



V E R N O N  
RESEARCH GROUP

# **Grand Forks, East Grand Forks Community Needs Assessment**

## **Service Providers' Report**

*Prepared for  
United Way of Grand Forks,  
East Grand Forks and Area  
[www.unitedwaygfgf.org](http://www.unitedwaygfgf.org)*

**April 2010**

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# Purpose and Methodology

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In the third phase of this Community Needs Assessment, the target audience was service providers; those members of the Greater Grand Forks community who work “in the trenches” each day, providing services for the county’s in-need residents.

The purpose of the Service Providers’ Study was to understand how service providers perceive the areas outlined below:

- ▼ Critical issues facing the Greater Grand Forks area
- ▼ How the community can address critical issues
- ▼ Groups and organizations in the best position to address critical issues
- ▼ Community challenges
- ▼ Change in level of severity of community challenges over time
- ▼ Barriers to service
- ▼ Specific challenges facing service providers
- ▼ Overall perception of local agencies and organization
- ▼ Quality of life in the Greater Grand Forks area
- ▼ Community strengths
- ▼ Coordination and maximization of services and resources

In conjunction with the Untied Way of Grand Forks, East Grand Forks (UWGFEGF) and their partners, Vernon Research Group designed a survey instrument to reflect the specific goals of the study identified above.

A link for an online survey was e-mailed to service providers on February 10, 2010. The survey was closed on February 23, 2010. Fifty-one participants completed the 2010 study.

# Executive Summary

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The service providers in the Greater Grand Forks area work tirelessly to improve the situation for the disadvantaged, distressed, and vulnerable groups. They are also advocates, a voice for populations that are usually ignored or underrepresented in the community. As we examine the results of the service providers' study, we see that they are more attuned to the level of need in the community.

There were five critical issues that service providers indentified: underemployment, affordable housing, alcohol abuse, homelessness and affordable medical care. Throughout, there is a sense that if underemployment were addressed, finding a job that paid a living wage, many of the other issues would also be diminished.

Service providers recognize that addressing underemployment and affordable housing will require a variety of solutions and organizations. When local leaders work to attract businesses to the area, service providers feel there needs to be less focus on service industry positions that are usually low-wage and part-time positions.

All of the solutions must first begin with recognition and acceptance by residents, leaders and decision-makers that the issues outlined above are problems. Along with struggling for funding, service providers must work day-in and day-out, making the community aware of both the need and availability of services. The Greater Grand Forks area is made up of hard-working, community-minded people who have a sense of pride about working for what they have. This makes accepting help when you need it difficult, and service providers must fight the stigma attached to receiving help when it is needed.

Service providers feel that there is a level of competition for funding, and there is a perception that organizations are not good at sharing information about funding sources. Organizations struggle with the perception that there is duplication of services in the community and are constantly having to justify their existence, which may account for the lack of openness about funding sources.

Service providers feel they are knowledgeable and effective in addressing community issues. However, they are less confident that government leaders are in touch with community needs. Most telling, there is little agreement with the statement – our community is one where leaders from business, labor, government, education, religious, neighborhood, non-profit and all other sectors come together and work productively to address critical community issues. Communication on a higher level needs to be addressed.

Service providers want a forum in which they can meet and collaborate with one another. A committee or organization should be formed that is responsible for coordinating communication between organizations and can represent organizations in meetings with community leaders and residents.

In the end, service providers love their community and appreciate the work of fellow agencies. With a focus on addressing the most critical issues, while, in turn, not ignoring the issues that concern just a few, the area can be prosperous for all citizens.

# Sectors Served

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Surveys were completed and returned by 46 different organizations and groups. Stakeholders of each group were asked to provide descriptive data about their organizations, including type of organization, geographic area served, number of people using their services, community challenges, barriers to services, service provider challenges and issues, and community strengths and weaknesses.

The responses shaded in light blue were listed as “other” by respondents. There were no respondents in the environment or recreation categories.

<b>S1. Which of the following best describes the sector in which you work?</b>	<b>Number of Responses</b>	<b>Percent</b>
At-risk populations	12	24%
Human services	8	16%
Early childhood (day care, preschool)	5	10%
Health care	4	8%
Mental health	4	8%
Education	3	6%
Homelessness	3	6%
Safety/crime prevention	3	6%
Senior services	3	6%
Dentistry	1	5%
Housing	1	5%
Transportation	1	5%
Community service	1	5%
Financial counseling	1	5%
Nutrition	1	5%
Environment	0	0%
Recreation	0	0%

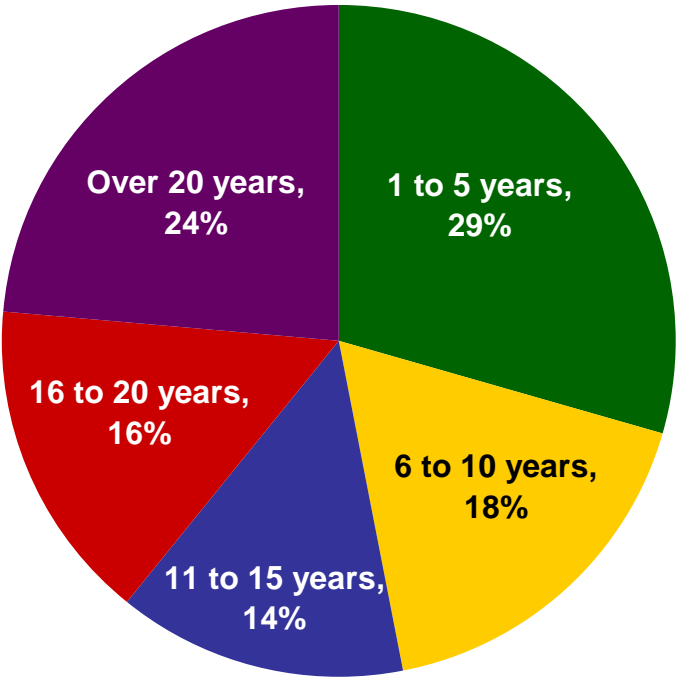
# Years in the Field in the Greater Grand Forks Area

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Service providers' average experience in the Greater Grand Forks area is 13 years. The range of service is half a year to 33 years.

**N=51**

S3. How long have you worked in this field in the Greater Grand Forks area?



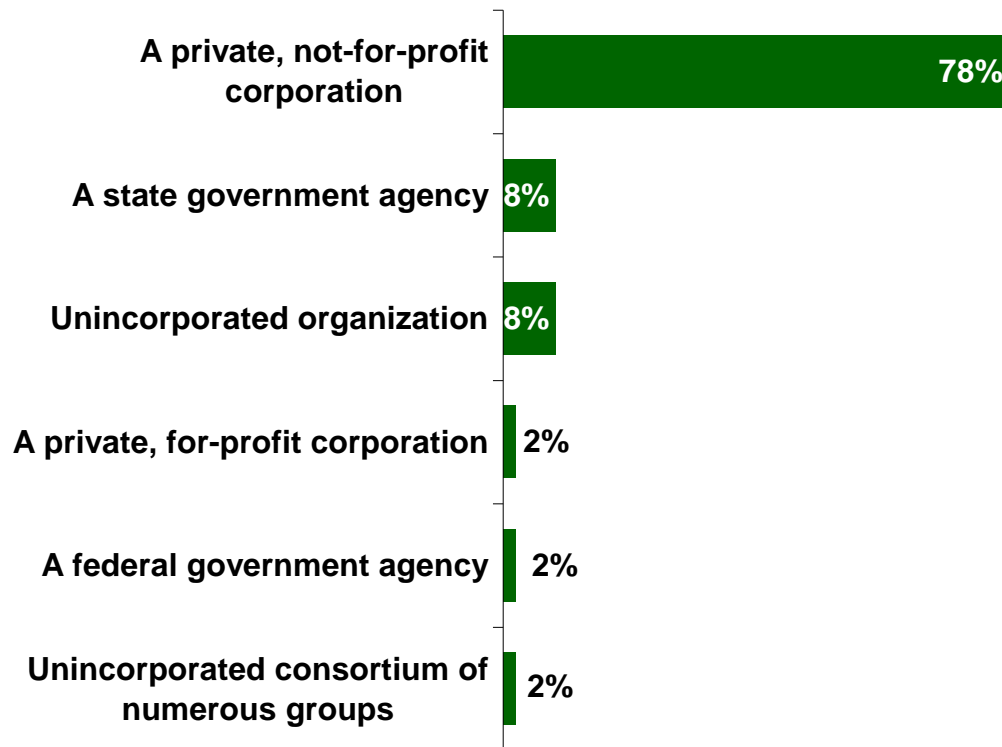
# Type of Organization

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Of the 51 organizations reporting the type of organization, 45 organizations are private, not-for-profit corporations, one is a private, for-profit corporation, one is a federal government agency and four are state agencies.

