

# Ascension Saint Thomas Rutherford Hospital

**Implementation Strategy for the 2024 CHNA  
Rutherford County, Tennessee**



**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.

Hospital legal name: Saint Thomas Rutherford Hospital (Ascension Saint Thomas Rutherford Hospital)

Hospital address: 1700 Medical Center Pkwy, Murfreesboro, TN 37129

Hospital website: [Ascension Saint Thomas Rutherford](https://www.ascensionstthomas.com)

Hospital phone: 615-396-4100

Hospital EIN/Tax ID: 62-0475842

The 2024 Implementation Strategy (IS) was adopted by the Ascension Saint Thomas Rutherford Hospitals Board of Directors on September 18, 2025 (2024 tax year) and by the Ascension Saint Thomas Board of Directors on October 24, 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 Ascension's 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 Saint Thomas

Ascension Saint Thomas is a leading health care system with a 125-year history of providing care to the community, and is the only faith-based, non profit health system in Middle Tennessee. Today, the health system offers a highly comprehensive system of care, with more than 320 sites of care that cover a 45-county area in Tennessee consisting of 18 hospitals and a network of affiliated joint ventures, medical practices, clinics and specialty facilities. Across the state, Ascension Saint Thomas and its partner organizations employ more than 13,000 dedicated associates who care for millions of patients each year.

### Ascension Saint Thomas Rutherford Hospital

As a Ministry of the Catholic Church, Ascension Saint Thomas Rutherford Hospital located in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, continues to Rutherford County since 1927. Ascension Saint Thomas Rutherford Hospital in Murfreesboro, is a critical care hospital offering advanced specialty care services. The full-service hospital delivers 24/7 emergency care for life threatening injuries and illnesses. The care teams listen to quickly understand your health needs and deliver care that's right for



you. As a leading destination for specialty care, we offer expert services in heart and vascular care, orthopedics, intensive care, maternal - fetal medicine and obstetrics and maternity services. The OB-GYN maternity care teams deliver a personalized birthing experience and advanced neonatal care for sick babies. Ascension Saint Thomas Rutherford Hospital offers a wide range of minimally invasive procedures, imaging, lab tests and rehabilitation services, all on one campus.

For more information about Ascension Saint Thomas Rutherford Hospital, visit [Ascension Saint Thomas Rutherford Hospital](#).

## Overview of the Implementation Strategy

### Needs Prioritization

Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010, more commonly known as the Affordable Care Act (ACA), requires all not-for-profit hospitals to conduct a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) and adopt an Implementation Strategy (IS) every three years. 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 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). Accordingly, Ascension Saint Thomas Rutherford Hospital used a phased prioritization approach to identify the needs of Rutherford County. The first step was to determine the broader set of community identified needs. The CHNA assessment narrowed identified needs to a group of needs determined most crucial for community stakeholders to address.

Ascension Saint Thomas Rutherford Hospital identified additional criteria to prioritize the significant needs including:

- Policy Impact: Will community stakeholders support work on this issue?
- Cost-Benefit: Are there policies or practices that affect inequities that could be addressed?
- Influence: Can community stakeholders address the issue?
- Opportunity: Are there others doing work in the community that can be leveraged?
- Resources: Can the community access the resources (money, time, people, expertise) needed to address this issue?

After completing the CHNA, community significant needs were further narrowed down to the community prioritized needs that the hospital will address within the Implementation Strategy (IS). To arrive at the community prioritized needs, Ascension Saint Thomas Rutherford Hospital collaborated with the Rutherford County Health Department and the Wellness Council of Rutherford County (Health Council) to facilitate a discussion during a Wellness Council of Rutherford County meeting on September 3, 2024 to prioritize the top needs in the community.

The needs listed below were voted as top priority needs by the community key stakeholders in Rutherford County.

