

Community Health Improvement Plan

Mercy Hospital Berryville Arkansas
Fiscal Year 2026



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.

Our Values

Dignity
Excellence
Justice
Service
Stewardship

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Introduction

Mercy Hospital Berryville is a 25-bed critical access facility located in Carroll County, Arkansas. As part of Mercy, a Catholic health system headquartered in St. Louis, the hospital is dedicated to meeting the health needs of rural Northwest Arkansas. Mercy Berryville offers a range of services, including outpatient surgery, physical therapy, sleep studies, and emergency care. With more than 220 coworkers, it is one of the largest employers in the area.

The hospital serves Carroll County and surrounding communities nestled in the Ozark Mountains, with a population of approximately 28,814. The county is part of the broader Northwest Arkansas metropolitan region, which has experienced rapid growth and increasing diversity, particularly among Hispanic and Marshallese populations.

Despite this growth, Carroll County continues to face significant health and economic challenges, including lower median income, higher poverty rates, and elevated levels of uninsured residents compared to state and national averages.

Mercy Hospital Berryville is actively engaged in community-building efforts, participating in local boards, events, and partnerships that promote health and well-being. These efforts reflect Mercy's mission to deliver compassionate care and exceptional service, looking beyond the walls of the hospital to improve the lives of those it serves.



Introduction *(continued)*

Mercy's mission is to deliver “compassionate care and exceptional service” to every community member. In alignment with this mission, Mercy Hospital Berryville completed a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) in 2024, which was formally adopted by the Board of Directors in April 2025. The CHNA was developed in collaboration with the Carroll County Health Department, local organizations, and community stakeholders, including underserved populations.

This Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) outlines Mercy Berryville's strategy to address identified priorities through coordinated programs, partnerships, and evaluation efforts. Together, the CHNA and CHIP provide a framework for improving health outcomes and reducing disparities in Carroll County.

This summary also serves as documentation that Mercy Hospital Berryville is meeting IRS requirements for conducting a CHNA and CHIP. The full CHNA report is available electronically at mercy.net/about/community-benefits.

Introduction *(continued)*

The CHNA identified eight top-priorities and of the eight, **two have been chosen as health needs for the Mercy Hospital Berryville community**. We will strive diligently to address these needs with a Health Equity lens over the next three years:



Access to Care



Behavioral Health

As always, we seek to develop a rich and rewarding network of partnerships with our neighbors. We welcome any thoughts you may have on ways to achieve our goal for a healthier community.

Improvement Plan by Prioritized Health Need





Prioritized Need #1: Access to Care

GOAL 1

Increase access to health care and community resources for uninsured and at-risk persons.





Prioritized Need #1: Access to Care

Program 1 of 1: Community Health Worker Program

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

The Community Health Worker (CHW) initiative is dedicated to improving health care access and outcomes for underserved communities by bridging gaps between healthcare systems, social services, and the individuals they serve. CHWs engage directly with underserved communities to identify barriers related to social drivers of health, such as transportation, housing, and financial instability, that impact access to care. By fostering trust and cultural humility, this initiative aims to reduce disparities, enhance patient advocacy, and ensure equitable access to comprehensive health care for all community members.

ACTIONS MERCY INTENDS TO TAKE TO ADDRESS THE HEALTH NEED:

Through personalized support, Mercy CHWs will help community members navigate healthcare services, assist with Medicaid and financial assistance enrollment, understanding health plan benefits, and connect individuals to vital community resources, including medication and social support programs.

ANTICIPATED IMPACT OF THESE ACTIONS (OBJECTIVES):

- Reduce 72-hour return rate
- Reducing readmission rates for focused populations

PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES MERCY PLANS TO COMMIT:

- Compensation and benefits for Community Health Workers.
- Mileage and travel expenses required for CHW work.
- Office space and indirect expenses dedicated to CHW work.
- CHW Training-Offered by Ministry (or through community partnership)

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS:

- Mercy Primary Care Clinic
- People Helping People



Prioritized Need #1: Access to Care

GOAL 2

Increase the number of practicing primary care physicians in the region.



