

**St. Joseph Medical Center**  
**Community Needs Assessment and Focus Groups**  
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**St. Joseph Medical Center Community Survey**  
**Summary Report**  
**November 2011**

**I. Introduction**

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St. Joseph Medical Center is a 22-bed Critical Access Hospital based in Polson, Montana and is a public non-profit organization. St. Joseph Medical Center provides medical services to the lower Flathead and Mission Valleys with a population of approximately 16,000 people. St. Joseph Medical Center participated in the Community Health Services Development Project administrated by the Montana Office of Rural Health and the National Rural Health Resource Center (NRHRC) in Duluth, Minnesota. A part of this project is community engagement. This includes a health care service survey and focus groups.

In the summer of 2011, the community in the lower Flathead and Mission Valleys of Montana were surveyed about its health care system. This report shows the results of the survey in both narrative and chart formats. At the end of this report, we have included a copy of the survey instrument (Appendix B). Readers are invited to familiarize themselves with the survey instrument and then look at the findings. Our narrative report touches on the highlights while the charts present data for virtually every question asked.

**II. Survey Methodology**

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**Survey Instrument**

In May 2011, surveys were mailed out to the residents of the lower Flathead and Mission Valleys. The survey was based on a design that has been used extensively in the states of Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana and Idaho. The survey was designed to provide each facility with information from local residents regarding:

- Demographics of respondents
- Hospitals, primary care providers and specialists used and reasons for selection
- Local health care provider usage
- Services preferred locally
- Perception and satisfaction of local health care

**Sampling**

St. Joseph Medical Center provided the National Rural Health Resource Health Center with a list of outpatient and inpatient admissions. Those zip codes with the greatest number of admissions were selected to be included in the survey. A random list of 800 residents was then selected from Prime Net Data Source. Residence was stratified in the initial sample selection so that each area would be represented in proportion to the overall served population and the proportion of past admissions. (Note: Although the survey samples were proportionately selected, actual surveys returned from each population area varied, which may result in slightly less proportional results.) A second method of convenience sampling was utilized in effort to increase the statistical significance of the data collected.

Two focus groups were held to identify the motives of local residents when selecting health care providers and discover reasons why people may leave the Polson area to seek health care services. It was intended that this research would help determine the awareness of local programs and services, as well as the level of satisfaction with local services, providers, and facilities.

### Survey Implementation

In May, the community health services survey, a cover letter from the National Rural Health Resource Center with Medical Center Chief Executive Officer’s signature on St. Joseph Medical Center’s letter head and a postage paid reply envelope were mailed to 800 randomly selected residents in the targeted region. A news release was sent to local newspapers prior to the survey distribution announcing that St. Joseph Medical Center would be conducting a community health services survey throughout the region in cooperation with the Montana Office of Rural Health.

As shown in the table below, 170 surveys were returned out of 800. Of that 800, 64 surveys were returned undeliverable for a 21% response rate. From this point on, the total number of surveys will be out of 736. Based upon the sample size, we can be 95% confident that the responses to the survey questions are representative of the service area population, plus or minus 5.37%.

### III. Survey Respondent Demographics

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A total of 736 surveys were mailed first class. One hundred and seventy surveys were completed for a 21% response rate. The following tables indicate the demographic characteristics of the survey respondents. Information on location, length of residency, gender and age is included. Percentages indicated on the tables and graphs are based upon the total number of responses for each individual question, as some respondents did not answer all questions.

#### Place of Residence (Question 30)

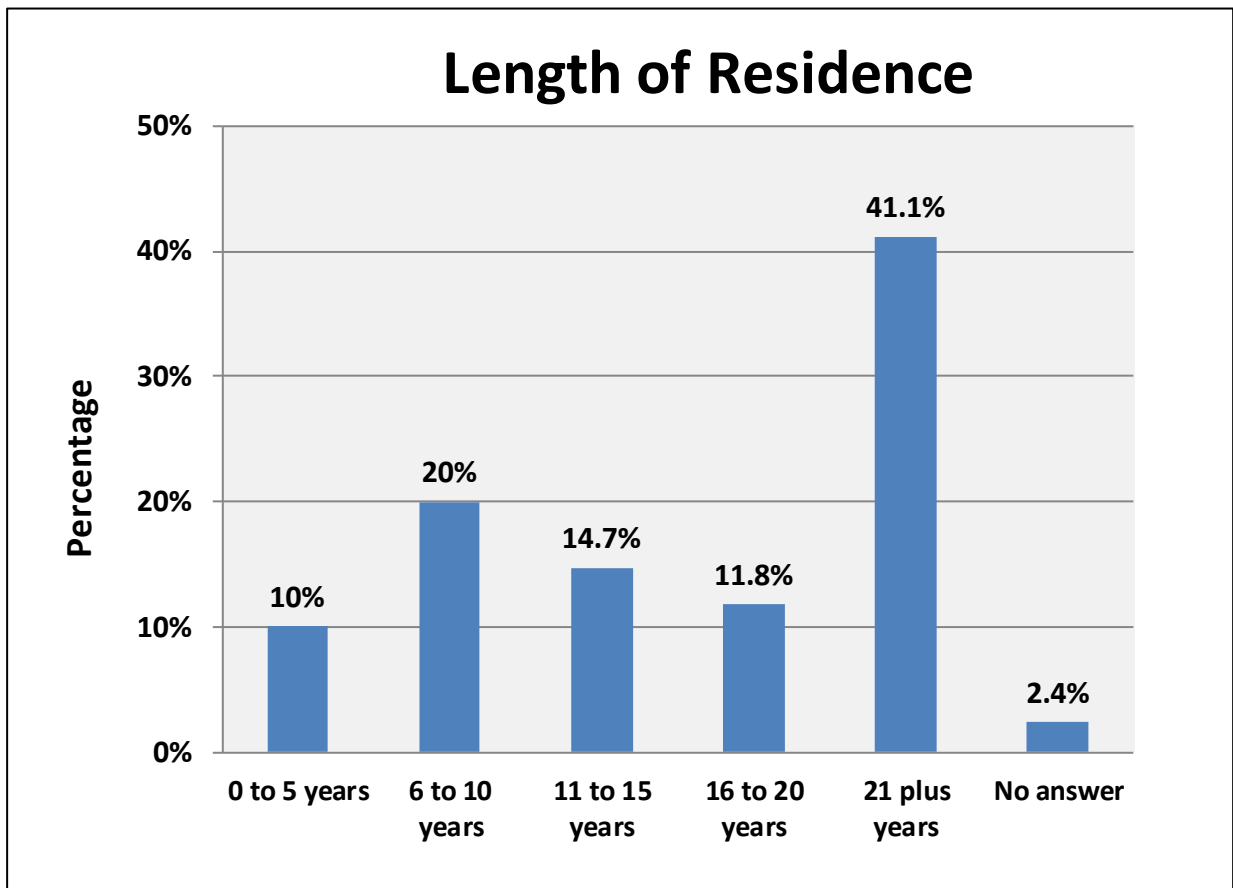
While there are some large differences in the percentages below, the absolute differences are small. The returned surveys are skewed toward the Polson population which is reasonable given that, that is where most of the services are located.

Location	Zip Code	Count	Percent
Polson	59860	117	68.8%
Ronan	59864	13	7.6%
St. Ignatius	59865	10	5.9%
Big Arm	59910	6	3.5%
Elmo	59915	6	3.5%
Big Fork	59911	4	2.4%
Charlo	59824	4	2.4%
Pablo	59855	3	1.8%
Hot Springs	59845	2	1.2%
Arlee	59821	1	0.6%
Lone Pine	59848	1	0.6%
Dixon	59831	0	0
No Response		3	1.8%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>170</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Length of Residence (Question 31)

N= 170

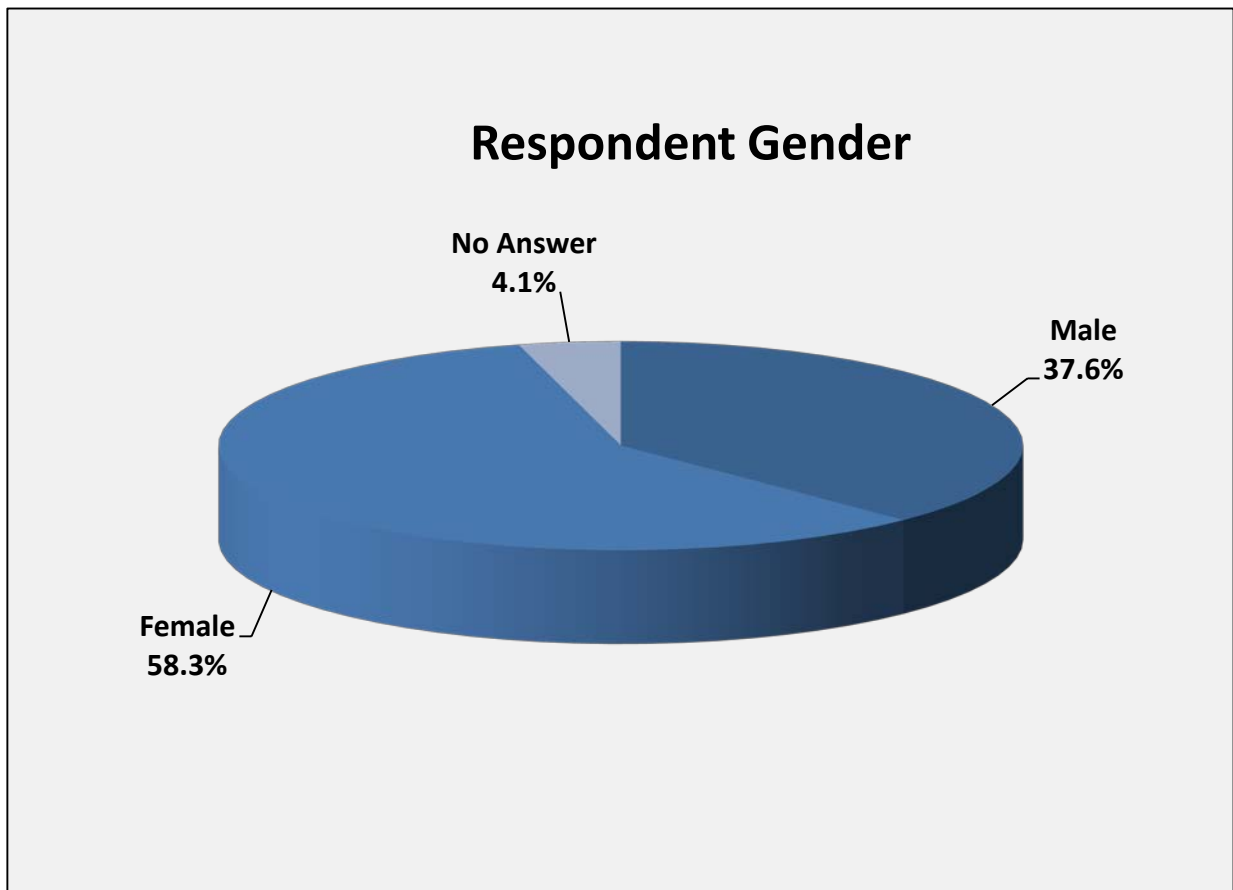
Forty-one percent (n=70) of the respondents have lived in the area for 21 or more years. Twenty percent (n=34) have lived in the Polson area for 6-10 years and 14.7% (n=25) have lived in the area for 11- 15 years. Four respondents chose not to answer this question.



### Gender (Question 32)

N= 170

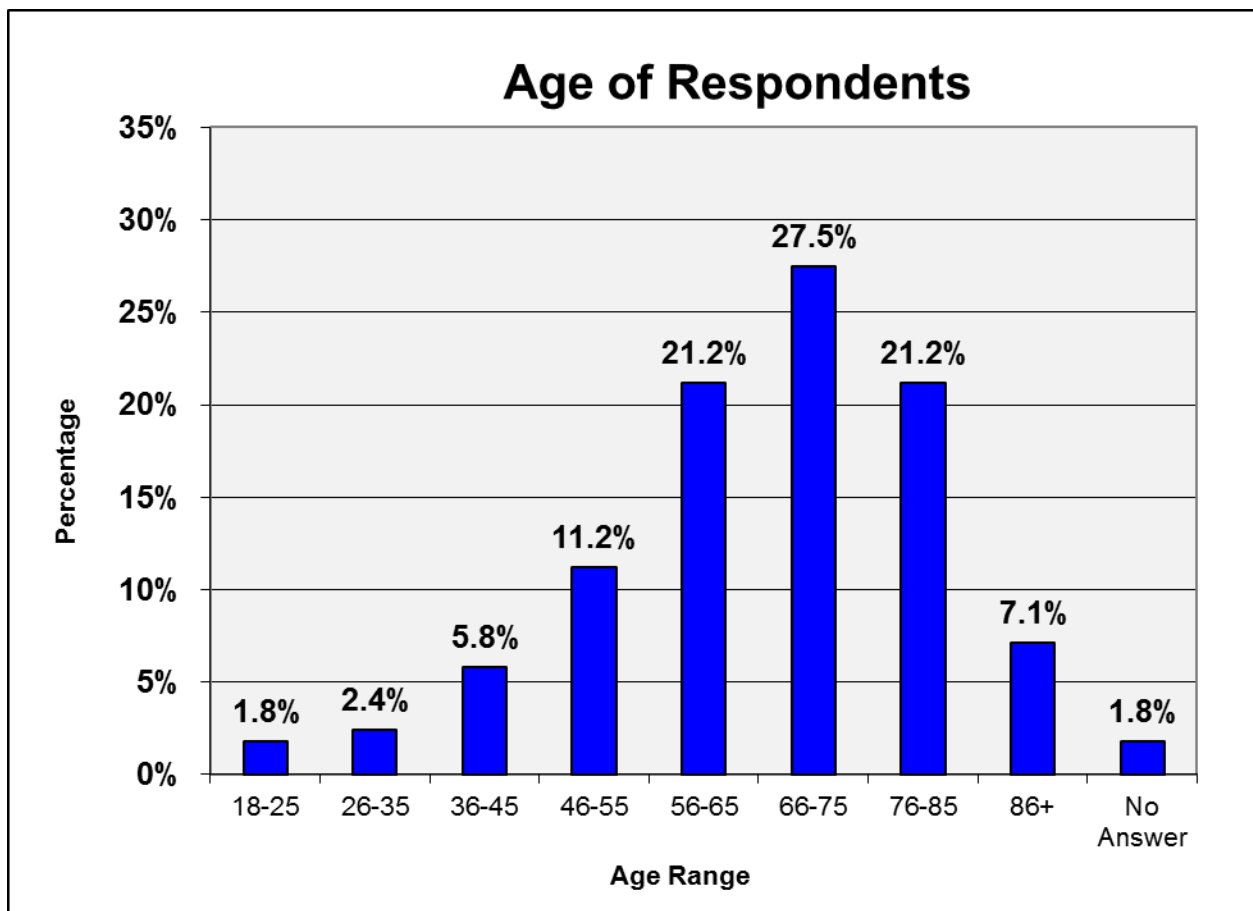
Of the surveys returned, 58.3% (n=99) of survey respondents were female; 37.6% (n=64) were male and 4.1% (n=7) chose not to answer this question. The survey was distributed to a random sample consisting of 50% women and 50% men. It is not unusual for survey respondents to be predominantly female, particularly when the survey is health care oriented since women are frequently the health care decision makers for families.



