The 2019 Community Health and Needs Assessment (CHNA) identified areas affecting the health of San Mateo County. Five health issue areas and five social determinants, which are social and economic conditions that influence differences in health status. This report highlights aspects of each issue.

**Health Issues**
- **Behavioral health and well-being**: includes mental health, emotional well-being and substance use
- **Chronic disease**: specifically arthritis, cancer, high blood pressure and respiratory conditions
- **Healthy lifestyles**: specifically diabetes, overweight/obesity, diet/nutrition and fitness/physical activity
- **Infectious diseases**: specifically tuberculosis, pertussis, chlamydia and gonorrhea
- **Oral health**: lack of access to high-quality dental services and dental insurance

**Social Determinants**
- **Food insecurity**: includes eligibility for/received food assistance and use of food banks/access to food
- **Healthcare access and delivery**: health insurance, specialty providers and medication costs
- **Housing and homelessness**: housing costs burden, assisted housing needs and shared housing
- **Neighborhood and built environment**: includes transportation, traffic/commute times and community infrastructure
- **Social and community context**: health disparities, discrimination, poverty and community connectedness
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Approach

San Mateo County Health as a member of the Healthy Community Collaborative of San Mateo County (HCC) is pleased to have produced this Major Findings from the 2019 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). The goals of the 2019 CHNA are to provide insight into the health of the community, prioritize local health needs, and identify areas for improvement. With these data, the HCC member agencies will individually and collectively develop strategies to tackle critical health needs, as well as improve the health and well-being of community members.

The 2018 San Mateo County Health & Quality of Life Survey was conducted as part of the CHNA among 1,581 adults through a countywide random sample, as well as additional surveys in the Coastside area, among low-income residents, and among Black and Pacific Islander communities. Many questions in the survey were also administered in the previous CHNAs, allowing for trend analysis.

Over 400 health indicators were analyzed for the CHNA to assist with understanding the health needs in San Mateo County and assessing priorities in the community. Data was assessed against national and/or statewide benchmarks to highlight worsening trends.

Direct community input was also gathered for the CHNA through (a) key informant interviews with 19 local health experts, (b) focus groups with 45 community leaders and representatives, and (c) focus groups with 45 medically underserved, low-income, or minority population residents.

For the full CHNA report or assessment tools, please contact San Mateo County Health at epidemiology@smcgon.org.
Mental health and wellbeing are vital to daily life functions. Depression and poor mental health have been increasing in San Mateo County.

**Health Issue:** Behavioral Health & Wellbeing (Mental Health)

**History of Mental Health**

*One in ten* (11%) report a history of mental or emotional problems, which has *doubled in the past 20 years.*

It is *highest among younger adults* under 40 years (17%).

**Depression**

*One in four* (26%) experience symptoms of chronic depression (depressed most days for at least 2 years).

It is *increased among Blacks* (37%), *Hispanics* (34%) and those on the *Coastside* (33%).

**Stress**

*Two in five* (39%) report moderate stress on a daily basis. High stress on a daily basis (6%) has been decreasing and is at the lowest point over the past 20 years.

High stress is *highest among those living on the Coastside* (11%) and is lowest among older adults 65+ years (1%) and Asians (3%).

**Mental Health Treatment**

Almost *one-third* (32%) have actually sought professional help for a mental or emotional problem (such as depression or anxiety).

Those *less likely* to utilize mental health services include those with *less education* (18%), *Asians* (20%), *older adults* 65+ years (24%) and *men* (26%).

**Community input**

The majority of community meetings prioritized mental health and well-being, and substance use.
Health Issue: Behavioral Health & Wellbeing (Substance Use)

The use of substances such as alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs (both legal and illegal) impacts not only the individuals using them, but also their families and communities. Substance use is a major concern in San Mateo County.

**Alcohol Use**

Six in ten adults (60%) are current drinkers (consuming at least one alcoholic drink in the past month). This is increased among higher income of >400% federal poverty level (FPL) (70%) and Whites (69%).

Chronic drinking (have 2+ alcoholic drinks per day in the past month) is 6%. This is highest among older adults 65+ (9%) and Whites (8%).