- Healthcare Access
- Infant Mortality



- Mental Health
- Safe and Attainable Housing
- Substance Use

## Needs That Will Be Addressed

During the Implementation Strategy (IS) brainstorming phase, Ascension Saint Thomas Hospitals, Community Benefit and leaders agreed to a collective impact model toward addressing needs that appeared in multiple counties. This model is an effort to allocate resources in ways that can more meaningfully impact priority areas. Ascension Saint Thomas Rutherford Hospital has selected the prioritized needs outlined below for its 2024 Implementation Strategy (IS). Ascension has defined "prioritized needs" as the significant needs which have been prioritized by the hospital to address through the three-year CHNA cycle:

- **Access to Care** - This need was selected because Access to Care is in alignment with the organizational strengths and priorities, and was identified as a top priority by most Ascension Tennessee Hospitals and voted as a top priority need by the Wellness Council of Rutherford County.
- **Mental Health** - This need was selected because Mental Health is in alignment with the organizational strengths and priorities, and was identified as a top priority by most Ascension Tennessee Hospitals and voted as a top priority need by the Wellness Council of Rutherford County.
- **Substance Misuse** - This need was selected because Substance Misuse is in alignment with the organizational strengths and priorities, and was identified as a top priority by most Ascension Tennessee Hospitals and voted as a top priority need by the Wellness Council of Rutherford County.

## Needs That Will Not Be Addressed

Ascension Saint Thomas Rutherford Hospital will be addressing all community prioritized health needs listed above.

## Written Comments

This Implementation Strategy (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 Implementation Strategy (IS) by Ascension Saint Thomas Rutherford Hospital Board of Directors**

To ensure the Ascension Saint Thomas Rutherford Hospital's efforts meet the needs of the community and have a lasting and meaningful impact, the 2024 Implementation Strategy (IS) was presented and adopted by Ascension Saint Thomas Rutherford Hospital's Board of Directors on September 18, 2025 (2024 tax year) and by the Ascension Saint Thomas Board of Directors on October 24, 2025 (2024 tax year). 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 Implementation Strategy (IS) below is based on prioritized needs from the hospital's most recent Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). These strategies and action plans represent where the hospital will focus its community efforts over the next three years.

Strategy: Build a Bridge Between Communities and Healthcare	
<b>Prioritized Health Need:</b> Access to Care	
<b>Collaborators</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ascension Saint Thomas Hospitals</li> <li>• Community Partners</li> <li>• Government Agencies</li> <li>• Providers</li> </ul>	
<b>Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time</li> <li>• Talent</li> <li>• Dollars</li> </ul>	
ACTION STEPS	ROLE/OWNER
1. Collect and analyze data on social factors	Hospital Leadership, Population Health, Case Management, Providers, Quality, Spiritual Care
2. Identify, recommend and/or implement actions/interventions to address social factors	Hospital Leadership, Population Health, Case Management, Providers, Quality, Spiritual Care
3. Collaborate with community based organizations and nonprofits through data sharing on social factors	Hospital Leadership, Population Health, Case Management, Providers, Quality, Spiritual Care
4. Invest in community based organizations that are addressing social factors	Hospital Leadership, Population Health, Case Management, Providers, Quality, Spiritual Care
5. Continue to strengthen and expand navigation workforce	Hospital Leadership, Population Health, Case Management, Providers, Quality, Spiritual Care
ANTICIPATED IMPACT	



Strategy: Enhance Sexual Assault Infrastructure for the Community	
<b>Prioritized Health Need:</b> Access to Care	
<b>Collaborators</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ascension Saint Thomas Hospitals</li> <li>• Community Partners</li> <li>• Government Agencies</li> <li>• Providers</li> </ul>	
<b>Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time</li> <li>• Talent</li> <li>• Dollars</li> </ul>	
ACTION STEPS	ROLE/OWNER
1. Implement a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner float pool	Hospital Leadership, Nursing
2. Develop and implement comprehensive training, educational materials and resources on sexual assault and human trafficking	Hospital Leadership, Nursing
3. Collaborate and engage with stakeholders and community partners	Hospital Leadership, Nursing
4. Invest in community based organizations and nonprofits who focus on addressing sexual assault, challenge harmful norms and promote a culture of consent and respect	Hospital Leadership, Nursing
ANTICIPATED IMPACT	
Improved health outcomes and reductions in health disparities	

