

INSIGHTS FROM PROVIDERS

TOWN OF Newfane

DECEMBER 2019

“Whatever it is to get people to learn about [services], it's just out of reach.”

“

No one can get anywhere without a car.”

“

If you need something and can't do it over the phone, you are out of luck.”



Numbers in Need

IN BUFFALO NIAGARA



A Mobile Safety Net Team
initiative established by
The John R. Oishei Foundation

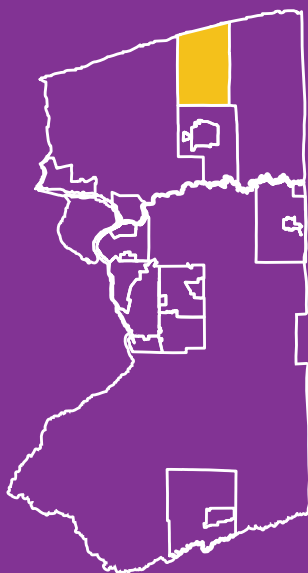


Prepared by



University at Buffalo
Regional Institute
School of Architecture and Planning

Town of Newfane



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About this Report

This report offers a snapshot of findings for the Town of Newfane, with new data on the community's population that lives in or near poverty. It includes the perspectives of human services providers, the landscape of providers, and strategies that could strengthen the safety-net for individuals and families.

Research in this report was led by the University at Buffalo Regional Institute in partnership with the Mobile Safety-Net Team. It was commissioned by The John R. Oishei Foundation. This work updates and expands upon a community report completed by the research team in 2013.

A Mobile Safety Net Team
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Defining Need

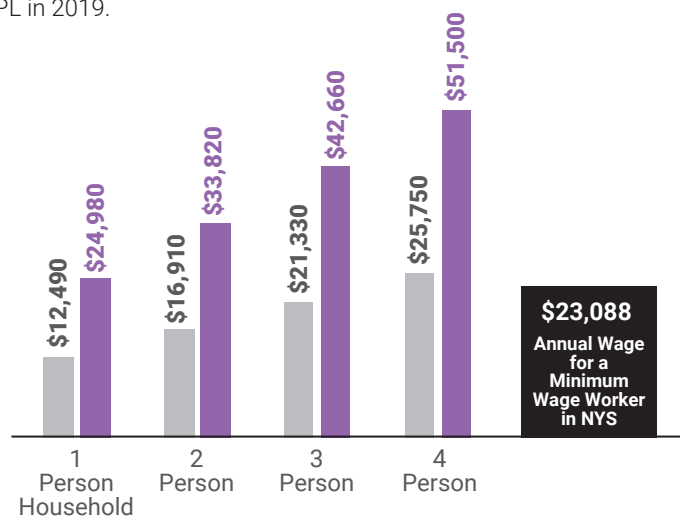
Almost 2,500 residents in Newfane live in or near poverty with incomes below two hundred percent of the federal poverty line.

The federal poverty line (FPL) is \$12,490 for a household of one, \$16,910 for a two-person household, \$21,330 for a family of three, and \$25,750 for a family of four. A single parent of two who works full time, year round at the minimum wage in NYS (\$11.10 per hour or \$23,088 a year) earns an income just above the FPL in 2019.

The FPL is adjusted annually by the federal government and varies by household size. It is often used to determine eligibility for programs that assist individuals and families with basic living expenses such as food, utilities, and rental housing. Households with incomes that exceed two hundred percent of the FPL (up to \$51,500 for a family of four) generally do not meet income guidelines for most programs.

Federal Poverty Guidelines, 2019

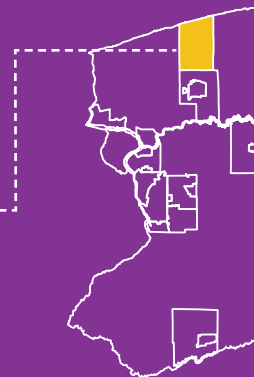
■ Federal Poverty Level ■ 200% of Federal Poverty Level



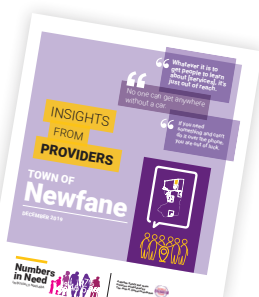
Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Reports for this Community

This report is part of a comprehensive suite of reports for the **Town of Newfane**, one of 12 representatives communities in the Buffalo Niagara Region selected for assessment and investment as part of the Numbers in Need project.

