

Women's Health Care in Monroe County

Monroe County Women's Commission,
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- ▶ Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. ([World Health Organization](#))
- ▶ Mental health is a vital part of women's overall health. For some women in our community, mental health care is more difficult to access. Services are less available and visible, as compared to physical health care.

County Agencies

- ▶ Over a one-year period, the MCWC invited the following agencies to attend our monthly meetings to share information about their services for women.*

<u>Bloomington Area Birth Services (BABS)</u>	<u>Planned Parenthood IN and KY (PPINK)</u>
<u>Catholic Charities</u>	<u>Volunteers in Medicine (VIM)</u>
<u>Centerstone</u>	<u>Women Infants and Children (WIC)</u>
<u>Futures Family Health Clinic</u>	

*This information was gathered before the passage of the Affordable Care Act

Bloomington Area Birth Services

Started by local women in 1994, BABS is an independent nonprofit organization that provides education and support services for maternal and infant health, including:

- ▶ Classes
- ▶ Doula programs
- ▶ Lactation center
- ▶ Postpartum depression
- ▶ Support groups

Some services have a fee, and others are free or on a sliding scale. They work closely with the Postpartum Depression Task Force.

Note: BABS stopped providing services in June 2015 pending needed funding.

Catholic Charities

Catholic Charities–Bloomington provides services to the poor with a focus on mental health care.

Counseling services are provided through:

- ▶ Individual–, family–, and community–based services
- ▶ Becky’s House (Bedford), a residential women’s shelter for homeless women

Services are provided on a sliding–fee scale or through Medicaid and Medicare.

Centerstone

The mission of Centerstone is to prevent and cure mental illness and addiction. The services provided include:

- ▶ Psychiatric medication management
- ▶ Diagnosis and evaluation
- ▶ Individual and family counseling/therapy
- ▶ Addiction treatment and recovery
- ▶ Recovery Engagement Center (outpatient with virtual services for rural clients)
- ▶ Education and support groups
- ▶ Limited in-patient treatment

Centerstone (cont.)

Continued list of services...

- ▶ Health coaching
 - Improving life for seriously mentally ill including general health problems such as weight, smoking, blood pressure, and other physical health issues
- ▶ Telemedicine
- ▶ Vocational services

Partners include the IN Department of Corrections and the IN Department of Child Services. All patients are served regardless of their ability to pay.

Futures Family Planning Clinic

The Futures Family Planning Clinic is part of and supports the mission of the Monroe County Health Department: “to promote the best achievable scope and quality of health services for the public.” This agency provides:

- ▶ Gynecological exams
- ▶ STI testing and referrals
- ▶ Low-cost or free birth control
- ▶ Counseling for lifestyle issues

Services are provided on a sliding scale and Medicaid and other insurances are accepted.

Planned Parenthood of IN and KY

Statewide, 94% of PPINK services are preventative in nature and include:

- ▶ Cancer screenings
- ▶ Birth control
- ▶ Sexually transmitted infections (STI) testing
- ▶ Annual wellness exams
- ▶ Health education programs

Many patients are under-insured or not insured.

Volunteers in Medicine

VIM's mission is to provide easily accessible, high-quality health care to any uninsured patient living below the poverty level. Volunteer clinicians provide physical health care as well as some dental and mental health care. Specialized clinic services include:

- ▶ Diabetes care
- ▶ Smoking cessation
- ▶ Pain management
- ▶ Cardiac care
- ▶ Orthopedics/spine care
- ▶ Women's health

Women, Infants, and Children

WIC is a federally funded program to safeguard the health of low-income women with infants and children under the age of 5 who are at nutritional risk. They provide access to:

- ▶ Food vouchers
- ▶ Supplemental diets
- ▶ Education on healthy eating
- ▶ Referrals to health care
- ▶ Screening for height/weight and iron level
- ▶ Support groups

Impact of Health Care Concerns

Health care concerns impact women across their lifecycle:

- ▶ Adolescence
- ▶ Young adult
- ▶ Reproductive years
- ▶ Pregnancy, childbirth, post-partum
- ▶ Sandwich generation (caring for children and elderly parents)
- ▶ Post-menopausal
- ▶ Senior women

These stages indicate a need for continuity of care.

