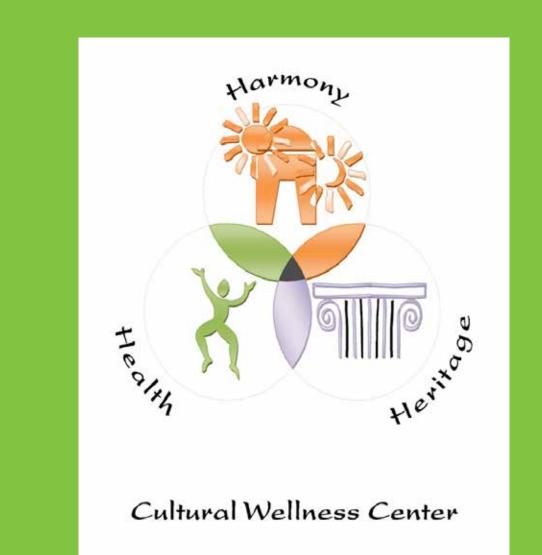
# The Backyard Initiative Community Health Survey: Assessing Social Cohesion and General Health Status

Authors: Atum Azzahir<sup>2</sup>, Mark Anderson<sup>1</sup>, MA, Janet Dahlem<sup>1</sup>, MA, Susan Gust<sup>1</sup>, Mau Jernigan<sup>1</sup>, Rose Lobley<sup>1, 2</sup>, Pamela J. Mink<sup>1, 3</sup>, PhD, MPH, Dimpho E. Orionzi<sup>1, 3</sup>, BA, Lovel Trahan<sup>3</sup>, MPH, MPP, Dee Henry Williams<sup>1</sup>, BA, and Amged Yusuf<sup>1</sup>, BA.

<sup>1</sup>Backyard Initiative Assessment Team, Minneapolis, MN <sup>2</sup>Cultural Wellness Center, Minneapolis, MN <sup>3</sup>Division of Applied Research, Minneapolis, MN



# AllinaHealth

### 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 Minnesota non-profit organization created for cultural communities to study and document their experiences around sickness and disease in order to produce solutions that speak to their specific cultural practices and traditions.

Allina Health: a not-for-profit organization including > 90 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 and Chavis 1986).
- **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).
- General Health Status was categorized into 2 groups: excellent/very good versus good/fair/poor. SCI was categorized into 3 groups (tertiles), and the 4 sub-measures recoded into 3 categories.
- 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.

