



**BROOKINGS  
COMMUNITY MENTAL  
HEALTH TASK FORCE**

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**Findings and Recommendations**



# Task Force Members

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# Keywords

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**Serious Mental Illness (SMI)** - a mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder resulting in serious functional impairment, which substantially interferes with or limits one or more major life activities

**Mental Illness** - wide range of health conditions involving changes in thinking, emotion or behavior.

**Mental Health** - a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.

**Behavioral Health** - generally encompasses both mental health and substance use disorders.

# Background

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## Nationwide

- 1 in 5 adults experience a mental illness
- Depression is the leading cause of disability worldwide, and is a major contributor to the global burden of disease.
- 90% of those who die by suicide have an underlying mental illness.
- Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the U.S.

## South Dakota

- More than 30,000 adults and 9,000 kids live with serious mental health conditions.
- SD experiences the 13th highest suicide rate in the U.S.

# Mental Health Task Force Purpose

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To complete a comprehensive needs assessment, create a roadmap of services currently available to the mentally ill, and to propose improvements to the current services available to people with mental health issues in our community.

# Task Force Objectives

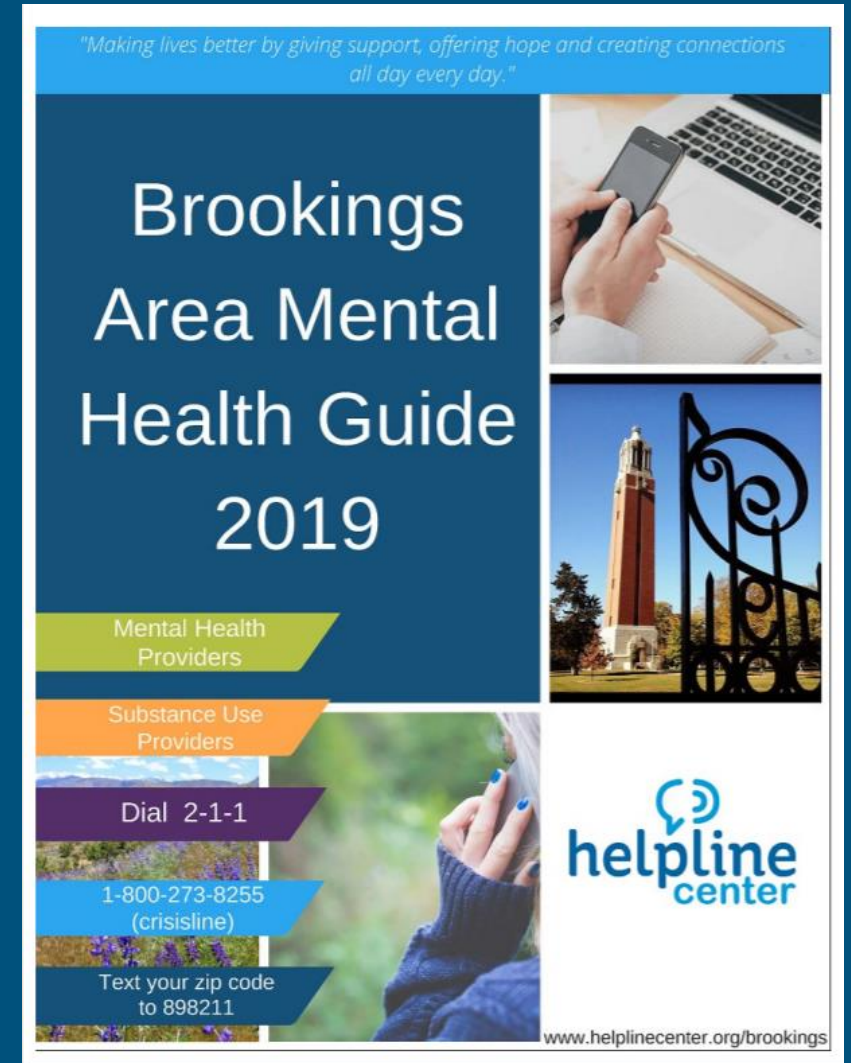
1. Identify and investigate what resources are available to someone struggling with mental health issues.
2. Determine the prevalence of mental illness in the County.
3. Explore what needs currently exist.
4. Provide a venue for collaboration and communication.

*Identify and investigate what resources are available to someone struggling with mental health issues.*

**Fulfillment:** Creation of the Brookings Area Mental Health Guide.

Guide allows for efficient access to information regarding mental health practitioners and services in Brookings County.

