

# **Juneau County Key Informant Interview** **Summary and Report**

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## **Introduction**

WI Community Health Alliance (WCHA) is a small consulting firm with expertise in the field of public health. Specific expertise includes program development and evaluation as well as strategic planning, grant writing and community health improvement training. WCHA was contracted to conduct key informant interviews as a part of the Juneau County community needs assessment process.

## **Method**

**Approach to Developing Key Informant Schedule.** The project was undertaken with a quick turn-around schedule, with calls taking place over a period of nine days and the report being prepared approximately one week after the interviews were completed. A list of 20 names was provided by Juneau County Health Department. Subsequently, two additional names were provided in an email. The names were added to the list. All of the participants had been contacted and agreed to take part in the interviews. Telephone contact information was provided for each of the contacts, and electronic mail addresses were also provided for several participants. Calls were planned to take place between May 16-25 with the final report being submitted to Juneau County Health Department on June 1, 2016.

**Conducting Key Informant Interviews.** The initial approach for conducting interviews for participants with email addresses was to send a message via email participants to set up a time for the telephone calls. Where that was not possible, contact was made via telephone. Voicemail messages were left when participants were not reached directly. Interviews began on May 16<sup>th</sup> and the initial two surveys were analyzed to review the questions as well as the protocol for introducing the survey to participants. After consultation with Barb Theis, it was agreed that the survey questions did not need to be adjusted. The framing of the questions was adjusted to include an overview of Healthiest WI 2020 to prompt the participants in terms of what overall concepts to consider when looking at the health of a community. Individual calls took approximately 10 minutes to complete, with some calls being complete in as little as six minutes, and other calls lasting as long as 20 minutes each. A total of 18 interviews were completed, which is an 81% response rate. The interviews were documented during the call, with interviewer taking handwritten notes. At the conclusion of the interview, responses were read back to each participant to ensure that the documentation was accurate.

**Unanticipated Challenges.** The project was a success. Participants were receptive to the telephone interviews, engaged in the conversation, and deeply committed to their communities. The only challenge was making contact with participants. Some participants did not return messages, others were not available in the window of time that was set for the calls, while others were not able to be reached for several days. The time spent reaching participants exceeded the initial timeline. As a result, the timeline was adjusted to allow for calls after May 25<sup>th</sup> and the report timeline was also adjusted.

