

22ND ANNUAL SOUTHERN PLAINS CONFERENCE
FEBRUARY 16, 2011
HOME MERCANTILE BUILDING & COMMUNITY HALL
NAZARETH, TEXAS

WHAT MAKES COMMUNITIES HEALTHY?

Social Health

Physical Health

Economic Health

Emotional Health



Environmental Health

Spiritual Health

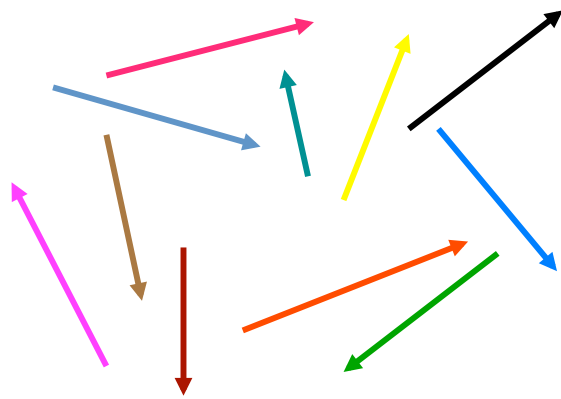
Mental Health

A Message from the Executive Director

Darryl Birkenfeld, Ph.D.

Welcome to our 22nd Annual Southern Plains Conference! Thanks for gathering together to learn about and discuss a topic so essential to our communities as health.

Back in 2006, Ogallala Commons began sharing with community leaders across our region a poignant image. The illustration consisted of a page of brightly colored arrows, with each arrow pointing in a different direction than the arrows to next to it. As you can

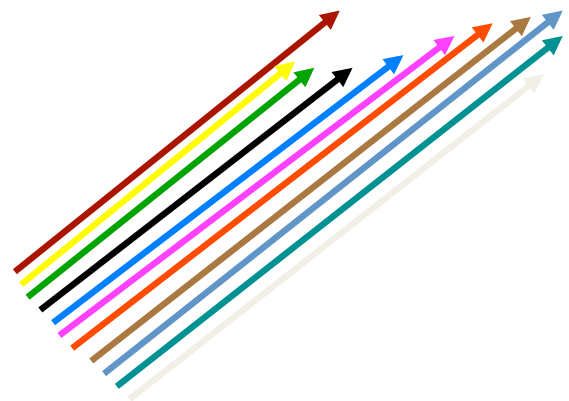


Worthy Causes and Community Activities
(David Beurle, 2005)

see to your left, the image looks like chaos...or a wreck waiting to happen. Actually, the illustration depicts our communities as having multitudes of worthy activities and causes—with many that are not connected or complimentary of one another. The jumble of arrows is also a valid illustration of our society's efforts at health care. We have pills, vaccinations, government programs, and wide selections of food items. And yet, this multitude of tools and choices appears to be more chaos than

cure, more encouragement for chronic disease than prevention, and more burden than gift. Even worse, this illustration of health care demonstrates highly fragmented, individual efforts unrelated to one another, actually competing for more space and attention. My interpretation is a tad bit exaggerated, but you get the point.

Luckily, we also shared a second image at community meetings since 2006. This image also has arrows, but in the second picture, the arrows are unified and all moving in the same direction...towards the same goal. I offer these two illustrations to you because they are good metaphors for understanding and exploring community health. The illustrations lead us to ask the question: which image of community health do we want to be operating in our localities, counties, and regions? I hope our Southern Plains Conference is filled with great presentations, resources, ideas, and information for each of you. Most of all, I hope our day of education inspires you to become an active participant (an arrow in a quiver of unified efforts) in understanding and building community health.



Worthy Causes with Community Activities
(David Beurle, 2005)

Conference Overview

When it comes to health care, Americans find a lot to argue about these days. Yet, something is missing in these heated debates. Shouldn't we begin by talking about what we mean by health? Essayist and poet Wendell Berry writes that "community is the smallest measure of health, and that to speak of the health of an isolated individual is a contradiction in terms."

Starting from this premise, presentations at our Southern Plains Conference will explore community health as a participatory work, as a practice of communal wellness, and an unbreakable circle of interdependent dimensions:



All of us are members in this multi-dimensional commonwealth of health, and we seek to remember these dimensions and reacquaint ourselves with the tools necessary to develop an inclusive practice of community health that fits our time.

Key Questions For Our Conference on Community Health

- What are community indicators of health that ordinary people can observe?
- What are community indicators of a lack of health that we observe?
- What can data and statistics reveal about what we have observed so that we can analyze, evaluate, and judge our community health on a deeper level?
- To take concrete action for building community health, what are the resources we can utilize and how can we network to share these resources more effectively?

