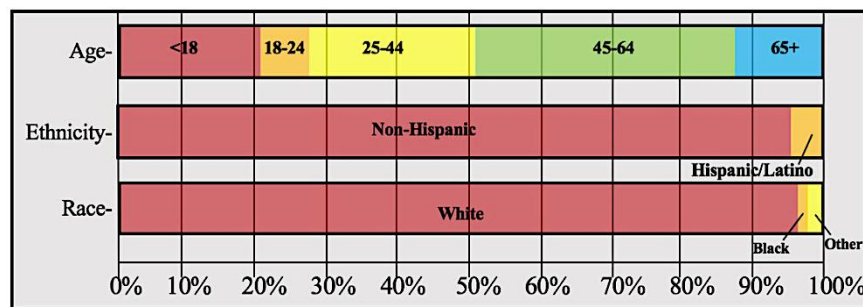


St. Luke's Western Rural Campuses 2019-2022 Community Health Needs Assessment Executive Summary

Background & Methodology:

As part of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, all non-profit hospitals are required to conduct a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) every three years in order to remain a tax-exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The goal of the assessment is to identify critical health disparities faced among residents within the community. The needs assessment states health priorities addressed by community stakeholders, hospital professionals, or public health experts. Additionally, campus specific implementation plans have been crafted for each of the St. Luke's University Health Network (SLUHN) campuses in order to determine how resources will be allocated to address the specified health needs. Our CHNA is comprised of both primary and secondary data. The primary data was collected through our community health surveys, where approximately 10,000 surveys were conducted in our eleven campus geographic region. Primary data was also collected through 11 campus specific key stakeholder focus groups. Secondary data included hospital network, county, state, and national level data.

Description of Service Area:



Area: 349.88 square miles
Population: 65,641 people
Population Density: 187.61 persons per square mile

Social Determinants of Health:

Income

- 36% of the St. Luke's service area residents live at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (\$24,600 for a family of four in 2017).
- 60% of children in the service area are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch programs.

Education

- Carbon County and Schuylkill County have high school graduation rates of 91% and 88%, respectively.
- The public high school graduation rates for 2016-17 were 85% for Shenandoah Valley, 78% for Panther Valley, and 90% for Mahoney Valley.

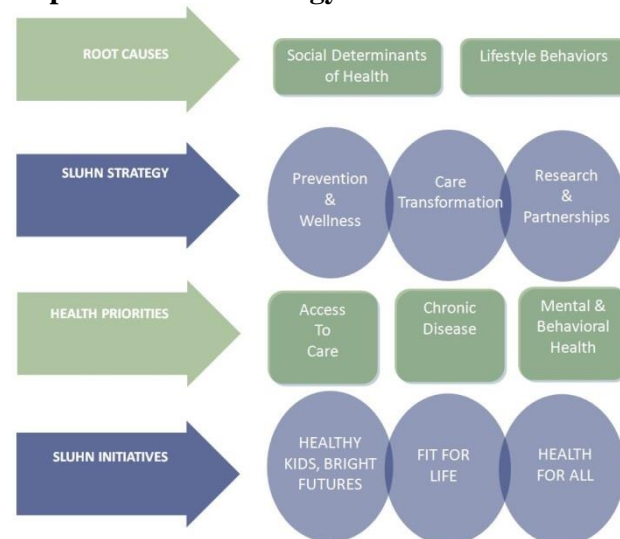
Health Insurance

- 8.42% of the service area population is without health insurance.
- Roughly 4.6% of service area residents without medical insurance is under the age of 19.
- According to the 2019 community survey, the top reason that respondents cited for postponing medical care was that their share of the cost was too high (13%).

Employment

- The service area has a higher unemployment rate (6.3) than both statewide (5.2) and national (4.4) rates.
- About 14% of respondents from the 2019 community survey were unemployed.

Implementation Strategy:



Key Findings:

The three main priorities identified include: improving access to care; preventing chronic disease; and improving mental and behavioral health. The upstream factors related to the social determinants of health and individual lifestyle behaviors contribute to the poor health status of our communities. These three health priorities will be addressed using the social determinants of health framework in conjunction with using the Lifestyle Medicine interventions in order to influence the overall health of our communities. The Western Rural Campuses include Geisinger, Miners, Palmerton, and Gnadon Huetten, located within Schuylkill and Carbon Counties in northeastern Pennsylvania. The following data is reflective of the St. Luke's rural service area.

To explore some of the most vulnerable neighborhoods we serve, we examined resources in the ten lowest income census-tracts that send patients to our St. Luke's Miners campus.

Access to Food

- 20% of families use SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program).
- The average rate of residents living more than half a mile from a supermarket and without a vehicle is 5%, with some neighborhoods up to 10%.
- There have been noted concerns with limited public transportation for the region affecting access to grocery stores, employment opportunities, health care, government services, and community services.

Housing

- 31% of these low-income tract households are cost-burdened.
- 15% of all households in Carbon County and 11% in Schuylkill County have at least one severe housing problem.
- In 2018, there were 107 homeless individuals in Carbon and Schuylkill Counties combined.

Lifestyle Behaviors:

Diet

- According to 2019 community survey data, only 7% of the service area respondents consumed the recommended amount of 5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables per day.
- A healthy diet is linked to income; 12% of network-wide respondents with over \$60,000 income consumed 5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables per day compared to only 6% of those with less than \$15,000 income.

Exercise

- Only 14% of the service area respondents reported regularly exercising 5 or more days per week.
- 30% of the respondents reported no days of exercise per week.

Obesity

- 80% of survey respondents were overweight or obese according to BMI calculations (31% overweight and 49% obese).
- Network-wide, the highest rate of obesity (48%) was found for lower-income people earning less than \$25,000 while the lowest rate of obesity (38%) was found for those earning more than \$60,000 annually.

Diabetes

- Respondents with less than \$25,000 income had significantly higher reported diabetes diagnosis rates (40%) than those with more than \$60,000 income (12%), according to network-wide survey data.
- Trust for America's Health in 2016 predicted a 34% nationwide increase in diabetes by 2030.

Mental Health

- 41% of survey respondents reported having missed one or more days of normal activity due to poor mental health within the past month.
- According to 2017 PA Youth Survey data, 39% of all students in Carbon County felt depressed or sad most days in the past 12 months.

Smoking

- For 2018, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation reported that 17% of adults in Carbon County and 18% of adults in Schuylkill County were smokers.
- According to survey data, smoking is linked to income; 27% of respondents with less than \$15,000 income reported smoking, compared to 7% of respondents with incomes of \$60,000 or more.

Adolescent Electronic Vapor Product Use

- There has been a 900% increase in e-cigarette use among high school students nationally from 2011 to 2015.
- Survey responses showed that the highest rate of electronic vapor product use (8%) was in the 18-24 age group.
- In Schuylkill County, 17% of 12th graders reported using a vapor product at least once a week in the past month.

Substance Abuse

- There has been a 600% increase in synthetic opioid (fentanyl) deaths in the U.S. since 2013.
- There was an increase in Carbon County opioid overdose death rates from 7.6 (2007-11) to 18.1 (2012-16) per 100,000 residents and in Schuylkill County rates from 3.9 (2007-11) to 24.5 (2012-16) per 100,000 residents.
- 25% of the service area respondents reported at least one episode of binge drinking behavior and 9% reported at least 3 episodes of binge drinking behavior in the past month.
- Survey data indicated that the highest rate of binge drinking (18%) occurs in the 18-24 age group.