

Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola

**Implementation Strategy for the 2024 CHNA
Escambia and Santa Rosa counties, Florida**



Ascension

The purpose of this Implementation Strategy (IS) is to describe how the hospital plans to address prioritized health needs from its current Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). The significant health needs the hospital does not intend to address are identified, and a rationale is provided. Special attention has been given to the needs of individuals and communities at increased risk for poor health outcomes or experiencing social factors that place them at risk.

Sacred Heart Health System, Inc.
D/B/A Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola
5151 North 9th Ave, Pensacola, FL
ascension.org/PensacolaFL
(850) 416-7000
59-0634434

The Ascension Florida Board of Directors approved the 2024 IS on August 19, 2025 (2024 tax year) and applies to the following three-year cycle: July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2028. This report, as well as the previous report, can be found on our public website.

We value the community's voice and welcome feedback on this report. Please visit our public website (<https://healthcare.ascension.org/chna>) to submit your comments.

Table of Contents

Introduction	4
About Ascension	4
About Ascension Florida	4
About Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola	5
Overview of the Implementation Strategy	6
Needs Prioritization	6
Needs That Will Be Addressed	6
Needs That Will Not Be Addressed	7
Written Comments	8
Approval and Adoption of the IS by Ascension Florida Board of Directors	8
Action Plans	9

Introduction

As one of the leading non-profit and Catholic health systems in the United States, Ascension is committed to delivering compassionate, personalized care to all, with special attention to impoverished and vulnerable persons.

About Ascension

Ascension is one of the nation's leading non-profit and Catholic health systems, with a Mission of delivering compassionate, personalized care to all, with special attention to those most vulnerable. In FY2024, Ascension provided \$2.1 billion in care of persons living in poverty and other community benefit programs. Across 16 states and the District of Columbia, Ascension's network encompasses approximately 99,000 associates, 23,000 aligned providers, 94 wholly owned or consolidated hospitals, and ownership interests in 27 additional hospitals through partnerships. Ascension also operates 30 senior living facilities and a variety of other care sites offering a range of healthcare services.

Ascension's Mission provides a strong framework and guidance for the work done to meet the needs of communities across the US. It is foundational to transform healthcare and express priorities when providing care and services, particularly to those most in need.

Mission: Rooted in the loving ministry of Jesus as healer, we commit ourselves to serving all persons with special attention to those who are poor and vulnerable. Our Catholic health ministry is dedicated to spiritually-centered, holistic care which sustains and improves the health of individuals and communities. We are advocates for a compassionate and just society through our actions and our words.

For more information about Ascension, visit <https://www.ascension.org/>.

About Ascension Florida

In Northwest Florida, Ascension operates Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola, The Studer Family Children's Hospital at Ascension Sacred Heart, Ascension Sacred Heart Emerald Coast, Ascension Sacred Heart Bay and Ascension Sacred Heart Gulf. In Northeast Florida, Ascension operates Ascension St. Vincent's Riverside, Ascension St. Vincent's Southside, Ascension St. Vincent's Clay County and Ascension St. Vincent's St. Johns County. In addition to operating nine hospitals, Ascension Florida also has more than 190 other sites of care and employs more than 12,000 associates throughout the state.

About Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola

As a Ministry of the Catholic Church, Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola is a non-profit hospital providing medical care to Escambia and Santa Rosa counties. Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola operates an adult hospital and Studer Family Children's Hospital at Ascension Sacred Heart, the region's only pediatric hospital, two free-standing emergency departments, 106 related healthcare facilities, and employs 430 primary and specialty care clinicians. Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola offers a Level I Trauma Center, the region's only Pediatric Trauma Referral Center, the area's only nationally-certified Comprehensive Stroke Center.

Serving Florida since 1908, Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola is continuing the long and valued tradition of responding to the health needs of the people in our community, following in the footsteps of the Daughters of Charity. The hospital was constructed on 12th Avenue during the summer of 1915 and the new hospital officially opened its doors to the community on September 1, 1915

For more information about Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola, visit ascension.org/PensacolaFL

Overview of the Implementation Strategy

Needs Prioritization




Included in Code Section 501(r)(3) is the requirement that hospitals must provide a description of the process and criteria used to determine the most significant health needs of the community identified through the CHNA, along with a description of the process and criteria used to determine the prioritized needs to be addressed by the hospital. Accordingly, Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola used a phased prioritization approach to identify the needs of Escambia and Santa Rosa counties. The first step was to determine the broader set of identified needs. The CHNA assessment narrowed identified needs to a group of significant needs determined most crucial for community stakeholders to address.

