
**RHP 17 REGIONAL
HEALTH ASSESSMENT
2013**

**SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT:
ROBERTSON COUNTY**

PREPARED BY:

CENTER FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH DEVELOPMENT

TEXAS A&M HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER

SCHOOL OF RURAL PUBLIC HEALTH

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RHP 17 REGIONAL HEALTH ASSESSMENT

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INTRODUCTION

The 2013 Regional Health Assessment, conducted by the Center for Community Health Development (CCHD) at the Texas A&M Health Science Center School of Rural Public Health (SRPH), covers the nine-county region of south-central Texas consisting of Brazos, Burleson, Grimes, Leon, Madison, Montgomery, Robertson, Walker, and Washington Counties. The *Executive Report* provides comprehensive descriptions of methodology, as well as regional findings. The supplemental reports are intended to provide specific regional and county-level data.

This report presents the health status assessment findings for Robertson County. Most data and comparisons given will be compared to the Brazos Valley region (the seven counties comprising the Brazos Valley), the state, or the nation. For specific regional-level data, please refer to the regional *Executive Report*. Unless otherwise noted, the data presented are for Robertson County survey and discussion group respondents.

FINDINGS

Community Discussion Groups

Fourteen community discussion groups (CDGs) and interviews were conducted in Robertson County with 82 total participants. Those participating represented the diversity of the county's population; attendees were 29.9 percent male and 70.1 percent female, and 69.8 percent White/Caucasian, 19.8 percent Black/African American, and 9.3 percent Hispanic/Latino. These discussion groups were conducted in February, March, and April 2013. Four audiences were targeted to attend these open meetings to provide a forum for community members to discuss various issues, challenges, and resources in their community related to health: key community leaders, health care providers, social service providers, and the general public (i.e., residents) of Robertson County. Discussion groups were held at several donated locations throughout Robertson County, including:

- First Baptist Church, Franklin,
- Jones Chapel Missionary Baptist Church, Hearne,
- Hearne Community Center
- Lone Star Burger Bar, Franklin,
- Robertson County Special Services,
- Bremond City Hall,
- Calvert City Hall,
- Hearne City Hall,
- Robertson County Judge’s Office,
- Calvert Rural Healthcare Center,
- FCHC Bremond Medical Clinic,
- St. Joseph Rural Health Clinic, Franklin, and
- St. Joseph Rural Health Clinic, Hearne.

Community

Across Robertson County, discussion group participants described their community as having a rural, small-town atmosphere as well as access to amenities in nearby bigger cities. For an increasing number of residents, Robertson County serves as a “bedroom community” where residents live in the county but work and participate in activities elsewhere. However, this population growth is not necessarily equivalent economic growth. Discussion group participants also noted that the community is also seeing an influx of retirees from larger cities. Residents described Robertson County as having close knit and very conservative communities with a strong religious influence. Despite this general characterization, residents gave repeated accounts of historical racial tension and socioeconomic divisions within and between Robertson County communities. While there are close-knit bonds among community members, discussion group participants across the county highlighted the distinct communities within the county and the division among them.

Community Issues & Challenges

As is true throughout the Brazos Valley region, transportation is a persistent and substantial problem for many Robertson County residents. Participants expressed their concern with Brazos Transit, the public transportation system, saying it was expensive and unreliable. Many residents said that they have to go outside the community for work and to buy groceries, which underscores the critical need for reliable, affordable transportation in the county.

Additionally, Robertson County’s proximity to larger communities such as Bryan/College Station has contributed to its growth as a bedroom community. Because these residents live in Robertson County but spend much of their time and resources outside of the community, this kind of population growth does not help support the infrastructure development needed in the county. As a result, residents who cannot find employment within the community are left to face transportation barriers that prevent travel outside the county for work, giving these community members few options. Moreover, the county’s close proximity to larger

communities contributes to a lack of retail businesses, particularly grocery stores in the county. Businesses are content to stay in the larger Bryan/College Station area rather than opening new locations in the smaller, rural communities, which also poses a significant access problem for Robertson County residents who do not have reliable transportation.

Community discussion participants also expressed the need for educational opportunities for young adults. Participants stated that they wanted to see more vocational options in the county for residents who do not pursue higher education at colleges or universities. Again, due to the lack of transportation options, young adults find it challenging to access training services offered in Bryan/College Station.

Finally, the lack of affordable public transportation also poses a barrier to accessing health services. Poor access to health care was identified as a major issue within Robertson County. With a limited number of physicians and no hospital or emergency room, residents are forced to travel outside of the county to access most health care services, including specialty care, mental health, and dental services.

Resources

Despite the wide range of issues affecting Robertson County, CDG participants were able to identify a variety of resources in their community. Across all discussion groups, participants mentioned that churches and local ministerial alliances are important and active resources within the community. Schools were listed as an asset, and participants boasted that the school districts in Robertson County were excellent. Residents highlighted local civic and social service organizations as resources in Robertson County, especially for residents in need. The Boys and Girls Club in Hearne was seen as especially valuable for the youth of Robertson County, particularly during the summer months.

Household Survey

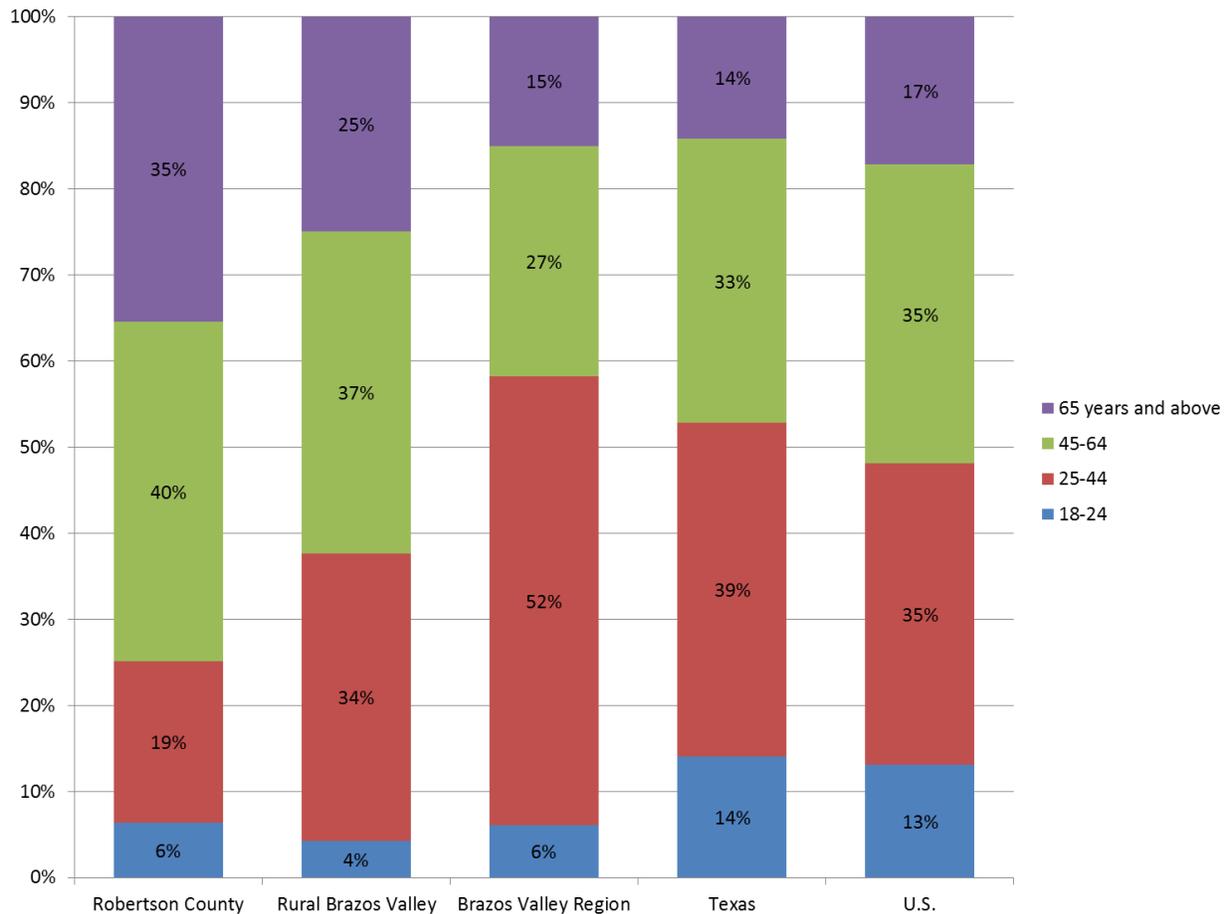
The household survey was developed and pilot tested by the Survey Committee (see Regional Report for more details). As typical in survey research, those who actually responded to the survey disproportionately represented older residents, Caucasians, and those more educated and affluent. To balance some of this bias, the analysis for this report was performed on scientifically weighted data by weighting the responses to match the age and gender distribution by county based on current Census estimates. Even with the weighting, however, we also know by comparison to Census estimates that the current sample under-represents low-income residents. This should be considered when interpreting the results; the survey analysis likely indicates a more positive reflection of the community than actually exists. Regardless, the data provides us a useful snapshot of what residents are currently experiencing. This survey was used to collect comprehensive information regarding factors affecting health status from a random sample of RHP 17 residents, with 231 surveys completed in Robertson County. What follows are the results from those Robertson County surveys.

