

Allegheny Health Network – AHN Saint Vincent Hospital

Implementation Strategy Plan

2025 Report



AHN SAINT VINCENT

Implementation Strategy Plan 2025

About Allegheny Health Network (AHN)

Allegheny Health Network (AHN) is a leading nonprofit health system based in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, dedicated to providing exceptional quality, comprehensive health care services to the communities it serves. AHN, part of the Highmark Health enterprise, operates 14 hospitals, employs over 22,000 people, and has more than 250 locations providing care. The facilities have nine surgical centers, six regional cancer centers, and six health and wellness pavilions. Its staff includes over 3,000 physicians, residents, and fellows; 6,000 nurses; and 22,000 employees.¹ AHN is an integrated health system dedicated to providing exceptional care to people in the local communities. Serving 12 Pennsylvania counties and two counties in New York, AHN brings together the services of AHN Allegheny General Hospital, AHN Allegheny Valley Hospital, AHN Canonsburg Hospital, AHN Forbes Hospital, AHN Grove City Hospital, AHN Jefferson Hospital, AHN Saint Vincent Hospital, AHN West Penn Hospital, AHN Westfield Memorial Hospital, AHN Wexford Hospital, and AHN Neighborhood Hospitals (AHN Brentwood Neighborhood Hospital, AHN Harmar Neighborhood Hospital, AHN Hempfield Neighborhood Hospital, and AHN McCandless Neighborhood Hospital).

AHN encompasses a wide range of health care services, including acute care, outpatient services, rehabilitation, emergency care, and specialty programs. AHN is also recognized for its cutting-edge technology and research initiatives, focusing on advancing medical science and enhancing patient care. AHN is a vital component of the health care landscape focused on delivering high-quality, patient-centered care. Through its extensive services, community engagement, and commitment to health equity, AHN strives to improve the health and well-being of the communities it serves. With a dedication to innovation and excellence, AHN continues to play a crucial role in shaping the future of health care in the region.

Mission

To create a remarkable health experience, freeing people to be their best.

Vision

A world where everyone embraces health.

¹ Allegheny Health Network

About Allegheny Health Network Saint Vincent Hospital

AHN Saint Vincent has served the people in the Lake Erie region since 1875 with a quality of care and service that is second to none. Their expansion and ongoing renovations strengthen the tradition of excellent and transformative health care. Providing various inpatient and outpatient services, along with multiple physician practices and outpatient medical facilities, AHN Saint Vincent has 836 physicians that serve Northwestern Pennsylvania and Southwestern New York regions.

AHN Saint Vincent has 348 full-service hospital beds and over 2,500 employees committed to delivering the highest quality patient care while providing a continuum of services to fit everyone's health care needs. AHN Saint Vincent remains a leader in cardiac, neurological, orthopaedic, and women's services and offers patients broad access to primary care and multiple other specialties.

Community Health Needs Assessment and Implementation Strategy Plan Background

In 2024, Allegheny Health Network (AHN) partnered with Tripp Umbach to conduct a comprehensive community health needs assessment (CHNA) for AHN Saint Vincent primarily serving Crawford, Erie, and Warren counties. The CHNA process included input from persons who represent the broad interests of the community served by the hospital, including those with special knowledge of public health issues and representatives of social service agencies. As a continuation of the CHNA, AHN, with the assistance of Tripp Umbach, proceeded to the Implementation Strategy Plan (ISP). The ISP process delineates and describes the hospital's plan for addressing the community health needs identified in the CHNA. The overall CHNA and ISP involves multiple steps, as depicted in the flowchart on the next page.

Overall Prioritized Needs of Allegheny Health Network Hospitals

2024 Prioritized Needs	Social Determinants of Health (SDOH)					Behavioral Health			Chronic Diseases and Aging					Health Equity
	Transportation	Workforce Development	Cost of Care	Access to Care*	Food Insecurity, Diet, & Nutrition	Substance Use Disorder	Mental Health Services	Postpartum Depression	Diabetes	Heart Disease	Cancer	Aging	Obesity	Social and Workforce Programs**
														
Allegheny General Hospital	X	X	X		X	X			X	X	X			X
Allegheny Valley Hospital	X				X	X	X		X	X				X
Canonsburg Hospital		X		X										X
Forbes Hospital		X		X	X	X	X				X			X
Grove City Medical Center					X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X
Jefferson Hospital		X			X		X				X			X
Saint Vincent Hospital		X	X		X		X				X			X
West Penn Hospital			X		X			X					X	X
Westfield Memorial Hospital				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X
Wexford Hospital		X			X		X	X		X		X		X
Brentwood Neighborhood Hospital			X	X										X
Harmar Neighborhood Hospital			X	X										X
Hempfield Neighborhood Hospital			X	X										X
McCandless Neighborhood Hospital			X	X										X

* Access to care includes primary care, specialty care, EMS/trauma services, and access to general services.

