

Community Health Needs Assessment Implementation Plan

To best meet the needs of the communities we serve, Pulaski Memorial Hospital (PMH) leadership reviewed the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) Final Report, which was provided by the Indiana Rural Hospital Association (IRHA). Following this review, PMH developed the following action plan around several key areas identified by the CHNA:

I. Affordable Housing

Access to affordable and stable housing was identified as a significant need in this Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA), reflecting both financial barriers and a shortage of available units in the community. Housing insecurity impacts community health outcomes, workforce stability, and patients' ability to maintain consistent access to care. The opportunities below reflect local support as well as state and federal resources the hospital can leverage to help connect residents to housing solutions.

- PMH maintains active participation in the Pulaski County Community Development Commission.
- PMH will continue to collect Social Drivers of Health – Z Codes related to housing during intake in the Hospital and Rural Health Clinics (RHCs).
- PMH will continue to support the Community Health Worker (CHW) in the Rural Health Clinics to assist with patient/family navigation of resources.
- PMH will work with the Pulaski County Health Department (PCHD) to identify community resources.
 - PMH will continue to meet quarterly with the PCHD to identify issues in the community and share resources as needed.
 - In collaboration with the PCHD and Pulaski County Court System, PMH will develop a comprehensive electronic resource guide with housing information.
- PMH will continue to work with our elected officials, both locally and at the state and federal levels, to educate and advocate for housing needs in rural communities.

II. Early Childhood Education and Childcare Access

Affordable, high-quality childcare and early learning opportunities are crucial for supporting working families, ensuring children are well-prepared for school, and enhancing the local workforce. A lack of accessible childcare was identified as a barrier during the CHNA process, which can particularly impact parents working in shift-based and healthcare roles. PMH can

play an essential role in connecting staff, patients, and community members to resources that expand childcare access and promote early learning.

- PMH continues to support childcare access by connecting employees and patients to early learning resources.
- PMH continues to advocate for expanded childcare availability.
- PMH continues to explore partnerships that reduce childcare barriers for the local healthcare workforce.
- PMH will continue to work with our elected officials, both locally and at the state and federal levels, to educate and advocate for early childhood education and childcare needs in rural communities.

III. Transportation – Availability of Non-Emergent Transport and EMS Funding

Reliable transportation is crucial for accessing healthcare services, particularly in rural communities where long distances, inadequate public transportation, and financial constraints frequently impede access to care. Transportation challenges were identified during the CHNA as a significant obstacle for patients needing non-emergent medical transport, as well as for sustaining adequate EMS coverage. The hospital can play a crucial role in coordinating referrals, sharing resources, and advocating for the expansion of transportation options.

- PMH will advocate for sustainable EMS and non-emergent transport to improve access to care.
- PMH will continue to collect Social Drivers of Health – Z Codes related to transportation during patient intake in the Hospital and Rural Health Clinics (RHCs).
- PMH will integrate transportation referrals into discharge planning.
- PMH will continue to collaborate with Pulaski County EMS and Starke County EMS to provide emergent transport to tertiary care facilities. Additionally, PMH will continue to explore other non-emergency transportation options with local ambulance services.
- PMH will continue to work with area nursing homes for van utilization to assist with patient transport between nursing home facilities and the hospital and/or clinics.
- PMH will continue to support the Community Health Worker (CHW) in the Rural Health Clinics to assist with patient/family navigation of resources.
- PMH will work with Pulaski County Health Department (PCHD) to identify community resources.
 - PMH will continue to meet quarterly with the PCHD to identify issues in the community and share resources as needed.
 - In collaboration with PCHD and the Pulaski County Court System, PMH will develop a comprehensive electronic resource guide with information regarding transportation options.

- PMH will continue to work with our elected officials, both locally and at the state and federal levels, to educate and advocate for the need for better transportation resources in rural communities.

IV. Access to Healthcare – After-hours and Mental Health Services

Access to timely healthcare outside of regular business hours, as well as comprehensive mental health services, was identified as a high-priority need in the Community Health Needs Assessment. Patients in rural areas often experience delays in care or are unable to access behavioral health support when and where it is needed. Expanding awareness of available resources, strengthening partnerships, and improving coordination can help bridge these gaps.

Pulaski Memorial Hospital could enhance its after-hours care and mental health access by establishing referral pipelines, incorporating mental health screenings into routine visits, and ensuring that care coordinators directly connect patients with available community resources.

- PMH will continue to develop a chronic care management program
- PMH will investigate the feasibility of participating in a high-value network/clinically integrated network (HVN/CIN)
- PMH will continue to collect Social Drivers of Health – Z Codes related to substance use disorder and interpersonal safety during patient intake in the Hospital and Rural Health Clinics (RHC).
- PMH will continue to support licensed clinical social workers (LCSW) in the RHC.
- PMH will continue to support the Community Health Worker (CHW) in the Rural Health Clinics to assist with patient/family navigation of resources.
- PMH will research options to launch an improved patient portal that allows for a streamlined scheduling process.
- PMH will investigate the expansion of telemedicine and virtual care offerings to improve access to care.
- PMH will research staffing and provider availability to expand after-hours appointment availability.
- PMH will continue to work with our elected officials, both locally and at the state and federal levels, to educate and advocate for the healthcare needs of rural communities.