



# Community Health Improvement Plan

Mercy Hospital  
Carthage

Fiscal Year 2023-25



*Your life is our life's work.*



## Our Mission:

As the Sisters of Mercy before us, we bring to life the healing ministry of Jesus through our compassionate care and exceptional service.

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# I. Introduction

Mercy Hospital Carthage completed a comprehensive Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) that was adopted by the Community Board of Southwest Missouri/Southeast Kansas Directors in May 2022. The CHNA considered input from the county health department, community members, members of medically underserved, low-income, and minority populations and various community organizations representing the broad interests of the community of Joplin. The CHNA identified four prioritized health needs the hospital plans to focus on addressing during the next three years: Lung Disease, Cardiovascular Disease, Mental Health, and Diabetes. The complete CHNA report is available electronically at [mercy.net/about/community-benefits](https://mercy.net/about/community-benefits).

Mercy Carthage is affiliated with Mercy, one of the largest Catholic health systems in the United States. After a tornado destroyed Mercy's hospital in Joplin, Mo., Mercy teamed up with McCune-Brooks Regional Hospital in Carthage, Missouri to provide care for residents in both communities as well as the surrounding counties. On Jan. 1, 2012, Mercy assumed operations of the 25-bed Carthage hospital, now known as Mercy Hospital Carthage.

This three-year Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), aimed at addressing the prioritized health needs identified in the CHNA, will guide the coordination and targeting of resources, and the planning, implementation and evaluation of both new and existing programs and interventions. The 2022 CHNA and this resulting CHIP will provide the framework for Mercy Hospital Carthage as it works in collaboration with community partners to advance the health and quality of life for the community members it serves.

## II. Implementation Plan by Prioritized Health Need

### Prioritized Need #1: Access to Care

**GOAL:** Decrease long-term effects of the COVID-19 virus, which affects cardiovascular disease and lung disease.

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| <b>PROGRAM 1: Outpatient clinic for patients with the COVID-19 virus</b>   |
| <b>PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:</b> Mercy Hospital Carthage will provide outpatient treatment services, and education to all community members who may be suffering from effects of the COVID-19 virus.  |
| <b>ACTIONS THE HEALTH SYSTEM INTENDS TO TAKE TO ADDRESS THE HEALTH NEED:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Regardless of insurance status, community members will be identified in need of assistance for health care services specific to the treatment of the COVID-19 virus.</li><li>2.</li></ol>                  |
| <b>ANTICIPATED IMPACT OF THESE ACTIONS (OBJECTIVES):</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Patients receiving treatment/therapy services or educational information will have improved health outcomes</li></ol>  |
| <b>PLAN TO EVALUATE THE IMPACT:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Track number of patients seen at the clinic</li><li>2. Track demographic information of patients seen</li><li>3. Record number of patients receiving treatment</li><li>4. Identify patient successes due to treatment plans</li></ol>               |
| <b>PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES THE HEALTH SYSTEM PLANS TO COMMIT:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Mercy employees and indirect expenses dedicated to providing treatment plans for those with COVID-19</li><li>2. Cost of coworker and physician time.</li><li>3. Operational budgeted support as appropriate.</li></ol> |
| <b>COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Mercy Hospital Carthage and Clinics</li><li>2. Mercy Carthage Foundation</li></ol>   |

