
Community Health Improvement Plan

2025 - 2028



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Table of Contents

3	Leadership Message
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4	Community Health Needs Assessment Review
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5	Priority Area #1: Mental Health
---	---------------------------------

6	Priority #2: Nutrition, Physical Activity & Weight
---	--

7	Priority #3: Prenatal Health & Infant Mortality
---	---

8	Priority #4: Cancer Screenings
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9	Key Partners, Next Steps & References
---	---------------------------------------

Leadership Message

As we launch the 2025–2028 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), we want to take a moment to reflect on what this work means for Nebraska Medicine and the communities we serve.

Our commitment to *Serious medicine. Extraordinary care.* extends far beyond our clinical walls. It lives in our neighborhoods, in our partnerships and in the daily efforts of our colleagues who work to make world-class health care more accessible and responsive to real community needs.

This plan is grounded in the insights from our Community Health Needs Assessment, a collaborative effort that engaged thousands of voices across the Omaha metro. It revealed clear priorities: 1) mental health, 2) nutrition physical activity and weight, 3) prenatal health and infant mortality, and 4) cancer screenings.

The CHIP gives us the guardrails and strategic focus to shape a meaningful plan with measurable impact. It outlines goals, provides a framework for scaling interventions that work and offers guidance for evaluating our progress. It also reinforces our responsibility to build authentic partnerships and listen deeply to the communities we serve.

Together, we can make the extraordinary possible.

Let's get to work.



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "anna cramer".

Anna Cramer, JD
Chief People Officer



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ada K. Walker".

Ada K. Walker, JD
Vice President
People Development & Culture

Community Health Needs Assessment

Why it matters

The 2024 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) for the Omaha metro area is a comprehensive, data-driven evaluation of health status, disparities and needs across Douglas, Sarpy, Cass and Pottawattamie counties. Conducted by Professional Resource Consultants (PRC) and developed through robust community surveys, key informant interviews and analysis of public health data, the CHNA identifies the most pressing health challenges and “areas of opportunity” for improvement. The following fourteen items were identified as “areas of opportunity” in the CHNA.

Mental Health	Social Determinants of Health
Diabetes	Nutrition, Physical Activity & Weight
Substance Use	Heart Disease & Stroke
Infant Health and Family Planning	Injury and Violence
Disabling Conditions	Oral Health
Cancer	Access to Health Care Services
Tobacco Use	Respiratory Diseases

Together, the Nebraska Medical Center and Bellevue Medical Center have identified four significant health needs to focus on for the 2025-2028 Cycle: Mental Health, Nutrition and Physical Activity, Prenatal Health and Infant Mortality and Cancer Screenings.

Each priority reflects significant local health needs, persistent disparities and input from community stakeholders, ensuring the CHIP is evidence-based and aligned with the region’s most urgent opportunities for impact.

Mental Health

Identified Needs

Mental health is the top-ranked community health concern, with nearly one in four adults (22.7%) reporting “fair” or “poor” mental health and 32.3% diagnosed with depression. Access to timely, affordable mental health care remains a significant challenge, as 11.8% of adults were unable to obtain needed services in the past year. The 2024 CHNA also highlights rising rates of anxiety, chronic stress and suicide, along with persistent stigma and workforce shortages. Prioritizing mental health is essential for overall well-being, strengthening community resilience and reducing the burden of chronic disease, making it a foundational focus for health improvement efforts.

Goals	Implementation Activities	Anticipated Outcomes
Identify and address disparities in mental health access and outcomes by leveraging community partnerships, improving referral systems and reducing financial, geographic and cultural barriers.	Strengthen and expand Behavioral Health Connections to reduce barriers, connect community members with mental health and substance use concerns to appropriate resources, and promote access to care.	Decrease the % of metro area Key Informants reporting Mental Health as a major problem in the Omaha metro area
Increase timely access to mental health and substance use services across the metro area through workforce growth, leveraging telehealth, and building integrated care models	Continue to develop models of care that increase providers available within treatment areas, with a focus on identifying representative providers to match the Omaha metro area population.	Decrease the % of metro area adults describing their overall mental health as “fair” or “poor”
	Strengthen recruitment, training, and retention at Nebraska Medicine to increase the number of practitioners available to see patients.	Decrease the % of metro area adults describing their overall mental health as “fair” or “poor”
Decrease stigma related to mental illness and substance use.	Build community-driven education, peer support initiatives and public awareness campaigns.	Decrease the % of metro area adults reporting difficulty obtaining mental health services

Nutrition, Physical Activity & Weight

Identified Needs

The 2024 CHNA reveals that 26.5% of adults report no leisure-time physical activity, and 72.2% are overweight or obese, both risk factors for chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease and cancer. Food insecurity affects over a quarter of residents, and nearly one in four adults struggles to afford fresh produce. These challenges are compounded by social determinants such as poverty, limited access to healthy foods and barriers to safe physical activity. Addressing nutrition and physical activity is vital for preventing chronic disease, supporting healthy weight and improving quality of life across the community.

