BACKGROUND

- Research suggests social capital and social cohesion impact health, but few studies have examined associations of health status with sense of community.
- The Minneapolis-based Backyard Initiative (BYI) is a partnership to improve community health. Members of the Partnership include:
  - The Backyard Community: a diverse area in Minneapolis, MN with 41,219 people, 35 spoken languages, and multiple cultural groups.
  - The Cultural Wellness Center: the first Minneapolis non-profit organization created for cultural communities to study and document their experiences and diseases in order to produce solutions that speak to their specific cultural practices and traditions.
- Allina Health: a not-for-profit organization including > 19 clinics and 13 hospitals providing care in Minnesota and western Wisconsin. Health equity is a top priority of Allina. Knowledge from the BYI helps to inform development of Allina’s population health strategy.

OBJECTIVE: Our purpose

- Describe associations of social cohesion (Sense of Community) with General Health Status among participants in the 2013 Backyard Initiative Community Health Survey

METHODS: Where, who, how

Setting

- The “Backyard” encompasses 7 urban neighborhoods in South Minneapolis, including: Ventura Village, Phillips West, Midtown Phillips, East Phillips, Central, Powderhorn Park, and Corcoran.
- Community participants who answered all of the SCI questions (n=87).

Measures

- The Assessment Team, a collaborative team of conventional researchers, community residents, and Cultural Wellness Center staff, selected survey measures called: the Sense of Community Index (SCI) for social cohesion, and General Health Status for overall self-reported health.

- Sense of Community Index (SCI-1 – 12-item) measures the extent to which each participant feels a sense of belonging, they matter to one another and the group, and their needs will be met through membership in the group. The four subscales are: Membership, Influence, Reinforcement of Needs, Shared Emotional Connection (McMillan & Chavis 1996).
- General Health Status is a commonly used measure of perceived overall health that asks “In general, would you say your health is…?” (excellent, very good, good, fair, poor)

Institutional and Community Review

- This study was reviewed and approved by the Allina IRB and the BYI Community Commission on Health.

Data Collection

- Seven survey sessions were held with 239 participants.
- Survey sessions were held in familiar community settings, led by community members (Hosts), with meals and cultural activities incorporated.
- Instrument: 65 – item Survey included items on: stress, social support, social cohesion, health literacy, patient activation and demographics.
- Tool: Turning Technologies TurningPoint Response System (“clickers”).

Data Analysis

- Survey responses were analyzed overall (n=198) and restricted to those who provided complete answers to all items on the SCI assessment (n=87). All variables are categorical and are presented as % (n).
- Multivariable logistic regression was used to examine associations between SCI and General Health Status adjusting for age, gender, and cultural group. Statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS.

RESULTS: What we found

TABLE 1: Characteristics of Backyard Initiative (BYI) Community Health Survey participants, 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Total (n=198)</th>
<th>Sense of Community Index (n=87)</th>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Total (n=198)</th>
<th>Sense of Community Index (n=87)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SCI 25% or lower</td>
<td>32% (62)</td>
<td>1.00 (1.00, 1.00)</td>
<td>37% (1.00)</td>
<td>1.00 (1.00, 1.00)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SCI 26-39%</td>
<td>37% (71)</td>
<td>0.80 (0.61, 1.06)</td>
<td>43% (1.00)</td>
<td>1.00 (1.00, 1.00)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SCI 40-59%</td>
<td>20% (39)</td>
<td>0.66 (0.48, 0.92)</td>
<td>27% (1.00)</td>
<td>1.00 (1.00, 1.00)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SCI 60-74%</td>
<td>8% (15)</td>
<td>0.55 (0.30, 1.00)</td>
<td>11% (1.00)</td>
<td>1.00 (1.00, 1.00)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SCI 75% or higher</td>
<td>2% (4)</td>
<td>0.46 (0.19, 1.12)</td>
<td>3% (1.00)</td>
<td>1.00 (1.00, 1.00)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

CONCLUSIONS

These preliminary analyses suggest a positive association between the SCI and General Health Status. If confirmed, these findings reinforce the Backyard Initiative’s strategy of strengthening social cohesion to improve health.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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REFERENCES