**Recommendation:** Continued funding and support of the resource guide.



# *Determine Prevalence and Explore what needs currently exist.*

**Fulfillment:** Development and distribution of the Mental Health Needs Assessment Survey.

The Survey data shows the perceived gaps in mental health services in Brookings County that can then be targeted.

**Recommendations:** Specified later.



## **MENTAL HEALTH NOW!**

The Brookings Mental Health Taskforce is conducting a county-wide needs assessment focused on identifying mental health strengths, issues and areas of concern. The Taskforce needs the input of city and county members to support recommendations focused on mental health to the City of Brookings, The Brookings Public School Board and Brookings County. Your completion of this survey ensures that your voice is included in these recommendations.

**Access the survey here:**

**<https://brookingsmentalhealthnow.questionpro.com>**

**Survey access will close September 30th.**

For more information on the Mental Health Taskforce, please visit our website at: <http://www.cityofbrookings.org/index.aspx?NID=505>



# Needs Assessment Methods

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Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR)

Online Survey (qualitative / quantitative data)

Focus Groups (ancillary qualitative data)

# What can be achieved by a mental health needs assessment?

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- identification of the mental health challenges and requirements within a community.
- acquire information to guide improvements on mental health services.
- effective collaboration and communication among providers to address identified and unmet needs of the community.

## *Survey Data - Demographics*

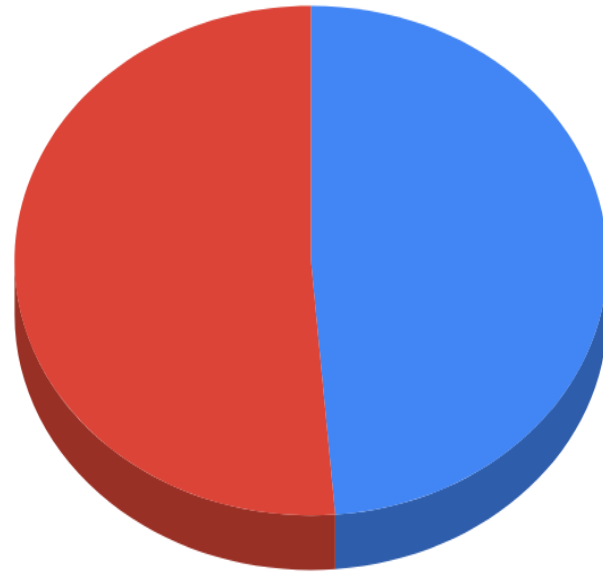
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- Online survey via QuestionPro: September 1st - October 23rd, 2018
- Target population: residents of Brookings County
- Respondents: 331 individuals completed the entire survey
  - 74.7% female
  - 69.7% aged 25-55
  - 89.8% white, non-Hispanic
  - 81.1% live in the City of Brookings
  - 76.5% use private insurance as primary payer for mental health / substance abuse services
  - 69.4% have bachelor's or higher degree
  - 72.8% employed full-time
  - 52.4% annual household income > \$75,000

# I would consider myself... (N-690)

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I Would Consider Myself:



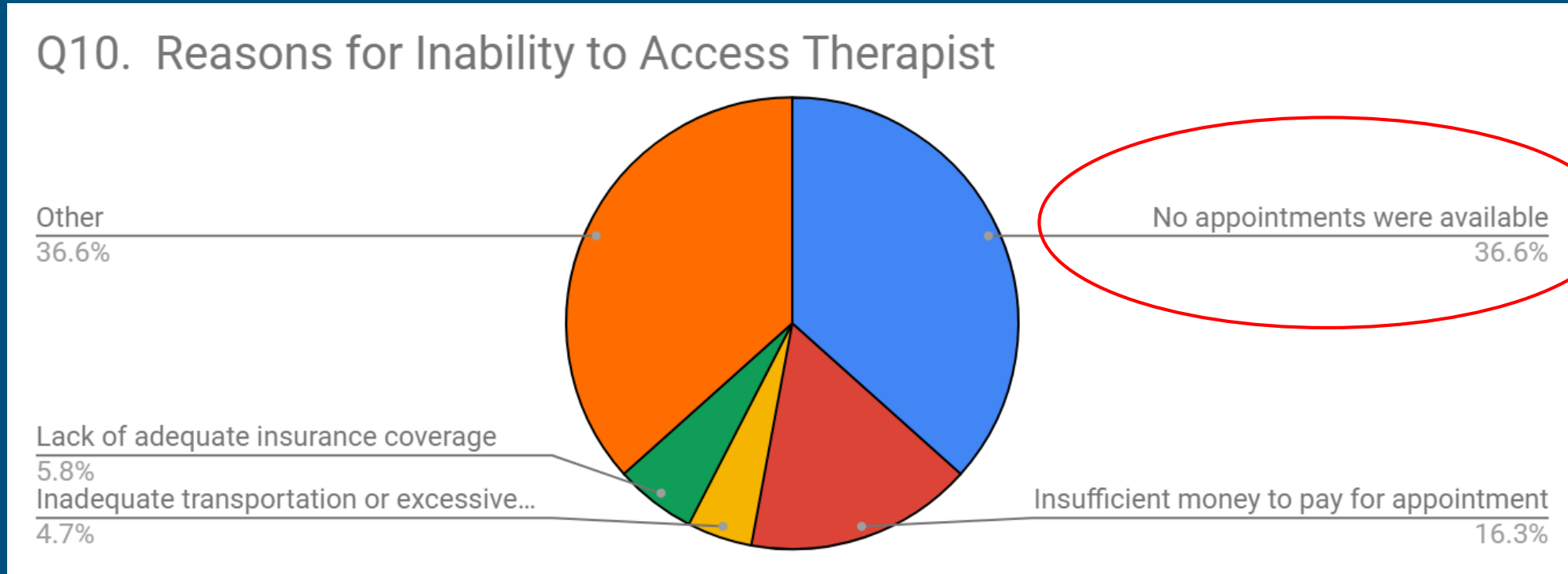
● Requiring Access to Services ● Not Requiring Services

