

Appendix B
Phase Three Response Focus Groups
Raw Data
Citizens' Perspectives

Refugio County

- Lots of my clients don't have phones, so the answers would be different.
- My folks are living paycheck to paycheck.
- I agree with the barriers: transportation, cost, availability
- Everything here seems consistent on lack of resources
- I wonder about that 71% figure on housing—how many are multi-families living in one home? That's pretty common in my experience
- In terms of my counties, there needs to be more focus on counseling, in general. More than MHMR. Some clients are reluctant to go because of the stigma of being "committed" or because they see MHMR as "medication dealers." Need more counseling, not necessarily a State agency.
- Mental health, overall, is a big issue...need more to address grief and post traumatic stress disorder.
- We need "unstigmatized" counselors.

Jim Wells County

- On Health and Well-being, it says 94% say they are ok, yet we have lots of older folks in Jim Wells County. I see older folks with Ziploc bags of pills, getting more pills.
- For people with disabilities getting help, I saw one man fumble around for three months with a leg injury before anyone could help him
- Key Informants are painting a clearer picture. They see the needs day to day.
- Lack of information is a real problem
- On Health and Well-being, I agree with stigma and fear being barriers. The change in Medicaid benefits for adults with mental health issues was bad.
- Seniors—big problem is utility costs on a fixed income.
- 15% leave kids with other kids under 13? I thought the percentage would be higher
- Parents are so busy with work there is no time for family involvement
- Many parents need much more information because they are, in fact, kids themselves
- Overall lack of respect is a problem.
- I think there's a higher percentage of folks who say their income does not match their needs

Duval County

- It says crime is a minor problem, yet people don't think they have the power to change things. We have problems with juveniles just hanging out on a corner without a light. We need to have law enforcement out making the rounds. People need to feel they can report things without retaliation.
- Housing and getting info out to people is a problem. We need more brochures, print info. Need to put them in churches, stores, etc.
- During Claudette, it was hard to get info out to folks who needed help.

- As far as lack of available housing, if a woman needs need to flee, there is no place to go...we have a waiting list of 70
- When people need services but don't get them, usually "pride" is involved."
- Abandoned buildings and trash are a problem. Need funding and law enforcement.
- Need to use county inmates for the trash plan
- Look for churches, youth groups that want to work
- Lots of people are sick from cancer here...could it be uranium poisoning?
- We really need to pay attention to the colonias here. That population is growing. That is my biggest concern.

Bee County

- Serious problem with residential services for people with mental health issues
- Our mental health services and facilities are the worst. They do nothing. MHMR version of substance abuse treatment is to give the client a toll-free number to call
- When they send someone to SASH, it's a tremendous disincentive....cold, clinical, no one listening
- If people think transportation is a problem now, just wait—they have no idea about what's coming. With the new cuts, Medicaid eligibility for transportation will only get worse. What will they do then?
- I agree—care for children with special needs is insufficient to meet the need
- I'm surprised you didn't have more on access to prescription drugs
- I am amazed, though, at how giving people are in this town
- It's interesting to me that we have 3 prisons around this area, but no overnight child care for those workers
- I know of seniors who make \$20 too much each month, and are not qualified for services...these people are falling through the cracks
- Talk about fear—how about that 90-year-old woman here who was raped? People are fearful
- As far as after-school activities, the Boys and Girls Club is about it...and there are lots of kids who are not near here. Once again, transportation is a problem. Plus this town has too much of a focus on athletics. The kid who isn't an athlete is lost.
- I think there are more people leaving kids unattended than the survey indicates
- There is a lot of poverty in Bee County.
- Lots of clients say they will only take an 8-4 job...nothing else. People are out of touch with reality, or at least they cannot see the possibilities.
- Teachers, police officers can't make ends meet. Lots of people in second, third jobs.
- Also, with the elderly, we have lots in poverty. They worked hard all their lives, and do not want to take charity.
- There's more unemployment here. Some companies have "encouraged" people to retire
- We need much more mental health services and substance abuse services
- I'd be really interested in the number of outstanding arrest warrants in this town

(Two people in this session were from Live Oak County, and commented on the Live Oak – McMullen County information)

- The sample size must have been VERY low.
- I cannot think of any company that pays for childcare in this county. I'd be interested in knowing who that is.

