

# Assessment of Sexual and Reproductive Health Services on Martha's Vineyard

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## Introduction

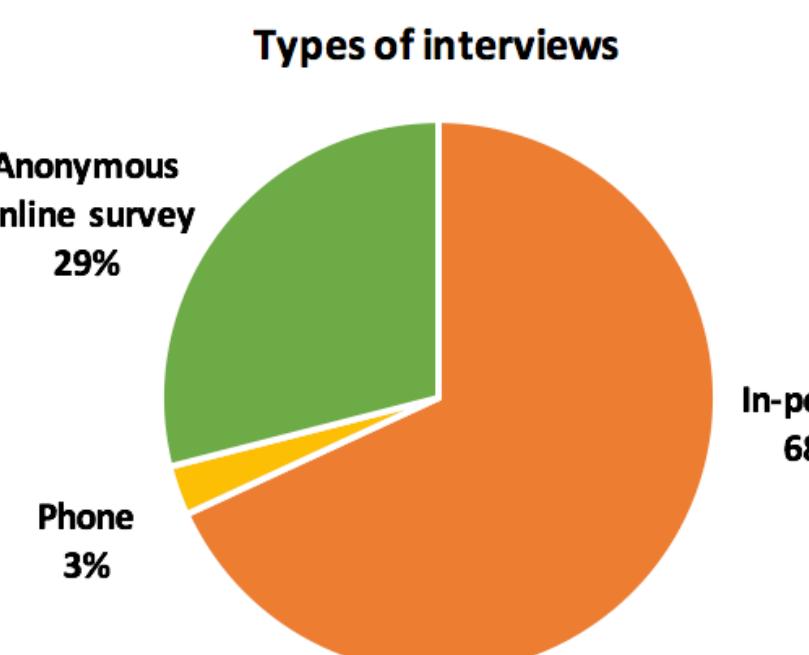
- Martha's Vineyard is part of Duke's County, which encompasses six towns on-island and the Elizabeth islands off Cape Cod
- The county is a rural the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy with a year-round population of 17,246.
- Martha's Vineyard, crucially, is deemed a medically underserved population by Governor's Exception, with both profound primary and dental care shortages.
- These shortages, combined with a lack of specialty care on the island, directly impact reproductive health care delivery, and access, on the island.
- Women from Martha's Vineyard can travel up to 90-101 miles to access abortion services off the Island, while 67% of women in the United States travel less than 25 miles to access abortion services nationwide.

## Project goals

- Identify** the reproductive and sexual health services available on Martha's Vineyard (MV).
- Assess** the community's knowledge of the sexual and reproductive health resources.
- Evaluate** the current reproductive and sexual health services.
- Provide recommendations** for improvement.

## Methods

- 69 participants were interviewed through in-person interview, anonymous online survey, or via phone conference.
- Participants included organization leaders, medical providers, and Martha's Vineyard community members.
- Questions covered reproductive and sexual health topics, including access to contraception, STI prevention and treatment, infertility counseling and treatment, resources for sexual assault, and domestic violence, and abortion access.