Prioritized Need #1: Access to Care

Program 1 of 1: Family Medicine Rural Residency Program

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

In partnership with the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, Mercy supports the Family Medicine Rural Residency Track. Launched in 2023, the program trains medical residents in rural settings, with assignments in Berryville and Eureka Springs. Residents provide care in both hospital and outpatient clinic settings and complete rotations at other regional facilities. This program is designed to strengthen the rural healthcare workforce and improve access to care in underserved communities.

ACTIONS MERCY INTENDS TO TAKE TO ADDRESS THE HEALTH NEED:

Mercy Berryville will provide infrastructure and physician leadership to support inpatient and outpatient clinical training opportunities. These efforts will strengthen recruitment and retention of providers in Carroll County and include ongoing evaluation to ensure meaningful impact.

ANTICIPATED IMPACT OF THESE ACTIONS (OBJECTIVES):

- Family medicine residents will gain exposure and experience in outpatient general family medicine practice with a focus on rural medicine.
- Retain graduating residents and increase participating primary care physicians in Carroll County and rural Arkansas.

PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES MERCY PLANS TO COMMIT:

- Staff and physician salaries.
- Indirect expenses related to graduate medical education and training.

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS:

- University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences Northwest
- Washington Regional Medical



Prioritized Need #2: Behavioral Health

GOAL 1

Increase access to behavioral health services in both the emergency and primary care setting.



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Prioritized Need #2: Behavioral Health

Program 1 of 3: Virtual Behavioral Health (vBH)

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

Mercy's Virtual Behavioral Health (vBH) program provides integrated, regional support for patients with behavioral health needs. Based out of local and centralized Ministry locations, vBH co-workers provide virtual and telephonic behavioral health assessments to establish patients' level of care, and facilitate referrals for inpatient, intensive outpatient (IOP), and outpatient services, as well as for basic social needs in their home communities. vBH also provides virtual psychiatric consults to help with medication stabilization related to the exacerbation of behavioral health conditions.

ACTIONS THE HOSPITAL INTENDS TO TAKE TO ADDRESS THE HEALTH NEED:

Operate a hub-based model of virtual care, where clinical vBH co-workers respond to incoming referrals, conduct telephone behavioral health assessments, and facilitate outgoing referrals for ongoing diagnosis, treatment, and support. Collaborate with external partners and behavioral health service providers to ensure a strong regional network for care coordination and social service navigation.

ANTICIPATED IMPACT OF THESE ACTIONS (OBJECTIVES):

- 10% decrease in hospital readmissions and ED visits by FY28

PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES THE HOSPITAL PLANS TO COMMIT:

- Cost of coworker and clinical time, including Regional Resource Behavioral Health RNs and LPNs and Patient RN Advocates
- Operational budgeted support as appropriate
- Indirect expense related to EMR and clinic operations

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS:

- Mercy Behavioral Health Service Line Leadership
- Mercy Virtual Behavioral Health (vBH)
- Substance Abuse Recovery Program (SURP)



Prioritized Need #2: Behavioral Health

Program 2 of 3: Collaborative Care

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

Supporting primary care providers (family medicine, internal medicine, obstetrics & gynecology, and pediatrics) in providing mental and behavioral health services to patients in need. The model provides a behavioral care manager to interact directly with patients, perform assessments, initiate treatment, and communicate and collaborate with primary care physicians. Concert Health provides a psychiatric consultant who meets with care managers regularly, reviews patient charts, and makes recommendations for medication and ongoing treatment.

ACTIONS THE HOSPITAL INTENDS TO TAKE TO ADDRESS THE HEALTH NEED:

Mercy will continue training and educating providers on the use of the care approach, identify gaps in care, and refer patients to Concert Health.