Binge drinking (men reporting 5+ alcoholic drinks or women reporting 4+ alcoholic drinks on any single occasion during the past month) is 17%, which has remained stable. It is highest among younger adults under 40 years (28%).

**Marijuana Use (prior to legalization)**

13% report marijuana use in the past month, with 3% using marijuana daily.

Smoking is the most common type of marijuana use (65%).

Marijuana use is highest among younger adults under 40 years (26%) and those residing on the Coastside (19%).

Marijuana use is very high among those with chronic depression (44%).

**Illegal Drug Use**

4% of adults acknowledge having taken an illegal drug in the past year; this is likely underreported.

This is highest among younger adults under 40 years (7%) and Hispanics (6%).

**Cigarette Smokers**

Current smokers (6%) has decreased steadily over the past 20 years.

Smoking is higher among those with less education (10%), younger adults under 40 years (8%), lower income of <200% FPL (8%) and Asians (8%).

**Electronic Cigarettes/Vaping**

Only 3% currently use electronic cigarettes/vaping products.

This is double for younger adults under 40 years (7%). Additionally, vaping is high among those with chronic depression (38%).

More than four in ten San Mateo County adults (47%) admit they would not know where to access treatment if needed for a drug-related problem, which has been increasing.

Furthermore, this uncertainty impacts almost two-thirds of Asians (64%).
Health Issue: Chronic Disease

Chronic diseases and their risk factors remain a major cause of illness, disability, and death in San Mateo County. Specifically arthritis, cancer, high blood pressure, and respiratory conditions are all increasing. In 2018, heart disease was the leading cause of death in San Mateo County, followed by cancer, with respiratory disease being 5th.

Cancer

Screening for certain cancers in San Mateo County is better than what is found nationally, with 86% of females age 50-74 meeting recommendations for mammogram screening in the past two years and 80% of adults age 50-75 meeting recommendations for colorectal cancer screening.

Approximately 8% of San Mateo County residents report having been diagnosed with cancer (excluding skin cancer). This is higher than the prevalence in California (6%), but is similar to national prevalence (7%).

Non-skin cancer is highest among older adults 65+ years (20%), Blacks (13%) and Whites (12%).

Asthma

One in five (19%) adults report ever having been diagnosed with asthma, which is double that since 1998. This is higher than state levels (13%).

Asthma is more common among Blacks (25%), younger adults under 40 years (24%) and those with lower income of <200% FPL (24%).

About 16% of children suffer from asthma, which has been increasing since 2001. Approximately 6% of children with asthma have needed urgent care for breathing problems in the past year.

Arthritis

Arthritis or rheumatism is noted among 22% of San Mateo residents. This has been on the rise.

It is highest among older adults 65+ years (47%) and in Mid-County (25%).

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)

COPD (includes bronchitis or emphysema) has been increasing with 9% being diagnosed. This is double that of the state level (4%).

COPD is highest on the Coastside (14%).

Community input

Fewer than 15% of discussions prioritized arthritis and cancer.

Heart Disease

Heart disease rates remain steady (5%), while one in three reported a diagnosis of high blood pressure (32%) and high blood cholesterol continues (32%) to rise.

High blood pressure is more common among Blacks (60%) and older adults 65+ (57%). High blood cholesterol is highest among older adults (55%).
Healthy lifestyles, such as physical activity and nutrition, are important in preventing disease. In 2018, diabetes was the 8th leading cause of death in San Mateo County.

**Diabetes**

There has been a steady increase in adults having diabetes (12%), which is higher than the state level but (10%) similar to the nation (13%).

Higher for residents at lower income of <200% FPL, with one of four (24%) being diagnosed with diabetes, along with one of five Blacks (21%), those with lower education (20%), those who are obese (20%), and older adults 65+ years (19%).

**Physical Activity**

Three in five San Mateo County residents (60%) do not participate in regular, vigorous physical activity.

Inactivity is higher among older adults age 65+ (72%), Asians (70%) and those at lower income of <200% FPL (68%).