**Prioritized Need #2: Access to Care**

**GOAL 1: Increase access to health care for uninsured and at-risk persons.**

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| <b>PROGRAM: Community Health Worker Program</b>  |
| <b>PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:</b> Community Health Workers (CHWs) serve as liaisons/links between health care and community and social services, screening for needs related to social determinants of health, facilitating access to services, and improving the quality and culture competence of care. CHWs work one-on-one with at-risk patients and community members, acting as patient advocates, assisting patients in applying for Medicaid and financial assistance and connecting patients with community resources and medication assistance.  |
| <b>ACTIONS THE HOSPITAL INTENDS TO TAKE TO ADDRESS THE HEALTH NEED:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Identify uninsured and at-risk patients and community members in need of assistance in Mercy clinics, emergency department, inpatient settings, community events, and through the use of reports and dashboards.</li><li>2. Assist uninsured patients apply for Mercy financial assistance, Medicaid programs, and Marketplace insurance plans.</li><li>3. Assist patients without an established primary care provider in establishing care with a primary care clinic or provider.</li><li>4. Screen patients for needs related to social determinants of health and connect patients to community resources to meet identified needs.</li><li>5. Connect patients with other community resources, including medication resources, as needed.</li></ol> |
| <b>ANTICIPATED IMPACT OF THESE ACTIONS (OBJECTIVES):</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. By the end of each month, each CHW will have recorded 20 new and 20 ongoing encounters.</li><li>2. By the end of each fiscal year for the next three years, each CHW will enroll 80 patients in Mercy financial assistance 10 in Medicaid</li><li>3. Each CHW will assist at least 100 patients per year with community and medication assistance resources.</li><li>4. Patients enrolling in CHW program will demonstrate reduced ED utilization.</li><li>5. Patients enrolling in CHW program will demonstrate a reduction in their total cost of care.</li><li>6. Clinic patients enrolling in CHW program will demonstrate reduced no-show rate for follow-up clinic appointments.</li></ol>   |
| <b>PLAN TO EVALUATE THE IMPACT:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Track number of new and ongoing encounters conducted by each CHW.</li><li>2. Track number of patients successfully enrolled in Mercy financial assistance and Medicaid.</li><li>3. Track number of patients receiving community resource and medication assistance.</li><li>4. Analyze ED utilization clinic no-show rates for patients enrolled in CHW program.</li></ol>  |

5. Analyze total cost of care for patients enrolled in CHW program.

**PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES THE HOSPITAL PLANS TO COMMIT:**

1. Compensation and benefits for Community Health Workers.
2. Mileage and travel expenses required for CHW work.
3. Office space and indirect expenses dedicated to CHW work.
4. Cost of coworker, physician time, and operational budget support as appropriate.

**COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS:**

1. Care Partner Network
2. Mercy Carthage Clinics

### III. Other Community Health Programs

Mercy Carthage conducts other community health programs not linked to a specific prioritized health need. These programs address a community health need and meet at least one of the following community benefit objectives: improve access to health care services, enhance the health of the community, advance medical or health care knowledge or relieve or reduce government burden to improve health. The need for these programs was identified through documentation of demonstrated community need, a request from a public health agency or community group, or the involvement of an unrelated, collaborative tax-exempt or government organization as partners in the activity or program carried out for the express purpose of improving community health. Although this is not an exhaustive list, many of these programs are listed below.

| <b>Community Benefit Category</b>                     | <b>Program</b>  | <b>Outcomes Tracked</b> |
|---|---|-------------------------|
| Community Health Improvement Services                 | Bariatric Support Group   | Persons served          |
|   | Diabetes Support Group  | Persons served          |
|   | Community Health Fairs & Screenings   | Persons served          |
|   | Community health education talks  | Persons served          |
|   |   |                         |
| Community Building Activities – Workforce Development | Health professions student education – nursing, imaging, therapy, pharmacy, medical student, lab, emergency medical technician, and advanced practice nursing | Number of students      |



## IV. Significant Health Needs Not Being Addressed

A complete description of the health needs prioritization process is available in the CHNA report. Mercy Carthage identified the health needs established through the Community Health Needs Assessment and determined that it was best to engage in programs and partnerships that already exist. Mercy Carthage, through its clinic community health worker program, plans to address the following needs with patients that may be suffering from these chronic conditions. Although the need will not be addressed directly or assessed for the next three years, we know that patients, who visit with our CHW's, will be provide resources to help with disease management and access to health care providers for treatment. During this cycle of the Community Health Improvement Plan, Mercy Carthage will not be addressing the following identified health needs directly:

- **Cancer:** Cancer is a significant health need in our community, but there are many factors related to this disease that will be addressed though our local hospital oncology departments and community collaborations. Mercy Carthage representatives are actively engaged in community collaborations that promoting healthier lifestyles that effect the various diseases of cancer. Mercy Columbus's Mobile Mammography Unit will continue to provide screenings in the Carthage community and look to new opportunities to reach those that are underserved or underinsured. Additionally, this disease will not be resolved as quickly as other health needs that are currently identified in this CHIP
- **Diabetes:** Diabetes is a significant health need in our community, but there are many factors related to this disease that will be addressed though our community endocrinology departments and community collaborations. Mercy Carthage representatives are actively engaged in community collaborations that promoting healthier lifestyles that effect diabetes and engage with community members for diabetes support programs.



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