**N=51**

S4. Is your organization... (Please select all that apply.)



# Number of People Using Services

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The number of people served varied by age group. Those ages 20 through 65 received services and programs from the greatest number of service providers (36 providers), while infants received services from 24 of the 45 providers.

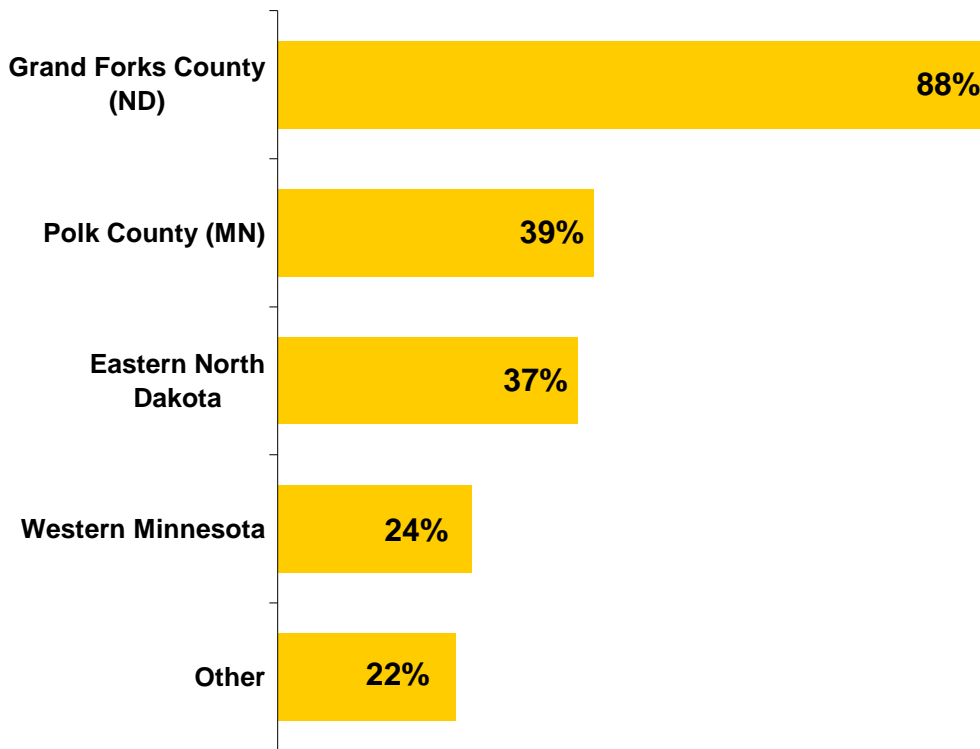
<b>Ages</b>	<b>Number of Service Providers</b>	<b>Number of Persons Served</b>
<b>Infants (0 – 3 years old)</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>1 – 630</b>
<b>Children (4 – 12 years old)</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>1 – 3500</b>
<b>Youths (13 – 19 years old)</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>1 – 3500</b>
<b>Adults (20 – 65 years old)</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>14 – 5680</b>
<b>Senior citizens (over 65 years old)</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>3 – 4109</b>

# Geographic Area Served

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Forty-five service providers (88%) provide services to Grand Forks County; 20 (39%) serve Polk County, 19 serve clients in eastern North Dakota, 12 serve Western Minnesota. Those making up the “other” category generally include organizations serving clients in all of North Dakota, or Nelson County.

**N=51** S6. Which of the following geographic areas do you serve? (Please select all that apply.)



# Critical Issues Facing the Greater Grand Forks area

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Service providers identified underemployment as the most critical issue facing the Greater Grand Forks area – those who could, and would like to be, working a full workweek but can only find part-time work. In Grand Forks, this means many workers are holding multiple part-time jobs that pay low wages. By extension, we also see low economic activity rates, due to a lack of job opportunities, training opportunities, and services such as child care and public transportation.

<b>Q1. In your opinion, what is the critical issue facing the Greater Grand Forks area?</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Underemployment (low wages, multiple jobs)	23	40%
Affordable housing	8	14%
Homelessness	4	7%
Access to affordable transportation	4	7%
Growing the economy	4	7%
Drug and alcohol abuse	4	7%
Access to affordable services	3	5%
Affordable child care	3	5%
Access to mental health care	2	3%
Access to affordable health care	1	2%
Lack of services in rural areas	1	2%
Lack of physical education	1	2%
<i>Total (51 respondents gave 58 responses)</i>	58	100%

# How Community can Address Underemployment

Service providers offered a variety of solutions for addressing underemployment, with about 30% agreeing that there should be less focus on the retail and service industries. Ensuring that wages are competitive and provide a livable wage were also mentioned. Options that involved retaining young people and tax incentives were solutions presented by service providers.

<b>Q2. What one thing might the community do to address underemployment?</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Bring in more competitive industry and job opportunities, less retail and service industry jobs	7	29%
Raise wages	4	17%
More pulling together and joining forces - collaboration	3	13%
Bring living expenses down	2	8%
Recruit young people	2	8%
Limit taxpayer subsidies to companies that provide benefits and a reasonable wage	1	4%
Offer more money management classes	1	4%
Continue economic development to increase jobs in Grand Forks	1	4%
Provide incentives for thriving industries/employers in the community	1	4%
Improve economy	1	4%
Talk about livable wages for families	1	4%
<i>Total (23 respondents gave 24 responses)</i>	24	100%

# How Community can Address Affordable Housing

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When thinking about solutions to address the lack of affordable housing, service providers focused more on increasing wages and providing vouchers than the actual cost of housing.

<b>Q2. What one thing might the community do to address affordable housing?</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Provide full-time work opportunities for lower-income residents	2	22%
Find funding to help with rent	1	11%
Provide permanent housing and rehab housing for homeless and near-homeless people	1	11%
Offer more vouchers	1	11%
Provide more competitive pay	1	11%
Do not cut the programs that are needed to help the clients	1	11%
Lower property taxes, which will lower the rent	1	11%
Offer more low-income housing	1	11%
<i>Total (8 respondents gave 9 responses)</i>	9	100%

# Groups, Organizations, or Agencies in the Best Position to Address Underemployment

Service providers feel that the Grand Forks City Council and City Government, the University of North Dakota and Job Service North Dakota are in the best position to address underemployment.

<b>Q3. Which groups, organizations, or agencies are in the best position to address underemployment?</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
City Council and City Government	7	29%
University of North Dakota	4	17%
Job Service North Dakota	3	13%
The Chamber of Commerce	1	4%
Grand Forks Region Economic Development Corporation	1	4%
Young Professionals	1	4%
Head directors in the organizations who agree with the problem	1	4%
Salvation Army	1	4%
St. Vincent De Paul	1	4%
Red River Valley Community Action	1	4%
State Government	1	4%
United Way	1	4%
All of them	1	4%
<i>Total (23 respondents gave 24 responses)</i>	24	100%

# Groups, Organizations, or Agencies in the Best Position to Address Affordable Housing

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The Grand Forks City Government and Housing Authority were mentioned by service providers as being in the best position to address the issue of affordable housing.

