

# Ascension Columbia St. Mary's Hospital - Ozaukee Campus

Implementation Strategy for the 2022 CHNA  
Ozaukee County, WI



**Ascension**



The purpose of this implementation strategy is to describe how the hospital plans to address prioritized health needs from its current Community Health Needs Assessment. 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 that are more vulnerable, to unmet health needs or gaps in services and to input gathered from the community.

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d/b/a Ascension Columbia St. Mary's Hospital - Ozaukee Campus  
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The 2022 Implementation Strategy was approved by the Board of Directors of Ascension Columbia St. Mary's Hospital - Ozaukee Campus on April 25, 2023 (2022 tax year) and applies to the following three-year cycle: July 2023 to June 2026. This report, as well as the previous report, can be found at our public website.

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

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## About Ascension

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

### Ascension

Ascension is a faith-based healthcare organization dedicated to transformation through innovation across the continuum of care. The national health system operates more than 2,600 sites of care – including 139 hospitals and more than 40 senior living facilities – in 19 states and the District of Columbia, while providing a variety of services including clinical and network services, venture capital investing, investment management, biomedical engineering, facilities management, risk management and contracting through Ascension’s own group purchasing organization.

Ascension’s Mission provides a strong framework and guidance for the work done to meet the needs of communities across the U.S. 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 Columbia St. Mary’s Hospital - Ozaukee Campus

As a ministry of the Catholic Church, Ascension Columbia St. Mary’s Hospital - Ozaukee Campus (“Ascension Columbia St. Mary’s Ozaukee”) is a non-profit hospital governed by a local board of directors and provides medical care to Ozaukee County and the surrounding communities. In Wisconsin, Ascension operates 17 hospital campuses, more than 100 related healthcare facilities and employs more than 1,200 primary and specialty care clinicians from Racine to the Fox Valley.

Serving Wisconsin for about 150 years, Ascension is continuing the long and valued tradition of addressing the health of the people in our community. Following in the footsteps of our founders, Ascension Wisconsin was formed in 2016 when sponsorship transitioned from four health systems: Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare, Ministry Health Care, Columbia St. Mary’s and Affinity Health System.

For more information about Ascension Columbia St. Mary’s Ozaukee, visit:

<https://healthcare.ascension.org/locations/wisconsin/wimil/mequon-ascension-columbia-st-marys-hospital-ozaukee>

## Overview of the Implementation Strategy

### Purpose

This implementation strategy (IS) is the hospital's response to the health needs prioritized from its current Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). It describes the actions the hospital will take to address prioritized needs, allocate resources and mobilize hospital programs and community partners to work together. This approach aligns with Ascension Columbia St. Mary's Ozaukee's commitment to offer programs designed to address the health needs of a community, with special attention to persons who are underserved and vulnerable.

### IRS 501(r)(3) and Form 990, Schedule H Compliance

The CHNA and IS satisfy certain requirements of tax reporting, pursuant to provisions of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010, more commonly known as the Affordable Care Act (ACA). As part of the ACA, all non-profit hospitals are required to conduct a CHNA and adopt an implementation strategy every three years. Requirements for 501(c)(3) Hospitals Under the Affordable Care Act are described in Code Section 501(r)(3), and include making the CHNA report (current and previous) widely available to the public. In accordance with this requirement, electronic reports of both the CHNA and the current implementation strategy can be found at <https://healthcare.ascension.org/CHNA> and paper versions can be requested at the hospital.