## *Survey Data - Overview*

Perceived service gaps in Brookings County:

- Lack of Mental Health Care Professionals (Counselors, Psychiatrists, Psychologists, etc)
- Affordability of Services
- Crisis Support
- Substance Abuse Services
- School Mental Health Services and Mental Health Care for Children/Adolescents.

# Lack of Mental Health Care Professionals



When asked: If you sought counseling services in the past year, but you were not able to see a therapist right away, what was the reason? (select all that apply)

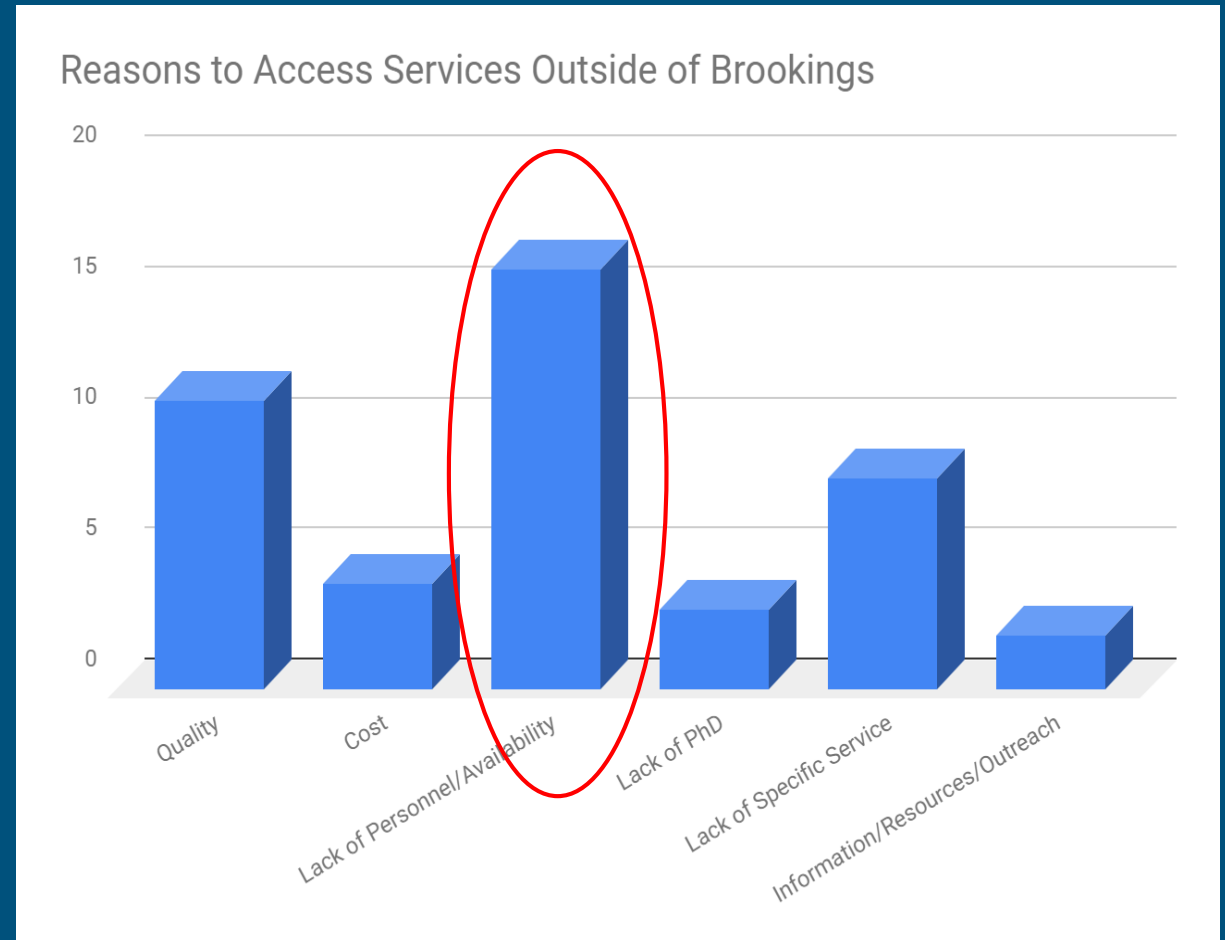
## Lack of Mental Health Care Professionals (cont.)