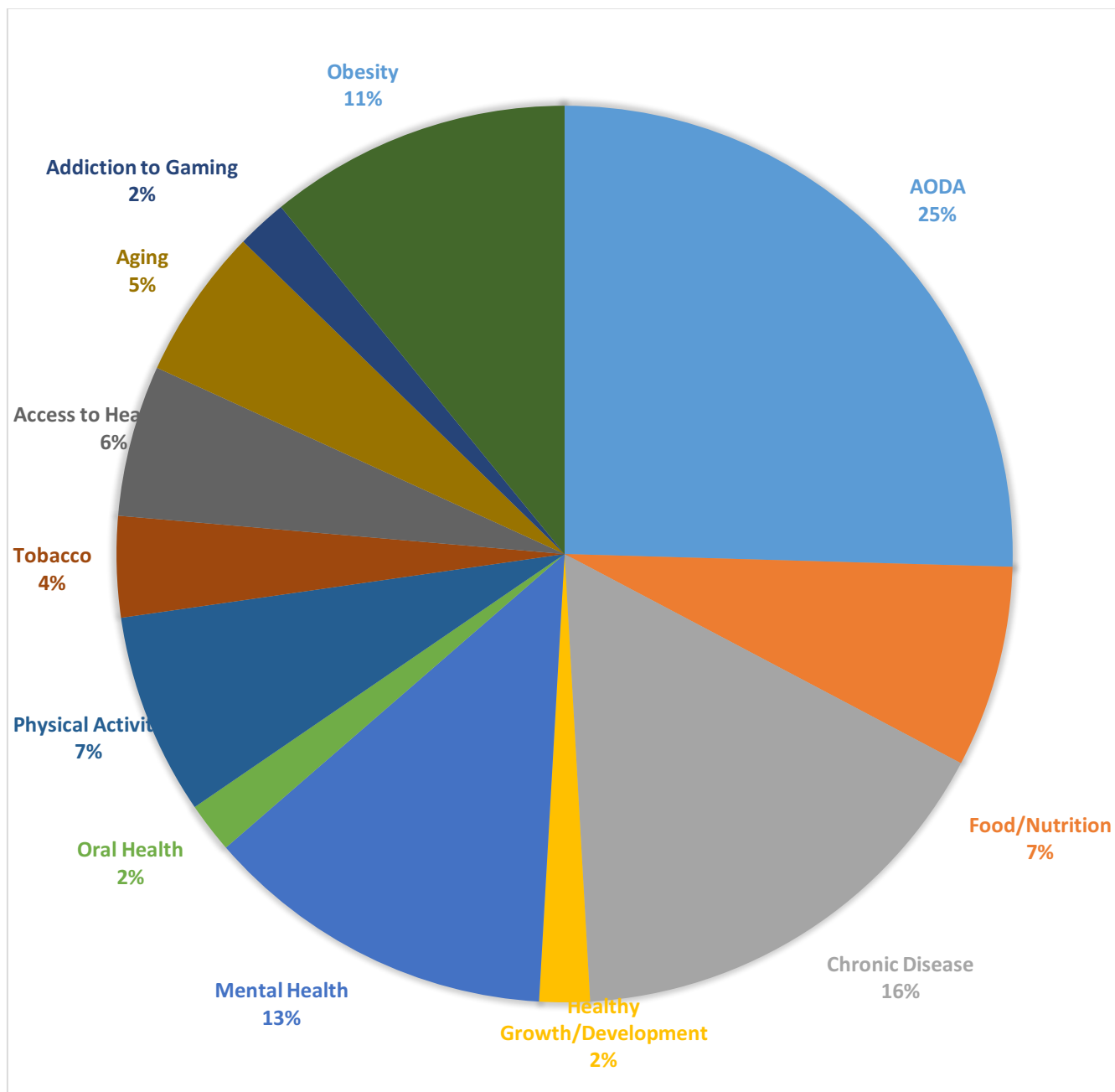
**Analyzing Results and Report Development.** Interview results were grouped into categories and documented in an excel spreadsheet. Tables were developed for each question, and the comments were analyzed according to category. Participants were identified by sector and number. Participant Demographics are described on the following page.

## Participants

<b>Sector</b>	<b>Number of Participants</b>
Retired/Senior	3
Non-profit/Library	4
School	1
Faith Based	1
Health Care	3
Business	5
Government	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18</b>

<b>Participant Identification</b>	<b>Sector</b>
ID-1	Retired/Senior
ID-2	Non-Profit/Library
ID-3	Non-Profit/Library
ID-4	Retired/Senior
ID-5	Business
ID-6	School
ID-7	Faith Based
ID-8	Health Care
ID-9	Business
ID-10	Retired/Senior
ID-11	Health Care
ID-12	Government
ID-13	Business
ID-14	Health Care
ID-15	Business
ID-16	Non-Profit/Library
ID-17	Health Care
ID-18	Business

## Summary



### Top Health Concerns in Juneau County

**Priority 1: Alcohol and Other Drugs.** The overall health priority that was identified most often was alcohol and other drugs, with 16 of 18 participants making reference to that problem. Within that priority, abuse of prescription medications, heroin, marijuana and alcohol were most often identified. There was one reference to cocaine. There was an acknowledgement that schools and law enforcement are working to address this issue, but that there is not enough being done. There was acknowledgement that health care has begun to address the prescription drug issue. Several participants

referenced the culture of alcohol in Juneau County as well as the fact that drugs are easy to access in schools.

**Priority 2: Chronic Disease.** The second most identified health priority was chronic disease. Specifically, five participants identified cancer, four participants identified the aging related chronic diseases of dementia and Alzheimer's. It is important to note that the fourth most commonly identified health issue was obesity, and several participants referred to obesity both in the context of its own health issue as well as in the context of leading to chronic disease.