After completing the CHNA assessment, significant needs were further narrowed down to prioritized needs that the hospital will address within the IS. To arrive at the prioritized needs, members from Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola leadership and Community Benefit teams reviewed the findings from the 2024 CHNA, assessed community interest and local momentum, and reflected on the criteria outlined below (listed alphabetically). This approach ensured that the selected priorities reflect both data-informed insights and the values of the communities served.

- Ability to leverage existing organizational assets, resources, and areas of expertise
- Alignment with the hospital's mission, values, and strategic priorities
- Potential to positively impact a significant number of people, with attention to those who are most vulnerable

Needs That Will Be Addressed

Following the completion of the current CHNA, Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola has selected the prioritized needs outlined below for its 2024 IS. Ascension has defined "prioritized needs" as the significant needs that the hospital has prioritized to address through the three-year CHNA cycle.

Prioritized Need	Rationale
Access to Care 	<p>This need was selected because the ability to obtain timely, affordable, and quality healthcare is essential to improving physical, mental, and social well-being. When individuals face barriers to care, such as cost or limited availability of services, they are more likely to delay diagnosis, miss preventive services, and experience worsening of chronic conditions, which can lead to poorer health outcomes and increased healthcare costs.</p>
Food Insecurity 	<p>This need was selected because access to nutritious, affordable food is a key driver of health outcomes and health equity. In Northwest Florida, many communities experience high rates of food insecurity and limited access to healthy food options, particularly in underserved and rural areas. Poor food environments contribute to chronic conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, and obesity—conditions that disproportionately affect low-income populations.</p>
Child Abuse 	<p>This need was selected because children living in poverty, child and infant mortality, Early Childhood Development, and abuse and neglect have a profound and lasting impact on health, development, and overall well-being. Children who experience abuse are at significantly higher risk for poor mental and physical health outcomes, both immediately and across their lifespan. In Northwest Florida, rates of child abuse remain a serious concern.</p>

Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola understands the importance of all the community's health needs. It is committed to playing an active role in improving the health of the people in the communities it serves. For this IS, Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola has focused its efforts on the above priorities.

Needs That Will Not Be Addressed

Based on the prioritization process and criteria, the significant (health) needs identified through the CHNA that Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola does not plan to address at this time include:

- **Mental Health and Wellbeing** - This need was not selected because a number of specialized organizations in the community are already leading efforts to expand access to mental health services.
- **Overweight and Obesity** - This need was not selected because several community partners and local agencies are already leading targeted efforts to address overweight and obesity, as well as to promote healthier lifestyles.

- Substance Abuse - This need was not selected because addressing substance use falls within the core expertise of several dedicated community organizations that are actively engaged in this work.

While these needs are not the focus of this IS, Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola may consider investing resources in these areas as appropriate, depending on opportunities to leverage organizational assets in partnership with local communities and organizations. Also, this report only encompasses a partial inventory of everything Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola does to support health within the community.

To find a list of resources for each need not being addressed, please refer to the Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola's 2024 CHNA: <https://healthcare.ascension.org/CHNA>.

Written Comments

This IS has been made available to the public and is open for public comment. Questions or comments about this IS can be submitted via the website: <https://healthcare.ascension.org/chna>.

Approval and Adoption of the IS by Ascension Florida Board of Directors

To ensure the Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola's efforts meet the needs of the community and have a lasting and meaningful impact, the 2024 IS was presented and adopted by the Ascension Florida Board of Directors on August 19, 2025. Although an authorized body of the hospital must adopt the IS to be compliant with the provisions of the Affordable Care Act, adoption of the IS also demonstrates that the board is aware of the IS, endorses the priorities identified, and supports the action plans that have been developed to address prioritized needs.

Action Plans

The IS below is based on prioritized needs from the hospital's most recent CHNA. These action plans represent where the hospital will focus its community efforts over the next three years.

