

# Ascension St. Vincent Carmel

## Implementation Strategy for the 2024 CHNA Hamilton County, Indiana



**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.

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The Ascension St. Vincent Carmel Board of Directors approved the 2024 Implementation Strategy on October 29, 2025 (2024 tax year) and applies to the following three-year cycle: July 2025 to June 2028 (FY 2026 - FY 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.**

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## 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/>.

## **Ascension St. Vincent Indiana**

Ascension St. Vincent operates 19 hospitals in addition to a comprehensive network of affiliated joint ventures, medical practices and clinics serving Indiana and employs more than 13,000 associates. In Fiscal Year 2024, Ascension St. Vincent provided more than \$357 million in community benefit and care of persons living in poverty throughout the state.

## **Ascension St. Vincent Carmel**

As a Ministry of the Catholic Church, Ascension St. Vincent Carmel is a non-profit hospital governed by a local board of trustees represented by community members, medical staff, and sister sponsorships. For many years, the hospital has provided medical care for the residents of Hamilton County, Indiana and neighboring areas.

In 1985, St. Vincent Carmel was built in Hamilton County. Since then, there have been several expansions to meet the needs of the growing county. Ascension St. Vincent Carmel hospital is a 125-bed, acute care facility and offers the following services: bariatric services, cancer, cardiovascular services, cosmetics & plastic surgery, digestive health, emergency medicine, interventional radiology, laboratory services, maternity services, medical imaging, neuroscience, nutrition support, orthopedics, pediatrics, post-acute care, primary care, rehabilitation services, respiratory care, spiritual care, surgery, wellness medicine, and women's health. Ascension St. Vincent Carmel's primary service area is Hamilton County which is in Central Indiana.

For more information about Ascension St. Vincent Carmel, visit

<https://healthcare.ascension.org/locations/indiana/inasc/carmel-ascension-st-vincent-carmel>

## 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 St. Vincent Carmel used a phased prioritization approach to identify the needs of Hamilton County. 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, Ascension St. Vincent Carmel used the following process: hospital leaders and board members reviewed the 2024 CHNA significant health needs and the data used to define each as significant, then voted on the top three needs they determined the hospital could respond to within its IS during the next three years. The criteria used to prioritize the significant needs were:

- **Organizational capacity** – The hospital facility has the capacity to respond to the issue.
- **Existing infrastructure** – The hospital facility has programs, systems, staff and support resources in place to respond to the issue.
- **Established relationships** – There are established relationships with community partners to respond to the issue.
- **Ongoing investment** – There are existing resources committed to the issue. Staff time and financial resources for this issue are counted as part of the community benefit effort.
- **Focus area** – The hospital facility has acknowledged competencies and expertise to respond to the issue and the issue fits with the organizational mission.
- **Magnitude of the problem** – The number of and/or disparities among people
- **Severity of consequences** – The potential for mortality or morbidity
- **Feasibility of intervention** – The available resources and evidence-based solutions
- **Alignment with organizational or community goals** – The response would fit with strategic plans

## Needs That Will Be Addressed

Following the completion of the current CHNA, Ascension St. Vincent Carmel 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:

- **Access to Care** – This need was selected because access to care indicators such as adults reporting fair or poor health, low birthweight babies, per capita supply of healthcare providers, preventable hospital stays, and/or core preventive services compared unfavorably to peer counties or U.S. averages and because community meeting participants identified access to care (including preventive services) as a priority.
- **Behavioral Health (includes Mental Health and Access to Mental Health Services and Substance Use Disorders, including Alcohol and Nicotine)** – This need was selected because mental health indicators such as number of poor mental health days, number of mental health providers per population, depression rate and/or suicide rate compared unfavorably to peer counties or U.S. averages and because community meeting participants identified mental health as a priority. Substance use disorder is included because indicators such as drug poisoning deaths, percentage of tobacco and/or e-cigarette users, opioid-related deaths, and/or the percentage of alcohol-impaired driving deaths compared unfavorably to peer counties or U.S. averages and because community meeting participants stressed the prevalence of SUD and mental health as co-occurring health issues and identified them as priorities.
- **Services for Older Adults/Social Drivers of Health (including poverty, affordable housing, food security, and transportation)** -This need was selected because the percentage of the population aged 65 and older is anticipated to grow at a faster pace than the general population. This trend will increase needs and demands for health care and social services. Additionally, the mortality rate from Parkinson’ Disease is higher than Indiana and U.S. rates. Community input stressed the connection between health outcomes and social drivers of health, especially transportation, and that social isolation remains a hidden issue for many community members, especially older adults.

