

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Community Hub Engagement

What We Heard Report

October • 2019



STRATHCONA
COUNTY

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1.0 Acknowledgments

Strathcona County Family and Community Services (FCS) wishes to thank all citizens, community groups and stakeholders who participated in the 2019 Community Hub public engagement through the completion of surveys and attendance of small group workshops.

2.0 Introduction

Why Community Hubs?

Community hubs are spaces where citizens can access multiple and diverse supports that enhance their social wellbeing.¹ Community hubs have evolved differently across communities, given community-specific priorities, partnership networks and strategic opportunities. However, they consistently strive to create gathering places that are welcoming and inclusive, where citizens can build friendships or connections based on shared interests or goals, and where available supports assist them in reaching their personal change goals.² With such supports, citizens build on their protective factors and increase their ability to bounce back from adversity.³

Strathcona County commissioned a Community Hub Study in 2018 to examine the potential for the creation of a community hub for Strathcona County.⁴ This exploration was aligned with the outcomes and shifts outlined in the Strathcona County Social Framework. The project researched community hubs across Canada to gain insights as to how Strathcona County could approach the design and implementation of a community hub, and then engaged stakeholders and citizens on their perspectives. The report identified broader public engagement, partner exploration, business planning and possible site exploration as potential next steps for the project.

2019 Engagement

In the spring and summer of 2019, Family and Community Services (FCS) planned and implemented further public engagement on the community hub. The 2019 engagement was refined to focus on wellness as it is a universal concept reflecting the diverse priorities and interests of Strathcona County citizens at every age and stage of life. Individuals living and working in Strathcona County were invited to share their thoughts and ideas on wellness. The engagement intended to understand how citizens defined wellness, which aspects of wellness should be supported in a community wellness hub and how service providers and other community organizations in Strathcona County could work together in one location to better support wellness.

¹ Strathcona County Community Hub Study, Strathcona County, pg. 11

² Community Hubs by Design: How to Build Supportive Spaces for Fighting Poverty, Vibrant Calgary, pg. 6

³ Protective Factors as a Pathway to Better Youth Mental Health, New Brunswick Health Council, January 2016, pg. 3-4

⁴ Strathcona County Community Hub Study, Strathcona County, 2018

3.0 Methodology: Engagement Activities

Where and How we Listened

To bring representation and diversity to the conversation, FCS engaged citizens in all eight county wards. Throughout July and August, FCS staff visited a broad range of locations and events across Strathcona County, including, but not limited to: community block parties, recreation centres, transit centres, senior centres, community leagues, farmers markets, public parks and Bookmobile sites.

Engagement Tools

The 2019 community hub public engagement reached individuals who live and work in Strathcona County through three primary methods: a community hub survey, community conversations and community hub prototype interviews (wherein a prototype refers to emerging example of a community hub).

Further details of each engagement method can be found below:

Community hub survey (Intercept & SCOOP)

The community hub survey was distributed through two different methodologies using an eight-question survey (see Appendix I).

(1) Intercept Survey:

The community hub survey was administered with citizens at various locations throughout Strathcona County. The survey was also shared on the Strathcona County website and was made available to citizens from June 12 - July 26, 2019. In total, 1261 individuals completed the intercept survey

(2) SCOOP (Strathcona County Online Opinion Panel) Survey:

The community hub survey was also made available to Strathcona County citizens SCOOP panelists from June 12 - July 3. In total, 177 individuals completed the SCOOP survey.

Community conversations

In-person community conversations took place at community gathering sites across Strathcona County (i.e., community leagues, senior centres, parent groups, etc.). During these facilitated conversations, participants were invited to complete the community hub survey (Appendix I) and were engaged in further discussion around several of the survey questions. Four groups accepted the invitation from FCS to host a community conversation including, Strathcona County's Community Living Advisory Council, Good Hope Community League, South Cooking Lake Senior's Club and Antler Lake's Parent Link drop in group. Approximately 25 participants participated in community conversations.

Hub prototype conversations

Colocation refers to the practice of multiple agencies sharing a space and delivering services under one roof. The 2019 engagement focused on harvesting learning from community partners around their experiences in colocation. FCS had learned from other Canadian community hubs that it was important not to wait for partners to become integrated in a physical hub-like space, but rather integration of services and programs should begin with the development of relationships and networks prior to physical colocation.

In a community hub setting, synergies are created when community partners come together with citizens to purposely offer complementary, collaborative and even integrated services. Partners choose to work together through shared processes to foster relevant and more impactful community change; Shared processes can include governance, communication and marketing, as well as commitment to shared outcomes, decision-making and accountability.⁵ This is the intentional process of “hubbing.”

Colocating services can be a first step in community partners learning how “to hub.” As relationships are built, partners may choose to move along a continuum, from independent parallel operations to multi-disciplinary or interdisciplinary service delivery and possibly service integration.⁶

FCS observed that many Strathcona County community partners had experienced colocation within FCS at three different sites. These examples were identified as prototypes - a first step to implementing an idea to understand if it has promise. Partners working together were gaining insights that could be foundational for understanding what it meant “to hub”. These three sites included

- FCS staff and Millennium Place Recreation, Parks and Culture staff on their colocation at Millennium Place in late 2018;
- seven colocated community partners and FCS staff co-located at the Community Centre FCS Navigation staff
- Strathcona County Library staff colocated at the Strathcona County Library.

FCS undertook and summarized conversations with participating staff groups at each of these three hub prototypes. Conversations addressed

- the experience of colocation (the benefits, what worked, and what was surprising);
- responses to colocation;
- impacts for citizens, staff, and programs; and
- key learning and advice.

⁵ Strathcona County Community Hub Study, Strathcona County, 2018, pg. 18-19

⁶ Community-based Integrated Mental Health Service Hubs for Youth: Second Call (Information session), Policy Wise for Children and Families, Dec. 5, 2018, Slide 10

4.0 Community Hub Survey Performance

Survey objective

The community hub survey was designed to gain insight regarding how citizens define wellness, which aspects of wellness should be present in a community wellness hub as well as how service providers and other community organizations in Strathcona County could work together in one location to better support wellness.

Sample size

One thousand four hundred thirty-eight (1438) individuals who live and/or work in Strathcona County completed the eight-question community hub survey, either through the intercept survey or online through SCOOP.

Representative sample

The sample closely mirrored the demographic profile of Strathcona County citizens. Therefore, the scaling of survey results was not necessary.

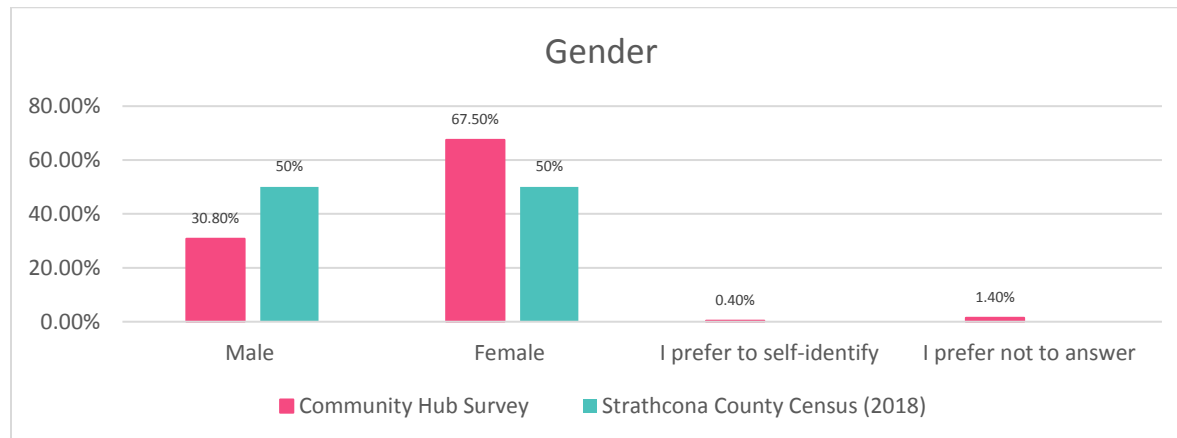
Margin of error

At a confidence level of 95%, the estimated margin of error is 3%.

