

# Community Health Needs Assessment and Implementation Plan 2020–2022

## Executive Summary

*The mission of Allina Health is to serve our communities by providing exceptional care as we prevent illness, restore health and provide comfort to all who entrust us with their care.*

### INTRODUCTION

Mercy Hospital (Mercy) is part of Allina Health, a nonprofit health system of clinics, hospitals and other health and wellness services, providing care throughout Minnesota and western Wisconsin. Every three years, Allina Health's hospitals conduct a federally-required Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) to examine health in the communities it serves, identify health priorities and develop strategies and action plans to pursue them. The hospitals conduct their CHNA in partnership with local public health departments, other hospitals and health systems, community organizations and residents.

### Hospital and Community Description

Mercy consists of two campuses in Anoka County—the Mercy campus in Coon Rapids and the Unity campus in Fridley. Combined, it serves over 100,000 patients and their families annually. The hospital serves patients from many communities though its primary service area (and the focus of the CHNA) was Anoka County, located in the Twin

Cities' north metro. Approximately 345,000 residents live in Anoka County. The median age is 38 years and approximately 24 percent of its total population is under age 18. Approximately 16 percent of residents are people of color: Black (6.9 percent), Asian (5.2 percent) or Hispanic or Latino (4.2 percent). In 2017, 7.9 percent of residents were foreign-born and 4 percent had limited English proficiency. The median household income was \$76,796, with 6.6 percent of residents living in households with income below the Federal Poverty Level. Four percent of Anoka County residents are uninsured.

### COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Mercy collaborated with Anoka County Public Health to complete its CHNA. As part of a committee with representatives from 22 agencies, it used the Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP) community-driven strategic planning process, which includes six phases: Organizing, Visioning, The Four Assessments, Identifying Strategic Issues, Formulating Goals and Strategies and the Action Cycle. For the purposes of this report, the phases are condensed to data review and prioritization, community input and implementation plan. The process began in July 2018 and was completed in August 2019.

## EVALUATION OF 2017–2019 CHNA IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Between 2017 and 2019, Mercy conducted activities to pursue the health priorities identified in its 2016 CHNA: chronic disease, mental health and senior health. With community partners, Mercy provided health programs to schools and community organizations, advocated for health-promoting policies and made charitable contributions to community organizations. Highlights included:

- Reaching 2,800 high school students with Change to Chill School™ mental health activities.
- Conducting 72 health screenings and 32 free vaccination clinics for 4,622 residents.
- Creating an Intense Residential Treatment Services residence on the Unity campus to provide after-care treatment for patients with mental health conditions.
- Awarding \$91,098 in Neighborhood Health Connection™ grants to 19 local organizations in Mercy's region.
- Delivering educational sessions on domestic violence and elder abuse to more than 1,000 community members and Allina Health employees.
- Establishing the Northwest Mental Health Roundtable with Anoka County Board of Commissioners to better promote and coordinate mental health services.

A complete description of 2017-2019 achievements is available online at

<https://www.allinahealth.org/about-us/community-involvement/need-assessments>.

### Data Review and Prioritization

The MAPP committee created a shared vision for the Anoka County community, “We envision a safe, welcoming, and engaged community where basic needs are met, people have opportunities for employment and active living and all individuals and families have access to preventive health resources and quality care.” The committee then reviewed Allina Health patient data and state and local data related to demographics, social and

economic factors and health behaviors, prevalence of health conditions and health care access. Members also reviewed responses from interviews with 14 community leaders and data from 857 resident-responses on a 2018 Anoka County Community Health Survey.

Using the Hanlon Method for Health Issue Prioritization, the group chose the following priorities for Mercy and Anoka County:

- **Chronic diseases and health habits**
- **Mental health and addiction**
- **Violence**

### Community Input

To gain residents' perspectives on these priorities, Mercy conducted community dialogues with 64 people representing the West African community, the Anoka County Head Start Policy Council, Alexandra House Domestic and Sexual Assault Center and the Northwest Community Health Advisory Council.

Participants cited stress and lack of affordable and convenient options for healthy food and physical activity as barriers to healthy habits. They said stigma, language and transportation barriers affect use of mental health services and that different cultural perspectives of mental health and violence make it difficult to address these issues.

### Implementation Plan

Based on the community input, Mercy developed a 2020–2022 implementation plan that outlines the strategies and activities it will pursue to address its health priorities. To make progress in achieving health equity among residents, Mercy will prioritize partnerships and activities that engage populations that are historically underserved.