**Weight Status**

Currently, six in ten (63%) San Mateo County adults are overweight, based on body mass index (BMI). While overweight prevalence remains below the national average (69%), it has been increasing in the county. A quarter (25%) of adults are obese.

Four in five (82%) Blacks are overweight, which is the highest in the County, followed by three of four (75%) Hispanics, those at lower income of <200% FPL (72%) and men (70%).

**Nutrition**

Few residents (15%) eat adequate amounts of fruits/vegetables (five or more servings of fruits and vegetables per day).

Adequate consumption of fruits/vegetables is even lower for those with less education (4%) and lower income (7%).

13% of adults report drinking soda daily in the past month.

Residents more likely to drink soda daily include those with lower education level (26%), Hispanics (19%) and those living in South County (18%).

**Community input**

Healthy lifestyles was prioritized at approximately 25% of discussions.

Diabetes was specifically prioritized by more than 15% of key informants.
Health Issue: Infectious Diseases

Infectious diseases remain a major cause of illness, disability, and death in San Mateo County. Sexually transmitted infections are on the rise and in 2018 influenza/pneumonia were the 7th leading causes of death.

Tuberculosis

Cases of Tuberculosis (TB) have increased over the last two years, with 8 cases per 100,000 residents in 2018.

Asians have almost 3x the amount of cases, 23 cases of TB per 100,000 population. Cases also increased in older adults, 18 per 100,000 population 65+ years; and increased in the North County, 14 per 100,000 population.

Chlamydia

The number of cases of Chlamydia has been rising, with 372 cases per 100,000 residents in 2017.

Blacks have almost 2x the amount of cases, 715 cases of Chlamydia per 100,000 population. Cases also increased in the younger population, 681 cases per 100,000 population under the age 40 years.

Community input

Infectious diseases were not prioritized overall by the community.

Gonorrhea

Cases of Gonorrhea have been rising, with 105 cases per 100,000 residents in 2017.

Blacks have over 3x the amount of cases, 334 cases of Gonorrhea per 100,000 population. Cases are also increased in men, 173 per 100,000 population and increased in the younger population, 162 cases per 100,000 population under the age 40 years.

Syphilis

The number of cases of Syphilis have been increasing, with 16 cases per 100,000 residents in 2017.

Men have 2x the amount of cases, 30 cases of Syphilis per 100,000 population. Cases are also increased among Hispanics, 23 cases per 100,000 population and increased in the younger population, 21 cases per 100,000 population under the age of 40 years.

Preventive Health

Three in four seniors have ever had a pneumonia vaccine (76%) and in the past year had a flu shot (74%).
Oral health contributes to overall health; a variety of factors can create barriers to accessing dental services.

**Dental Care**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Usual source dental care</th>
<th>Routine dental checkup</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>San Mateo County</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental insurance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>63%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Income level</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower income</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle income</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>73%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Higher income</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race/ethnicity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>80%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;High school</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Approximately **four in five** (82%) have a single dentist or dental office that is their **usual source of dental care**.

Over **three in four adults** (79%) have visited a dentist for a **routine checkup** within the past year.

Among surveyed parents of children up to age 17, **86%** report that their **child has visited a dentist** for a routine checkup in the past year. Although, only **64%** of children 0-4 years had a dental visit.

**Disparities in dental care** are noted among those with lower income, with less education, those without dental insurance, Blacks and Hispanics.

**Lack Dental Insurance**

The amount of **dental uninsured has been increasing**. One-third (33%) do not have insurance coverage that pays for any of their routine dental care.

**Over half** of those at **lower income** of <200% FPL (58%) and **older adults** 65+ years (56%) lack dental insurance.

**Unresolved Dental Issue**

Due to lack of dental insurance, **29%** report that they **are unable to address dental issues**.

Unresolved issues are **more common** for **younger adults** 18-39 years (45%), **Hispanics** (44%) and **lower income** of <200% FPL (42%).
Social Determinant: **Food Insecurity**

Food insecurity is a lack of consistent access to enough food for an active and healthy life. In San Mateo County, food insecurity has been increasing.