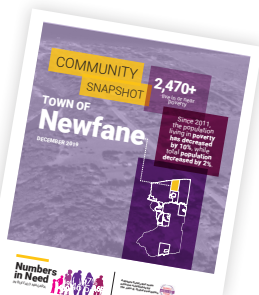


Each of these reports for this community is available online at NumbersinNeed.org



Insights from Providers

Insights from Providers explores the perspectives of service providers in the community with respect to gaps in the landscape of services, barriers to reaching residents, promising developments, and strategies for strengthening the landscape of programs and services. A focus group with agency leaders informed the findings presented in this document. Agency and community leaders can use this report to shape programs and services that respond to identified gaps and barriers, while leveraging system strengths and promising developments.



Community Snapshot

This report, **Community Snapshot**, presents an overview of findings from the research in this community, with new data and information on the people living in or near poverty, their barriers to programs and services, the landscape of service providers, and strategies for strengthening the community so that all residents can thrive economically. This report draws from more detailed findings available on the Numbers in Need website, as well as from **Insights from Residents** and **Insights from Providers**. Agency and community leaders can use this report to understand key findings and identify topics for further exploring.



Insights from Residents

Insights from Residents presents a more detailed look at the community's vulnerable populations, their needs, urgent concerns, and barriers to programs and services. A survey of residents and conversations with residents inform findings in this report. Agency and community leaders can use this document as they develop programs and services that respond to the needs of residents and remove barriers to jobs, programs and services faced by residents.



Visit us online at NumbersInNeed.org

NumbersInNeed.org is an online tool that leaders can use to understand economically vulnerable populations in the Buffalo Niagara Region, their urgent needs and concerns, barriers to services, and relevant factors such as access to good paying jobs, educational attainment, and transportation options. The website features individual stories, community and regional indicators, interactive lists and maps of service providers, strategies for strengthening communities and models to consider.

What Went Into This Report

Building an Updated Landscape of Providers



The 2013 Baseline Community Report was the starting point.

Baseline Community Reports

The community report completed for Newfane in September 2013 offered a starting point for analyzing the landscape of services.



Information was updated through an Agency Questionnaire.

Agency Questionnaire

Dozens of not-for-profit and governmental human service providers completed an agency questionnaire offering information on their programs and services. This questionnaire asked providers to update information about their organization and the services/programs they offer.



Find it here:

Pg 5 of this report
(*The Landscape of Providers*)

Numbers in Need Website
(*Provider Tool*)

Gaining Insights from Providers



We shared what we heard from residents and what the data said about the community.

Talking with agencies that provide programs and services to residents in the community highlighted challenges and barriers that preliminary data findings did not show. In some cases, providers turned our attention to new topics and areas of concern. In other cases, they offered additional insights on data and trends coming out of our outreach to residents and an analysis of detailed community data on poverty, housing costs, vehicle access, educational attainment, work, income and family factors that contribute to economic vulnerability.

Participating Organizations

EPIC (Every Person Influences Children, Inc)
First Baptist Church of Newfane
Independent Living of Niagara County
Lockport Cares
Native American Community Services
Newfane Public Library
Niagara County Department of Health
Niagara County Employment and Training
Niagara County Mental Health
Olmsted Center for Sight
Orleans-Niagara BOCES
Pinnacle Community Services
Salvation Army
YWCA of Niagara Frontier

Community Data



Resident Surveys



Resident Focus Groups



Preliminary findings from these activities were shared at provider focus group meetings and through provider interviews.

Provider Focus Groups



16 representatives of nonprofit human services participated in a focus group. The conversation gathered insights on additional areas of concern, barriers, successes and strategies for the future.