When asked: What barriers do individuals currently experience?



## *Lack of Mental Health Care Professionals (cont.)*

When asked: we choose to access services outside of Brookings County because.





## *Lack of Mental Health Care Professionals (cont.)*

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A lack of appointment availability rated #1 on reasons for accessing mental health care outside of Brookings and for Barriers to Service.

**Quotes:** If I, or my family member, were able to access all needed behavioral health services in Brookings County, there would be...

“More licensed counselors, more professional psychiatric care providers, inpatient treatment options, accessible temporary housing options, crisis support centers, comprehensive resources that make sense for people to navigate.”

“Lack of access to psychiatrist, psychologist, affordable treatment, and options outside East Central Behavioral Health. Many services must be obtained in Sioux Falls, which is already overburdened with patients.”

” We would have more therapists/counselors within the area. Appointments are booked full often at East Central Behavioral Health, and it's even worse at SDSU. We need more counselors.”

## *Lack of Mental Health Care Professionals (cont.)*

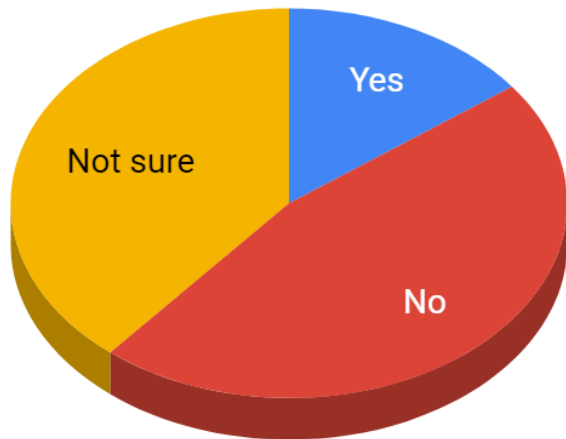
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### **Recommendations:**

- Additional funding and support to the Community Mental Health Center (CMHC) of Brookings County to allow for the hiring of additional counselors and expansion of services.
- Additional funding and support to increase school-based mental health services. (more details to come)
- Support for the expansion of triage services via Avera Behavioral Health (ABH)
- Consideration of a centralized referral service

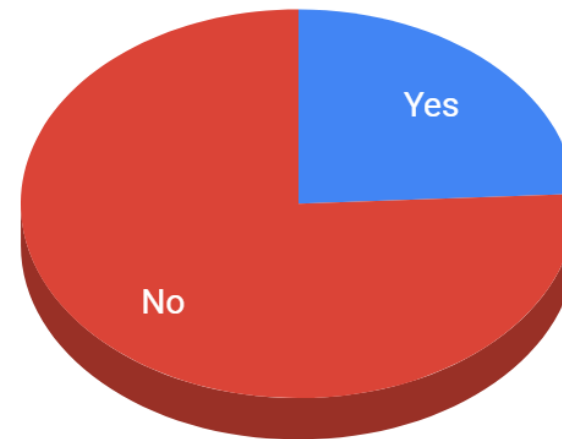
# Affordability of Services

Affordability of Mental Health/Substance Abuse Services



All Responses

Affordability of Mental Health/Substance Abuse Services



Responses with Definitive Opinion

# *Affordability of Services (cont.)*

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Over 75% of people who answered either “Yes” or “No” to the question of “Are mental health services affordable in Brookings County” answered “No”.

## **Quotes:**

“While there is a lot in Brookings for supports, financial means is the biggest concern that is seen. Even with insurance, it can be expensive to meet with someone just to keep yourself in a livable place and work through things, even if you only meet once a month.”