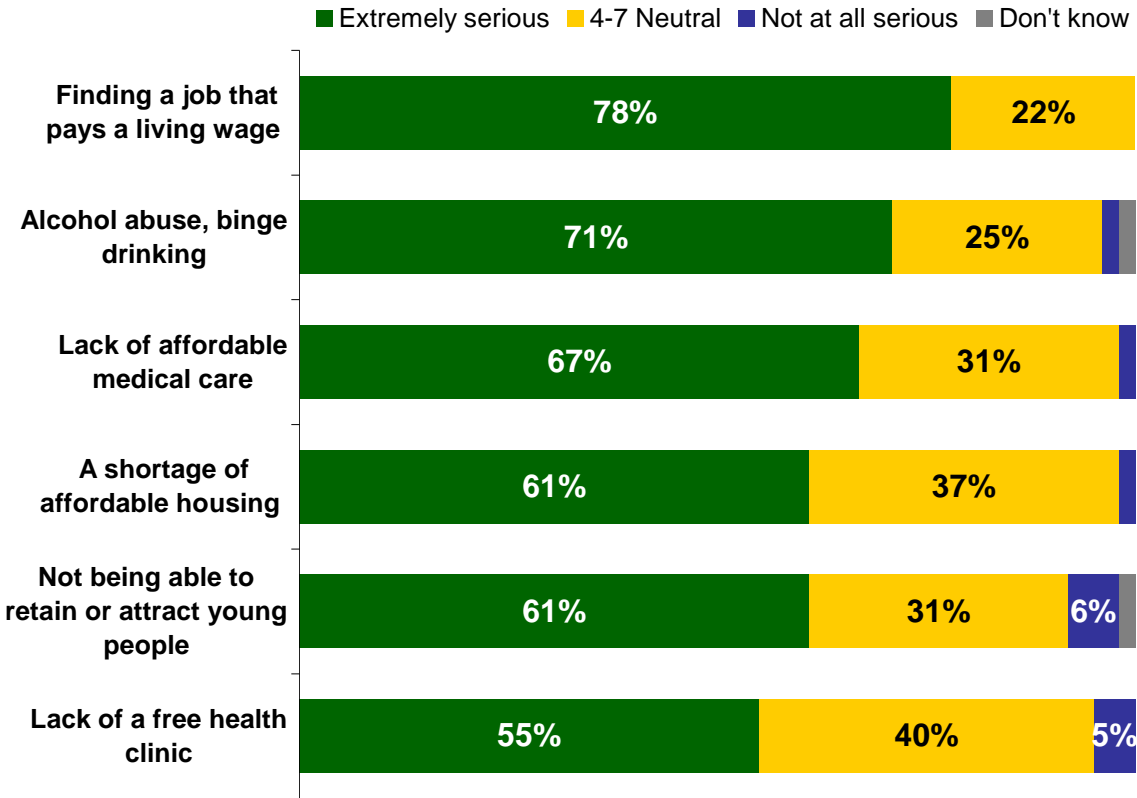
<b>Q3. Which groups, organizations, or agencies are in the best position to address affordable housing?</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
City Government	3	25%
Grand Forks Housing Authority	2	17%
St. Vincent De Paul	1	8%
Northlands Rescue Mission	1	8%
Prairie Harvest	1	8%
Urban Development	1	8%
Local employers	1	8%
Shelters	1	8%
Social services	1	8%
<i>Total (8 respondents gave 12 responses)</i>	12	100%

# Community Challenges (I)

When asked how serious a number of issues were in the Greater Grand Forks area, finding a job that pays a living wage was noted as the most serious. This was followed closely by alcohol abuse or binge drinking and lack of affordable medical care. A shortage of affordable housing, not being able to retain or attract young people and lack of a free health clinic round out the top six community challenges.

**N=51**

Q4. Please rate how serious you believe the problem is in the community, where 1 is "not at all serious" and 10 is "extremely serious."

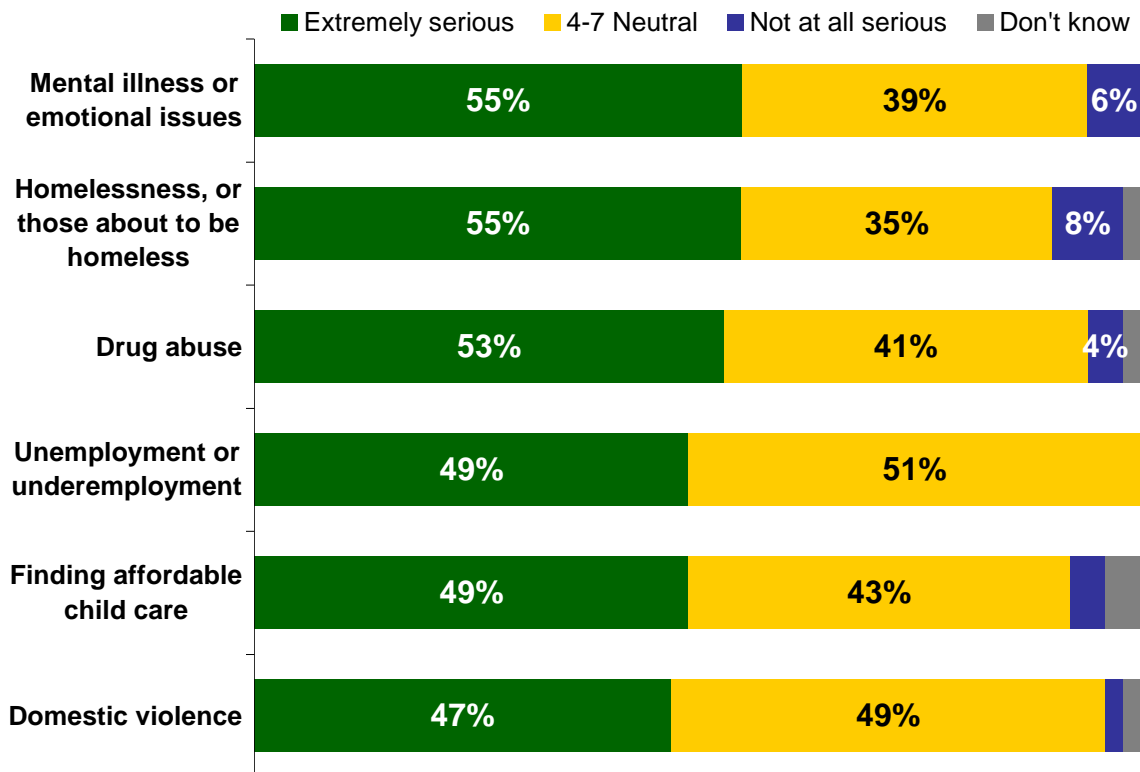


# Community Challenges (II)

The next group of issues were seen as serious problems in the community to about half of the service providers.

**N=51**

Q4. Please rate how serious you believe the problem is in the community, where 1 is "not at all serious" and 10 is "extremely serious."

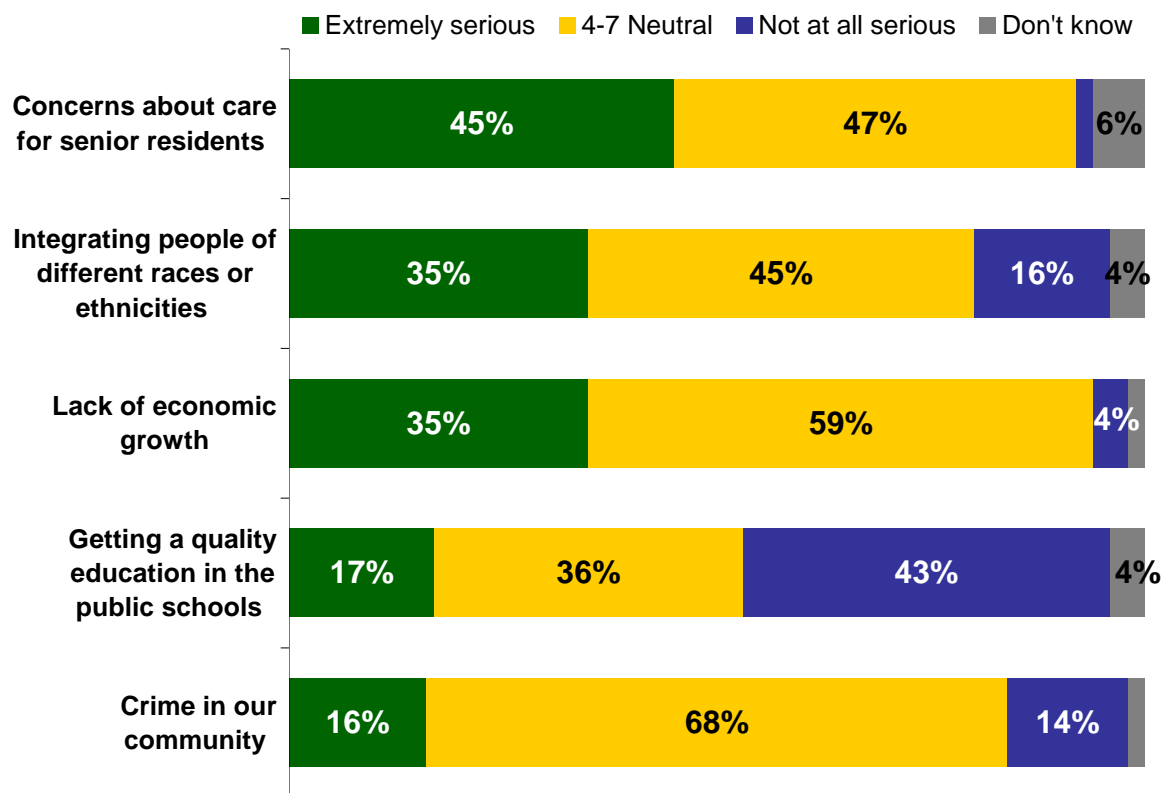


# Community Challenges (III)

The final set of issues were seen as the least serious issues facing the Greater Grand Forks area, with crime and access to a quality education receiving the lowest extremely serious ratings, at 17% and 16%, respectively.