### Age of Respondents (Question 33)

N= 170

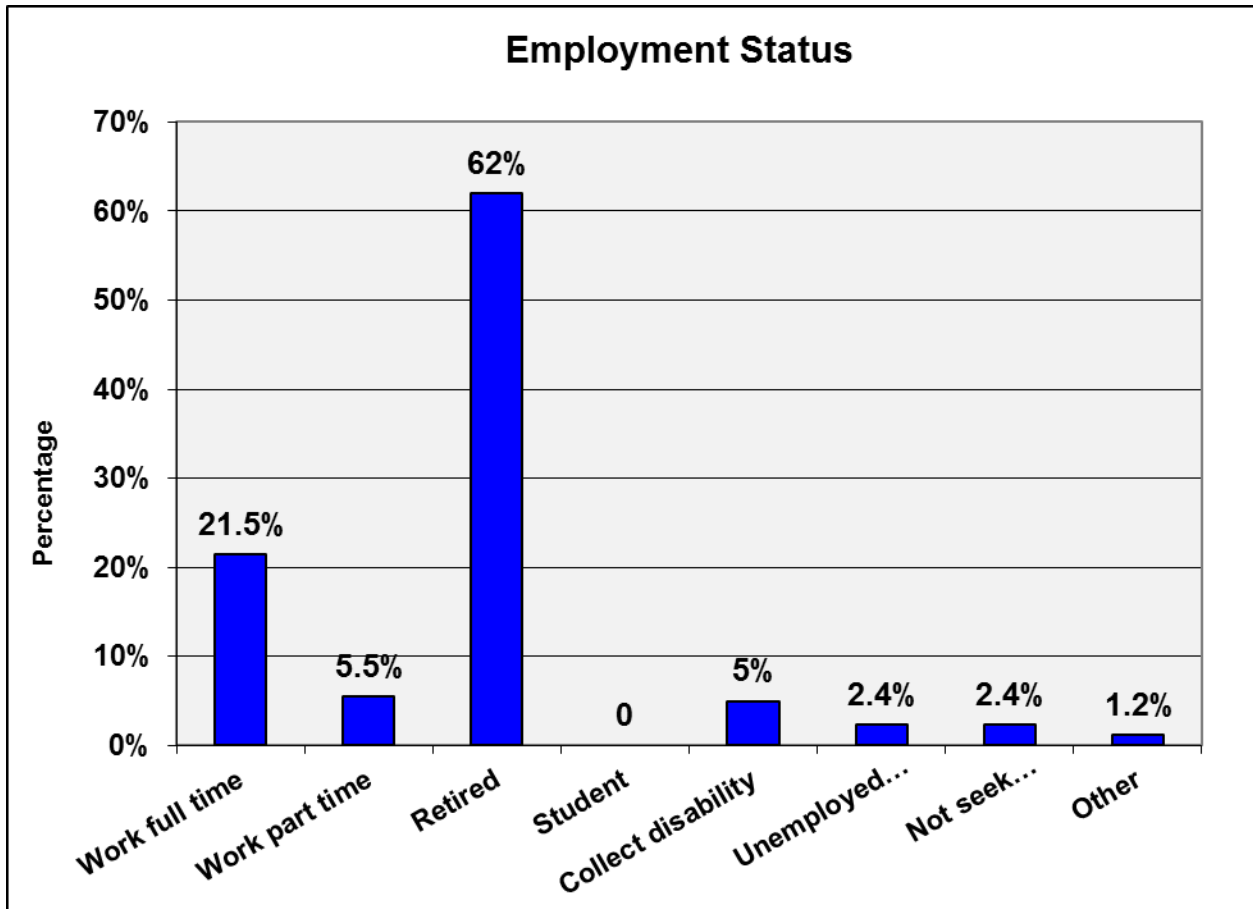
Twenty-eight percent (n=47) of respondents were between the ages of 66-75. Twenty-one percent (n=47 each) of respondents were between the ages of 56-65 and also 76-85. This statistic is comparable to other Critical Access Hospital demographics. The increasing percentage of elderly residents in rural communities is a trend which is seen throughout Montana and will likely have a significant impact on the need for health care services during the next 10-20 years. However, it is important to note that the survey was targeted to adults and therefore no respondents are under age 18. Older residents are also more invested in health care decision making, therefore are more likely to respond to health care surveys, as reflected by this graph.



### Employment of Respondents (Question 34)

N= 163

Sixty-two percent (n=101) of respondents reported being retired, while 21.5% (n=35) work full-time. Six percent of respondents (n=9) indicated they work part time. Respondents could check all that apply, so the percentages do not equal 100%. Seven respondents chose not to answer this question.



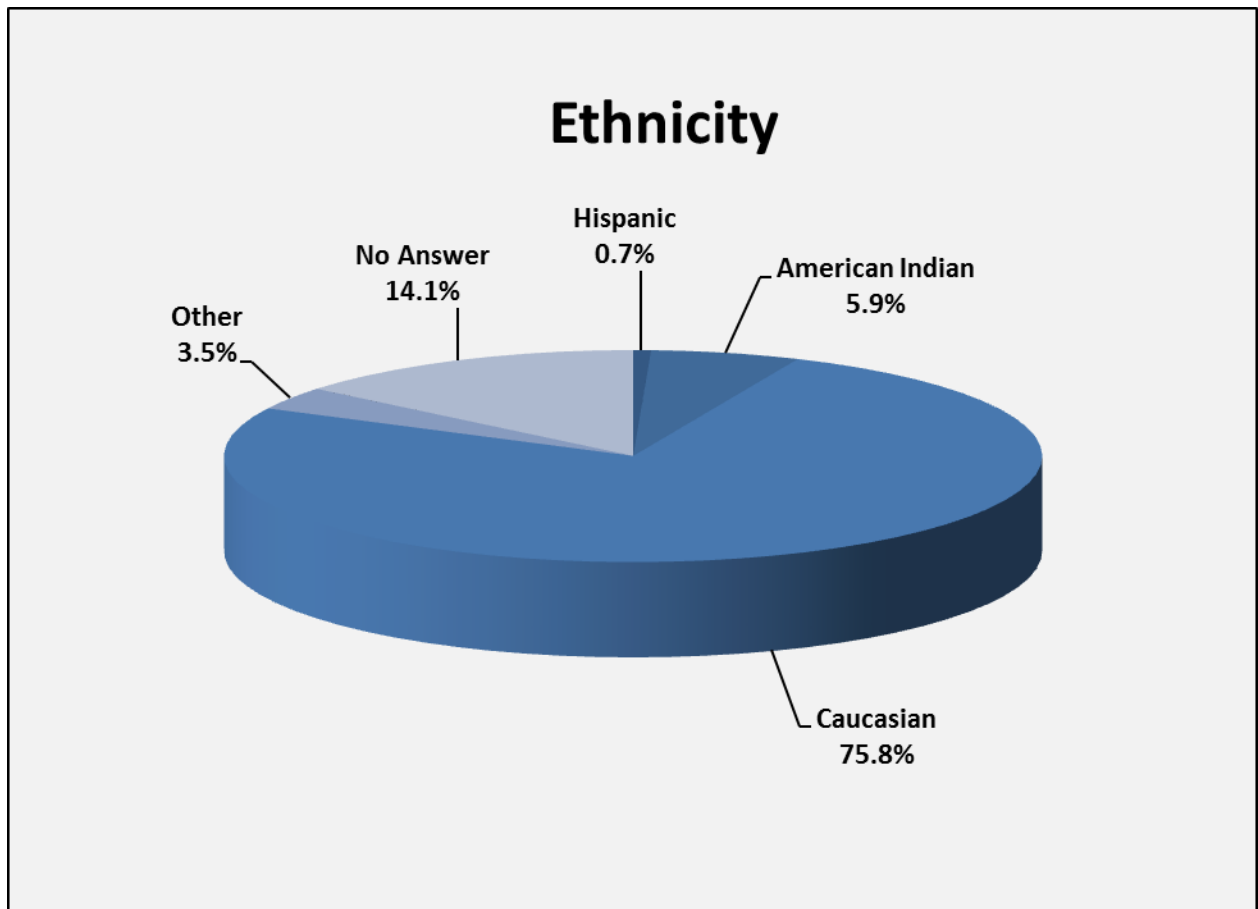
“Other” comments:

- Self-employed

### Ethnicity (Question 35)

N= 170

The majority of the respondents, 75.8% (n=129) reported their ethnicity as Caucasian. Six percent (n=10) reported their ethnicity as American Indian and 3.5% indicated “other” (n=6). Twenty-four respondents chose not to answer this question (14.1%).



“Other” comments:

- White
- Multi-racial
- American citizen
- Irish



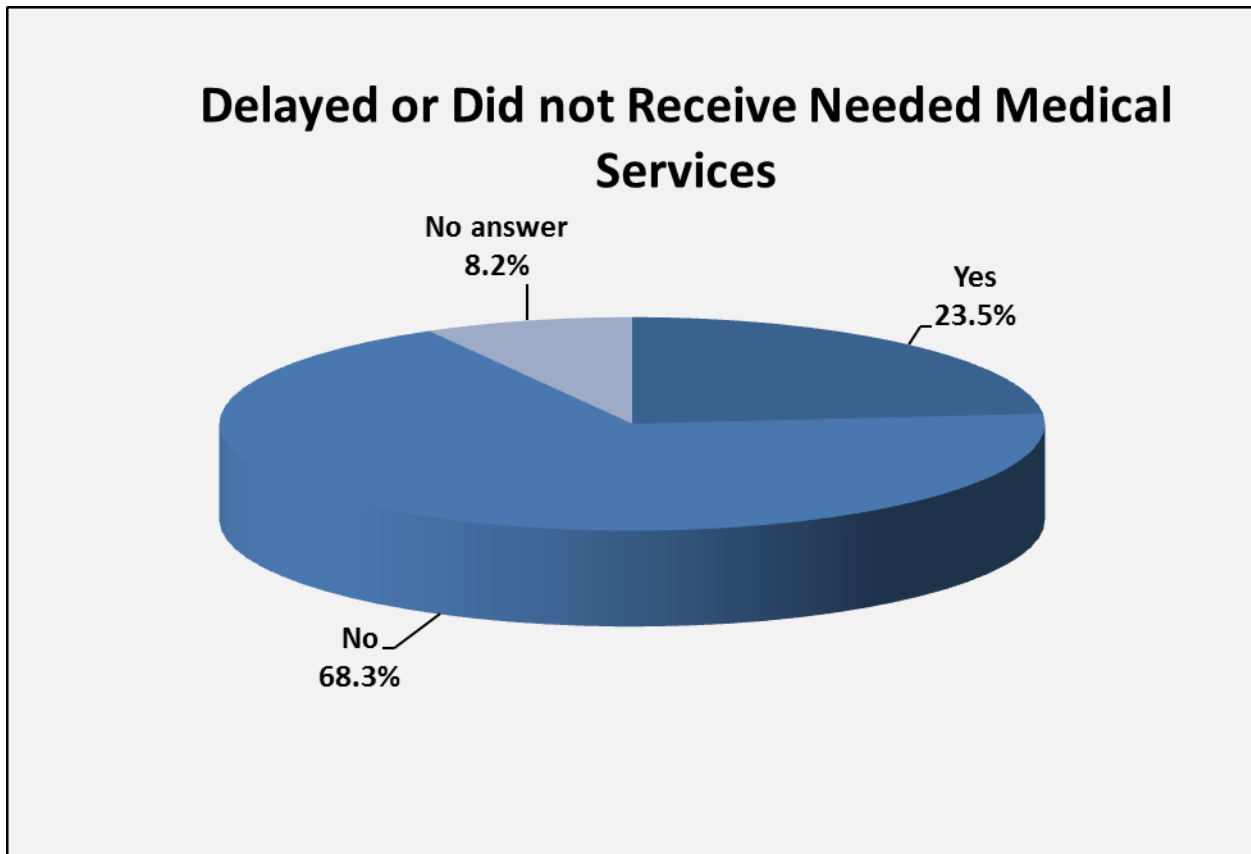
#### IV. Survey Findings- Use of Health Care Services

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##### Hospital Care Received During the Past Three Years (Question 1)

N= 170

Of the 170 surveys returned, 23.5% (n=40) reported that they or a member of their household thought they needed health care services, but did NOT get it or delayed getting it. Sixty-eight percent of respondents (n=116) felt they were able to get the health care services they needed without delay and fourteen respondents chose not to answer this question.



**Reasons for NOT Being Able to Receive Services or Delay in Receiving Health Care Services (Question 2)**

The reasons most cited why respondents were not able to receive or had a delay in receiving health care services were: “It costs too much” (55%, n=22) and “No insurance” (35%, n=14). Respondents were asked to indicate their top three choices thus percentages do not total 100%.

<b>Reason</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>
It cost too much	22	55.0%
No insurance	14	35.0%
Too long to wait for an appointment	7	17.5%
My insurance didn't cover it	7	17.5%
Office wasn't open when I could go	5	12.5%
Too nervous or afraid	5	12.5%
Don't like/trust doctors	4	10.0%
Discouraged from utilizing local service	3	7.5%
Not treated with respect	3	7.5%
Transportation problems	3	7.5%
Could not get an appointment	2	5.0%
Could not get off work	2	5.0%
Unsure if services were available	1	2.5%
Had no one to care for the children	1	2.5%
Didn't know where to go	1	2.5%
It was too far to go	1	2.5%
Language barrier	0	0
Other	8	20.0%

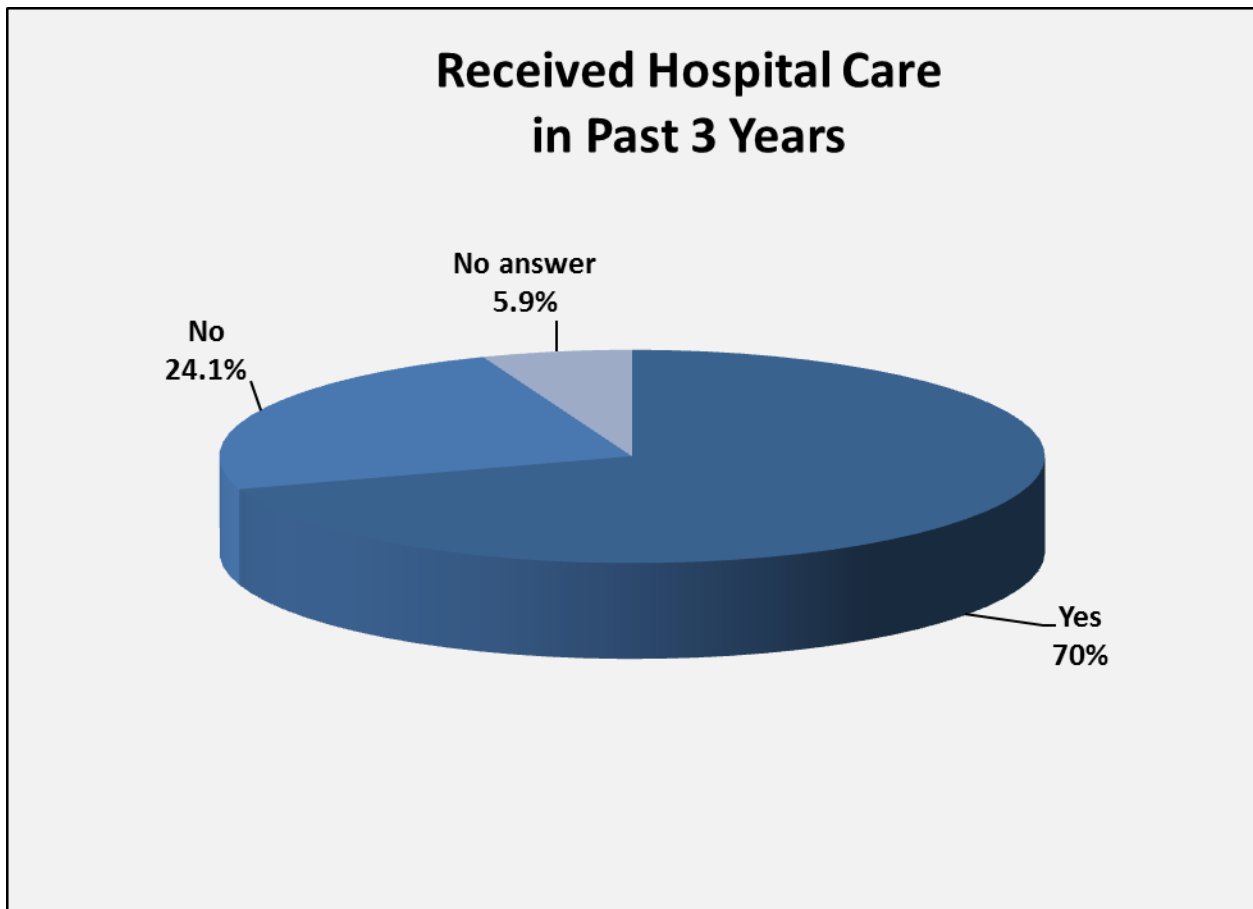
“Other” comments:

- Wanted to wait it out
- Trying to find new doc
- Poor service
- Could not see doctor I asked for
- No money
- No one to take me
- Doc goes over with prescriptions
- In Polson, Rausch has been great

### Hospital Care Received in the Past Three Years (Question 3)

N= 170

Seventy percent of respondents (n=119) reported that they or a member of their family had received hospital care during the previous three years. Twenty-four percent (n=41) had not received hospital services and 5.9% of respondents (n=10) did not answer this question.



