



BUILDING BRIDGES:

Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds



Community Health Implementation Plan 2023-2025



Community Health
Improvement Partnership
OF BERGEN COUNTY

CHIP of Bergen County

The Community Health Improvement Partnership (CHIP) of Bergen County is comprised of more than 50 community organizations, business, schools, hospitals and also private citizens that are stakeholders in the health of the county. There are currently two task forces, the **Mental Health and Substance Use Task Force (MHSUTF)** and the **Nutrition and Physical Activity Task Force (NPATF)**, staffed by volunteers from these organizations along with individuals all working toward creating a healthier Bergen County. CHIP members develop, implement and promote initiative to improve the health and lives of people who live, work, or attend school in Bergen County.

CHNA Background

In alignment with the Affordable Care Act (ACA), the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and applicable federal requirements for not-for-profit hospitals, CHIP of Bergen County completed a comprehensive Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) that was adopted by CHIP at the Steering Committee Meeting on March 23, 2023. The Bergen County 2022 CHNA was conducted by Professional Research Consultants, Inc. (PRC) for CHIP of Bergen County, representing the needs of all of Bergen County.

The assessment incorporates data from multiple sources, including primary research (through the PRC Community Health Survey and PRC Online Key Informant Survey) and qualitative research including focus groups, key informant interviews, as well as a review of secondary data including vital statistics and other existing health indicators. The complete CHNA report can be found on the CHIP of Bergen County's website:

<https://www.healthybergen.org/community-health-assessment>.

Included in the assessment of health indicators was an examination of the social determinants of health (SDoH) such as food insecurity, housing, transportation, education, and other factors. Furthermore, information and data learned about inequities in opportunity, access, education, and trust revealed by COVID-19 were also taken into consideration.



Community Health Implementation Plan (CHIP)

The intent of the CHIP is to respond to our community health needs and expectations with an implementation plan that can be effectively executed leveraging hospital and network resources, as well as community partners. The implementation plan should be modified as internal and external factors change, including emerging needs, availability of resources, partnerships and policies. An implementation plan should build on and leverage prior success while simultaneously adjusting strategies and actions as obstacles are encountered. The following graphic depicts CHIP of Bergen County's programmatic strategies and interventions, which guided the development of the implementation plan.

Determining Community Health Priorities

In reviewing the data from the 2022 CHNA, it is evident that the priorities previously identified in the 2019 assessment continue to be pressing needs, but are now further complicated by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Existing inequities in opportunity, access, and education were exacerbated by the pandemic. The inequities highlighted by the pandemic elevated health equity as a lens to be prioritized and more closely addressed in the 2022-2025 planning effort.

As part of the Community Health Improvement Partnership of Bergen County collaborative 2022 CHNA process, on October 19, 2022, CHIP of Bergen County and its partners conducted a virtual community forum with hospital representatives and key community stakeholders. During the forum, an overview of the CHNA findings was shared, followed by breakout groups to discuss and determine priority health needs. Seventy-eight people representing social agencies and institutions throughout Bergen County participated and provided diverse perspectives. The goals were reviewed with the common understanding that the social determinants of health (SDoH) have an impact on every identified area and should be incorporated throughout the complete strategic framework. **These priorities were identified as the most important issues facing Bergen County, and are not represented in any particular order.**

There was overwhelming support for the strategy, and ultimately participants endorsed the priority areas for 2023-2025 as **Healthy Minds, Healthy Bodies, Building Bridges**.

2023 Prioritized Health Needs Summary



CHIP of Bergen County acknowledges the wide range of issues that emerged from the CHNA process and determined it could effectively focus on those health needs which are the most pressing, under-addressed, and within its ability to influence. CHIP of Bergen County will continue to lead efforts in support of the prioritized needs related to Healthy Minds, Healthy Bodies, and Building Bridges. CHIP of Bergen County remains open and willing to explore opportunities and partnerships to address key contributing factors outside of the expertise and scope of the organization.

Centering Equity: The Connection Between our Communities and our Health

By focusing on removing barriers and creating vital resource connections, we can work towards building communities where all people have access to choices and tools to live their healthiest lives. One step in this process of advancing health equity is to identify and address disparities in the Social Determinants of Health.

EQUALITY:

Everyone gets the same—regardless if it's needed or right for them.



EQUITY:

Everyone gets what they need—understanding the barriers, circumstances, and conditions.