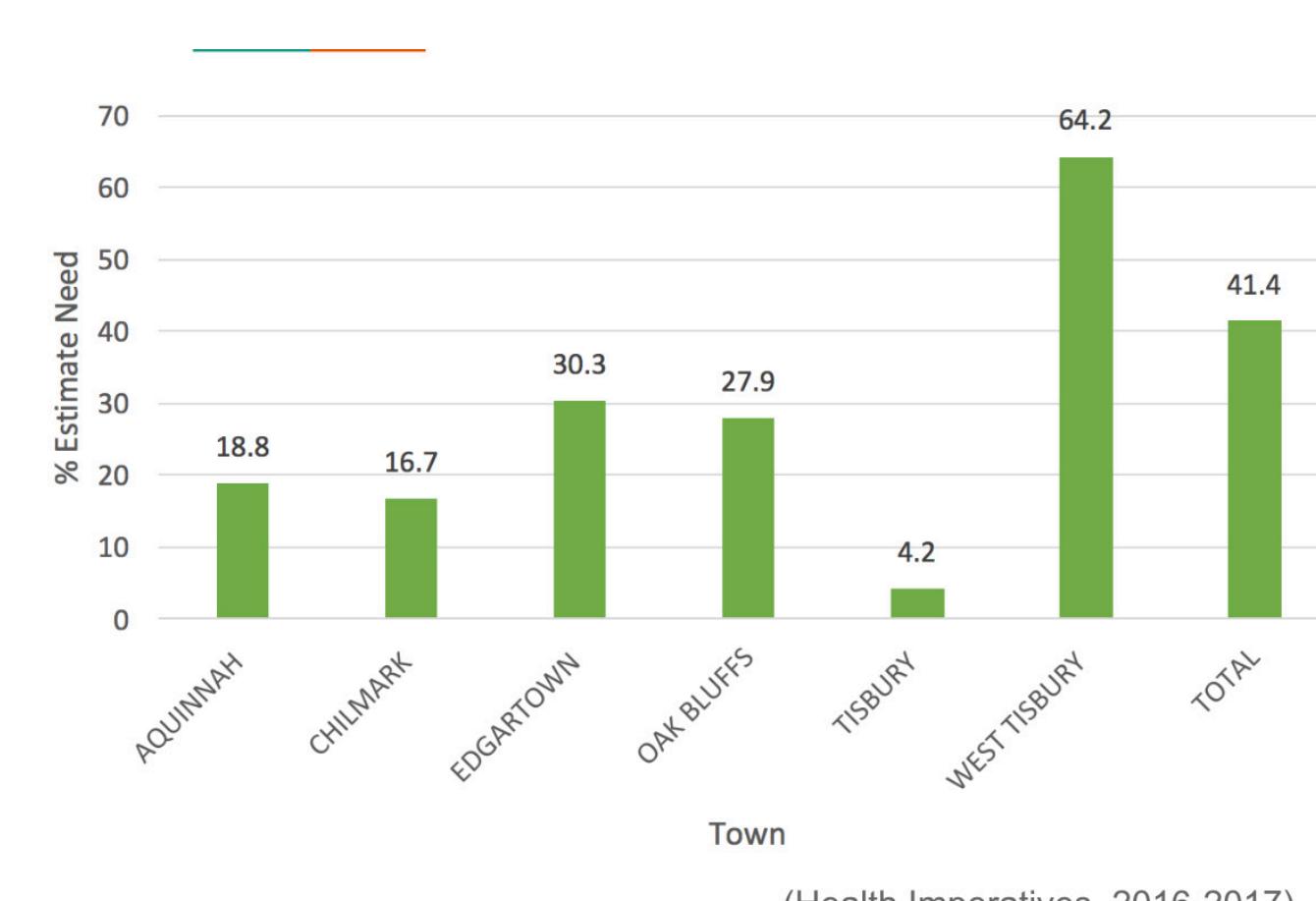
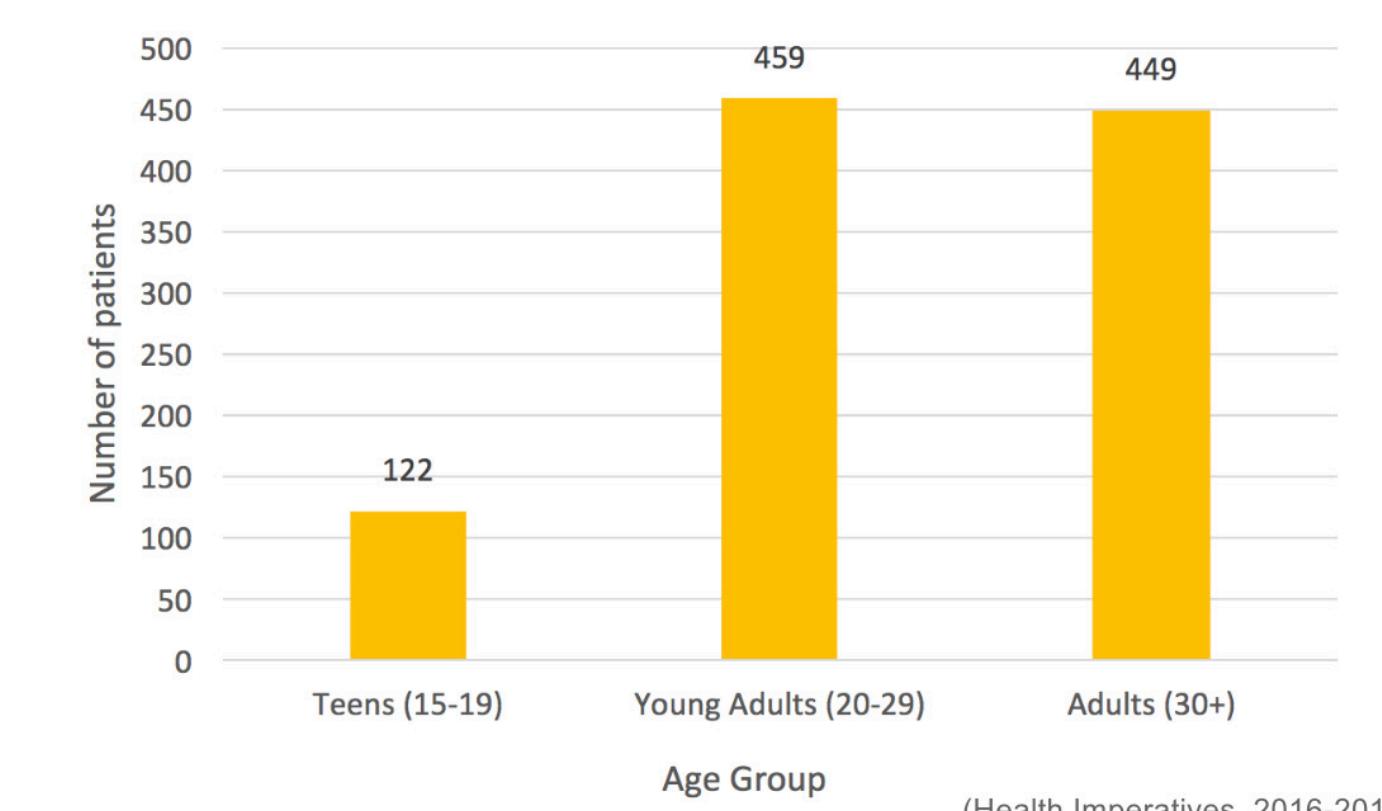
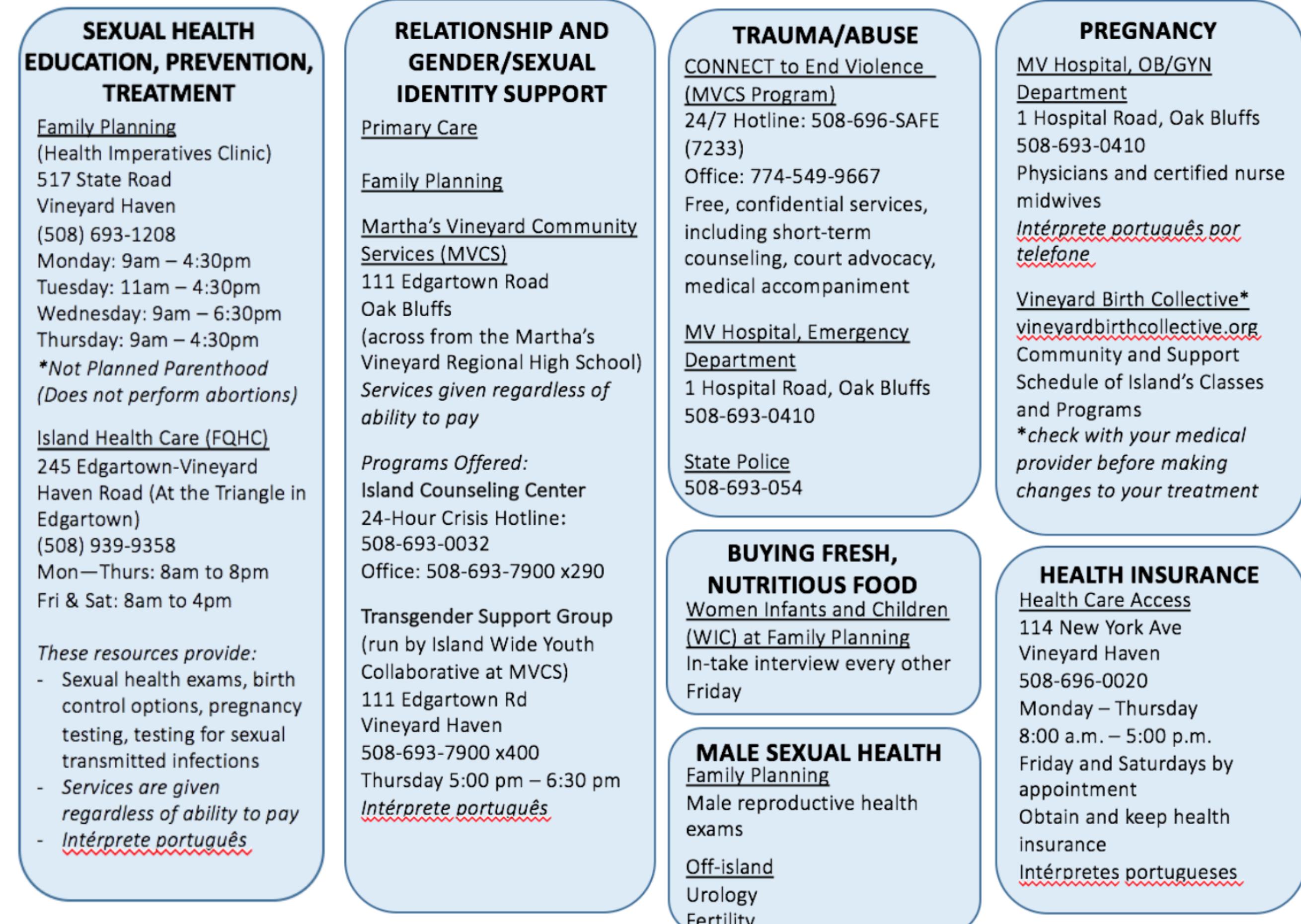
Age range	# of Participants
< 18	13
20-24	0
25-29	3
30-34	5
35-39	7
40-44	2
45-64	31
65+	7
Unknown	1