#### Hospitals Used Most Often in the Past Three Years (Question 4)

N= 104

Of the 119 respondents who indicated receiving hospital care in the previous three years, 50% (n=52) reported receiving care at St. Joseph Medical Center. Twenty-six percent of respondents (n=27) went to St. Luke Community Healthcare for hospitalization and 9.6% of the respondents (n=10) utilized services at St. Patrick Hospital and Health Sciences Center. Fifteen of the 119 respondents who reported they had been to a hospital in the past three years did not indicate which hospital they had utilized.

<b>Hospital</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>
St. Joseph Medical Center	52	50.0%
St. Luke Community Healthcare	27	26.0%
St. Patrick Hospital and Health Sciences Center	10	9.6%
Kalispell Regional Medical Center	9	8.7%
Community Medical Center	4	3.8%
Other	2	1.9%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>100%</b>

“Other” comments:

- Clark Fork Valley (2)
- NW Healthcare Kalispell
- Flagstaff Medical Center
- U of Washington
- We probably use St. Pat, St. Joe and Community equally

### Reasons for Selecting the Hospital Used (Question 5)

Of the 119 respondents who had personal or family experience at a hospital within the past three years, the primary reason given for selecting the facility used most often was “Closest to home” at 58.8% (n=70). “Prior experience with hospital” was selected by 58% of the respondents (n=69) and 46.2% (n=55) selected “Referred by physician.” Note that respondents were asked to select the top three answers which influenced their choices therefore the percentages do not equal 100%.

Reason	Count	Percent
Closest to home	70	58.8%
Prior experience with hospital	69	58.0%
Referred by physician	55	46.2%
Emergency, no choice	27	22.7%
Hospital’s reputation for quality	27	22.7%
Recommended by family or friends	12	10.1%
Only location that provided needed services	6	5.0%
Closest to work	5	4.2%
Cost of care	5	4.2%
Tribal health requirement	5	4.2%
Required by insurance plan	4	3.4%
VA/Military requirement	1	0.8%
Other	12	10.1%

“Other” comments:

- Member of New West Health Ins.
- Familiarity with family history
- New hospital with up to date equipment
- Worked with us on payment plan
- Our doctor
- Employee of St. Luke’s
- Great service
- We moved to this community 60 years ago. The Polson owned hospital, operated by sisters of Providence was a fact that was important to us. 3 out of our 4 children were born there. Now it is no longer Polson’s hospital – SAD!
- My doctor’s office is there
- My doctor provides work at western MT Med Clinic
- Daughter on Hospital Board

## Cross Tabulation of Hospital and Residence

Analysis was done to look at where respondents utilized hospital services the most in the past three years with where they live by zip code. The chart below shows the results of the cross tabulation. Hospital location is along the top and residence is along the side.

### LOCATION OF MOST OFTEN UTILIZED HOSPITAL BY RESIDENCE

	St. Joseph Medical Center	Kalispell Regional Medical Center	Community Medical Center	St. Luke Community Healthcare	St. Patrick Hospital & Health Sciences Center	Other	Total
<b>Polson 59860</b>	48 (59.3%)	5 (6.2%)	3 (3.7%)	15 (18.5%)	9 (11.1%)	1 (1.2%)	<b>81</b>
<b>Bigfork 59911</b>		1 (100%)					<b>1</b>
<b>Ronan 59864</b>	1 (12.5%)		1 (12.5%)	5 (62.5%)	1 (12.5%)		<b>8</b>
<b>St. Ignatius 59865</b>	1 (20%)			4 (80%)			<b>5</b>
<b>Arlee 59821</b>					1 (100%)		<b>1</b>
<b>Charlo 59824</b>	1 (33.3%)			2 (66.7%)			<b>3</b>
<b>Hot Springs 59845</b>	1 (100%)						<b>1</b>
<b>Dixon 59831</b>							<b>0</b>
<b>Big Arm 59910</b>	1 (33.3%)	2 (66.7%)					<b>3</b>
<b>Elmo 59915</b>	1 (33.3%)	2 (66.7%)					<b>3</b>
<b>Lone Pine 59848</b>							<b>0</b>
<b>Pablo 59855</b>				1 (50%)		1 (50%)	<b>2</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>54</b> (50%)	<b>10</b> (9.3%)	<b>4</b> (3.7%)	<b>27</b> (25%)	<b>11</b> (10.2%)	<b>2</b> (1.9%)	<b>108</b>

## Cross Tabulation of Hospital and Reason Selected

Analysis was done to look at respondents' most utilized hospital with why they selected that hospital. The chart below shows the results of the cross tabulation. Reason hospital was selected was a multiple response item thus totals cannot add up to 100%. Hospital location is across the top of the table and reason for selection is along the side.

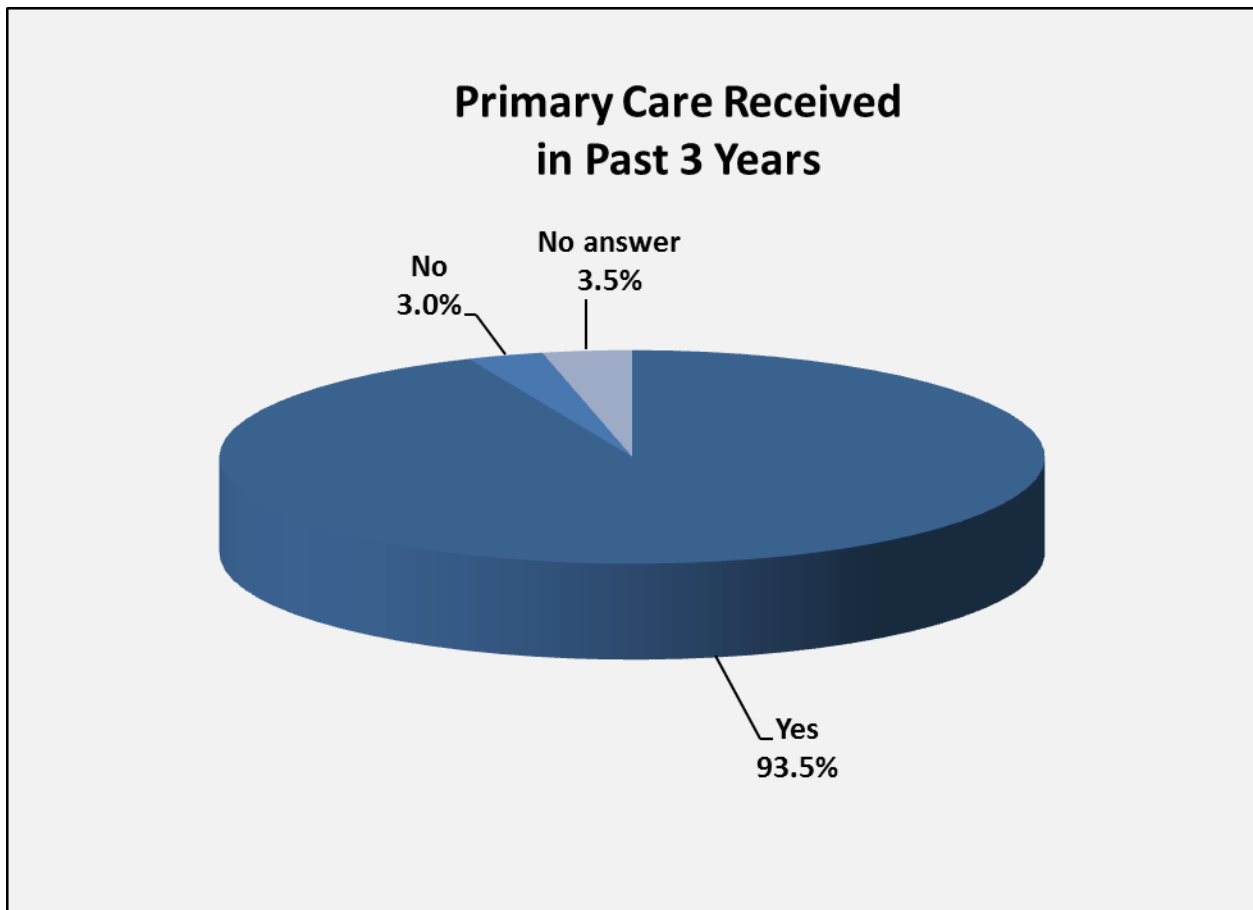
### LOCATION OF MOST UTILIZED HOSPITAL BY REASONS HOSPITAL SELECTED

	St. Joseph Medical Center	Kalispell Regional Medical Center	Community Medical Center	St. Luke Community Healthcare	St. Patrick Hospital & Health Sciences Center	Other	Total
<b>Closest to home</b>	47 (72.3%)	1 (1.5%)	1 (1.5%)	12 (18.5%)	3 (4.6%)	1 (1.5%)	<b>65</b>
<b>Closest to work</b>	3 (60%)			2 (40%)			<b>5</b>
<b>Cost of care</b>	1 (25%)			2 (50%)		1 (25%)	<b>4</b>
<b>Emergency, no choice</b>	23 (85.2%)	1 (3.7%)		2 (7.4%)	1 (3.7%)		<b>27</b>
<b>Hospital's reputation for quality</b>	6 (22.2%)	4 (14.8%)	2 (7.4%)	11 (40.7%)	4 (14.8%)		<b>27</b>
<b>Prior experience with hospital</b>	35 (57.4%)	4 (6.6%)	3 (4.9%)	15 (24.6%)	4 (6.6%)		<b>61</b>
<b>Recommended by family or friends</b>	3 (33.3%)			4 (44.4%)	1 (11.1%)	1 (11.1%)	<b>9</b>
<b>Referred by physician</b>	20 (40.8%)	6 (12.2%)	3 (6.1%)	11 (22.4%)	8 (16.3%)	1 (2%)	<b>49</b>
<b>Required by insurance plan</b>	3 (60%)			1 (20%)	1 (20%)		<b>5</b>
<b>VA/Military requirement</b>						1 (100%)	<b>1</b>
<b>Tribal health requirement</b>	2 (40%)			1 (20%)	2 (40%)		<b>5</b>
<b>Only location that provided need</b>	1 (20%)			1 (20%)	3 (60%)		<b>5</b>
<b>Other</b>	1 (9.1%)	2 (18.2%)		7 (63.6%)		1 (9.1%)	<b>11</b>

### Primary Care Received in the Past Three Years (Question 6)

N= 170

Ninety-four percent of respondents (n=159) indicated that they or someone in their household had been seen by a primary care provider (such as a family physician, physician assistant or nurse practitioner) for health care services in the past three years. Six respondents (3.5%) chose not to answer this question.





### Location of Primary Care Provider (Question 7)

N= 145

Of the 159 respondents who indicated receiving primary care services in the previous three years, 51% (n=74) reported receiving care at St. Joseph Medical Clinic in Polson. Fifteen percent of respondents (n=22) went to St. Luke Community Clinic in Ronan and 12.4% of respondents (n=18) utilized primary care services at St. Luke Community Clinic in Polson. Fourteen of the 159 respondents who reported they had utilized primary care services in the past three years did not indicate where they received those services.

<b>Location</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>
St. Joseph Medical Clinic- Polson	74	51.0%
St. Luke Community Clinic- Ronan	22	15.2%
St. Luke Community Clinic- Polson	18	12.4%
Polson Health Clinic (Kalispell's clinic in Polson)	5	3.4%
St. Joseph Medical Clinic- Ronan	1	0.7%
Tribal Clinics	1	0.7%
Other	24	16.6%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100%</b>

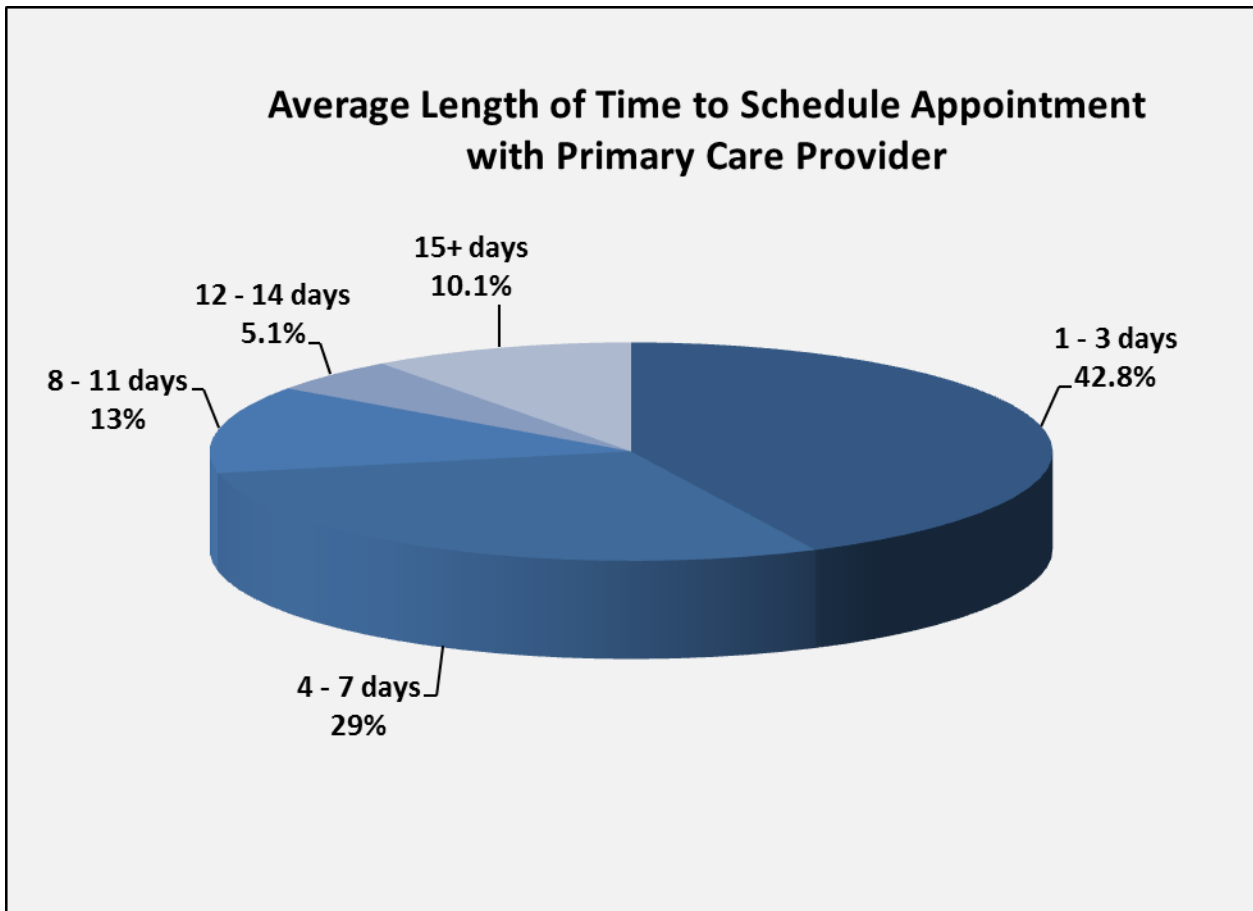
“Other” comments:

- CMC
- MSLA
- PHC Missoula
- St. Luke in St Ignatius
- Dr. Lowell
- Big Sky Medicine
- Kalispell (not KRMC)
- Clark Fork
- Hot Springs (2)
- VA Missoula
- Community Hospital Missoula
- Whitefish
- WMC
- Missoula
- St. Ignatius (3)
- St. Patrick's
- Bigfork (2)
- St. Peters Health, Helena, MT

### Length of Time to Schedule Appointment (Question 8)

N= 138

Respondents were asked to identify the average length of time it takes for them to schedule an appointment with their primary care provider. Forty-three percent of respondents (n=59) indicated they were able to schedule an appointment within “1-3 days”. Twenty-nine percent (n=40) were able to get appointments within “4-7 days” and 13% (n=18) indicated they were able to get appointments within “8-11 days” with their primary care provider. Twenty-one respondents chose not to answer this question.