Demographic overview

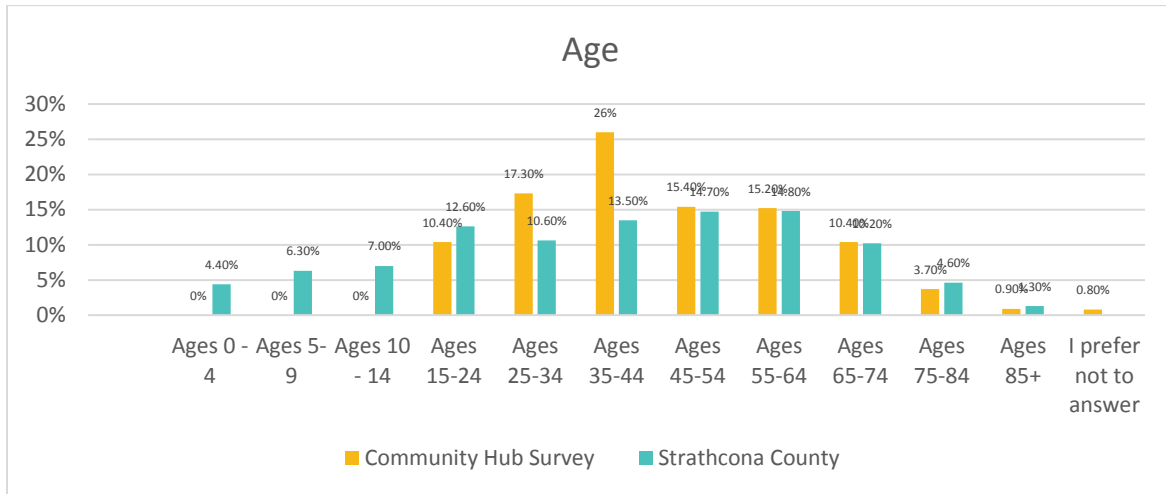
The following charts provide an overview of the demographic characteristics of survey participants. The demographic characteristics closely reflect the overall demographic makeup of Strathcona County citizens with regards to age, and rural/urban divide. Results from the Strathcona County 2018 Census were used to compare similarities between the Strathcona County population and the community hub sample.⁷ While the community hub survey did not survey citizens under the age of 15, the hub study had many participants between the ages of 25-34 and 35-44, two age cohorts that are often associated with parenthood. Because the hub survey focused on overall familial experiences, the hub survey inadvertently captured the perspective of the under 15 age cohort.

Gender

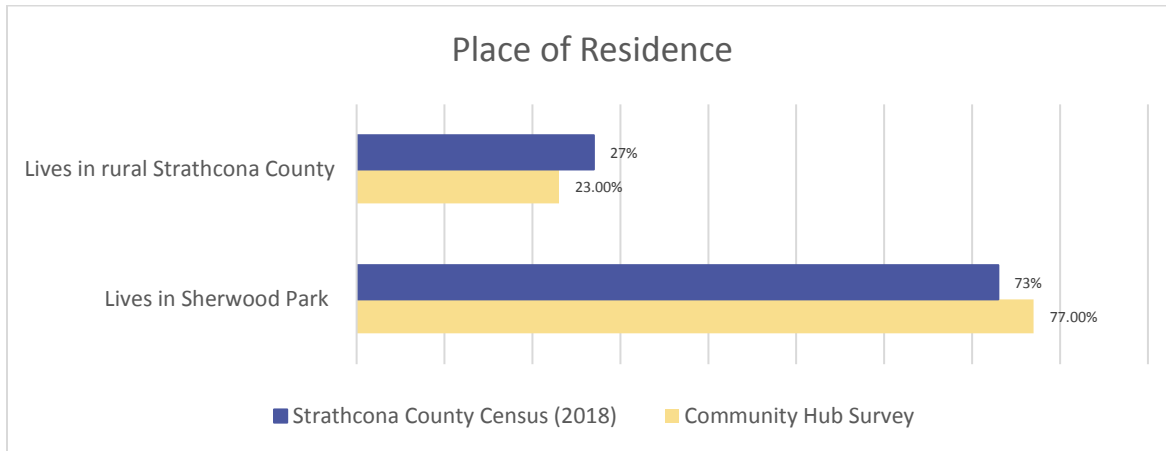


⁷ Strathcona County Census 2018: Results Report

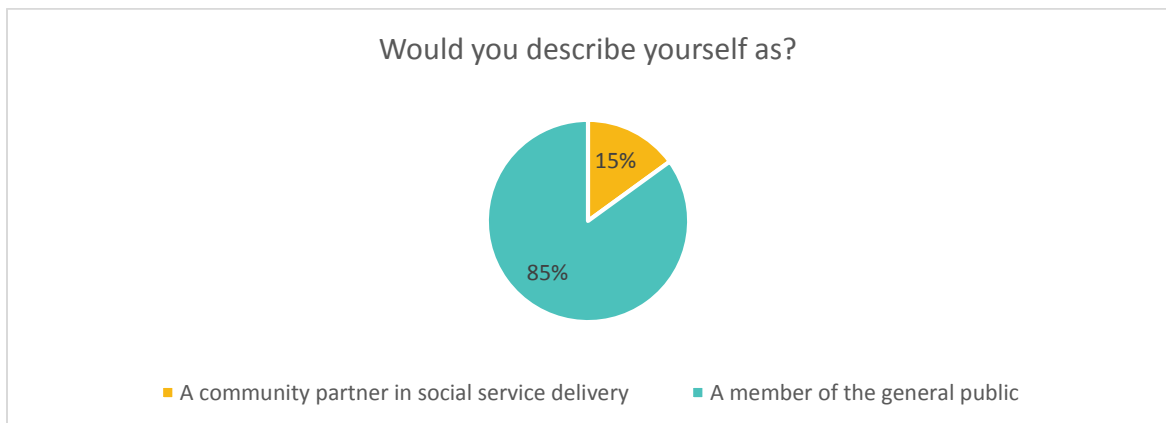
Age



Place of residence



Miscellaneous

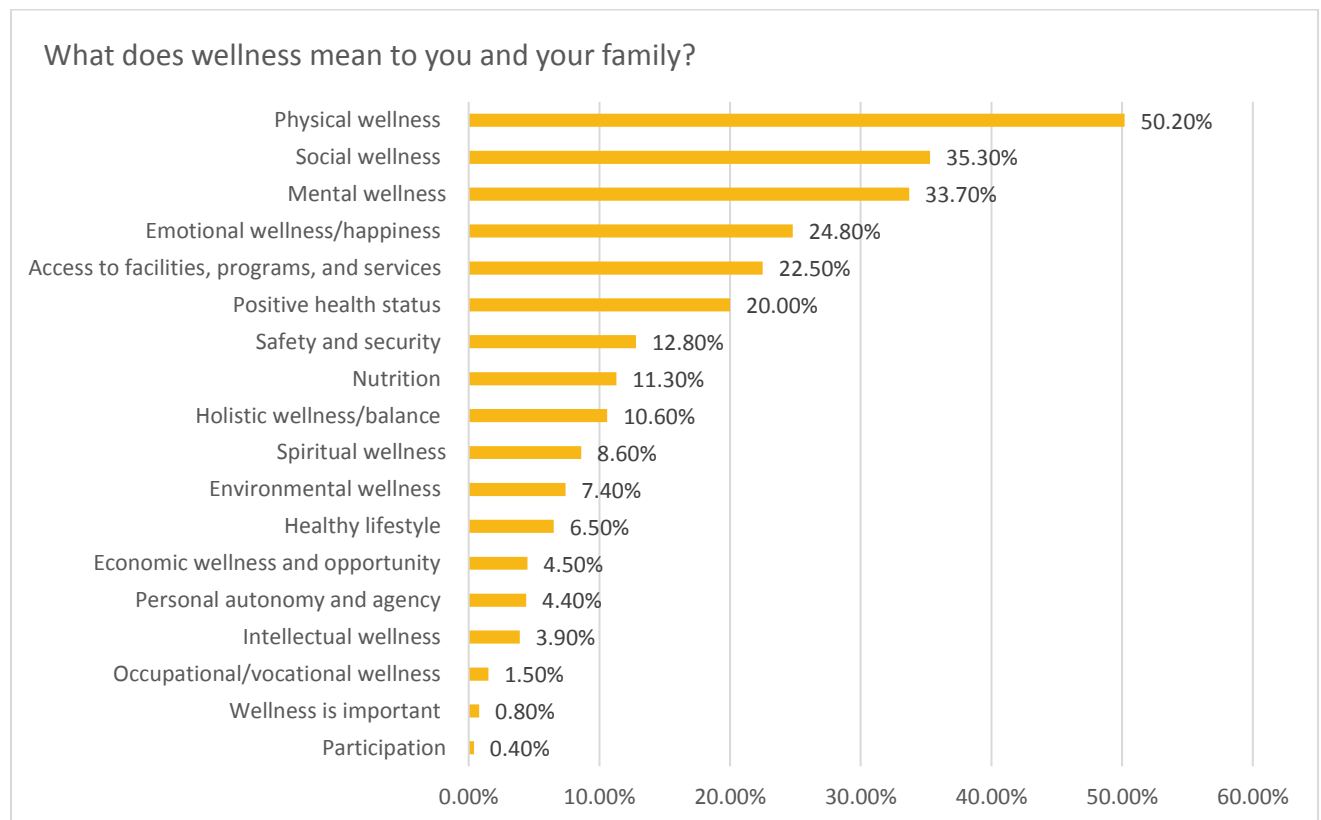


5.0 Findings & Analysis

Survey participants were given the opportunity to provide a written response to the questions: “what does wellness mean to you and your family” and “how could social service providers and other community organizations in Strathcona County work together in one location to better support the wellness of citizens”. Open-ended survey questions were themed and analyzed. The following section provides a detailed overview of the results from each of the survey questions.