PRIORITIZED NEED #1: ACCESS TO CARE	
HOSPITAL NAME: Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola	
STRATEGY #1.1: Engage in community-based councils, associations, and other collaborative forums	
OBJECTIVE: By June 30, 2028, Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola will strengthen its role in collective efforts to improve access to care and drive measurable improvements in overall community health outcomes.	
COLLABORATORS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other Ascension hospital(s): Ascension Sacred Heart hospitals (Northwest Florida-based) Collaborators: Community-based organizations (to be determined) 	
RESOURCES: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola - Allocated staff time; Funds to support participation, if applicable Other Ascension hospital(s): Ascension Sacred Heart hospitals (Northwest Florida-based) - Allocated staff time Collaborators: Community-based organizations (to be determined) - Time 	
TACTICS	OWNER
Expand current, or initiate new, community partnerships with community-based organizations, particularly those focused on addressing availability and affordability.	Community Benefit, Hospital leadership, Mission
Strengthen relationships with Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and other clinics providing care to under and or uninsured community members	Community Benefit, Foundation, Hospital leadership, Mission, Service Lines, Strategy
Participate in Achieve Healthy EscaRosa collaborative efforts to address shared community health priorities	Community Benefit, Hospital leadership
ANTICIPATED IMPACT	
The anticipated impact of these tactics is stronger, trust-based relationships with community organizations that improve access to care. These partnerships will help address social and structural barriers to health, elevate community voice, and promote shared accountability for the health of the community. Over time, this approach will support more coordinated systems, aligned resources, and improved health outcomes.	

PRIORITIZED NEED #1: ACCESS TO CARE	
HOSPITAL NAME: Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola	
STRATEGY #1.2: Expand hospital programs, services, and infrastructure	
OBJECTIVE: By June 30, 2028, Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola will expand access to timely, affordable, and appropriate care by strengthening service delivery, expanding capacity, and removing barriers to care.	
COLLABORATORS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other Ascension hospital(s): Ascension Sacred Heart hospitals (Northwest Florida-based) Collaborators: Community-based organizations (to be determined) 	
RESOURCES: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola - Allocated staff time; Funds to support participation, if applicable Other Ascension hospital(s): Ascension Sacred Heart hospitals (Northwest Florida-based) - Allocated staff time, shared programming and funding resources Collaborators: Community-based organizations (to be determined) - Time 	
TACTICS	OWNER
Offer community-based clinics, health screenings, and other localized health services	Community Outreach, Mission
Implement transformation strategies that improve access for Medicaid and Uninsured patients	Community Impact, Hospital leadership
Expand the Maternal Health Patient Navigation program	ACEN, Community Impact, Women's Health
Connect Emergency Department patients without a primary care provider to follow-up care through the ED Concierge program	ACEN, Emergency Department, Care Continuity
Assess opportunities to increase access to medication, including expansion of the Dispensary of Hope program	Pharmacy Department
Assess opportunities to expand access points	ACEN, Hospital leadership, Strategy
ANTICIPATED IMPACT	
The anticipated impact of these actions is that more individuals will be able to access the care they need, when and where they need it. Through expanded capacity and more coordinated services, patients will experience fewer barriers, shorter wait times, and improved connections to preventive, acute, and specialty care.	

PRIORITIZED NEED #1: ACCESS TO CARE	
HOSPITAL NAME: Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola	
STRATEGY #1.3: Invest in community-based programs and initiatives	
OBJECTIVE: By June 30, 2028, Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola will improve access to care and community health outcomes through strategic investments in trusted nonprofit partners and collaborative community programs.	
COLLABORATORS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other Ascension hospital(s): Ascension Sacred Heart hospitals (Northwest Florida-based) Collaborators: Community-based organizations (to be determined) 	
RESOURCES: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola - Allocated staff time; Funds to support investments, if applicable Other Ascension hospital(s): Ascension Sacred Heart hospitals (Northwest Florida-based) - Allocated staff time, shared programming and funding resources Collaborators: Community-based organizations (to be determined) - Time 	
TACTICS	OWNER
Expand reach and impact through new or increased community investments	Community Investment Council, Hospital leadership
Implement Ascension's national Community Investment Guidelines	Community Benefit, Community Investment Council, Hospital leadership
ANTICIPATED IMPACT	
The anticipated impact of these tactics is expanded community capacity to connect and provide individuals with needed healthcare services and support. Investments in nonprofit organizations and programs will help reduce barriers such as transportation and cost, leading to improved access to care and better health outcomes.	