Strategy: Strengthen the Healthcare Workforce	
<b>Prioritized Health Need:</b> Access to Care	
<b>Collaborators</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ascension Saint Thomas Hospitals</li> <li>• Community Partners</li> <li>• Government Agencies</li> <li>• Providers</li> </ul>	
<b>Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time</li> <li>• Talent</li> <li>• Dollars</li> </ul>	
ACTION STEPS	ROLE/OWNER
1. Participate in community activities and forums that promote reduction in healthcare workforce shortages	Hospital Leadership, Workforce Development Human Resources
2. Expand access to healthcare career pathways for students, community members, and internal associates	Hospital Leadership, Workforce Development Human Resources
3. Explore scaling school-based Certified Clinical Medical Assistance (CCMA) programs to incorporate a total of 8 counties for training	Hospital Leadership, Workforce Development Human Resources
4. Invest in community based organizations and nonprofits that focus on education, job skills training, and address social factors that influence workforce development	Hospital Leadership, Workforce Development Human Resources
ANTICIPATED IMPACT	
Increased health outcomes, increased productivity and economic growth	

Strategy: Right Care, Right Place at the Right Time	
<b>Prioritized Health Need:</b> Access to Care	
<b>Collaborators</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ascension Saint Thomas Hospitals</li> <li>• Community Partners</li> <li>• Government Agencies</li> <li>• Providers</li> </ul>	
<b>Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time</li> <li>• Talent</li> <li>• Dollars</li> </ul>	
ACTION STEPS	ROLE/OWNER
1. Understand patient needs	Hospital Leadership, Ascension Saint Thomas Medical Partners, Nursing Leadership, Population Health, Providers
2. Assess and identify opportunities, gaps and barriers	Hospital Leadership, Ascension Saint Thomas Medical Partners, Nursing Leadership, Population Health, Providers
3. Develop recommendations	Hospital Leadership, Ascension Saint Thomas Medical Partners, Nursing Leadership, Population Health, Providers
4. Activate adopted recommendations	Hospital Leadership, Ascension Saint Thomas Medical Partners, Nursing Leadership, Population Health, Providers
5. Expand partnerships	Hospital Leadership, Ascension Saint Thomas Medical Partners, Nursing Leadership, Population Health, Providers
ANTICIPATED IMPACT	
Improved health outcomes	

Strategy: Improve Maternal Health Outcomes	
<b>Prioritized Health Need:</b> Access to Care	
<b>Collaborators</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ascension Saint Thomas Hospitals</li> <li>• Community Partners</li> <li>• Government Agencies</li> <li>• Providers</li> </ul>	
<b>Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time</li> <li>• Talent</li> <li>• Dollars</li> </ul>	
ACTION STEPS	ROLE/OWNER
1. Continuously collect and analyze data on maternal outcomes to identify trends and assist with determining needs	Hospital Leadership, Population Health, Community Health Workers, Nursing Leadership, Emergency Department, Spiritual Care, Providers
2. Educate women and their families about pre-pregnancy care, during pregnancy care and after pregnancy care	Hospital Leadership, Population Health, Community Health Workers, Nursing Leadership, Emergency Department, Spiritual Care, Providers
3. Collaborate, invest and/or provide support to community organizations and efforts that will improve maternal health outcomes	Hospital Leadership, Population Health, Community Health Workers, Nursing Leadership, Emergency Department, Spiritual Care, Providers
4. Advocate for policies that support access and remove barriers	Hospital Leadership, Population Health, Community Health Workers, Nursing Leadership, Emergency Department, Spiritual Care, Providers
ANTICIPATED IMPACT	
Healthier mothers, babies, and families	

