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Abstract

The Access and Functional Needs population is oftentimes either not ready for a natural emergency, or agencies who provide resources at shelters are not prepared with enough resources for them. Aging and Adult services in Monterey county joined with the Office of Emergency Services are joining forces to make sure that they understand and are ready to meet the needs of this specific population to provide the care needed in case of a natural disaster. The project concentrated in getting accurate community data in order to understand the volume of need for this population. The results showed not only information about overall access and functional needs population, but also information based on the county region.

Keywords: access and functional needs, emergency preparedness, functional assessment service team

Agency & Communities Served

The Aging and Adult branch of the Monterey Department of Social services provides social services to seniors and people with disabilities. Their Vision statement is "We are dynamic innovative leaders who will continue to ensure quality of life for the aging population and persons living with disabilities". Their mission statement is "Our mission is to empower and serve the aging population and persons living with disabilities to live safely and with dignity." They accomplish this through the variety of programs they offer which include adult protective services, information, referral and assistance, in home supportive services, public authority for in home supportive services, supplemental security income advocacy program, and area agency on aging.

Their Information, Referral and Assistance (IRA) program is one of their main services, as this program is in charge of routing individuals to the correct services. Trained social workers are knowledgeable about the other program's services, lead supervisors and social workers in order to make sure they are sending the consumers to the correct department in the county or to the community depending on their need. If during the call they realize that what the consumer is needing is a service that they do not provide, they find them a resource and call them back in a few days to make sure that they received the assistance needed.

According to the County Report for Disability Prevalence completed in 2015 in Monterey county alone 36,922 individuals had disabilities this is 9% of the Monterey county population (Page 7). The aging and adult services branch provides services to this population as well as their family members in order to aid with financial burden as well as resources needed.

According to the United States census bureau, there is an estimate of 14% of persons 65 years and over in Monterey county as of July 1, 2019 (paragraph 1). With the growing aging population that according to the California State plan on aging 2017-2021, by 2030 when all the baby boomers have reached age 60, there will be an estimated 10.9 million older Californians. This will increase the need for services provided by the aging and adult services programs as well as resources needed for this population.

Problem Description

Access and Functional Needs (AFN) community information needs to be updated to be clearly accounted for in the emergency plan of the Monterey County Department of Social Services. The Access and Functional needs community is defined by the state as "individuals who have developmental or intellectual disabilities, physical disabilities, chronic conditions, injuries, limited English proficiency or who are non-English speaking, seniors, children, people living in institutionalized settings, or those who are low income, homeless, or transportation disadvantaged, including, but not limited to, those who are dependent on public transit or those who are pregnant," (Page 96)and in order to fully be prepare in case of a natural disaster, the department of Social Services must make sure that there an awareness of the prevalence of AFN populations in Monterey County and that accommodations are available for all these individuals and that they are well prepare to care for this vulnerable population.

Contributing Factors

According to the Center of Disease Control(CDC) "Older adults are more likely to have medical problems that put them at an increased risk during a disaster...Young children...have yet to develop the resources, knowledge, or understanding to effectively cope with disaster, and they

are more susceptible to injury and disease...people with lower socioeconomic status are more likely to lack resources needed to follow emergency preparedness instructions...limited english proficiency might have trouble understanding public health directive" (2015, Pg.2-3). The AFN population includes all these individuals when not taken into account what their base knowledge, accessibility restrictions, and linguistic restrictions contribute to their lack of preparedness in case of a disaster.

Consequences

As mentioned by the CDC some of the older adults in a given area might have health problems or be isolated, and lack media use which would limit their communication, or knowledge of what is being directed. Young children face problems with communication as well, as they might be distressed over being separated from a parent, and might not have enough knowledge of what is to be done in an emergency. Low income individuals lack the resources to be able to buy extra food and have it ready in case of an emergency, and might not be able to stay home from work as they rely on that day's income. While individuals with limited english proficiency will not be able to understand instructions by public health and not know what to do.