Key findings – What does wellness mean to you and your family (Q5)?

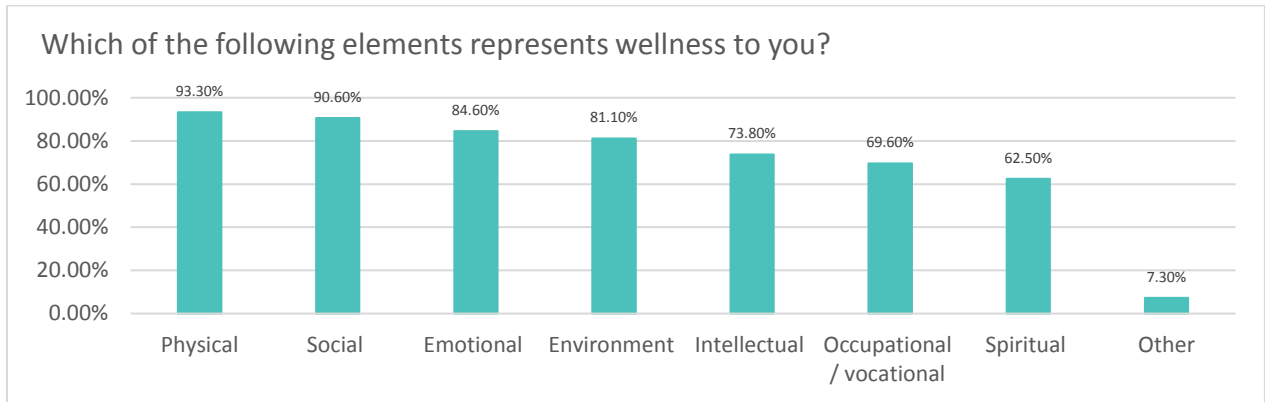
Survey respondents were given the opportunity to respond to the open-ended question, "what does wellness mean to you?". For further subsegment analysis on this question, see Appendix III.



Key findings – which of the following elements represents wellness to you (Q6)?

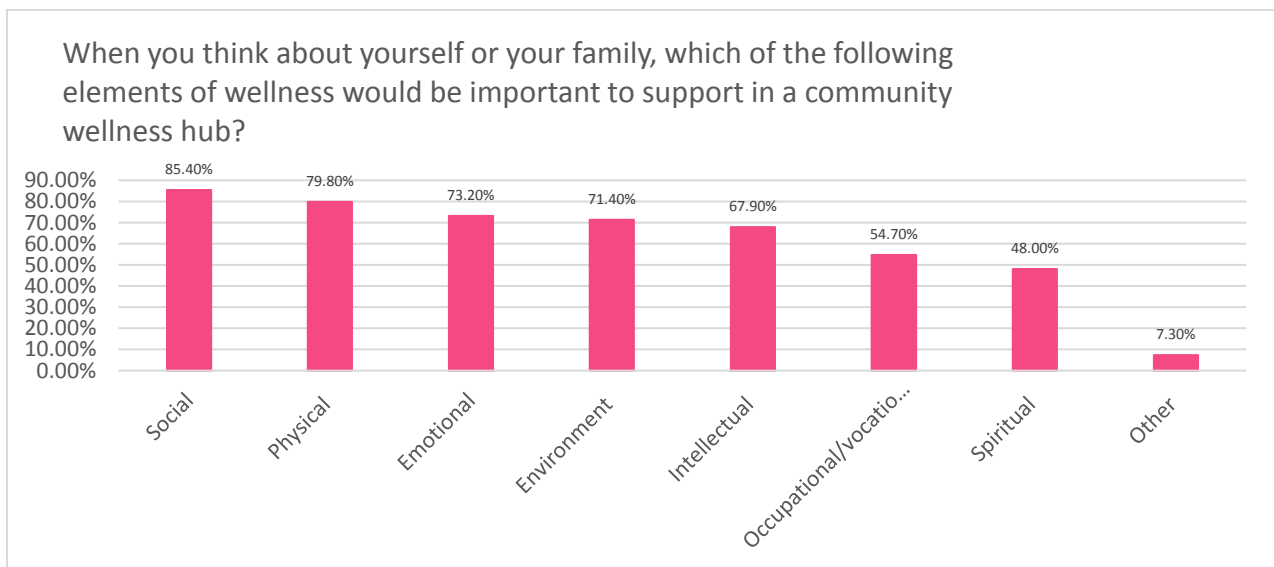
Survey respondents were provided with definitions for seven different elements of holistic wellness (physical, social, emotional, environmental, intellectual, occupational and spiritual) and were asked to select the elements that they identified as representing wellness.

For further subsegment analysis on this question, see Appendix III.



Key findings – when you think about yourself or your family, which of the following elements of wellness would be important to support in a community wellness hub (Q7)?

Survey respondents were provided with the seven elements of holistic wellness that appeared in question six and were asked to select the elements of wellness that they believed would be important to support in a community wellness hub. For further subsegment analysis on this question, see Appendix III.



How could social service and other community organizations in Strathcona County work together in one location to better support the wellness of citizens (Q8)?

Survey respondents were given the opportunity to respond to the open-ended question. Results are summarized in the chart below.



Facilitated Conversations

An open invitation was sent to a list of FCS stakeholders requesting to meet with their memberships and hold facilitated conversations on the concept of a community wellness hub. These engagements yielded some common themes:

Wellness is a holistic concept

- All seven elements of wellness presented in the community hub survey were important and holistic wellness involves a balance of all seven elements.
- Questions were raised regarding the elements of wellness for which the County is responsible (i.e. spiritual wellness).

Potential of community hubs

- Discussions highlighted that community hubs have the potential to be spaces that foster intersections among the different facets of wellness. This increased interaction could serve to reduce the stigma associated with accessing non-traditional wellness supports and increase the possibility for individuals to learn about new programs and services.
- Many conversations highlighted the potential for community hubs to increase collaboration between service providers, which could enhance the service experience of clients.

Decrease barriers and increase accessibility

- Many thoughts were shared regarding the importance of a community wellness hub being accessible to different demographics (i.e. geographically central to rural and urban populations,

implementing principles of universal design, having extended hours of operation, being accessible by public transportation, etc.).

Information sharing

- Community conversations highlighted that Strathcona County has many valuable programs and services, however citizens are not aware that these programs and services exist. Many recommendations identified enhancing efforts to promote programs and services across the county.

Understand and address community needs

- Community conversations held with diverse groups emphasized the notion that different communities and sub-communities have unique and disparate needs. Community hubs should not adhere to a “one size fits all” model, but rather should be uniquely tailored to the needs of different communities and should strive to fill the gaps that exist in different communities.
- Conversations highlighted the notion that facilities already exist in different communities across the county, and that existing facilities can be better utilized to address community needs.

Hub Prototype Conversations

Conversations were held with Strathcona County FCS staff and community partners staff that have trialed colocation of services at three sites:

- FCS staff co-located with Strathcona County Recreation, Parks and Culture at Millennium Place November and December 2018 (i.e., specifically walk-in counsellors, counselling groups and navigators).
- Community Centre colocation at FCS of staff with seven community partners in 2019 (i.e., Youth Justice, Strathcona County Mediation, Family Court Navigation (Alberta Justice), Parents Empowering Parents, AltView, Community Adult Learning and Literacy and Big Brothers Big Sisters).
- Strathcona County Library staff worked with FCS Navigators collocated in the Library at the Community Centre.

These conversations yielded some common themes which are summarized below; their views confirmed that their colocations have begun to lay some essential foundations for deepened collaborations.

Colocation benefits to citizens

The three collocated prototypes identified specific benefits for citizens when services were collocated in centralized and/or multi-purpose sites:

- Colocation simplifies organization/time management for citizens (e.g. only one stop for time-challenged families; simplified access for people already feeling stressed or vulnerable).
- People learn about and are directly linked to additional complimentary services offered by collocated partners. Navigation services also help citizens link to a broader range of community services that support their personal or family goals.
- People feel can feel safe as everyone belongs; there are many reasons to visit the site. There can be a perceived absence of stigma or personal risk – “a no judgment zone.”

Colocation service sites can become a place where citizens gather and where they can feel part of the community. Not all who show up need to be users of a service (e.g. meeting friends for coffee; 1/1 business meetings; reading or knitting; resting / relaxing; seeking information pamphlets; event spectators, etc.).

- Citizens have an opportunity to make connections and broaden their networks in the community.

Deeper collaborations increase organization effectiveness.