**N=51**

Q4. Please rate how serious you believe the problem is in the community, where 1 is "not at all serious" and 10 is "extremely serious."



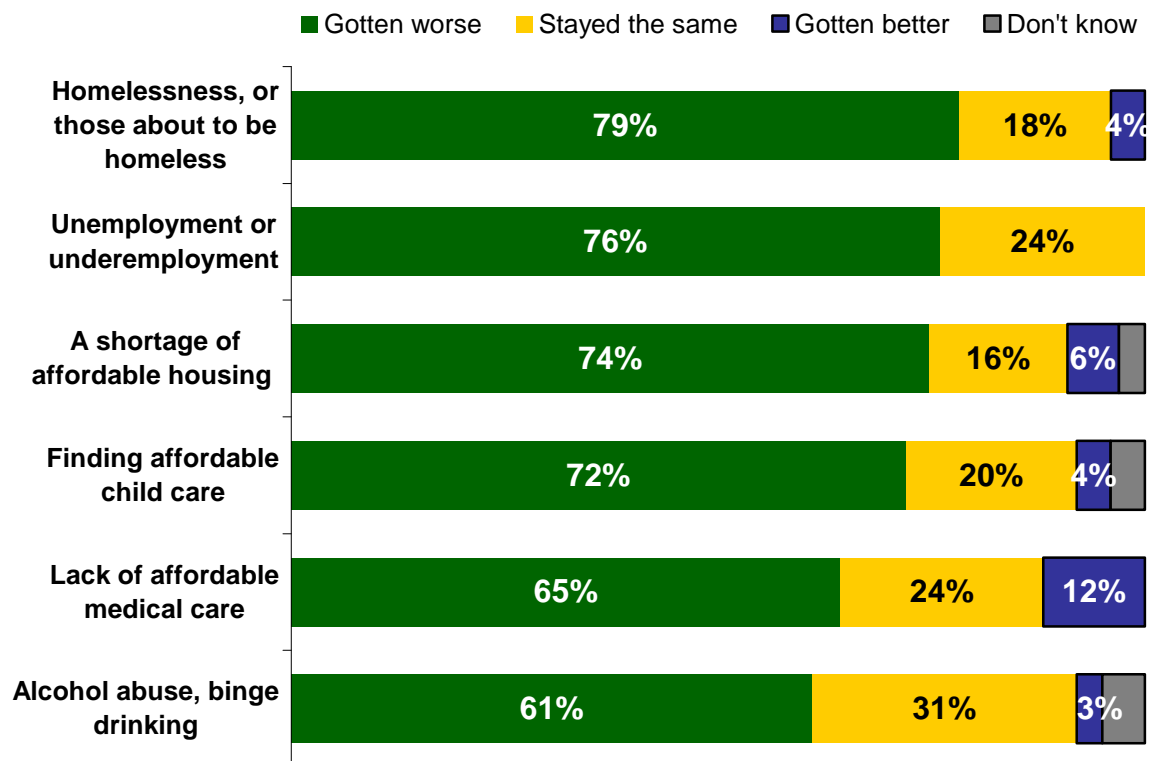
# Change in Problems Over Time (I)

Those who ranked an issue an 8, 9 or 10 to the previous question, Question 4, "Please rate how serious you believe the problem is in the community, where 1 is "not at all serious" and 10 is "extremely serious," were then asked how they felt the issue had changed over time, Question 5.

Homelessness ranked 8 out of 17 in level of severity, Question 4, with 55% of service providers identifying it as an extremely serious problem. Here, we see that of those service providers who ranked it extremely serious, almost 80% feel it has gotten worse over the past few years. Service providers also felt that unemployment or underemployment and a shortage of affordable housing and child care have gotten significantly worse over the past few years.

**N=51**

Q5. How have the following problems changed over the past few years in Grand Forks? Have they gotten better, stayed the same or gotten worse?

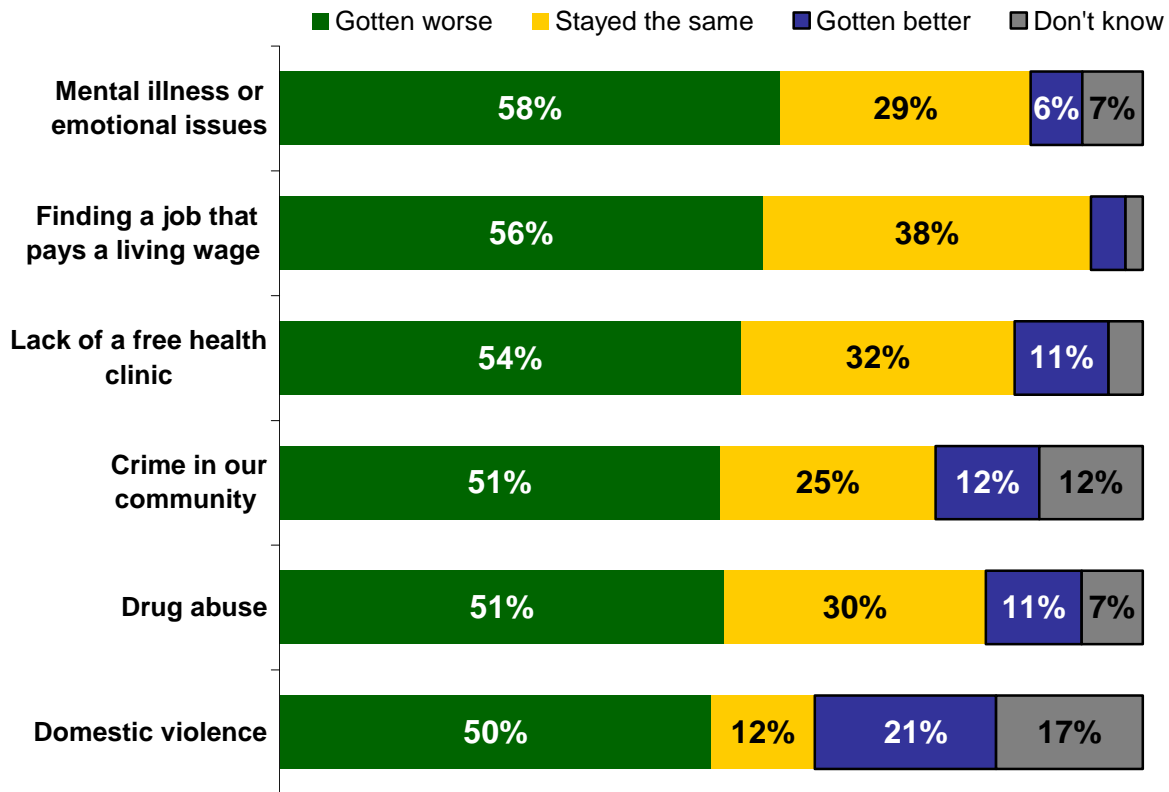


# Change in Problems Over Time (II)

Service providers gave the highest “gotten better” rating to domestic violence, at 21%. However, 50% still believe that it has gotten worse over the past few years.

**N=51**

Q5. How have the following problems changed over the past few years in Grand Forks? Have they gotten better, stayed the same or gotten worse?