Goals	Implementation Activities	Anticipated Outcomes
<p>Strengthen food access and affordability by supporting healthy, low-cost food options, reducing food insecurity and promoting healthy decision-making.</p> <p>Collaborate with community organizations and multisector partners to identify, connect and support households experiencing food or nutrition insecurity.</p>	<p>Strengthen and expand partnerships with community organizations to provide information, education, and research on nutrition, physical activity and weight management. This includes structured programming through the Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) and Hypertension Control classes and Food is Medicine series.</p>	<p>Decrease the % of metro area adults with an overweight classification</p> <p>Decrease the % of community members who are often or sometimes worried about running out of food</p>
<p>Build sustainable, community-driven solutions for food access.</p>	<p>Partner with community based organizations (CBOs) to increase the use and access of community gardens and refrigerators.</p>	<p>Decrease the % of residents often or sometimes worried about running out of food</p>
<p>Increase opportunities for regular physical activity through accessible community-based programs, workplace wellness initiatives and education on lifestyle strategies.</p>	<p>Promote Walk with a Doc program, local walking and bike trails, and other accessible community programs to encourage regular physical activity and social connection.</p>	<p>Decrease the % of adults reporting no leisure-time physical activity in the Omaha metro area</p>

Prenatal Care & Infant Mortality

Identified Needs

Improving prenatal health and reducing infant mortality are critical priorities in the Omaha metro area. Between 2017 and 2019, 5.1% of births did not receive prenatal care in the first six months, and the infant mortality rate remained elevated at 5.8 per 1,000 live births. Early and continuous prenatal care is strongly linked to better birth outcomes, yet access barriers persist. Expanding access, providing culturally competent care, and strengthening community partnerships are essential to ensure all infants have a healthy start and to close gaps in maternal and child health.

Goals	Implementation Activities	Anticipated Outcomes
Expand recruitment, training, and integration of culturally competent and trauma-informed providers, doulas and community health workers.	Partner with community-based organizations (CBOs) to provide comprehensive training for clinicians and education for birthing individuals.	Decrease the % of births that occur without prenatal care
Improve access to comprehensive maternal care by expanding prenatal and postpartum services, increasing availability of high-level obstetric and ultrasound care, implementing navigation supports, and increasing coverage initiatives.	<p>Strengthen access and coverage of prenatal and high-risk obstetric care visits within the Omaha metro area.</p> <p>Address high risk factors in maternal care in partnership with Women and Infant Services and Population health teams</p>	Decrease the infant mortality rate

Cancer Screenings

Identified Needs

Cancer remains the leading cause of death in the region, with an age-adjusted mortality rate of 154.6 per 100,000 and high incidence rates for breast and prostate cancers. While screening rates for breast (82.2%) and colorectal cancer (78.9%) are relatively strong, disparities persist by geography and population group and screening rates for cervical cancer (73.5%) fall short of national targets. Early detection through regular screenings is proven to reduce mortality and improve outcomes, making it imperative to expand access, raise awareness and address barriers to ensure accessible cancer prevention and care.

Goals	Implementation Activities	Anticipated Outcomes
Expand community education opportunities focused on cancer prevention, early detection and care, particularly for high- incidence cancers.	Create and disseminate education campaigns to raise awareness about the risk of high-incidence cancers and emphasize the importance of early detection.	Decrease the age-adjusted cancer mortality rate in Omaha metro area
Increase community awareness of cancer prevention and treatment options, including support services, survivorship programs and clinical trials	Collaborate with partners to reduce barriers related to cancer treatment and improve awareness and access to clinical trials.	Increase public awareness of the connection between lifestyle behaviors and cancer risk
Increase access to cancer screenings and diagnostic services in underserved areas to ensure early detection and improve survival rates.	Build partnerships with local healthcare providers, hospitals and community organizations in high-need areas.	Increase the % of age-eligible adults receiving up-to-date cancer screenings

Community Partners

Prenatal Care and Infant Mortality

A Mother's Love, 75 North, Charles Drew Health Center, Community Doula, Douglas County Health Department, Faith Community, Fred LeRoy Health & Wellness Center, Girls Inc., IBBG, North Omaha Community Care Council, One World Health Center, South Omaha Community Care Council, Sarpy/Cass County Health Department, United Way of the Midlands, University of Nebraska Medical Center, Milk Works.

Cancer Care

Charles Drew Health Center, Douglas County Health Department, Faith Community, Fred LeRoy Health & Wellness Center, Great Plains Colon Cancer Task Force, My Sister's Keeper, North Omaha Community Care Council, One Stop Cancer Shop, One World Health Center, Pink Lotus, Sarpy/Cass County Health Department, South Omaha Community Care Council, University of Nebraska Medical Center, Fred & Pamela Buffet Cancer Center, Project Pink'd, Local Barbershops.

Mental Health

Boys Town National Hotline, Charles Drew Health Center, Community Alliance, Douglas County Health Department, ENCAP, Faith Community, Fred LeRoy Health & Wellness Center, Heartland Family Service, NAMI Nebraska, North Omaha Community Care Council, One World Health Center, Sarpy/Cass County Health Department, South Omaha Community Care Council, University of Nebraska Medical Center, Local Barbershops.

Nutrition, Physical Activity & Weight

Charles Drew Health Center, City Sprouts, Community Garden Spaces, Douglas County Health Department, ENOA, Faith Community, Fred LeRoy Health & Wellness Center, Girls Inc., Heartland B Cycle, Intercultural Senior Center, Metro Area Food Pantries, Metropolitan Community College, North Omaha Community Care Council, No More Empty Pots, Omaha Public Schools, One World Health Center, Saving Grace Perishable Food Rescue, South Omaha Community Care Council, Sarpy/Cass County Health Department, University of Nebraska Medical Center, Whispering Roots, YMCA.

Next Steps

1

Track and Measure KPIs

A series of KPIs will accompany each priority area and will be available through Nebraska Medicine's Community Health Improvement Dashboard.

2

Report Progress Annually

In conjunction with the annual Community Benefit Report, Nebraska Medicine will share progress to goals and any necessary adjustments.

3

Review, Revise and Refine

As the cycle progresses, Nebraska Medicine will use a data-driven approach to identify opportunities for greater impact or process improvement.

References

This report was developed from the 2024 Community Health Needs Assessment prepared by PRC. A full copy of the CHNA Report is available on request.



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