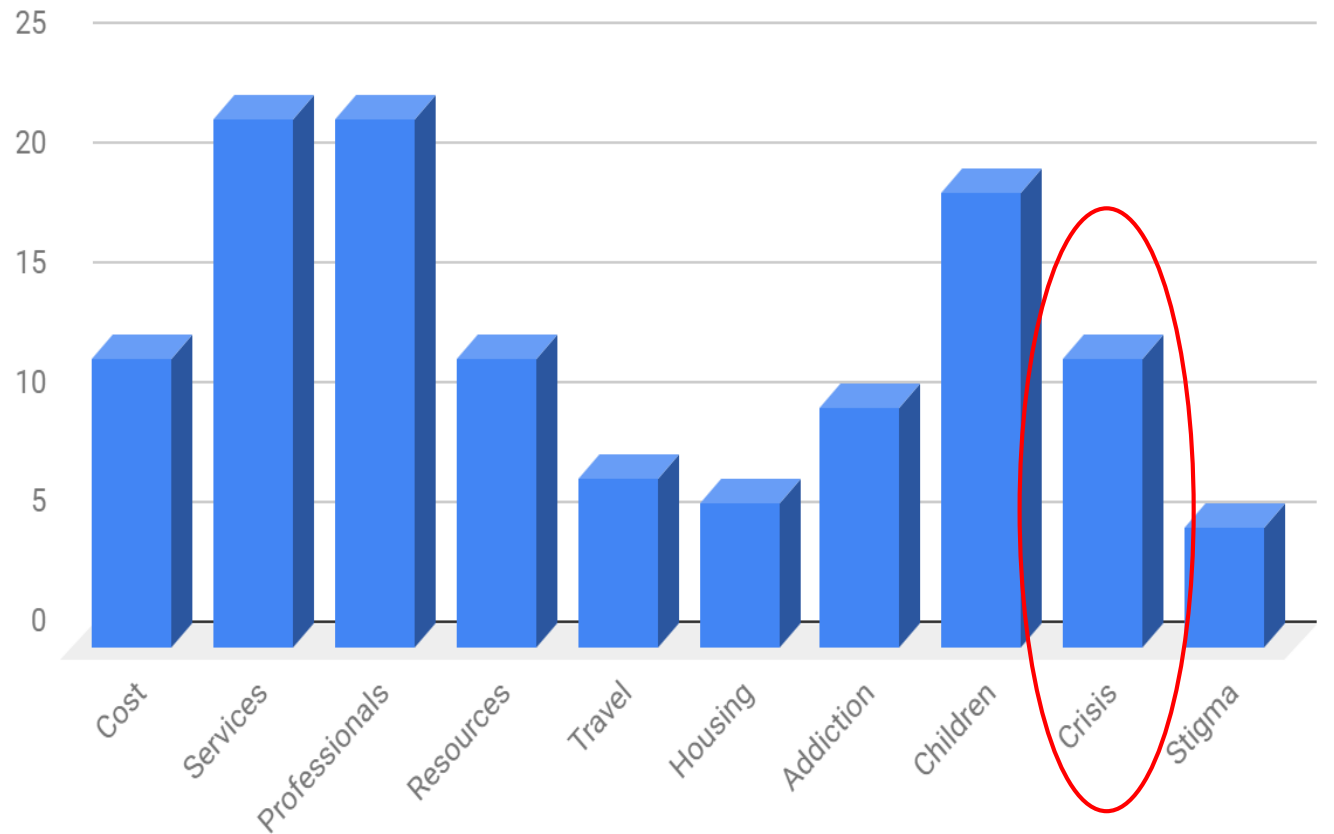
(If I, or my family member, were able to access all needed behavioral health services in Brookings County, there would be) “Psychiatric care available in town, better insurance rates for mental health care, free or reduced cost mental health services.”

(If I, or my family member, were able to access all needed behavioral health services in Brookings County, there would be) “More insurance coverage for more affordable services. (Ex: Through Dakotacare there are only 5 covered counseling appointments and after that it was no longer affordable).”