## Reasons for Selecting Primary Care Providers (Question 9)

N= 159

Those respondents who indicated they or someone in their household had been seen by a primary care provider within the past three years were asked why they chose that primary care provider. “Closest to home” (n=76, 47.8%) and “Prior experience with clinic” (n=67, 42.1%) were the most frequently cited factors in primary care provider selection. Respondents were asked to check all that apply, so the percentages do not equal 100%.

<b>Reason</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Closest to home	76	47.8%
Prior experience with clinic	67	42.1%
Recommended by family or friends	44	27.7%
Appointment availability	43	27.0%
Clinic’s reputation for quality	31	19.5%
Referred by physician or other provider	24	15.1%
Length of waiting room time	10	6.3%
Cost of care	6	3.8%
Required by insurance plan	5	3.1%
VA/Military requirement	4	2.5%
Tribal Health by choice	3	1.9%
Indian Health Services requirement	3	1.9%
Other	20	12.6%

“Other” comments:

- Dr. reputation (2)
- Decent Dr.
- Dr. was at the clinic
- Sliding scale
- Stability of physician – didn’t leave after 3-4 years
- Random choice
- Lucky to find him at Saturday morning walk in clinic
- Dr. Dan Rausch is the best!
- Really like and trust my Dr. – he listens
- Worked with physician
- Personal choice
- My doctor changed from St. Joe
- Kalispell

## Cross Tabulation of Primary Care and Residence

Analysis was done to look at where respondents went most often for primary care with where they live by zip code. The chart below shows the results of the cross tabulation. Location of clinic is across the top of the chart while location of residence is along the side.

### LOCATION OF CLINIC MOST UTILIZED BY RESIDENCE

	St. Joseph Medical Clinic Polson	St. Joseph Medical Clinic Ronan	Polson Health Clinic (Kalispell clinic in Polson)	St. Luke Community Clinic Polson	St. Luke Community Clinic Ronan	Tribal Clinics	Other	Total
<b>Polson 59860</b>	68 (64.8%)		4 (3.8%)	17 (16.2%)	6 (5.7%)		10 (9.5%)	<b>105</b>
<b>Bigfork 59911</b>							4 (100%)	<b>4</b>
<b>Ronan 59864</b>	1 (9.1%)				10 (9.9%)			<b>11</b>
<b>St. Ignatius 59865</b>		1 (12.5%)			3 (37.5%)		4 (50%)	<b>8</b>
<b>Arlee 59821</b>						1 (100%)		<b>1</b>
<b>Charlo 59824</b>	1 (33.3%)				2 (66.7%)			<b>3</b>
<b>Hot Springs 59845</b>							2 (100%)	<b>2</b>
<b>Dixon 59831</b>								<b>0</b>
<b>Big Arm 59910</b>	4 (16.7%)		1 (16.7%)				1 (16.7%)	<b>6</b>
<b>Elmo 59915</b>	4 (66.7%)						2 (33.3%)	<b>6</b>
<b>Lone Pine 59848</b>								<b>0</b>
<b>Pablo 59855</b>							1 (33.3%)	<b>3</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>78</b> (52.3%)	<b>1</b> (0.7%)	<b>5</b> (3.4%)	<b>17</b> (11.4%)	<b>23</b> (15.4%)	<b>1</b> (0.7%)	<b>24</b> (16.1%)	<b>149</b>

## Cross Tabulation of Clinic and Reason Selected

Analysis was done to look at where respondents went most often for primary care services with why they selected that clinic/provider. The chart below shows the results of the cross tabulation. Reason clinic/provider was selected was a multiple response item thus totals cannot add up to 100%.

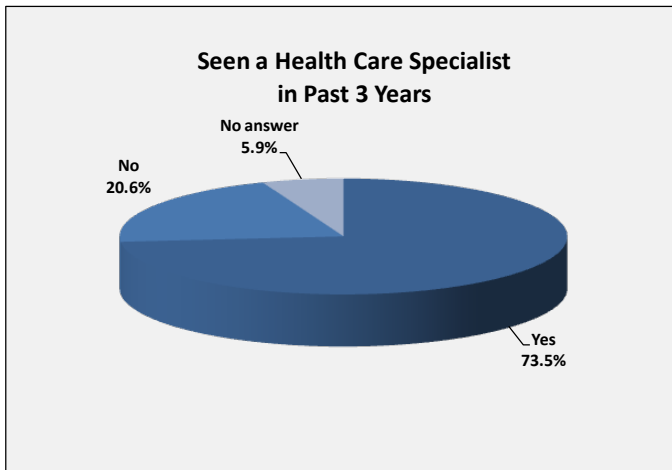
### LOCATION OF MOST UTILIZED PRIMARY CARE PROVIDER BY REASONS CLINIC SELECTED

	St Joseph Medical Clinic Polson	St Joseph Medical Clinic Ronan	Polson Health Clinic (Kalispell Clinic in Polson)	St Luke Community Clinic Polson	St Luke Community Clinic Ronan	Tribal Clinics	Other	Total
<b>Appointment availability</b>	24 (54.5%)		2 (4.5%)	6 (13.6%)	7 (15.9%)		5 (11.4%)	<b>44</b>
<b>Clinic's reputation for quality</b>	13 (44.8%)	1 (3.4%)	1 (3.4%)	5 (17.2%)	5 (17.2%)		4 (13.8%)	<b>29</b>
<b>Closest to home</b>	45 (60.8%)		1 (1.4%)	6 (8.1%)	13 (17.6%)	1 (1.4%)	8 (10.8%)	<b>74</b>
<b>Cost of care</b>	1 (33.3%)						2 (66.7%)	<b>3</b>
<b>Length of waiting room time</b>	6 (60%)			1 (10%)	3 (30%)			<b>10</b>
<b>Prior experience with clinic</b>	31 (47.7%)		1 (1.5%)	11 (16.9%)	12 (18.5%)		10 (15.4%)	<b>65</b>
<b>Recommended by family or friends</b>	20 (47.6%)	1 (2.4%)	1 (2.4%)	8 (19%)	7 (16.7%)		5 (11.9%)	<b>42</b>
<b>Referred by physician or other provider</b>	14 (63.6%)			1 (4.5%)	2 (9.1%)		5 (22.7%)	<b>22</b>
<b>Required by insurance plan</b>	4 (80%)						1 (20%)	<b>5</b>
<b>VA/Military requirement</b>							2 (100%)	<b>2</b>
<b>Tribal Health by choice</b>	2 (66.7%)				1 (33.3%)			<b>3</b>
<b>Indian Health Services requirement</b>	1 (33.3%)				2 (66.7%)			<b>3</b>
<b>Other</b>	5 (27.8%)		3 (16.7%)	3 (16.7%)	3 (16.7%)		4 (22.2%)	<b>18</b>

### Use of Health Care Specialists during the Past Three Years (Question 10)

N= 170

Seventy-four percent of the respondents (n=125) indicated they or a household member had seen a health care specialist during the past three years. Ten respondents (5.9%) chose not to answer this question.



### Type of Health Care Specialist Seen (Question 11)

The respondents (n=125) saw a wide array of health care specialists. The most frequently indicated specialist was the Dentist with 41.6% (n=52) of respondents having utilized these services. Cardiologist was the second most utilized specialist with 31.2% (n=39) and Dermatologist at 29.6% (n=37). Respondents were asked to choose all that apply so percentages will not equal 100%.

Health Care Practitioner	Count	Percent
Dentist	52	41.6%
Cardiologist	39	31.2%
Dermatologist	37	29.6%
Orthopedic surgeon	36	28.8%
Radiologist	35	28.0%
Physical therapist	32	25.6%
OB/GYN	19	15.2%
Oncologist/Hematologist	18	14.4%
ENT (ear/nose/throat)	17	13.6%
General surgeon	17	13.6%
Chiropractor	15	12.0%
Urologist	15	12.0%
Gastroenterologist	13	10.4%
Neurosurgeon	11	8.8%
Neurologist	10	8.0%
Rheumatologist	10	8.0%
Pulmonologist	9	7.2%
Allergist	8	6.4%
Mental health counselor	8	6.4%
Diabetes Educator	7	5.6%
Occupational therapist	5	4.0%
Psychologist	5	4.0%
Podiatrist	4	3.2%
Nephrologist	3	2.4%
Psychiatrist (M.D.)	3	2.4%
Geriatrician	2	1.6%
Pediatrician	2	1.6%
Dietician	1	0.8%
Endocrinologist	1	0.8%
Speech therapist	1	0.8%
Social worker	1	0.8%
Substance abuse counselor	1	0.8%
Other	12	9.6%

“Other” comments:

- Audiologist
- Vascular surgeon (2)
- St. Joe’s
- Eye surgeon
- ER
- Ophthalmologist (6)
- Naturopathic (2)
- Colonoscopy
- Gall bladder
- Physician

### Location of Health Care Specialist (Question 12)

Of those respondents indicating they saw a health care specialist, 60% (n=75) indicated they saw the specialist in Polson. Missoula was the second highest reported location with 47.2% (n=59) and Kalispell was next with 36.8% (n=46). Respondents could select more than one location therefore percentages do not equal 100%.

<b>Location</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Polson	75	60.0%
Missoula	59	47.2%
Kalispell	46	36.8%
Ronan	28	22.4%
St. Ignatius	5	4.0%
Other	6	4.8%

“Other” comments:

- Meza, AZ
- Denver
- Seattle, WA
- Libby
- Flagstaff
- VA Missoula and Harrison
- Clark Fork
- Whitefish
- Tucson, AZ



**Overall Quality of Care at St. Joseph Medical Center/ St. Joseph Medical Clinic- Polson/  
St. Joseph Medical Clinic- Ronan (Question 13)**

Respondents were asked to rate a variety of aspects of the overall care provided at St. Joseph Medical Center and Clinics based in Polson and Ronan. Respondents were asked to rate the services using the scale of 4= Excellent, 3= Good, 2= Fair, 1= Poor and Don't know or Haven't used. The sums of the average scores were then calculated with "Oncology (cancer treatment)" receiving the top average score of 3.6 out of 4.0. The total average score was 3.4, indicating the overall services of the hospital to be Excellent to Good.

	<b>Excellent (4)</b>	<b>Good (3)</b>	<b>Fair (2)</b>	<b>Poor (1)</b>	<b>Don't know</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Average</b>
Assisted living	6	3	2	0	159	170	3.4
Cardiology	12	11	4	2	141	170	3.1
Dermatology	9	6	0	3	152	170	3.2
Emergency room	38	33	10	4	85	170	3.2
ENT (ear/nose/throat)	3	7	1	0	159	170	3.2
General surgery	13	10	3	1	143	170	3.3
Laboratory	51	36	2	1	80	170	3.5
Medical Clinic (primary care)	49	36	8	0	77	170	3.4
Orthopedics	6	10	3	1	150	170	3.1
Oncology (cancer treatment)	12	4	0	1	153	170	3.6
Ophthalmology	2	2	0	2	164	170	2.7
Physical therapy/rehabilitation	24	22	8	1	115	170	3.3
Radiology (x-ray)	40	33	2	0	95	170	3.5
Urology	4	7	0	1	158	170	3.2
Visiting specialists	18	10	3	1	138	170	3.4
Women's health (OB/GYN)	23	14	1	1	131	170	3.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>19</b>			<b>3.4</b>

### Experience at St. Joseph Medical Center (Question 14)

N=130

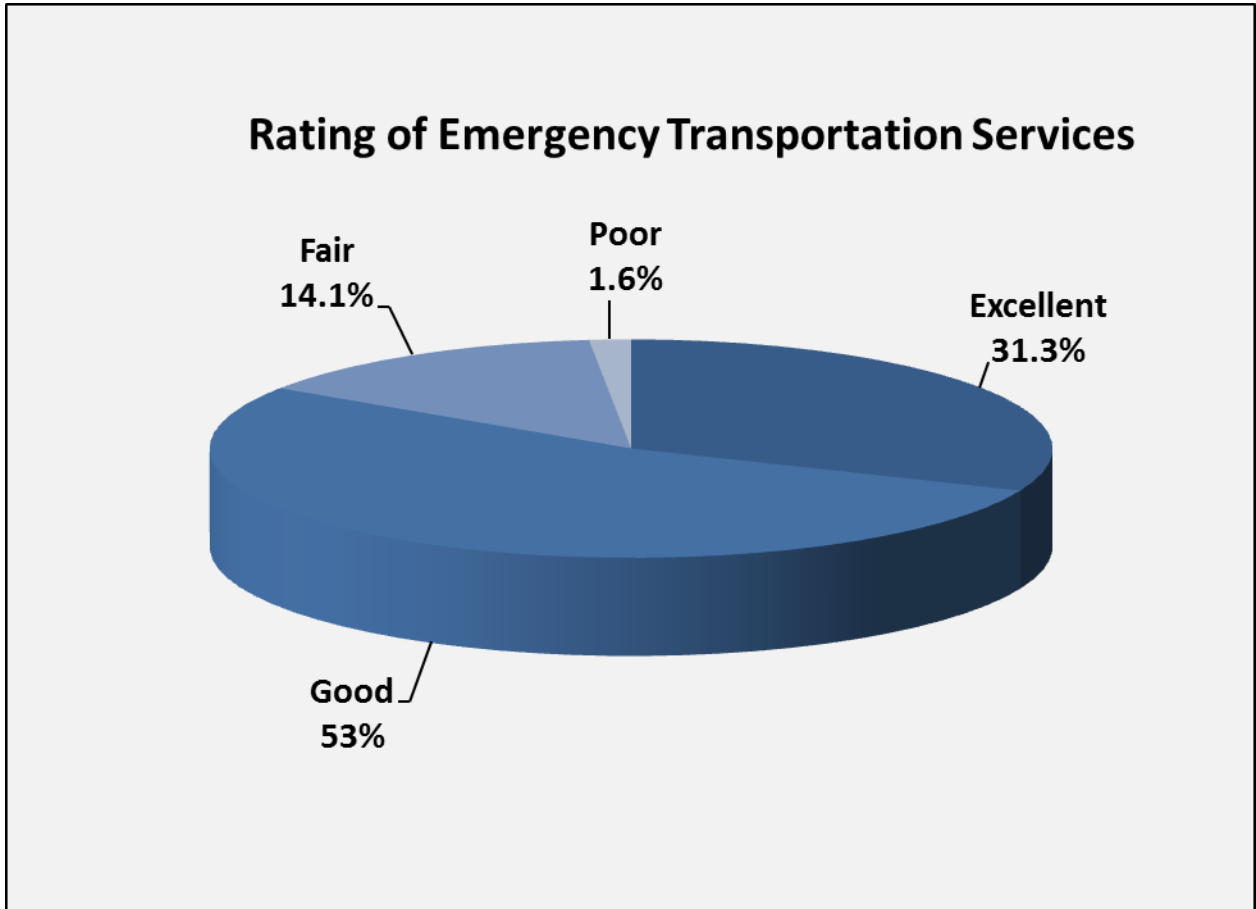
Respondents, who had utilized St. Joseph Medical Center’s services in the past three years, were asked to indicate how they would describe that experience. Over half of the respondents, 54.6% (n=71) indicated they “felt welcome and well taken care of” and 28.5% (n=37) indicated “the care met their expectations”.

<b>Description of experience</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>
I felt welcome and well taken care of	71	54.6%
The care met my expectations	37	28.5%
No opinion/neutral	19	14.6%
I felt disrespected	2	1.5%
I felt ignored	1	0.8%

### Rating of Emergency Transportation (Question 15)

N= 64

Respondents were asked to rate the emergency transportation services in their community. Fifty-three percent of respondents (n=34) indicated the emergency transportation services in the community were “Good.” Thirty-one percent felt the services were “excellent” (n=20) and 14.1% indicated they were “Fair” (n=9). One hundred and six respondents chose not to answer this question.



### Emergency Transportation Services Utilized (Question 16)

N= 45

Respondents were asked if they had utilized emergency transportation services/emergency medical services (EMS), to indicate which service was used. Arlee EMS services were the top utilized with 69% (n=31) followed by St. Ignatius with 24.4% (n=11). One hundred and twenty-five respondents chose not to answer this question.

<b>EMS Service Utilized</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Arlee	31	69.0%
St. Ignatius	11	24.4%
Hot Springs	2	4.4%
Polson	1	2.2%
Ronan	0	0

### Cross Tabulation of Rating of EMS Services and EMS Service Utilized

Analysis was done to look at which Emergency Medical Services respondents utilized with their Rating of EMS in the community. The chart below shows the results of the cross tabulation. Reason clinic/provider was selected was a multiple response item thus totals cannot add up to 100%.