Provider Interviews



Conversations with selected agency representatives offered new and additional information on human service challenges, barriers and promising developments in the community.

Perspectives and Insights from Providers

The findings presented in this report synthesize **what we heard from providers**. In addition to the provider focus group, insights were captured from other providers who were interviewed, who shared additional perspectives and information on their programs, their successes, and challenges in connecting with residents.



Strengths of the Landscape



Additional Gaps/Needs Identified by Providers



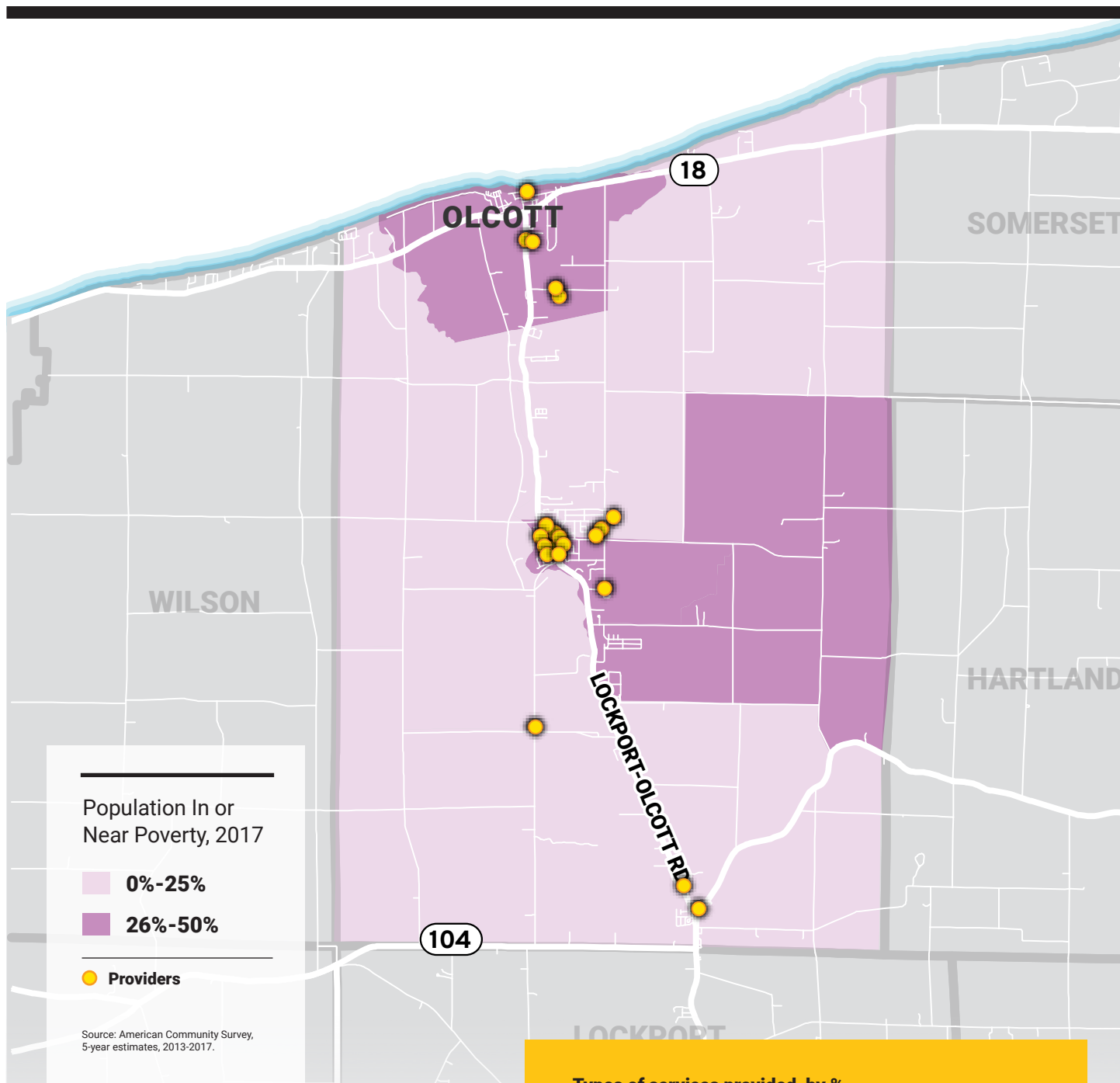
Barriers Residents Face to Programs, Services and Jobs