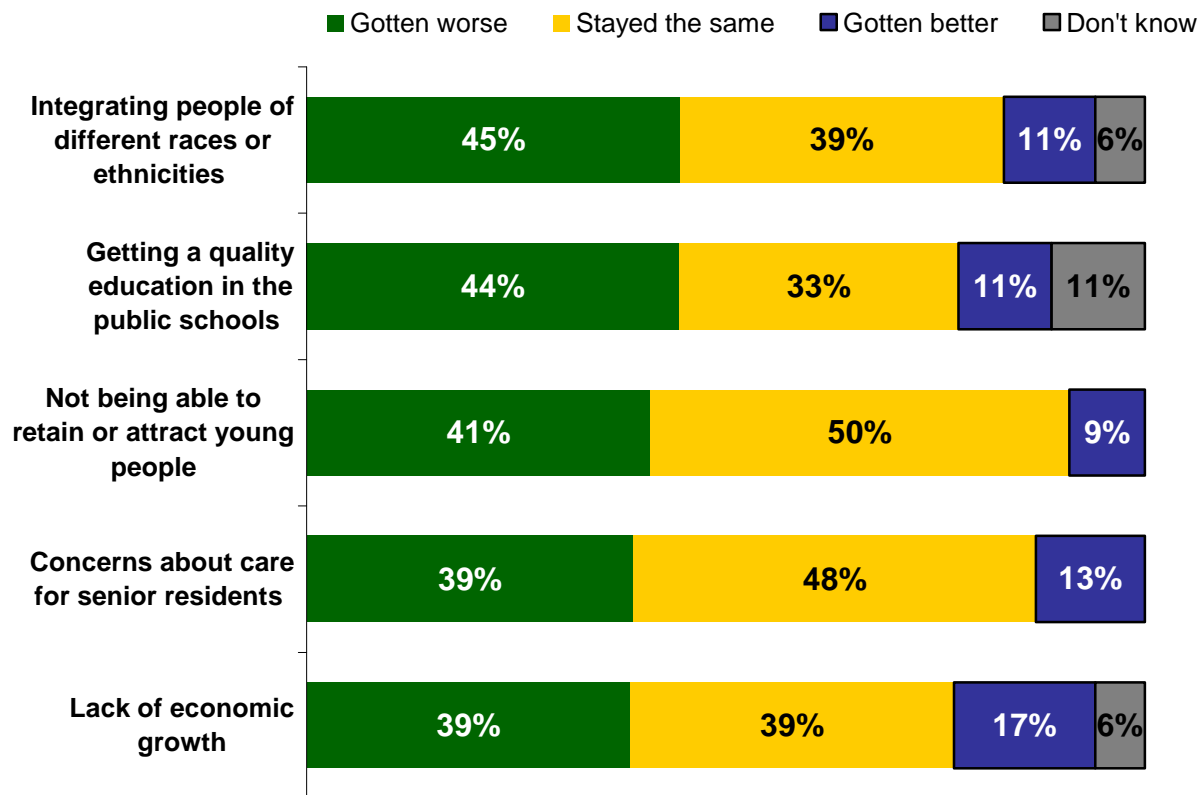


# Change in Problems Over Time (III)

The third tier identifies issues, like integration, quality education, and concerns about care for senior residents, receiving “gotten worse” ratings of 45%, 44% and 39%, respectively.

**N=51**

Q5. How have the following problems changed over the past few years in Grand Forks? Have they gotten better, stayed the same or gotten worse?



# Barriers to Services

A lack of funding was identified as the number one barrier contributing to the lack of services necessary to adequately address the needs of local residents. Service providers also felt that the perception in the community that there is not a problem presents a significant barrier to providing adequate services.

<b>Q6. What types of barriers do you feel are contributing to the lack of services necessary to adequately address the needs of local residents in your area of service/non-profit sector? Please respond on a 1-to-10 scale, where 1 is “not a serious barrier” and 10 is an “extremely serious barrier.”</b>	<b>Mean Score</b>
Lack of funding	8.22
The perception that there isn't a problem	7.59
There is a stigma attached to seeking help	6.88
We depend on donations of supplies/materials, and there are not enough	6.80
Lack of staff/personnel/manpower	6.57
We serve a population with little influence or few advocates in our area	6.43
People who need our services don't know they are available	6.26
Our service is far down on the list of community priorities	6.19
Transportation, people can't get to us	6.06
State and/or local government regulations	5.61
Language and cultural issues not addressed or recognized	5.57
Not enough volunteers	5.50
Lack of facilities	5.49
Access to best practices and training	5.40
Not enough collaboration/cooperation between service providers	4.88

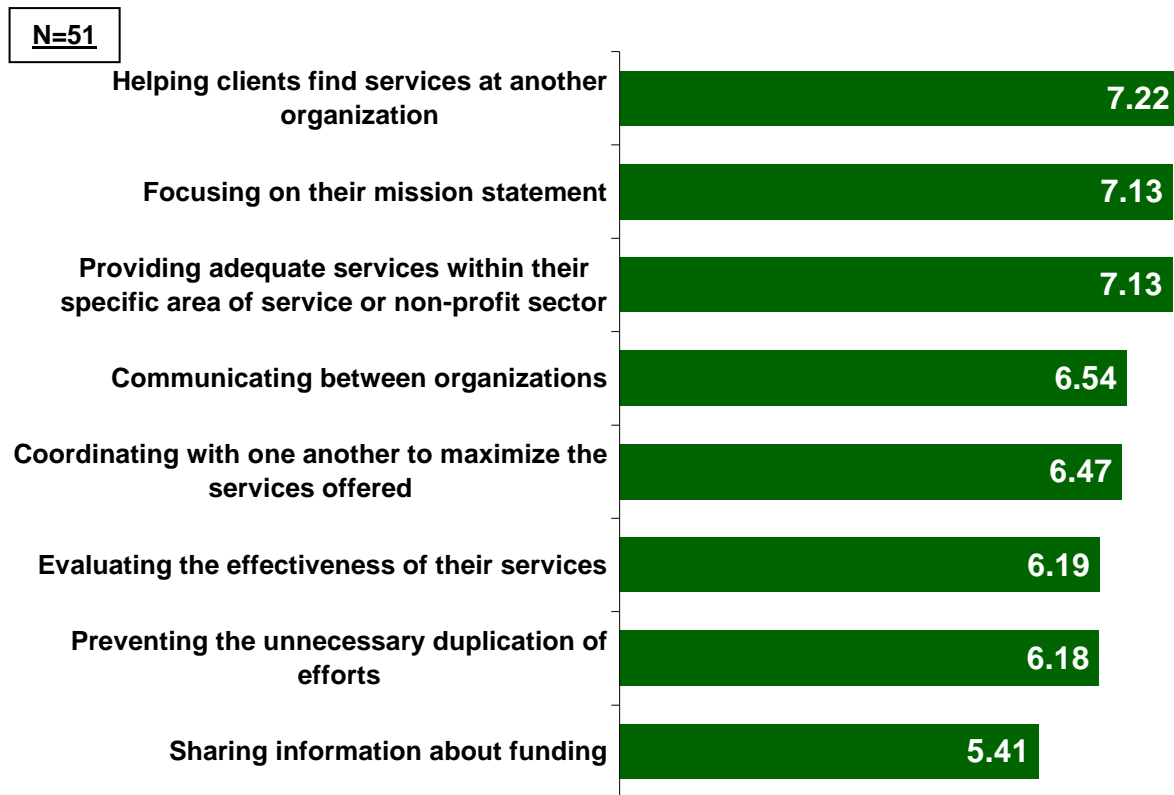
# Other Barriers

Again, funding is identified as the most significant barrier contributing to the lack of services necessary to adequately address the needs of local residents. We also see the availability of public transportation and lack of accountability for those receiving services mentioned as barriers by service providers.

<b><i>Q.7 What other barriers do you feel are contributing to the lack of services necessary to adequately address the needs of local residents in your area of service/non-profit sector?</i></b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Funding	10	20%
Availability of public transportation	4	8%
Lack of requirements for people needing assistance to be accountable	3	6%
Leaders have a different priority	2	4%
Awareness programs exist	2	4%
Pride keeps those needing services away	2	4%
Wages for services providers are too low	2	4%
Interpreter	2	4%
Offense on your record	2	4%
Community's acceptance of problems (alcohol abuse by minors, homelessness)	1	2%
Too many non-profits	1	2%
Community is unaware of the severity of problems	1	2%
Increased demand for limited resources	1	2%
Cost of health care for employees	1	2%
Cost of child care for employees	1	2%
Prevention - early intervention	1	2%
Need more time to work	1	2%
Keeping and attracting talented employees	1	2%
Time of day services are offered	1	2%
Not enough space	1	2%
No additional comment	11	22%
<b><i>Total (51 respondents)</i></b>	<b>51</b>	<b>100%</b>

# Challenges Facing Service Providers

Sharing information about funding opportunities was identified as the most significant challenge facing service providers. We also see preventing the unnecessary duplication of efforts and evaluating the effectiveness of their services at the top of the challenges identified by service providers.