Place & Happiness Survey

(5 major categories) from *Who's Your City* by Richard Florida (p.163)

- **Physical & Economic Security:** perception of crime and safety, the overall direction of the economy, availability of jobs
- **Basic Services:** schools, health care, affordable housing, roads, and public transportation
- **Leadership:** quality and efficacy of elected and unelected (business and civic) leadership, and opportunities for public and local engagement
- **Openness:** level of tolerance for and acceptance of diverse demographic groups: families with children, ethnic & racial minorities, seniors, immigrants, gays & lesbians
- **Aesthetics:** physical beauty, amenities and cultural offerings

People are healthy when the places they live in support health. May this conference assist and inspire us to engage in building communities of health and wellness!

Conference Schedule

- 8:15am **Welcome**
Linda Rasor, CEO, Plains Memorial Hospital, Dimmitt, TX
Jim Koulovatos, CEO, Swisher Memorial Hospital, Tulia, TX
- 8:20 **Conference Overview**
Darryl Birkenfeld, Director, Ogallala Commons, Nazareth, TX
- 8:30 **“A Salubrious Country”**
J. Michael Harter, History Teacher, Ascension Academy, Amarillo, TX
- 8:50 **Understanding & Appreciating the Development of Wellness**
Elaine Sullivan, Counselor and Educator, Dallas, TX
- 9:15 **What Makes Communities Healthy? A Panel Presentation**
Nutritious Food and Physical Activity
Morgan Dezendorf, High Plains Food Bank, Amarillo, TX
Vibrant Local Economies
Bobby Gierisch, Director, Texas Rural Innovators, Austin, TX
Educated Health Consumers
Joann Starr, Christus Health, Nazareth, TX
Local Social Services
Donna Montes, Catholic Family Service, Dimmitt, TX
Resilient Ecosystems
Courtney White, Quivira Coalition, Santa Fe, NM
- 10:10 **Break - Exhibit Booths and Silent Auction Viewing at the Nazareth Community Hall**
- 10:55 **Community Health Observation Teams... A Walking Activity**
Julie Hodges, OC Education Coordinator, Lubbock, TX
- 12:10pm **Lunch - (Locally Produced and Prepared) at Nazareth Community Hall**
- 1:00 **Community Forums as a Tool for Building Health**
- 1:30 **Dealing with Unhealth... the Flipside of Striving for Health**
Fr. Ken Keller, MSW, pastor of Holy Family Church, Nazareth, TX
- 2:00 **Break - Silent Auction Closes** (*Move to Home Mercantile for final presentations*)
- 2:10 **Resources for Building Healthy Communities**
Jeff Reid, Associate Director, WTAMU Enterprise Center, Amarillo, TX
Shannon Kirkland, F. Marie Hall Institute for Rural & Community Health, TTU, Lubbock, TX
Joe Franco, Azteca Economic Development, Dimmitt, TX
- 2:50 Evaluation of the Conference
- 3:00 **The Promise of Health: Action Steps (A Panel Presentation)**
Moderator: Tabitha King, Texas Tech University, Lubbock OC Rural/Community Health Intern
- 3:30pm **Adjournment**

Speaker Information

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The Observing Your Community exercise is a tool for exploring the many aspects of your community's health. It is meant to heighten your awareness of health in your community.

What are some general observations you could make (general thoughts) that form the broad outlines of a "picture" of overall health in your community or locale?

Major Health Issues

- What are common health issues you see in your community?
 - I. Diabetes, hypertension, obesity, heart diseases, arthritis, cancer, etc.
 - II. Does your community have support groups or education classes to assist or inform people in regard to these issues?
- How prevalent is the use of tobacco, tobacco products, alcohol and other drugs in your town?
- What are the most common injuries?
- What do you observe about risks that impact health in your community: occupational, lifestyle, and recreational risks?
- What contributes the most to the lack of health in your community?
- In what ways do local churches facilitate well-being in your community or locale?

Diet and Nutrition

- Describe the selection and quality of fresh fruits and vegetables in your local stores?
- What are the fresh fruit and vegetable options at your local restaurants?
- What have you observed about school lunches and the students awareness and participation in healthy eating?
- Do you observe local people eating a large percentage of their meals at fast food restaurants or convenience store counters?
- Are there community gardens and/or farmers markets in your town?
- Do you grow any food for yourself or others? If so, do you preserve any of your produce?
- Are classes on diet and nutrition offered in the community?
If so, with what do they assist community/members?

Well-Being

- What is the level of optimism in the community?
- Where can people in the community exercise?
- What fitness programs and classes are offered?
What social activities are available: for elders? children? families? adults?
 - I. What social activities are available year-round? Seasonally?
- What services are available to help individuals achieve financial well-being?
- Are there vocational and career development classes, adult continuing education, life skills, or craft or home economics courses offered in your town or locale?

