



SPECIAL MEMBER ADVISORY AND YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL
In-Person and Virtual Meeting
NOTES

Date: Saturday, August 19, 2023

Time: 11:30 a.m. - 12:30pm

Location: Wright Elementary School, Tallulah, LA

On Saturday, August 19th, 2023, AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana (ACLA) utilized our ***Caritas on the Move*** event to host a special member and youth advisory council in Tallulah, Louisiana. (Madison Parish)

ACLA utilized a moderator from the LSU Agricultural Center for the event. The panel discussion included two high school students, the Mayor of Tallulah, the Superintendent of Schools in Madison Parish, a parent of an ACLA member, and a member of the Sheriff's Department in Madison Parish.

The following questions were selected from for discussions with ACLA members (18 in attendance), community leaders and partners, and members of the community:

Health Barriers

- 1. What do you perceive as the main challenges to accessing quality healthcare services in our rural community and are there specific health issues that you feel are not adequately addressed in our community?**
 - a. The group responded that the main challenges are the location of health care facilities and access to transportation to doctor appointments.
 - b. One participant expressed that because they are in Northeast Louisiana, they feel that sometimes South Louisiana "forgets about them" and their needs because they are so far away.

Safety Barriers

- 2. Are there initiatives or programs that have successfully improved safety in other communities that we could adapt to our rural setting?**
 - a. The young adult participants expressed the need for more education about gun safety, bullying, and more fun events geared toward youth, and not so much toward adults. The young adults also expressed that kids are easily influenced but can be great influences to other kids.
 - b. The young adults further expressed that they feel a child's voice is not seen as important in small and rural areas. Youths are not included in decision making or invited to the table for feedback.

Education Barriers

- 3. What challenges do you see in accessing quality education in our rural community, and how do these challenges impact students' academic journeys?**
 - a. The group responded that more vendors should come to school events in the area with resources that can be used by youth, adults, and their families.

Cross Cutting Barriers

- 4. What role can local businesses, community organizations, and government agencies play in breaking down barriers and fostering collaboration?**
 - a. The group expressed a need for more educational materials, and more staff from governmental agencies visiting the area in person to provide education.
 - b. The group also expressed that they would like to see more mental health resources (kids stated the difficulty with seeking help is the adults. The older generation is uncomfortable with mental health and need help realizing it is a good thing.)

Regarding Health Plan Preferences

- 5. When considering healthcare options, what factors play a significant role in your decision-making process?**
 - a. The group expressed that they would like a health plan that offers access to care that is close to their home, and a health plan that is willing to listen to their needs.

Medicaid Renewal Barriers

- 6. Whether you are a current Medicaid recipient or not, have you encountered challenges in completing your Medicaid renewal information? If so, what are they?**
 - a. The group did not express any barriers.

Transportation Barriers

- 7. Given the rural nature of your region, have you faced difficulties in arranging transportation for medical appointments? If so, how might organizations like ACLA assist in overcoming these barriers?**
 - a. The group expressed that transportation is an ongoing problem, and that they would like to see ACLA hire more transportation vendors that are in closer proximity to their homes.

Adjournment: The panel discussion adjourned at 12:42 p.m.