

**Summary Highlights: 2013 Josephine County Community Health Assessment**  
(Public Outreach 5.8)

***Justice System & Public Safety Services Study Design: 2015 (Study Design)***

Web Page: <http://www.hugoneighborhood.org/justicesystemexploratorycommittee.htm>

Mike Walker & Jon Whalen, Members  
JS&PSS Exploratory Committee (Committee)  
Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society



Draft December 27, 2015

Josephine County (JO CO) — and much of Southern Oregon — ranks near the bottom of the state for quality of health. Unless noted, the following community health assessment (CHA) information is from the 2013 *Jackson and Josephine County Community Health Assessment* (see the original or Public Outreach 5.7 for more information).

- AllCare Health Plan; Jackson Care Connect; Primary Health. November 2013. *2013 Jackson and Josephine County Community Health Assessment*. Coordinated Care Organizations.

**Location and Physical Characteristics** JO CO is located in Southwestern Oregon, in a rugged part of the state with multiple climates and geography within its 1,640 square miles. The majority of residents live in over 24 unincorporated areas, creating geographic barriers to accessing medical care, services and in some communities, access to exercise facilities, grocery stores and fresh foods.

**Migration and Growth** JO CO has experienced out migration of younger populations while seeing an influx of older populations at the same time. Both the exodus of younger and the influx of older demographic groups in the county ultimately influences the health status and burden for care on the community. According to 2012 census data, 23.6% of the county population is over 65 years old. That is nearly double the state average of 14.9%.

**Poverty** Nearly one in three children in JO CO live in poverty, creating significant challenges to their overall health and long-term development. 18.8% of the total county population lives in poverty (2007-2011), higher than the state average of 14.8%.

**Homelessness** continues to be a challenge for many living in JO CO. Causes of homelessness are varied, they include drug and alcohol abuse, high rents, domestic violence and unemployment.

**Employment** Unemployment in JO CO continues to be higher than state and national averages. Although the trend shows slight decreases in the seasonally adjusted unemployment rates from the Oregon Employment Department, they continue to hover around 11.2-11.3% annually, 4% higher than the national average.

**Crime** Crime continues to be top of mind for residents living in JO CO. The Report of Oregon Offenses known to Law Enforcement lists JO CO as 14th highest in the state for property crimes (out of 36), 14th for person crimes and 23rd for behavior crimes in 2010.

**County Health Rankings** JO CO has one of the worst health rankings in the state, raking 29th out of 33 Oregon counties (health outcomes category), a second year in a row. Mortality (death) was also ranked 29th out of 32, morbidity (disease) was ranked slightly better at 18th out of 32.

**Oral and Dental Health** National and state level data shows that tooth decay is five times more common than asthma in Oregon children, making dental health a priority concern for the County and State.

**Mental Health** 67% of residents in JO CO describe themselves as having good mental health. Although that is close to the state average, it still shows that close to 1 in 3 people don't consider themselves as having good mental health. When people don't feel as though their mental health is good, health-related quality of life is reduced.

**Addictions** JO CO residents have significant issues with addictions of alcohol, tobacco, other drugs and gambling.

**Food Insecurity** The USDA defines food insecurity as lack of access to enough food for all members in a household and limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate foods. Over 17.8% of JO CO households, or approximately 14,650 people are food insecure. 78% of the food-insecure households in the county have incomes below the poverty level.

**Access to Medical Care** Lack of health insurance coverage continues to be a significant barrier to accessing needed health and medical care. JO CO far exceeds the national benchmark of 11% and state percentages in all age groups - 29.7% of adults 19- to 64-years-old in the county were uninsured in 2011.

Josephine County — and much of Southern Oregon — has once again ranked near the bottom of the state for quality of health, according to the recently released 2015 County Health Rankings.<sup>1</sup>

Footnote 1. Kingsland, Ruth Longoria. April 5, 2015. *JoCo Still Among Unhealthiest Counties*. TGPDC. Grants Pass, OR. [http://www.thedailycourier.com/articles/2015/04/04/healthy\\_living/news01.txt](http://www.thedailycourier.com/articles/2015/04/04/healthy_living/news01.txt)

The Grants Pass Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) (i.e., JO CO) has the third-largest gap between the haves and the have-nots in the U.S. Out of 381 MSAs in the entire U.S., only two are higher (worse) than JO CO. For example, nearly 30 percent of all income in JO CO goes to just 5 percent of area households, while the lowest-earning 20 percent of households take home just 3.2 percent of all income generated. Even though the cost of living is lower than the national level, 24.3 percent of the population still was on food stamps. The conclusion is drawn from the Gini coefficient, a measure of statistical dispersion intended to represent the income distribution of a nation's residents, and is the most commonly used measure of inequality.<sup>2</sup>

Footnote 2. Dwewel, Jeff. July 18, 2015. *USA Today Says GP Has Huge Income Gap*. TGPDC. Grants Pass, OR. [http://www.thedailycourier.com/articles/2015/07/18/front\\_page\\_news/news000004.txt](http://www.thedailycourier.com/articles/2015/07/18/front_page_news/news000004.txt)