Observing Your Community's Health, cont'd...

Survivability

- How far are you from the nearest emergency medical services (EMS) unit?
- What is the average EMS response time in your area?
- What is the availability of EMS certification or CPR classes?

Clinical Services

- How far away is the health clinic you visit?
 - I. What has been your experience with preventative healthcare in your community?
- Is there a licensed midwife, or homeopathic health practitioner in your community?
- Is there a parish nurse or community health worker in your town or locale?
- How far is the nearest pharmacy?
- How far is the nearest dentist? What is the level of oral hygiene in the community?

Environmental Health

- What observations can you make about the state of the water supply in your community?
- What do you observe about the overall quality of the air in your community?
- Are there opportunities for recycling in your community?
- What do you observe about the state of the land and landscapes around your community or locale?
- What elements of the environment would you identify as key to your town being a livable community?

Selected Reading List

Florida, Richard. Who's Your City?: How the Creative Economy Is Making Where to Live the Most Important Decision of Your Life (Basic Books, 2009).

Farren, Suzy. A Call to Care: The Women Who Built Catholic Healthcare in America (St. Louis, MO: The Catholic Health Association of America, 1996).

Freyfogle, Eric. The New Agrarianism: Land, Culture, and the Community of Life (Washington, DC: Island Press, 2001).

Rosenberg, Charles. The Care of Strangers: The Rise of America's Hospital System (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987).

Travis, John W. M.D., and Regina Sara Ryan. The Wellness Workbook: How to Achieve Enduring Health and Vitality, 3rd ed. (Berkeley, CA: Celestial Arts, 2004).

Conference Sponsors



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER™
F. Marie Hall Institute for
Rural and Community Health

Since its inception, Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) has focused on rural health issues. In an effort to bring rural issues to the forefront, the TTUHSC Office of Rural and Community Health was established at the vice presidential level in 1997 to provide a more defined rural focus

for the institution. This was made possible by the generous endowment of the F. Marie Hall Chair in Rural Health and the commitment of university resources. The Institute now serves as the primary liaison with communities across the 108-county TTUHSC service area. These community partnerships provide both the framework and the mechanism for achieving the mission of improving the health of West Texans. The Institute develops and coordinates a wide range of rural health and community projects, which include assisting with the creation and implementation of sound rural health policies; focusing on health education and health workforce development; sponsoring and conducting applied research and policy analysis; and improving the health of communities through innovative research, health education and health care service delivery programs. Some of the core programs of the Institute include the Rural Health Research Group, Telemedicine, and the West Texas Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Program. These core programs are foundational components of efforts to develop comprehensive, sustainable programs that will improve the health status of residents of rural and underserved communities in West Texas.



**Castro County
Healthcare**

Through the years we have helped generation after generation reach better health. Our organization has been striving to serve the needs of our region since 1953. Since 1996, we've added Physical and Occupational Therapy, Durable Medical Equipment, Hospice, Social Services and in 2000 we updated

our CT Scan. At that time, the community banded together to formulate a regional healthcare facility that they could be proud of. We here at Plains Memorial Hospital are loyal to our community and region, and will continue to strive for excellence in healthcare.

Through the sacrifices of many, we have managed to make quality healthcare a reality for Castro County. Being part of the Dimmitt Community has been an important goal throughout the years, and with your help and loyalty we can continue to provide health services that you can depend on.



The Texas Farmers Union is part of the National Farmers Union which is organized in 24 states. Since the creation of Farmers Union in Point, Texas, in 1902, the organization has worked to improve the quality of life for all rural people through legislation, cooperation and education. Whether you live on a farm or reside in a rural community, we are concerned with the issues that impact the quality of life in our families and communities. We also spread the message of family farms and rural communities and their importance to our urban friends and neighbors.



Swisher Memorial Hospital District provides superior health care services to all of the patients we serve. Our 20 bed in-patient unit is fully staffed and offers acute medical care for patients of all ages.

The state of health care today is sometimes perceived as unpleasant and not very accommodating. At Swisher our goal is to prove to you that is not the case. We strive to provide you with the very best care we can.

Moore Than Medicine
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Ogallala Commons

www.ogallalacommons.org

Playa Classroom

In June of 2010, Ogallala Commons completed construction of the Playa Classroom. It is an educational facility on a 20 acre playa wetland dedicated to educating the public about playas, giving visitors a unique opportunity to touch, see and experience a prairie wetland. The project was sponsored by USFW Partners for Wildlife, Playa Lakes Joint Venture, Natural Resource Conservation Service, The Dixon



Water Foundation, and Texas Parks and Wildlife. Guided tours and class field trips are available. For more information contact Darryl Birkenfeld, Ph.D., at (806) 945-2255.