ANTICIPATED IMPACT OF THESE ACTIONS (OBJECTIVES):

- Increase patient referrals by 5% each year
- Increase patient satisfaction assessment participation by 10% from previous CHIP cycle

PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES THE HOSPITAL PLANS TO COMMIT:

- Cost of coworker and clinician time, including Regional Resource Behavioral Health RNs and LPNs and Patient RN Advocates
- Operational budgeted support as appropriate
- Indirect expenses related to EMR and clinic operations

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS:

- Mercy Behavioral Health Service Line Leadership
- Mercy Virtual Behavioral Health (vBH)
- Substance Abuse Recovery Program (SURP)



Prioritized Need #2: Behavioral Health

Program 3 of 3: Senior Life Solutions

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

Mercy's Senior Life Solutions program supports primary care providers and hospital teams in addressing the mental and emotional health needs of older adults, particularly those experiencing depression, anxiety, or other behavioral health challenges related to aging. This intensive outpatient program offers group therapy led by licensed behavioral health professionals and includes comprehensive individual assessments, structured group sessions, family engagement, and close coordination with primary care and specialty providers to ensure whole-person care.

ACTIONS THE HOSPITAL INTENDS TO TAKE TO ADDRESS THE HEALTH NEED:

Mercy will proactively identify older adults who may benefit from behavioral health support through routine screenings and provider referrals. Clinical teams will be engaged through targeted outreach and education, while staff receive ongoing training in geriatric behavioral best practices.

ANTICIPATED IMPACT OF THESE ACTIONS (OBJECTIVES):

- Increase patient referrals by 5% each year
- Improve patient-reported outcomes related to depression and anxiety

PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES THE HOSPITAL PLANS TO COMMIT:

- Cost of coworker and clinician time, including licensed behavioral health clinicians, program coordinator, and administrative support
- Dedicated facility space for group therapy sessions
- Indirect expenses related to EMR and clinic operations

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS:

- Psychiatric Medical Care
- Area Agency on Aging

Other Community Health Programs

Mercy Berryville 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 on the next page.

Other Community Health Programs (Continued)

Community Benefit Category	Program	Outcomes Tracked
Community Health Improvement Services	Alzheimer’s Support Group	Persons served
	People Helping People pharmacy assistance program	Persons served
	Health Fairs, Screenings, Education	Persons served
Health Professions Education	Health professions student education – lab, nursing, and radiology technician students	Number of students



Other Community Health Programs (Continued)

Community Benefit Category	Program	Outcomes Tracked
Financial & In-Kind Contributions	Community Building -Cash/In-kind Contributions	\$1,095
Community Building	Coalition Building/Board Memberships	



Significant Health Needs Not Being Addressed

In any case of prioritization, there will be some areas of needs that are identified that are not chosen as a priority. Because Mercy Berryville has limited resources, not every community need will be addressed. Throughout the CHNA process, the following needs arose as a community concern. However, it will not be addressed as a top priority because other organizations are more appropriate to address this need.

- **Obesity**

Mercy will continue to engage in collaborative efforts to address obesity through education, prevention, and support programs in partnership with community organizations. While Mercy recognizes the significant impact of obesity on overall health, it will not take a lead role in this area, as broader public health entities and community-based initiatives are better equipped to drive long-term, population-level change.

- **Maternal Health**

Mercy will continue to contribute to maternal health efforts through collaborative partnerships and support for evidence-based care practices. While Mercy remains committed to improving outcomes for mothers and infants, it will not take a lead role in this area, as other organizations and public health agencies are better positioned to coordinate comprehensive maternal health strategies across the community.

Significant Health Needs Not Being Addressed

Next Steps

After carefully reviewing the data and mapping existing resources, Mercy Berryville is developing an implementation plan with evidence-based strategies. The plan will be submitted to a committee of appointed members from Mercy Hospital Berryville, for their approval. The final version of the CHNA and Implementation Plan will be available to the public on the Mercy Hospital Berryville website, [**www.mercy.net/communitybenefits**](http://www.mercy.net/communitybenefits).



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