**Families Experiencing Food Insecurity**

Families not having enough food on a regular basis is the highest amount for the past 20 years. Overall, 4% of adults say their family does not have enough food on a regular basis. It is more than 5x higher for those who experienced **homelessness** (21%), and increased for **lower income** (10%), **Blacks** (8%) and **younger adults** 18-39 years (7%).

**Community input**

Fewer than 15% specifically prioritized food insecurity as a need in the community, although it was discussed in the context of economic security and/or nutrition in one third of the meetings.

**Received Food Assistance**

One in three children (33%) in San Mateo County are eligible for **free or reduced-price lunch**. Additionally, 6% of residents have received food from a food bank, church, or other organization in the past year. This has been **consistently increasing** and is about 2x higher than 10 years ago.

Those at **lower income** levels of <200% FPL are almost 3x more likely (17%) to receive food assistance. It is also higher for those living on the **Coastside** (12%), **Asians** (10%), **Hispanics** (9%) and those with **less education** (9%).
Social Determinant: Healthcare Access & Delivery

A variety of factors have the potential for restricting access to healthcare services for many community residents.

Access to Healthcare Services

Three in four (75%) rate the ease of accessing local healthcare as “excellent” or “very good.” With 10% rating ease as “fair” or “poor.”

Low ratings on ease of access are more likely among those without insurance (32%), lower income of <200% FPL (24%), Hispanics (18%), lower education (16%) and those who live in South County (16%).

Low ratings are increased for access to specialized services.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health Service Type</th>
<th>County %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local healthcare</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental health services</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance abuse services</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental healthcare</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child healthcare</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Community input

Access and delivery was prioritized in 30% of discussions.

Lack of Health Insurance

A total of 9% of adults age 18 to 64 do not have any type of health insurance.

Lack of health insurance is higher among those with less education (22%), Hispanics (17%), and lower income of <200% FPL (14%).

Of those without health insurance one-third (34%) have gone 1-5 years without coverage, with 1 in 4 not having coverage for 5+ years.

Job Does Not Offer Health Insurance

A quarter (26%) report that their job does not offer health benefits. This has increased slightly.

Over half (56%) of those employed that are lower income of <200% FPL do not have employer health benefits; this is also higher for those living in the South County (36%), Coastside (34%) and Hispanics (35%).

Financial issues

6% have been unable to see a doctor when needed due to cost in the past year.

Cost is more prohibitive for lower income of <200% FPL (11%), younger adults 18-39 years (10%), those with lower education (10%), Blacks (10%), and Hispanics (10%).

8% were unable to purchase a needed medication in the past year due to cost.

This is higher among those at lower income of <200% FPL (18%), Hispanics (13%) and less education (12%).

Getting in to see Physician

Difficulty getting in to see a doctor in the past year is experienced by 11% of adults.

It is more difficult for those lower income of <200% FPL (20%), Hispanics (17%) and younger adults under 40 years (16%).
Housing affordability is associated with health and well-being. Housing and homelessness is one of the chief concerns of the community.

**Housing Affordability**

The 2018 median home price is $1.4 million and the median monthly rent is $4,150 in San Mateo County.

Four in five (80%) rate the availability of affordable housing in the community as “fair” or “poor.”

“Fair/poor” ratings of the availability of affordable housing are highest among Blacks (87%), Whites (87%), those living in Mid-County (86%) and those with higher income of >400% FPL (85%).

**Homelessness**

Of those currently housed, 3% report having had to live on the streets, in a car, or in a shelter in the past two years, which is the highest reported in the last 15 years.

The percentage of residents who have experienced homelessness is highest for younger adults under 40 years (8%) and those living on the Coastside (5%).

**Home Ownership**

Six in ten (61%) residents own their own home or condominium, which has remained stable over the years.

Home ownership is lowest among younger adults under 40 years (30%), lower income of <200% FPL (33%), Hispanics (36%) and those with less education (37%).

**Cost of Living**

Nearly two in five (39%) report that they or a family member have seriously considered leaving the county in the past year because of the cost of living.

Over half of younger adults under 40 years (54%), Hispanics (54%) and Blacks (53%) have considered relocating.