Problem Model

Contributing Factors	Problem	Consequences
Medical problems	AFN community is not part of the emergency operation plan of Monterey county Department of Social Services	Limit capacity to follow instructions
Young children knowledge		Vulnerability when separated from their parents
Socioeconomic status		Not being able to stay home from work, or buy extra food during an emergency
Limited english proficiency		Lack of understanding

		directives

Capstone Project Description and Justification

Capstone Project

This project will include a combination of data research to figure out the Access and Functional Needs population in Monterey county in efforts to get an accurate number of individuals in Monterey County that are part of this population, and utilizing this data to update community profile section in the Monterey County Operational Area Access and Functional Needs Framework and Planning Guide. Efforts to have an accurate count of the population will better prepare the county in case of a natural disaster.

Project Purpose

This project will seek to address all AFN populations which includes individuals with medical problems, possible unaccompanied children, individuals with low socioeconomic status and those individuals with limited english proficiency, by making sure that they are accounted for in Monterey county in order to make sure that enough resources are attributed to this population, including any special consideration for signage, specials equipment and staff to help the AFN population. Given the different emergencies that can arise in any county at any point it is important to make sure that we are aware of the need so that in situations such as the Covid 19 outbreak, and that there are enough resources for the AFN population, including maintaining constant communication and reaching out to these individuals.

Project Justification

Collecting data about specific AFN population will help guide the amount of resources needed as well as policies that need to be put in place in order to better respond to any emergency. Updating the AFN population date to the office of emergency plan is a requirement per Federal Emergencies Management Agencies (FEMA)s and is intended to help make sure that the counties are fully prepared. CDC explains that having people who know what to do, and having resources in place to allow them to do their jobs, saves lives, and therefore knowing the need for the AFN population in Monterey County can have a big impact in readiness and future emergencies.

Project Implementation

Implementation of this plan will consist of final compiling of AFN data point in census data and homeless census data, and once enough information has been completed, a description of the population as well as policies and procedures to follow will be implemented and approved by Monterey county AFN coordinator and Office of Emergency Services manager. A detailed implementation plan and timeline can be seen in the Scope of Work in Appendix A.

Assessment Plan

Effectiveness of the data collected will be proven by presenting the data analysis as well as confidence intervals based in a combination of the census data and homeless census data to the office of emergency services for approval and implementation into the Monterey County Operational Area Access and Functional Needs Framework and Planning Guide . As well as proven resources needed after COVID-19 response by the FAST team, which has proven the need to make sure that resources are available not only for the AFN population, but the caregivers that are providing services to the AFN recipients in the county.
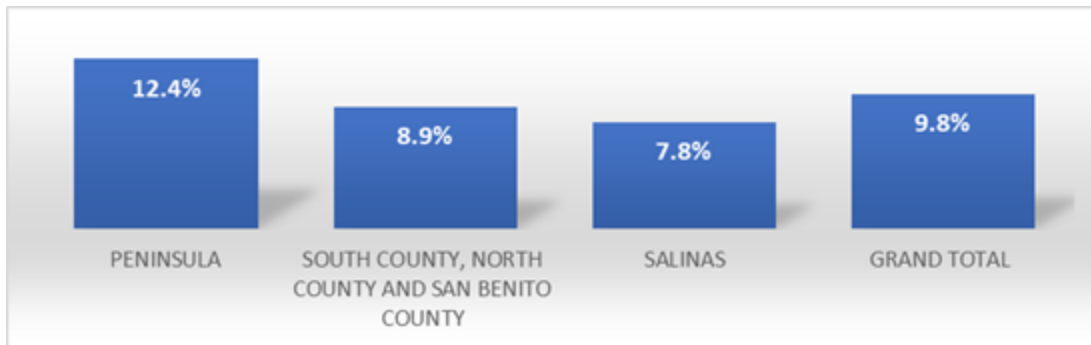
Expected Outcomes

This project will provide county AFN leaders with accurate population count in order to know how to better access for needs, as well as provide a framework in terms of deployment for FAST team members to any of the emergency sites.