#### RATING OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES BY SERVICE UTILIZED

	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Arlee</b>	14 (50%)	9 (32.1%)	5 (17.9%)		<b>28</b>
<b>St. Ignatius</b>	2 (20%)	8 (80%)			<b>10</b>
<b>Hot Springs</b>	1 (50%)		1 (50%)		<b>2</b>
<b>Polson</b>		1 (100%)			<b>1</b>
<b>Ronan</b>					<b>0</b>

### Desired Local Health Care Services (Question 17)

Respondents were asked to indicate which additional health care services presently not available would they use if available locally. The following list is the responses to this open ended question.

- Podiatrist, 3D mammograms, colonoscopy
- Rheumatologist
- More natural and preventative
- Dermatologist
- Fertility specialist
- Acupuncture, massage therapy, bodytalk
- More physicians than are available (specialists), dermatology, surgeons
- Unsure
- A clinic with a sliding fee scale
- Mental health and counseling. Help paying for healthcare services
- All specialists, if I had confidence in them. More competence in ER
- Heart specialist
- Naturopathic
- Not sure. Additional costs apply to using specialized services through St. Joe – i.e. surgical room such as for cataract or laser
- Place to work out
- Women's pool for aquacise
- Any I may need if New West was accepted at St. Joe's
- Pulmonologist
- Low income medical and dental services – fee based on income

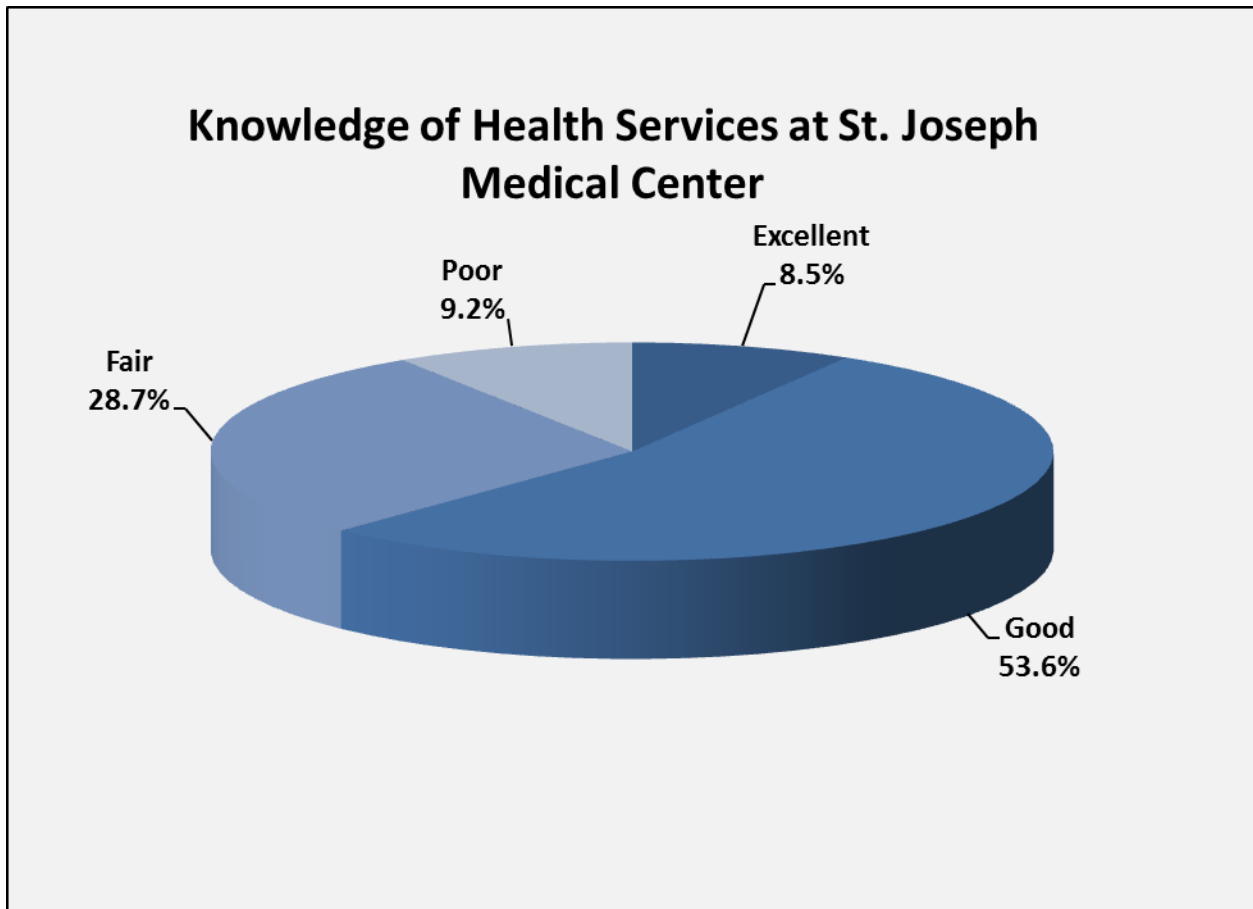
## V. Survey Findings – Service Awareness

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### Overall Awareness of St. Joseph Medical Center’s Services (Question 18)

N= 153

Respondents were asked to rate their knowledge of the health services available at St. Joseph Medical Center. Fifty-four percent (n=82) of respondents rated their knowledge of St. Joseph Medical Center as “Good.” Twenty-nine percent (n=44) rated their knowledge as “Fair” and 9.2% of respondents (n=14) rated their knowledge as “Poor.” Seventeen respondents chose not to answer this question.



### How Respondents Learn of Health Care Services (Question 19)

“Word of mouth” was the most frequent method of learning about available services at 74.7% (n=127). Generally, “word of mouth” is the most frequent response among rural hospital surveys. “Health care provider” was the second most frequent response to how people learn of health care services with 35.3% (n=60) and “Lake County Leader” was reported at 22.9% (n=39). Respondents could select more than one method so percentages do not equal 100%.

Method	Count	Percent
Word of mouth	127	74.7%
Health care provider	60	35.3%
Lake County Leader	39	22.9%
Yellow Pages	32	18.8%
Valley Journal	26	15.3%
Missoulian	13	7.6%
Public Health	12	7.1%
Billboard	12	7.1%
Presentations	9	5.3%
Television	9	5.3%
Radio	6	3.5%
Website/internet	3	1.8%
Other	16	9.4%

“Other” comments:

- Being in Bigfork, I’m not really part of your community
- Persons working there
- Call and ask
- Experience
- Co-workers
- Live in the area
- Drove around town
- Primary doctor (3)
- Dr. referrals
- Always go to Ronan
- Drove past
- Family past experience
- It is a small town. Everybody knows about everybody.



## Cross Tabulation of Service Knowledge and Learning about Services

Analysis was done to look at respondents' knowledge of services available at St. Joseph Medical Center with how they learn about services available in their community. The chart below shows the results of the cross tabulation. How respondents learned of health care services was a multiple response item thus totals cannot add up to 100%.

### KNOWLEDGE RATING OF ST JOSEPH MEDICAL CENTER SERVICES BY HOW RESPONDENTS LEARN ABOUT HEALTH CARE SERVICES

	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Yellow Pages</b>	3 (9.7%)	10 (32.3%)	13 (41.9%)	5 (16.1%)	<b>31</b>
<b>Word of mouth</b>	12 (9.8%)	64 (52.5%)	35 (28.7%)	11 (9%)	<b>122</b>
<b>Website/internet</b>	1 (33.3%)	1 (33.3%)	1 (33.3%)		<b>3</b>
<b>Public Health</b>	1 (8.3%)	8 (66.7%)	3 (25%)		<b>12</b>
<b>Billboard</b>	2 (18.2%)	4 (36.4%)	4 (36.4%)	1 (9.1%)	<b>11</b>
<b>Health care provider</b>	5 (8.6%)	33 (56.9%)	17 (29.3%)	3 (5.2%)	<b>58</b>
<b>Presentations</b>	2 (22.2%)	6 (66.7%)	1 (11.1%)		<b>9</b>
<b>Television</b>	2 (25%)	4 (50%)	2 (25%)		<b>8</b>
<b>Lake County Leader</b>	3 (7.9%)	18 (47.4%)	13 (34.2%)	4 (10.5%)	<b>38</b>
<b>Valley Journal</b>	2 (7.7%)	15 (57.7%)	7 (26.9%)	2 (7.7%)	<b>26</b>
<b>Missoulian</b>	2 (15.4%)	7 (53.8%)	3 (23.1%)	1 (7.7%)	<b>13</b>
<b>Radio</b>	1 (16.7%)	5 (83.3%)			<b>6</b>
<b>Other</b>		10 (66.7%)	1 (6.7%)	4 (26.7%)	<b>15</b>

### Other Community Health Resources Utilized (Question 20)

Respondents were asked which community health resources, other than the hospital or clinic, they had used in the last three years and if it was Tribal or Non-Tribal.

<b>Health Resources</b>	<b>Non-Tribal</b>	<b>Tribal</b>
Pharmacy	125 (73.5%)	14 (8.2%)
Dentist	113 (66.5%)	12 (7.1%)
Public/County health	21 (12.4%)	2 (1.2%)
Audiology	17 (10.0%)	2 (1.2%)
Chiropractor	36 (21.2%)	
Naturopath	14 (8.2%)	
Mental health	11 (6.5%)	1 (0.6%)
Tribal Health services	1 (0.6%)	11 (6.5%)
Senior Center/Elder care	6 (3.5%)	1 (0.6%)

## Improvement for Community’s Access to Health Care (Question 21)

Respondents were asked what would improve their community’s access to health care. Twenty-six percent of respondents (n=44) report “More specialists” would make the greatest improvement. Twenty-one percent of respondents (n=35) indicated they would like “More primary care providers” and 20% indicated they would like “Improved quality of care.” Respondents could select more than one method so percentages do not equal 100%.

Service	Count	Percent
More specialists	44	25.9%
More primary care providers	35	20.6%
Improved quality of care	34	20.0%
Greater health education services	30	17.6%
Outpatient services open longer hours	30	17.6%
Transportation assistance	22	12.9%
Cultural sensitivity	9	5.3%
Telemedicine	8	4.7%
Interpreter services	1	0.6%
Other	15	8.8%

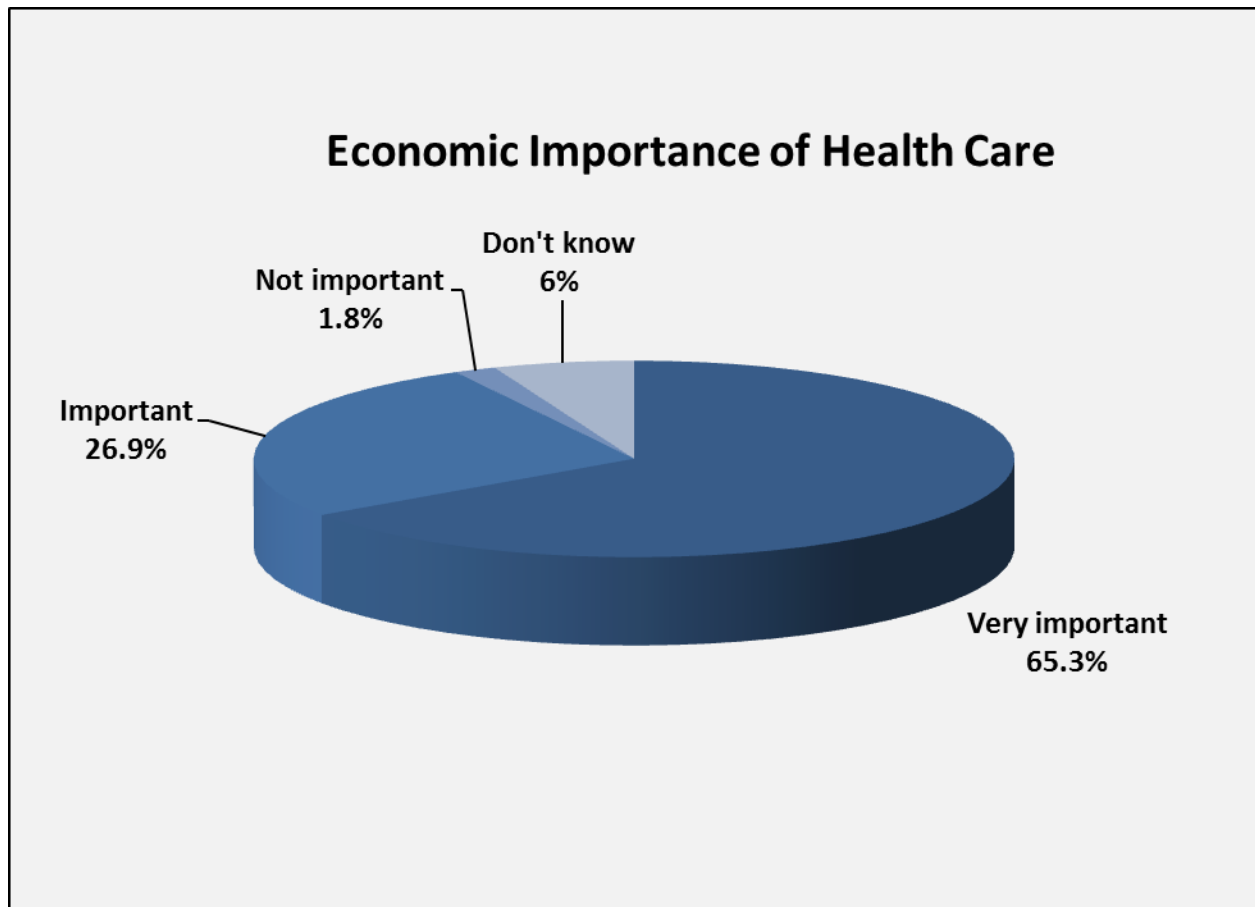
### “Other” comments:

- Being in Bigfork, I’m not really part of your community
- More preventative options
- US government controlled universal health care
- A good water therapy without needing dr. prescription
- Join New West Ins.
- Basic health clinics
- My health insurance sucks, preventative/alternative medicine
- Naturopathic
- Affordable
- National computer access for patient records
- Better quality of doctors
- Trusting that local practitioners have same level of competency as larger medical centers.
- More experienced doctors
- Information on no income solutions
- Dialysis center
- I feel our access to health care and the quality of care available in MT is amazing
- Affordable insurance
- Insurance coverage
- Health care here is excellent. I recommend no changes
- Physician training in bedside manner, sterile technique, diagnosis
- Increased surgical services
- More info as to what is available in our area

### Economic Importance of Local Health Care Services (Question 22)

N= 167

The majority of respondents, 65.3% (n=109) indicated that local health care services are “Very Important” to the economic well-being of the area and 26.9% (n=45) indicated they are “Important.” Three respondents chose not to answer this question.