**Living Situation**

One in five (21%) currently share housing costs with someone other than a spouse or partner in order to limit expenses (i.e. roommate or family member), which has been increasing over the last 10 years.

Shared housing is more common among younger adults under 40 years (37%), Hispanics (36%), lower income of <200% FPL (33%) and Blacks (31%).

**Community input**

Housing is one of the chief concerns of the community and was prioritized by almost all discussions.

**Older Dependents**

12% have an older dependent (such as a parent, aunt, or uncle) living in their household because he or she is unable to live alone, which has been increasing.
Areas in need in San Mateo County under neighborhood and built environment include: transportation and traffic, access to food and recreation, and community infrastructure.

**Public Transportation**

*Two in five* (40%) feel they could not rely on local public transportation if necessary to get them to work, appointments, and shopping.

*Two in three* (66%) on the Coastside feel they could not rely on public transportation. Almost half of Whites (46%) and older adults 65+ years (46%) also feel less likely they could rely on public transportation.

**Lack of Transportation**

7% of adults report that a lack of transportation made it difficult or prevented them from seeing a doctor or making a medical appointment in the past year. This is the highest amount over the last 20 years and is similar to the national level (8%).

Lack of transportation preventing healthcare access is higher for those at lower income of <200% FPL (16%), Hispanics (12%) and middle income of 200-400% FPL (12%).

**Local Physical Environment**

Almost two in three (64%) rate their local physical environment as “excellent” or “very good,” which has been increasing over time. Conversely, 12% believe the local physical environment is “fair/poor.”

“Fair/poor” ratings are double that for Blacks (27%), Hispanics (25%), lower income of <200% FPL (25%) and in South County (24%).

**Community Rating**

Two in three (68%) gave “excellent” or “very good” ratings for the community as a place in which to live. One in ten adults (10%) gave “fair/poor” ratings.

“Fair/poor” ratings are higher among Blacks (20%), lower income of <200% FPL (18%), Hispanics (17%) and those living in the South County (17%).

Community input

Community input describes public transit access as poor all across the county, especially for Coastside residents and older adults whose homes are not near transit lines and supermarkets.
San Mateo County is highly diverse. About half (54%) of the population is White alone, a quarter (27%) is Asian alone, and one quarter (25%) has Hispanic heritage. Over one-third (37%) of residents are foreign-born.

**Income**

Half of households (49%) in the county earn more than $100,000 per year, with the median household income of $98,546, which is higher than that of California ($63,783).

One in five adults (20%) live below 200% of the FPL, which has been on the rise.

More than half with lower education (51%) report living below the 200% FPL threshold. One in three Hispanics (35%) and one in four women (24%) are lower income.

**Financial Situation**

One in five (19%) rate their personal financial situation as “fair” or “poor” in terms of being able to afford adequate food and housing and pay the current bills.

This is double for lower income of <200% FPL (43%), also higher for those who experienced homelessness (38%), Blacks (32%) and Hispanics (31%).

**Community Attachment**

The level of connectedness residents feel toward their community has remained steady, with one in three (34%) reporting feeling “not very connected” or “not at all connected.”

Community connectedness is lowest among Asians (46%), men (41%) and younger adults under 40 years (39%).

**Racial and Cultural Tolerance**

One in ten (10%) gave “fair” or “poor” rating of racial and cultural tolerance in San Mateo County; this has been improving over time.

More than one in seven lower income of <200% FPL (15%), Hispanic (15%) and Black (14%) residents believe racial and cultural tolerance in San Mateo County is “fair” or “poor.”

**Community input**

In the majority of focus groups and key informant interviews, the community identified persons of low socioeconomic status as having health disparities.

**Perceived Treatment Based on Race**

In the past 30 days, as a result of how they were treated based on their race, one in ten (10%) adults reported having felt emotionally upset (for example, being angry, sad, or frustrated).

While 7% reported experiencing physical symptoms (such as a headache, an upset stomach, tensing of muscles, or a pounding heart).

This is highest in Blacks; 25% felt emotionally upset and 18% experienced physical symptoms.