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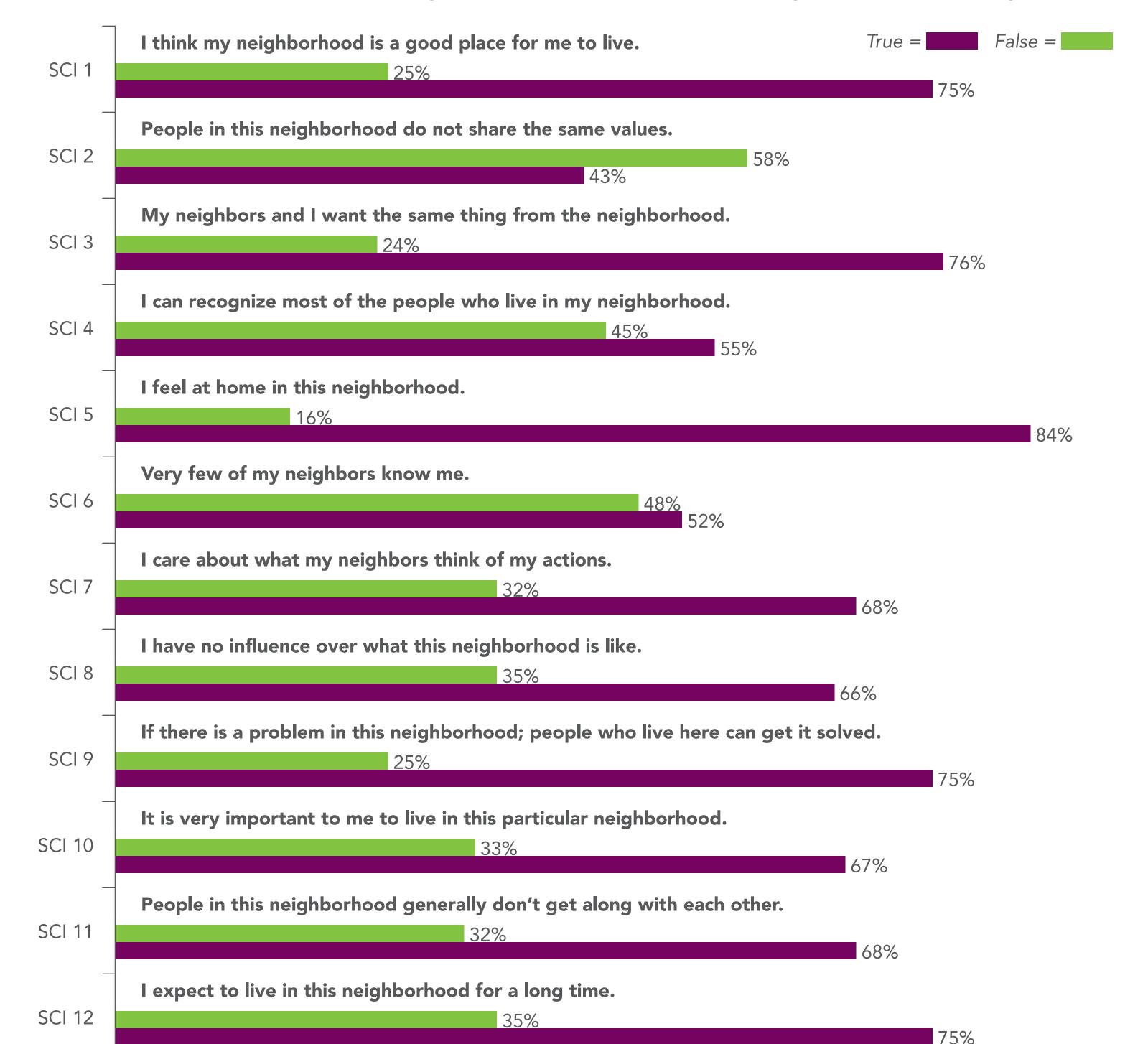
# RESULTS: What we found

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

Characteristic	Total (n=198)	Sense of Community Index (n=87)	Characteristic	Total (n=198)	Sense of Community Index (n=87)	
Age Group	% (n)	% (n)	Language(s) Spoken in Household <sup>2</sup>			
18-29 years	24% (45)	25% (22)	English	72% (126)	78% (61)	
30-39 years	22% (42)	22% (19)	Somali	14% (25)	8% (6)	
40-59 years	27% (52)	18% (16)	Spanish	7% (13)	8% (6)	
60+ years	27% (52)	22% (19)	Other	7% (12)	6% (5)	
Choose not to answer/missing	7	0	Choose not to answer/missing 22		9	
Gender			Household Income			
Man	29% (57)	31% (27)	< \$15,000	47% (77)	49% (38)	
Woman	65% (128)	63% (54)	\$15,001 to \$25,000	20% (33)	12% (9)	
Transgender	7% (13)	6% (5)	\$25,001 to \$45,000	20% (33)	17% (13)	
Choose not to answer/missing	0	1	>\$45,000	13% (22)	23% (18)	
Marital Status			Choose not to answer/missing	33	9	
Married	27% (46)	28%( 23)	Educational Attainment			
Living together in a marriage-like relationship	16% (27)	19% (16)	Less than high school	17% (31)	16% (13)	
Separated or divorced or widowed	27% (47)	19% (16)	High school graduate or GED	28% (53)	23% (19)	
Never been married	30% (52)	34% (28)	Some college, associate degree, or tech/vocational/business school	35% (66)	38% (31)	
Choose not to answer/missing	26	4	Bachelor degree or higher	20% (37)	22% (18)	
Cultural Group(s) <sup>1</sup>			Choose not to answer/missing	11	6	
African/African-American	37% (64)	28% (20)	General Health Status			
Asian/Asian-American	1% (2)	1% (1)	Excellent	13% (24)	8% (6)	
European/European-American	11% (19)	18% (13)	Very Good	26% (49)	30% (24)	
Latino/Latina	15% (26)	15% (11)	Good	31% (57)	27% (22)	
Native American/American Indian	34% (59)	36% (26)	Fair	25% (47)	27% (22)	
Other	2% (4)	1% (1)	Poor	5% (10)	8% (6)	
Choose not to answer/missing	24	16	Choose not to answer/missing	11	7	

\*Percents do not include choose not to answer and missing responses.