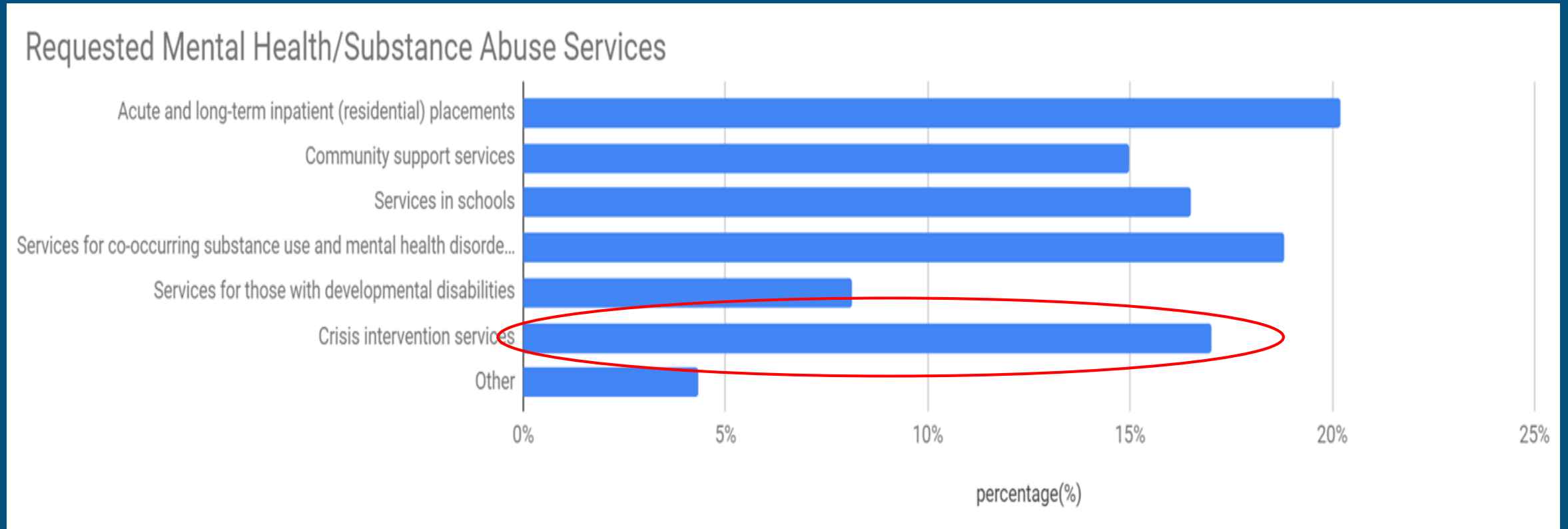
# Crisis Support

**When asked:** If I, or my family member, were able to access all needed behavioral health services in Brookings County; here is what would be different.

12. Ideal Community Access



## *Crisis Support (cont.)*



Survey participants identified areas of perceived service gaps.

## *Crisis Support (cont.)*

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**Fulfillment:** Members of the Task force have worked with key stakeholders in the community to develop and implement Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) geared to law enforcement and first responders.