Promising Developments



Models to Consider



The Landscape of Providers

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SERVICE PROVIDERS 
in the Town of Newfane

See more online

Visit NumbersInNeed.org to view additional maps and the listing of service providers.



Types of services provided, by %

36%	Info/Referral	5%	Housing/Utility
32%	Education/Training	5%	Financial Literacy
32%	Youth Programs	0%	Mental Health/Addiction
23%	Food	0%	Crime/Juvenile
18%	Seniors	0%	Teen Parents
14%	Health/Wellness	0%	Veterans
5%	Transportation	0%	Homeless
5%	Clothing	0%	Legal



Strengths of the Landscape

There are 22 service providers located in the community.

Exactly 22 service providers are located in Newfane. Although this is the fewest number of providers in any of the study region's 12 communities, Newfane has more providers than other communities relative to its population living in or near poverty. Most of Newfane's service providers are small not-for-profit organizations that focus on a targeted number of services. Five of Newfane's providers offer more than two types of services. The recent closing of the Eastern Niagara Hospital branch in Newfane, which was the town's largest provider, further limits the range of services available within the community.

Half of all providers offer education or youth programs.

Access to strong schools and youth programs can help children avoid the enduring lifelong impacts often faced by those raised in poverty. Seven locations offer education, including public schools, Head Start, and the library. These education resources were identified as a community strength by providers who took part in an agency focus group. Four other locations, including churches, Boy Scouts, and Girl Scouts, also offer activities for youth. These programs are another asset for children and families in Newfane.

There are hundreds of residents in or near poverty living within one mile of most providers in the community.

Nearly 2,500 people live in or near poverty in Newfane. These residents are mostly concentrated near the town center, but many are dispersed throughout Newfane, from the hamlet of Olcott to the southern part of the town closer to Lockport. Even though there are relatively few providers in town and the population is spread out, most providers are located within one mile of hundreds of residents in need. But even with providers in close proximity, access to services can be limited for those with disabilities or without a vehicle.

Information and referral is one of the most common services in Newfane, which can help residents find the programs they need.

Overall, information and referral is the most common type of service in Newfane. Residents can find out about available services and programs at eight locations in town. Informational resources can be especially important in Newfane where residents may need to travel outside of the community to receive many important services.

Programs that offer food are seen as a top community strength.

Food was the top strength identified by providers in an agency focus group. Five locations in Newfane operate a food pantry or similar service. These locations include churches, childcare centers, and the Olcott Fire Hall where the Niagara County Office of Aging runs a food pantry. The variety of locations, and the range of groups they serve, from young children to older adults, make food programs a strength for social services in Newfane.

Newfane has food programs for people of all ages, from children to seniors.

Source: UBRI analysis of provider programs.

There are 700+ residents living in or near poverty within a one-mile radius of most service providers in Newfane.

Source: UBRI analysis of provider locations in Newfane relative to the population living in or near poverty, 2019.

Many types of services can be found in Newfane. The most common—information, education, and youth programs—are offered at seven or eight locations.

Source: UBRI analysis of provider locations and services, 2019.

Top strengths identified by provider focus group

Providers were asked to identify the community's strongest programs and services. Food and Information/Referral were most commonly marked.





Additional Gaps/Needs Identified by Providers

Limited options exist for getting around without a car.