**Social and Workforce Programs includes, for example, cultural competency and Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS).

Workforce Development

Workforce development plays a crucial role in addressing social determinants of health by cultivating a skilled labor force, ensuring that health care systems and other industries have the workforce to deliver quality services. For instance, training programs for health care workers help address provider shortages and expand access to medical care. In both rural and urban areas, workforce training initiatives that strengthen local health care capacity can increase the number of professionals serving these regions, ultimately improving health care access and outcomes.

Beyond health care, workforce development contributes to broader societal improvements by tackling systemic inequities. Many populations encounter significant barriers to obtaining quality education and stable employment. Workforce programs that prioritize equity — such as vocational training, mentorship, and job placement services — can help break the cycle of poverty and reduce health disparities. When individuals access stable jobs and financial security, they are better equipped to afford necessities like housing, transportation, and other essential factors that influence health and well-being.

Social Determinants of Health (SDOH): Workforce Development				
Goal: Work with community partners to develop new and innovative workforce initiatives.				
Impact: Strengthen workforce within hospital.				
Target Population	Strategies	Action Steps	Measures	Partners and Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Erie County high school students University students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand Project Search program with a goal of recruiting 12 students each year. Develop a partnership with Edinboro University for a Registered Nurse Program. Establish talent acquisition process with Erie County Trade School. Expand TAP Program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work with Erie City Schools to identify candidates. Explore expansion into neighboring school districts. Work with local universities to develop the program. Meet with university staff to define program parameters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of students in Project Search Program. Number of students in TAP program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Erie City School District Local universities

Cost of Care

The cost of health care is a significant factor in shaping social determinants of health (SDOH) because it directly influences individuals’ ability to access necessary medical services. When the cost of care is prohibitively high, people may delay or forgo medical treatments, leading to worse health outcomes. This issue is especially pronounced among uninsured or underinsured individuals, who often face higher out-of-pocket expenses. According to a West Health-Gallup Affordability Index Survey, an estimated 72.2 million (or nearly one in three) American adults did not seek needed health care because of cost, significantly impacting their ability to seek preventive care, manage chronic conditions, or receive timely treatments.²

The CHNA Community Survey results revealed cost barriers such as lack of insurance coverage, lower incomes, or limited access to affordable care are present in AHN Saint Vincent’s service area. Addressing the high cost of health care is essential for improving health equity and reducing the long-term societal costs of poor health outcomes. By tackling the cost of care, society can take a significant step toward reducing health disparities and improving the overall well-being of populations.

Social Determinants of Health (SDOH): Cost of Care				
Goal: To help provide more comprehensive care to low-income and uninsured patients by enabling them to purchase outpatient drugs at discounted prices.				
Impact: Provide more affordable care to patients and the community.				
Target Population	Strategies	Action Steps	Measures	Partners and Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General population 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase access to affordable medications. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gain support from pharmaceutical assistance programs through AHN clinic, specialty, and infusion centers. Gain support from pharmaceutical grant foundation application assistance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of specialty pharmacy grants – for both oncology and AHN Saint Vincent patients. Number of free drug applications for infusions and through AHN specialty Rx (prescriptions) (free drug through manufacturer patient assistant programs). Number of patients who utilize prescription cost reduction program(s). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Care Partners Clinic Pharmacy and AHN 340B Department SVH Oncology Infusion Center Pharmacies

² West Health-Gallup Affordability Index

Food Insecurity, Diet, and Nutrition

Food insecurity — a major social determinant of health — affects millions of individuals and families, particularly in low-income communities where access to nutritious food is often limited. Many areas are classified as food deserts, meaning residents cannot access affordable, healthy food options. Instead, many rely on highly processed, high-calorie foods that lack essential nutrients, increasing the likelihood of diet-related health conditions. Poor nutrition not only exacerbates chronic disease prevalence but also impacts mental health, contributing to stress, anxiety, and depression.³

Diet and nutrition are fundamental to overall health, influencing physical well-being to cognitive development. A lack of essential nutrients can weaken the immune system, lower energy levels, and increase vulnerability to illness. Inadequate nutrition during early childhood has severe and lasting consequences, contributing to developmental delays, learning difficulties, and a higher risk of chronic diseases such as obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular conditions later in life.⁴

The consequences of food insecurity and poor diet extend beyond individual health, affecting educational achievement, workforce productivity, and economic stability. Children who experience hunger or malnutrition often struggle academically due to difficulties concentrating and increased absenteeism caused by illnesses.⁵ Adults facing food insecurity may experience diminished work performance and higher health care costs due to preventable diet-related illnesses. Addressing food insecurity through policies that expand access to nutritious food — such as subsidized grocery programs, community gardens, and improved public transportation to grocery stores — can help mitigate these disparities and promote better health outcomes across populations. Ultimately, ensuring access to a healthy diet is not just a matter of personal choice but a critical factor in reducing health inequities and improving overall societal well-being.