All three conversations identified gains in service effectiveness resulting from colocated partners learning to work together in new ways:

- Partner relationships were built as colocated staff gained a more in-depth appreciation of different staff roles and capacities. Trusting relationships grew as partners planned and worked together in support of specific citizen needs or opportunities.
- Referrals became more effective. The practice of "warm handoffs" brokered trust relationships and citizens felt more comfortable with the referred service partner. Citizens also experienced timely links to services, connecting them in the moment of action when they were ready to make a change in their life.
- Supports were more proactive. When colocated partners noted changes in citizens or identified pressing needs or erratic/concerning behaviors, they felt more comfortable initiating contact with colocated partners for additional support. They felt their partners were there to help them through uncertainties and were more confident checking in with partners in areas they were less knowledgeable. This enabled colocated organizations to facilitate immediate connections to partner supports.
- Partner collaborations created opportunities to more readily surface root causes for individuals in complex circumstances. When additional partners were invited into conversations, the different viewpoints helped to surface the complexity of the situation, while still enabling that individual participant opportunity to problem-solve and meet their personal and family goals. Through such collaborations, partners identified systemic issues (e.g., barriers to service of which they were not aware) or unmet resident needs, which enabled them to identify additional opportunities for service innovations.

Other observations on "how-to hub"

The three prototypes shared some additional observations regarding "hubbing."

Citizens Service Preferences

- Citizen priorities: Citizens have different priorities when choosing where and how to access community services or facilities. Citizens gravitate to spaces based on their needs and ability (e.g., affordability, childcare, etc.), their range of interests or preferences and goals (e.g., self-directed or pre-defined experiences).
- Citizen perceptions: When accessing services and supports, many citizens also value privacy, safety and anonymity. However, how they interpret or experience these values can vary greatly. Some people find privacy, safety, and anonymity at specialized service centres; others find greater privacy, safety and anonymity in multi-purpose spaces.
- One size does not fit all: The choice of a community hub setting would likely increase service access, effectiveness and reach for a greater number of Strathcona County citizens.

Observations on Factors that Supported "hub-like" Behavior

- Partner relationships and trust were readily built when there was a shared philosophy of service excellence, including:
 - responsive customer service;
 - person-centered approaches;
 - agile and flexible plans; and
 - strength-based exploration of issues and action-oriented approaches.
- Partner relationships were strengthened by a collaborative culture that valued:
 - empowerment and agency of citizens to achieve their goals;
 - a shared purpose for hub partners;
 - genuine care and concern for citizens, co-located partners, and other community partners;
 - structures and processes for clear, regular communication; and
 - attention to building and maintaining relationships.
- Strong relationships fostered program innovation ideas and action. As people developed a more holistic understanding of citizen needs, as well as a clearer picture of partner capacity, partners were more comfortable collaborating on and trialing new ideas for improved services.

Community Hub Engagement – Future Direction

Learnings from all three engagement activities will be used to help inform proposed future direction, which will be presented to Strathcona County Council's Priorities Committee on October 22, 2019.

6.0 Appendix I: Community Hub Survey



Community Wellness Hub Survey

In 2018, Strathcona County began exploring the idea of a community hub. A community wellness hub could be a place where residents can go for easy access to social services and programs. A community wellness hub is also a place where service providers could work together in new ways to meet community needs.

Through a previous community engagement, we learned people in Strathcona County are interested in:

- Spaces that support people across all ages and stages of life.
- A range of wellness supports that could be offered in a community hub.

In 2019, Strathcona County is focusing on the idea of a community hub that supports individual, family, and community wellness.

We want to learn from you and hear your thoughts on this idea.

Please limit your response to comments related to the Community Wellness Hub generally. Please do not include any personally identifying information in your responses.

If you have any questions, please contact the Survey Central Admin group via the following email: SurveyCentral@strathcona.ca

For staff use only; check box when survey is complete:

1

- 1) Would you describe yourself as someone who:
- a. Lives in Sherwood Park
 - b. Lives in rural Strathcona County
 - c. Works in Strathcona County but does not live in Strathcona County
 - d. Does not work or live in Strathcona County

- 2) Would you describe yourself as: (check one)
- a. A community partner in social service delivery
 - b. A member of the general public

- 3) Please select an age category that includes your current age:
- a. 15-24
 - b. 25-34
 - c. 35-44
 - d. 45-54
 - e. 55-64
 - f. 65-74
 - g. 75-84
 - h. 85 years or older
 - i. Prefer not to answer

- 4) I identify my gender as:
- a. Male
 - b. Female
 - c. I prefer to self-identify – _____
 - d. I prefer not to answer

- 5) What does wellness mean for you and your family?

- 6) When you think about wellness for you or your family, which of the following elements represent wellness to you?

(Check all that apply)

- a. Social: relationships with family, friends, other community members
- b. Physical: taking care of your body
- c. Emotional: positive feelings about self; sharing feelings
- d. Occupational / vocational: satisfaction with work and volunteer activities; work / life balance
- e. Intellectual: learning new skills; participating in creative activities
- f. Environment: experiencing a clean, safe and healthy environment
- g. Spiritual: living a meaningful and purposeful life
- h. Other elements:

- 7) When you think about yourself or your family, which of the following elements of wellness would be important to support in a community wellness hub?

Check all that apply:

- a. Social: relationships with family, friends, other community members
- b. Physical: taking care of your body
- c. Emotional: positive feelings about self; sharing feelings
- d. Occupational / vocational: satisfaction with work and volunteer activities; work / life balance
- e. Intellectual: learning new skills; participating in creative activities
- f. Environment: experiencing a clean, safe and healthy environment
- g. Spiritual: living a meaningful and purposeful life
- h. Other elements:

- 8) Many services and organizations exist to support wellness in Strathcona County. How could social service and other community organizations in Strathcona County work together in one location to better support the wellness of residents?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

The information you've provided will be used to prepare a report which will be presented at Strathcona County Council's Priorities' Committee Meeting on October 22.

7.0 Appendix II: Subsegment Analysis

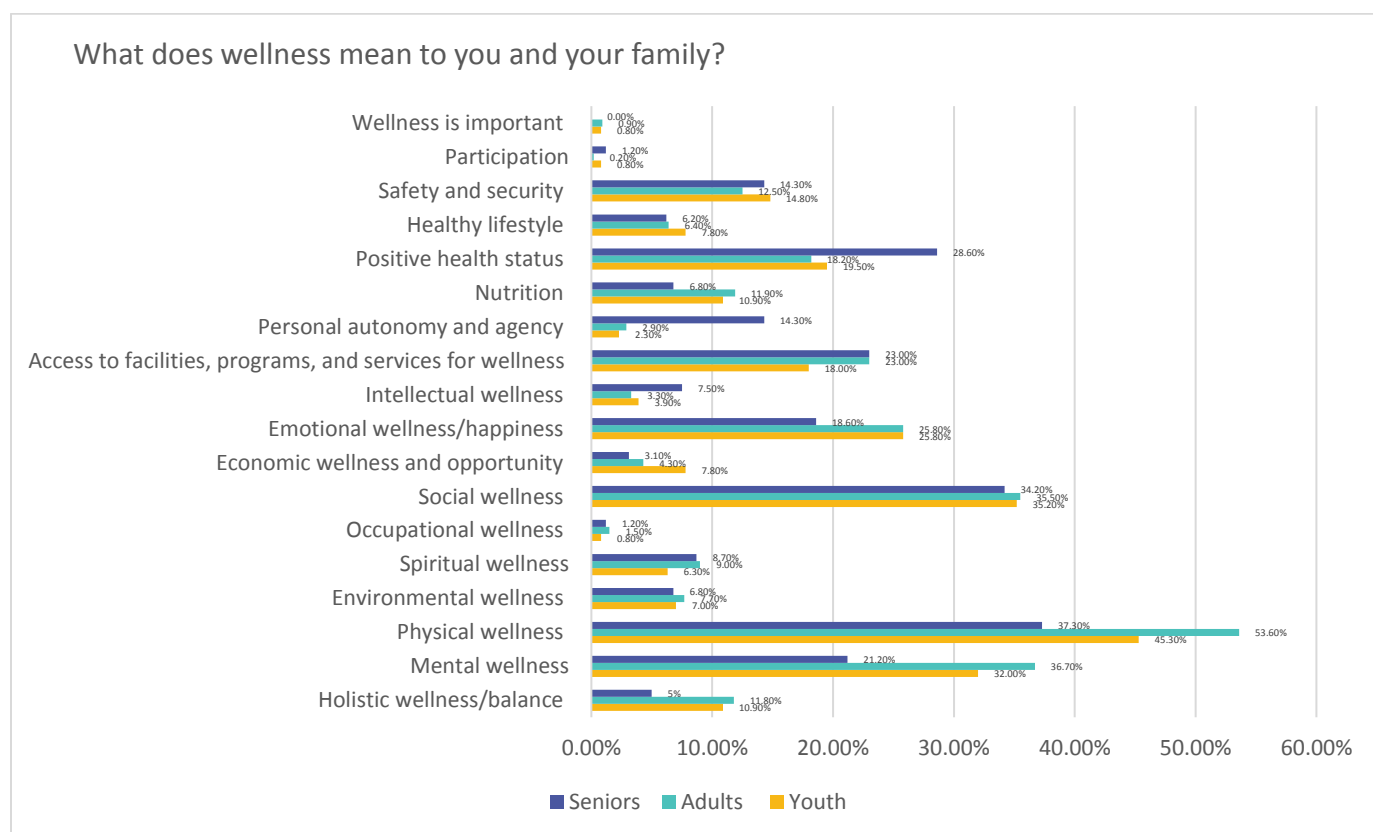
Age: Differences Between Youth, Adult and Senior Responses

The following section provides a detailed overview of survey responses, according to the survey respondent's identified age category. For purposes of this analysis, youth are classified as respondents between the ages of 15 – 24, adults as those between 25 – 64 and seniors are those aged 65+. This section will provide key highlights as to where different age cohorts differed in their survey responses.