Ascension St. Vincent Carmel 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 implementation strategy, Ascension St. Vincent Carmel has focused its efforts on the above priorities.

## **Needs That Will Not Be Addressed**

Based on the prioritization criteria, the health needs identified through the CHNA that Ascension St. Vincent Carmel does not plan to address within the hospital's IS at this time include:

- **Substance Use Disorders, including Alcohol and Nicotine** - The hospital, together with AMG, does provide diagnoses, treatment, and counseling for community members with substance use disorders and overdoses, most notably through emergency services. Additionally, the hospital remains committed to partnering with community groups to address this identified health need and will continue to seek opportunities to do so. As federal, state, and local authorities, as well as community-based organizations, have focused efforts to reduce substance use disorders and overdoses, the hospital will not directly address this need in the current Implementation Strategy.

While these needs are not the focus of this Implementation Strategy, Ascension St. Vincent Carmel 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 St. Vincent Carmel does to support health within the community.

To find a list of resources for needs not being addressed, please refer to the Ascension St. Vincent Carmel's 2024 CHNA: [https://healthcare.ascension.org/2024\\_CHNA/Carmel](https://healthcare.ascension.org/2024_CHNA/Carmel).

## **Written Comments**

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

## **Approval and Adoption of the IS by Ascension St. Vincent Carmel**

To ensure the Ascension St. Vincent Carmel's efforts meet the needs of the community and have a lasting and meaningful impact, the 2024 Implementation Strategy was presented and adopted by the Ascension St. Vincent Carmel Board of Directors on October 29, 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 strategies and action plans represent where the hospital will focus its community efforts over the next three years.

Access To Care	
<b>Hospital(s) Name(s)</b> Ascension St. Vincent Carmel Hospital	
<b>Prioritized Health Need</b> Access to Care	
<b>Objective</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By June 30, 2028, Ascension St. Vincent Carmel will increase the 3-year total number of individuals enrolled in public programs through the completion of an Enrollment Pathway by 3% compared to the total enrolled during FY2023–FY2025.</li> <li>By June 30, 2028, Ascension St. Vincent Carmel will increase the 3-year total number of individuals established with a medical home through the completion of a Medical Home Pathway by 3% compared to the total established in FY2023-FY2025.</li> </ol>	
<b>Strategy</b> Provide technical support for individuals when applying for public programs and finding primary care	
<b>Collaborators/Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Collaborators:</b> FSSA, FQHCs, community groups focused on access to care, referring organizations</li> <li><b>ASV Department/Program:</b> Health Access/Community Health Worker (CHW) Advocacy, Mission Integration</li> </ul>	<b>Budget*</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Associate time to develop materials with updated eligibility requirements</li> <li>Associate time working with individual to complete a pathway</li> <li>Printing costs for updated materials</li> </ul>
ACTION STEPS	ROLE/OWNER
Establish, or utilize an existing, internal workgroup to identify and implement ways the hospital can support the CHW and increased access to care.	IS Priority Lead (Access)
Work with Advocacy and Communications to develop materials to inform individuals of new Medicaid eligibility requirements.	IS Priority Lead (Access)
Complete the Medical Home Pathway through the following steps: assess and address barriers to establishing a medical home, refer patients to a medical home, educate on process, assist with scheduling, confirm attendance at appointment and follow up for ongoing concerns.	Community Health Worker
Complete the Enrollment Pathway through the following steps: verify appropriate application is completed, review referrals for social drivers of health (SDOH), assess and address barriers, monitor patient progress and provide ongoing management.	Community Health Worker
Track and report progress via bi-annual IS Tracker Report	Health Access Director & Community Benefit

**ANTICIPATED IMPACT**

The anticipated impact of these actions is increased access to care by providing support with establishing a medical home and securing medical insurance.

