

# If rural nurses undertake regular community assessment (biannually) will this identify issues that if left unattended would reduce sustainable healthcare for rural communities?

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## Introduction:

There are greater needs for healthcare services in rural area due to risk factors linked with rural living and accessing services are difficult (Ryan-Nicholls, 2004).

Community assessments can be utilized to ensure that the services used are those needed to sustain and improve the health in rural communities.

## Clinical Issue:

There are challenges associated with healthcare in rural communities (Ryan-Nicholls, 2004). Health of communities is dependent on the social determinants of health which differ in each community. Services need to be suited to the needs of specific communities for them to be sustainable.

## Sustainability:

Is defined as communities that work together to conserve the physical, cultural, social and natural environment. The carrying capacity is when the community has all the health resources available in the community to manage illness (McMurray & Clendon, 2010).

## Nursing practice:

Healthcare is a problem due to access of a limited range of healthcare services. Nurses need a diverse range of skills and knowledge as there are less services available than in urban areas. These nurses have to provide services which most benefit the community (Anderson & McFarlane, 2011).

## Community Assessment:

Purpose is to gain knowledge of strengths, weaknesses, issues and interventions. This is used to create change or empowering the community. It is important to work in partnership with the community when initiating change. Community assessment allows nurses to determine the health of a community, develop and improve existing strategies and prioritise health services to ensure healthy living environments (Anderson & McFarlane, 2011).

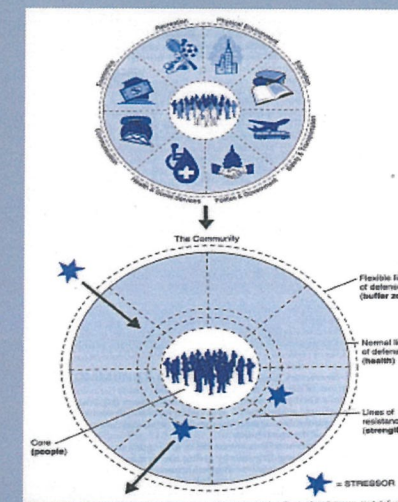


Figure 1: (Anderson & McFarlane, 2011, p. 173)

## Rational:

Regular community assessments (biannually) will identify issues that if not identified would have negative impact on the health of rural community's. It is important to ensure that the needs of community's are always being met. Therefore making regular community assessment essential for sustainability (Anderson & McFarlane, 2011).

## Conclusion

Community assessments help gather data about a community. As every community is different, Nurses use community assessments to ensure that they are providing the right services. This creates sustainability by ensuring that health issues within the community are met or can be used for change.

## References:

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