PRIORITIZED NEED #2: FOOD INSECURITY	
HOSPITAL NAME: Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola	
STRATEGY #2.1: Engage in community-based councils, associations, and other collaborative forums	
OBJECTIVE: By June 30, 2028, Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola will strengthen its role in collective efforts to reduce food insecurity and improve access to healthy, affordable food in the community.	
COLLABORATORS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other Ascension hospital(s): Ascension Sacred Heart hospitals (Northwest Florida-based) Collaborators: Community-based organizations (to be determined) 	
RESOURCES: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola - Allocated staff time; Funds to support participation, if applicable Other Ascension hospital(s): Ascension Sacred Heart hospitals (Northwest Florida-based) - Allocated staff time Collaborators: Community-based organizations (to be determined) - Time 	
TACTICS	OWNER
Expand community partnerships with organizations focused on reducing food insecurity and improving access to healthy, affordable food.	Community Benefit, Hospital leadership, Mission
Participate in Achieve Healthy EscaRosa's subcommittee efforts to food insecurity	Community Benefit, Hospital leadership
ANTICIPATED IMPACT	
The anticipated impact of these tactics is stronger, trust-based relationships with community organizations working to reduce food insecurity and improve access to healthy, affordable food. These partnerships will help address root causes of poor food access, elevate community voice, and promote shared responsibility for improving local food systems. Over time, this approach will support more coordinated efforts, better-aligned resources, and improved food security for the community.	

PRIORITIZED NEED #2: FOOD INSECURITY	
HOSPITAL NAME: Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola	
STRATEGY #2.2: Expand hospital programs, services, and infrastructure	
OBJECTIVE: By June 30, 2028, Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola will enhance access to healthy, affordable food by promoting community and associate awareness and improving availability of fresh food options both on campus and beyond.	
COLLABORATORS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other Ascension hospital(s): Ascension Sacred Heart hospitals (Northwest Florida-based) Collaborators: Community-based organizations (to be determined) 	
RESOURCES: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola - Allocated staff time; Funds to support participation, if applicable Other Ascension hospital(s): Ascension Sacred Heart hospitals (Northwest Florida-based) - Allocated staff time, shared programming and funding resources Collaborators: Community-based organizations (to be determined) - Time 	
TACTIC	OWNER
Implement the Produce Rx program for patients that meet appropriate chronic condition criteria	Community Outreach
Explore opportunities to expand the Maternal Health Food Initiative program	ACEN, Community Impact, Community Outreach, Women's Health
Promote broader awareness and use of the Neighborhood Resources platform among patients, associates, and community	ACEN, Case Management, Community Impact
Collaborate with internal teams to ensure (eligible) associates are aware of and able to benefit from the Fresh Funds foods program	Associate Engagement Committee, Hospital leadership, Human Resources
Explore partnerships and initiatives to enhance on-campus access to fresh and healthy foods	Community Benefit, Hospital leadership, TouchPoint
ANTICIPATED IMPACT	
The anticipated impact of these tactics is increased access to healthy, affordable food for associates and community members. By expanding programs, services, and infrastructure, barriers to obtaining fresh food will be reduced, resulting in greater food security, improved well-being, and stronger connections to community resources.	

PRIORITIZED NEED #2: FOOD INSECURITY	
HOSPITAL NAME: Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola	
STRATEGY #2.3: Invest in community-based programs and initiatives	
OBJECTIVE: By June 30, 2028, Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola will help reduce food insecurity and improve access to healthy, affordable food by strategically investing in trusted nonprofit partners and community-based programs.	
COLLABORATORS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other Ascension hospital(s): Ascension Sacred Heart hospitals (Northwest Florida-based) Collaborators: Community-based organizations (to be determined) 	
RESOURCES: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola - Allocated staff time; Funds to support investments, if applicable Other Ascension hospital(s): Ascension Sacred Heart hospitals (Northwest Florida-based) - Allocated staff time, shared programming and funding resources Collaborators: Community-based organizations (to be determined) - Time 	
TACTICS	OWNER
Expand reach and impact through new or increased community investments	Community Investment Council, Hospital leadership
Implement Ascension's national Community Investment Guidelines	Community Benefit, Community Investment Council, Hospital leadership
ANTICIPATED IMPACT	
The anticipated impact of these tactics is expanded community capacity to address food insecurity and increase access to healthy, affordable food. Strategic investments in nonprofit partners and community-based programs will help reduce barriers such as cost, availability, and geographic access, contributing to improved food security and overall community well-being.	