Aransas County

- I think these figures are on-track
- About grief counseling—it's about connecting with the right people. The services are available.
- I'm surprised at that 41% number of elderly not getting help. Seems high for our county.
- Well, we do have folks in the "in-between" bracket...50 years old, disabled, but can't qualify...that sort of situation
- I always have concerns about youth here. There's nothing to do.
- Well, the Chamber is doing a lot for youth—Junior Bay Blazers, \$1 million beach project, the Youth Leadership Conference
- There is a drug and discipline problem at the high school that people don't want to talk about
- Housing is a major, major problem, especially for women who need shelter in domestic violence situations

Nueces County

- Only 4% saying they need training in basic reading is too low
- 42% experiencing problems renting house or apartment seems too high
- On work issues—50% still looking for work is not unusual. Once you lose a job, it's tough to get one.
- Is it because they don't have the skills? The kind of jobs available? Narrow range of opportunity locally?
- Childcare is a huge barrier. I have a friend who spends \$1000 a month for two kids each summer
- Well-being stats do not seem surprising at all
- I must say I'm the only official grief counselor around, as far as I know....we certainly need some marketing
- Cost for childcare is high in proportion to average wage
- The phone survey responses indicate a higher wage than I would expect from the general population
- There's lots of money pumped into childcare by Work-Force 1...but availability is sporadic
- 15% leaving kids with other children under 13...it's much higher than that
- On families: Is the data skewed because people won't admit to problems like drugs and alcohol in their own homes?
- 33% of seniors not getting nursing care is low, from my experience
- In Nueces County we take advantage of Senior Companion program in outlying areas
- Low income grandparents are raising grandchildren, with little or no support. They are raising their grandkids on their limited Social Security income

- 15% without insurance seems low to me—of course, they may be counting Medicaid as insurance
- Mental health—73% receiving help may be high
- If I was a kid in Corpus Christi, what would I do? What do they do for fun that's low budget and healthy? Kids get into trouble for just hanging out
- We need to increase summer recreation programming
- Transportation in rural communities is a big problem. We need more outreach to rural areas

San Patricio

- First of all, I don't like phone surveys. Lots of folks do not have phones, or they do not answer
- Disabled persons were getting transportation, but agencies thought they didn't have that service available. There's some sort of communication problem there.
- I think it's pretty accurate on key informers' Perspectives. Maybe the people who have phones are better off than others, and that skews the data.
- People here make choices. If I have \$450 per month, what do I do? Do I choose tortillas and coffee? Or do I buy medications? This month is it food or utilities?
- Illiteracy is an issue—people just do not comprehend
- Vanity and ego keep people from getting services they need
- People need transportation
- TAMU-CC helps people prioritize. Many of these folks can't put first things first
- Really, the key to everything is lack of available information
- When we had PIC here in Sinton, they wouldn't advertise because they were afraid they'd have more people than they could serve
- Word of mouth is very strong here—a person could do nothing but answer questions 365 / 24 / 7
- On housing, just look at the census—that'll tell you what the needs are. In this county we have three or four families in one house
- Lack of available public housing—and no one is interested in making that better
- Rotary has helped with shots, but the County is losing money and may close sites—maybe the County government is not prioritizing
- Too many unfunded mandates here
- Work-Force 1 was funding childcare facilities and caregiver certification—that money is now unavailable
- On that phone survey—*who* is getting employer help with childcare? That's hard to believe.
- 25% not covered by insurance—that's too low
- We've had only 3 or 4 folks needing emergency shelter all year
- Quality housing is an issue
- A "good home" for some people means the roof doesn't leak and there is electricity
- There's nothing about education and literacy. That's basic, fundamental. It trickles down to everything else.
- Kids that graduate, many are not going to college. We need a magnet trade school

Brooks County

- With regard to information—we have flyers, radio announcements. It surprises me that more information is needed. The information is there, but people don't read it.
- Transportation definitely IS insufficient here.
- I think Brooks County unemployment is higher than reported.
- The low wage disincentive is not surprising
- The lack of jobs and training is consistent with us
- Why is it perceived as so difficult to access services? People here definitely DO know how to work the system
- I really think the fact that this was a phone survey resulted in skewed results. There are many, many in this county who don't have a phone...and they are likely the people with the greatest need.
- What happens to people who get sick here after 11 p.m.? You're in real trouble.
- The physicians assistants who work here ask you, "What medicines do you want?" rather than prescribing what you need
- It really aggravates me that our statistics get used by providers to get money because we make the whole region look needy. Then, we don't actually get the services. They are using us!
- Disabilities—are emotional disabilities covered in this section?
- Middle-class or working poor cannot get childcare in this county. If you make just a little too much, you cannot qualify. They are falling through the cracks.
- There is no grief counseling in Brooks County
- Everyone is so easily labeled here.
- The problem is not just that there isn't enough for teenagers to do here. There never has been anything for them to do. There's just so many new ways for them to get in trouble now. People turn the other way when kids are smoking pot or drinking here. (Name of local restaurant)—everyone knows the kids are smoking pot there, but no one does anything, the manager does nothing.
- The results are accurate.
- There is no available housing. You wait 4 or 5 months, or a year
- It's all a matter of perception—"good" or "average" health...they don't know how bad off they are. They only see the big picture.
- If they aren't optimistic, they'll just give up