Demographics

Age and Gender

The mean age of survey respondents from Robertson County was 55.5 years. Robertson County had the oldest population among the Brazos Valley region respondents. Compared to Texas and the U.S., Robertson County has a smaller proportion of young adults and larger proportion of those 65 years and older. Figure 1 illustrates the age distribution of adults for Robertson County compared to the rural Brazos Valley counties, the Brazos Valley region, Texas, and the U.S.

Figure 1. Age distribution of Robertson County, rural Brazos Valley counties, Brazos Valley region, Texas, and U.S.¹



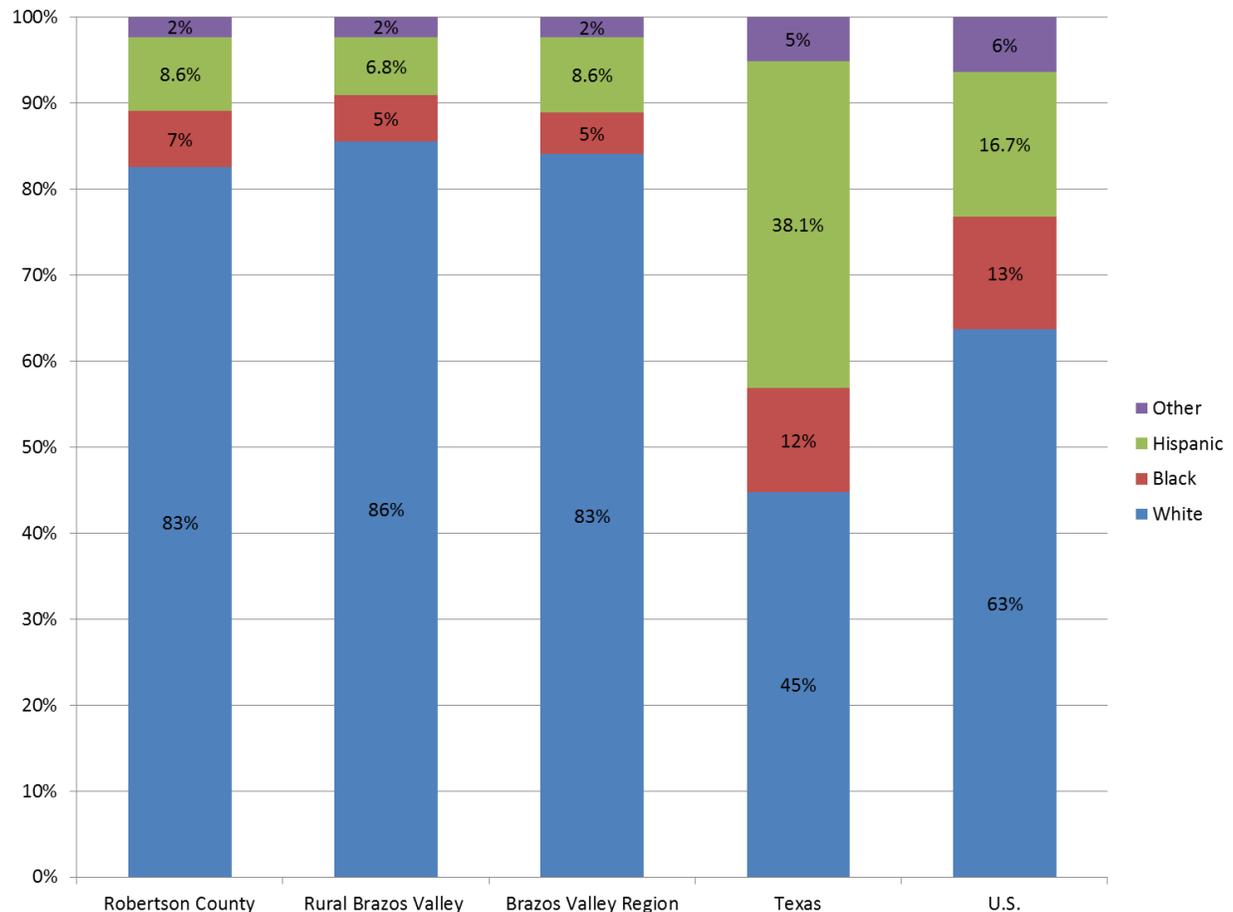
Race and Ethnicity

Survey respondents were asked to indicate the racial or ethnic group they felt best described them. A majority of Robertson County survey respondents identified themselves as White/Caucasian (82.6%), 6.5 percent indicated Black/African American, and 8.6 percent

¹ <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/48000.html>

Hispanic/Latino. Comparing these figures to 2011 Census estimates indicates that minority groups are underrepresented in this survey sample. Other respondents identified themselves as Asian or Pacific Islander, Native American, and as more than one race. Because of these relatively small numbers, these last three categories were combined into a single group called “All Other Races” for the purpose of analysis (total of 2.3%). Figure 2 shows the racial/ethnic distribution of Robertson County survey respondents.

Figure 2. Racial/ethnic distribution of survey respondents in Robertson County, rural Brazos Valley counties, Brazos Valley region, Texas, and U.S.²



Marital Status

The majority of Robertson County survey respondents reported being married (75.4%); 8.5 percent reported their marital status as single (never married); 7.8 percent reported being separated or divorced; 7.7 percent were widowed; and less than one percent indicated they were unmarried, living with a partner. In comparison, 49.6 percent of Texas residents and 48.3 percent of U.S. residents are married; a third (31.4% in Texas and 32.5% in the U.S.) of residents are single, while 13.7 percent of Texas residents and 13.2 percent of U.S. residents are

² <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/48000.html>

separated or divorced. The remaining proportion of residents in Texas and the U.S. are widowed (5.2% and 6%, respectively).

Household Composition

The mean household size for Robertson County survey participants was 2.7 persons, in line with both the state mean (2.8) and U.S. mean (2.6). Among respondents, 42.9 percent reported having children less than 18 years of age living in their household. Statewide, 61.1 percent of households do not have children, and nationally, 64.4 percent of households are childless.

