Yerington - South Lyon County Health Care Survey Report

University of Nevada School of Medicine
University Center for Economic Development
Nevada Rural Hospital Partners

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Table of Contents

Introduction..................................................................................................................2
Primary Source of Medical Information.................................................................3
Most Important Community Health Concern .......................................................4
Location of Primary Care Provider........................................................................5
Reason for Primary Care Outside of South Lyon County .................................6
Rating Care Received in South Lyon County ......................................................7
Rating Care Received Outside of South Lyon County ........................................7
Length of Wait for an Appointment.......................................................................8
Rating the Wait for an Appointment.....................................................................8
Length of Wait in the Doctor’s Office .................................................................9
Rating the Wait in the Doctor’s Office ...............................................................9
Primary Shopping Locations by Category of Goods .........................................10
Hospital Utilization in Past Year .........................................................................13
Reason for Using Other Hospital......................................................................13
Awareness and Use of Hospital Services..........................................................14
Changes Desired in availability of Long-Term Care .......................................15
Support for New Hospital Services....................................................................16
Rating Local Health Care System......................................................................17
Overview

This report provides current data on the views of South Lyon County, Nevada residents regarding their local health care system. The purpose of this report is to provide local leaders and citizens of South Lyon County with reliable information on quality and availability of health care services in their local community.

Household-level data were collected by a telephone survey administered by the private firm of InfoSearch International during December 2002. The sample was composed of 209 residents of the rural communities of South Lyon County, Nevada, randomly selected by telephone number. Respondents were asked 84 questions, including opinions regarding quality, cost and availability of health care in South Lyon County as well as choices made when purchasing health care or other services. They were also presented a set of questions on primary care – which, for the purposes of this survey refers to basic care provided by a family physician.

The data were then analyzed and compiled into this report by the University Center for Economic Development. In this report, a short statement regarding each question is followed by a graph or chart illustrating the responses to that question.

In general, the findings presented below indicate several needs and future avenues for action by the hospital and community leaders. These include: (1) greater marketing of existing services; (2) assessing the financial feasibility of expanding existing services; and (3) assessing the feasibility of adding new services.

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Survey Findings

The primary source of medical information for South Lyon County residents is the family doctor. Residents are five times more likely to receive medical information from their physician than the nearest alternative. Television, friends or relatives, and books appear as the most frequent sources of medical information after the family doctor.

Figure 1. Primary Source of Medical Information

As the administration and board of South Lyon Medical Center considers the marketing of new and existing services, staff physicians should be utilized since they are a prominent source of medical information.
The most important community health concern identified by local residents relates to the general unavailability of various facilities and services in South Lyon County. Geriatric care, the second most important concern, was cited by almost as large a percentage of respondents. Other important concerns included cancer prevention and treatment, the availability of physicians, and lack of health insurance.

Figure 2. Most Important Community Health Concern

While the availability and number of doctors was listed as a major concern by 11% of those surveyed, this concern is contradicted by data presented elsewhere in the report that indicate short waiting times to obtain appointments with local physicians.
Figure 3 presents information on where South Lyon County residents go for their primary care. Sixty-four percent of residents report receiving their primary care from a South Lyon County physician or South Lyon Medical Center. Some of the reasons local residents travel to other communities to receive their primary care may include quality of care, cost of care, insurance coverage, and their familiarity with outside physicians.
Figure 4 provides data on some of the reasons why South Lyon County residents travel to other communities to receive their primary care. Twenty-four percent of those who receive their primary care outside of South Lyon County report that the quality of care was their primary reason for seeing a primary care physician outside of the community. Other reasons, in order of importance, include physician referral, insurance coverage, and recommendation by friends or family.

**Figure 4. Reason for Primary Care Outside of South Lyon County**
The next two figures rate satisfaction with primary care received. Responses from individuals who receive primary care locally are summarized in Figure 5, indicating that nearly 75% of those who received primary care from local providers are “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with that care. Ratings from those individuals who obtain primary care outside South Lyon County are shown in Figure 6. In both cases, most respondents are either satisfied or very satisfied with care received.

**Figure 5. Rating the Care in South Lyon County**

![Bar chart showing percentage of ratings for care in South Lyon County](chart1)

**Figure 6. Rating the Care Outside South Lyon County**

![Bar chart showing percentage of ratings for care outside South Lyon County](chart2)
The next set of figures present information on the satisfaction of South Lyon County residents with the medical care provided by their primary care physicians, with responses grouped according to whether the respondent receives primary care locally or outside South Lyon County. Figure 7 suggests that the time needed to get an appointment is not a major access barrier facing South Lyon County residents. Figure 8 indicates that more than half of respondents were either “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the length of time they have to wait to get an appointment with their primary care doctor.

Figure 7. Length of Wait for Appointment

Figure 8. Rating the Wait for Appointment
Figure 9 presents data on the amount of time respondents spent waiting in the physician’s office before seeing their physician during a primary care appointment. A very large majority of respondents (91.8%) report spending less than half an hour waiting to see their primary care physician. Only 4.3% of those sampled report waiting an hour or longer to see their primary care physician during scheduled appointments. Figure 10 indicates that a significant majority of those sampled (61.7%) were either “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the waiting time that they normally experience with primary care physician appointments.
The next five figures present data on where South Lyon County residents report going to purchase the following five items: food, clothing, major appliances, prescription drugs, and health care. Figure 11 reveals that a majority of South Lyon County residents (53.1%) shop for food and groceries locally, with Minden/Gardnerville and Carson City as the second and third most frequent shopping locations.