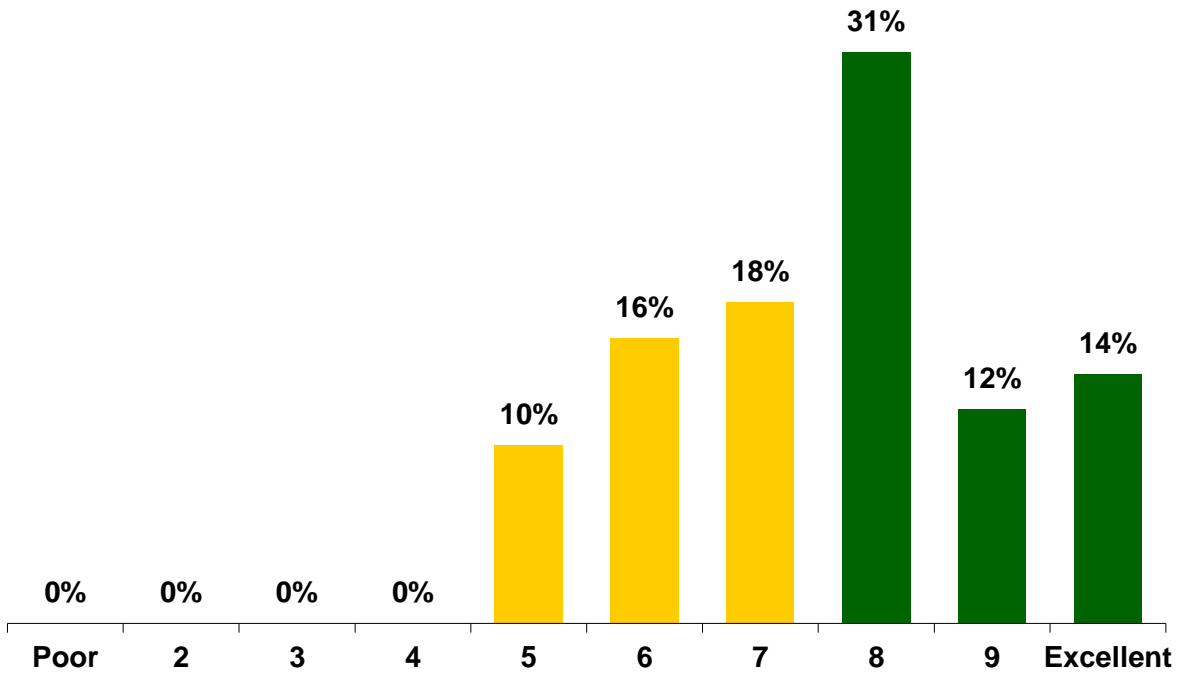
*Q.8 How would you rate local service agencies and non-profit organizations when it comes to the attributes listed below? Please respond on a 1-to-10 scale, where 1 is "poor" and 10 is "excellent."*

# Overall Perception of Local Agencies and Organizations

The overall perception of the local agencies and organizations working in the community was high – a mean score of 7.61 out of 10. However, there was a significant group – 44% of service providers – who gave neutral ratings of 5, 6 or 7.

**N=51**

**Mean**  
7.61



Q9. What is your overall perception of the local agencies and organizations working in the community?

# Service Providers' Drivers

Here, we see what drives service providers' overall perception of local agencies and organizations working in the community. Communication and coordination have the highest correlation, and addressing these would greatly improve service providers' perceptions of agencies working in the community.

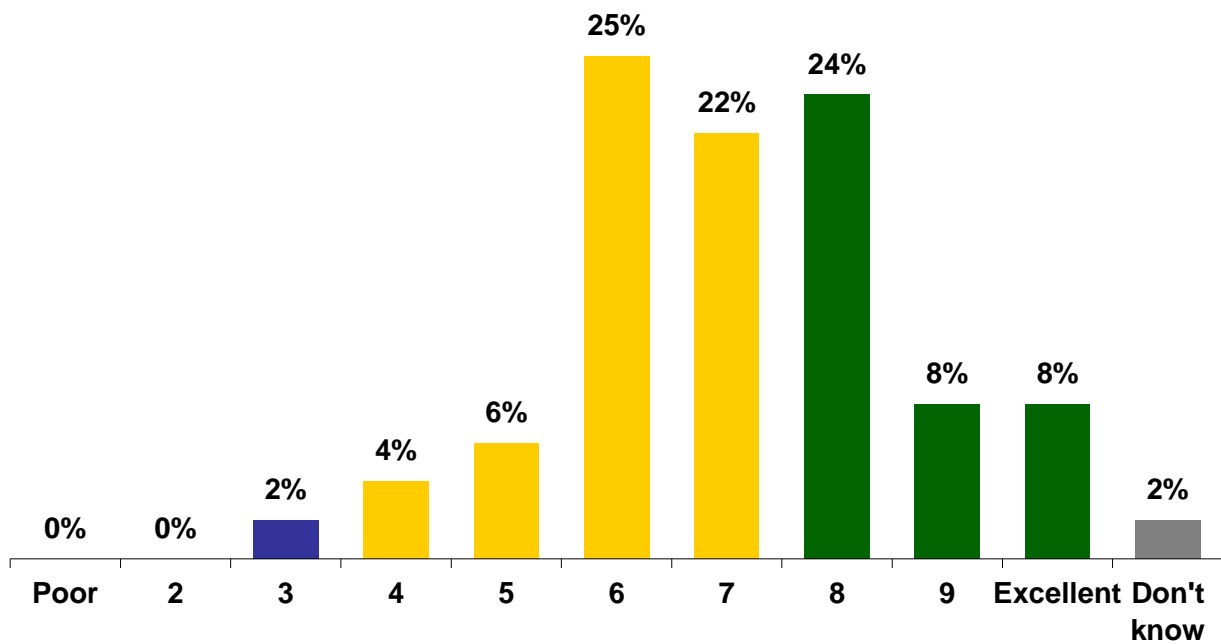
<b><i>Correlation between overall perception of local agencies and organizations working in the community and the following:</i></b>	<b>Correlation</b>
Communicating between organizations	0.645
Coordinating with one another to maximize the services offered	0.621
Evaluating the effectiveness of their services	0.578
Focusing on their mission statement	0.543
Helping clients find services at another organization	0.536
Preventing the unnecessary duplication of efforts	0.509
Providing adequate services within their specific area of service or non-profit sector	0.490
Sharing information about funding	0.475

# Overall Quality of Life

When asked about the overall quality of life in the Greater Grand Forks area, service providers gave a mean score of 7.06 out of 10. However, here, we see a larger range of scores from 3 to 10.

**N=51**

**Mean**  
7.06



*Q.10 How would you rate the overall quality of life, the personal satisfaction with the cultural and intellectual environments, for residents of Grand Forks, East Grand Forks?*

# Understanding Overall Quality of Life Rating (I)

## Poor

One service provider ranked the overall quality of life as poor – a 1, 2 or 3 rating. His/her reasoning was, “an ‘us and they’ mentality.”

<b>Q11. Why do you say that?</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Poor rating</b>		
There is "an 'us and they' mentality"	1	100%
<i>Total (1 respondent)</i>	1	100%

## Neutral

Twenty-nine service providers gave the overall quality of life a neutral rating – a 4, 5, 6 or 7 rating. We see low wages and high cost of living as the reason for these ratings.

<b>Q11. Why do you say that?</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Neutral rating</b>		
Low wages	7	21%
High cost of living	5	15%
Need more/cheaper things for residents to do as families	4	12%
Need to be more accepting and understanding of diversity	4	12%
Little cultural/intellectual diversity in our community	3	9%
Public attitudes	2	6%
Can do more for low income	2	6%
Youths and outsiders have negative perceptions of Grand Forks	1	3%
City leaders are not focused on community issues	1	3%
Lack of transportation	1	3%
Most people seem happy	1	3%
Community is closed to new people	1	3%
Don't know	1	3%
<i>Total (29 respondents gave 33 responses)</i>	33	100%

# Understanding Overall Quality of Life Rating (II)

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## ***Excellent***

Those who rated the overall quality of life as excellent – 8, 9 or 10 – did so because they believe the Greater Grand Forks area is a great place to live and work, it is a safe community with good schools and has lots to offer residents.

<b><i>Q11. Why do you say that?</i></b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b><i>Excellent rating</i></b>		
Great place to live and work	6	27%
Safe	4	18%
Good schools	4	18%
Things to do	3	14%
Friendly	2	9%
Size of community	1	5%
Willingness to work together	1	5%
Don't know	1	5%
<b><i>Total (20 respondents gave 22 responses)</i></b>	<b>22</b>	<b>67%</b>

# Community Strengths

Service providers agree that the Greater Grand Forks area has non-profit leaders who are knowledgeable and effective in addressing community issues. They disagree that the community is one where leaders from business, labor, government, education, religious, neighborhood, non-profit and all other sectors come together and work productively to address critical community issues. In addition, service providers feel that members of the community do not have enough money for basic needs, like food, clothing and housing.