Newfane is a car dependent community. The large majority of residents get around in a car they own. Still, about 140 households across Newfane do not have a vehicle. Providers say there are few options for getting around and accessing programs and services if one does not have a vehicle. The Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA) does not run a route to this community. There is Rural Niagara Transportation, run by Niagara County, but its bus service is infrequent, and providers say the bus does not always run on time. The bus operates Monday through Friday between 6:30 am and 5:30 pm, but there is no service on weekends or nights. For those who cannot physically get to one of the pickup points in Newfane along Route 78, no travel options exist except for medical transportation to doctor appointments.

Many providers that serve residents in Newfane do not have a physical location in the community.

Focus group participants described how Niagara County is resource rich. One provider said that there are four or five providers for every kind of resource across the county. Most of the time, these programs and services are free of charge to those who qualify. However, most services in Niagara County are concentrated in Lockport and Niagara Falls, the county's two largest cities. Few of the 16 providers who participated in the focus group have a brick-and-mortar location in Newfane. The Newfane Public Library and First Baptist Church of Newfane were two exceptions. The others serve residents in the community but do not have a facility in Newfane. Without transportation, traveling to these sites outside of the community is difficult for residents. Residents are also less likely to be aware that these important services outside of the community exist to help residents with challenges such as homelessness, healthcare, eye care, workforce training, independent living, and supports for children and families.

Many providers offer information and referral, but some providers see the need for a community resource directory.

A fifth of residents surveyed said they face barriers to the services and programs they need. Provider focus group participants talked about how the lack of centralized information creates barriers for them and residents too. One provider said that if they could make one change in the community that would have the biggest impact for the largest number of people, they would generate a directory of information. Nothing like this currently exists. The directory would be online and in print format. It would be updated monthly and include information about services, programs, and events in the town. While some focus group participants were aware of 2-1-1 WNY and said it was a useful resource, not all providers at the table knew about it. Another noted that sometimes information is missing or there are gaps in what is made available.

Nearly 140 households in Newfane do not have a vehicle. The large majority of these households are headed by someone age 65 and up.

Source: US Census, American Community Survey, 2017 (5 year estimates)

"If you need something, and you can't do it over the phone, you're out of luck."

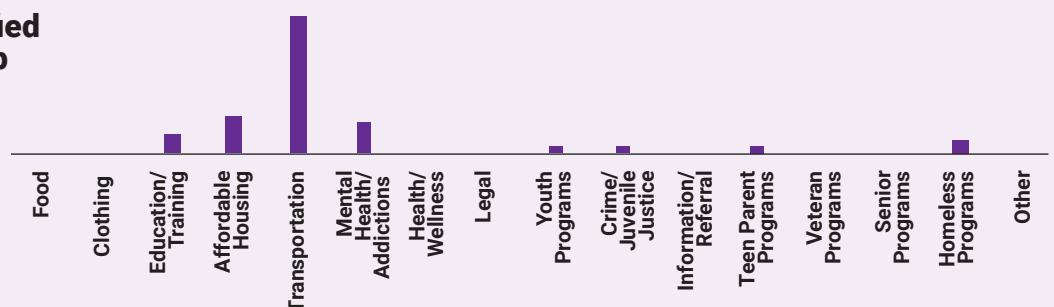
Source: Numbers in Need, Conversation with community providers, 2019

Providers say that a meeting with a service provider outside the community can take an entire day for those who depend on the rural transit bus.

Source: Numbers in Need, Conversation with community providers, 2019

Top gaps/needs identified by provider focus group

Providers were asked to identify where the community needs more and/or expanded programs and services. Transportation emerged as the #1 need in Newfane.





Additional Gaps/Needs Identified by Providers, cont'd.

Demand for ambulance service has risen as health care services in the community have been scaled back.

In August 2019, Eastern Niagara Hospital announced that it would be closing its campus in Newfane. Before this, services at the hospital's site in Newfane were gradually cut back. Inpatient services ended completely in 2014. The local volunteer fire station states that as hospital services in Newfane have dwindled, its ambulance has become "the most frequently used piece of equipment in our fleet." Over the past three years, 50,000 miles were put on the ambulance. This is nearly 16,700 miles a year, on average. The ambulance prior to this one was used an average of 4,062 miles a year. Not only has call volume requiring the ambulance increased, there are now longer trips to connect residents with appropriate health care.