**Priority 3: Mental Health.** Within the realm of mental health, participants most commonly referred to anxiety and depression. Within the school age population, anxiety and depression were noted to be on the rise. Family disruption, pressure at school and too much time spent using technology were identified as factors leading to an increase in youth anxiety and depression. Other participants talked about depression and anxiety related to the stress of family disruption, a culture of poverty that results in a sense of hopelessness, depression and anxiety.

**Food & Nutrition.** It is important to note that participants identified a need for people to increase consumption of healthy food options, and several participants linked this issue to poverty, stating that Juneau Co provides ample access to fast, unhealthy food options, which are more affordable than healthy foods. Two participants identified the need for education on how to make healthy food choices and preparation of healthy meals.

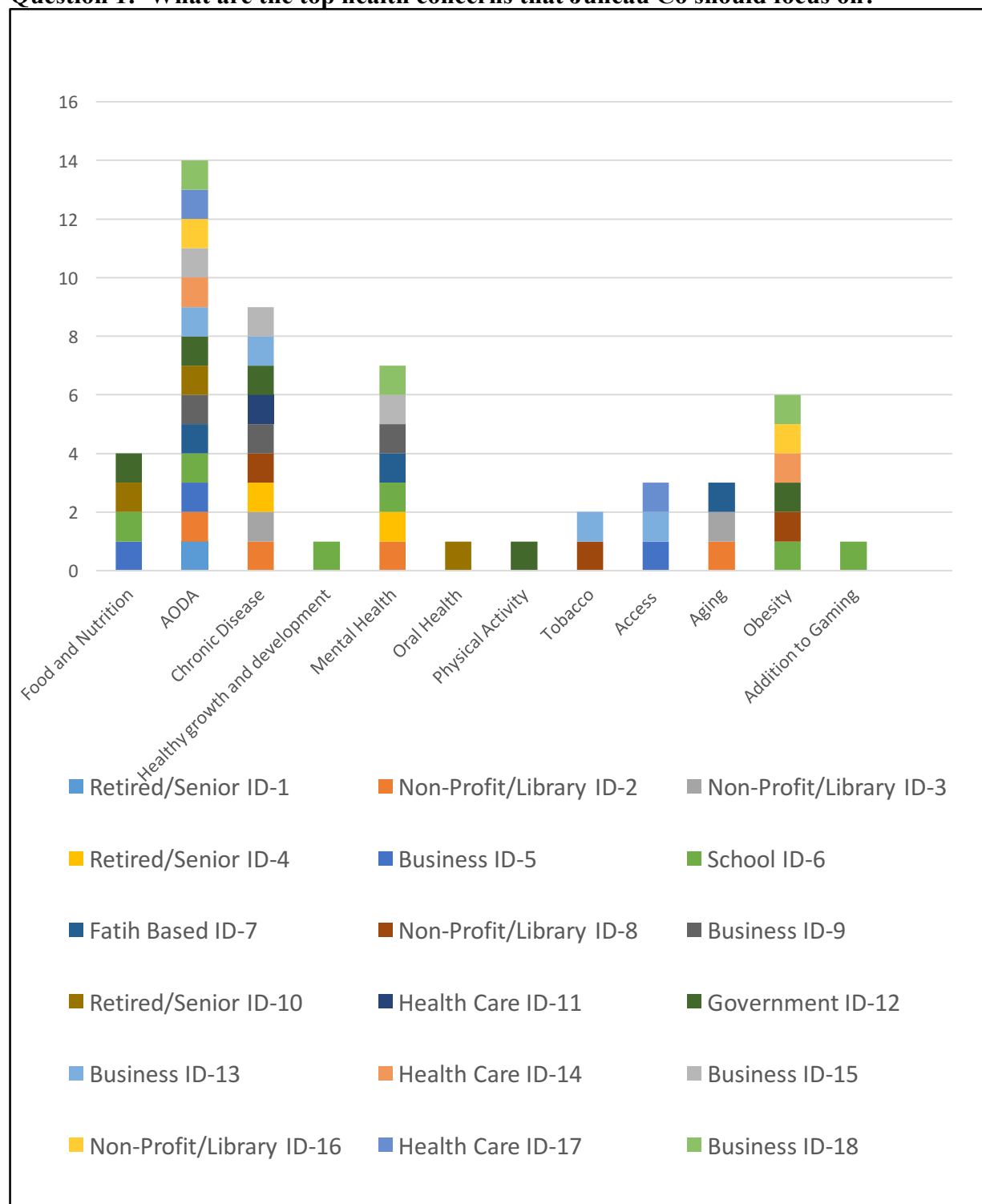
### **Existing Services in Juneau County**