### Needs That Will Be Addressed

Following the completion of the current CHNA, Ascension Columbia St. Mary's Ozaukee has selected the prioritized needs outlined below for its 2022 Implementation Strategy. 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 was selected because access to affordable, quality health care is important to physical, social and mental health. Ascension Wisconsin is committed to addressing all aspects of access to care, which includes affordability, geographic access and culturally competent care with trustworthy providers. As a Catholic healthcare system, improving access to care for all, regardless of ability to pay, is a foundational principle for Ascension Wisconsin.
- Chronic Disease and Prevention was selected because prevention is an important step toward a healthier community. For those with chronic diseases, proper treatment through healthcare can help improve quality of life. A healthy lifestyle through access to healthy foods, increase in activity and decreased stress can reduce the risk of several chronic diseases, lessening the need for medication or other treatments. This priority especially focuses on communities disproportionately affected by structural barriers relating to poverty. Ascension Wisconsin is committed to quality treatment of chronic diseases and focusing on prevention efforts.
- Mental Health was selected because mental health challenges have been increasing since the pandemic and the community has clearly expressed the need for more support and



resources. Mental health issues can lead to numerous physical health complications. Ascension Wisconsin is committed to expanding access to mental health providers and partnering with community organizations to address this health priority.

In alignment with these priorities and the voice of the community, strategies addressing these health issues will focus on equity, working to address the root social causes of health disparities in our communities and giving special attention to those who have been made vulnerable by historic disadvantages.

Ascension Columbia St. Mary's Ozaukee understands the importance of all the health needs of the community and is committed to playing an active role in improving the health of the people in the communities it serves. For the purposes of this implementation strategy, Ascension Columbia St. Mary's Ozaukee has chosen to focus its efforts on the priorities listed above.

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

The following needs were not selected for the 2022 CHNA cycle: Alcohol and Drug Use, Communicable Diseases or COVID-19 and Economic Stability. However, Ascension Columbia St. Mary's Ozaukee is committed to participating with partners in addressing these needs and will continue to look for opportunities to do so. Below is the rationale behind not prioritizing these issues.

For Alcohol Abuse and Illegal Drug Use, a community response is necessary. Ascension Columbia St. Mary's Ozaukee does refer patients to numerous internal and community programs for treatment when needed and will actively participate in further collaborative efforts. Some efforts will also be incorporated under the Mental Health priority as these issues are often interrelated.

While Communicable Diseases or COVID-19 was identified as a top need, the Ascension Columbia St. Mary's Ozaukee stakeholders did not list it as a priority because the primary data report suggested that most people were concerned with COVID-19 specifically. Responding to this acute community concern is our duty as healthcare providers and should not be considered as community health improvement. Instead, all strategies have been created through the lens of the pandemic to consider the social impacts and further health disparities it has created.

Economic Stability as it relates to social factors that influence health is indeed an important social issue for Ozaukee County's health. This social issue requires a systems approach led by experts in these respective areas. Ascension Columbia St. Mary's Ozaukee will support community efforts and look for future opportunities as economic stability has a significant influence on the health of individuals and communities, directly affecting chronic disease and mental health.

Racism impacts health in many ways; driving unfair treatment through policies, practices and resource allocation. It is a fundamental cause of health disparities across numerous health issues. Therefore, this implementation strategy has been framed to advance health equity throughout all prioritized

issues. The hospital must consider populations that have been disparately affected and focus attention on those populations.

This report does not encompass a complete inventory of everything Ascension Columbia St. Mary's Ozaukee does to support health within the community. To find a list of resources for each need not being addressed, please refer to the Ascension Columbia St. Mary's Ozaukee's 2022 CHNA: <https://healthcare.ascension.org/CHNA>.

## **Acute Community Concern Acknowledgement**

A CHNA and IS offer a construct for identifying and addressing needs within the community(s) it serves. However, unforeseen events or situations, which may be severe and sudden, may affect a community. At Ascension, this is referred to as an acute community concern. This could describe anything from a health crisis (e.g., COVID-19), water poisoning, environmental events (e.g., hurricane, flood) or other event that suddenly impacts a community. If adjustments to an IS are necessary, the hospital will develop documentation to notify key stakeholders of possible adjustments.