Bee County

- I think you are hearing from the average people, but we are seeing the people who really have the needs
- I think Work Force 1 does an awesome job. There are more ads for work in the Bee Pic than I've seen in a long time...but most require specialized training, especially in healthcare. Mechanics and car salesmen, too

- There doesn't seem to be a category in here for just sorry people. If you talk to people who deal with this every day, their concerns deal with people who are just unmotivated, unfit to keep a job because they have no work skills, that's a psychological problem...a lazy deal.
- Grandparents raising kids...floating their grown kids.
- This deal with middle school—that's right.
- Kids are starting to use drugs in elementary school
- I wonder if several left their kids with folks younger with 13 but wouldn't admit it
- I was just thinking about old people...a lot of these issues are just because of the way the system is running
- I think their families aren't helping like they used to.
- I think you have more grandparents raising grandchildren
- The phone survey sample looks too small
- We're out of money for the dislocated worker program that pays for transportation, books, tuition for people who need it
- We have lots of kids who didn't get the diploma, but don't want to sit for the whole GED exam. If they fail, they can't take the exam right away

Nueces County

- I'm surprised that people chose to go to independent professionals for help with financial problems
- Transportation--I thought RTA was doing that
- Disconnect between the key Informants and population who answered the phone--maybe there are a lot more of us who want to help than those who want help
- If 94% are in excellent health, I doubt it.
- With the 94% in reasonably good health, how many have been assessed? Our focus always seems to be on dealing with folks who are sick rather than prevention.
- It seems like the phone people are very happy...homes, health in good condition...Were those to homes that were stable?
- Question about stability--the average homeowner being there for ten years is not in line with demographics
- I was not surprised to see transportation, child care, cost being problems
- We have a child care facility at our place, but other places folks have to leave work
- In regard to transportation, bus tokens have been available for a quick fix. The RTA is discontinuing those. That will cut some of the clients who needed help immediately. The reason for discontinuing tokens is that there were countless tokens distributed that were unredeemed.
- I was not surprised by large number who don't seek assistance because of hassles. I went to one of our institutions and saw a large number of people in line—I talked to someone who said this was the third day they'd been there waiting for help.
- I'm wondering if people who answered the phone wanted to look good or sound good
- In the last week and a half, I have heard several times about (homeless) people being bussed from outside cities to Corpus Christi
- Lots of people came here to work on a shrimp boat
- Going back to transportation, I don't know if you understood...lots of people don't have cars. They walked or got a ride. We have to tell them we can't help them without the information.

Used to give them tokens. Now we can't do that. The money that we spent on bus tokens was very little, but we spread it out. Now we have to give them a bus pass for \$5. Good for five days. If we just want someone to go home and get their proof of income, they have to use a \$5 bus pass.

- Sort of like stating the obvious...when we talk to key Informants, they see the people with needs all the time.
- One more thing: we do home assessments. One of the words we use a lot is "adequate"...to a poor person that's "good"
- I'm surprised that nothing is said about one-parent families. Extremely serious, not reflected here at all
- Sounds like there is nothing to be learned here about abuse
- I agree strongly with the part on the seniors. There are older people who cannot afford the meds they need...seniors with big Ziploc bags of meds
- Section on youth...I just attended a seminar at Del Mar on youth. Children are spending too much time in front of the television watching video games not getting enough exercise. We will be paying for it in the future as those kids are getting diabetes, etc. They are not physically active
- Mine has to deal with seniors: We can help them with errands and such, but for my agency or DHS, they have to have a personal care need. If they don't have a personal care need, we can't help them. They fall through the cracks.
- Want to make note on affordability of childcare...I think 50% saying they can afford it is high. What type of childcare is affordable?
- In our hospital, people talk about needing spiritual care.
- Looking at the data for youth, when parents say the biggest problem is finding a job, it says something about the economics, priorities, and education
- I'm real surprised that 6% reported divorce or separation
- I was surprised that so few reported mental illness
- I'm not surprised about children staying with their grandparents
- I wonder about the 25% of respondents whose income doesn't meet their needs
- I am surprised there is no mention of the needs for foster children. When those kids grow too old, they are kicked out. That is the start of homelessness
- Barriers including managed care hassles or not getting an appointment. We are the last of the Mohicans to have an actual person on the phone, not a recording. I think they need get an actual person, not a machine.
- I'm surprised that only 15% said they had no health insurance.