What does wellness mean to you and your family?

From the contingency chart below, which highlights respondents' answers as a function age, several notable findings emerge, including:

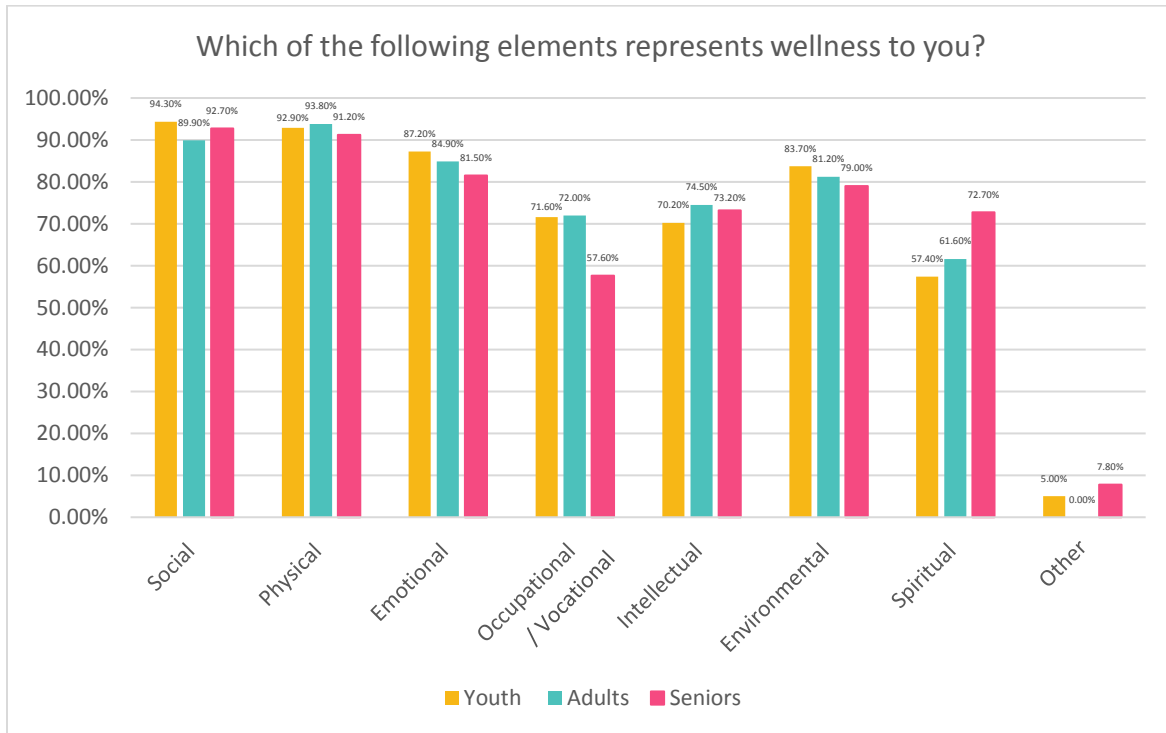
- When compared to youth (32.0%) and adult cohorts (36.7%), seniors (21.1%) were less likely to name "mental wellness" in their definition of wellness.
- Youth (10.9%) and adults (11.9%) were more likely than seniors (6.8%) to identify "nutrition" as part of their definition of wellness.
- When compared to youth (19.5%) and adults (18.2%), seniors (28.6%) were more likely to identify "positive health status" as part of their definition of wellness.



Which of the following elements represents wellness to you?

From the contingency chart below, which highlights respondents' answers as a function age, several notable findings emerge, including:

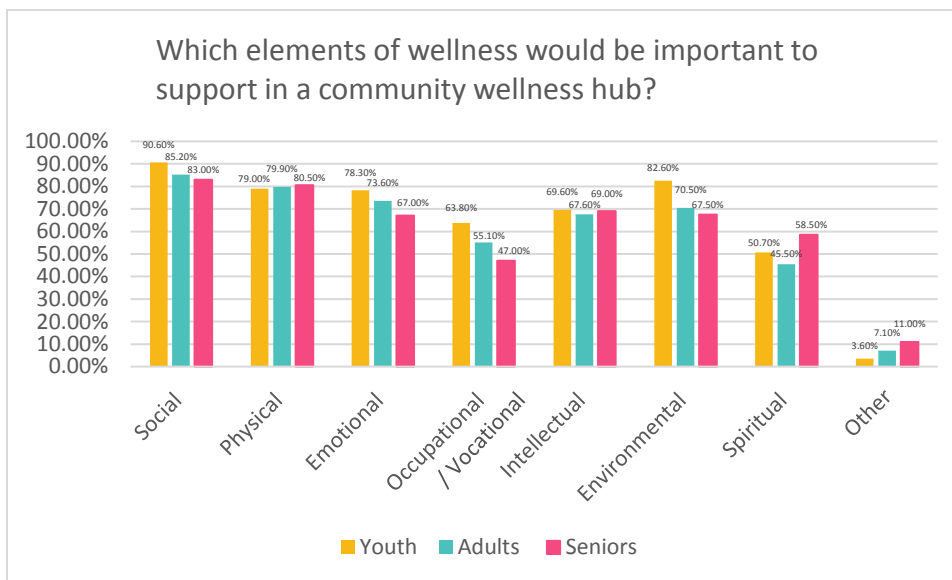
- When compared to youth (71.6%) and adults (72.0%), seniors (57.6%) were less likely to identify “occupational wellness” as a defining component of wellness.
- When compared to youth (57.4%) and adults (61.6%), seniors were more likely to identify “spiritual wellness” as a defining component of wellness.



Which elements of wellness would be important to support in a community wellness hub?

From the contingency chart below, which highlights respondents' answers as a function age, several notable findings emerge, including:

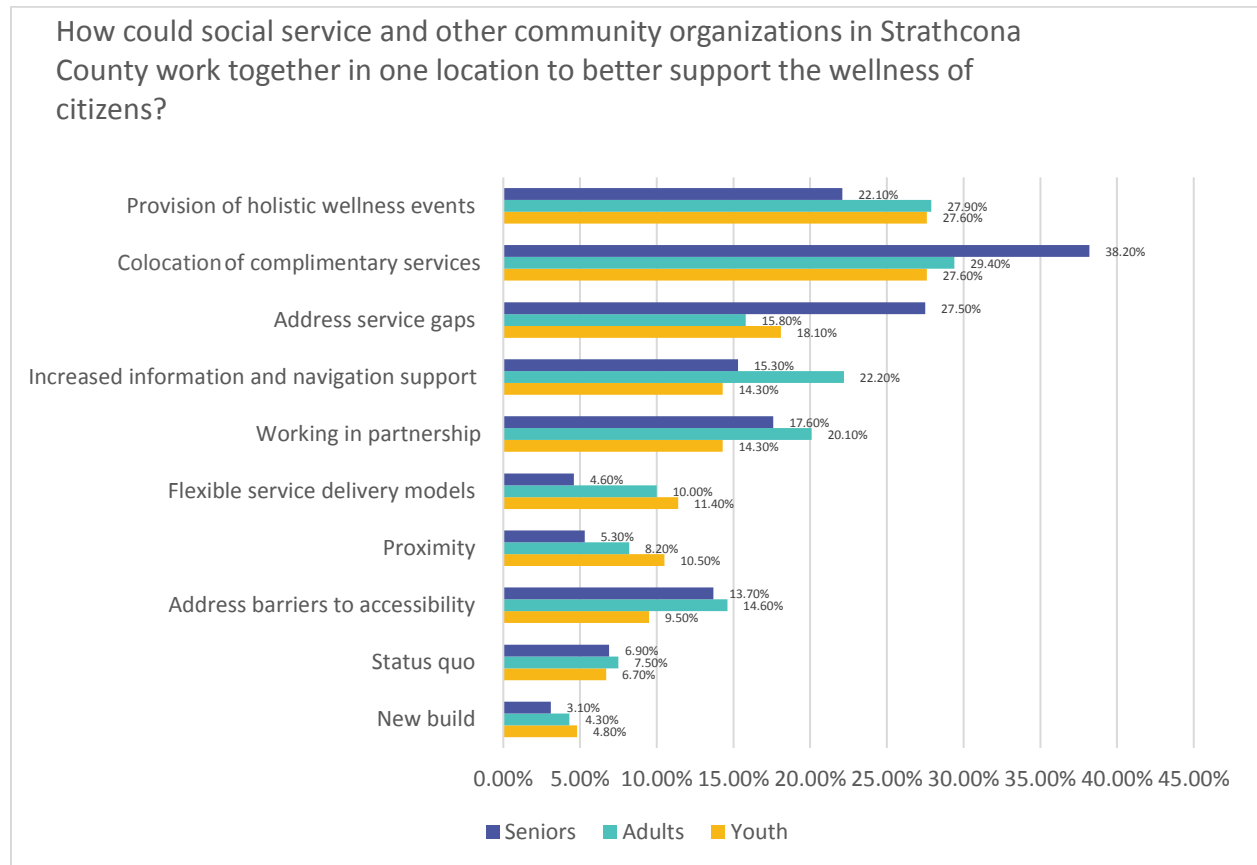
- Among the three age cohorts, youth were most likely to identify “social wellness” (90.6%), “occupational wellness” (63.8%), “emotional wellness” (78.3%), “intellectual wellness” (69.6%) and “environmental wellness” (82.6%) as being important to support in a community wellness hub.
- Seniors (67.0%) were less likely to identify “emotional wellness” as being important to support in a community wellness hub when compared to youth (78.3%) and adults (73.3%).
- Seniors (58.5%) were most likely to identify “spiritual wellness” as being important to support in a community wellness hub when compared to youth (50.7%) and adults (45.5%).



