



Rural North Dakota has a lot of challenges, primarily [a] lack of **access to health care**.



Housing prices and rents have increased, and wages [have] not.



Transportation barriers often leave people not able to attain services.



Head Start classrooms are being forced to close because they don't have **staffing**.

COMMON SENTIMENTS



More **mental health** services [are] needed.



A big concern is that **life expectancy** is dropping.



Families live together. Homeless shelters are available...but there are more people experiencing **homelessness** than beds.



Drug overdose, binge drinking and suicide data was surprising.



Lack of **early childhood education** leads to worse outcomes.



Mothers are leaving jobs to care for their newborns as many can't afford **childcare**.

ELEVATE THE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF NORTH DAKOTANS

A Social Determinants of Health Perspective

A RECAP OF THE ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS

In February 2023, Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Dakota (BCBSND) Caring Foundation and the North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services Community Engagement Unit gathered health influencers from across the state to discuss our social determinants of health (SDoH) study findings.



ND Caring FOUNDATION



Health & Human Services

NDSU

CENTER FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH

ROUNDTABLES AGREED:

We should be **proactive** rather than reactive.

Community collaboration and communication can make a difference.

All five SDoH are interrelated, so **services should be connected** too.

ASKED QUESTIONS:

How can we provide **more services** with **fewer staff**?

How many of **our own employees** could be experiencing things like **poverty**?

SHARED IDEAS:



Things that have worked well include food pantries, receiving leftover produce from Walmart, affordable fitness centers free to diabetics, raised gardens at retirement homes [and] educational grants.

FOUND INSPIRATION:



SDoH seem overwhelming to tackle. We can start working within our spheres of control, then push to our spheres of influence.



It is impossible for people to plan for their futures when they are using excessive energy trying to meet basic needs. With better coordination, we can help them meet basic needs. That way, they can access more resources with only one entry point into the system. When we impact one SDOH, others are also impacted.



We have many opportunities to make a difference.

CONTINUING CONVERSATIONS AROUND SDOH

We at the Caring Foundation hope these conversations will lead to further collaboration and alignment between key stakeholders in North Dakota. We invite you to learn more and get involved by visiting bcbsnd.com/sdoh.