*\*The budget for this initiative is an estimate and should be considered as such.*

Behavioral Health	
<b>Hospital(s) Name(s)</b> <b>Ascension St. Vincent Carmel Hospital</b>	
<b>Prioritized Health Need</b> Behavioral Health (including mental health, substance use disorder, and suicide)	
<b>Objective</b> By June 30, 2028, Ascension St. Vincent Carmel, in collaboration with the Stress Center, will sponsor and support the certification of at least one community member who works with youth and young adults, ages 10 through 24, in the evidence-based online QPR Pathfinder Training.	
<b>Strategy</b> Support the development of a new workforce of crisis responders	
<b>Collaborators/Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Collaborators:</b> QPR, Community partners, community coalitions, local schools and youth sports/clubs</li> <li>• <b>ASV Department/Program:</b> Stress Center, Peyton Manning Children's Hospital</li> </ul>	<b>Budget*</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fee for QPR training</li> <li>• Staff time working towards this initiative</li> </ul>
ACTION STEPS	ROLE/OWNER
Develop applicable materials, including an application for individuals who are interested in being trained and post training document(s) to assess the perceived impact from the training.	Community Benefit
Promote the training opportunity, identify individual(s) to attend training, secure training placement, and complete required post-training documentation.	IS Priority Lead (Behavioral Health)
Complete required quarterly reporting to Community Benefit.	IS Priority Lead (Behavioral Health)
ANTICIPATED IMPACT	
The anticipated impact is an increase to the number of community members who work with young people that are equipped to recognize and respond effectively to the signs of a suicide crisis, enhancing early intervention and reducing the risk of suicide among youth and young adults.	

\*The budget for this initiative is an estimate and should be considered as such.

Services for Older Adults	
<b>Hospital(s) Name(s)</b> Ascension St. Vincent Carmel Hospital	
<b>Prioritized Health Need</b> Services for Older Adults	
<b>Objective</b> By June 30, 2028, Ascension St. Vincent Carmel will develop and implement a written plan to respond to barriers related to social drivers of health facing older adults, specifically, social isolation and transportation.	
<b>Strategy</b> Reduce and/or eliminate barriers related to social drivers of health for older adults to improve health outcomes.	
<b>Collaborators/Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>Collaborators:</b> Meals on Wheels of Hamilton County, PrimeLife Enrichment, Shepherds Center of Hamilton County, Senior Citizens Organization, Inc. Hamilton County Health Department</li><li>● <b>Other Ascension hospital(s):</b> Ascension St. Vincent Fishers, Ascension St. Vincent Indianapolis, Center for Healthy Aging</li></ul>	<b>Budget*</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Staff time to coordinate initiative</li><li>● Financial support provided to nonprofit organizations</li><li>● Printing costs for resource guides</li></ul>
ACTION STEPS	ROLE/OWNER
FY26: Establish an internal multi-department workgroup and identify existing Ascension St. Vincent resources that respond to older adults’ mental health, social isolation, and transportation. Identify gaps that outside resources may fill.	IS Priority Lead (Services for Older Adults)
FY27: Develop a written plan in collaboration with partner organizations, such as the Shepherd’s Center of Hamilton County and the Hamilton County Health Department, to respond to gaps that Ascension is unable to fill.	
FY28: Implement the written plan, including a printed resource for patients and community members that promotes social interactions and helps connect older adults to transportation services.	
ANTICIPATED IMPACT	
The anticipated impact of these actions is a reduction in barriers that prevent older adults from accessing essential services, helping them remain independent, active, and connected to services.	

\*The budget for this initiative is an estimate and should be considered as such.

## **Evaluation**

Ascension St. Vincent Carmel will develop a comprehensive measurement and evaluation process for the implementation strategy. The Hospital will monitor and evaluate the action plans outlined in this plan for the purpose of reporting and documenting the impact these action plans have on the community. Ascension St. Vincent Carmel uses a tracking system to capture community benefit activities and implementation. Data will be aggregated into an annual Community Benefit report made available to the community to ensure accountability.