There was general acknowledgement that schools are doing their best to address both the alcohol and drug issue as well as mental health issues, including depression, anxiety and suicide prevention. Among the participants who discussed schools, there was a general acknowledgement that more resources including staff training and better curricula related to health are required.

Several participants were aware of programs, information or services being offered in community based settings, offered through public health, or by health care. There were two participants who responded that they are not aware of any services being offered in the county. Four participants made reference to community based walking programs. Two participants mentioned the suicide coalition and efforts to reduce rates of suicide as being strong community efforts.

**Barriers and Challenges.** By far, the most commonly identified barrier in Juneau County was poverty. 16 of 18 participants named poverty or having no jobs/low paying jobs as the root of the health issues in the county. Poverty was named as a factor for AODA use, poor food and nutrition, and obesity. Several participants talked of the culture of poverty as well as dependence upon the welfare system leading to poor education, inability to access programs and services as well as the contributing factor for homelessness.

**Question 1: What are the top health concerns that Juneau Co should focus on?**



## **Question 1: Comments**

### **AODA**

- Drugs are a huge issue; not so much alcohol. A lot of people are connected to the prison system
- There is a lot of meth and cocaine
- Pills are easy to get. Kids are handing them out at school!
- Drugs are an issue. Big time!
- Drugs and alcohol are rampant
- A lot of prescription drug abuse and heroin
- I don't see a problem with my employees and drugs, but I do see it when it comes to job seekers

### **Chronic Disease**

- There is a lot of cancer in Juneau County
- Substance abuse is effecting the entire family
- There is a lot of cancer here but I do not know the genesis of it
- There is a lot of diabetes
- Especially diabetes and cancer

### **Healthy Growth & Development**

- Family disruption leads to stress, youth living with grandparents

### **Mental Health**

- Mental health and disabilities lead to people not being able to read, and not being able to hold a job, so they need services forever
- High levels of anxiety and pressure are leading to an increase in suicidal thoughts, depression
- There is a great deal of depression in Juneau County
- Mental health issues cause a problem in getting quality help, many people have limited skill sets

### **Tobacco**

- Tobacco use among youth is particularly an issue

### **Access to Health Care**

- This is an issue especially with the elderly population in particular
- Response time in emergencies is an issue
- Health insurance issues are leading to lack of access to health care
- We need more access to hospitals and clinics so that people do not have to leave the county for care. Limited emergency services means that we often have to travel to Tomah for emergency health care

### **Aging**

- There is a lot of dementia and Alzheimer's
- There is a lot of Alzheimer's
- The population is aging