**Figure 11. Primary Shopping Location for Food**

In contrast, as Figure 12 indicates, very few South Lyon County residents shop locally for clothing. Most travel to Carson City (45.9%) or Reno (31.1%) to purchase clothes for themselves and their families. Figure 13 reveals a similar pattern for the purchase of major appliances. Most respondents made purchases of major appliances in Reno (30.1%) or Carson City (28.7%).
Figure 12. Primary Shopping Location for Clothing

Figure 13. Primary Shopping Location for Major Appliances
Figures 14 and 15 provide information on respondents’ primary shopping location for prescription drugs and health care. Over half of those surveyed report shopping locally for prescription drugs. In summary, these data suggest that the ability of the local hospital to capture additional market share for hospital services may be limited, since local residents travel outside the community for a wide range of goods and services.

**Figure 14. Primary Shopping Location for Prescription Drugs**

![Bar chart showing the percentage of respondents' primary shopping location for prescription drugs. The chart indicates that 59.3% of respondents shop locally, 13.9% shop in Minden-Gardnerville, 10.0% in Carson City, 7.7% in Other, 3.8% in Reno, 3.3% in Fallon, and 1.0% have no response.]

**Figure 15. Primary Shopping Location for Health Care**

![Bar chart showing the percentage of respondents' primary shopping location for health care. The chart indicates that 48.3% of respondents shop locally, 14.8% in Yerington, 14.4% in Reno, 10.5% in Minden-Gardnerville, 5.7% have no response, 3.8% in Carson City, 1.9% in Fallon, and 0.5% have no response.]

12
The next four figures provide data on local residents’ use of hospital services. Over two thirds of survey respondents report using the services of South Lyon Medical Center in the past year. Among the 44% of respondents who reported receiving hospital care outside of South Lyon County, the principle reasons cited include referrals by local physicians and transfers by hospital staff. Survey data suggest that perceptions about the quality and accessibility of hospital services were relatively minor factors in respondents’ decisions to receive hospital services outside of the community.

**Figure 16. Hospital Utilization in Past Year**

![Bar chart showing hospital utilization in past year](chart16)

**Figure 17. Reason for Using Other Hospital**

![Bar chart showing reasons for using other hospital](chart17)
Figure 18 provides data on local residents’ awareness and use of services currently available at South Lyon Medical Center within the past year. With the exception of urgent care, laboratory services, and outpatient clinics, these data indicate that relatively low rates of local use of services at South Lyon Medical Center might be improved by increasing public awareness of those services.

**Figure 18. Awareness and Use of Hospital Services**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Used</th>
<th>Aware</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hospice</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>54.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Health</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>66.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outpatient</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>42.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting Specialists</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>71.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phys, Occup, and Speech</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>58.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urgent Care</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>75.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ultrasound</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>40.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long-term care</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>77.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lab</td>
<td>56.3</td>
<td>78.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smith Clinic</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>57.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yerington Clinic</td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td>78.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CT/MRI</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>63.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percent (Conditional Percent)
Figure 18 reveals that among the services currently offered by South Lyon Medical Center, just 40% to 75% of local residents are aware that any given service exists. This suggests that utilization of existing services could be improved by relatively straightforward marketing of services and increased awareness.

As shown in Figure 19, among those respondents with an opinion regarding changes in long-term care services at South Lyon Medical Center, approximately a third of respondents requested an increase in long term care or skilled nursing beds. Interestingly, 19% of respondents indicated that no changes are needed.

**Figure 19. Changes Desired in Availability of Long-Term Care**
Figure 20 shows the percentages of households that will use and support the health care services listed if they were made available locally. Broad support exists for several options, including evening and weekend clinics, as well as outpatient services and some limited surgical services.

**Figure 20. Support for New Health Care Services**

The remaining figures present data on the opinions of South Lyon County residents on general and specific aspects of the health care system in their local community. The **response category values represent the percentage of respondents out of the entire sample that expressed a particular level of satisfaction. In many cases, respondents may not have familiarity with a service, and may have expressed no opinion. Because the no opinion response category is not shown in the figures below, response values may not sum to 100% across categories.**
Figures 21 through 24 indicate moderate levels of dissatisfaction with the availability of primary care providers. While local residents are generally satisfied with the primary care received, survey results indicate concern regarding their ability to access services.

**Figure 21. Availability of family or primary care doctors.**

**Figure 22. Availability of Nurse Practitioners/PAs**
Figure 23. Obstetrical and Gynecological Care

Figure 24. Availability of Pediatric Care
Figures 25 and 26 indicate modest concern about the availability of hospital services and medical specialists in the local community. While SLMC and the local economy may be able to support only limited expansion of services, these data indicate that local officials should continue to explore feasible health services expansion and continue to monitor changing health care needs.

**Figure 25. Availability of Hospital Services**

**Figure 26. Availability of Specialists**
Figures 27 through 40 provide data on the satisfaction of local residents with the various aspects of the local health care system. Services receiving high marks include dental care, emergency medical services, home health services, pharmacy services, local community health nursing, flu clinics, and local health fairs.

**Figure 27. Adult Day Care Services**

![Bar chart showing satisfaction levels for Adult Day Care Services.]

**Figure 28. Cost of Health Care in Lyon County**

![Bar chart showing cost percentages for health care in Lyon County.]

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20
Figure 29. Dental Care

Figure 30. Emergency medical services / ambulance services
Figure 31. Eye Care / Optometrists

Figure 32. Home Health Services
Figure 33. Long Term Care

Figure 34. Mental Health Services
Figure 35. Pharmacy Services

Figure 36. Preventive Services
Figure 37. Community Health Nurses

Figure 38. Drug Counseling
Figure 39. Flu Clinics

Figure 40. Health Fairs