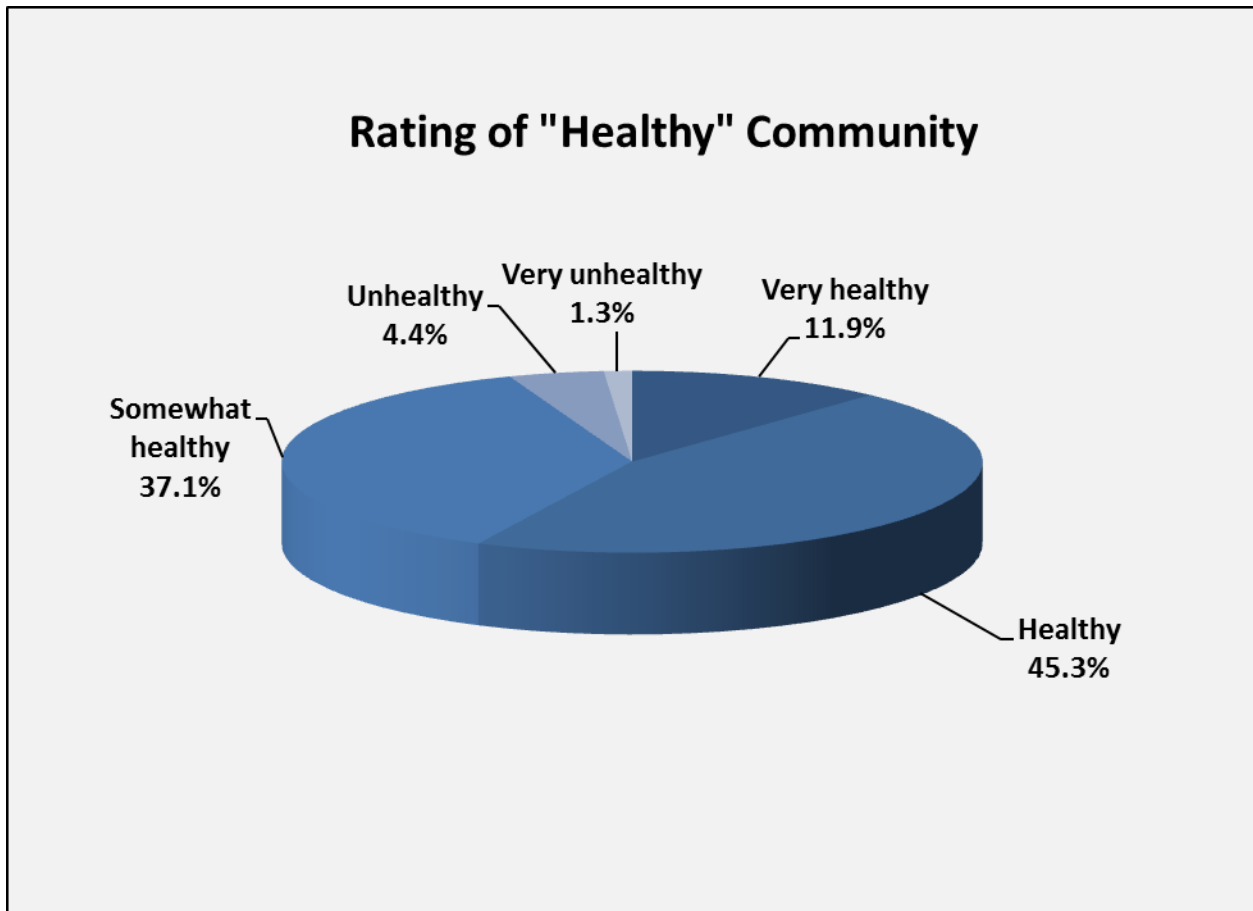
## VI. Survey Findings- Community Health

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### Impression of Community (Question 23)

N=159

Respondents were asked how they would rate their community as a healthy place to be living in. Forty-five percent of respondents (n=72) rated their community as “Healthy.” Thirty-seven percent of respondents (n=59) felt their community was “Somewhat Healthy” and 11.9% (n=19) felt their community was “Very Healthy.”



### Health Concerns for Community (Question 24)

Respondents were asked what they felt the three most serious health concerns were in their community. The number one health concern identified by respondents was “Alcohol/Substance abuse” at 71.8% (n=122). “Obesity” was also a high priority with 35.9% (n=61) and “Cancer” with 34.7% (n=59). Respondents were asked to pick their top three serious health concerns, so percentages do not equal 100%.

Health Concern	Count	Percent
Alcohol/Substance abuse	122	71.8%
Obesity	61	35.9%
Cancer	59	34.7%
Domestic violence	42	24.7%
Lack of exercise	41	24.1%
Diabetes	37	21.8%
Tobacco use	33	19.4%
Motor vehicle accidents	30	17.6%
Heart disease	25	14.7%
Lack of access to healthy food choices	14	8.2%
Mental health issues	13	7.6%
Lack of access to health care	9	5.3%
Lack of dental care	7	4.1%
Suicide	6	3.5%
People not following doctor’s instructions	4	2.4%
Work related accidents/injuries	4	2.4%
Stroke	3	1.8%
Recreational related accidents/injuries	2	1.2%
Other	4	2.4%

“Other” comments:

- Drugs
- Ignorance
- Education
- Healthy choices are available at stores, but not necessarily restaurants

### Components of a Healthy Community (Question 25)

Respondents were asked to identify the three most important things for a healthy community. Fifty-eight percent of respondents (n=99) indicated “Access to health care and other services” is important for a healthy community. “Good jobs and healthy economy” was the second most indicated component with 42.9% (n=73) and “Healthy behaviors and lifestyles” at 34.7% (n=55). Respondents were asked to identify their top three choices, thus the percentages will not add up to 100%.

<b>Important Component</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Access to health care and other services	99	58.2%
Good jobs and healthy economy	73	42.9%
Healthy behaviors and lifestyle	55	34.7%
Strong family life	48	28.2%
Low crime/safe neighborhoods	41	24.1%
Religious or spiritual values	38	22.4%
Good schools	37	21.8%
Clean environment	35	20.6%
Affordable housing	34	20.0%
Community involvement	14	8.2%
Low level of domestic violence	9	5.3%
Embracing diversity	8	4.7%
Food accessibility	7	4.1%
Arts and cultural events	6	3.5%
Parks and recreation	5	2.9%
Low level of death and disease rates	4	2.4%
Other	1	0.6%

“Other” comments:

- All of the above
- Education

## VII. Survey Findings- Health Insurance

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### Insurance Coverage (Question 26)

Respondents were asked to indicate what type of insurance covers the majority of their medical, dental, vision and prescription expenses. Thirty-six percent (n=29) indicated they have “Medicare” coverage for their medical expenses. Respondents indicated they “Do not have insurance” for dental and vision services (37.5%, n=39; 36.7%, n=33 respectively) and prescription expenses were utilized through “Employer sponsored” programs (25.3%, n=25).

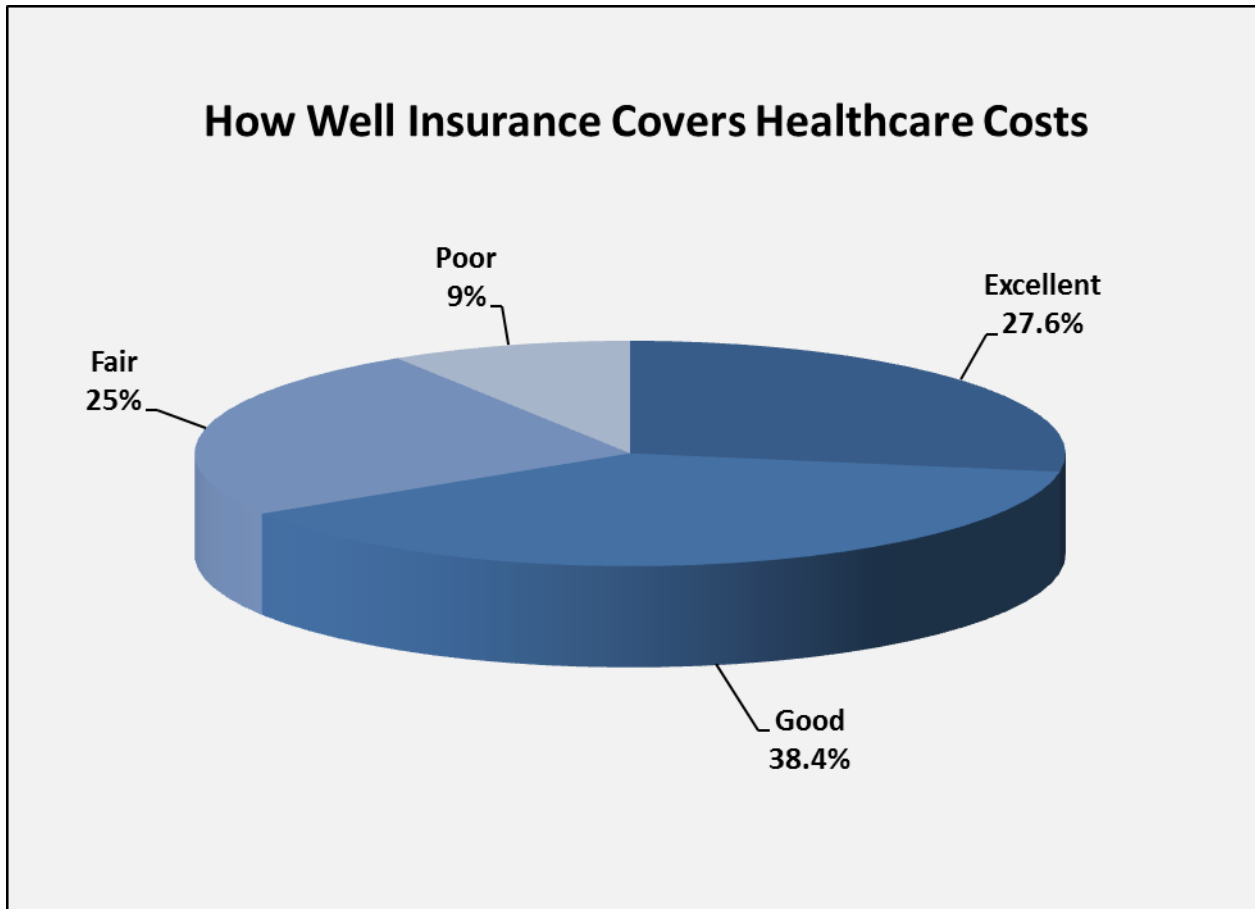
Type of Coverage	Medical	Dental	Vision	Prescription
Do not have insurance	9 (11.3%)	39 (37.5%)	33 (36.7%)	19 (19.2%)
Employer sponsored	21 (26.3%)	18 (17.3%)	13 (14.4%)	25 (25.3%)
Private Insurance	10 (12.5%)	12 (11.5%)	6 (6.7%)	17 (17.2%)
Self paid/out of pocket	5 (6.3%)	22 (21.2%)	18 (20.0%)	12 (12.1%)
Health Savings Account		1 (1.0%)	1 (1.1%)	1 (1.0%)
Healthy Montana Kids	1 (1.3%)			
Medicaid	2 (2.5%)	2 (1.9%)	2 (2.2%)	3 (3.0%)
Medicare	29 (36.3%)	1 (1.0%)	12 (13.3%)	12 (12.1%)
Indian Health	1 (1.3%)	6 (5.8%)	3 (3.3%)	5 (5.1%)
VA/Military	2 (2.5%)	3 (2.9%)	2 (2.2%)	5 (5.1%)
Total (n= )	80	104	90	99



### Insurance and Health Care Costs (Question 27)

N= 156

Respondents were asked to indicate how well they feel their health insurance covers their health care costs. Thirty-eight percent of respondents (n=60) indicated they feel their insurance covers a “Good” amount of their health care costs. Twenty-eight percent of respondents (n=43) indicated they feel their insurance is “Excellent” and 25% of respondents (n=39) indicated they felt their insurance was “Fair.”



### Barriers to Having Medical Insurance (Question 28)

N= 9

Respondents were asked if they do not have medical insurance, why not. Eighty-nine percent (n=8) reported they did not have medical insurance because they could not afford to pay for it and twenty-two percent (n=2) indicated their employer does not offer insurance. Respondents were asked to mark all answers that applied, thus the percentages do not equal 100%.

Reason	Count	Percent
Cannot afford to pay for medical insurance	8	88.9%
Employer does not offer insurance	2	22.2%
Choose not to have medical insurance	1	11.1%
Cannot get medical insurance due to medical issues	1	11.1%
Other	1	11.1%

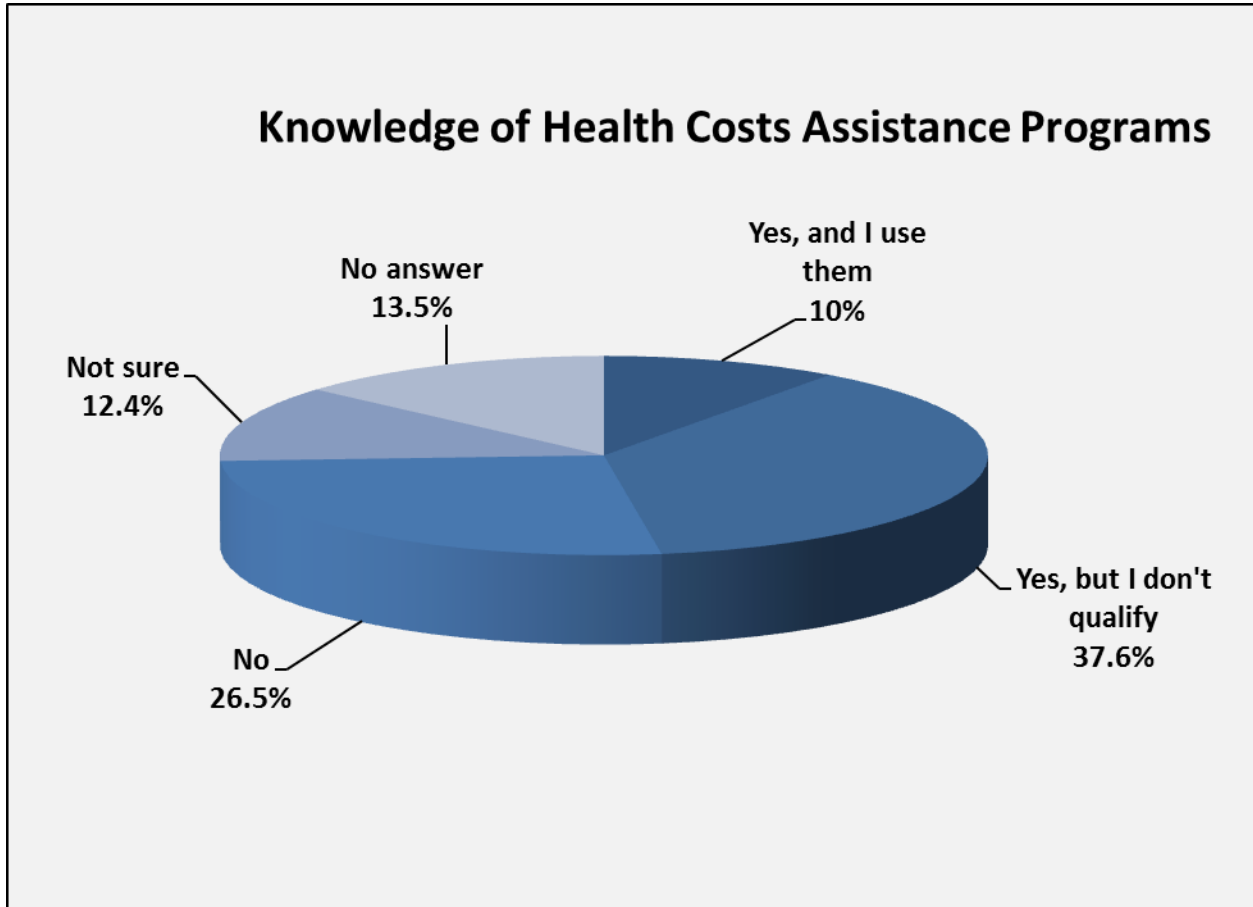
“Other” comments:

- All of the above
- Was very grateful for St. Joe’s “mercy” fund I qualified for 5 years ago - \$25,000 was paid for my accident
- We had Humana Gold until 2011 – now not available in WMT
- Lake County takes it all in property taxes
- My age, 86 year old
- Have not worked for 14 years
- Get no dental or eye. Tribal health turns you down if not life threatening
- Unemployed (2)

### Awareness of Health Payment Programs (Question 29)

N= 170

Respondents were asked to indicate their awareness of programs that help people pay for health care bills. Thirty-eight percent of respondents (n=64) indicated they were aware of these types of programs, but did not qualify to use them. Twenty-seven percent (n=45) indicated they did not know of these programs and 12.4% of respondents (n=21) indicated they are unsure. Twenty-three respondents chose not to answer this question.



## **VIII. Focus Group Methodology**

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Two focus groups were held in Polson, Montana in August 2011. Focus group participants were identified as people living in the St. Joseph Medical Center's service area. Each individual received an invitation to participate.

Approximately 26 people participated in the two focus group interviews. The focus groups were designed to represent various consumer groups of health care including senior citizens and local community members. Focus groups were held at the Senior Center and at the Mission Bay Development Community Center, were up to 90 minutes in length and followed the same line of questioning in each session (Appendix D). The questions and discussions at the focus groups were led by Kristin Juliar with the Montana Office of Rural Health.

## Focus Group Findings

The following themes and issues emerged from the responses participants gave to the line of questions found in Appendix D.