Project Results

The data that was gathered from IPUMS and analyzed was presented to county representatives in effort to bring awareness to various leaders within community organizations in the county that serve the AFN population. Data was separated into the different categories that make up the AFN population to better understand the need based on county regions and finally combined to get the overall AFN population of Monterey county. Only characteristic of the population that we were not able to get information for is pregnant women as this is a protected factor and not data that is obtained by the census.
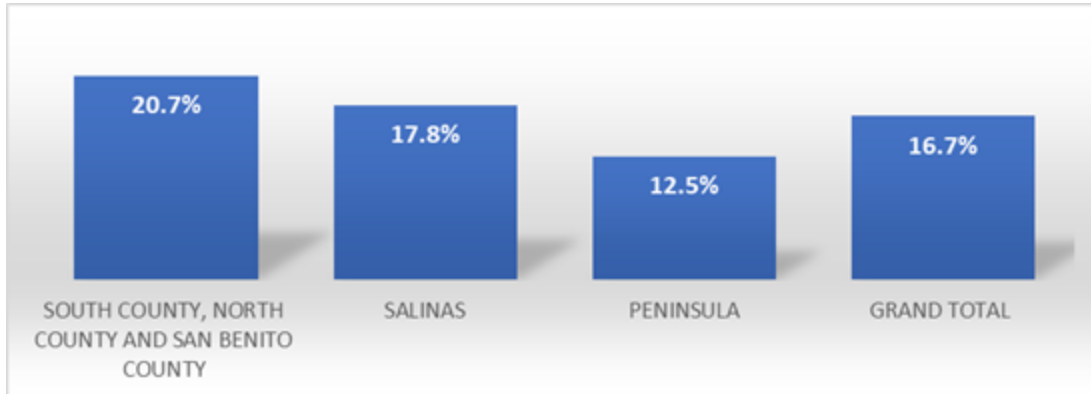
Disability per location

As shown in figure 1, 9.8% of the total population in Monterey and San Benito counties live with a disability. However, when separated by location Monterey peninsula has the highest prevalence of disability, with a total of 12.4% of its residents have a disability followed by south and north Monterey and San Benito county with 8.9% and Salinas at 7.8%.

Figure 1: Disability per County Region
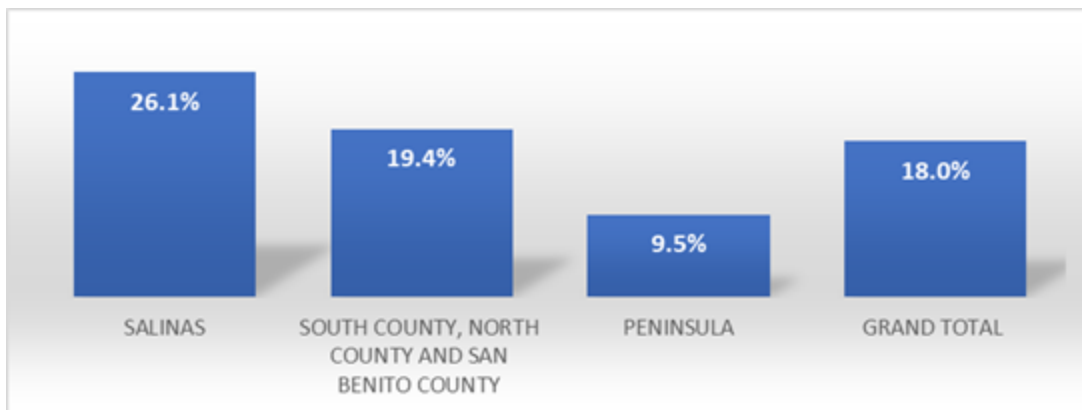
Poverty

As shown in figure 2, 16.7% of the total population in Monterey and San Benito Counties live under the poverty line. However, when separated by location south and north Monterey county and San Benito have the highest prevalence of residents below the poverty line at 20.7% followed by Salinas with 17.8% and the Monterey peninsula with a total of 12.5%.