Strategy: Improve Care Delivery of Older Adults	
<b>Prioritized Health Need:</b> Access to Care	
<b>Collaborators</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ascension Saint Thomas Hospitals</li> <li>• Community Partners</li> <li>• Government Agencies</li> <li>• Providers</li> </ul>	
<b>Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time</li> <li>• Talent</li> <li>• Dollars</li> </ul>	
ACTION STEPS	ROLE/OWNER
1. Collect and analyze data on social factors impacting older adults	Hospital Leadership, Community Health Workers, Case Management, Providers, Quality, Behavioral Health
2. Identify and make recommendations to address the needs of older adults	Hospital Leadership, Community Health Workers, Case Management, Providers, Quality, Behavioral Health
3. Invest in community based organizations and nonprofits that are addressing the needs of older adults and their caregivers	Hospital Leadership, Community Health Workers, Case Management, Providers, Quality, Behavioral Health
4. Actively partner, engage and/or serve on community based organizations and nonprofits whose mission is to support older adults and their caregivers	Hospital Leadership, Community Health Workers, Case Management, Providers, Quality, Behavioral Health
ANTICIPATED IMPACT	
Improved the health and well-being of older adults	

Strategy: Strengthen Social Infrastructure to Increase Community Connections	
<b>Prioritized Health Need:</b> Mental Health	
<b>Collaborators</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ascension Saint Thomas Hospitals</li> <li>• Community Partners</li> <li>• Government Agencies</li> <li>• Providers</li> </ul>	
<b>Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time</li> <li>• Talent</li> <li>• Dollars</li> </ul>	
ACTION STEPS	ROLE/OWNER
1. Assess and build knowledge about social infrastructures that build community connections	Hospital Leadership, Providers, Quality, Behavioral Health, Spiritual Care, Providers, Mental Health Practitioners, Emergency Department
2. Identify and create a communication plan that will increase community connections	Hospital Leadership, Marketing and Communication, Providers, Quality, Behavioral Health, Spiritual Care, Providers, Mental Health Practitioners, Emergency Department
3. Engage with local community based organizations and nonprofits partners who are strengthening social infrastructures that increase community connections	Hospital Leadership, Marketing and Communication, Providers, Quality, Behavioral Health, Spiritual Care, Providers, Mental Health Practitioners, Emergency Department
4. Invest in organizations that are creating social infrastructures that are increasing community connections	Hospital Leadership, Marketing and Communication, Providers, Quality, Behavioral Health, Spiritual Care, Providers, Mental Health Practitioners, Emergency Department
ANTICIPATED IMPACT	
Improved well-being and resilience	

Strategy: Support Substance Misuse Prevention and Education Efforts	
<b>Prioritized Health Need:</b> Substance Misuse	
<b>Collaborators</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ascension Saint Thomas Hospitals</li> <li>• Community Partners</li> <li>• Government Agencies</li> <li>• Providers</li> </ul>	
<b>Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time</li> <li>• Talent</li> <li>• Dollars</li> </ul>	
ACTION STEPS	ROLE/OWNER
1. Explore launching the infrastructure to support Harm Reduction Services	Hospital Leadership, Spiritual Care, Community Health Workers, Case Management, Emergency Department, Providers
2. Explore opportunities for collaborations with community based organizations and nonprofits on harm reduction training and services	Hospital Leadership, Spiritual Care, Community Health Workers, Case Management, Emergency Department, Providers
3. Promote harm reduction resources both locally and regionally	Hospital Leadership, Spiritual Care, Community Health Workers, Case Management, Emergency Department, Providers
4. Invest in community based organizations and nonprofits efforts addressing harm reduction programs and negative consequences of drug use	Hospital Leadership, Spiritual Care, Community Health Workers, Case Management, Emergency Department, Providers
5. Engage with community based organizations and nonprofits by serving on councils, boards and forums	Hospital Leadership, Spiritual Care, Community Health Workers, Case Management, Emergency Department, Providers
ANTICIPATED IMPACT	
Reducing the harms related to drug use for individuals and the community	



## Evaluation

Ascension Saint Thomas Rutherford Hospital will develop a comprehensive measurement and evaluation process for the Implementation Strategy (IS). 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 Saint Thomas Rutherford Hospital uses a tracking system to capture community benefit activities and implementation.