Community Forum

MCWC hosted a Community Forum on Women and Mental Health on October 23, 2013. This forum identified community strengths, barriers and issues, and recommendations.

Introduction to the forum:

Women's mental health care is an integral part of our overall health as individuals, families, and a community. Women, disproportionately from men, are more likely to struggle with various mental health issues for reasons both complex and profound. This forum is the culmination of months of meetings between health care professionals and the Women's Commission. We hope to share what we've learned with the community and to bring professionals together to address this vital issue and spark a discussion as to the needs which require further government and community measures.

Community Strengths

- ▶ Cross-agency collaborations
- ▶ Local sources of funding (government, foundation, community)
- ▶ Local taskforce initiatives/coalitions/advocacy groups/professional associations
- ▶ Higher education expertise
- ▶ Information referral using 211
- ▶ Numerous agencies (public, private, and non-profit)
- ▶ Integrated best practices (for example, trauma-informed care)
- ▶ Quality health care professionals

Barriers and Issues

Barriers and issues facing agencies and clients include:

- ▶ Funding challenges
- ▶ Restrictions associated with state and federal funding
- ▶ Agency ability to maintain or expand services
- ▶ Communication barriers with clients based on language and culture
- ▶ Client access to health care:
 - Lack of transportation (especially in rural areas)
 - For some agencies, lack of adequate office space and parking

Barriers and Issues (cont.)

List of barriers and issues continued:

- ▶ Sufficient childcare services while attending appointments
- ▶ Poverty and its related challenges
- ▶ Difficulty in delivering and coordinating care for the individual
- ▶ Information is not easily shared between agencies
- ▶ Geographic fragmentation of services
- ▶ Difficulty maintaining adequate staff levels
- ▶ Too few psychiatrists

What Is Needed?

- ▶ Reliable funding stream so agencies can provide comprehensive health services
- ▶ Readily available pool of professional translators attuned to cultural sensitivities, and adept in translating medical terminology
- ▶ Easily accessible public transportation in all areas of the county
- ▶ On-site childcare services for clients
- ▶ Comprehensive approach to poverty and its related challenges

What Is Needed? (cont.)

- ▶ Safety net services
- ▶ Programs to break the cycle of poverty
- ▶ Living wage
- ▶ Support services across life-cycle
- ▶ Central point for coordination of services
- ▶ Competitive wages for health care professionals and recruitment of young professionals into field
- ▶ More psychiatrists
- ▶ Adequate facilities and parking

Recommendations: Monroe County

- ▶ **Explore** community models of case management for women's health care services
- ▶ **Expand** health care services to better reach rural areas
- ▶ **Partner** with IU–Bloomington and other local and state agencies to provide counseling service outreach
- ▶ **Build** upon existing community resources, for example:

Health services in Monroe County jail	Existing agencies and service providers
Advocacy groups	Schools and libraries
Veterans Affairs	Work One
Government at all levels	211

Recommendations (cont.)

- ▶ **Encourage** Monroe County government to prioritize and respond to women's health care needs
- ▶ **Advocate** for local funding of physical and mental health care services
- ▶ **Lobby** state and federal legislators to reform health care funding
- ▶ **Urge** state and federal legislators to increase the minimum wage

Recommendations (cont.)

- ▶ **Collaborate** with Indiana University–Bloomington and community resources to create and maintain a roster of foreign language translators for agency use
- ▶ **Encourage** the provision of education on women's health care and self–advocacy using the following:
 - Township government
 - Monroe County Health Department
 - K–12 schools
 - IU–Bloomington
 - Ivy Tech

Summary

- ▶ As can be seen from the above information, the agency meetings and mental health forum highlighted a wide range of issues for women in Monroe County that go far beyond mental health.
- ▶ The Monroe County Women's Commission will continue to follow up on these issues in its advisory role to residents, businesses, and the government of Monroe County.