Expanded mental health services are needed in the community but are being cut back.

Focus group participants were asked what changes they would make in the community to have the biggest impact for the greatest number of people. Two providers want to see mental health services available for both children and adults in Newfane. One provider explained that a mental health program with substance use treatment and in-patient services would make good use of the hospital site and address a community need. This need is likely to increase when Eastern Niagara Hospital closes its Newfane site, which houses an addiction rehabilitation program. The closure is scheduled for October 2019.

Over half of residents surveyed reported that they or someone in their household have a disability. Physical and mental health disabilities are most common.

Source: Numbers in Need, Survey of Residents in Newfane, 2019

17% of surveyed residents in Newfane say they need mental health services but can't afford them.

Source: Numbers in Need, Survey of Residents in Newfane, 2019



Barriers Residents Face to Programs, Services and Jobs

Transportation is a big barrier to programs, services, and jobs.

Traveling difficulty emerged as the top barrier to helpful programs and services identified by surveyed residents in Newfane. Provider focus group participants agreed that transportation is the biggest barrier between residents and the programs and services available to help them. It's also a barrier to jobs and training for working-age adults. A single meeting with a provider in Niagara Falls can take an entire day using Rural Niagara Transportation to get there and back. For many residents, bus stops are inaccessible due to distance and/or the limited walkability of streets and sidewalks during inclement weather. Providers say seniors without a vehicle can be isolated. While options exist for getting to medical appointments, there are no options for running errands, attending social events, or even getting to religious services.

Childcare is a barrier to work.

About 40% of survey respondents in Newfane said their household faces an urgent concern. The cost and availability of childcare was the fourth most common urgent concern identified by residents. Providers said transportation is by far the biggest barrier in the community, but this is followed by childcare.

While information and referral is a strength, outreach and information delivery is a barrier that some agencies face.

Focus group participants concurred that connecting with their target audiences and disseminating information to residents can be challenging to them. It's not always clear to providers which information channels should be used and which will be most effective. There are many options, and the landscape is changing. One provider described that Facebook is helpful in getting the word out about programs but not everyone uses Facebook and usage is dwindling. Another provider commented that fewer people read the newspaper today or even get a newspaper. Turnout at resource events has been low. One provider described working with social workers and counselors at the school to deliver information to parents. Another provider agreed that youth and their parents are easier to reach through schools. Their agency's challenge is connecting with young adults who are not enrolled in school and could benefit from information about jobs and workforce training opportunities.

Low turnout at resource events prevents providers from connecting with more residents.

Resource events can be an effective for providers to come together under one roof to connect with residents and raise awareness of their programs and services. However, focus group participants said resource events in Newfane don't get a great turnout. They see people seeking services only when they need them and not before. For some residents, mobility challenges and not having a vehicle may limit their ability to attend such events in the community.

Fragmented information systems make it difficult for agencies to coordinate service delivery.

In an ideal world, providers would be able to look up a record for their client, see who that client is working with, and what services they are receiving. The system that exists today is far from this ideal. It is fragmented and burdened with paperwork. Many providers are under different delivery umbrellas. There is no centralized database for tracking clients or service delivery, and there is no way to quickly identify service needs at the client level. While case management aims to coordinate service delivery, reduce fragmentation, and avoid duplication, providers say it can be confusing to clients to work with so many different people. Providers see clients who think they have a case manager when they do not.

None of the service providers in Newfane are within reach of public transit. Difficulty traveling was a top barrier to programs and services identified by surveyed residents.

Source: UBRI analysis of provider locations and NFTA transit stops, 2019 and Numbers in Need, Survey of Residents in Newfane, 2019.

“Whatever it is to get people to learn about [services], it's just out of reach.”

Source: Numbers in Need, Conversation with community providers, 2019

Providers described how seniors without a vehicle have no options in Newfane for socializing, recreation or errands.

