



Shiawassee County Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) 2026–2029

Background

The 2010 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act requires non-profit hospitals to conduct or participate in a community health needs assessment, receive community input, and to develop an action plan called a Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) to address prevalent health needs identified in the assessment.

Purpose

The Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) serves as a roadmap to improve the health and well-being of Shiawassee County residents. This plan builds upon findings from the 2025 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) and reflects the shared commitment of Memorial Healthcare and community partners to address priority health needs through collaborative, sustainable strategies.

The CHIP focuses on three priority areas identified through data analysis and community input:

- Mental Health
- Substance and Alcohol Misuse
- Healthcare Access

These priorities reflect underlying drivers of health and are closely interconnected. Improving access to behavioral health services, strengthening prevention efforts, and reducing barriers to care will improve overall health outcomes across the community.

Implementation Plan

Memorial Healthcare will continue to collaborate on opportunities that arise to improve the health and well-being of area residents. As the sole health care provider in the community, organizations rely on us for guidance and coordination. Below are some of the strategies the hospital is pursuing to address the strategic issues defined in our Community Health Needs Assessment.

Priority Area 1: Mental Health

Goal

Improve access to timely, appropriate mental health services for residents of all ages, with added emphasis on early intervention and further pediatric mental health access.

Why This Matters

Mental health was consistently identified as a top concern across survey respondents and community stakeholders. Barriers include limited provider availability, long wait times, cost, transportation, and insufficient pediatric mental health resources. Early intervention and accessible care are critical to improving long-term outcomes.

Objectives and Strategies

Objective 1: Improve access to pediatric and adult mental health services

Strategies may include:

- Explore partnerships to expand pediatric behavioral health capacity
- Assess the availability of school-based or community-based mental health supports
- Identify gaps in referral pathways and care coordination
- Support efforts to integrate behavioral health into primary care settings
- Continued focus on outpatient counseling service expansion across several providers
- Explore funding options for collaborative step-down crisis residential services.
- Establish a shared advocacy focus on mental health practitioner licensing reform

Objective 2: Improve coordination and awareness of existing mental health resources

Strategies may include:

- Maintain and promote an updated community resource guide and complementary web-based resources
- Support cross-agency collaboration and referral coordination
- Increase awareness of available services through community outreach

Objective 3: Strengthen early identification and intervention

Strategies may include:

- Ensure cross-entity integration with mobile crisis services offered through Shiawassee Health and Wellness
 - Support mental health screening initiatives in healthcare and community settings
 - Promote education and awareness to reduce stigma and encourage help-seeking
 - Collaborate with schools and youth-serving organizations
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Priority Area 2: Substance and Alcohol Misuse

Goal

Reduce the impact of substance and alcohol misuse through prevention, treatment access, and recovery support.

Why This Matters

Substance use disorder continues to impact individuals, families, and the broader community. Barriers to treatment, stigma, and limited local treatment options contribute to ongoing challenges. Expanding access to appropriate treatment and strengthening prevention efforts are critical to improving outcomes.

Objectives and Strategies

Objective 1: Improve access to appropriate substance use treatment

Strategies may include:

- Explore opportunities to expand access to treatment services locally
- Strengthen care coordination between healthcare providers and community-based treatment organizations, including integration of peer recovery support in clinical settings, to ensure individuals with substance use disorder are connected to appropriate treatment and recovery supports
- Identify barriers to treatment and recovery services

Objective 2: Strengthen prevention efforts, particularly among youth

Strategies may include:

- Support evidence-based prevention programs
- Partner with schools, youth organizations, and community groups
- Promote education on substance use risks

Objective 3: Support recovery and harm reduction efforts

Strategies may include:

- Support community-based recovery resources
 - Strengthen collaboration with community partners engaged in harm reduction efforts
 - Promote access to overdose prevention and safety resources, including naloxone and related education
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Priority Area 3: Healthcare Access

Goal

Improve access to affordable, timely healthcare services for all residents.

Why This Matters

Access to care is influenced by multiple factors, including cost, transportation, provider availability, and awareness of services. Improving access supports early detection, prevention, and better health outcomes.

Objectives and Strategies

Objective 1: Reduce barriers to accessing healthcare services

Strategies may include:

- Identify gaps in service availability and explore opportunities for growth
- Support efforts that address barriers to care access, such as transportation
- Promote awareness of available healthcare services, both primary care and specialty
- Participation in provider recruitment and retention initiatives, including further partnerships with higher education institutions

Objective 2: Improve community awareness and navigation of healthcare resources

Strategies may include:

- Maintain and promote accessible community resource directories to help residents identify available health and social services
- Support community outreach and education efforts that increase awareness of healthcare services and available resources
- Strengthen coordination among healthcare providers, community organizations, and social service agencies to improve navigation and referrals
- Explore opportunities to integrate technology solutions that improve access to information and simplify connections to services

Objective 3: Improve capacity for management of chronic conditions

Strategies may include:

- Explore opportunities to expand the use of technology and digital tools that support chronic disease management and improve care coordination
- Explore grant and partnership opportunities that support chronic disease management, prevention, and community-based wellness initiatives
- Strengthen care coordination and patient navigation efforts to support individuals with newly diagnosed chronic conditions and reduce hospital readmissions

Implementation and Collaboration

This CHIP will be implemented through collaboration among Memorial Healthcare and community partners, including healthcare providers, public health agencies, schools, behavioral health providers, social service organizations, and community-based organizations.

Partners will work together to:

- Align efforts with shared priorities
- Leverage existing programs and resources
- Monitor progress and adjust strategies as needed

Measurement and Evaluation

Progress will be monitored through ongoing collaboration and review of available data sources.

Evaluation will focus on:

- Expansion of services and programs
- Improved coordination between partners
- Increased awareness and access to resources

This CHIP is intended to serve as a flexible framework, allowing partners to adapt strategies as community needs and resources evolve. The hospital reserves the right to amend this plan as circumstances warrant. During the three-year period, other organizations in the community may decide to address certain needs, or new needs may arise, requiring the hospital to refocus its limited resources to best serve the community.