## **Written Comments**

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

## **Approval and Adoption by the Board of Directors of Ascension Columbia St. Mary's Hospital - Ozaukee Campus**

To ensure Ascension Columbia St. Mary's Ozaukee's efforts meet the needs of the community and have a lasting and meaningful impact, the 2022 Implementation Strategy was presented and adopted by the Board of Directors of Ascension Columbia St. Mary's Ozaukee on April 25, 2023. Although an authorized body of the hospital must adopt the IS to be compliant with the provisions in the Affordable Care Act, adoption of the IS also demonstrates the board is aware of the IS, endorses the priorities identified and supports the action plans 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. While these remain a priority, the hospital will continue to offer additional programs and services to meet the needs of the community, with special attention to people who are experiencing poverty/low income or are otherwise made vulnerable.

As part of this implementation strategy, several of the tactics designed to address the prioritized needs also incorporate targeted responses to the social determinants of health that were identified by the community. Economic stability has a significant influence on the health of individuals and communities and greatly affects access to care, chronic disease and mental health.

<b>Priority 1: Access to Care</b>	
<b>Background</b>	Access to health care includes affordability, accessibility and acceptability. Access to preventive health care can prevent both disease and early death ( <a href="#">Healthy People 2030</a> ). People who cannot get the care they need may have more preventable complications, hospitalizations, emotional stress and higher costs. Furthermore, delaying medical care can have a negative effect on health, including years of potential life lost. While the number of people getting preventive services has increased in recent years, there are disparities by age and race/ethnicity for many health care factors and health outcomes ( <a href="#">Healthy People 2030</a> ). For example, in Ozaukee County, the rate of preventable hospital stays for Hispanics (6,942) is much higher than the rates for Whites (2,539).
<b>Objectives</b>	By 2026, the number of preventable hospital stays in Ozaukee County will decrease (baseline: 2,546).
<b>Healthy People 2030 Alignment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● AHS-04 - Reduce the proportion of people who can’t get prescription medicines when they need them</li> <li>● AHS-07 - Increase the proportion of people with a usual primary care provider</li> <li>● AHS-08 - Increase the proportion of adults who get recommended evidence-based preventive health care</li> </ul> ( <a href="#">Healthy People 2030</a> )
<b>Collaborative Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Current: Ascension Wisconsin Foundation, Ascension Pharmacies, Dispensary of Hope national program, Lyft, R1 RCM, Inc., health departments</li> <li>● Potential: Schools, various community based organizations (CBOs)</li> </ul>
<b>Strategy 1: Expand Access to Care in the Community</b>	
<b>Anticipated Impact</b>	Increased access to health care services for community members in Ozaukee County.
<b>Priority Populations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Families and individuals experiencing poverty and/or low income; Hispanic individuals and families; older adults</li> </ul>



<b>Resources Committed</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff time, funding, education materials, IT infrastructure for tracking</li> </ul>	
<b>INITIATIVES</b>	<b>TACTICS</b>
Support Community Access to Care Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Provide support on important access initiatives and health education outside of the traditional health system</li> <li>-Conduct mobile health screenings within the community</li> </ul>
<b>Measures</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Process outcomes of community engagement activities to respective tactics</li> </ul>	
<b>Strategy 2: Provide Initiatives to Patients for Improved Access to Care</b>	
<b>Anticipated Impact</b>	
Increased access to healthcare services and quality holistic care for Ascension Wisconsin patients in Ozaukee County.	
<b>Priority Populations</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Patients experiencing barriers to healthcare, particularly those experiencing low-income; patients who are under/uninsured; Hispanic individuals and families</li> </ul>	
<b>Resources Committed</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff time, funding, education materials, IT infrastructure for tracking, transportation resources</li> </ul>	
<b>INITIATIVES</b>	<b>TACTICS</b>
Increase Access to Health Care Services by Providing Holistic Support for Ascension Wisconsin Patients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Support patients in engaging in a usual place of care by assisting patients in accessing financial assistance and preventative services</li> <li>-Remove barriers to healthcare services and treatments for those experiencing low income or other access barriers</li> </ul>
<b>Measures</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percent of patients screened</li> <li>Number of patients referred to support services</li> <li>Process outcomes to respective tactics</li> </ul>	