Source: Numbers in Need, Conversation with community providers, 2019



Promising Developments

Programs and Partnerships

Providers describe **2-1-1 WNY** as a valuable resource for information about programs and services that both residents and providers can use. They say program leadership at 2-1-1 WNY is exploring ways they can partner with healthcare providers to assist with referrals and strengthen the referral process.

Headed by the Niagara County Department of Health, the **Community Network of Care** brings together 30 partnering agencies and organizations, from schools to community-based organizations and government agencies. The network continues to add partners and promote services through community education and outreach. The Community Network of Care was recognized in 2018 by the NYS Office of Mental Health for its “extraordinary” efforts related to suicide prevention.

Domestic violence survivors from Newfane have access to a shelter in Lockport run by the YWCA that now offers busing to schools in Newfane. Not having to worry about how their children will get to and from school offers women peace of mind and helps them stay in a safe place.

Food pantries in Newfane are partnering with FeedMore WNY to bring a **Mobile Food Pantry** into the community. The truck is in Newfane once a month, 10 months out of the year, and it has been highly successful. The mobile pantry attracts 80-90 residents and about 20 volunteers. Some providers say they have been able to leverage these events to meet with residents and offer them information about additional programs and services that could benefit them.

Newfane Central School District provides a bus of children to the **Orleans/Niagara BOCES** in Lockport each day. BOCES offers training to high school students and others that leads to higher-paying jobs and career pathways in healthcare and the trades.

The **Partnership for Healthy Aging** helps older residents age in place by connecting them with medical services, mental health services and non-medical in-home assistance. One provider praised the partnership for how it creates connections and makes referrals to other providers. Core partners include the Niagara County Department of Mental Health, the Niagara County Office of the Aging, and Northpointe Council.

Models to Consider



Good things are happening in this community and beyond that are transforming the way human services are delivered. The models on this page offer two examples of innovative ways service providers are tackling challenges in order to better serve the needs of the community.

The Numbers in Need website—NumbersInNeed.org—contains additional models to consider and strategies for tackling the concerns and barriers experienced by providers in Newfane. These are intended to spur conversation, inspire solution building and strengthen under-resourced communities in ways that reduce poverty and increase quality of life for all residents.



Transportation

Mountain Empire Older Citizens, Inc. (MEOC)

Mountain Empire Older Citizens (MEOC) Transit launched in 1974 with an annual budget of \$12,500 to provide services to older adults in a rural region of southwestern Virginia. In the time since, the organization has grown its annual budget to \$14 million and now takes a holistic approach to supporting residents in the region, especially older adults, by offering a full array of social services. MEOC's transit system became a national model for rural public transportation by catering its services to those with mobility challenges. MEOC offers transportation to anyone in its nearly 1,400 square mile service area upon request, given 24-hour notice. In 2012, MEOC launched Saturday services with the support of state funding, earning an award from the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging. A key to its success has been partnering with community organizations, local governments, and state departments and garnering donations from local citizens.

meoc.org/transportationmeoc.htm

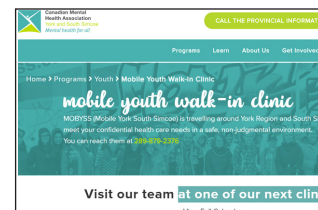


Health & Mental Health

Mobile York South Simcoe (MOBYSS)

The Canadian Mental Health Association's Mobile York South Simcoe (MOBYSS) launched in 2015 as Ontario's first mobile mental health clinic. MOBYSS focuses on providing a range of confidential mental health services to youth ages 12 to 25 free of charge, without appointments. The clinic also offers preventive care, acute care, and reproductive health services to youth in the region. The clinic is funded by a number of organizations, including the United Way and provincial government departments, as well as community donations. MOBYSS has nurse practitioners, peer support volunteers, and mental health counselors on its staff that assist young people at the traveling MOBYSS vehicle. In its first 18 months, the clinic met with nearly 4,200 young people, 40% of which used mental health support services.

cmha-yr.on.ca/programs/youth/mobyss



Data Sources & Notes

Most information in this report comes from conversations with agency providers. Data and information from additional sources outside of these conversations are listed below, unless otherwise noted within this report.

