost (56%), followed by a lack of insurance (44%).

Figure 22. Barriers to health services: Medical care/prescriptions

N=124 respondents who were not able to get needed medical care/prescriptions; Respondents could provide multiple answers, may total more than 100%

Respondents who experienced barriers for dental care identified cost as the most frequent barrier (63%). Other prevalent issues were lack of insurance (43%) and difficulty finding a provider who accepts Medicaid (38%).

Figure 23. Barriers to health services: Dental care

N=174 respondents who were not able to get needed dental care; Respondents could provide multiple answers, may total more than 100%

Nearly half of the respondents who were not able to get mental health services said they did not know where to go for help (45%). A similar, slightly smaller proportion (43%) attributed their unmet needs (at least in part) to feeling nervous or fearful. Cost and transportation were ranked third and fourth (both 38%).

Figure 24. Barriers to health services: Mental health

N=82 respondents who were not able to get needed mental health services; Respondents could provide multiple answers, may total more than 100%

Barriers to drug and alcohol treatment looked very similar to those faced by respondents looking for mental health services. Nearly half of the respondents who were not able to get drug or alcohol treatment said they did not know where to go for help (48%). A slightly smaller proportion (45%) attributed their unmet needs (at least in part) to feeling nervous or fearful.

Figure 25. Barriers to health services: Drug or alcohol treatment or counseling

N=29 respondents who were not able to get needed drug or alcohol treatment or counseling; Respondents could provide multiple answers, may total more than 100%

EDUCATION

Fifteen percent of respondents (15%) said they do not have a high school diploma or GED.

Figure 26. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

N=395

Respondents who are currently in school or interested in going back to school were asked how far they would like to go in school. Figure 27 shows their responses, along with their current status. Roughly one-quarter of those who want to continue in school would like a professional certification (24%).

Figure 27. If you are currently in school or interested in going to school, how far would you like to go?

N=190 respondents who are in school or interested in returning to school

Respondents were asked about their household's education needs. Fifty-six percent (56%) of the respondents identified at least one of the education needs listed in Figure 28. The top need was financial assistance to go to college (28%).

Figure 28. What are your household's education needs?

N=374

APPENDIX A: RESEARCH METHODS

The survey questions were based on prior community needs assessments in Snohomish County as well as community needs surveys conducted in other regions of Washington State. The survey included 72 closed-ended questions.

Surveys were collected during November and December of 2018. The survey was available in paper and online, in both English and Spanish. In addition, the paper version was also available in Russian.

A raffle was used as incentive, offering a prize of a \$100 gift card.

Local social service agencies were asked to recruit from their client base.

The method of recruitment varied slightly from agency to agency depending on the typical style of client interaction. In some locations, agency staff provided paper copies of the survey to clients while they were waiting for services. In other locations, agencies emailed the link to the online survey.

A total of 1,145 surveys were collected in total. Respondents who identified themselves as currently living in Everett or surrounding zip codes of 98208 or 98205 were identified to include in this current analysis.

Over half of the Everett surveys were done online (230) . The remainder (174) were conducted on paper.

	English	Spanish	Russian	Total
Paper	147	18	9	174
Online	216	14	0	230
Total	363	32	9	404