

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – The AHS Community Profiles

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How are the indicators in the AHS Community Profiles selected?

The AHS Community Profiles are intended to be a tool for communities to measure changing conditions over time so that partners can work together to improve them.

For the profiles to be meaningful, communities need to play a role in identifying what information is useful and relevant. AHS will host regional workshops to solicit input that will help shape the first published profiles, as well as over time to revisit the list of indicators and utility of the tool.

Further, for the profiles to be meaningful indicator, data must be quality, reliable and updated on at least an annual basis.

By what geographies will indicators be available?

To meet a range of community needs, AHS intends over time for the AHS Community Profiles to demonstrate trends by to County, AHS District and Health Service Area. The ability to disaggregate indicators by sub-state geographies is limited by the data set, and there will be some indicators that cannot be displayed at less than a statewide level.

Can I create a custom AHS Community Profile?

Individual Community Profiles are comprised of indicators that are topically, geographically, demographically, or otherwise related to one another. These “groupings” of indicators are curated by AHS, informed by input from regional workshops about what Profiles would be most useful for planning, taking, and measuring action. Examples of Community Profiles might include, “Act 186: State of Vermont Outcomes of Well-being” and “Vermont – Institute of Medicine Vital Signs: Core Metrics for Health and Health Care Progress” and “Social Determinants of Health across Vermont.”

How often will indicators in the Community Profiles be updated?

AHS will update indicator data in the AHS Community Profiles on a rolling basis, according to the frequency of different data sources. The Agency intends for the AHS Community Profiles to be updated as often as possible and promoted annually.

Can I download the graphs and data from the Community Profiles?

Yes! Viewers can download trends on a graph right from a profile as an image that can be embedded in documents or on other sites. Viewers can also embed a unique link to different Profile views right in an email to share with colleagues. Data is also downloadable in Excel format.

How are the AHS Community Profiles related to other data hubs, like Building Bright Futures’ Vermont Insights?

AHS Community Profiles of Health and Well-Being and Vermont Insights Early Childhood Community Profiles are two different approaches in pursuit of a common agenda: to increase use of local data to drive local decision-making and improve outcomes.

In some ways, AHS Community Profiles and Vermont Insights Early Childhood Profiles are similar in their approach, in that they are publicly available online; demonstrate population indicator trends as locally as possible; offer comparison of population indicator trends over time, across localities and to the state; and refer viewers to other sites to learn more about the story behind the baseline and other information.

In other ways, the projects are distinct in their approaches, creating alignment without duplication of efforts toward their common agenda. The biggest distinction is the population trends that are available on either site. AHS Community Profiles demonstrate a broad set of indicators related to the health and well-being of various populations; Vermont Insights Early Childhood Profiles demonstrate a focused set of indicators related to early childhood health and well-being. Vermont Insights Early Childhood Profiles also incorporate data about the early childhood service system, whereas AHS Community Profiles stay focused on general conditions.

AHS Community Profiles and Vermont Insights Early Childhood Profiles enhance and support one another in pursuit of that common agenda in the area of early childhood health and well-being by simplifying and standardizing data connections between AHS Departments and Vermont Insights, creating consistency in data use for viewers of AHS and Vermont Insights Early Childhood Profiles, referring to AHS and Vermont Insights respectively for more and/or different information about health and well-being in Vermont, and supporting use of data for planning at the local level.

What is the difference between the Agency of Human Services Scorecards and the AHS Community Profiles?

The primary difference between the AHS Scorecards and AHS Community Profiles is that Scorecards are built to demonstrate trends about the performance of programs and services over time, while the Profiles are built to demonstrate trends about whole populations and conditions in geographic areas.

AHS Scorecards support Agency efforts to be transparent about managing, communicating, and improving the performance of our programs and services in alignment with what we want for whole populations at a statewide level. While viewers will find population indicator trends on the AHS Scorecards, they will not be at sub-state geographic levels. AHS Community Profiles support communities, community organizations, and AHS local programs and services to work together to change conditions of well-being locally over time.