How could social service and other community organizations in Strathcona County work together in one location to better support the wellness of citizens?

From the contingency chart below, which highlights respondents' answers as a function age, several notable findings emerge, including:

- Senior respondents were most likely to identify “colocation of complimentary services” (38.2%) and to “address service gaps” (27.5%).
- Youth respondents were least likely to identify “working in partnership” (14.3%) and were most likely to identify “proximity” (10.5%).
- Adults were most likely to identify “increased information and navigation support (22%), when compared to youth (14.3%) and seniors (15.3%).



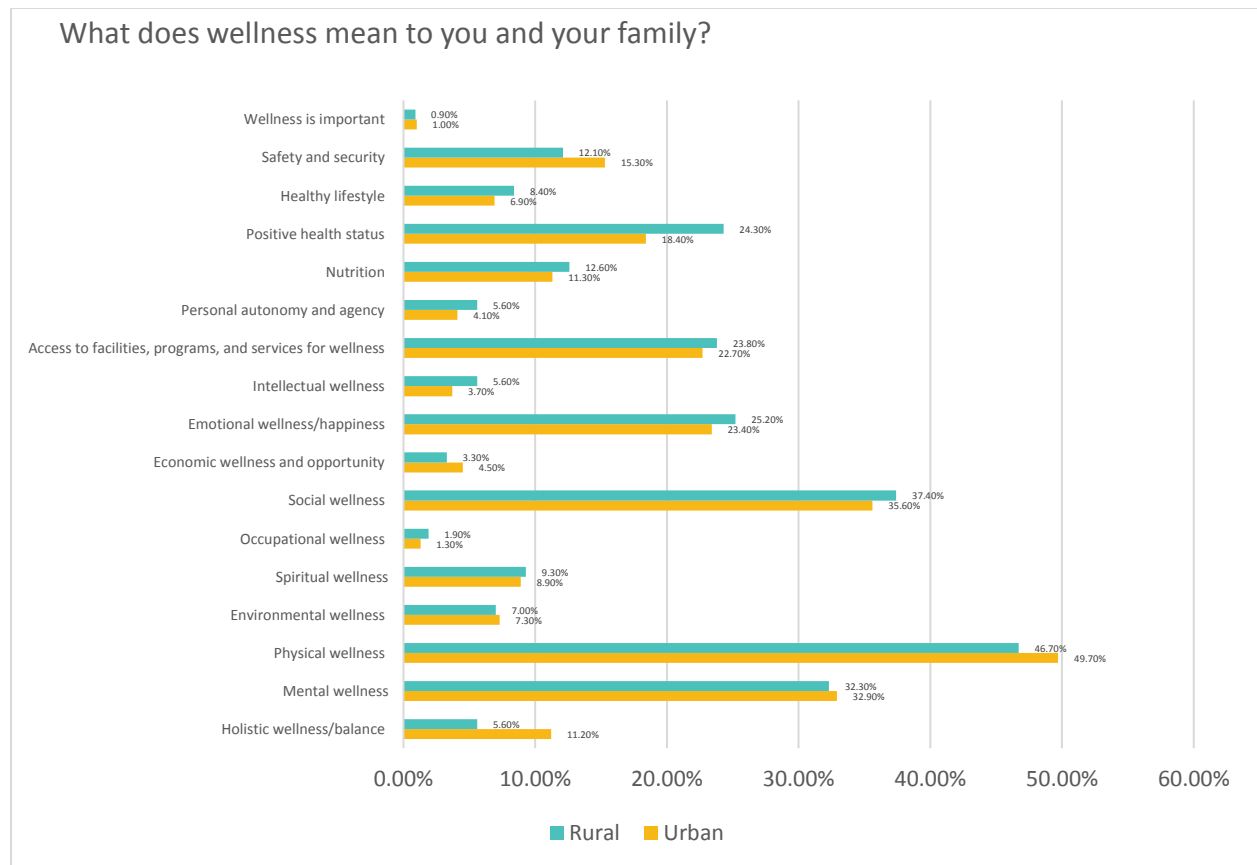
Area of Residence: Differences Between Urban and Rural Responses

The following section provides a detailed overview of survey responses according to the survey respondent's area of residence (i.e., whether the survey respondent lives in Sherwood Park or rural Strathcona County). This section will provide key highlights as to where urban and rural citizens differed in their responses.

What does wellness mean to you and your family?

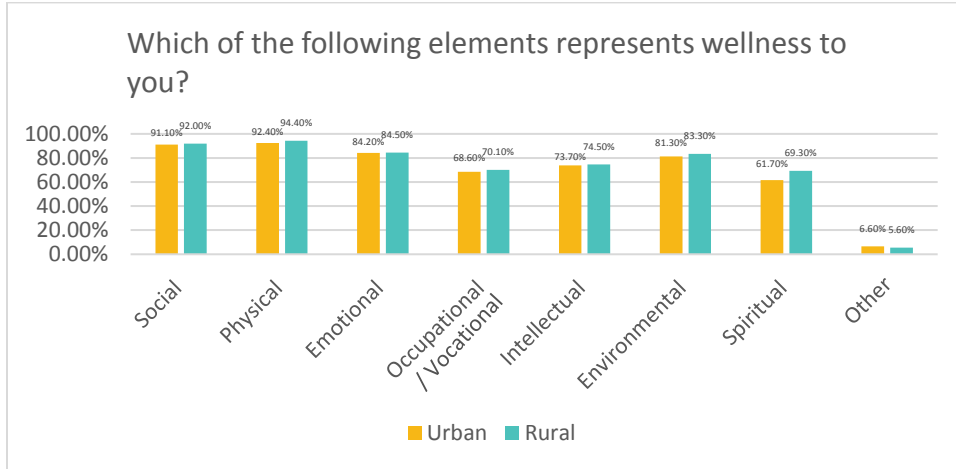
From the contingency chart below, which highlights respondents' answers as a function of their area of residence, several key findings emerge, including:

- Individuals who live in Sherwood Park were more likely (11.2%) to name "holistic wellness" in their definition of wellness compared to those who live in rural Strathcona County (5.6%).
- Individuals who live in rural Strathcona County were more likely (24.3%) to name "positive health status" in their definition of wellness compared to those who live in Sherwood Park (18.4%).



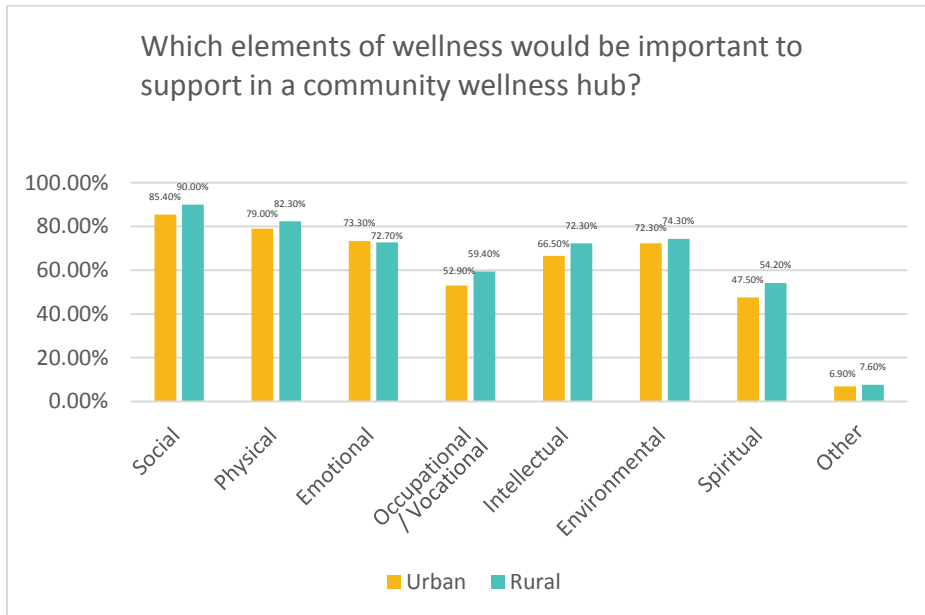
Which of the following elements represents wellness to you?