Social Determinants of Health (SDOH): Food Insecurity, Diet, and Nutrition				
Goal: Identify and address food insecurity for AHN Saint Vincent Hospital/Community.				
Impact: (1) Number of patients referred to Healthy Food Center; (2) Number of visits new vs. follow-up and total served; and (3) Increase total meals provided.				
Target Population	Strategies	Action Steps	Measures	Partners and Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AHN patients (inpatient and outpatient) Surrounding community and community-based members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educate providers and community-based organizations (CBOs) on food insecurity screening and referral process. Identify food insecure patients and community members through SDOH screening tool. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Patients who screen positive for food insecurity will receive referral to the Healthy Food Center. Assess needs of population served (i.e., food access, transportation, utensils, education, recipes, other SDOH needs). Provide healthy foods based on individual needs — chronic disease/preference/cultural, provide. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of patients referred to the Healthy Food Center. Number of patients who complete referrals and visits (new vs. follow-up). Total number of people served. Total number of meals provided. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CIH Healthy Food Center

³ National Library of Medicine

⁴ National Library of Medicine

⁵ National Library of Medicine

Mental Health Services

Access to mental health services in Pennsylvania remains a critical public health concern, with many individuals facing significant barriers to receiving necessary care. The state has seen a growing demand for mental health services, a trend that has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, economic stressors, and ongoing social challenges. Anxiety, depression, and substance use disorders have surged, yet many Pennsylvanians struggle to access timely and affordable treatment due to provider shortages, insurance limitations, and geographic disparities, particularly in rural areas.⁶

According to recent data, nearly 20% of adults in Pennsylvania experience some form of mental illness, yet over half of those affected do not receive the care they need. This gap in treatment is driven by factors such as long wait times for psychiatric appointments, insufficient mental health coverage in insurance plans, and a lack of mental health professionals, especially in lower-income and rural communities. Additionally, stigma surrounding mental health remains a barrier, discouraging individuals from seeking support. By prioritizing mental health services, AHN Saint Vincent and Pennsylvania can move toward a more equitable and effective mental health care system.⁷

Behavioral Health: Mental Health Services				
Goal: Increase knowledge and access to Mental Health programs and services.				
Impact: (1) Increased access to BH programs; (2) increased awareness of behavioral health (BH) services.				
Target Population	Strategies	Action Steps	Measures	Partners and Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community members who need access to BH services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase access to BH programs and services through community-based seminars and programming. Increase awareness and engagement of BH services through various, media, TV, radio, and social media initiatives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide BH programming and education in the community. Develop list of BH program and services offered in community. Develop list of community BH programs and services to market. Develop marketing strategy for these services. Develop content to be distributed through various media platforms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of outreach events and programming that occurs in the community. Number of people addressed. Number of new marketing initiatives. Attendance at community outreach events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community programs Media platforms

⁶ Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

⁷ Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Cancer

Cancer is a significant and growing chronic disease in Pennsylvania, significantly impacting the health and lives of its residents. Each year, thousands of Pennsylvanians are diagnosed with cancer, and the disease remains a leading cause of death in the state. Cancer was identified as a prioritized health need for AHN Saint Vincent based on the community survey results as well as the secondary data analysis.

According to a recent study by the American Cancer Society, the burden of cancer in Pennsylvania is expected to continue increasing in the coming years.⁸ In 2024, approximately 89,410 people were diagnosed with cancer and 27,570 would die from the disease. This marks a slight increase from the previous year's projections, which estimated 88,450 diagnoses and 27,460 deaths. The steady rise in cancer diagnoses and mortality underscores the growing challenge this chronic disease presents to public health.

Several factors contribute to the rising incidence of cancer, including an aging population, environmental exposures, and lifestyle-related risks such as tobacco use, poor diet, and physical inactivity. Additionally, the increasing prevalence of chronic conditions such as obesity, diabetes, and heart disease can further elevate cancer risk. With cancer rates expected to climb, there is an urgent need for robust public health strategies focused on prevention, early detection, and improved treatment options to combat this chronic disease.

The increasing number of cancer diagnoses and deaths highlights the importance of prioritizing cancer research, access to care, and public awareness campaigns. By addressing the underlying risk factors and promoting healthier lifestyles, Pennsylvania can work toward reducing the impact of cancer and improving survival outcomes for those affected by this devastating chronic disease.