- *Major issues in health care-* Themes that were commonly discussed as top concerns was the cost of healthcare and insurance as well as the need for more help and better explanations concerning billing, financial and insurance issues in regard to services received at St. Joseph Medical Center. One participant stated, “Insurance is expensive. Blue Cross Blue Shield has a monopoly in Montana; the prices are too high”. Furthermore, participants’ perception is that there is a high turnover in providers at St. Joseph Medical Center and a lack of collaboration to provide services among local hospitals.
- *Opinion of services and quality of care at St. Joseph Medical Center:*

*Quality of Care-* Participants spoke highly of the hospital and clinic. Many praised the care they and their family had received saying, “What there is, is excellent”, and “Good home health and we have a great physical therapist”. Participants also made a number of suggestions for improvement including the need for follow up services and better communication about available services. “They need to follow up with services, for instance better instruction when you go home and it would be nice to take your records with you” and, “We need better communication- no one knows about what’s available: shots, etc. We need an access site to get information.” Finally, participants also indicated that, “There are a lot of rumors that go around; it would help if the hospital informed the people in the paper, over the radio, in the journal, or just on signs” and some mentioned they are “disgusted with the competition between hospitals”.

*Number of Services-* Participants indicated that local services are good; however they have to travel out of town a lot for referrals and they would like to see close-by hospitals share resources to provide more services. “People here rely on referrals out of town, but the services are good” and indicated they felt there was “No coordination between hospitals that are only 11 miles apart”. Participants complimented the women’s health fair, “There is a women’s wellness fair that a lot of people go to. It’s very well organized and lets you know what services are provided in the valley. Another concern was also expressed by participants, “A lot of doctors come from other places and there is concern with doctors not knowing their patients.”

*Hospital Staff-* Participants discussed hospital staff in terms of style of care and competence. Hospital staff was viewed highly. There were many praising comments such as, “Technicians are excellent” and “Dave is so good”. One participant noted, “St. Pats has a program for staff regarding weight control that I think St. Joes should consider because it’s hard to take advice from nurses who are way overweight. Also, nurses smelling like smoke are gross.”

*Hospital Board and Leadership-* The hospital board was viewed well by participants who had knowledge of the group. “They are good leaders as far as I know” and “They have improved a lot”. Some participants do not know how the hospital board is doing. “How would we know?” One participant commented, “[We] Don’t have the opportunity to meet them, but I would like to.”

*Business Office-* Billing is perceived as “very frustrating”. Many indicated difficulty getting help with billing issues, insurance issues and paying bills. “As far as getting care, they do a good job. It’s the details though, like billing and communication about the billing that are a problem.” Others expressed frustration with payments and access to care for those with less means, “When you get a bill you are expected to pay so many dollars a month. If you can’t pay that, they send you to the bill collectors, even though you could pay a lower amount”, and “Need awareness for a place to get help with financial problems”. Participants did indicate that they liked the business office staff. “Leann is outstanding” and “The lady in the business office upstairs was awesome”.

*Condition of Facility and Equipment-* Condition of facility was described as “good”. One participant added, “I had cataract surgery done twice and it was as good at St. Joes as it was in Kalispell”.

*Financial Health of the Hospital-* Participants stated, “How would we know?” and “Reorganization in staff kinda brings up a red flag”.

*Cost-* Participants felt that the cost of care was better than other places. Participants commented, “In relation to a big city, it is very reasonable” and “Much more affordable than New Mexico”. However, it was also noted in relation to cost that there is, “Great health care when a person has nothing, but less when you have a little income because there is less help from the hospital to pay for health care if a person makes just enough to be above the poverty line.”

*Office/Clinic staff-* Participants had “good experiences” with the office or clinic staff. One participant noted, the staff is “Very pleasant at front desk. They just don’t have enough information to help with insurance issues”.

*Availability-* Participants felt availability was good. Comments included, “I have been able to get everything I need” and “[They are] willing to work with your schedule”

- *Opinion of local providers-* Participants indicated they use local providers as much as possible, but “We don’t have many specialists, so we have to be referred which is fine.” Reasons given for using local providers were, “They are handy” and “I love my PA. She’s the best I have ever had”. One participant noted, “Yes I say local, but we have a problem with the turnover of doctors. I would like to get comfortable with one.”

- *Opinion of Local Services:*

*Emergency Room-* Participants spoke highly of the emergency room and had positive experiences.

*Ambulance Service-* Participants felt that improvements could be made to the ambulance service. It was noted that it is “Very expensive; \$2200 from Polson to Missoula” and that there are “Problems with ambulance taking too much time after arriving on scene to stabilize the patient”. It was suggested that the ambulance service “needs better training and communication”.

*Health Care Services for the Elderly-* Participants indicated that healthcare services should be sensitive to the specialized needs of the elderly, noting, “I get upset with hospitals referring elderly people for out- of- town services, especially a 6:00 AM appointment.” They also indicated a need for services, stating “Home health care is absolutely superb, but it comes from the doctor. The patients don’t know who to contact to get home health care” and “We need a place between the nursing home and home, like assisted living.”

*Public/County Health Department-* Participants commented that “It’s the only place that offers some services like shots.”

*Health Care Services for the Poor-* Participants felt that those who are poor “get very decent help and better than average care” and that “They are treated very well.” It was also indicated that “the Tribal Healthcare Center has answered some of the healthcare needs”. Further noted by one participant was that, “There seems to be problems with getting information out there to the people who need it.”

- *What Would Make Community a Healthier Place to Live-* Participants indicated a need for “more elder care such as short term care for things like hip replacements”, current medical records for hospital patients, and less fluctuation among hospital staff. “Health records may not be as good here because many people do not live here year round and they have health records where they live too. The hospital needs to get up-to-date records”. Finally, one participant noted, “I wish we had mental health care”.
- *Health Services Needed in the Community-* Additional services needed in the community were “a good cardiologist”, assisted living, short-term rehabilitation, mental health care and dermatology.

## IX. Summary

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One hundred and seventy surveys were completed in the St. Joseph Medical Center's service area for a 21% response rate. Of the 170 returned, 58.3% of the respondents were females, 55.8% of the respondents were 66 years of age or older and 62% of respondents indicated they are retired.

Respondents rated the overall quality of care at the hospital as excellent to good, scoring 3.4 out of 4.0 on a scale of 4.0 being excellent and 1.0 being poor.

Seventy-four percent of the respondents have sought specialty care during the past three years. The most frequent specialists seen was the Dentist at 41.6% (n=52), Cardiologist at 31.2% (n=39) and Dermatologist at 29.6% (n=37).

Overall, the respondents within the St. Joseph's Medical Center service area are seeking hospital care at a rate that is typically seen in rural areas. Area residents recognize the major impact the health care sector has on the economic well-being of the area, with 65.3% of respondents identifying local health care services as "Essential" and "Very Important" to the economic well-being of the area.

The majority of participants appeared to have very favorable opinions of the services with most praising the care received. Participants were appreciative of the care available while identifying additional services or needs.

In summary, respondents report support for local health care and many prefer to seek care locally whenever possible for the convenience and out of trust for local providers.



**Appendix A- Survey Cover Letter**



May 2, 2011

Dear Resident:

This letter and survey concern the future of health care in Polson and the surrounding area. Your help is critical in determining health priorities and future needs.

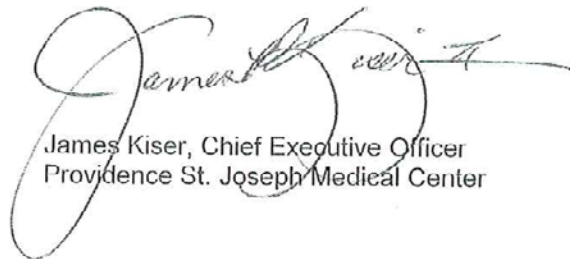
You are probably aware of many challenges facing rural health care, including access to services and affordability. Unfortunately, many of the same factors that threaten health care services nationally challenge our local health care system as well. By completing the enclosed survey, you can help guide Providence St. Joseph Medical Center in developing comprehensive and affordable health care services to Lake County residents.

Please take a few moments to complete the enclosed survey by **May 31st, 2011**. **Your name was selected at random and your answers will be kept confidential.** Your response is very important because your comments will represent others in the area. The purpose of the survey is to obtain information from a wide range of area residents to assist in planning programs, services, and facilities to meet present and future health care needs. Even if you don't use health care services with Providence St. Joseph Medical Center, your input is still helpful. We know your time is valuable so we have made every effort to keep the survey brief. It should take less than 15 minutes to complete. **Your help is much appreciated in responding to this survey.**

Once you complete the survey, simply **return it in the enclosed self-addressed, postage paid envelope.** All survey responses will go to the National Rural Health Resource Center in Duluth, Minnesota, the organization that is assisting with this project. If you have any questions about the survey, please call Natalie Claiborne at the Montana Office of Rural Health/Area Health Education Center at 406-994-6001. The overall results of the survey will be presented at a community forum. We believe, with your help, we can continue to improve our local health care services.

Thank you for your assistance. We appreciate your effort.

Sincerely,



James Kiser, Chief Executive Officer  
Providence St. Joseph Medical Center

Appendix B- Survey Instrument

Community Health Services Development Survey
Polson, Montana

INSTRUCTIONS: Please use a #2 pencil or ink pen to complete the survey and return it in the enclosed postage paid envelope. All responses must be made by filling in the circle next to the corresponding answer. If you need assistance filling out this survey, please contact the Montana Office of Rural Health at 406-994-6001. All responses will be kept confidential.

1. In the past three years, was there a time when you or a member of your household thought you needed health care services but did NOT get or delayed getting medical services?

- Yes No (If no, skip to question 3)

2. If yes, what were the three most important reasons why you did not receive health care services? (Select 3 that apply)

- Could not get an appointment, Too long to wait for an appointment, Office wasn't open when I could go, Unsure if services were available, Had no one to care for the children, Discouraged from utilizing local service, It cost too much, Could not get off work, Didn't know where to go, It was too far to go, My insurance didn't cover it, No insurance, Not treated with respect, Too nervous or afraid, Language barrier, Transportation problems, Don't like/trust doctors, Other

3. In the past three years, have you or a household member received care in a hospital? (i.e. hospitalized overnight, day surgery, obstetrical care, rehabilitation, radiology or emergency care)

- Yes No (If no, skip to question 6)

4. If yes, which hospital does your household use MOST for hospital care? (Please select only ONE)

- St. Joseph Medical Center, Kalispell Regional Medical Center, Community Medical Center, St. Luke Community Healthcare, St. Patrick Hospital & Health Sciences Center, Other

5. Thinking about the hospital you use most frequently, what were the three most important reasons for selecting that hospital? (Select 3 that apply)

- Closest to home, Closest to work, Cost of care, Emergency, no choice, Hospital's reputation for, Prior experience with hospital, Recommended by family or friends, Referred by physician, Required by insurance plan, VA/ Military requirement, Tribal health requirement, Only location that provided needed, Other

6. In the past three years, have you or a household member seen a primary health care provider, such as a family physician, physician assistant, nurse practitioner, obstetrician or pediatrician for health care services?

- Yes No (If no, skip to question 10)



7. Where was that primary health care provider located? **(Please select only ONE)**

- St. Joseph Medical Clinic- Polson
- St. Joseph Medical Clinic- Ronan
- Polson Health Clinic (Kalispell's clinic in Polson)
- St. Luke Community Clinic- Polson
- St. Luke Community Clinic- Ronan
- Tribal Clinics
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

8. What is the average length of time to schedule an appointment with your primary care provider?

- 1-3 days
- 4-7 days
- 8-11 days
- 12-14 days
- 15+days
- Not applicable

9. Why did you select the primary care provider you are currently seeing? **(Select all that apply)**

- Appointment availability
- Clinic's reputation for quality
- Closest to home
- Cost of care
- Length of waiting room time
- Prior experience with clinic
- Recommended by family or friends
- Referred by physician or other provider
- Required by insurance plan
- VA/Military requirement
- Tribal Health by choice
- Indian Health Services requirement
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

10. In the past three years, have you or a household member seen a health care specialist (other than your primary care provider) for health care services?  Yes  No **(If no, skip to question 13)**

11. What type of health care specialist was seen? **(Select all that apply)**

- Allergist
- Cardiologist
- Chiropractor
- Dentist
- Dermatologist
- Diabetes educator
- Dietician
- Endocrinologist
- ENT (ear/nose/throat)
- Gastroenterologist
- General surgeon
- Geriatrician
- Mental health counselor
- Nephrologist
- Neurologist
- Neurosurgeon
- OB/GYN
- Occupational therapist
- Oncologist/Hematologist
- Orthopedic surgeon
- Pediatrician
- Physical therapist
- Podiatrist
- Psychiatrist (M.D.)
- Psychologist
- Pulmonologist
- Radiologist
- Rheumatologist
- Speech therapist
- Social worker
- Substance abuse counselor
- Urologist
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

12. Where was the health care specialist seen? **(Select all that apply)**

- Polson
- Ronan
- Missoula
- St. Ignatius
- Kalispell
- Other \_\_\_\_\_





13. The following services are available at St. Joseph Medical Center/SJM Clinic-Polson/SJM Clinic-Ronan. Please rate the overall quality for each service. (Please mark DK if you haven't used the service)

	<i>Excellent = 4</i>	<i>Good = 3</i>	<i>Fair = 2</i>	<i>Poor = 1</i>	<i>Don't Know = DK</i>
Assisted living	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> DK
Cardiology	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> DK
Dermatology	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> DK
Emergency room	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> DK
ENT (ear/nose/throat)	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> DK
General surgery	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> DK
Laboratory	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> DK
Medical Clinic (primary care)	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> DK
Orthopedics	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> DK
Oncology (cancer treatment)	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> DK
Ophthalmology	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> DK
Physical therapy/rehabilitation	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> DK
Radiology (x-ray)	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> DK
Urology	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> DK
Visiting specialists	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> DK
Women's health (OB/GYN)	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> DK

14. If you utilized St. Joseph Medical Center services in the past three years, please indicate which best describes your experience. (Please select only ONE)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> I felt welcome and well taken care of | <input type="radio"/> I felt ignored      |
| <input type="radio"/> The care met my expectations          | <input type="radio"/> I felt disrespected |
| <input type="radio"/> No opinion/neutral                    |   |

15. How would you rate emergency transportation services in our community?

- Excellent       Good       Fair       Poor       Don't know/haven't used

16. If you have used local emergency transportation services, which emergency medical services (EMS) did you utilize?

- Polson       St. Ignatius       Ronan       Hot Springs       Arlee



17. What additional health care services would you use if they were available locally?

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18. How do you rate your knowledge of the health services that are available at St. Joseph Medical Center?  
 Excellent       Good       Fair       Poor

19. How do you learn about the health services available in our community? (Select all that apply)

<input type="radio"/> Yellow pages	<input type="radio"/> Billboard	<input type="radio"/> Lake County Leader
<input type="radio"/> Word of mouth	<input type="radio"/> Health care provider	<input type="radio"/> Valley Journal
<input type="radio"/> Website/internet	<input type="radio"/> Presentations	<input type="radio"/> Missoulian
<input type="radio"/> Public Health	<input type="radio"/> Television	<input type="radio"/> Radio
<input type="radio"/> Yellow pages	<input type="radio"/> Billboard	<input type="radio"/> Other _____

20. Which community health resources, other than St. Joseph Medical Center or clinic, have you used in the last three years? (Select all that apply)

	Non-Tribal	Tribal
Pharmacy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dentist	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Public/county health	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Audiology	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Chiropractor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Naturopath	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mental health	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tribal Health services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Senior Center/elder care	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

21. In your opinion, what would improve our community's access to health care? (Select all that apply)

<input type="radio"/> Greater health education services	<input type="radio"/> More specialists
<input type="radio"/> Improved quality of care	<input type="radio"/> Transportation assistance
<input type="radio"/> Interpreter services	<input type="radio"/> Outpatient services open longer hours
<input type="radio"/> More primary care providers	<input type="radio"/> Telemedicine
<input type="radio"/> Cultural sensitivity	<input type="radio"/> Other _____

22. In your opinion, how important are local health care services to the economic well-being of the local area?  
 Very important       Important       Not important       Don't know



23. How would you rate our community as a healthy community to be living in?

- Very healthy     Healthy     Somewhat healthy     Unhealthy     Very unhealthy

24. In the following list, what do you think are the **three** most serious health concerns in our community? (Select 3 that apply)

