



# Community Assessment of Benson, Arizona

Karen C. Tsui<sup>1</sup>

University of Arizona College of Pharmacy, Pharm D Candidate Class of 2019

## Background and Introduction

### Community Description

Benson, Arizona is a community located in Cochise County, southeast of Tucson and North of Sierra Vista. Benson is a junction point located right next to the Interstate 10, giving very quick access for drivers to stop by any necessities such as food or gas if needed.

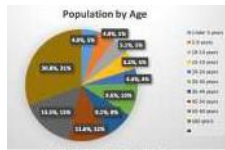


History

- Benson was founded when the Southern Pacific Railroad came through the southern Arizona in 1880.
- Benson served as a mining region of the San Pedro Valley.
- Benson's economy involved high demand for copper and silver ore.
- Benson gained its name of "Hub City" after 1881.
- In the 1990s, Benson suffered a big economic loss due to the relocation of railroads.
- The transitional period of Benson ended by World War II and after the war, development for the highway began.



- Distribution between male and female is fairly even.
- Female is 51% and male is 49%.
- The majority of the population in Benson is above 65 years old with the minority being between 0-24 years old.
- The median resident age in Benson is 54.8 years old.
- A variation of ethnicities currently reside in Benson from: Caucasians (70%), Hispanics (27%), African Americans (1.5%), Native Americans (20%), and Asians (1.9%).



## Methods

### Primary

- The primary data is my on-month long rural rotation at the Medicine Shoppe Independent Pharmacy
- Windshield surveys
- Pictures were taken during windshield survey in June/July 2016
- All of my interactions with the Medicine Shoppe staff were informal conversations.

### Secondary

- Information was obtained through Benson's City website, Benson's Community Guide, and online sources.

## Community Assessment

### Education

- 1 elementary
- 1 middle school
- 2 high schools
- 2 school from kindergarten to 8<sup>th</sup> grade
- 1 community college
- There are 28.8% of students who attend a high school in Benson, higher than the Arizona average of 24.8%.
- Benson has a great public education system, ranging from kindergarten to a two-year college.
- A low percentage of residents received a bachelor's or associate degree after high school.



### Economic/Income

- Job opportunities in Benson are currently 0.61% compared to the national average of 1.59%.
- The unemployment rate in Benson is 7.1% versus the national average being 5.2%.
- The median household income \$3,204.4.



### Transportation

- Benson Area Transit (BAT)
- Benson Airport
- Transit hours are from 8am - 4pm from Monday to Friday excluding holidays.

### Government

- A mayor and a vice mayor
- Five council members, one city manager, and one city clerk

### Crime

- Lower crime rate compared to Arizona



### Insurance

- The percent of adults with health insurance are 85.5% and children with health insurance are 92.3% in Cochise County.
- More people in Cochise County have health insurance compared to Arizona and the United States.



- 3 public parks: Lions Park, Apache Park, Union Street Park
- 1 city golf course: San Pedro Golf Course
- 3 private gyms

### Community Resources

- 1 hospital: 22 beds
- 3 community pharmacy
- 1 police office
- 1 Safeway and 1 Walmart (groceries) provide produce



### Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the Medicine Shoppe pharmacists and staffs of Benson and their willingness to share and answer questions about their community.

For more information, please contact: Karen C. Tsui  
tsui@pharmacy.arizona.edu

## Community Barriers and Solutions

### Barriers

- The education level influence on lower income and possibly lack health education.
- Children who have asthma.
- Younger generation is overweight.
- Low job opportunity in Benson.
- Inconvenient public transportation

### Solutions

- Government should support more grants, scholarships, or implement courses to help students find careers they may be interested in. This will help motivate and encourage students to achieve further education after high school.
- The elementary school can also build up a connection with American Lung Association. American Lung Association can help teach children about asthma and if further assistance is needed.
- High school students should be required to take courses in nutrition to help educate to reduce BMI, obesity, and diabetes.
- More stores, manufacturers, environmental construction, and mining should increase job opportunities for Benson residents.
- BAT should open over the weekend for residents to have transportation for their necessities. Instead of closing at 4pm, BAT should close at 7pm to have the opportunity to work later in the day.
- Pharmacies are very effective at managing chronic diseases. Pharmacists should help manage chronic diseases through frequent checkups and proper counseling to help improve the health of the patient.



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