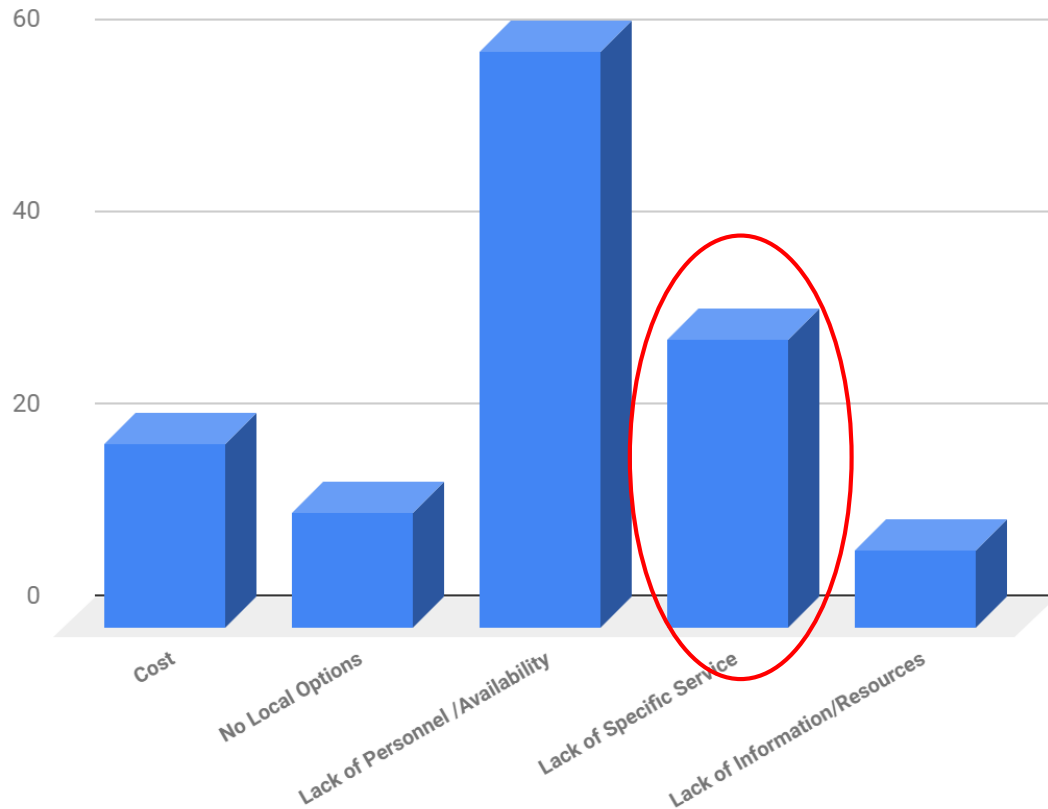
### **Recommendations:**

- Continue funding and support for CIT and the development of a Crisis Mobile Unit.
- Support for the expansion of triage services via ABH



# Substance Abuse Services

Barriers to Service



## Quotes:

“I think there is a good variety of mental health services available, however there seems to be a lack of substance abuse services - especially services for those who may need medical assistance with withdrawal.”

“The Brookings High School is engulfed in substance abuse, I removed my three children and sent them to a new school. We begged for help from schools, police, hospital, churches, and were provided no direction. There is not preventive concern only punishment after the fact.”

(If I, or my family member, were able to access all needed behavioral health services in Brookings County) “We would have adolescent outpatient programs for addiction/substance abuse. We would have teen NA and AA programs. We would have group therapy for teens dealing with chemical dependency.”



# *Substance Abuse Services*

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***Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) is the use of FDA-approved medications, in combination with counseling and behavioral therapies, to provide a “whole-patient” approach to the treatment of substance use disorders.***