## Priority 2: Chronic Disease and Prevention

### **Background**

Chronic conditions are responsible for the majority of deaths in the United States ([CDC, 2022](#)). A healthy lifestyle reduces risk of several chronic diseases, risk factors and illnesses. However, not all people have equal access to healthy opportunities. For example, individuals experiencing low income and some racial and ethnic minorities live farther from supermarkets, limiting their access to affordable and nutritious food ([Healthy People 2030](#)), and/or have built environments that otherwise worsen their quality of life ([AJMC, 2022](#)). This can contribute to disparities in chronic disease morbidity and mortality. Individuals experiencing low income and some racial and ethnic minorities have higher rates of obesity and chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, high cholesterol and blood pressure and stroke. For example, in Wisconsin, the Black/African American death rate due to heart disease is 1.5 times higher than the overall rate and 12.4% of Hispanic adults report having diabetes compared to 9.2% of White adults ([Kaiser Family Foundation, 2021](#)). Older adults are also disproportionately affected by chronic conditions, with 80% managing at least one chronic condition ([CDC, 2011](#)).

### **Objective**

By 2026, the percentage of adults that reported that they consider themselves in fair or poor health will decrease (baseline: 11%).

### **Healthy People 2030 Alignment**

- NSW-01 - Reduce food insecurity and hunger
  - NSW-03 - Reduce the proportion of adults with obesity
  - HDS-01 - Improve cardiovascular health
  - HDS-04 - Reduce the proportion of adults with high blood pressure
- ([Healthy People 2030](#))

### **Collaborative Partners**

- Current: Ascension Medical Group Wisconsin, TouchPoint Support Services, Mobile Mammography Team
- Potential: Schools, faith groups, local food pantry, hospital volunteers, various community based organizations (CBOs)

## Strategy 1: Implement Prevention and Detection Activities Within the Community

### **Anticipated Impact**

Increased access to healthy foods and increased education on the benefits of healthy eating for community members in Ozaukee County.

### **Priority Populations**

- Families and individuals experiencing poverty and/or low income; Hispanic and Black/African American individuals and families; older adults

### **Resources Committed**

- Staff time donated to numerous organizations, cash donations to community organizations, education collateral, [Neighborhood Resource](#)

INITIATIVES	TACTICS
Engage and Educate Community Members about Health and Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Contribute to community education sessions on healthy foods within the community, focusing on early interventions, particularly with children</li> <li>-Provide chronic disease support and prevention to groups that have historically been marginalized</li> </ul>
Expand Opportunities for Community Members to be Engaged in Healthy Living Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Donate fresh produce and other healthy foods through various channels</li> <li>-Partner with/support community-based organizations (CBOs) to positively influence the social determinants of health related to chronic conditions</li> </ul>
<b>Measures</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process outcomes of community engagement activities to respective tactics</li> </ul>	
<b>Strategy 2: Provide Initiatives to Patients for Improved Chronic Disease Care and Prevention</b>	
<b>Anticipated Impact</b> Increased access to healthy foods and increased education on the benefits of healthy eating for Ascension Wisconsin patients and associates.	
<b>Priority Populations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patients experiencing barriers to healthy foods, particularly those experiencing low-income; patients who are under/uninsured; Hispanic and Black/African American individuals and families; older adults</li> </ul>	
<b>Resources Committed</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff time, rooming standard updates, IT infrastructure for tracking, funding as needed for food support, education collateral</li> </ul>	
INITIATIVES	TACTICS
Promote Screenings and Interventions for Chronic Disease Support and Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Develop a food insecurity screening, tracking and referral program for patients</li> <li>-Improve standardized processes statewide for healthy weight/BMI screenings and provide referrals to nutritionists and other resources as needed</li> </ul>
Educate Patients and Associates about Healthy Living and Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Hold healthy living demonstrations, particularly around specific chronic conditions, within Ascension Wisconsin healthcare facilities</li> <li>-Identify and address social factors that influence chronic conditions through screening and referral to mitigate social-related barriers</li> </ul>
<b>Measures</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percent of patients screened</li> <li>• Number of patients referred to support services</li> <li>• Process outcomes to respective tactics</li> </ul>	