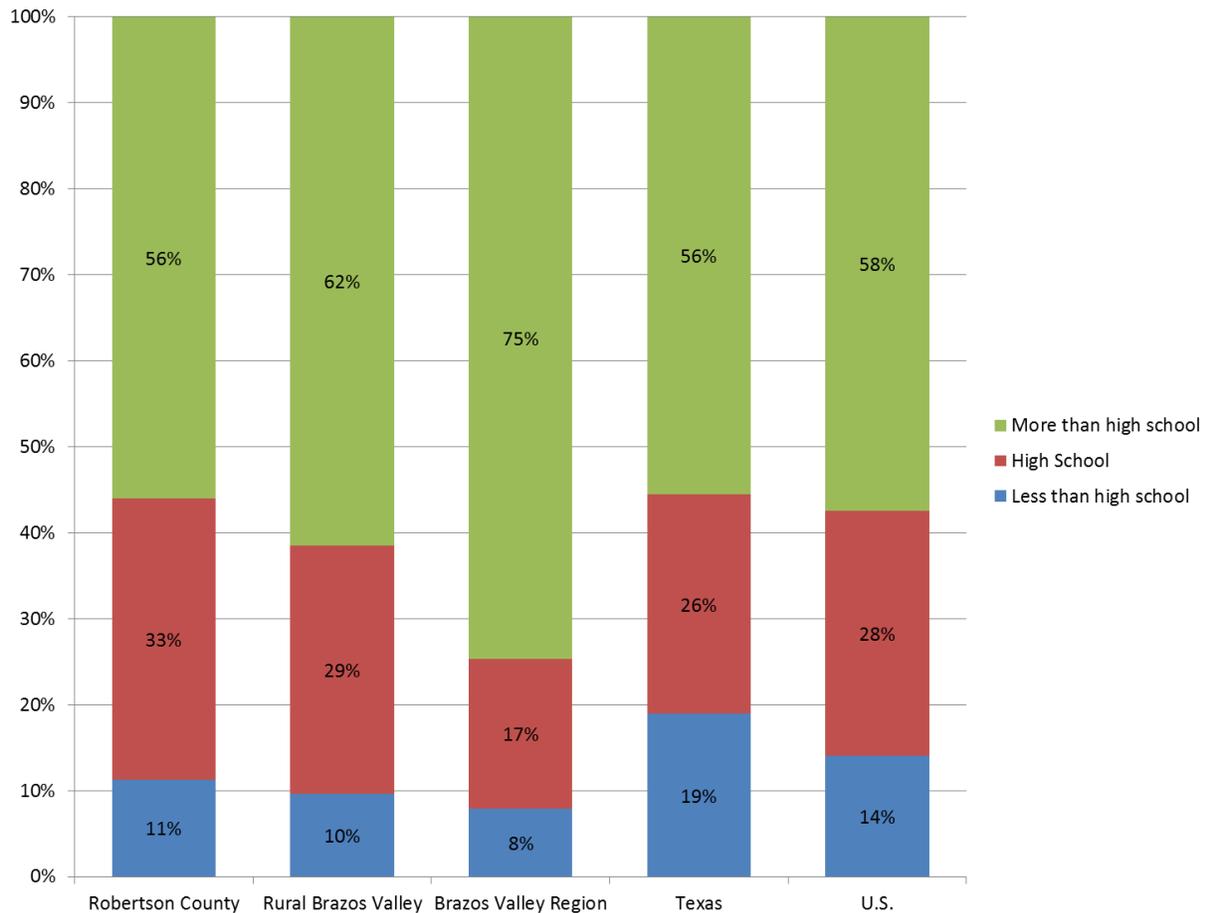
This survey also asked respondents how many people in their household earned wages that contributed to their household income. In response, 19.3 percent reported that **no one** living in the household was contributing to the household income, which reflects many of the concerns heard in the discussion groups about unemployment. Over one-third of respondents said that one person contributed all of the household income (37.1%), 39 percent said two people contributed to the household income, and 4.6 percent said three people contributed.

Education

Education is an important social factor that influences health status. The mean years of education for survey respondents in Robertson County is 13.4—the equivalent of a high school diploma plus over one year of college. Among survey participants, 11.3 percent reported not completing high school, while 32.6 percent received their high school diploma, and 56 percent proceeded to complete at least some college credit. In comparison, 19.6 percent of Texans over the age of 25 did not complete high school, and nationally, this figure is 14.6 percent.³ Figure 3 presents a comparison of educational attainment for Robertson County compared to the rural Brazos Valley counties, the Brazos Valley region, Texas, and the U.S.

³ <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/48000.html>

Figure 3. Educational attainment in Robertson County, rural Brazos Valley counties, Brazos Valley region, Texas, and U.S.⁴



Employment

Among Robertson County survey respondents, 43.5 reported they were currently employed. Of those who were employed, the vast majority said they only had one employer (81.8%), but 15.7 percent said they had two employers, and another 2.4 percent reported three or more employers.

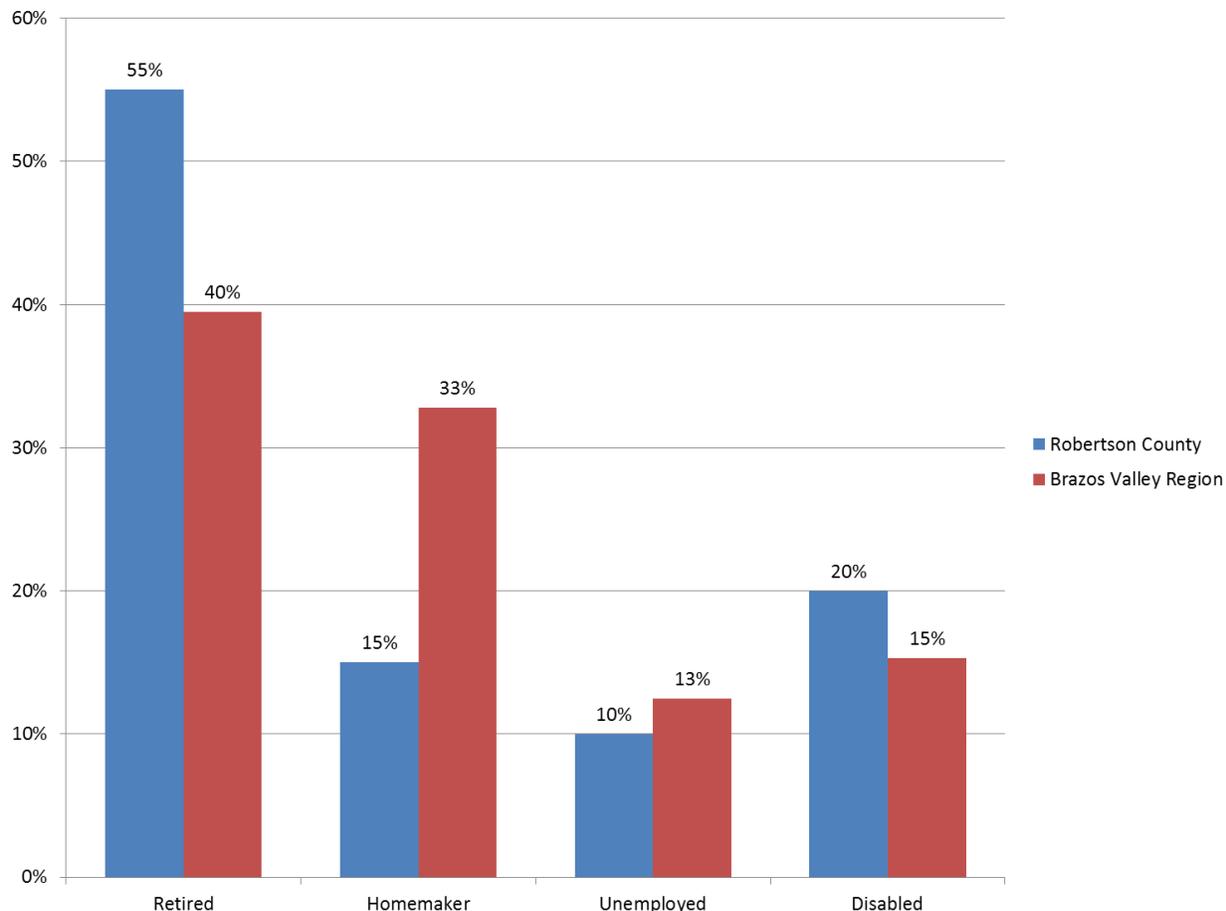
According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the unemployment rate for the State of Texas was 6.5 percent in May 2013. Locally, the Texas Workforce Commission reports that the unemployment rate for Robertson County in May 2013 was 6.6 percent. May 2013 rates were used to provide a more accurate comparison to the survey data, collected between February and July.

Of survey participants who reported they were not currently employed, 55 percent who said they were retired, 20 percent were disabled and unable to work, 15 percent were full-time

⁴ <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/48000.html>

homemakers, and 10 percent were laid off or unemployed. Figure 4 illustrates the responses of Robertson County residents who were not currently employed.

Figure 4. Percentage of responses regarding work situation if not currently employed

