

FEBRUARY 2020

FACT SHEET

Social Determinants of Health: Health and Healthcare



Access to and availability of healthcare resources and healthcare providers is an important aspect to consider when looking at an individual's overall health. These resources can be affected by where individuals live, their economic status, their ability to navigate the health system, and other social determinants.

Access and Availability

One way to examine access to and availability of healthcare services and providers is through Health Professional Shortage Area designations or HPSAs. These are designations defined by the Health Services and Resources Administration (HRSA) (2020) and indicate healthcare provider shortages for primary care providers, dental health providers, and mental health providers. These designations can be for a geographical area, a specific population within an area, or for a facility.¹ Individuals located in a HPSA may have increased travel time and distance to healthcare services and/or they may have to wait longer periods of time to access healthcare services.

As of June 2020, the percent of counties that are fully or partially designated as HPSAs are (Figure 1, Figure 2):²

- Primary Care: 94%
- Dental Care: 49%
- Mental Health 91%

Figure 1. Primary Care HPSAs in North Dakota

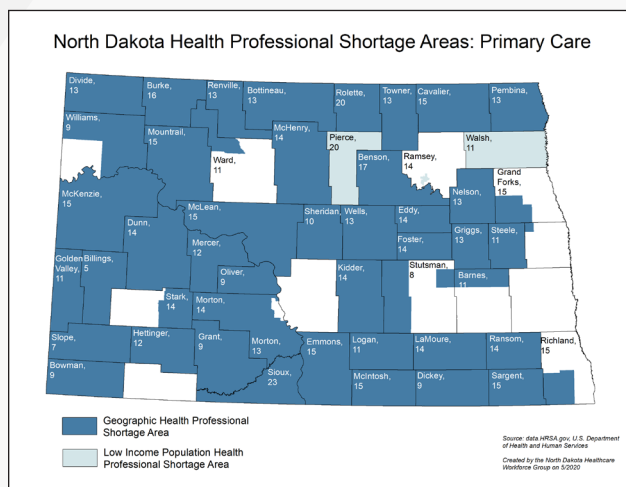
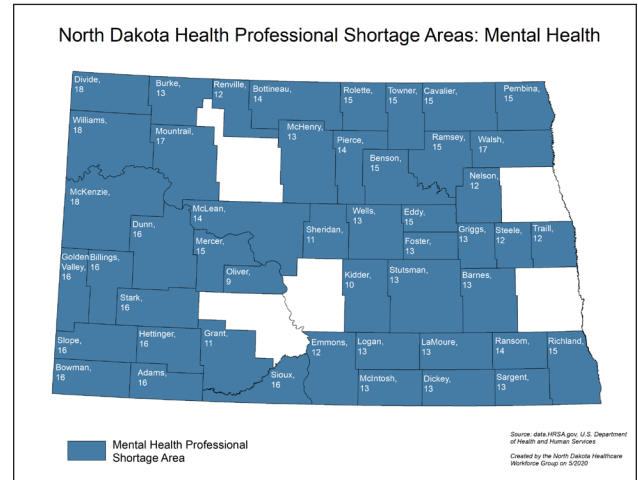


Figure 2. Mental Health HPSAs in North Dakota



When a facility is designated as a HPSA this indicates that the facility serves as a safety net facility and/or provides healthcare services to underserved populations. The following illustrates the amount of designated facilities as of May 2020.

Primary Care Facilities - There are 35 healthcare facilities in North Dakota designated for primary care including:²

- 10 Indian Health Service, Tribal, and Urban Indian Health (ITU) facilities
- 4 Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and their satellite locations
- 19 Rural Health Clinics (RHCs)
- 2 correctional facilities

Mental Health Facilities - There are 40 facilities designated for mental health in North Dakota including:²

- 10 ITU facilities
- 4 FQHCs and their satellite locations
- 19 RHCs
- 2 correctional facilities
- The state mental health hospital
- 4 human service centers that are not located in an already designated area

Dental Health Facilities - Finally, there are 35 healthcare facilities designated for dental health including:²

- 10 ITU facilities
- 4 FQHCs and their satellite locations
- 19 RHCs
- 2 correctional facilities

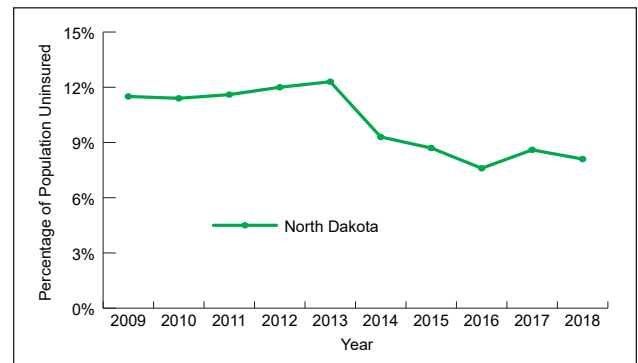
Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) are a key safety net facility for low-income and other underserved populations. In North Dakota, there are a total of 22 FQHCs or about 3.27 FQHCs for every 100,000 North Dakota residents.³

Providers - Another way to look at access to healthcare is to consider the types of providers available and how many there are to serve a given population. While a community may have a healthcare facility, that facility may not be fully staffed or may not be able to offer a complete range of healthcare services based on available providers. According to the Area Health Resource File (2017) there are 57.7 dentists per 100,000 residents in North Dakota and 76.7 primary care physicians per 100,000 residents in North Dakota. The rate of dentists and the rate of primary care physicians in North Dakota are within the average when compared to other states, neither is too low or too high.⁴

Insurance Coverage

Availability of healthcare services is not the only factor to consider when examining an individual's access to healthcare services. Insurance coverage or lack of insurance coverage is also a factor. There are a number of ways for an individual to pay for healthcare services including out-of-pocket or through insurance. Some healthcare services can be costly or unexpected, such as being injured in a car accident, which is why insurance coverage can be important. The majority of the population of North Dakota has some form of health insurance coverage, but in 2018, about 8.1% of the population was uninsured. In 2009, the percent of the population in North Dakota with no insurance was 11.5% so the number of uninsured individuals in North Dakota has decreased between 2009 and 2018 (Figure 3).⁵

Figure 3. Percent of Population with No Health Insurance Coverage



Conclusion

Access to healthcare and insurance coverage are key aspects to consider within this social determinant of health. There are many HPSAs that impact access for North Dakota residents as these are areas lacking facilities for primary care, dental care, and mental health. Further, lacking insurance coverage can also impact health. Fortunately, North Dakota has seen a decline in uninsured residents, which will prove beneficial to the health of North Dakota.

References

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