### **Obesity/Physical Activity**

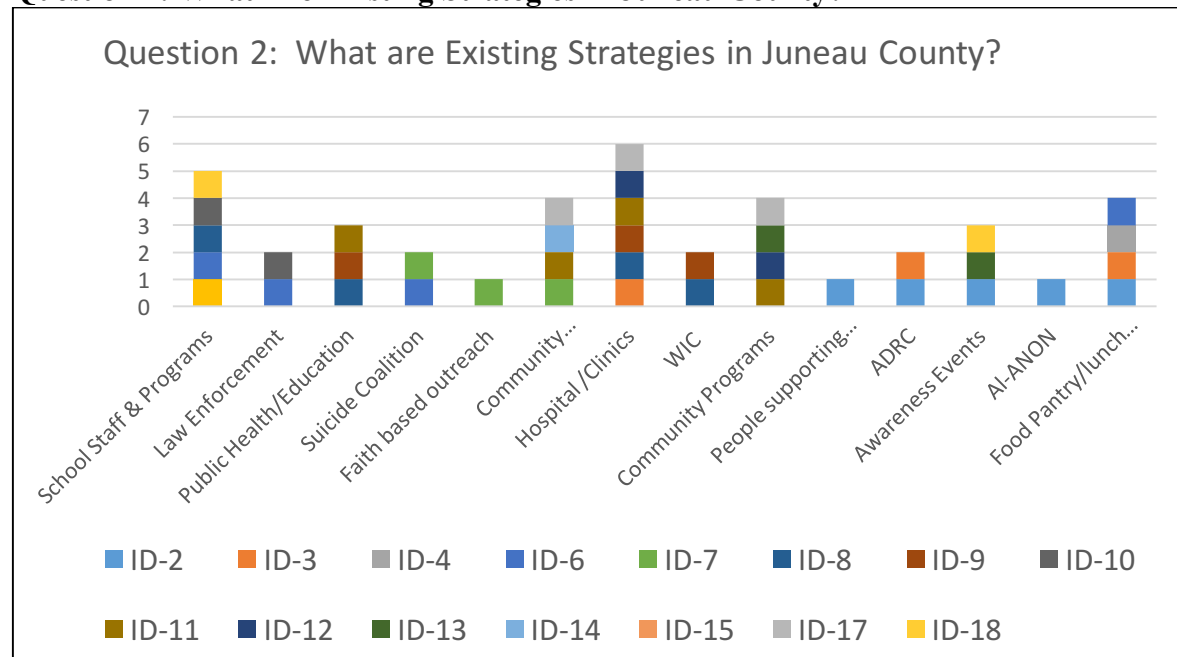
- Poor nutrition and lack of exercise are leading to obesity. Too much gaming



## Addiction to Gaming

- Too many youths are spending all their time on technology – phones, X-Box, etc. This is leading to obesity and other health issue

## Question 2: What Are Existing Strategies in Juneau County?



## Question 2: Comments

### School Staff & Programs

- School staff attended an anxiety training to meet the needs of students related to anxiety
- The school lunch program is healthier – serving less processed foods
- School Resource Officer works on suicide prevention and outreach to parents and students
- School Resource officer is working on truancy related to gaming and addiction to gaming
- Teachers/schools are trying but their hands are tied to really do anything about the drug problem
- School districts have been putting in great effort to focus upon non-traditional education which has fostered kids to go into non-traditional education. They are then coming back to Juneau Co to work and live, bringing talent and creativity

### Law Enforcement

- Law enforcement is doing a lot
- Law enforcement are working on the AODA issue

### Public Health/Education

- There is a Mental Health newsletter at the library, but it does not come from Juneau County. Juneau County does not have one and it's an area [mental health] that needs support
- Health Department and hospital are doing things but I don't know

- Brochures for child seats; smoking cessation information
- Chronic disease management: Health screenings in the community
- Community presentations on health related topics
- Walking hours at local schools and handouts
- Strong women, yoga classes (x2)
- Local hospital bulletins and publications – stress health all the time. It comes out monthly or quarterly. Mile Bluff Times. 20 pages long. They have numerous articles in there

### **Suicide Coalition**

- Suicide coalition is really starting to get some work done

### **Faith Based Outreach**

- Trying to build community through churches

### **Community Based Programs**

- Strong Bones for Women is offered two times per week
- Transportation services are available in Mauston
- Pre-employment screening
- Paint nights are one small way to build community – we need to get people out of houses and into the community. Human interaction
- Local newspaper – Star Times
- There is a wellness organization stressing wellness. Walking trails and bike trails
- The business community offers “Get More” health savings plan for smaller companies in Juneau
- Family Medical Center – fun run to promote healthy lifestyles
- River walk is well utilized
- Active sports community
- Several positive media about mental health issues
- A lot of joint efforts going on
- Entrepreneur & inventor’s Club – fosters people with new ideas, networking, help starting businesses