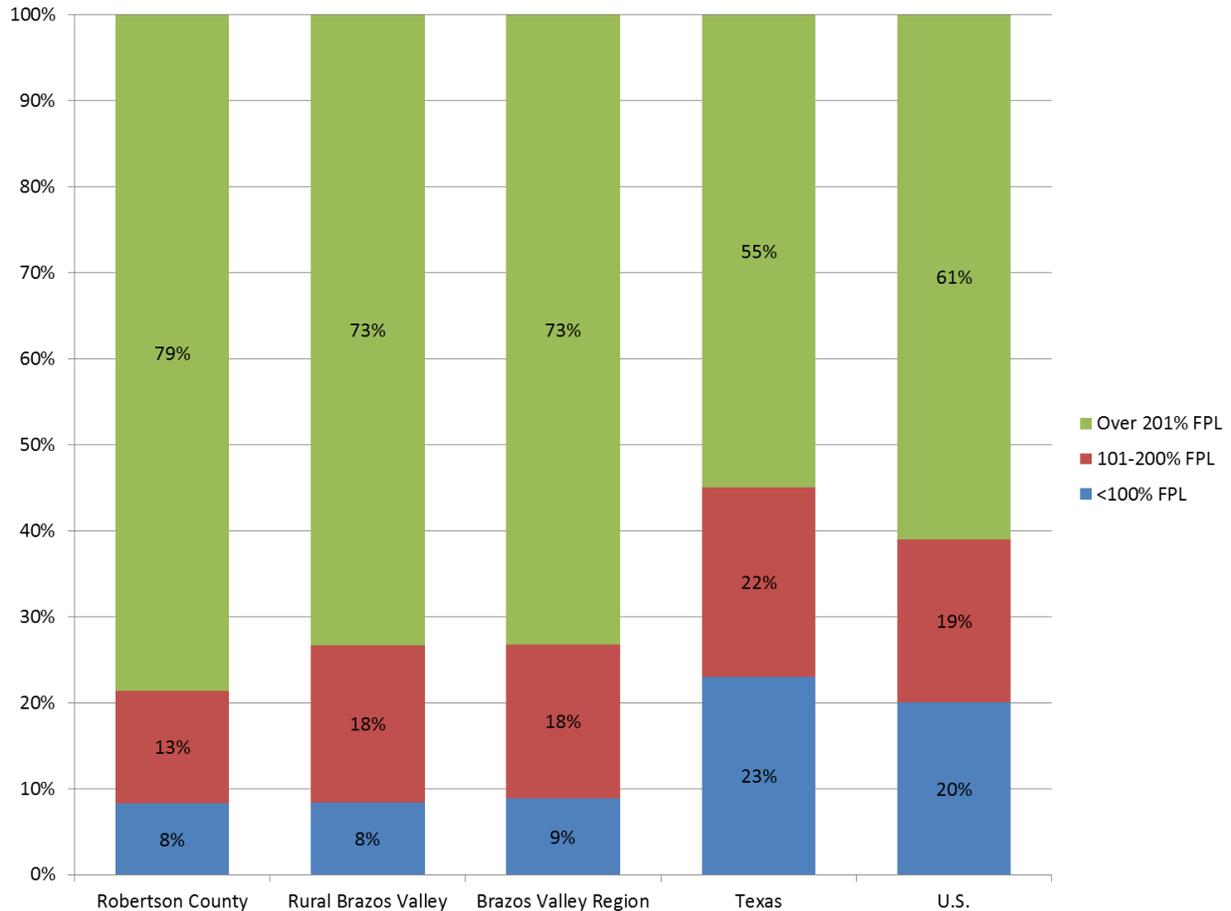


Household Income

Among survey respondents in Robertson County, the median household income was \$60,000 for 2012, which is higher than census estimates for Texas (\$50,920) and the US (\$52,762). This is not unusual for a sample survey, as the low-income are often less likely to be reached or to agree to complete a survey.

The Federal Poverty Guidelines set the federal poverty level (FPL) for 2012 at \$23,050 for a family of four. Among the survey respondents, 8.3 percent reported incomes at or below FPL, with another 24.8 percent between 101 and 200 percent FPL, which is generally considered low-income. Compared to the region and the U.S., Robertson County has a smaller proportion of residents living below FPL, but slightly more who are considered low-income. Figure 5 compares the poverty status for Robertson County survey respondents compared to the rural Brazos Valley counties, the Brazos Valley region, Texas, and the U.S.

Figure 5. Poverty status for Robertson County survey respondents, rural Brazos Valley counties, Brazos Valley region, Texas, and U.S.⁵



Military Service

With a growing number of veterans and their unique health needs, the survey committee thought it wise to ask about military service. Among survey respondents from Robertson County, 22.2 percent of survey respondents reported ever having served in any branch of the U.S. Armed Forces, while 5.9 percent who completed the survey identified themselves as currently being active duty in the military. Of Robertson County residents who reported having served in the U.S. Armed Forces, 47.9 percent reported serving in an active duty war zone. There are 1,618,413 veterans in Texas, representing approximately six percent of the population.

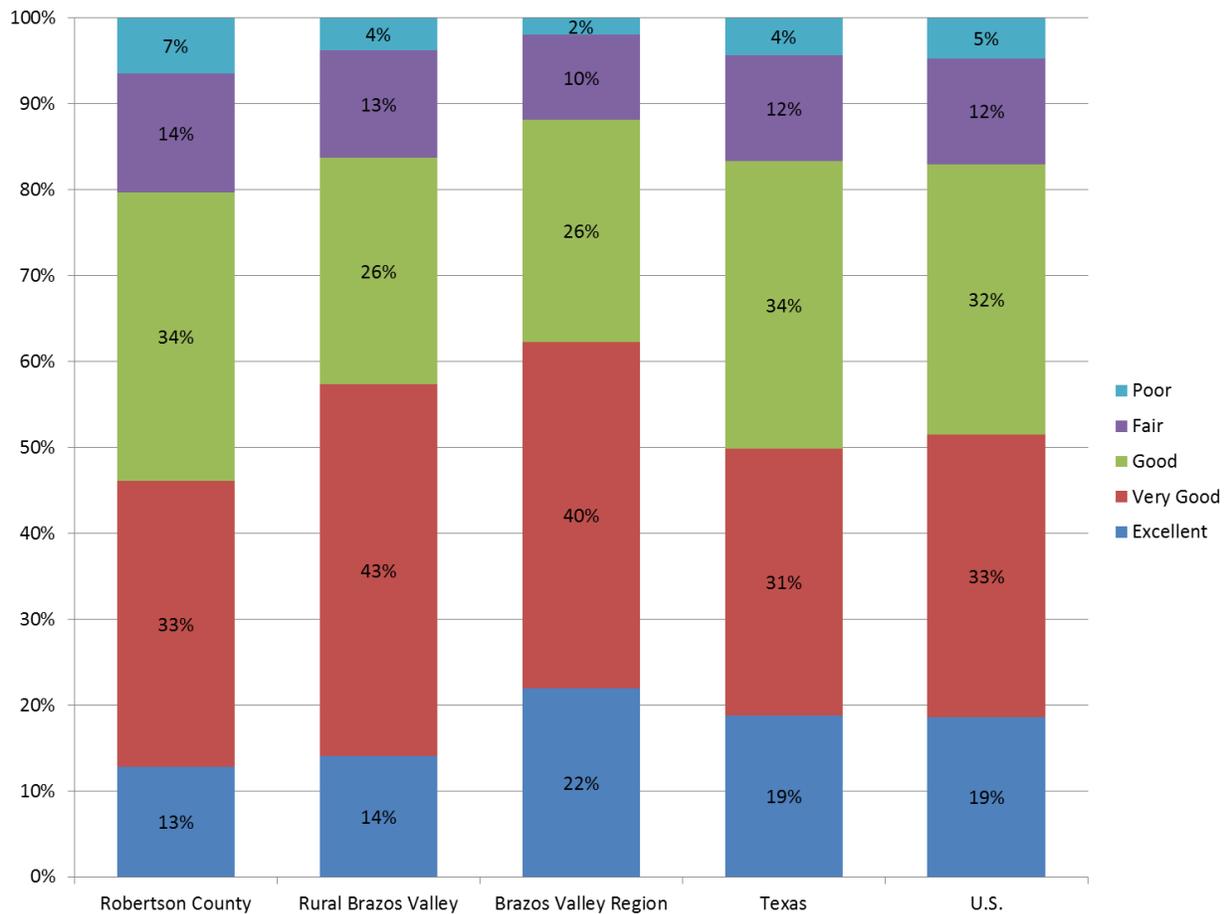
Health Status

The first four questions in the survey are taken from the Health Related Quality of Life scale developed and tested by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). These are simple but powerful indicators of functional health status and its impact on daily life.

⁵ <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/48000.html>

The first question simply asked respondents to rate their health; the possible responses were *excellent*, *very good*, *good*, *fair*, and *poor*. In Robertson County, 12.8 percent of respondents indicated their health was *excellent*, and 33.2 percent said their health was *very good*. In contrast, 13.8 percent indicated their health was *fair*, and 6.5 percent said their health was *poor*. In comparison to the 2010 health assessment, the proportion reporting their health as *excellent* is slightly less than 2010. Figure 6 compares self-reported health status for Robertson County, the rural Brazos Valley counties, the Brazos Valley region, Texas, and the U.S.

Figure 6. Self-reported health status in Robertson County, rural Brazos Valley counties, Brazos Valley region, Texas, and U.S.⁶



The second question asked how many days of the past 30 days was the respondent’s physical health not good. Among Robertson County respondents, the mean number of poor physical health days was 4.8, which is slightly higher than the region (3.7). Nearly one in six respondents (17.6%) reported between one and five days of poor physical health in the past month. A substantial number of respondents (14%) indicated *more than 10 days* of poor

⁶ <http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/brfss/display.asp?cat=HS&yr=2011&qkey=8001&state=UB>

physical health. In contrast, 63.3 percent of Texans reported no days of poor physical health, with a 19.5 percent reporting between more than five days of poor physical health each month.