Defining Need, Page 2

Federal Poverty Level: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, HHS Poverty Guidelines for 2019.

Minimum Wage: New York State Department of Labor, Minimum Wage (effective 12/31/18).

Landscape of Providers, Page 4

Information submitted by agency providers through a provider questionnaire updated a listing of providers developed for the 2014 community report for Buffalo (east of Main Street). Providers provided information on program and service locations, agency location, geographic scope and more.

Tax records available through the IRS and National Center for Charitable Statistics were used to identify new not-for-profits with locations in the community since 2014.

Strengths of the Landscape, Page 6

Top Strengths (and Top Gaps/Needs)

Agency focus group participants ranked the strongest programs in the community as well as the programs where the greatest need existed. Each provider had three dots for placing next to the strongest programs and three dots for identifying where need was greatest across 16 categories of programs and services. Dots could be used to identify up to three strengths and weaknesses or several dots could be allocated to fewer categories. Highest ranking categories are those that generated the largest number of dots.

Additional Needs/Gaps, Page 7-8

Rural transit routes: Niagara County, Rural Niagara county Transportation, available at <http://www.niagaracounty.com/County-Information/Public-Transportation-Schedule> (accessed 10/4/19).

Households without a vehicle: U.S. Census, American Community Survey, 2017 (5-year estimates). An estimated 138 households across Newfane lack a vehicle. Nearly 90% of these households are headed by an older individual age 65 and up.

Percentage of residents facing barriers to services: University at Buffalo Regional Institute, Insights From Residents: Town of Newfane, December 2019.

Ambulance Usage: Information comes from a letter from the Miller Hose Company, Inc addressed to friends and neighbors, provided to the UBRI research team on June 6, 2019.

Barriers Residents Face, Page 9

Traveling as top barrier in Newfane: University at Buffalo Regional Institute, Insights From Residents: Town of Newfane, December 2019.

Percentage of households with urgent concern: University at Buffalo Regional Institute, Insights From Residents: Town of Newfane, December 2019.

Promising Developments, Page 10

NYS (New York State) News: Office of Mental Health Recognizes Community Network in Niagara County for Extraordinary Suicide Prevention Efforts, September 18, 2018.

Niagara County, Mental Health Services: Partnership for Healthy Aging, available at <http://www.niagaracounty.com/Departments/Mental-Health-Services/Partnership-for-Healthy-Aging> (accessed on 9/26/18).

Models to Consider, Page 11

Mountain Empire Older Citizens, Inc. (MEOC)

"Rural Health Information Hub," "Program Clearinghouse: Mountain Empire Older Citizens, Inc. (MEOC)," 2019. Retrieved August, 2019 from www.ruralhealthinfo.org/toolkits/aging/3/mountain-empire

"Mitchell Elliott," "MEOC Transit," National Aging and Disability Center, 2017. Retrieved August, 2019 from www.nadtc.org/wp-content/uploads/MEOC-Transit-July-2017.pdf

Stephen Igo, "Mountain Empire Older Citizens Transit receives award," Times News, 2014. Retrieved August, 2019 from www.timesnews.net/News/2014/08/05/Mountain-Empire-Older-Citizens-Transit-receives-award

Mobile York South Simcoe (MOBYSS)

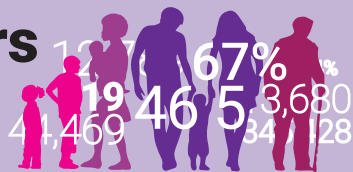
Canadian Mental Health Association, "Youth flock to Ontario's only mobile health/mental health clinic; Health Minister Jane Philpott tours MOBYSS today," 2016. Retrieved August, 2019 from ontario.cmha.ca/news/youth-flock-ontarios-mobile-healthmental-health-clinic-health-minister-jane-philpott-tours-mobyss-today/

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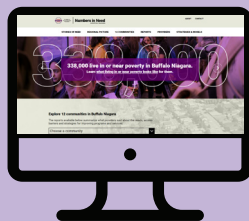


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NumbersInNeed.org