

Community Health Needs Assessment Implementation Plan 2023 – 2025



Cheshire Medical Center

The implementation of strategies to address community health needs identified in our 2022 assessment are guided by Cheshire Medical Center’s Board of Trustees 2019 resolution to prioritize diversity, equity, and inclusion.

In addition, the 2020 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) for our public health region, led by the Leadership Council for Health Monadnock with staff support from Cheshire Medical Center, provides important guidance for our annual implementation plan. The CHIP established equity at the forefront of community health improvement efforts. “Who is not thriving?” and “How will those experiencing inequities continue to be engaged?” are key questions in addressing community health needs.

The CHIP includes recognizing the influence of the social determinants of health. These are the conditions in the environments where people are born, live, learn, work, play, and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality of life outcomes and risks.

An awareness and understanding of trauma is the third guiding framework in the CHIP and for annual implementation activities. Trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances experienced individually or collectively as harmful or life-threatening with lasting adverse effects on daily functioning, and mental, physical, social, emotional and/or spiritual well-being. The events or circumstances that precipitate trauma may be amenable to prevention or resilience strategies.

Implementation plans to deal with improving healthcare access, behavioral health, substance use disorders, and an aging population will use an equity lens as they are developed.

The needs identified through the Community Health Needs Assessment Process undertaken in 2022 by Cheshire Medical Center were reviewed with leadership and key stakeholder groups to determine which would be prioritized for action. With a continual focus on improving health equity and addressing the social drivers of health, it has been proposed that Cheshire Medical Center focus on the following high-level action areas for change:

PROPOSED PRIORITY ACTION AREAS*:

1. IMPROVING HEALTHCARE ACCESS

2. BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SUPPORTS

3. SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER PREVENTION AND SUPPORTS

4. AGING POPULATION SERVICES

**ALL VIEWED THROUGH A HEALTH EQUITY LENS WITH CONSIDERATION OF THE SOCIAL DRIVERS OF HEALTH*

Focus Area 1

Improving Healthcare Access

Baseline Data

7.7% of the adult population in Cheshire County under age 65 is without any insurance coverage. (2016-2020, New Hampshire HHS Data Portal)

10.4% of NH state residents report not having any sort of primary care providing team; significantly higher rates among those younger than 45 years old. (BRFSS 2021)

1 in 5 residents of the Monadnock Region (20%) reported that there had been a time in the last year that someone in their household needed or wanted medical care for a routine physical exam or check-up but did not or could not get that care. (Greater Monadnock Community Survey, 2020)

Those who identify as non-white or are BIPOC are more likely to report not being able to receive wanted care. (Greater Monadnock Community Survey, 2020)

Community members reported that they were unable to obtain healthcare most often due to the high cost of co-pay or co-insurance. (Greater Monadnock Community Survey, 2020)

Strategies for Improvement

- Continue to support community members accessing health insurance
- Continue to support Community Health Workers to provide healthcare access navigation
- Launch Family Medicine Residency Program in 2024
- Provide integrated medical home support with Monadnock Family Services and Home Healthcare, Hospice, and Community Services
- Work with community partners to understand the readiness and impact of Mobile Integrated Health
- Continue to develop telehealth capacity
- Maintain health profession education program with physicians/medical students, nurses, and allied health professions including Project Search with Monadnock Developmental Services
- Focus on population-oriented prevention
- Support community capacity, remove barriers to care for underserved populations
- Continue to support The Doorway which provides free access to all seeking support for a substance use disorder
- Provide financial contributions to safety net oral health, healthcare, mental health, and community in-home care/mobile programs
- Provide financial assistance to qualifying patients

Focus Area 2

Behavioral Health Supports

Baseline Data

One-third of residents in the Monadnock Region reported that their mental health wasn't good in five or more of the past 30 days, representing a significant increase compared to previous years. (*Greater Monadnock Community Survey, 2020*)

34.2% of high school students self-reported feeling so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that they stopped doing some usual activities, above the statewide percentage. (*NH Youth Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey, 2019*)

1 in 5 (22%) of NH state adult residents have been diagnosed with some sort of mental illness, excluding developmental or substance use disorders. For young adults between the ages of 18-26, the rate is much higher at 1 in 3 (32%). (*New Hampshire HHS Data Portal 2019 estimates*)

The age-adjusted suicide rate for all ages between 2017 and 2021 in Cheshire County is higher compared to New Hampshire (18.2 per 100,000 vs 16.4 per 100,000). (*NH Health & Human Services Data Portal*) Rates are significantly higher for young adults under age 26.