Chronic Diseases and Aging: Cancer				
Goal: Increase the number of adults who receive age-appropriate screenings.				
Impact: (1) increased number of screenings in high-risk communities; (2) increased number of lung cancer studies performed.				
Target Population	Strategies	Action Steps	Measures	Partners and Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Provide community-based cancer screening events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Provide community-based cancer screening events.Increase CT lung cancer screening utilization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Number of screening events.Number of participants.Number of studies performed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Community eventsHospital staff

⁸ American Cancer Society

Social and Workforce Programs

Health equity is a crucial aspect of public health that aims to ensure that all individuals, regardless of socioeconomic status or geographic location, have equal access to health care resources and opportunities for optimal health. The importance of health equity lies in its potential to reduce health disparities, improve health outcomes, and enhance overall community well-being.

The World Health Organization (WHO) emphasizes that reducing inequities in health can lead to improved social and economic outcomes, as healthier individuals are more capable of contributing to their communities. Health equity is achieved when everyone can attain their full potential for health and well-being. Moreover, equitable access to health care develops a sense of trust and engagement among community members, encouraging them to seek necessary care and adhere to preventive measures. Health equity is essential for creating a fair and effective health care system that serves all individuals. Addressing the root causes of health disparities and promoting equitable access to care can improve health outcomes and advance a healthier, more resilient society.

Health Equity – Social and Workforce Programs				
Goal: Improve cultural and linguistic services within our health care organization.				
Impact: Advance health equity, decrease healthcare disparities, and improve our overall quality of care outcomes.				
Target Population	Strategies	Action Steps	Measures	Partners and Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Patients requiring interpreter services (phone) Patients requiring translation services (documents) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop system for patients presenting/calling the hospital who require interpreter services. Provide patients with translated documents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advance the implementation of CLAS Standards (Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services) through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with telephone operators and interpreters to set-up process when patients call the hospital with interpretation needs. Review the current program for translation of hospital menus. Expand program to identify and include additional documents for translation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of interpreter services provided. Number of patients benefitting documents being translated. Number of documents translated. Number of sign-ins and usage of CyraCom system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Telephone operators Translators

*All AHN employees receive annual mandatory CLAS Standard training in Health Care Environment Training.

Reclassifying Health Equity programs as Social and Workforce Programs better reflects the broader scope of addressing disparities and improving healthcare access, outcomes, and workforce representation for all populations. It ensures a more direct focus on addressing systemic barriers to care, social determinants of health, and workforce development initiatives. The change aligns with Allegheny Health Network's healthcare priorities, emphasizing measurable strategies to improve community health outcomes and strengthen the healthcare workforce. By reframing this category, AHN aims to highlight tangible efforts to improve social well-being and create sustainable workforce solutions that enhance access to quality healthcare for everyone.

CHNA Opportunities Requiring Renewed Focus

The unmet objectives and strategies from the 2021 CHNA and ISP for AHN Saint Vincent reflect challenges in multiple key areas, such as transportation, access to care, and specific health conditions like substance abuse disorder, postpartum depression, diabetes, and obesity. For transportation, while there was success in tracking patient rides throughout the three-year cycle, progress in addressing broader transportation needs, like those for Cancer Center patients, and transportation between AHN Westfield and AHN Saint Vincent was halted. These areas were discussed but not pursued further, representing a missed opportunity for improving access to care for vulnerable populations. In the realm of access to care, tracking the number of new primary care provider (PCP) visits was successful during the first two years of the CHNA cycle. However, the process broke down when tracking was discontinued in 2024. Additionally, while efforts were made to develop clinic space at the Mercy Center for Women, the initiative's success remains unclear as it focused more on setup rather than measurable outcomes. Similarly, substance abuse disorder initiatives, such as the warm-handoff program, faced roadblocks due to leadership turnover and the lack of specific goals from the Recovery Medicine Team. Other areas, such as postpartum depression, diabetes, and obesity, experienced inconsistent reporting, lack of metrics, or challenges in implementing effective programs. By addressing these opportunities with renewed focus, ideas and energy, AHN Saint Vincent will more effectively meet the health needs of its community and further improve overall health outcomes.

Conclusion

AHN Saint Vincent is committed to addressing key social determinants of health that impact the well-being of its community, including workforce development, cost of care, food insecurity, mental health services, cancer prevention, and broader social and workforce programs. Through a comprehensive, multi-faceted approach, the hospital is working collaboratively with community partners, educational institutions, and health care organizations to implement sustainable solutions that improve access to care, reduce disparities, and enhance overall health outcomes.

By taking a holistic approach to addressing these CHNA needs and community health concerns, AHN Saint Vincent is not only strengthening its own health care services but also fostering a healthier, more resilient community. Through collaboration, innovation, and a commitment to health equity, the hospital is addressing the root causes of disparities and working toward a future where all individuals have the opportunity to lead healthier lives.