## 2020-2022 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

### Chronic Disease and Healthy Habits

**Goal:** Increase healthy eating and physical activity among Anoka County residents of all ages.

## Strategies

- Address chronic disease management in ethnically and culturally-diverse ways.
- Improve access to healthy, culturally appropriate foods.
- Improve access to safe and appropriate physical activity options.

Activities will include supporting community-based, culturally appropriate chronic disease management education, providing grants, charitable contributions and employee volunteers to organizations that provide healthy food and physical activity and promoting use of outdoor and quiet space for family and personal renewal.

## Mental Health and Addiction

**Goal 1:** Increase resilience and healthy coping skills in Anoka County.

### Strategies

- Increase resilience among school-age youth.
- Increase social connectedness and community-wide resilience efforts.

Activities will include promoting [Change to Chill™](#) and [Health Powered Kids™](#) to Anoka County schools; providing mental health education to school district staff; offering activities and classes focused on mental health, resiliency and social connectedness and supporting grassroots resilience and social connectedness activities.

**Goal 2:** Reduce barriers to mental health and substance use services.

### Strategies

- Decrease stigma associated with seeking help for mental health and substance use conditions.
- Improve access to adolescent mental health and substance use services.

Activities will include enhancing the stigma-elimination components of Change to Chill™; supporting stigma reduction activities in schools and community organizations; advocating for policies aimed at increasing mental health and substance use services; and facilitating discussions among Anoka County leaders and mental healthcare providers to ensure that mental healthcare options are available and accessible to all residents.

**Goal 3:** Decrease use of tobacco and electronic cigarettes by youth.

### Strategies

- Increase awareness of harms caused by tobacco and electronic cigarettes.
- Improve adolescents' substance use refusal skills.

Activities will include providing information to parents and delivering the NAP nicotine and tobacco prevention program to Fridley and Anoka Hennepin students.

## Violence

**Goal 1:** Reduce violence, bullying, and abuse among people living in Anoka County.

### Strategies

- Identify and support individuals living in abusive relationships.
- Raise awareness of domestic abuse, sexual assault and human/sex trafficking.

Activities will include sponsoring Alexandra House's annual HopeFest event and the Annual Heroes Walk 4 Women and working with Anoka County to establish a Violence Roundtable that plans violence prevention and service improvement activities in the community.

## Social Determinants of Health

Allina Health and its hospitals acknowledge that addressing social determinants of health is essential to improving identified health priorities. In response, Allina Health identified a systemwide plan for addressing social determinants of health; Mercy will participate in its implementation.

**Goal:** Reduce social barriers to health.

### Strategies

- Establish a sustainable, effective model to systematically identify and support patients in addressing health-related social needs.
- Establish a sustainable network of trusted community organizations that can support patients with these needs.
- Increase policy and advocacy efforts to improve social conditions related to health.

Activities will include supporting implementation and evaluation of the Accountable Health Communities model and transitioning it to a modified version; identifying community partners and a tracked referral process that connects patients to them; and supporting community coalitions aimed at improving access to transportation, housing and food.

## Community Partners

Anoka County Public Health and Human Services, Alexandra House, law enforcement, elected officials, faith communities, Forensic Nurse Program, chambers of commerce, schools, community members, Lee Carlson Mental Health Center, NAMI, Liberian Health Initiative, CANVAS Health, NW Mental Health Roundtable, drug and alcohol prevention advocates, mental health providers, YMCA, AKA Youth, Three Rivers Park District, The Food Group, CEAP and local food shelves.

## Resources

To fulfill the implementation plan, Mercy will contribute financial and in-kind donations such as personnel, charitable donations and Allina Health's systemwide programs. It will also encourage staff to volunteer with local organizations.

## Evaluation Plans

Mercy will monitor progress on the implementation plan by tracking process measures, such as number of programs delivered and people served, staff time dedicated and dollars contributed. Allina Health will evaluate systemwide programs to assess their effects on intermediate outcomes (e.g., eating and physical activity), which evidence shows are likely to lead to improvement on population health measures such as obesity. To assess long-term

effects, Allina Health will monitor population-level indicators related to the health priorities.

## CONCLUSION

Through the MAPP process, which included data review, prioritization and community input, Mercy identified the health priorities it will pursue in 2020–2022 with its own strategies and activities and Allina Health initiatives.

The full report for the Mercy 2020–2022 Community Health Needs Assessment is available on the Allina Health website:

<https://www.allinahealth.org/about-us/community-involvement/need-assessments>.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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- Other staff at Allina Health and Mercy who provided knowledge and leadership.

For more information, please contact: [Craig Malm](#), Community Engagement Lead for Northwest Metro region or [Christy Dechaine](#), Community Benefit and Evaluation Manager.