HEALTH RESOURCES IN ACTION

Case study: Andover/ North Andover

Joint Community Health Assessment & Plan (CHA/CHIP)

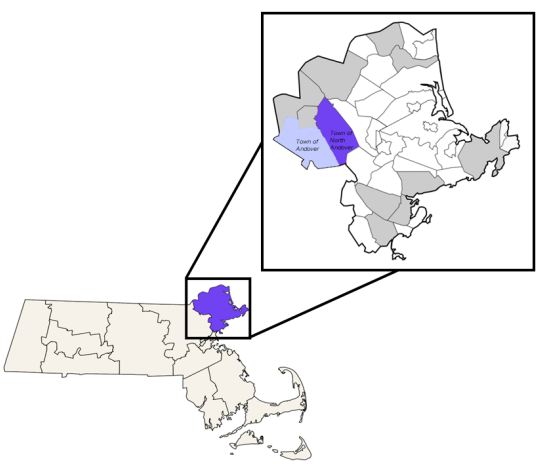

Figure 1. Map, Towns of Andover and North Andover

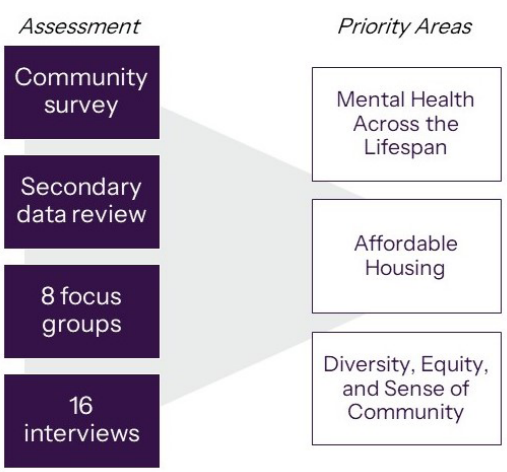

Figure 2. Assessment Activities and Priority Areas

In 2022, two neighboring Massachusetts towns (Andover and North Andover, Figure 1) pursued a collaborative approach to community health assessment and improvement planning.

Together with HRiA, the partners identified common needs and co-created clear, actionable plans to improve the health of both communities.

Challenge

Cities and towns often face limited capacity to assess and address community health needs. Recognizing similarities between their neighboring towns, staff from the Andover and North Andover health departments collaborated on a joint community health assessment (CHA) and community health improvement plan (CHIP).

Process

To guide the assessment and planning processes, HRiA supported the creation of an Advisory Committee. This Committee consisted of community members, leaders, and staff from both towns. With guidance from the Advisory Committee, HRiA facilitated the assessment process, including a review of secondary data, a community survey, eight resident focus groups, and 16 community leader interviews. HRiA then synthesized these data into key themes (Figure 2). Committee members reviewed the findings, discussed themes, and prioritized three areas of focus for their CHIP: Mental Health Across the Lifespan; Affordable Housing; and Diversity, Equity, and Sense of Community. In a series of virtual interactive planning sessions, participants co-created CHIP components and an accompanying one-year action plan.

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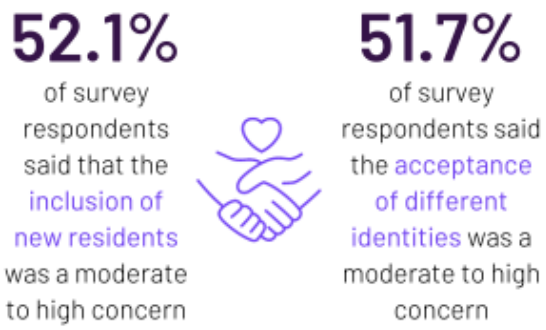

Figure 3. Excerpt from Andover report

Results

HRiA presented each of the towns with key findings, representing multiple real-time perspectives on town assets and health needs. Town officials and partners participated in capacity-building sessions exploring topics such as power, influence, and health and racial equity to ensure their CHIPs can better affect systems change.

In partnership with HRiA, teams of over 20 people from each of the towns created an actionable, data-informed plan to focus their efforts over the next three years. This plan included a detailed roadmap for the first year of work. To support the Towns' communication about the assessment findings and resulting plan, HRiA also developed infographics for the three priority areas to share key findings and aspects of the CHIP in an easily digestible way (Figure 3).

Key Takeaways

- Data from the assessment can be used beyond the plan; for instance, the Town of Andover is using findings to inform additional areas of their work, including refugee and immigrant health, healthy eating, and vaping concerns.
- Engaging community stakeholders throughout your process increases awareness of public health, buy-in and support for your plan.
- A strong CHA-CHIP process supports effective implementation.
- Having a trusted, experienced external partner to act as a neutral party can make the CHA-CHIP process less overwhelming.

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Resources

The Town of Andover has released their CHA and CHIP: Town of Andover CHA and CHIP

To learn more about HRiA's community health improvement services that can be tailored to your community, visit: hria.org/services/chi

The Public Health Accreditation Board's Foundational Public Health Services (FPHS) framework defines a minimum package of public health capabilities and programs that no jurisdiction can be without. The FPHS framework was updated in 2022 to assure it reflects the evolving nature and modernization of governmental public health. Functional public health services.

The 10 Essential Public Health Services (EPHS) framework from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) describes the public health activities that all communities should undertake. For the past 25 years, the EPHS has served as a well-recognized framework for carrying out the mission of public health. The EPHS framework was originally released in 1994 and more recently updated in 2020. The revised version is intended to bring the framework in line with current and future public health practice.