### **Hospitals/Clinics**

- Nursing staff has a children and family program
- Clinics offer services
- There is a group in New Lisbon – free doctors, dentists
- There was an intern that worked on the farmer’s market which supports both chronic disease and obesity prevention
- Clinic and pharmacy access is getting better
- Teachers/schools are trying but their hands are tied to really do anything about the drug problem
- A lot going on to provide access to health care. Recruiting primary care specialists
- Health systems work well together
- Starting to develop prescribing practices in Juneau Co
- Health care providers – focusing upon mental health

### **WIC**

- WIC clinics (x2)

**People Supporting Each Other**

- There is a network of people helping each other – but nothing official

**ADRC**

- There is a very active ADRC working to address dementia and Alzheimer's
- ARDC does a great job working with seniors – but need to remind seniors what is available

**Awareness Events**

- There is a walk in Mauston for cancer – at the Mauston High School
- There is strong support for cancer research in Juneau Co

**AL-ANON**

- Al-Anon meets at Mile Bluff

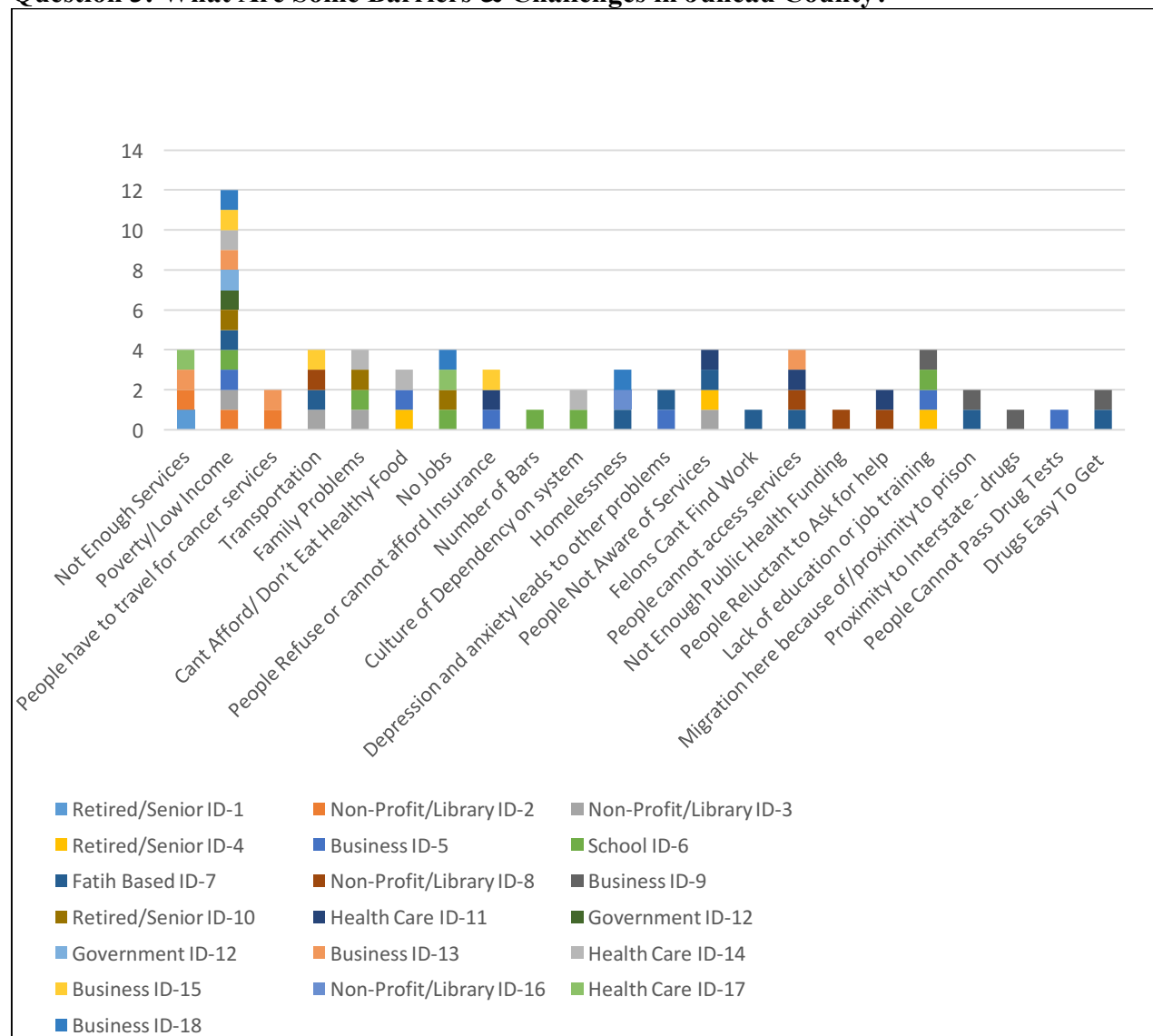
**Food Pantry/lunch Programs**

- Food pantry is utilized a lot
- The community provides excellent support for nutrition efforts. Our food pantry is very high functioning. Community supports it financially in Elroy
- There is a lot of support for free lunches for children

**General Comments**

- I see nothing happening in terms of strategies
- County programs are good, but there is not a lot of outreach beyond programs
- Do not know where to send people

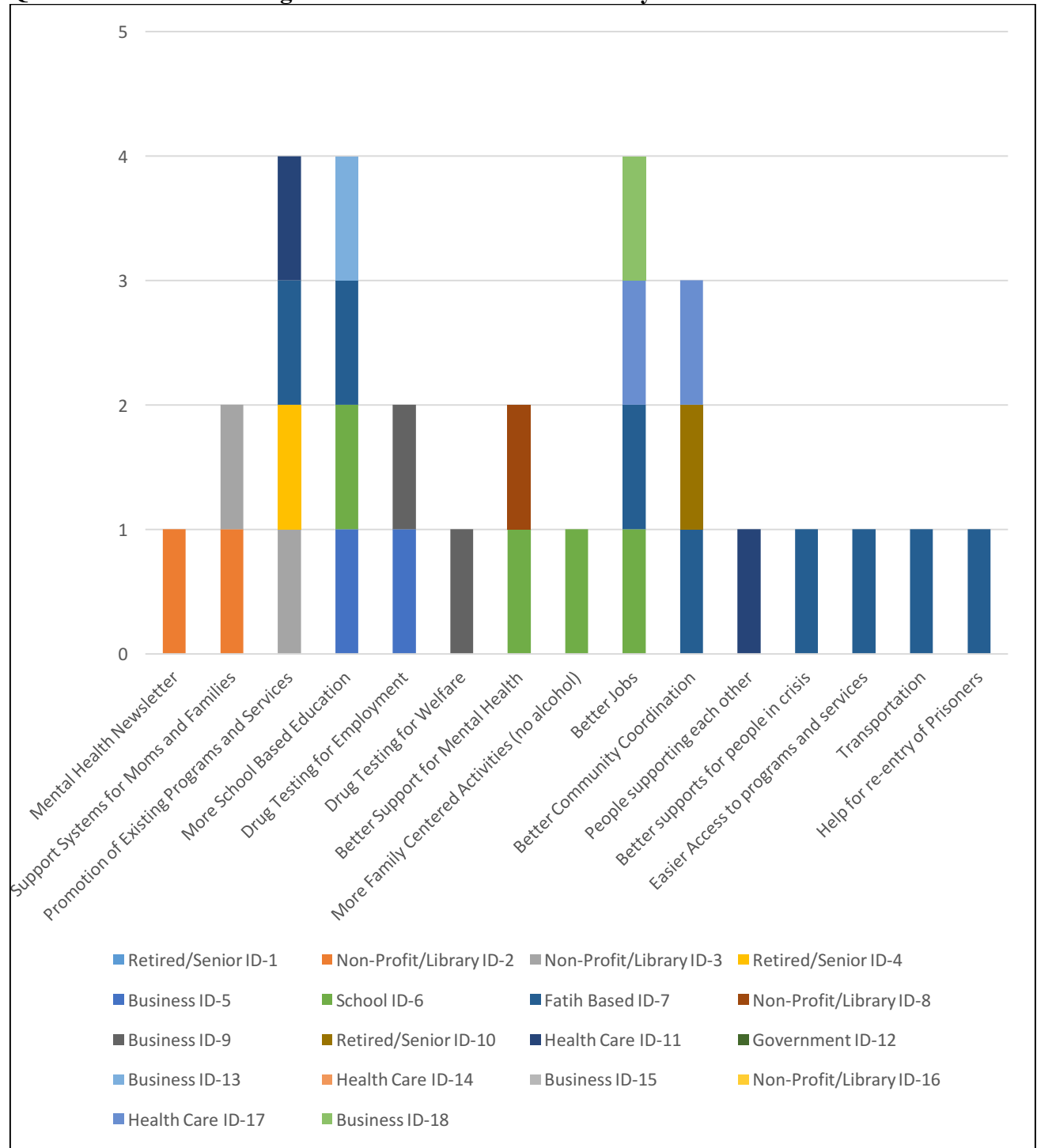
### Question 3: What Are Some Barriers & Challenges in Juneau County?