### Limitations of Reproductive Health Needs Assessment:

- Few interviews with underrepresented groups
  - Brazilian population, Wampanoag tribe, LGBTQIA community
  - Most interviewees were over the age of 45
- Did not conduct any interviews with representatives from Alex's Place, a youth support group
- Possible selection bias – connections to the healthcare community

## Results

### Current Reproductive & Sexual Health Resources Available on Martha's Vineyard



## Acknowledgements

The project was made possible through the Martha's Vineyard Rural Health Scholars Committee, the UMass Rural Health Pathway, and Suzanne Cashman, ScD. Martha's Vineyard Hospital generously donated the accommodations. Special thanks to the community members of Martha's Vineyard who graciously shared their insights about accessing and receiving care through different sexual and reproductive health services.

## Recommendations and Conclusions

### 1. Integration of Care

- Improve, integrate, and standardize communication between Family Planning (FP), Friends of Family Planning, and the community about the services that FP offers
- Standardized screenings for depression and anxiety for perinatal and postpartum women
- Have a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) nurse available for patients who have experienced sexual assault

### 2. Education and Prevention

- Early, comprehensive sex education in the high school
- Curriculum that includes current resources available on the island, and how to access them
- Efforts to destigmatize Family Planning and educate students on services provided
- Integration of education into fundraising events including greater emphasis of services provided by FP
- Increased presence of FP staff at fundraiser
- Increased availability of translated materials on resources for sexual and reproductive health, especially at culture events and school events, where in-person interpreters are present.
- Translated material should use simple, non-medical language

### 3. Improve Visibility of Available Reproductive Resources

- Create a website with comprehensive information on all reproductive health services available on the island
- Organize community engagement events focused on reproductive and sexual health education

### 4. Outreach to Vulnerable Populations

- Allocation of funds for off-island travel to specialty appointments and procedures that utilizes an income-based eligibility system
- Outreach to underserved populations with mobile health clinic that provides screening and prevention services across all towns and populations
- Increased training for medical providers on delivering culturally humble care for LGBTQIA community via online continuing education
- Engage LGBTQIA community members by creating welcoming clinical spaces with community symbols

## References

Guttmacher Institute. (2014, March 03). One-Third of U.S. Women Seeking Abortions Travel More Than 25 Miles to Access Services. Retrieved October 26, 2017, from <https://www.guttmacher.org/news-release/2013/one-third-us-women-seeking-abortions-travel-more-25-miles-access-services>