

New Mexico Domestic Violence Services Needs Assessment Executive Summary

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Background

The University of New Mexico Prevention Research Center (UNM PRC) conducted a needs assessment of DV services in NM. The needs assessment focused on the capacity, needs and challenges at the organizational and systems levels. The needs assessment consisted of three components, an online survey of programs, interviews with DV service providers, and a geospatial analysis to better understand access to services across the state. This report provides the results of the individual components of this assessment and provides recommendations for the future.

Key Findings

- 1 in 3 people in NM lives more than 10 miles driving distance to the closest DV program and more than 1 in 10 live over 25 miles from the nearest service provider.
- Only 4 DV organizations indicated that their services could be reached by most people seeking services using public transportation.
- A majority of DV organizations in NM serve individuals from tribal lands.
- There is a lower average capacity to serve people with limited English proficiency, people of different races and ethnicities, people living with disabilities, and people with mental and behavioral health issues, including substance misuse.
- Limited support services exist for LGBTQ+ populations.
- Nearly half of DV organizations had at least one vacant staff position at the time of the survey.
- Nine DV organizations had to restructure in the past 2 years because they could not fill an open position.
- There is a need for better collection and presentation of DV data at the state level.
- Many DV organizations are conducting primary prevention initiatives focused on individuals and interpersonal relationships.
- There is a need for more organizational, community, and society level primary prevention work.



"It's just bits and pieces. It's always a puzzle, and always trying to find that specific funding for that specific need is really difficult."

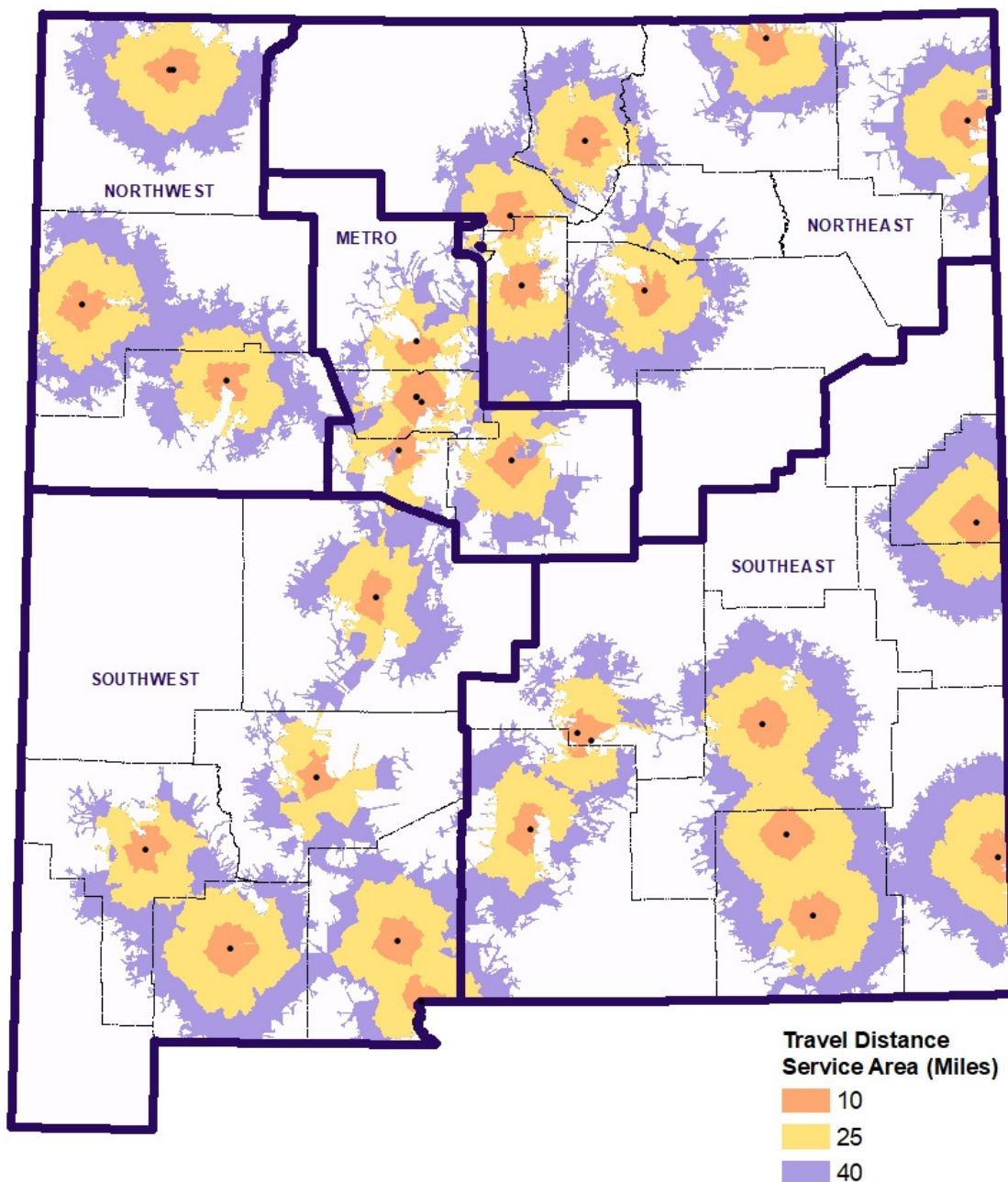
Barriers to obtaining DV services included:

- Lack of providers including therapists, counselors, and lawyers
- Geographic size and rurality inhibits hiring and access
- Lack of transportation
- Social stigma, especially in particular cultures
- Administrative burden and funding constraints
- Conflicting jurisdictional policies or regulations
- Silos between agencies and tribal, federal, state, and local entities
- Lack of sufficient mental and behavioral health services to refer to

Agency priorities were clustered in 8 areas: youth programming, staffing, facilities, outreach and prevention, new or expanded programming, direct intervention work, enhanced organizational capacity, and better connections with law enforcement.