PRIORITIZED NEED #3: CHILD ABUSE	
HOSPITAL NAME: Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola	
STRATEGY #3.1: Engage in community-based councils, associations, and other collaborative forums	
OBJECTIVE: By June 30, 2028, Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola will actively collaborate with local partners and stakeholders to strengthen coordinated efforts that prevent and address child abuse and support child and family well-being.	
COLLABORATORS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other Ascension hospital(s): Ascension Sacred Heart hospitals (Northwest Florida-based) Collaborators: Community-based organizations (to be determined) 	
RESOURCES: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola - Allocated staff time; Funds to support participation, if applicable Other Ascension hospital(s): Ascension Sacred Heart hospitals (Northwest Florida-based) - Allocated staff time Collaborators: Community-based organizations (to be determined) - Time 	
TACTICS	OWNER
Expand community partnerships with organizations focused on addressing child abuse and supporting child and family well-being	Community Benefit, Hospital leadership, Mission
Participate in Achieve Healthy EscaRosa's subcommittee efforts focused on child safety	Community Benefit, Hospital leadership
ANTICIPATED IMPACT	
<p>The anticipated impact of these tactics is stronger, trust-based relationships with organizations and stakeholders working to prevent and address child abuse. These partnerships will help align efforts, elevate the voices of those impacted, and promote shared responsibility for protecting children and supporting families. Over time, this approach will foster more coordinated services, reduce duplication of efforts, and strengthen the community's capacity to create safe, stable, and nurturing environments for all children.</p>	

PRIORITIZED NEED #3: CHILD ABUSE	
HOSPITAL NAME: Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola	
STRATEGY #3.2: Expand hospital programs, services, and infrastructure	
OBJECTIVE: By June 30, 2028, Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola will strengthen its internal capacity and protocols to promote early identification, intervention, and support for children and families at risk of or affected by child abuse.	
COLLABORATORS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other Ascension hospital(s): Ascension Sacred Heart hospitals (Northwest Florida-based) Collaborators: Community-based organizations (to be determined) 	
RESOURCES: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola - Allocated staff time; Funds to support participation, if applicable Other Ascension hospital(s): Ascension Sacred Heart hospitals (Northwest Florida-based) - Allocated staff time, shared programming and funding resources Collaborators: Community-based organizations (to be determined) - Time 	
TACTIC	OWNER
Identify and screen for child/family vulnerability and social determinants of health during pediatric and prenatal visits	ACEN, Case Management, Community Impact, Women's Health
Promote broader awareness and use of the Neighborhood Resources platform among patients, associates, and community	ACEN, Case Management, Community Impact
Train staff on recognizing signs of abuse/neglect	MyLearning
ANTICIPATED IMPACT	
The anticipated impact of these tactics is improved identification and support for children and families at risk of or affected by child abuse. By strengthening internal capacity and protocols, staff readiness will be enhanced, gaps in intervention will be reduced, and timely connection to supportive services will contribute to greater child safety, family stability, and overall well-being.	

PRIORITIZED NEED #3: CHILD ABUSE	
HOSPITAL NAME: Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola	
STRATEGY #3.3: Invest in community-based programs and initiatives	
OBJECTIVE: By June 30, 2028, Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola will help prevent and address child abuse by strategically investing in trusted nonprofit partners and community-based programs that support safe, stable, and nurturing environments for children and families.	
COLLABORATORS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other Ascension hospital(s): Ascension Sacred Heart hospitals (Northwest Florida-based) Collaborators: Community-based organizations (to be determined) 	
RESOURCES: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola - Allocated staff time; Funds to support investments, if applicable Other Ascension hospital(s): Ascension Sacred Heart hospitals (Northwest Florida-based) - Allocated staff time, shared programming and funding resources Collaborators: Community-based organizations (to be determined) - Time 	
TACTICS	OWNER
Expand reach and impact through new or increased community investments	Community Investment Council, Hospital leadership
Implement Ascension's national Community Investment Guidelines	Community Benefit, Community Investment Council, Hospital leadership
ANTICIPATED IMPACT	
The anticipated impact of these tactics is strengthened community capacity to prevent and respond to child abuse. Intentional investments in nonprofit partners and community-based programs will enhance access to supportive services, reduce risk factors such as family stress and social isolation, and promote safe, stable, and nurturing environments, ultimately contributing to improved child and family well-being.	