Similar to the previous question, the next question asked how many days of the past 30 days was the respondent’s mental health not good. Among Robertson County respondents, the mean number of poor mental health days was 4.0, which is the same as the regional rate. Close to one-fifth of respondents (19%) reported between one and five days of poor mental health in the past month. Over one in 10 respondents (11.1%) indicated more than 10 days of poor mental health. In addition, 24.2 percent of respondents reported having been diagnosed with depression and 24.7 percent with anxiety. The self-reported depression rates are higher than the overall depression rates for Texas (8.6%). Among Texans, 66.3 percent reported no days of poor mental health, and 14.4 percent reported experiencing between one and five days of poor mental health. Given the persistent lack of mental health services available in the region, these numbers are cause for concern.

Feelings of anxiety and depression are also important indicators of residents’ mental health. Table 1 shows common problems that residents reported bothering them over the past two weeks:

Table 1. Common mental health problems among Robertson County survey respondents

Type of Mental Health Problem	Percentage of Robertson County Responses	Percentage of rural Brazos Valley Respondents	Percentage of Brazos Valley Region Respondents
Becoming easily annoyed or irritable	43.1%	36.5%	41.7%
Worrying too much about different things	40.5%	39.2%	42.2%
Feeling nervous, anxious, or on edge	39.3%	39.1%	41.6%
Not being able to stop or control worrying	34.0%	34.8%	37.2%
Trouble Relaxing	33.1%	30.9%	31.1%
Little interest or pleasure in doing things	31.2%	20.8%	23.7%
Feeling down, depressed, or hopeless	27.8%	25.2%	25.1%
Feeling afraid as if something awful might happen	20.5%	27.9%	25.8%
Being so restless that it is hard to sit still	20.4%	19.1%	19.7%

The fourth question in this set sought to understand the extent to which physical and mental health limited one’s daily activities. It asked respondents how many days of the past 30 days did poor physical or mental health keep them from their usual activities. In Robertson County,

the mean number of days in which usual activities were limited by poor physical or mental health was 3.5, which is slightly higher than the regional mean of 2.6. More than one in four respondents reported some interruption of their usual activities, with 12.2 percent indicating between one and five days, 3.5 percent reporting six to 10 days, and 11.7 percent reporting more than 10 days. In comparison, 27.7 percent of Texans reported between one and five days of limited activities and 12.2 percent reported six or more days of limited activities due to poor physical or mental health.

Many residents reported being limited in their activities due to an impairment and/or health problem. Commonly reported issues are listed in Table 2. Participants could identify more than one impairment; therefore, percentages in the table are percentages of the total number of *responses* instead of the percentage of respondents who reported the impairment.

Table 2. Major impairments or health problems among Robertson County responses

Major Impairment or Health Problem	Percentage of Robertson County Responses
Arthritis/rheumatism	14.2%
Cardiovascular issues (heart problems, hypertension, high blood pressure)	14.2%
Back or Neck problem	11.7%
Diabetes	9.2%
Eye/vision problem	8.3%
Lung/breathing problem	6.7%

The most commonly reported impairments or health problems were related to joint and bone health issues – together, back or neck problems and arthritis/rheumatism made up 25.9 percent of the responses. Additionally, cardiovascular issues represented 14.2 percent of the responses.

For the given impairments and health problems, the duration of having limited activities varied among survey respondents. Most survey participants (63%) did not experience pain that impacted their daily activities during the past 30 days. Of those who did experience pain that impacted activity during the past 30 days, 17.8 percent reported pain for between one and five days, 4.7 percent had pain between six to 10 days, and 14.5 percent reported more than 10 days of pain. Almost one in five participants (13%) reported their daily activities were limited for less than one year. Daily activities were reported as limited for one to five years by nearly one-third of respondents (31.8%). Another 30.8 percent reported limitations for the past six to 10 years and 23.7 percent had limitations to their daily activities for more than 10 years.

In the final question about residents' overall health, respondents listed a range days in the past month that they got a sufficient amount of sleep and felt very healthy and full of energy. A majority of participants (31.5%) reported that they felt they had enough rest or sleep every night of the past 30 days. Almost one third of participants (30.5%) reported not feeling rested between one and five days in the past month, 15.4 percent reported the same for between six to 10 days, and 5.7 percent reported not having enough rest or sleep for between 11 and 15 days. Over one in six participants (16.8%) reported not feeling rested for at least half of the days for the past month.

Thirty-six percent of participants reporting feeling healthy and full of energy for at least 21 days of the past month and one in five participants (21.4%) reported feeling good for 11 to 20 days of the past month. Disturbingly, one-quarter of participants (25.6%) did not feel very healthy and full of energy for at least one third of the month, and an additional 16.3 percent reported never feeling healthy or full of energy.

Risk Factors

Several sets of survey questions asked about health behaviors or characteristics that often place individuals at greater risk of disease or injury. The risk factors of interest are those that individuals can sometimes control or manage to prevent development of related illnesses or complications.

Obesity

Being overweight or obese increases an individual's risk for developing many chronic diseases and other conditions such as depression and chronic pain. The way that overweight and obesity is typically assessed is through the calculation of the body mass index (BMI), which is a simple ratio of weight to height (kg/m^2). This measure does not account for individual variations in bone or muscle mass, but are a good general indicator of weight status for the population.

The National Institutes of Health have published the following guidelines:

- Underweight = BMI score < 18.5
- Normal weight = BMI score between 18.5 – 24.9
- Overweight = BMI score between 25 – 29.9
- Obese = BMI score between 30 and 34.9
- Morbidly Obese = BMI score \geq 35

In Robertson County, only 25.7 percent of residents were assessed to be at a normal weight for their height. The majority of survey respondents were overweight or obese; over one-third were overweight (33.6%), 19 percent were obese, and alarmingly, 20 percent were morbidly obese. Given the number and types of conditions that are related to obesity, these statistics are cause for concern in this community.

Nutrition

Nutrition is an important aspect of achieving and maintaining a healthy weight and overall health. Accordingly, the survey asked questions about individuals' grocery shopping and eating habits.

In Robertson County, 33.2 percent of residents do their grocery shopping within 10 miles of the community where they live; this is much lower than the 76.8 percent reported in Brazos Valley. The mean distance Robertson County residents travel to buy groceries is 21.6 miles, compared to the regional average of 8.9 miles traveled by other residents in the Brazos Valley.

Concerns about the economy have a pronounced impact on residents' overall nutrition. Across Robertson County, 11.7 percent of respondents said that *sometimes* or *often*, the food they bought did not last and they did not have money to get more, and 5.7 percent reported not being able to afford to eat completely meals *sometimes* or *often*. Seven percent reported eating less than they should because there was not enough money for food, while 3.6 percent reported skipping meals because of financial concerns. These rates were lower than the rates reported for other Brazos Valley communities.

Six percent of Robertson County residents reported receiving food from a food pantry or food bank in the past six months.

Physical Activity

Physical activity is also a key aspect of maintaining a healthy weight and good health. The National Institutes of Health recommend 150 minutes of moderate or 75 minutes of vigorous physical activity each week, in addition to engaging in strengthening exercises twice weekly. Across Robertson County, only 22.3 percent of respondents meet this recommendation, while 20.5 percent reported they rarely do any physical activity. These rates are similar to the rates found across the Brazos Valley.

The survey also sought to assess Robertson County residents' sedentary time. In a seven day period, respondents reported sitting an average of 358 minutes (6 hours) on *weekdays* and 314 minutes (5.2 hours) on *weekends*. Overall, Robertson County residents reported slightly less sitting time on average compared to the region.

In addition to obesity, nutrition, and physical activity, several other behavioral risk factors are key determinants of subsequent health and safety issues.

Cigarette Smoking

Slightly better than the State of Texas (19.2%) and the U.S. (19.3%), 12.6 percent of Robertson County survey respondents report being a current smoker, most of whom (91.4%) smoke a pack or less per day. Five percent of Robertson County residents reported using other tobacco products, including chewing tobacco, snuff, or dip.

Substance Use & Abuse

When asked about their alcohol consumption habits, 60 percent of Robertson County survey respondents reported that they do not drink alcohol in a typical week. About one-quarter (22.4%) said that they typically consume one to five alcoholic drinks in a week. Three percent of respondents reported having driven after drinking at least two drinks in the past month.

In the past 30 days (2%) and in the past year (3%), few Robertson County residents reported using prescription medications for nonmedical reasons or not as prescribed. Approximately two percent of respondents reported consuming marijuana and other illegal drugs.