### Priority 3: Mental Health

**Background**

In the most recent CHNA for Ozaukee County, mental health was identified as a significant health issue by key stakeholders and community members. The average reported number of unhealthy mental health days is nearly four out of 30 days and 12% of the county's population report frequent mental distress ([CHRR, 2021](#)). Mental health issues are associated with increased rates of smoking, physical inactivity, obesity and substance abuse. As a result, these physical health problems can lead to chronic disease, injury, disability and death (including overdose or suicide) ([NIH, 2021](#)). At Ascension Wisconsin, mental health includes prevention, treatment and access to mental health care services.

**Objective**

By 2026, fewer individuals will report frequent mental distress in Ozaukee County (baseline: 12%).

**Healthy People 2030 Alignment**

- MHMD-07 - Increase the proportion of people with substance use and mental health disorders who received treatment for both
- MHMD-08 - Increase the proportion of primary care visits where adolescents and adults are screened for depression
- MHMD-01 - Decrease the suicide rate ([Healthy People 2030](#))

**Collaborative Partners**

- Current: Ascension Medical Group Wisconsin, emergency medical services, health departments, Ascension Wisconsin Employee Assistance Program
- Potential: Schools, various community based organizations (CBOs), faith communities

### Strategy 1: Support Positive Mental Health in the Community

**Anticipated Impact**

Increased access to mental health services, support on the social needs that contribute to mental health issues and reduced stigma on behavioral issues for community members in Ozaukee County.

**Priority Populations**

- Families and individuals experiencing poverty and/or low income; Hispanic and Black/African American individuals and families; older adults

**Resources**

- Staff time donated to numerous organizations, cash donations to community organizations, education collateral

INITIATIVES	TACTICS
Support Community-Based Initiatives that Create an Environment for Mental Wellbeing and Increased Access to Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Actively participate in suicide prevention initiatives and promote other bystander interventions</li> <li>-Support collective impact programs that address social factors that influence mental health wellbeing, particularly for those who have been historically marginalized</li> </ul>
Partner on Substance Misuse Prevention in the Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Work to support stigma reduction around substance use disorders</li> <li>-Direct efforts to important prevention activities in the</li> </ul>

	community such as Prescription Drug Take Back events to reduce opioids within the community
<b>Measures</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Process outcomes of community engagement activities to respective tactics</li> </ul>	
<b>Strategy 2: Improve Mental Health Programs and Services for Patients and Associates</b>	
<b>Anticipated Impact</b> Increased access to mental health services, support on the social needs that contribute to mental health issues and reduced stigma on behavioral issues for Ascension Wisconsin patients and associates.	
<b>Priority Populations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Patients experiencing behavioral health conditions; patients who are under/uninsured; patients and associates who have underlying trauma</li> </ul>	
<b>Resources Committed</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff time, quality improvement initiatives, IT infrastructure for tracking, funding</li> </ul>	
<b>INITIATIVES</b>	<b>TACTICS</b>
Deliver Comprehensive, Compassionate Care and Treatment for Patients and Associates with Mental Health Conditions	-Implement and evaluate different models of care to increase access and timeliness to outpatient mental health providers and prescribers, including telehealth -Coordinate response programs for trauma-informed care and spiritual care offerings that encourage healing and mental wellbeing
Integrate Timely Interventions in All Care Settings for Substance Misuse	-Increase access to a variety of substance use treatment including medication-assisted treatment and innovative models of care -Provide support groups/peer programs for those in treatment
<b>Measures</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percent/number of patients screened</li> <li>Number of patients referred to/served by support services</li> <li>Process outcomes to respective tactics</li> </ul>	

## **Evaluation**

Ascension Columbia St. Mary's Ozaukee will develop a comprehensive measurement and evaluation process for the implementation strategy. The ministry 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 Columbia St. Mary's Ozaukee uses a tracking system to capture community benefit activities and implementation. To ensure accountability, data will be aggregated and reported on in the next CHNA.