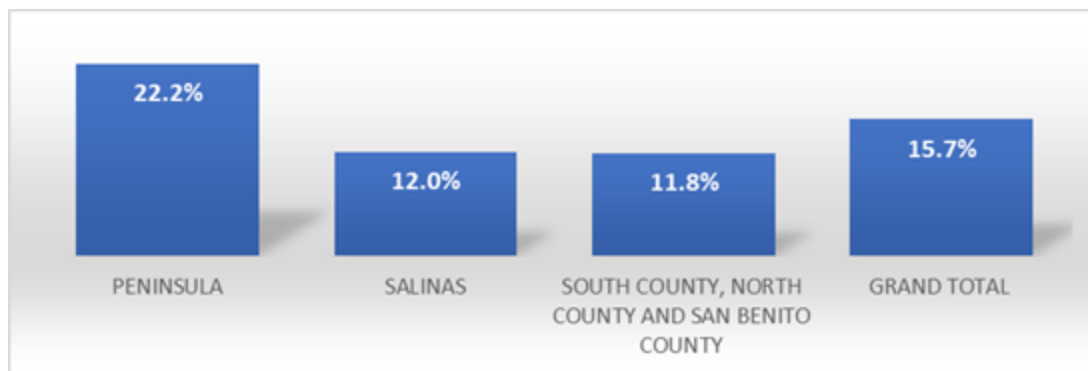*Figure 2: Below Poverty line per County Region*

Non-English

As shown in figure 3, 18.0% of the total population in Monterey and San Benito counties are Non-English speaking. However, when separated by location Salinas has the highest prevalence of residents that are non-English speaking at 26.1% followed by south and north Monterey county and San Benito with a total of 19.4% and Monterey peninsula at 9.5%.

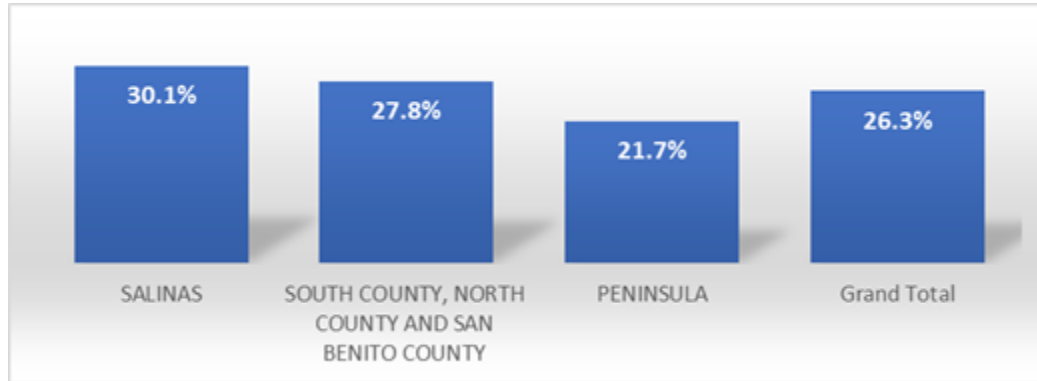*Figure 3: Non-English Speaking per County Region*

Seniors

As shown in figure 4, 15.7% of the total population in Monterey and San Benito counties are individuals over the age of 65. However, when separated by location Monterey peninsula has the highest prevalence of residents that are over 65 years, with a total of 22.2% followed by Salinas with 12.0% and south and north Monterey county and San Benito at 11.8%.

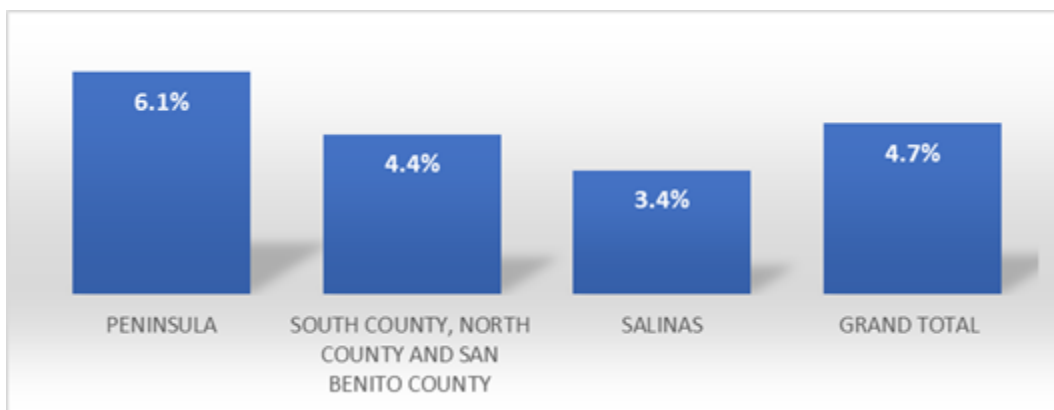*Figure 4: Seniors per County Region*

Children

As shown in figure 5, 26.3% of the total population in Monterey and San Benito counties are children under the age of 18. However, when separated by location Salinas has the highest prevalence of children with a total of 30.1% followed by south and north Monterey county and San Benito with 27.8% and Monterey peninsula at 21.7%.

