



**STRATEGIC**  
**ISSUES**  

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**PHASE FOUR**





## Identifying Strategic Issues

Data from the Forces of Change Assessment, Landscape Review, Local System Assessment, and Community Profile were used to help Impact DuPage identify strategic issues. During this phase of the planning process, the Impact DuPage Steering Committee considered issues that were critical to the success of local systems in DuPage County. In addition, they identified challenges that must be addressed in order for Impact DuPage to achieve its vision of “creating a common understanding of community needs, gaps and priorities that will advance the well-being of the DuPage County community.” The Steering Committee completed a prioritization exercise that occurred over the course of two meetings. Feedback on the selected issues was solicited from the community.

## Prioritization Meeting #1

On January 22, 2015, the Impact DuPage Steering Committee held a two hour meeting to review the data collected from the four assessments. Members of the Impact DuPage Core Team presented key findings from each assessment. In addition, members of the Steering Committee and Dashboard Committee were asked to explore the Impact DuPage dashboard website and highlight topics showing need for improvement in a survey prior to the meeting. The results of this survey were reported to the Steering Committee along with the other assessment data during the meeting.

After each Core Team member provided an overview of an assessment, an independent contractor and neutral facilitator, Seema Wadia, led the Steering Committee in a discussion of the data and identification of themes. By the end of this meeting, the following nine themes were identified as potential strategic issues:

- Access to Health Services
- Obesity
- Cancer
- Transportation
- Affordable Housing
- Mental Illness
- Substance Abuse
- Quality of Life of Older Adults
- Social and Economic Disparities

## Prioritization Meeting #2

To finalize selection of strategic priorities for Impact DuPage, the Steering Committee held a second two hour meeting on January 30, 2015. The Committee split into two small groups to each discuss 4-5 of the nine themes identified from Prioritization Meeting #1. The small group discussions were each facilitated by a Core Team member. Each group reviewed data from the four assessments pertaining to each theme and used the “5 Whys” exercise to determine the root cause of each issue. Finally, the small groups used a checklist to differentiate critical issues from strategic issues. Seema Wadia then led a large group discussion of the nine themes, eventually resulting in the Steering Committee identifying five themes to serve as the strategic issues for Impact DuPage. The questions developed to address each issue are below.





Access to Health Services: How do we use changes in the healthcare landscape to reach diverse populations?

Affordable Housing: How can we inspire community action to develop housing that meets the current socioeconomic and demographic profile of DuPage County?

Healthy Lifestyle: How do we implement strategies using all available resources to positively influence the behaviors of residents and partners to make better choices regarding nutrition, physical activity, and the environment?

Mental Health: How do we strengthen the mental health treatment system to respond to the complexity of mental health issues?

Substance Abuse: How do we strengthen prevention and treatment of substance abuse issues for residents of DuPage County?

As a result of both the small and large group discussion, the Steering Committee determined that the themes of Quality of Life for Older Adults and Social and Economic Disparities described populations, rather than issues. Indeed, some of the challenges faced by these populations might be addressed by the strategies developed for the other strategic issues. For example, group discussion about Affordable Housing included comments about the type of housing available for seniors and individuals with disabilities. By addressing Affordable Housing comprehensively, the strategies could also improve quality of life of older adults. Similarly, Transportation and Cancer were identified as critical issues, but not strategic issues. Again, the recommendation was made that these issues be addressed as they relate to the five strategic priorities.

## **Community Feedback**

To ensure that the strategic priorities identified by the Steering Committee resonated with other partners and community members, the Core Team solicited feedback from the community. The five strategic priorities were highlighted in the February Impact DuPage Newsletter, which was sent via email to 162 recipients. Ongoing feedback about the assessments and priorities will be collected via an electronic survey included on the Impact DuPage website and community meetings.

February 24, 2015