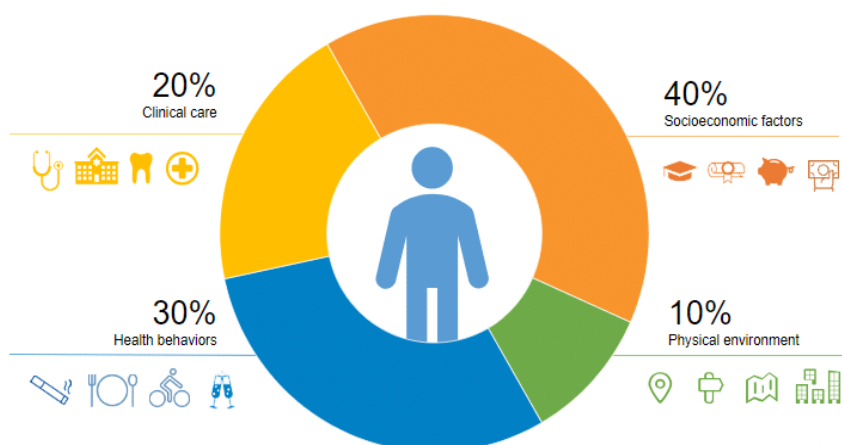


Copyright 2022 Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Social Determinants of Health

Social determinants of health (SDoH) are the conditions in the environments where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range of health and quality of life outcomes. SDoH are grouped into five domains that include factors such as access to health care, safe neighborhoods transportation options, nutritious food, and quality education. The quality and availability of these elements impact the array of healthy living choices and can be measured in rates of disease and length of life. Addressing social determinants of health is a primary approach to achieving health equity.

WHAT MAKES US HEALTHY?



© Interactive Health All Rights Reserved

Source: Centers for Disease Control



Priority Area: Healthy Minds

The 2022 CHNA for CHIP of Bergen County identified the following sub-priorities within the Healthy Minds priority area. Sub-priorities were determined based on areas of opportunity uncovered through the CHNA process.

Key factors:

- “Fair/Poor” Mental Health
- Stress
- Difficulty Obtaining Mental Health Services
- Use of Marijuana and Illicit Drugs
- Data from Key Informants: Mental Health ranked as a top concern
- Data from Key Informants: Substance Abuse rated as a top concern

Goal: Increase access to mental and behavioral health supports at the appropriate level of care.

Objectives

1. Increase active participation in the Mental Health and Substance Use (MHSU) Task Force
2. Expand opportunities and methods for behavioral health initiatives and communication strategies to reach diverse and vulnerable populations
3. Explore, strengthen and expand partnerships with community-based organizations
4. Create opportunities for collaborative action

Strategies

- Increase participation in the MHSU Task Force from organizations with mental health and substance use focus
- Leverage MHSU Task Force partners to expand access to information, education, resources, screenings and services to diverse and vulnerable populations
- Facilitate outreach, education and training regarding mental wellness and substance use to partner agencies
- Explore the collaborative use of community-based tools to provide access to MH resources
- Share best practices among MHSU Task force members regarding equity measurement strategies
- Respond to requests for information and collaboration from diverse organizations
- Continue and increase partnerships with community-based organizations that serve diverse and vulnerable populations

Priority Area: Healthy Bodies

The 2022 CHNA for CHIP of Bergen County identified the following sub-priorities within the Healthy Bodies priority area. Sub-priorities were determined based on areas of opportunity uncovered through the CHNA process.

Key factors:

- Cancer
- Diabetes
- Heart Disease and Stroke
- Tobacco Use
- Nutrition and Weight Management
- Food Insecurity
- Physical Activity
- Potentially Disabling Conditions
- Respiratory Disease

Goal: Increase equitable access to the resources needed to prevent, screen, and treat disease to achieve one's best life.

Objectives

1. Coordinate education and health promotion activities with partners and public health departments
2. Increase participation in task forces among agencies serving diverse and vulnerable populations
3. Create opportunities for partners to share emerging **needs** to identify resource connections and coordinate access to appropriate resources
4. Create opportunities for partners to share emerging **resources** and coordinate access
5. Explore, strengthen, and expand partnerships with community-based organizations.