DV Service Area Analysis: Travel Distance 10, 25, 40 Miles

"So our clients who don't have their own vehicle, it does create an extra barrier for them to even get to the shelter."



This map illustrates driving distances that people in New Mexico need to travel to receive DV services. The orange, yellow and purple areas reflect 10, 25 and 40 mile travel distances from services, respectively. Anyone living in the white areas (5% of the population) must drive more than 40 miles to receive services.

The average travel distance to closest DV services is roughly twice that in the Northwest region (15 miles) compared to the Metro region (8 miles). Even greater variability occurs between counties, where physical access is particularly reduced in sparsely populated rural counties. The entire population (100%) of six rural counties lives outside a 40-mile service area compared to 0% in nine counties. Average travel distances vary by roughly 30-fold between counties and range from 3 miles to 90 miles to the closest DV program.

Proportion of population residing more than 10, 25, and 40 Miles from DV Services

Geographic Level	Name	Total Population (2019)	Percent (%) of Population Outside Designated Travel Distance Service Area		
			10 Miles	25 Miles	40 Miles
State	New Mexico	2,092,454	34%	11%	5%
Region	Metro	912,108	28%	5%	2%
	Southwest	303,533	31%	11%	4%
	Southeast	357,737	30%	7%	6%
	Northeast	293,232	42%	20%	9%
	Northwest	225,844	58%	29%	12%
County	Curry	49,732	8%	0%	0%
	Eddy	57,732	8%	0%	0%
	Union	4,133	37%	0%	0%
	Chaves	65,144	15%	1%	0%
	Doña Ana	216,069	29%	4%	0%
	Luna	24,083	12%	9%	0%
	Sandoval	142,704	54%	11%	0%
	San Juan	126,515	52%	19%	0%
	Torrance	15,519	96%	28%	0%
	Rio Arriba	39,159	42%	39%	0%
	McKinley	72,438	69%	45%	0%
	Taos	32,786	47%	11%	1%
	Bernalillo	677,858	20%	4%	1%
	Santa Fe	149,293	29%	10%	2%
	Valencia	76,027	43%	6%	3%
	Lea	70,277	34%	8%	5%
	Roosevelt	18,888	100%	11%	5%
	Otero	66,137	45%	8%	6%
	Grant	27,669	46%	20%	6%
	Los Alamos	18,625	100%	7%	7%
Socorro	16,858	32%	32%	8%	
Cibola	26,891	53%	35%	9%	
San Miguel	27,738	51%	40%	10%	
Lincoln	19,461	28%	13%	13%	
Colfax	12,168	48%	36%	19%	
Sierra	11,031	24%	24%	24%	
Mora	4,536	100%	100%	50%	
Catron	3,526	100%	100%	100%	
De Baca	2,040	100%	100%	100%	
Guadalupe	4,353	100%	100%	100%	
Harding	441	100%	100%	100%	
Hidalgo	4,297	100%	100%	100%	
Quay	8,326	100%	100%	100%	

“I mean, this area is not just rural, it’s – what do they call it? There’s something beyond that. Frontier.”

Recommendations for the Future

Based on this needs assessment, there are several recommendations for moving DV services forward in New Mexico. These include:

- Provide more training opportunities in multiple regions of the state and online, including trainings that offer continuing education units (CEUs)
- Strengthen recruitment efforts among individuals from typically hard to serve populations
- Consider collaborations among DV agencies or other organizations that allow for the sharing of some administrative positions
- Look for opportunities to expand services in the online environment, where appropriate, to increase reach and outreach efficiently
- Review the system of care in the state to identify opportunities to reduce fragmentation of services and administrative costs
- Identify mechanisms for more funding, and for more flexible funding, that will allow programs to address local needs
- Identify and support specific strategies for increasing DV prevention efforts at multiple levels and consider funding staff devoted to prevention
- Develop a plan for reducing the proportion of the population that needs to travel more than 25 miles for DV services
- Provide DV resources and services that better address the needs of the LGBTQ population
- Evaluate opportunities for improving service provision to people affiliated with federal entities, such as military families, and Native American communities
- Partner with others to advocate for improved mental health and behavioral health services
- Conduct a needs assessment with high-risk populations and people seeking services to better understand barriers and facilitators to getting DV services
- Develop a statewide strategic plan that outlines goals, objectives, and tasks to achieve those goals

“One of the problems that we run into pretty regularly is that our resources are tapped. We are running above capacity. And shelters want to refer somebody in, or another organization wants us to assist somebody that they have identified, and we have to say we don’t have capacity. And it’s always heartbreaking.”

Acknowledgements

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“I have always had a heart for this kind of place”