

# FORCES OF CHANGE

Key community partners in the Okaloosa County Local Public Health System were asked to brainstorm “Forces of Change” that are occurring or might occur in our community that affect the health of our community, our local quality of life, or could impact our local public health system. Participants then identified specific opportunities and/or threats generated by these forces. These forces and their impacts will be incorporated into our Community Health Improvement Strategic Planning.

FORCES (TRENDS, EVENTS, FACTORS)	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<b>OKALOOSA COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residents are younger, wealthier, more educated than the average FL county</li> <li>An aging population, with a decreasing birthrate</li> <li>Recent increase to our school-aged population</li> <li>Undocumented residents</li> <li>Increased operations tempo on our local military bases</li> <li>Residents travel globally</li> <li>Influx of Ft. Bragg staff &amp; families</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aging population creates jobs to meet medical &amp; personal needs</li> <li>Higher income provides more in sales &amp; property tax revenues</li> <li>Higher levels in education in the local population provide well-trained health professionals in our community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retired “transplants” &amp; tourists earned/contributed to infrastructure in other locales; need/use services here. This group may also be less interested in the needs of school-aged population</li> <li>Undocumented residents draw on services they can’t fund through taxes (beyond sales tax), and may not be eligible for programs that limit the use of expensive emergency health services</li> <li>Increased deployments lead to family stress &amp; higher rates of suicide, domestic violence, and increased need for mental health &amp; support services</li> <li>Diseases could be carried by our worldwide travelers</li> <li>Influx of new community members stretches infrastructure – impacting roadways, ambulances, &amp; evacuation routes</li> </ul>
<b>OKALOOSA COUNTY GEOGRAPHY</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rural county with limited public transportation</li> <li>Population centers are split north &amp; south, with Air Force land in between</li> <li>Coastal location (hurricanes, tourists, BP oil spill)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tourists contribute to sales/ bed tax revenues &amp; help with economic activity/job creation</li> <li>Potential BP spill-related revenues may fund local services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Need emergency planning &amp; resources for a larger population than our “official” population</li> <li>Lack of affordable public transportation limits access to health resources</li> <li>Limited local specialty medical care</li> </ul>
<b>DECREASED HEALTH CARE FUNDING</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decreased CHD funding from state for health services</li> <li>Mismatched priorities between governor and legislature</li> <li>Decreased payments from Medicaid/Medicare</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LIP funding: Opportunity Health, One Problem Clinic, &amp; CMAP provide temporary access to care</li> <li>Federally Qualified Health Centers in CV &amp; Freeport</li> <li>Educate/advocate (citizens can lobby) legislature regarding health funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No state income tax limits state revenue to support health needs</li> <li>State considers primary care a need to be met with local funding</li> <li>Increased # of Medicaid recipients &amp; decreased reimbursements may overwhelm the system</li> </ul>
<b>NEED FOR EDUCATION &amp; COMMUNICATION</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to technology is a barrier to health education/communications</li> <li>Lack of awareness regarding sexual health issues</li> <li>Increase in obesity &amp; sedentary lifestyle leads to increase in chronic diseases</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Libraries &amp; schools provide access to technology</li> <li>Recent PACE project expanded bike paths in FWB</li> <li>Financial incentives for electronic medical record systems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retired transplants &amp; tourists may be less supportive of health &amp; education for families &amp; groups (ex: homeless)</li> <li>Conservative community may resist sexual health education</li> <li>Aging population may be harder to influence regarding lifestyle change</li> <li>Increase in chronic disease will increase cost of local health care</li> </ul>
<b>ECONOMIC DOWNTURN</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased number of under &amp; uninsured residents in need of health care services (primary care, medications, mental health, emergency care, hospitalization, etc)</li> <li>Impacts include increase in homeless families, jobless, welfare/Medicaid recipients, children not living with their parents, increased child abuse/neglect, domestic violence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Education focus for development of new job skills</li> <li>Community allies collaborating to address issues (sample community strategies at <a href="http://movethemountain.org">movethemountain.org</a>)</li> <li>Find less expensive ways to provide medical care</li> <li>Educate legislature regarding funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decreased funding needs to stretch further for most community partners</li> <li>Decreased tax revenue</li> <li>Increased untreated illnesses will result in higher costs to the community over time</li> <li>Lack of awareness of the needs of those most financially impacted, among those less impacted</li> <li>Heavy impact on children, our next generation of community leaders</li> <li>Increased need for pediatric mental health services &amp; funding</li> </ul>