Figure 5: Child per County Region

Transportation

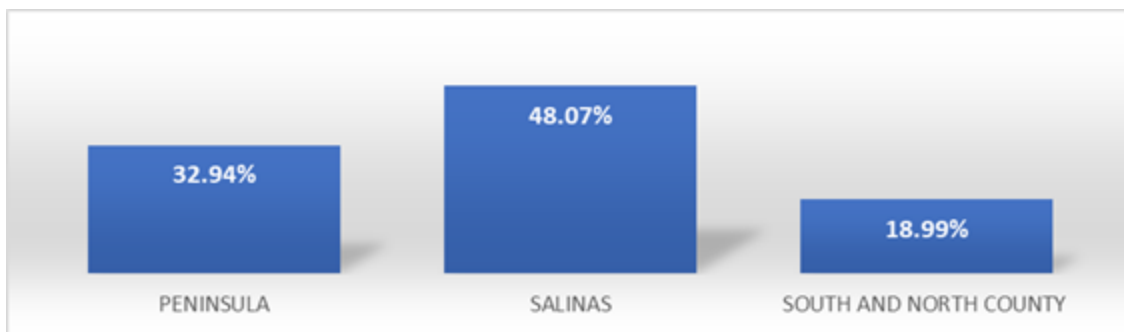As shown in figure 6, 4.7% of the population in Monterey and San Benito county do not have a vehicle or rely on public transportation. However, when separated by location Monterey peninsula shows a total of 6.1% of its residents do not have a vehicle or rely in public transportation while Salinas has 3.4% and south and east Monterey county and San Benito have 4.4%.

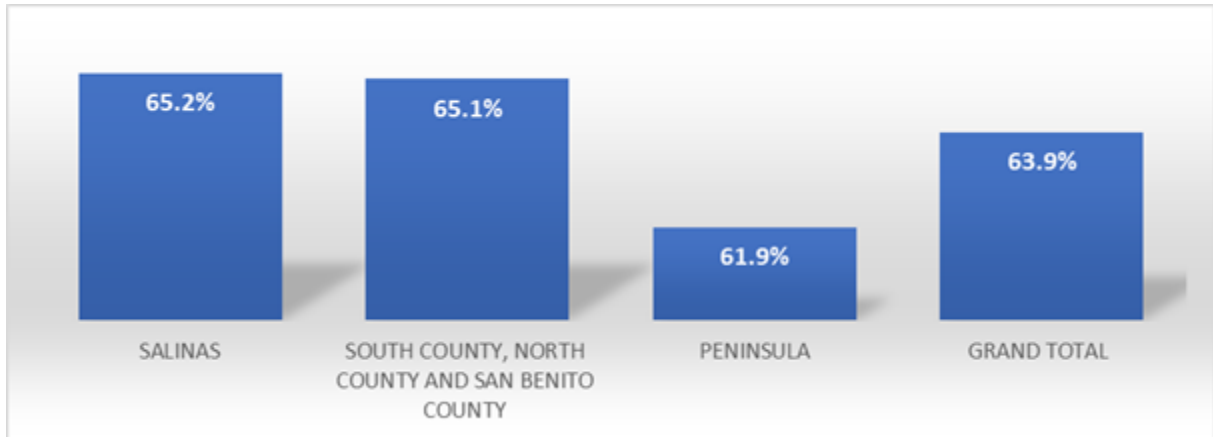*Figure 6: Transportation per County Region*

Homeless

Homeless Data was collected from Monterey County Homeless census and survey

comprehensive report 2019, this point in time data only includes data for Monterey County only.