FIGURE 1: Sense of Community Index (SCI) Response Distribution for 87 Participants in the Backyard Initiative Community Health Survey, 2013



- Largest cultural groups:
   Amer. Indian & African/
   African-American (Table 1).
- SCI: Items with the highest proportion of participants responding "true" are:
- "I think my neighborhood is a good place for me to live."
- "I feel at home in this neighborhood."
- "If there is a problem in this neighborhood; people who live here can get it solved."
- Increasing categories of scores on the sense of community index or subscale were associated positively with better self-reported health status. However, few multivariate adjusted OR were statistically significant.
- The strongest association (OR = 7.00) was observed for the reinforcement of needs subscale which remained statistically significant after adjustment.

TABLE 2: Association between General Health Status and Sense of Community Index (SCI) for 87 participants in the Backyard Initiative Community Health Survey, 2013

N	Adjusted OR* (95% CI)	P-value	Adjusted OR** (95% CI)	P-value
26	(1,0) ref		(1,0) ref	
34	0.93 (0.25, 3.50)	0.914	1.06 (0.26, 4.36)	0.931
27	5.55 (1.39, 22.1)	0.015	3.25 (0.75, 14.1)	0.116
35	(1,0) ref		(1,0) ref	
20	0.32 (0.07, 1.59)	0.165	0.29 (0.05, 1.71)	0.452
32	2.14 (0.70, 6.5)	0.181	1.64 (0.45, 6.00)	0.170
23	(1,0) ref		(1,0) ref	
26	1.21 (0.33, 4.5)	0.772	0.98 (0.23, 4.27)	0.982
38	2.38 (0.71, 8.02)	0.161	2.08 (0.54, 8.06)	0.290
31	(1,0) ref		(1,0) ref	
26	1.12 (0.30, 4.21)	0.862	1.01 (0.22, 4.72)	0.988
31	6.01 (1.62, 223.0)	0.008	7.00 (1.43, 34.18)	0.016
26	(1,0) ref		(1,0) ref	
26	0.95 (0.24, 3.70)	0.935	0.80 (0.18, 3.57)	0.772
35	2.64 (0.80, 8.740	0.112	1.88 (0.53, 6.67)	0.331
	26 34 27 35 20 32 23 26 38 31 26 31 26 31	OR* (95% CI)  26	A OR* (95% CI)  26	OR* (95% CI)

\*age and gender \*\*age, gender, cultural group

#### Strengths

- We reached our goal of surveying 200 participants (n=239).
- We reached people who are sometimes underrepresented in research.

#### Limitations

- Small sample size for those who competed the SCI.
- Sample is not representative of the geographic Backyard.

# CONCLUSIONS

These preliminary analyses suggest a positive association between the SCI and General Health Status.

If confirmed, these findings reinforce the Backvard Initiative's strategy of

the Backyard Initiative's strategy of strengthening social cohesion to improve health.

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#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The process included people and organizations who participate in planning, development, training, implementation, analysis and interpretation, writing, and learning together.

Profound appreciation for and thanks to:

- The community residents who participated in the Community Health Survey for sharing your knowledge and experiences.
- The BYI Commission for providing leadership to all BYI activities
  The BYI Assessment Team for guiding the BYI Research Plan process
- The BYI Research Team for supporting the work of the BYI Research Plan
   The Community Health Survey Hosts
- The staff of Allina Health and the Cultural Wellness Center who facilitated discussions, brought in resources, documented the process, and captured the learning, knowledge and feedback of community residents.

#### REFERENCES

1. McMillan DW, Chavis, DM. (1986). Sense of Community: A Definition and Theory. J Community Psychol, 14, 6-23.