### Question 3: Comments

- Nothing really happening to deal with mental health, substance abuse and child abuse because there are no resources
- People need to travel to La Crosse or Marshfield to get cancer services
- Transportation: seniors do not drive or do not know someone to take them
- Family concerns
- I get about a call a week asking for help because they are homeless or soon will be. There is a lot of homelessness in Juneau Co
- Poverty is a huge issue
- Poverty is the basis for many of the issues in Juneau Co
- Income is a barrier in every way – no car, no funds to purchase what they need
- We have fresh produce but people are not taking it because they do not know how to prepare them. We tried to offer a class but people would not come even though a meal was offered.

#### Question 4: What Strategies Are Needed in Juneau County?



## **Question 4: Comments**

### **Support Systems for Moms and Families**

- Need better supports for moms and families – in other communities, there are parent resource centers. It would be great to have something in Juneau Co to deal with family support issues.

### **Promotion of Existing Programs and Services**

- Community awareness of what services are out there
- More public messaging of what is available out there

### **More School Based Education**

- Need more education starting in grade school, especially marijuana and alcohol. Youth believe that marijuana is safer than alcohol
- With better education and experience, people can ask for better health care
- We need a full health curriculum for 6,7,8<sup>th</sup> graders. We do not have enough – mental health, habits, life skills

### **Drug Testing for Welfare**

- If they are positive, they need to get treatment

### **More Family Activities (no alcohol)**

- We need more opportunities for families, because everything seems to be focused upon alcohol

### **Better jobs**

- We need economic development
- Better, higher paying jobs
- We need to attract more businesses to Juneau Co

### **Better Community Coordination**

- We need more organization so that people can have access to all the information on everything from health care to churches, etc.
- Need to get the whole community to work together to solve problems
- Need more support for people in the community – especially seniors who are isolated

### **Transportation**

- People have no access to transportation so cannot run around from place to place to access services We have a wonderful hospital but sometimes people have to travel to get health care and they have no vehicle to get there

### **Help for Re-entry of Prisoners**

- We need a program to work with felons so that they can get back on their feet

**Question 5: Overall Comments**

- It's great that Juneau and other counties work together on some issues. There is power in pooling efforts
- Some living conditions that people maintain are deplorable
- Despite education, people still make poor choices
- We need more low impact exercise opportunities for seniors
- Homelessness is an issue. People come into the library looking for places to stay