Data shows that separated by gender there is a higher prevalence of male homeless, with a

65%. Data also concludes that when separated by race 50% of the homeless population

identifies as white, which continues to be consistent from previous years data.

Figure 7: Homeless Population per County Region

This data showed that of a total of 492,817 individuals, or 63.9%, of the population,

meets at least one characteristic of the AFN population. NOTE: Census data separates Monterey

County into three different geographic regions: peninsula, Salinas, and south and east Monterey

county and San Benito county. Figure 8 describes total AFN population by region.

Figure 8: AFN Population by Region

Conclusion & Recommendations

Based on data sorted during this capstone project, including the assembly bill 477, AFN population is to be included and updated in emergency planning. It is essential that the county takes into consideration, ADA sheltering, communication including interpreters, etc. as needed, and emergency evacuation planning. The Access and Functional Needs population in Monterey county account for 63.9% of the total population and therefore it is essential that emergency plans are made taking into consideration the AFN population needs.

Data tables compiled during this capstone will be essential to help with planning in the different areas in Monterey county as well as specific AFN components and needs based on the region, which can help the county and the Office of Emergency Services be better prepared in case of a natural disaster and resources by better anticipating the need and response needed. For example, by using information in these tables enough transportation resources will be available for those areas in the peninsula where there is more need.

Personal Reflection

Prior to my internship at Aging and Adult services in Monterey county I had little to no knowledge of the services needed for this community and what the AFN population was, but this quickly changed as I was able to shadow social workers and read information in the AFN population. By learning about the AFN population it was easier to understand the accommodations and needs in case of an emergency. During my internship a few emergencies happen in the accounting, including PG&E power shut off, COVID and fires, which allowed for continuous learning as well as practice to really put into use the knowledge I got as well as understand that it takes a full community to get past any disasters and work together to better assist the community at need. This capstone project helped with getting other community partners involved in AFN meetings as well as provide more accurate information on the need of Monterey county AFN residents.

Some of the challenges that I encountered with my capstone project during the starting process was getting data from other organizations on the AFN population. I reached out to different organizations in hopes to get some basic information about the total number in the community they were serving and trying to be sensitive and not request any protective health information and those organizations were not able to help with getting information, but kept referring me back to the agency I was already interning in for this data. Also one of the components of this population is pregnant individuals which is also an already protective factor and therefore I knew that I was not going to be able to get this information whether it was from any organization or the census data as this information is not collected, and when collected it can not be reported out.

With the help of my mentor and Dr. Navarro I was able to find a reliable source with enough information to be able to gather the information necessary for my capstone project. This source allowed me to get the necessary variables and information to truly account for the AFN population in Monterey county, and be able to separate the data by the different AFN factors in order to provide better information to help with the differentiating the needs based on the county region. This data source also provides information not just accounting for people interviewed but overall weight population to account for all Monterey County residents and their needs.

This capstone project was focused on emergency preparedness for the AFN population, and making sure that the full AFN population was accounted for in order to better prepare resources, and anticipate the need in case of an emergency. With accurate information on the AFN population, the county Office of Emergency Services can make sure to include this information in their preparedness plan and make sure to have enough specific information to guide them in case of a natural disaster.

Extra work that can be done with this project to help put together the full preparedness manual, and to make sure that information on the AFN population is routinely updated to account for any changes with the AFN population and resources needed. Any intern helping with this agency should be curious and shadow social workers to understand the work already being done, and the needs of the population. For interns working on a project like this it is necessary to be outgoing and know exactly what you want to get out of the project, and not be afraid to ask questions and receive feedback, and be comfortable with excel and data mining.

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Appendix A

Scope of Work

Activities	Deliverables	Timeline/Deadlines
Review of current preparedness manual	Intern will review current manual to help understand need and information that needs to be updated	December 31, 2019
Community Outreach	Intern will collect information for other community partners that provide services to AFN population and will contact to get participation in future meetings	January 31, 2020
Data collecting/sorting	Intern will use census data to gather accurate count of AFN population and will create data tables to provide accurate data	May 31, 2020
Compile sections to include in updated preparedness manual	Intern with the help of mentor will update information in the community profile, AFN population, and FAST description and deployment	December 15, 2020