Strategies

- Leverage the Nutrition and Physical Activity Task Force to conduct or support coordinated community-based preventive health screenings and education with a focus on reaching diverse and vulnerable populations
- Promote and support programs that reduce common risk factors through coordinated assessments, chronic condition management programs and increased messaging regarding healthy food and regular physical activity recommendations
- Coordinate resources to increase connections to food, nutrition access for all patients including vulnerable populations
- Leverage available resources to create a way to sharing emerging chronic disease needs and resources among partner agencies
- Respond to requests for information and collaboration from diverse organizations
- Continue and expand partnerships with community-based organizations that serve diverse and vulnerable populations

Priority Area: Building Bridges

The 2022 CHNA for CHIP of Bergen County identified Building Bridges as a priority.

Key factor:

Data and comments from the 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment indicate that Bergen County is rich in resources and some people have difficulty identifying and accessing information and services.

Goal: Achieve whole, healthy communities through availability and coordination of healthy living services and resources for all people.

Objectives

1. Increase collaborative partnerships with complementary agencies within and outside healthcare that reflect the overall goals of the CHIP
2. Work with partners to enhance traditional and new marketing strategies to communicate key initiatives
3. Promote health equity, access to care, diversity and other strategic initiatives to CHIP partners and the community
4. Embrace opportunities for collaborative action with diverse community partners
5. Facilitate the conversation on strategies regarding making and receiving referrals between partner agencies

Strategies

- Coordinate traditional and new media marketing messaging encouraging accessible information to community members including vulnerable and diverse populations
- Leverage diverse community partners to connect with diverse and vulnerable populations
- Promote free and/or readily affordable resources among partners and community members
- Respond to requests for information, participation and support from new and existing partners
- Promote workshops on Health Equity, diversity and other strategic initiatives to CHIP partners and the community
- Support partners to reduce common barriers to accessing health care including for diverse and vulnerable populations
- Seek opportunities to support other agencies serving Bergen
- Explore joint funding opportunities with community-based agencies and other CHIP partners
- Identify and deepen partnerships with community-based organizations that serve diverse and vulnerable populations

Alignment with New Jersey State Health Improvement Plan

Health needs identified in the CHNA research were confirmed by community stakeholders and refined through collaborative discussion. Local concerns were then aligned with the statewide health priorities in the **New Jersey State Health Improvement Plan (2020)**. This approach ensures priority areas reflect local concerns and community-generated strategies for action while establishing a connection to statewide initiatives. The table below shows the identified health needs in the New Jersey State Health Improvement Plan and the alignment of these issues with priorities with CHIP of Bergen County priorities.

New Jersey State Health Improvement Plan Priorities	CHIP of Bergen County Priorities	
Health Equity	Equity Informed Approach	Enhance competency / health equity commitment to patients and community and increase communication on this topic.
Mental Health and Substance Use	Healthy Minds	All people will have access to mental and behavioral health supports at the appropriate level of care.
Nutrition, Physical Activity and Chronic Disease	Healthy Bodies	All people have access to the resources needed to prevent, screen, and treat disease to achieve their best life.
Immunizations		
Birth Outcomes		
Alignment of State and Local Health Improvement Planning	Building Bridges	Achieve whole, healthy communities through availability and coordination of healthy living services and resources for all people.

Next Steps

Community health improvement requires collaboration among community-based organizations, policy makers, funders, and many other partners. CHIP of Bergen County's Community Health Improvement Plan is an active document, designed to serve as a guide to coordinate community resources, and to measure progress. CHIP of Bergen County invites opportunities for partnership and collaboration as we seek to advance health equity for all. For more information about CHIP of Bergen County's Community Health Implementation Plan and community health activities, or to get involved, please visit our website at <https://www.healthybergen.org/community-health-assessment>.

Our Research Partners:



A New Jersey certified Small Business Enterprise (SBE) and Women-owned Business Enterprise (WBE), 35th Street Consulting specializes in transforming data into action that advances health and social equity through practical and impactful strategies. Our interdisciplinary team of community development experts, health planners, researchers, and data analysts have worked with hundreds of healthcare providers, payors, public health departments, government agencies, health and human service providers, and other community-based organizations to direct action and funding to reimagine policies and achieve realistic, measurable social impact.

We use quantitative and qualitative research methods to conduct studies and develop solutions to address community health, housing, socioeconomic disparities, capacity-building, population health management, and similar challenges. We specialize in transforming research into action through strategic planning, policy change, and collective impact.



Professional Research Consultants (PRC) is a nationally recognized health care consulting firm with extensive experience conducting Community Health Needs Assessments in hundreds of communities across the United States since 1994.