<b>Q12. Please rate your agreement with the statements below, where 1 is “strongly disagree” and 10 is “strongly agree.” Our community:</b>	<b>Mean Score</b>
Has non-profit leaders who are knowledgeable about community issues	7.51
Has non-profit leaders who are effective in addressing community issues	7.10
Is one that actively promotes positive relations among people from all races	5.80
Has enough service providers/services in the area to address the needs of local residents	5.65
Has the right people in place for future growth and development	5.50
Is one where leaders from all sectors of the community share common goals and uphold a common vision for the community	5.39
Has government leaders who are knowledgeable about community issues	5.24
Is one where a great deal of money and resources are being saved due to coordination of efforts	5.17
Has government leaders who are effective in addressing community issues	5.17
Is one where leaders from business, labor, government, education, religious, neighborhood, non-profit and all other sectors come together and work productively to address critical community issues	4.96
Is one where people have enough money for basic needs, like food, clothing and housing	4.39

# Coordination and Maximization

Service providers agree that communication is the key to helping them coordinate with one another to maximize the availability of necessary services to local residents in need. How service providers want this communication to take place varies with some calling for meetings, others a committee, while still others a clearinghouse where residents can find out about the services provided in the community.

<b><i>Q13. What do you think would be the best way to help local service providers coordinate with one another and maximize the availability of necessary services to local residents in need?</i></b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Meetings	11	20%
Communication between organizations	8	14%
A committee or organization should be established	7	13%
Collaboration	5	9%
Funding	4	7%
Willingness to work together	3	5%
Clearinghouse where residents can find out about services	2	4%
Evaluation of services/documentation of service to prevent duplication	1	2%
Make other organizations aware of what services others provide	1	2%
Better referral system	1	2%
Don't know	13	23%
<b><i>Total (51 respondents gave 56 responses)</i></b>	<b>56</b>	<b>100%</b>

# Additional Comments (I)

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- ▼ All agencies need to focus on caring thoughtful implementation of services with a heartfelt attitude coupled with knowledge to be a success.
- ▼ Efficiency in non-profits is essential. I feel that there is too much overhead in larger organizations that tend to dominate the grant process. There are many smaller organizations whose operations would be completely funded by the annual salary of one Ex. Dir or CEO of other non-profits in the community. This frustrates users that need services in other venues.
- ▼ GF is a good community to live in however we have public service challenge areas i.e. homelessness, no insurance, recreation that is afford including transportation to.
- ▼ Grand Forks feel proud of their community. The greenway is great. Needs a big shelter for large events.
- ▼ Grand Forks has the needed non-profit agencies in place to serve people in need - unfortunately, the needed funding isn't available to provide the level of service required.
- ▼ Grand Forks is a good community but it could get even better
- ▼ Groups such as Interagency Forum are good for communicating and networking. More agency people should be involved. Seems it is the same ones that participate in such group efforts most often.
- ▼ I do not have an additional comment at this time.
- ▼ I don't have further comment
- ▼ I feel that while local service provider communication has improved greatly over the past years we continue to struggle to get the local government leaders to recognize the importance in our programming and how we fit in with the business community in providing services that improve the quality of life in the community.
- ▼ I like Grand Forks; it is a safe, welcoming community. We are doing a good job on most community aspects, but there is always room for improvement and I am willing to be a part of that discussion.

## Additional Comments (II)

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- ▼ Let us focus on ALL the residents of our community.
- ▼ Non-profits especially do not have advertising dollars. It would be helpful if the media outlets across the community reached out more to focus on community resources and keeping them in the public eye and doing this as a community service.
- ▼ Non-profit sector is often left out of community leadership planning/visioning
- ▼ Nonprofits need to better tell the "untold story" of what is happening in the community and we need leaders (especially local elected) who will LISTEN and be willing to do something about it!
- ▼ Our agency serves a population that is traditionally underserved and less embraced by society. Mental illness affects one in every five families and one of every four people. Depression is the #2 disabling condition in the US with heart disease being #1. How is it that providing services to people with mental illness becomes so difficult to find funding and resources? The stigma attached to mental illness is alarmingly alive in our community.
- ▼ People working together and agencies being open for all ages.
- ▼ Requiring accountability is key to helping people succeed - too many chances are not always a good thing. consequences of actions help people to figure things out faster and more effectively
- ▼ Someday, It is hoped (and believed) that the world will be a better, the best place for all to be. One in which money is not such a force to reckon with. It is always about the almighty dollar! Not about peace, cooperation, collaboration, connection, relationships, communication, balance, fairness/equality, being there/present in the moment for others, etc.
- ▼ The GF United Way has been a good advocate, supports the Senior Companion Program, and likes what we do for the area seniors.

## Additional Comments (III)

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- ▼ The Grand Forks area often puts money and resources towards those efforts that will increase the city's image, not increase the quality of life of ALL people in the community. The unseen, as history points out, are often those in need of the most assistance. An intense look at these "unseen" people is needed.
- ▼ There is a real wide span in quality between various groups in town. Some are beautifully run, some need drastic improvement. Sometimes it is a matter of money, sometimes of the vision and integrity of the person at the top. It's hard to give an average rating when some do things so well and others just slide by-- under the radar.
- ▼ We also need a detoxification center to educate those w/chemical abuse to become sober and become productive citizens.
- ▼ We need to have more different ethnicity (non-whites) community leaders in city government.

# Comparing Phases: Critical Issues (I)

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A goal of the community needs assessment is to understand where there are differences between community leaders and decision-makers, service providers and residents. When asked, "In your opinion, what is the critical issue facing the Greater Grand Forks area?" service providers and residents agreed on underemployment, while community leaders and decision-makers said diversifying the economy. Service providers and community residents ranked growing or diversifying the economy fifth and second, respectively. Affordable housing was ranked third overall for community leaders and decision-makers, second for service providers and fourth for community residents.

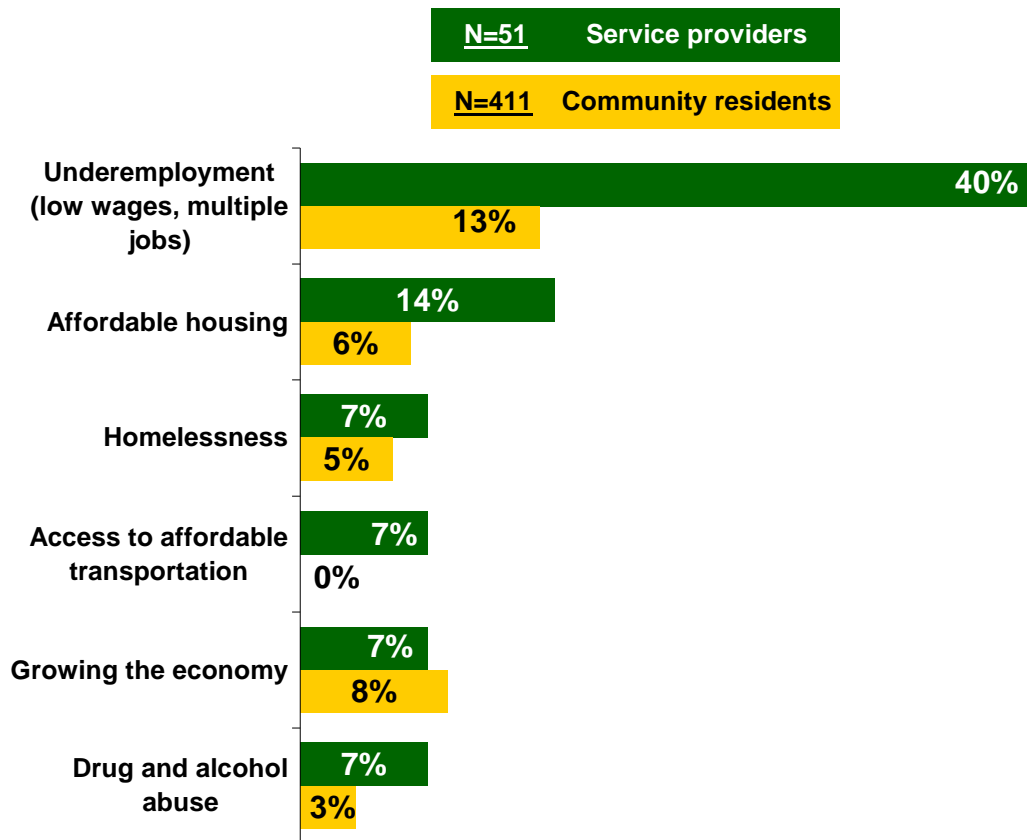
Critical issues mentioned by community leaders and decision-makers, in order of frequency:

- ▼ Diversifying economy
- ▼ Underemployment
- ▼ Affordable housing
- ▼ Lack of population growth
- ▼ Retention of youths
- ▼ Retention of highly educated people

# Comparing Phases: Critical Issues (II)

One point to note is the percentage of people who mentioned these critical issues in each group, specifically service providers and community residents. While both groups agreed that underemployment was the most critical issue, 40% of service providers mentioned it, while only 13% of community residents mentioned it. “Don’t know” was the response most often given by community residents to the question, at 22%.

