Los Alamos County is located on the Pajarito Plateau between White Rock Canyon and the Valles Caldera and sits at 7,355 feet above sea level, with the highest peak in the county topping 10,000 feet in altitude. The county is nestled between Santa Fe, Rio Arriba and Sandoval counties and is geographically the smallest county in the state. Los Alamos County encompasses the towns of White Rock and Los Alamos. It had a population of 18,147 in 2016.

In 1942, it was chosen by the federal government as a remote location for the Manhattan Project to develop the first atomic bomb. Los Alamos National Laboratory was later established as a research facility under the Department of Energy, and serves as a hub for scientific and high tech research and product development.

High levels of education and income often set Los Alamos County apart from the rest of the state. The county is often cited as having the highest number of PhDs per capita in the nation. The county is ranked among the healthiest in the state.

MENTAL HEALTH

The rate for MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDERS IN LOS ALAMOS COUNTY is 215 PROVIDERS PER 100,000; this rate is LOWER THAN THE STATE RATE of 357 mental health providers per 100,000.

During 2013-2015, 19% OF SURVEYED ADULTS REPORTED HAVING a doctor-diagnosed DEPRESSION.

WHAT IS BEING DONE WITHIN THE COMMUNITY TO ADDRESS THIS HEALTH ISSUE?

- The Mental Health Access Project: Connecting to Emotional Wellbeing was launched to provide access to behavioral health resources and mental health screening tools. The project provides a website (www.losalamosmentalhealth.org) which offers information about providers and phone numbers for immediate assistance. The site has been successful, with over 350 unique visits in the first 3 months.

- Los Alamos YMCA-Teen Center in partnership with the Los Alamos Juvenile Justice Advisory Board offers classes for youth to learn about healthy relationships, gender specific programing, and support groups. The YMCA hosts weekly open counseling for teens, followed by a general support group, with professional support from Mesa Vista Wellness Center. In 2016, the YMCA-Teen Center served 1,200 youth.
During 2011-2015, LOS ALAMOS COUNTY RESIDENTS 65 YEARS AND OLDER had the 3RD HIGHEST RATE for FALL-RELATED DEATHS among New Mexico’s counties; during this time 17 PERSONS DIED FROM FALLS.

WHAT IS BEING DONE WITHIN THE COMMUNITY TO ADDRESS THIS HEALTH ISSUE?

• An Older Adult Falls Prevention Coalition was created to address falls among adults aged 65 and over. Fall prevention workshops have been presented to community members reaching roughly 100 individuals. These presentations resulted in an estimated 10 seniors signing up for home visits to assess fall-risks in their homes.

• Since 2013, roughly 4 presentations on the topic of dementia have been offered to community members in alignment with a community goal of becoming a dementia friendly community. A dementia friendly community is defined as one that is informed, safe and respectful of individuals with dementia and their families, provides supportive options, and fosters quality of life.

• The New Mexico Department of Health’s Office of Injury Prevention teamed up with the Diabetes Prevention & Control Program to address diabetes in older adults at risk of falling. A 4-part lunch series is being delivered to physicians at Los Alamos Medical Center to educate staff at the hospital about resources and tools available through NMDOH. Fall prevention and chronic disease management classes are being scheduled for seniors at senior centers in the Los Alamos community.

For more information contact:
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Data Sources:
• Bureau of Vital Records and Health Statistics (BVRHS), New Mexico Department of Health
• Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey (BRFSS) Data, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
• National Provider Identification (NPI) Registry, U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services