Chronic Diseases and Conditions

Survey respondents were asked to report if they had ever been diagnosed with a list of chronic diseases/condition by a health care provider. The six most frequently reported conditions for Robertson County survey respondents were:

- 1) Hypertension (high blood pressure): 50.5%
- 2) High Cholesterol: 45.9%
- 3) Overweight/obesity 36.3%
- 4) Anxiety: 24.7%
- 5) Depression: 24.2%
- 6) Diabetes: 16.7%

Only 36.3 percent of respondents reported being told by a health care professional that they were overweight or obese, yet when calculating BMI from reported heights and weights of respondents who had not been diagnosed as such, 56.9 percent of respondents are overweight or obese. Over one-third of undiagnosed respondents were overweight (37.5%), 12.5 percent were obese, and 6.9 percent were morbidly obese. This raises serious concern regarding doctor-patient communication with respect to health weight, overweight and obesity.

Of the seven counties in the Brazos Valley region, Robertson County reported the highest rates of a number of chronic diseases common among older adults, including high cholesterol, hypertension, and diabetes. Table 3 provides the rates of several commonly reported chronic conditions, with comparisons to the region, and the U.S.

Table 3. Chronic condition rates for Robertson County, Brazos Valley region, and the U.S.

Disease/Condition	Robertson County	Brazos Valley	U.S. ^{7,8,9}
Anxiety	24.7%	23.7%	17%
Arthritis/Rheumatism	35.5%	19.9%	22%
Asthma	13.5%	17.3%	13%
Cancer (not skin)	8.7%	6.0%	8%
Congestive Heart Failure	8.9%	2.9%	2%
Depression	24.2%	24.6%	12%
Diabetes (type 2)	16.7%	8.4%	9%
Emphysema/COPD	13.5%	5.5%	2%
High Cholesterol	45.9%	30.3%	13%
Hypertension	50.5%	33.9%	24%
Overweight/ Obesity ¹⁰	72.6%	64.5%	62%
Stroke	2.7%	1.8%	3%

Preventive Screenings

The survey also collected information regarding individuals' participation in recommended preventive screenings. Figure 7 summarizes information regarding those who meet general preventive health guidelines.

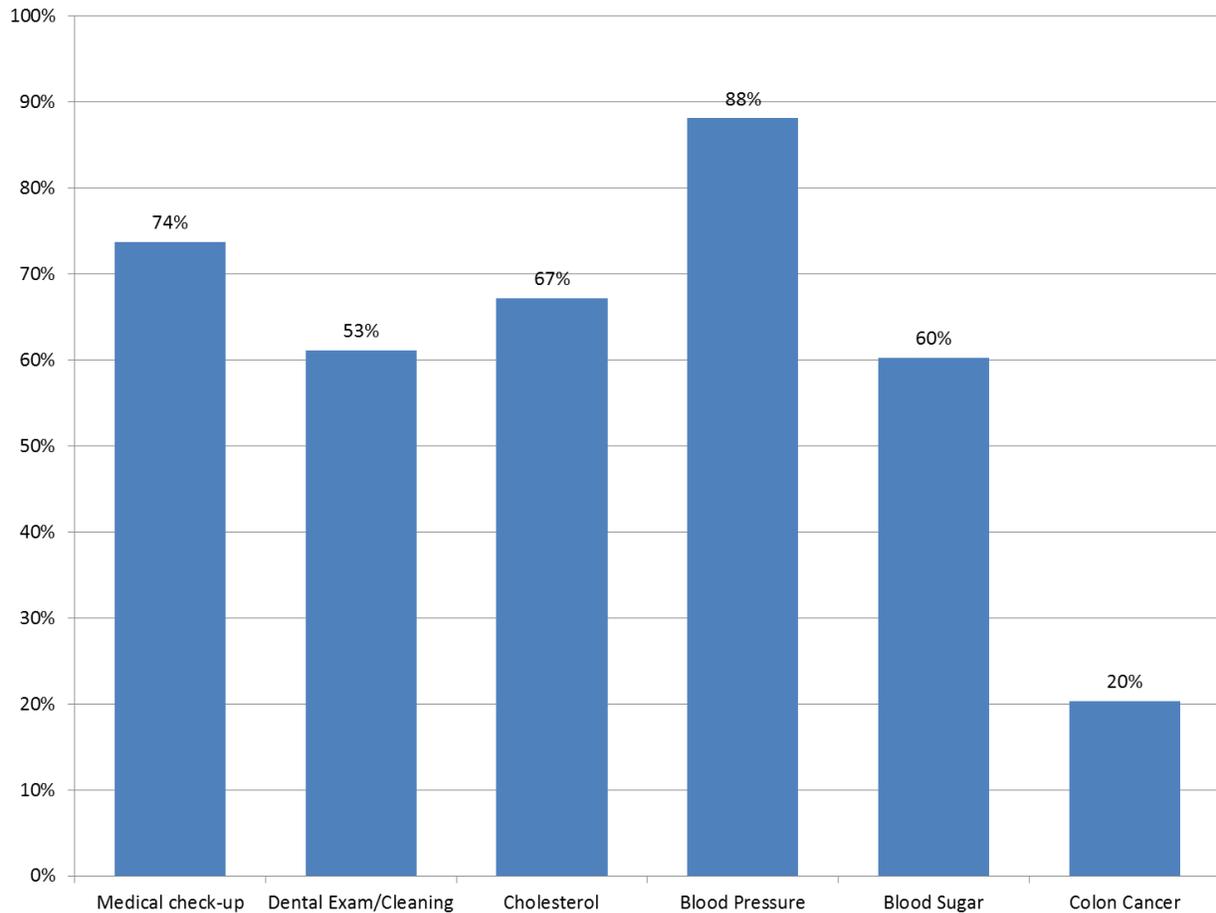
⁷ http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/series/sr_10/sr10_242.pdf.

⁸ <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/databriefs/db92.pdf>

⁹ http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/NCVDSS_DTM/LocationSummary.aspx?state=United+States

¹⁰ Overweight/obesity percentages reported in Table 3 are calculated from reported height and weight of survey participants NOT the percentage who reported being diagnosed by a health care professional.

Figure 7. Percent of survey respondents meeting preventive guidelines in Robertson County



For women, a test for cervical cancer (“Pap test”) is recommended every three years beginning at 21 years of age. In Robertson County, only 42.3 percent of women reported having had a Pap test in the past year, and 34.7 percent indicated their last Pap test was between one and three years ago. A substantial number of women (19%) reported having had their last Pap test more than five years ago. Among survey respondents 40 years of age and older, 56 percent reported having had a mammogram in the past year.

Health Insurance

The *Healthy People 2020* goal for health insurance was that by 2020, every resident would have some type of health insurance. The 2010 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act¹¹ was intended to advance this goal, but currently, many residents are still uninsured. Eighteen percent of Americans under the age of 65 lack health insurance¹², and Texas ranks last among the 50 states in access to care, with a 24 percent overall uninsurance rate¹³.

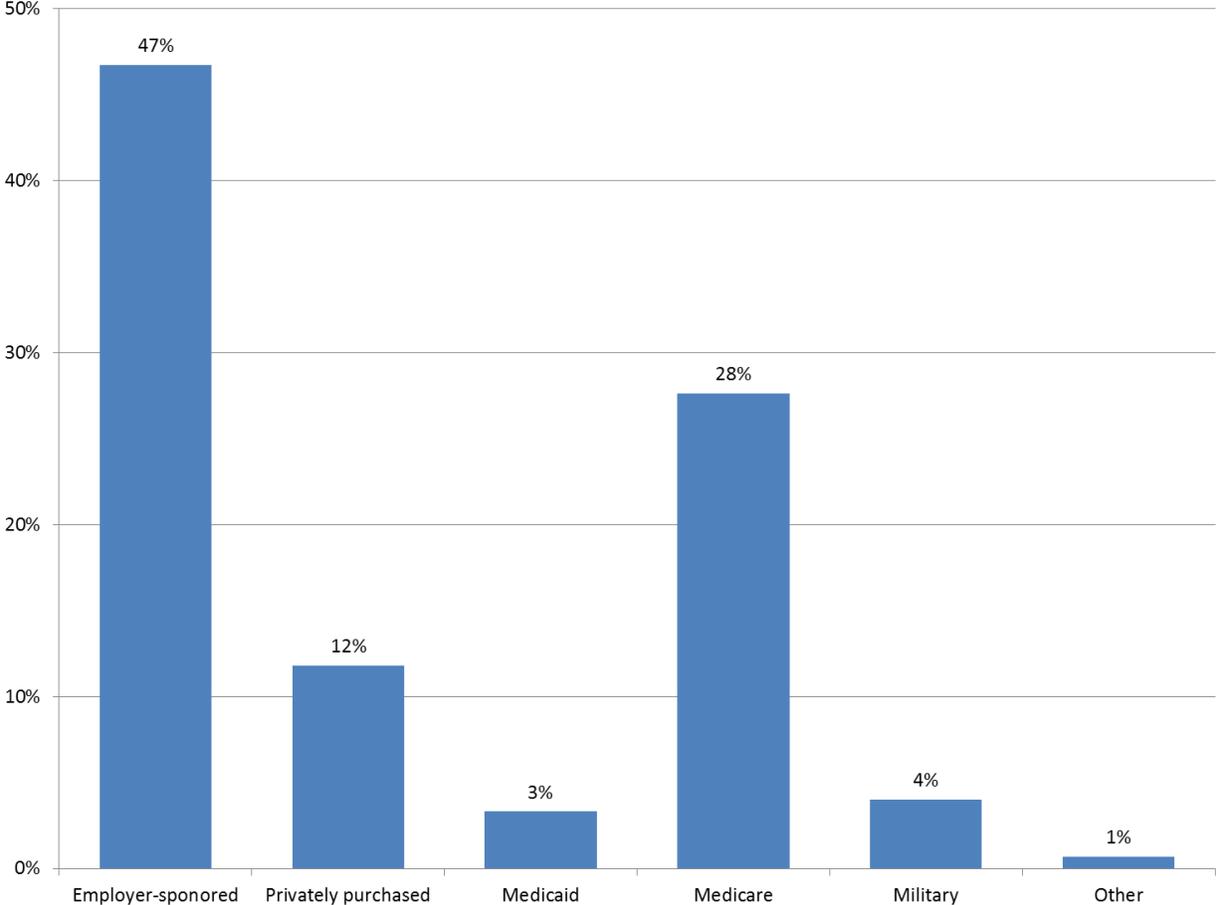
¹¹ *Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act* (HR 3590) signed into law on March 22, 2010