The contingency chart below, which highlights respondents' answers as a function of their area of residence, highlights that there is little difference in which elements of wellness rural and urban citizens resonated with.



Which elements of wellness would be important to support in a community wellness hub?

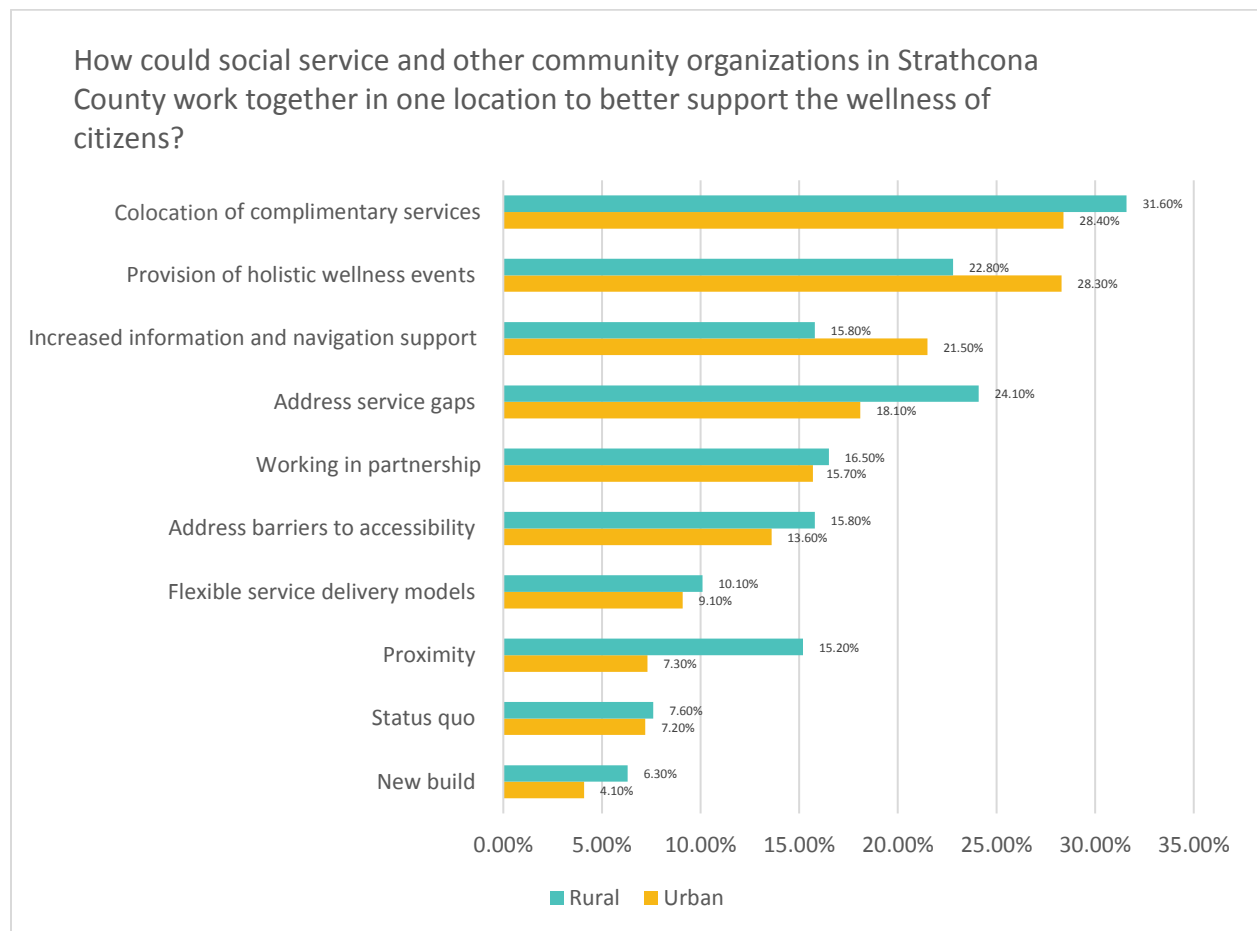
From the contingency chart below, which highlights respondents' answers as a function their area of residence, depicts that Individuals who live in rural Strathcona County were more likely (90.0%) to identify "social wellness" as being important to support in a community wellness hub compared to those who live in Sherwood Park (85.4%).



How could social service and other community organizations in Strathcona County work together in one location to better support the wellness of citizens?

From the contingency chart below, which highlights respondents' answers as a function of their area of residence, several key findings emerge, including:

- Rural respondents were more likely to identify “address service gaps” (24.1%), when compared to urban citizens (18.1%).
- Rural respondents were more likely to identify “proximity” (15.2%), when compared to urban citizens (7.3%).
- Urban respondents were more likely to identify “increased information and navigation support” (21.5%) when compared to rural citizens (15.8%).



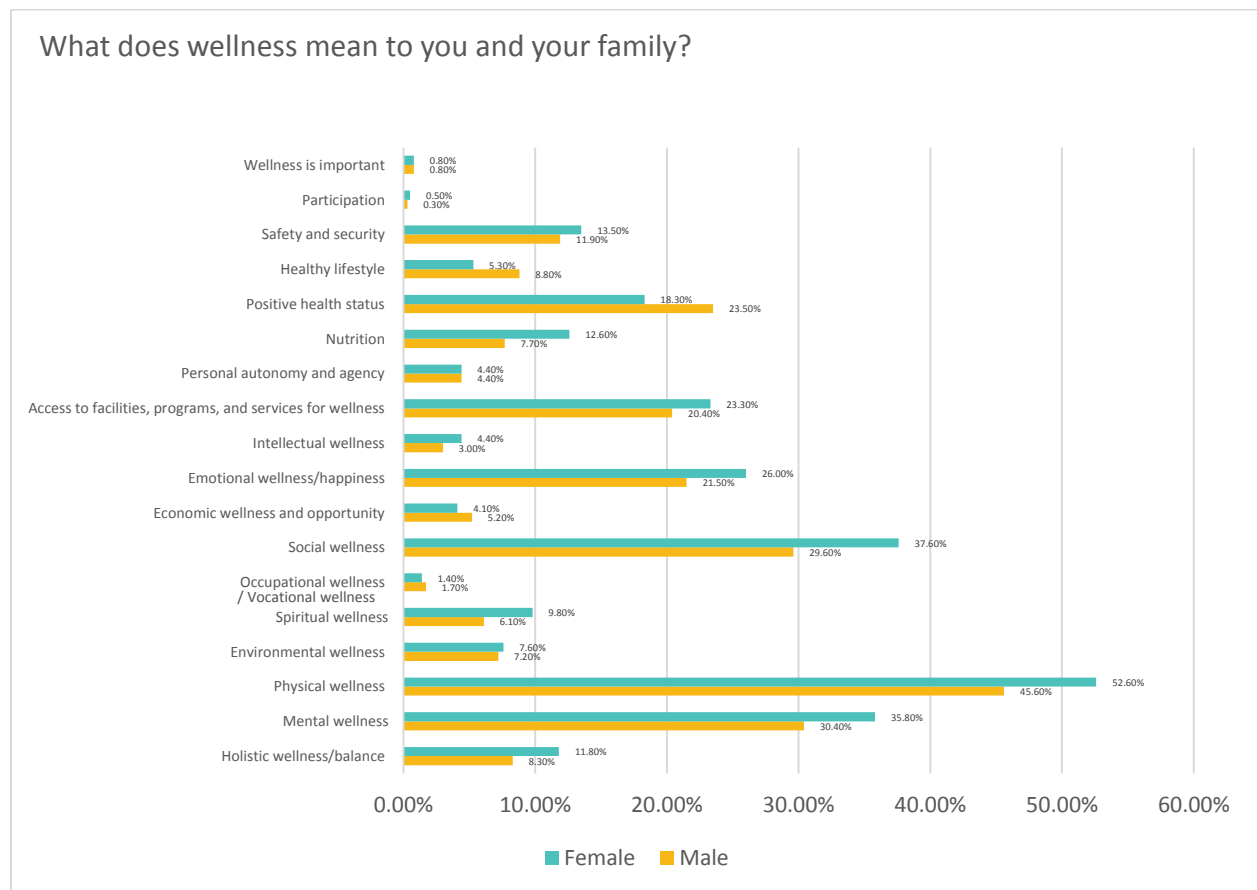
Gender: Differences Between Male and Female Responses

The following section provides a detailed overview of survey responses according to the survey respondent's identified gender. This section will give critical highlights regarding differences in gendered responses.

What does wellness mean to you and your family?