- |   |   |                                     |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Alcohol/substance abuse       | <input type="radio"/> Lack of exercise                        | <input type="radio"/> Stroke        |
| <input type="radio"/> Cancer                        | <input type="radio"/> Mental health issues                    | <input type="radio"/> Tobacco use   |
| <input type="radio"/> Diabetes                      | <input type="radio"/> Motor vehicle accidents                 | <input type="radio"/> Obesity       |
| <input type="radio"/> Domestic violence             | <input type="radio"/> People not following Drs instructions   | <input type="radio"/> Heart disease |
| <input type="radio"/> Lack of dental care           | <input type="radio"/> Recreational related accidents/injuries | <input type="radio"/> Suicide       |
| <input type="radio"/> Lack of access to health care | <input type="radio"/> Work related accidents/injuries         | <input type="radio"/> Other _____   |
| <input type="radio"/> Alcohol/substance abuse       | <input type="radio"/> Lack of exercise                        |                                     |
|   | <input type="radio"/> Lack of access to healthy food choices  |                                     |

25. Select the **three** items below that you believe are most important for a healthy community. (Select 3 that apply)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Access to health care and other services | <input type="radio"/> Low crime/ safe neighborhoods  |
| <input type="radio"/> Affordable housing                       | <input type="radio"/> Low death and disease rates    |
| <input type="radio"/> Arts and cultural events                 | <input type="radio"/> Low level of domestic violence |
| <input type="radio"/> Clean environment                        | <input type="radio"/> Parks and recreation           |
| <input type="radio"/> Community involvement                    | <input type="radio"/> Religious or spiritual values  |
| <input type="radio"/> Good jobs and healthy economy            | <input type="radio"/> Strong family life             |
| <input type="radio"/> Good schools                             | <input type="radio"/> Embracing diversity            |
| <input type="radio"/> Healthy behaviors and lifestyles         | <input type="radio"/> Food accessibility             |
|  | <input type="radio"/> Other _____                    |

26. What type of insurance covers the **majority** of your household's medical expenses? (Please select ONE FOR EACH insurance coverage type)

	Medical	Dental	Vision	Prescription
Do not have insurance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Employer sponsored	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Private Insurance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Self paid/out of pocket	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Health Savings Account	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Healthy Montana Kids	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Medicaid	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Medicare	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Indian Health	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
VA/Military	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>





27. How well do you feel your medical insurance covers your health care costs?

- Excellent     Good     Fair     Poor

28. If you **do NOT** have medical insurance, why? (Select all that apply)

- Cannot afford to pay for medical insurance     Cannot get medical insurance due to medical issues  
 Choose not to have medical insurance     Employer does not offer insurance  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

29. Are you aware of programs that help people pay for health care bills?

- Yes, and I use them     Yes, but I do not qualify     No     Not sure

**Demographics**

*All information is kept confidential and your identity is not associated with any answers.*

30. Where do you currently live by zip code?

- 59860 Polson     59865 St. Ignatius     59845 Hot Springs     59915 Elmo  
 59911 Bigfork     59821 Arlee     59831 Dixon     59848 Lone Pine  
 59860 Ronan     59824 Charlo     59910 Big Arm     59855 Pablo

31. How long have you lived in the area?

- 0-5 years     6-10 years     11-15 years     16-20 years     21+ years

32. What is your gender?     Male     Female

33. What is your age range?

- 18-25     26-35     36-45     46-55     56-65     66-75     76-85     86+

34. What is your employment status?

- Work full time     Student     Not currently seeking employment  
 Work part time     Collect disability     Other \_\_\_\_\_  
 Retired     Unemployed, but looking

35. With which ethnicity do you most identify? (Optional)

- African American     Hispanic     Caucasian  
 Asian     American Indian     Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return in the postage paid envelope enclosed with this survey or mail to:**  
National Rural Health Resource Center, 600 East Superior Street, Suite 404 Duluth MN 55802

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME**

**Please note that all information will remain confidential**



## **Appendix C- Responses to Other and Comments**

### **2. If yes, what are the three most important reasons why you did not receive health care services?**

- Wanted to wait it out
- Trying to find new doc
- Poor service
- Could not see doctor I asked for
- No money
- No one to take me
- Doc goes over with prescriptions
- In Polson, Rausch has been great

### **4. If yes, which hospital does your household use the MOST for hospital care?**

- Clark Fork Valley (2)
- NW Healthcare Kalispell
- Flagstaff Medical Center
- U of Washington
- We probably use St. Pat, St. Joe and Community equally

### **5. Thinking about the hospital you use most frequently, what were the three most important reasons for selecting that hospital?**

- Member of New West Health Ins.
- Familiarity with family history
- New hospital with up to date equipment
- Worked with us on payment plan
- Our doctor
- Employee of St. Luke's
- Great service
- We moved to this community 60 years ago. The Polson owned hospital, operated by sisters of Providence was a fact that was important to us. 3 out of our 4 children were born there. Now it is no longer Polson's hospital – SAD!
- My doctor's office is there
- My doctor provides work at western MT Med Clinic
- Daughter on Hospital Board

### **7. Where was that primary health care provider located?**

- CMC
- MSLA
- PHC Missoula
- St. Luke in St Ignatius
- Dr. Lowell



- Big Sky Medicine
- Kalispell (not KRMC)
- Clark Fork
- Hot Springs (2)
- VA Missoula
- Community Hospital Missoula
- Whitefish
- WMC
- Missoula
- St. Ignatius (3)
- St. Patrick's
- Bigfork (2)
- St. Peters Health, Helena, MT

**9. Why did you select the primary care provider you are currently seeing?**

- Dr. reputation (2)
- Decent Dr.
- Dr. was at the clinic
- Sliding scale
- Stability of physician – didn't leave after 3-4 years
- Random choice
- Lucky to find him at Saturday morning walk in clinic
- Dr. Dan Rausch is the best!
- Really like and trust my Dr. – he listens
- Worked with physician
- Personal choice
- My doctor changed from St. Joe
- Kalispell

**11. What type of health care specialist was seen?**

- Audiologist
- Vascular surgeon (2)
- St. Joe's
- Eye surgeon
- ER
- Ophthalmologist (6)
- Naturopathic (2)
- Colonoscopy
- Gall bladder
- Physician

**12. Where was the health care specialist seen?**

- Physician
- Mesa, AZ
- Denver
- Seattle, WA
- Libby
- Flagstaff
- VA Missoula and Harrison
- Clark Fork
- Whitefish
- Tucson, AZ

**17. What additional health care services would you use if they were available locally?**

- Podiatrist, 3D mammograms, colonoscopy
- Rheumatologist
- More natural and preventative
- Dermatologist
- Fertility specialist
- Acupuncture, massage therapy, bodytalk
- More physicians than are available (specialists) dermatology, surgeons
- Unsure
- A clinic with a sliding fee scale
- Mental health and counseling. Help paying for healthcare services
- All specialists, if I had confidence in them. More competence in ER
- Heart specialist
- Naturopathic
- Not sure. Additional costs apply to using specialized services through St. Joe – i.e. surgical room such as for cataract or laser
- Place to work out
- Women's pool for aquacise
- Any I may need if New West was accepted at St. Joe's
- Pulmonologist
- Low income medical and dental services – fee based on income

**19. How do you learn about the health services available in your community?**

- Being in Bigfork, I'm not really part of your community
- Persons working there
- Call and ask
- Experience
- Co-workers

- Live in the area
- Drove around town
- Primary doctor (3)
- Dr. referrals
- Always go to Ronan
- Drove past
- Family past experience
- It is a small town. Everybody knows about everybody.

**21. In your opinion, what would improve your community's access to health care?**

- More preventative options
- US government controlled universal health care
- A good water therapy without needing dr. prescription
- -Join New West Ins.
- -Basic health clinics
- -My health insurance sucks, preventative/alternative medicine
- -Naturopathic
- -Affordable
- -National computer access for patient records
- -Better quality of doctors
- -Trusting that local practitioners have same level of competency as larger medical centers.
- -More experienced doctors
- -Information on no income solutions
- -Dialysis center
- -I feel our access to health care and the quality of care available in MT is amazing
- -Affordable insurance
- -Insurance coverage
- -Health care here is excellent. I recommend no changes
- -Physician training in bedside manner, sterile technique, diagnosis
- -Increased surgical services
- -More info as to what is available in our area

**24. In the following list, what do you think are the three most serious health related concerns in your community?**

- Drugs
- Ignorance
- Education
- Healthy choices are available at stores, but not necessarily restaurants

**25. Select the three items below that you believe are most important for a healthy community**

- All of the above
- Education

**28. If you do NOT have health insurance, why?**

- Was very grateful for St. Joe's "mercy" fund I qualified for 5 years ago - \$25,000 was paid for my accident
- We had Humana Gold until 2011 – now not available in WMT
- Lake County takes it all in property taxes
- My age, 86 year old
- Have not worked for 14 years
- Get no dental or eye. Tribal health turns you down if not life threatening
- Unemployed (2)

**34. What is your employment status?**

- Self-employed

**35. With which ethnicity do you most identify?**

- White
- Multi-racial
- American Citizen
- Irish

## Appendix D- Focus Group Questions

1. What would make this community a healthier place to live?
2. What do you think are the most important local health care issues? (Probe question: What do you think are the biggest issues facing local health care services?)
3. We are now going to ask you for your views about the Medical Center. What do you think of the medical center in terms of:
  - Quality of care
  - Number of services
  - Medical Center staff (style of care, competence)
  - Medical Center board and leadership (good leaders, trustworthy)
  - Business office
  - Condition of facility and equipment
  - Financial health of the hospital
  - Cost
  - Office/clinic staff
  - Availability
4. Are any of the local physicians (midlevel providers) your personal physician or personal physician to your family members? Why?
5. What do you think about these local services:
  - ER
  - Ambulance service
  - Health care services for the elderly
  - Public/County health department
  - Health care services for the poor
  - Assisted living facility
6. What other healthcare services are needed in the community?

## Appendix E- Focus Groups Notes

### Focus Group #1

Wednesday, August 10, 2011 9:30 AM – Senior Center

1. What would make this community a healthier place to live?
  - Fix the issues with tribal persons getting care
  - Retired people need more elder care such as short term care for things like hip replacements
  - Health records may not be as good here because many people do not live here year round and they have health records where they live too. The hospital needs to get up-to-date
  - The fluctuation of people causes staff at the hospital to fluctuate as well because workers are laid off in the winter when less people are around.
  
2. What do you think are the most important local health care issues?
  - More doctors need to come in once a week or month
  - We have a lot of short term doctors, but they don't seem to stay. I've been through 4 doctors in the past 7 years and it's very frustrating.
  
3. What do you think of the hospital in terms of:
  - Quality of care
    - Have only had one experience with the clinic
    - Flux of doctors makes it hard for everyone, including staff to work out problems within the hospital
    - There are a lot of rumors that go around; it would help if the hospital informed the people in the paper, over the radio, in the journal, or just on signs
    - Doctor is not available at the ER, only a PA. This maybe gives a concern about quality of care when the PA is giving stitches
  
  - Number of services
    - Good, but the chemo guy from Missoula kept calling and trying to push his services on us when we didn't even know what was wrong yet.
    - A lot of doctors come from other places and there is concern with doctors not knowing their patients
    - If Ronan and Polson pooled together, there would be a lot more resources available to provide services
    - No coordination between hospitals that are only 11 miles apart
    - Mobility and insurance make a difference in what services you can get
    - Doctors used to come together, have a cup of coffee and talk about their specialties, and how they could work together to fix problems. They don't do this anymore
    - There is a women's wellness fair that a lot of people go to. It's very well organized and lets you know what services are provided in the valley

-Hospital staff

- I have been treated very well. They have always been okay
- Technicians are excellent
- Dave is so good
- St. Pats has a program for staff regarding weight control that I think St. Joes should consider because it's hard to take advice from nurses who are way overweight. Also, nurses smelling like smoke is gross

-Hospital board and leadership

- Don't have the opportunity to meet them, but I would like to
- How would we know?

-Business office

- Insurance from NewWest is not accepted anymore
- Had to change insurance
- Changes in health care makes things confusing
- I paid my bill, but still kept getting mail saying that I hadn't paid it yet
- Very frustrating
- Leann is outstanding
- The lady in the business office upstairs was awesome

-Condition of facility and equipment

- Good
- I had cataract surgery done twice and it was as good at St. Joes as it was in Kalispell

-Financial Health of the hospital

- How would we know?
- Reorganization in staff kinda brings up a red flag

-Cost

- In relation to a big city, it is very reasonable
- We are fortunate enough to have insurance
- Much more affordable than New Mexico
- Great health care when a person has nothing, but less when you have a little income because there is less help from the hospital to pay for health care if a person makes just enough to be above the poverty line

-Office/Clinic staff

- Good experiences
- Very pleasant at front desk. They just don't have enough information to help with insurance issues
- Problems with insurance policies; not enough information is easily accessible. They do have good references

-Availability

- Willing to work with your schedule

4. Are any of the local physicians your personal physicians? Why?

- Yes, I love my PA. She's the best I have ever had
- Yes, I've had the same NP for 15 years
- We don't have many specialists, so we have to be referred which is fine

5. What do you think about these local health care services:

-ER

- Positive
- Never used it
- Not enough staffing, I had a bad experience at the ER because they had to keep calling people for help from out of town for help

-Ambulance

- Problems with ambulance taking too much time after arriving on scene to stabilize the patient
- No hospital staff to help
- Needs better training and communication

-Health care services for the elderly

- Rumors I hear are that the home behind the hospital is really good, but the one next to it is not a place you want to be
- We need a place between the nursing home and home, like assisted living

-Public/County Health Department

- Never used it

-Health care services for the poor

- Get very decent help and better than average care
- As soon as you begin to make money, access to healthcare goes away
- Tribal Healthcare Center has answered some of the healthcare needs
- They are treated very well
- There seems to be problems with getting information out there to the people who need it
- There are big gaps between tribal, poor, and the middle class

6. What other healthcare services are needed in the community?

- We need a surgeon at the hospital
- There is one
- Assisted living
- Short term rehab
- Mental health care
- Dermatology



## **Focus Group #2**

Wednesday, August 10, 2011 12:15 pm – Senior Center

1. What would make this community a healthier place to live?

- I wish we had mental health care

2. What do you think are the most important local health care issues?

- Expenses, the cost of healthcare
- Insurance is expensive. Blue Cross Blue Shield has a monopoly in Montana; the prices are too high

3. What do you think of the hospital in terms of:

-Quality of care

- What there is, is excellent
- Disgusted with the competition between hospitals
- They need to follow up with services, for instance better instruction when you go home and it would be nice to take your records with you
- Good home health and we have a great physical therapist
- We have communication problems
- We need better communication- no one knows about available shots, etc. we need an access site to get information

-Number of services

- Never looked for them
- Good
- I have to go to Missoula or Kalispell a lot
- People here rely on referrals out of town, but the services are good here

-Hospital board and leadership

- They are good leaders as far as I know
- They have improved a lot

-Business office

- If you have billing issues, you have to call people in Seattle to get things straightened out
- When you get a bill you are expected to pay so many dollars a month. If you can't pay that, they send you to the bill collectors, even though you could pay a lower amount
- Need awareness for a place to get help with financial problems
- As far as getting care, we do a good job. It's the details though like billing and communication about the billing that are a problem
- Money is the biggest problem in most cases

-Availability

- I have been able to get everything I need
- A small town can't be expected to support full time specialists

4. Are any of the local physicians your personal physicians? Why?

- Yes, they are handy
- Yes, but we have a problem with the turnover of doctors. I would like to get comfortable with one

5. What do you think about these local health care services:

-Ambulance

- Very expensive; \$2200 from Polson to Missoula

-Health care services for the elderly

- I get upset with hospitals referring elderly people for out- of- town services, especially for a 6:00 AM appointment
- Physicians should be aware of the age of a patient
- I do not like the nursing home. My mom wouldn't have gotten the care she needed, if I wasn't there making sure she got what she needed. I also did not like the doctor
- Personal care in the nursing home is not good
- Would like to see change on care in the nursing homes
- Home health care is absolutely superb, but it comes from the doctor. The patients don't know who to contact to get home health care

-Public/County health department

- It's the only place that offers some services like shots

6. What other healthcare services are needed in the community?

- We need a good cardiologist