¹² <http://kff.org/state-category/health-coverage-uninsured/>

¹³ <http://kff.org/other/state-indicator/total-population/>

The survey question “What type of health insurance do you have?” allowed for multiple response options to be selected. Five percent of Robertson County respondents indicated that they did not have health insurance of any kind, which was a much lower rate than the region overall. Twelve percent indicated that they had been uninsured at least one month in the past three years. Figure 8 displays the types of health insurance coverage in Robertson County.

Figure 8. Health insurance coverage in Robertson County¹⁴



As illustrated in Figure 8, 46.7 percent of survey respondents reported being covered by a health insurance plan through a current or former employer or union. With 21.7 percent of respondents being covered by Medicare plus other insurance and 11.8 percent being covered by private insurance, a relatively small proportion of the population reported other sources of coverage.

¹⁴ Note that the percentages add up to more than 100 percent because some individuals are covered by more than one plan.

Health Resources and Medical Home

Issues with access to health care go deeper than whether one is covered by health insurance or not. The availability of providers and services and the ability to get to those services also influence access. In Robertson County, 37.5 percent of respondents rated their access to health care as excellent or very good.

Outpatient Care

The majority of Robertson County survey respondents (85.2%) reported having a provider they considered their regular health care provider. Although some did not indicate having a regular health care provider, 76.6 percent reported a private doctor's office or clinic as the place where they usually go for medical care. For outpatient care, 5.4 percent said they visited a community health center, 2.9 percent said an urgent care clinic, 6.6 percent said a Veterans Affairs clinic, and less than one percent named the emergency room of a hospital as a place they usually go for medical care. Of those respondents without insurance, the percent with a medical home was 83.3 percent, and those with a regular health care provider dropped to 62.5 percent. Nationwide, 53 percent of uninsured adults had no usual source of care¹⁵.

Health Care Utilization

During the past 12 months, Robertson County residents accessed a range of venues for their own health care. A majority of residents (90.8%) reported using a doctor's office or clinic for their health care. In the same time frame, 14.5 percent of respondents reported visiting a hospital emergency room for their own medical care. The most common reason given for visiting an emergency room was having an injury or being very sick (8.9%).

The survey also asked about residents' health literacy and preparation for medical visits. Among Robertson County respondents, 21.8 percent *fairly often, very often, or always* prepare a list of questions for their health care provider. Most residents appear to communicate well with their health care providers, asking questions about medications and treatment, and discussing personal problems (see Table 4).

Table 4. Communication with health care providers among Robertson County respondents

Behavior	Never/ Almost Never	Sometimes	Fairly Often/ Very Often/ Always
Ask questions about medication	12.8%	12.7%	74.4%
Ask questions about treatment	8.4%	24.6%	67.0%
Discuss personal problems	18.4%	19.6%	62.0%
Prepare a list of questions	46.9%	31.2%	21.8%

¹⁵ <http://kff.org/health-reform/fact-sheet/the-uninsured-and-the-difference-health-insurance/>

Delayed Care

With numerous barriers that inhibit access to care, the survey asked respondents about occasions in which they delay seeking the care they need. Specified reasons for delaying care included cost, not being able to miss work, and not having transportation. In Robertson County, over one-third of respondents (35.5%) report delaying seeing their health care provider, and 34.7 percent put off obtaining dental care. Nearly 20 percent indicated that they had experienced times when they had to choose between buying food, paying rent or bills, and paying for medications.

Caregiving

Many residents in Robertson County act as caregivers, providing regular care or assistance to a friend or family member at home who has a long-term health problem or disability. During the past month, 23.9 percent of residents in Robertson County reported providing care for at least one person. This is the highest percentage of caregivers in the Brazos Valley, where the regional average is 11.9 percent.

The majority of the people being cared for were aged 65 or older (79.4%); 14.4 percent of respondents reported caring for someone between the ages of 18 and 64. Six percent of respondents reported caregiving for a child between the ages of one and 17. Across the county, 32.1 percent reported caring for a parent. Other relationships reported between caregiver and the person they care for included caring for a spouse (24.1%), parent-in-law (18.7%), child (9.3%), and a non-relative (9.5%).

The survey also asked caregivers how many hours they provided care weekly, how long they had provided care, which areas in which the person they care for most requires help, and how much difficulty they faced in caregiving. Over two-thirds (76.2%) of caregivers in Robertson County reported providing care between one and two days (1-47 hours) per week. While 10.4 percent care for someone between three and six days and 4.9 percent care for someone for seven days per week. Eighty-four percent of participants had cared for someone for less than five years (48.1% reported 1-5 years; 36.0% reported less than one year). Less than six percent of caregivers reported caring for someone for more than 20 years. Caregivers most commonly reported the person they cared for needing assistance with mobility (28.9%), because of learning, remembering, or confusion problems (19.2%), and with taking care of oneself (15.5%).

Across the county, survey participants reported on caregiving's impact on personal finances, time, family, work, relationships, creating stress and health problems. Table 5 displays the reported impact of caregiving on the life of Robertson County resident caregivers.

Table 5. Reported difficulties associated with caregiving

Difficulties associated with caregiving	A lot	Some	A little
Affects family relationships	13.3%	32.7%	53.9%
Creates/aggravates health problems	2.2%	22.6%	75.1%
Creates stress	24.0%	39.3%	36.6%
Financial burden	9.7%	32.6%	57.7%
Interferes with work	2.3%	32.1%	65.6%
Not enough time for self	7.8%	39.3%	52.9%
Not enough time for family	9.4%	28.1%	62.5%
Other difficulty	0.0%	0.0%	100%