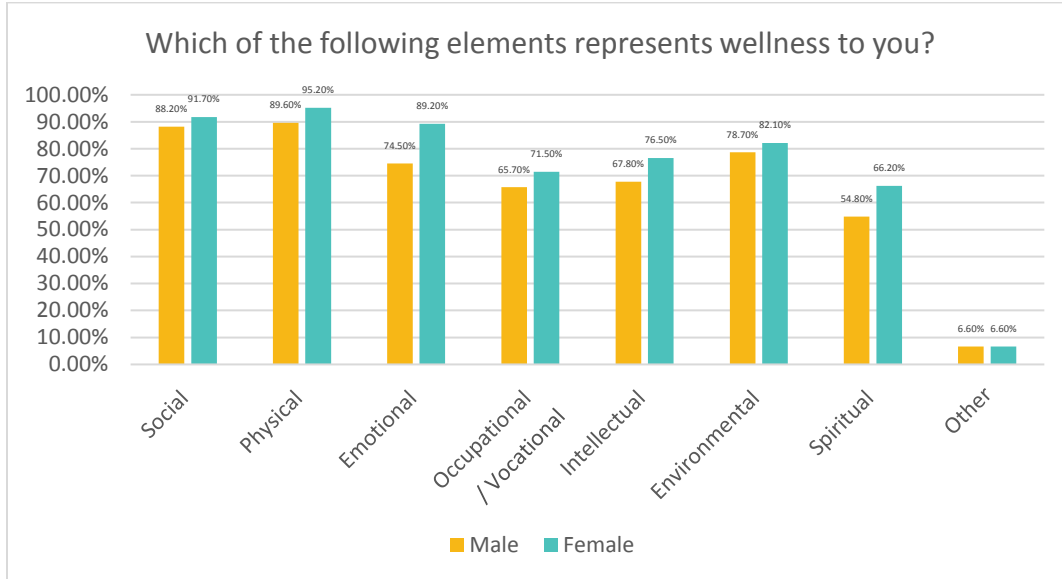
From the contingency chart below, which highlights respondents' answers as a function their gender, several key findings emerge, including:

- Males were less likely (8.3%) to name "holistic wellness" in their definition of wellness when compared to females (11.8%).
- Females were more likely to name "mental wellness" (35.8%) and "social wellness" (37.6%) in their definition of wellness when compared to males, (30.4%) and (29.6%), respectively.
- Males were less likely (7.7%) to name "nutrition" in their definition of wellness when compared to females (12.6%).



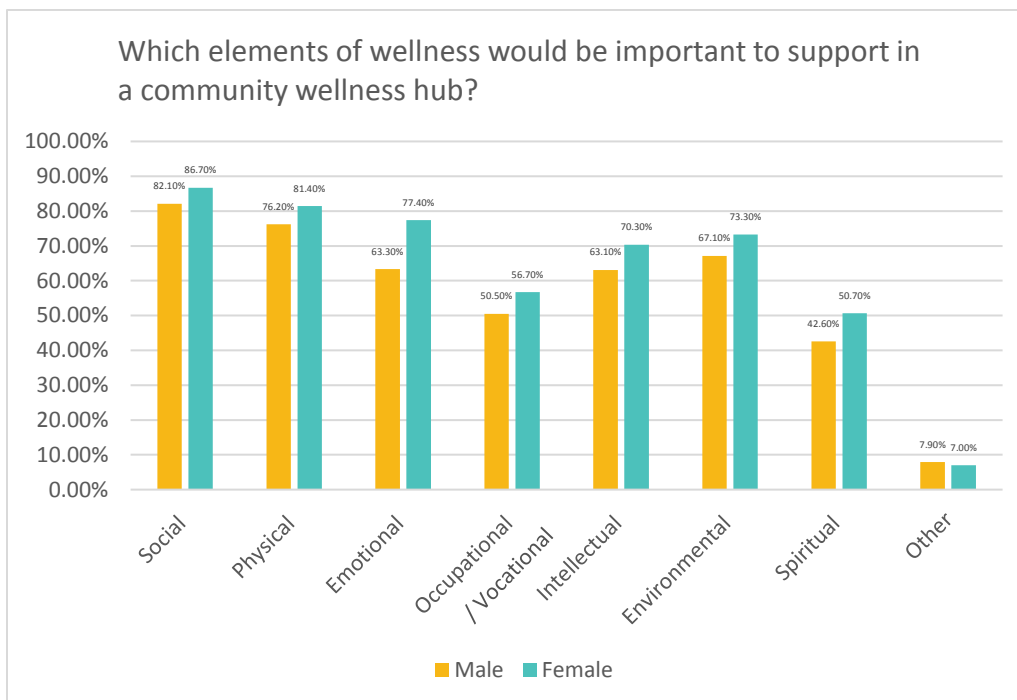
Which of the following elements represents wellness to you?

The contingency chart below, which represents respondents' answers as a function their gender, highlights that females are more likely to identify all elements as representing wellness when compared to males.



Which elements of wellness would be important to support in a community wellness hub?

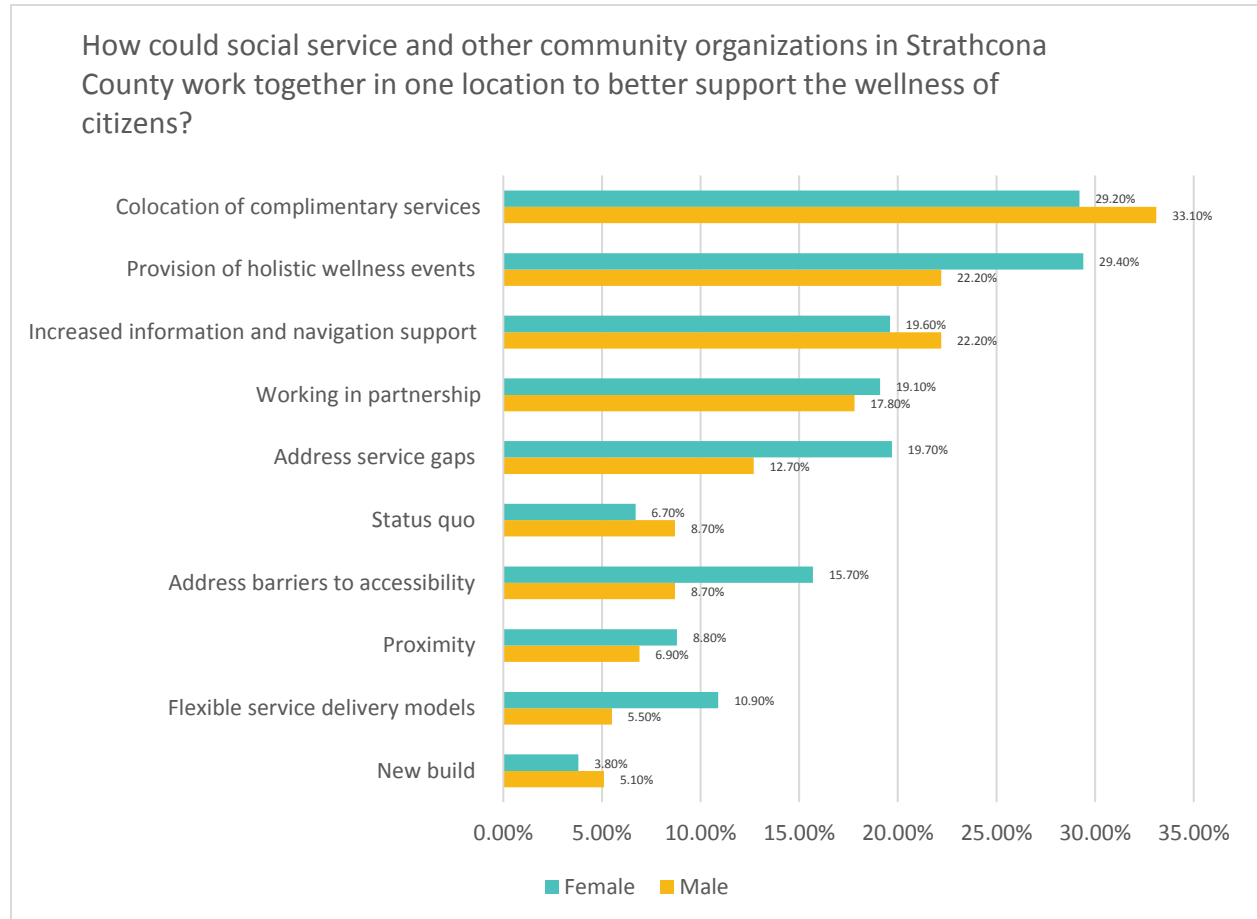
The contingency chart below, which represents respondents' answers as a function their gender, highlights that females are more likely to identify all elements as being important to support in a community wellness hub when compared to males.



How could social service and other community organizations in Strathcona County work together in one location to better support the wellness of citizens?

From the contingency chart below, which highlights respondents' answers as a function their gender, several key findings emerge, including:

- Female respondents were notably more likely to identify “address barriers to accessibility” (15.7%), when compared to male respondents (8.7%).
- Female respondents were almost twice as likely to identify “flexible service delivery models” when compared to male respondents (10.9%).





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