There were 829 emergency department visits related to self-harm or suicidal ideation in the Monadnock Region from 2016-2020. Rates of hospitalization for psychiatric and behavioral health concerns have been increasing over time. (*New Hampshire HHS Data Portal 2016-2020*)

Strategies for Improvement

- Integrate behavioral health resources in services and programs
- Increase education/training strategy and communication/awareness strategy, with focus in anti-stigma efforts and understanding trauma
- Continue to support programs like Wellpowered Worksites, Wellpowered Schools, community health education, support groups, etc.
- Continue to support our Community Health Improvement Plan which prioritizes behavioral health among other priorities like protective factors for substance use disorder prevention

- Continue to support the Leadership Council for Healthy Monadnock (our regional Public Health Advisory Council) which includes resources and capacity building for behavioral health
- Continue and expand Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) program
- Collaborate with community partners to develop and implement multi-pronged health promotions campaign

- Support behavioral health services with both Family Medicine and Emergency Department services
- Maintain our support of our regional Doorway

Focus Area 3

Substance Use Disorder Prevention and Supports

Baseline Data

An estimated 29.9% of adults in NH state they have had a binge drinking episode (5 or more drinks in a single sitting) in the past month. Young adults between the ages of 18-25 report significantly higher rates of binge drinking at 45.4%. (NH Health & Human Services Data Portal 2018-2019)

An estimated 32.5% of young adults age 18-25 in NH state use illicit drugs (marijuana, cocaine, heroin, inhalants hallucinogens, methamphetamine, or misuse of another prescription therapeutic drug). (NH Health & Human Services Data Portal 2018-2019)

Though rates of cigarette smoking are declining, 35.1% of high school students reported using an electronic vapor product in the past 30 days. (YRBS 2019)

39% of residents in the Monadnock Region believe that drug treatment resources (such as counseling or rehab) are unavailable or inadequate to meet the needs of the community. (Greater Monadnock Community Survey, 2020)

From 2019 to 2022, the number of adults receiving publicly funded treatment services for any substance increased by 37.1% in Cheshire County. (NH Health & Human Services Data Portal)

The Doorway at Cheshire Medical Center provided an average of 356 appointments per month for individual drug treatment and counseling services to community members during fiscal year 2022, a 380% increase in average monthly appointments compared to when the program began in 2019 (91 appointments per month). (Cheshire Medical Center 2022)

Strategies for Improvement

- Continue to support the regional public health network which works across the spectrum of substance use disorders from prevention, intervention, treatment, and recovery
- Continue to support regional partners and families affected by parental substance use
- Provide support through Orthopedics to local high school athletic training programs to provide positive experiences with trusted adults for youth in our community
- Increase awareness and education including of risk and protective factors related to substance use disorder
- Decrease stigma
- Capacity Building – support recruitment and education to expand the treatment workforce for counseling and other treatment strategies
- Maintain overdose harm reduction efforts including Naloxone and fentanyl test strip community distribution

- Continue to support our regional Doorway to treat and serve those with substance use disorders
- Prioritize no adverse effects from opioid prescriptions
- Provide support and technical support to substance use disorder treatment system providers, with special support to treatment services for pregnant and parenting persons
- Maintain and grow capacity to provide medication assisted treatment care
- Host evidence-based practice, Circle of Security parent training, utilizing regional partnerships

Focus Area 4

Aging Population Services

Baseline Data

1 in 5 residents of Cheshire County (20.0%) are aged 65 and older. This is expected to grow to more than 40% by 2040. (*U.S. Census Bureau, 2016-2020 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates*)

26.6% of Cheshire County residents age 65 and older live alone. (*NH Health & Human Services Data Portal 2016-2020*)

19.2% of adults 65 and older in Cheshire County are living with Alzheimer's disease or related dementia. (*Healthy Aging Data Reports, Chronic Disease Rates, 2022*)

Strategies for Improvement

- Engage with the Monadnock Healthy Aging Collaborative in identifying and prioritizing strategies for older adults in the region
- Develop Community Health Education programs that address significant health concerns of older adults
- Expand capacity to provide palliative care services that link with community-based programs and hospice care
- Continue funding safety net services to support transportation, case management, and community health workers to assist older adults
- Develop Community Health Education programs that address significant health concerns of older adults