Transportation

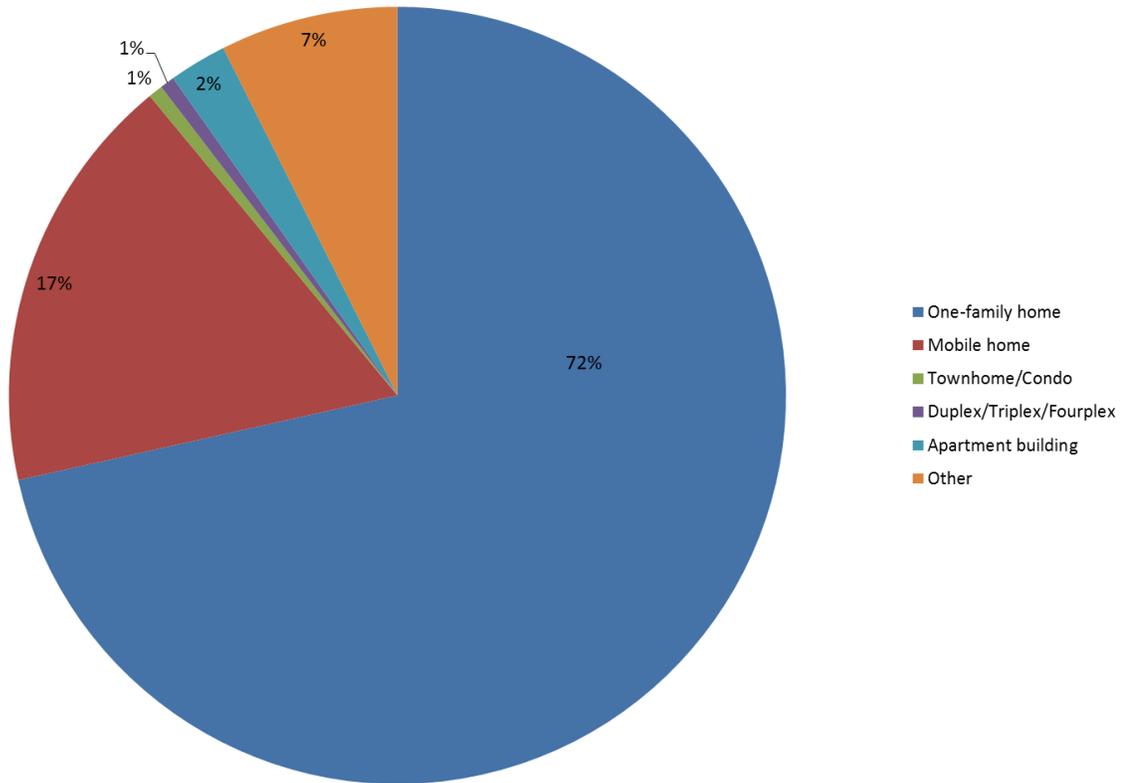
Transportation continues to pose a formidable challenge for all segments of the population and can be a significant barrier when it comes to accessing health care and related services. This issue was mentioned in every community discussion group, regardless of community sector represented.

Given that the vast majority of health resources are headquartered in Brazos County, the travel times and distances for Robertson County residents are substantially higher than the corresponding numbers from Brazos County. Among Robertson County survey respondents, the median travel distance to medical care was 25.6 miles, and median travel time was 30 minutes. For dental care, the median distance was 25 miles, and travel time was 30 minutes. To fill a prescription, the median distance was 11.9 miles, and travel time was 15 minutes.

Housing

For the first time in 2013, the survey asked residents about the condition of their housing. The majority of Robertson County respondents reported primarily living in a one-family home (71.5%), 17.5 percent reported living in a mobile home, and 2.4 percent reported living in an apartment building. Less than one percent of residents reported they lived in a duplex, triplex, or four-plex or a townhome or condominium. Figure 9 illustrates the housing situation for Robertson County.

Figure 9. Type of housing in Robertson County



Residents reported their buildings' estimated ages as well as how long they had lived there. Most residents (35.2%) lived in a building built between 1980-1999. Additionally, the condition of respondents' homes varied. More than one in four residents (31.1%) reported living in a building constructed prior to 1980, and 50 percent of residents have lived in their current home for less than 15 years. When asked if their residence had experienced a severe problem in the past 12 months, survey respondents described a range of issues listed in Table 6. Across the county, the most reported problem with residents' homes was related to plumbing, heating/cooling, or electricity (going more than 24 hours without service).

Table 6. Severe housing problems reported in Robertson County

Housing problems	Percentage of Robertson County Respondents
Plumbing, heating/cooling, electricity	23.6%
Mice, rats, or cockroaches	13.9%
Broken plaster or peeling paint (interior)	13.6%
Roof problems (such as holes, leaks, or sagging)	11.4%
Broken windows	8.4%
Mold	8.0%
Holes in the floor	4.1%

Community Services

Discussion regarding the health of a community should never be limited to only medical services or health insurance. Numerous social and community issues impact health, and various organizations exist in the community to address these issues.

The current survey included a set of questions asking about individuals' need for and utilization of a broad range of services with response options of *did not need*, *needed and used*, and *needed but did not use*. Although the survey did not gather information on the reasons why people did not get the services they needed, information about needs is still useful.

The top five community services needed (this included *needed and used* and *needed but did not use*) as reported by survey respondents were:

- 1) Care of a medical specialist (37.3%)
- 2) Financial assistance or welfare (18.3%)
- 3) Mental health services (12.5%)
- 4) Financial assistance for auto, appliance, or home repair; or weatherization (12.1%)
- 5) Work-related or employment services (11.8%)

While identifying needs is important, examining gaps in service delivery when people do not get the needed services is also critical. These data offer a snapshot of the top **unmet needs** in Robertson County. Table 7 summarizes the data of those who needed a service but could not get it.

Table 7. Unmet needs in Robertson County

Service Category	Percent Who Needed and <u>DID NOT</u> Get
Literacy training, GED, or English as a second language	100.0%
Financial assistance for auto, appliance, or home repair or weatherization	66.7%
Information and referral services (such as 211)	50.0%
Utility assistance	46.2%
Respite care (break from caring for child or adult dependent)	44.4%
Work-related or employment services	42.9%
Services for the disabled or their families	40.0%
Food, meal, and nutrition services (such as Meals-On-Wheels)	36.4%
Services for children with emotional problems or delinquent behavior	33.3%
Affordable after school or summer day programs for children	33.3%
Mental health services	26.7%
Alcohol/drug abuse services	25.0%

Community Characteristics

Specific community characteristics can influence perceptions of safety and the likelihood for community members to engage in activities outside their home. Robertson County respondents varied in their perception in how closely their fellow community members shared their values. Half of Robertson County residents (51.4%) felt that their community had shared values. Robertson County residents reported slightly lower levels of trust among fellow community members, with 26.9 percent saying you can't be too careful in dealing with other people, compared to 22.5 percent of respondents in the rural Brazos Valley counties. Table 8 summarizes these perceived characteristics of Robertson County, listing the percentage of respondents who reported *agree* or *strongly agree* with each statement.

Table 8. Robertson County community characteristics

Community Characteristics	Percentage of Brazos County Respondents
People are willing to help their neighbors	87.1%
This is a close knit community	77.5%
Most people can be trusted in the community	74.9%
Neighbors would help someone who fell	62.7%
Many people are physically active in local neighborhoods	49.3%
Problems in neighborhoods make it hard to go outside and walk	33.7%
People are concerned they will be a victim of crime if they walk/bike in their neighborhood	13.7%

Community Issues

Survey respondents were asked to rate the severity of a list of community issues, on a scale ranging from *not at all a problem* to a *very serious problem*. In Robertson County, the top 10 issues rated as a *serious problem* or a *very serious problem* were as follows:

- 1) Poor or inconvenient public transportation (54.3%)
- 2) Lack of jobs for unskilled workers (54.1%)
- 3) Abuse of drugs, including prescription drugs (53.8%)
- 4) Risky youth behaviors (such as alcohol use, drug use, truancy, etc.) (52.2%)
- 5) Unemployment (49.8%)
- 6) Alcohol abuse (44.1%)
- 7) Teen pregnancy (40%)
- 8) Access to mental health services (31.6%)
- 9) Poverty (30.2%)
- 10) School dropout rate (27.8%)

Community Advice

Community discussion group participants were asked to offer advice for anyone attempting to address issues in Robertson County. The following recommendations were offered in most of the discussions:

- **Understand town dynamics.** Discussion group participants emphasized that it is important to get to know the community in which you are working. Know that each community within Robertson County is different and that you must approach the issues in each community differently. Survey community residents to see what issues they face and get to know the specific community's strengths and weaknesses.
- **Build community trust.** Residents are often skeptical of newcomers in their community. Do not come into the community wanting to change everything before building relationships with local individuals and earning the trust of local residents. Work with established organizations and initiatives as a way to meet community residents and to learn how to work with the community. Participants suggest that you “roll up your sleeves” and get involved. Joining a local church is recommended as a way to meet people as well.
- **Work local leaders.** Go to the Chamber of Commerce and speak with them. These individuals will be able to assist you or point you in the right direction. Get to know the local leaders, since they can become one of your strongest resources and they also know how to get people together. Residents recommend consulting the local government to see how they can help you deliver the service you are offering to the community.
- **Communication.** The best way to get information to the residents of Robertson County is through word of mouth, churches, and social media. Community discussion group participants frequently mentioned churches as a great source of communication. They said that placing a flyer at the church, or getting the church to make an announcement about your program or service, will attract residents' interest. Sending flyers home through the schools in students' backpacks is another good way to inform the public about your service.

Regional analysis yielded a set of key findings that are presented in the regional Executive Report. It is important to understand that the data contained in this supplemental report should be considered as a whole; that is, the statistics should be interpreted with the insights offered by the community discussion groups. These reports are intended to be utilized for planning and resource development to benefit all members of the community.