Q1. In your opinion, what is the critical issue facing the Greater Grand Forks area? (Top six issues for service provider)

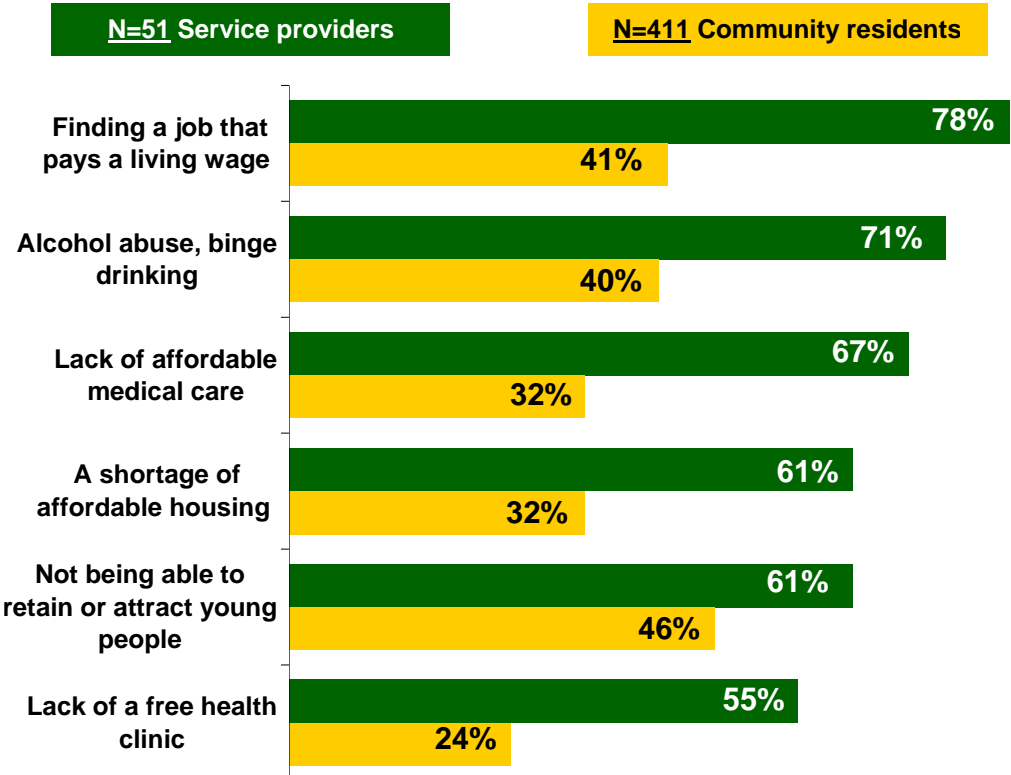


# Comparing Phases: Most Serious Problems

When asked to rate the level of severity of 17 issues, service providers felt finding a job that pays a living wage was the most serious, while community residents said not being able to retain or attract young people.

Again, we see a significant difference between the percentage of service providers and community residents when ranking the severity of issues. While both groups agreed that finding a job that paid a living wage was a serious issue in the community, only 41% of community residents said it was an extremely serious issue, while 78% of service providers gave such a rating.

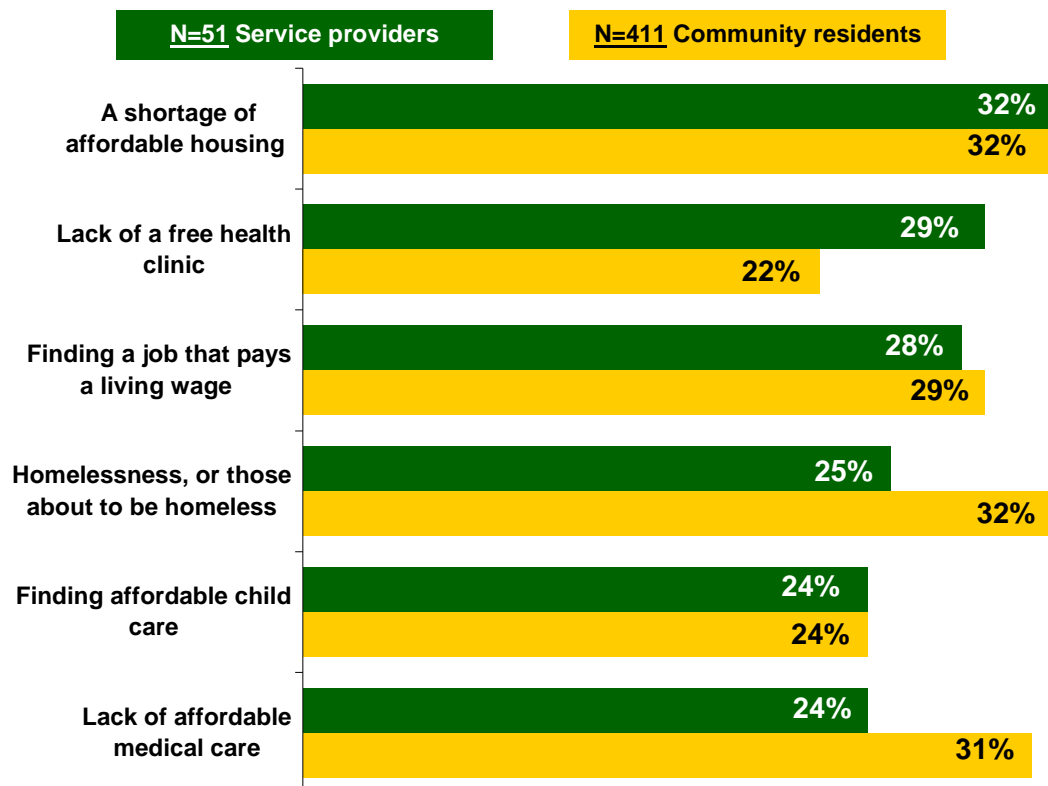
*Q4. Please rate how serious you believe the problem is in the community, where 1 is "not at all serious" and 10 is "extremely serious." (Attributes receiving highest "extremely serious" rating by service provider)*



# Comparing Phases: Changes in Issues Over Time

In a change from the previous pages, we see similarities in the percentage for service providers and community residents when discussing the level of change with affordable housing, finding a job that pays a living wage and finding affordable child care. Those differences we do see in lack of a free health clinic, homelessness and lack of affordable medical care are small.

*Q5. How have the following problems changed over the past few years in Grand Forks? Have they gotten better, stayed the same or gotten worse?  
(Attributes receiving the highest "gotten worse" rating by service providers)*



# Comparing Phases: Community Strengths

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Community residents ranked seven of the nine community strengths higher overall than service providers. Service providers gave themselves higher ratings in knowledge and effectiveness in addressing community problems than community residents.

<i>Q12. Please rate your agreement with the statements below, where 1 is "strongly disagree" and 10 is "strongly agree." Our community:</i>	<b>Service Provider Mean Score</b>	<b>Community Residents Mean Score</b>
Has non-profit leaders who are knowledgeable about community issues	7.51	7.04
Has non-profit leaders who are effective in addressing community issues	7.10	6.81
Is one that actively promotes positive relations among people from all races	5.80	6.28
Has the right people in place for future growth and development	5.50	6.07
Is one where leaders from all sectors of the community share common goals and uphold a common vision for the community	5.39	6.15
Has government leaders who are knowledgeable about community issues	5.24	6.70
Has government leaders who are effective in addressing community issues	5.17	6.26
Is one where leaders from business, labor, government, education, religious, neighborhood, non-profit and all other sectors come together and work productively to address critical community issues	4.96	6.11
Is one where people have enough money for basic needs, like food, clothing and housing	4.39	5.76