

Introduction

Beginning in 1995, the Health District of Northern Larimer County (Health District) has assessed the health needs and health status of our community every three years through a written survey mailed to area residents. Survey participants are asked a wide variety of questions about their own health, as well as their use of healthcare services.

Data from these surveys help local organizations and policy makers plan how to best meet community healthcare needs now and into the future. In addition, survey results play a key part in the planning process the Health District Board of Directors uses to determine which programs and services it should provide to help improve the health of the community.

This booklet contains findings from the most recent health survey, which began in the fall of 2004. Unless otherwise stated, all data presented here is from 2004.

All data comparisons presented in this summary, including trend data, are statistically significant, meaning they fall within the survey's margin of error.

Survey Methodology

The 2004 Community Health Survey was a written, 78-question survey sent to a statistically representative sample of people living within the boundaries of the Health District, an area that encompasses the northern two-thirds of Larimer County and includes the cities of Fort Collins, LaPorte, Wellington, Timnath and Livermore. This survey, as well as the ones conducted in 2001 and 1995, also was sent to a statistically representative sample of people living in southern Larimer County, although only results from district residents are reported in this summary.

Residents aged 18 and older were chosen at random from a comprehensive list of telephone numbers; those who agreed to participate were mailed a copy of the self-administered questionnaire and were asked to return it upon completion. A second survey was mailed two weeks after the first survey to those who agreed to participate, but who had not yet returned their completed survey. A total of 1,898 residents from the Health District service area returned usable questionnaires. Data was weighted to the 2000 census for age and gender. The margin of error is plus or minus 1-2% depending upon how close the statistic is to 50%; the closer to 50% the closer the margin of error gets to 2%.

Just as there are strengths to the methodology of our data collection, there are also weaknesses. A phone-initiated survey does not allow the sample to include those who do not have home phones. In having a mailed survey you eliminate input from those who do not have a mailing address. Individuals who have a literacy level below the seventh or eighth grade level and/or who do not read English may not be able to understand and complete the questionnaire.

Definitions

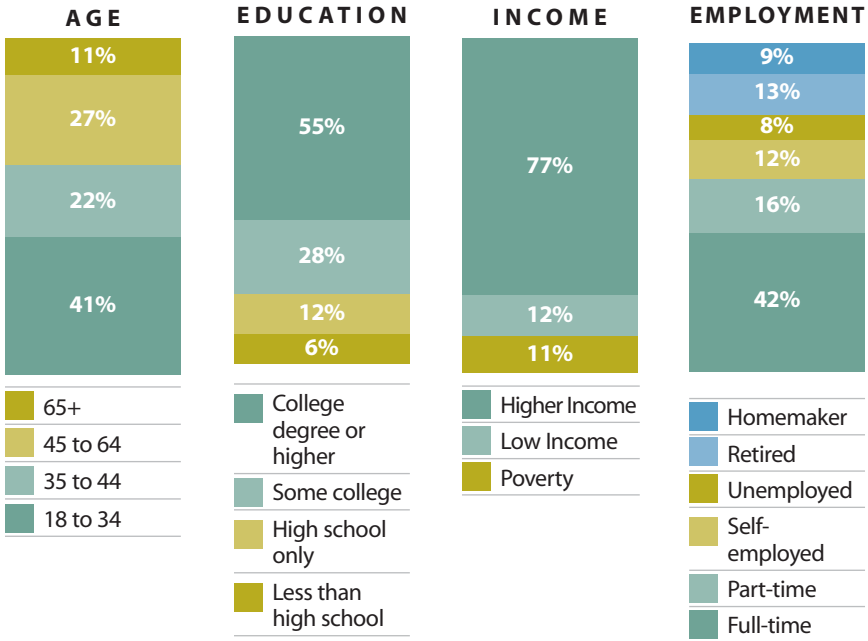
Healthy People 2010 — Whenever possible, local statistics have been compared to Healthy People 2010 goals. These are national health promotion and disease prevention goals set by the U.S. Public Health Service. For more about Healthy People 2010, visit www.health.gov/healthypeople/.

Federal Poverty Guidelines — This report uses Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG), which are based on income and household size, as a measure of income status. "Low income" is defined as having income below 185% of FPG, and "higher income" as having income at or above 185% of FPG.



Demographics

The charts below provide information about the characteristics of the individuals residing in the Health District service area who responded to the survey. Demographic information, such as age, income, education, and employment status can provide a framework for understanding the health status and needs of people in our community.



For more Information and Analysis

The 2004 Community Health Survey offers an immense wealth of local health data, of which a few key highlights and trends are represented in this booklet. If you or your organization would like in-depth analysis of selected topics or additional data not contained in this report, please contact the Health District Evaluation Team at (970) 224-5209. The Health District can also schedule a presentation on survey results for your group or organization.