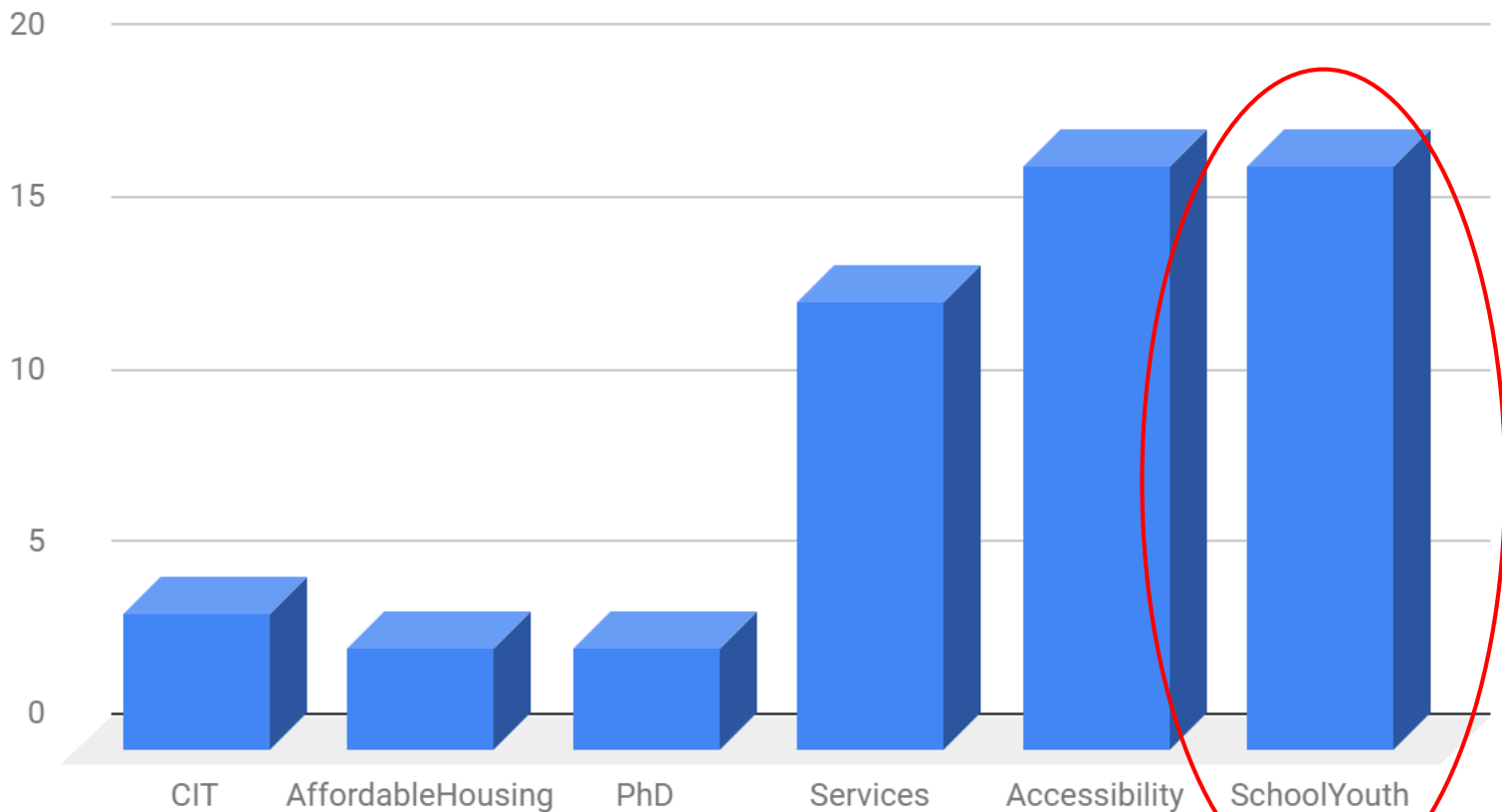
## **Recommendations:**

- Support East Central Behavioral Health in the implementation of MAT.
- Ongoing discussions and support for crisis/detox beds in Brookings County.

## *School Mental Health Services and Mental Health Care for Children/Adolescents.*

When asked in the survey to provide any additional comments, an overwhelming number of people stated major concerns over services available within the school system and to school-aged children.

Additional Comments Focus (Q24)



# *School Mental Health Services and Mental Health Care for Children/Adolescents.*

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When asked in the survey to provide any additional comments, an overwhelming number of people stated major concerns over services available within the school system and to school-aged children.

## **Quotes:**

“Psych and counseling services in the school system are good but they need much more support to accomplish the needs of the students. I do know of 3 families who have opted out of Brookings district to go to smaller schools where the kids will get the services they need”

“Teachers and school staff need to be adequately trained on recognizing children in need. More counselors are needed in the schools be available for children in need. This is severely lacking at the high school level.”

“The schools need additional staff to meet the needs of children with mental health issues. It is difficult affording trips to Sioux Falls to get the help that is needed. The cost of gas and taking time off of work makes it hard to get the correct help.”

## *School Mental Health Services and Mental Health Care for Children/Adolescents.*

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*The American School Counseling Association recommends that the school counselor to student ratio be 1 counselor to every 250 students.*

- *Brookings School District currently has 10.5 counselors giving a ratio of 1:324 students.*
  - *The goal would be to have 13 school counselors and 3 school social workers by the 2020-2021 school year.*

### **Recommendations:**

- Provide funding to support the proposed increase in school mental health staff.
- Use the data/information gathered by the Task Force to bolster community support for an Opt-Out to increase school funding.

## *Provide a Venue for Collaboration and Communication*

**Fulfillment:** The Brookings Mental Health Coalition is a collaborative group which includes members from various services intersecting mental health throughout the county.

# Brookings County Mental Health Coalition (BCMHC)

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The Brookings County MH Coalition was established out of a DSS opioid prevention grant in November of 2018. Research shows that coalitions, with the shared goal of improving the whole health of a community, create a venue for key stakeholders to work together to ensure that the full integration of substance abuse and mental health screening, prevention, and treatment services can be successful at the local level (SAMHSA-HRSA, 2013).

Mental Health Coalitions are also a key requirements for larger grants specific to Substance Abuse and Mental Health funding, specifically identifying the need for engagement from city, county and school government.

## *Provide a Venue for Collaboration and Communication*

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### **Recommendations:**

- That the City Council, County Commission and Brookings School Board identify a representative from each entity to attend the Brookings County Mental Health Coalition meeting monthly.
- The Brookings City/County will use their hospital board member positions within the Brookings Health System to place members that have a background in mental health experience and a commitment to the furthering of increased mental health care through the medical system.

# Goals

<i>Short Term</i>	<i>Intermediate Term</i>	<i>Long Term</i>
Additional Funding/Support to Community Mental Health Center	Ongoing Discussions with Health System, Law Enforcement, SDSU, etc.	Consideration of a centralized referral service
Additional Funding/Support to Increase School Services (Increase Counselor/Student Ratio)	Use Task Force Data to Bolster Community Support for Opt-Out to Fund Additional Counselors	Conversations about Future Legislative Issues
Brookings City, County, and School Board to Choose Representative to Attend the BCMHC Meeting Monthly.	The Brookings City/County will place Board Members within the Brookings Health System that have a mental health background and commitment to increased mental health care through the medical system.	Conversations about Licensure
Provide support for the expansion of triage services via ABH	Continue funding and support for CIT and the development of a Crisis Mobile Unit.	Ongoing discussion and consideration of detox/crisis beds
Continued Funding and Support of the Community Mental Health Resource Guide		