



Photo Credit: Ron Bruner

2022-2025

Community Health Improvement Plan

- Cambria and Somerset Counties, Pennsylvania -

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Overview

About The Partnership

This document is a hospital system Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) for Conemaugh Health System comprised of Conemaugh Memorial Medical Center, Conemaugh Meyersdale Medical Center and Conemaugh Miners Medical Center.

Conemaugh Health System participated in a partnership with other community organizations to complete the CHNA. Members of the partnership include The 1889 Foundation, 1889 Jefferson Center for Population Health, and United Way of the Laurel Highlands. Throughout the document they will be designated as “the partners or the partnership.”

Community Health Improvement Plan

The Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) defines priorities for health improvement, creates a collaborative community environment to engage stakeholders, and an open and transparent process to listen and truly understand the health needs of the community served by The Partnership (Cambria and Somerset Counties, PA). This document is the Partnership’s Implementation Plan outlining how the partners plans on addressing significant health needs in the community.

The CHNA is contained in a separate document.

Starting on June 1, 2023, pdf and paper copies of this report is made widely available to the community free of charge via:

- Conemaugh Memorial Medical Center, 1086 Franklin Street, Johnstown, PA 15905 or by phone 800-587-5875 or via the hospital website <http://www.conemaugh.org>
- Conemaugh Meyersdale Medical Center, 200 Hospital Drive, Meyersdale, PA 15552 or by phone 800-587-5875 or via the website <http://www.conemaugh.org>
- Conemaugh Miners Medical Center, 290 Haida Avenue, Hastings, PA 16646 or by phone 800-587-5875 or via the website <http://www.conemaugh.org>
- 1889 Foundation, 4 Valley Pike, Johnstown, PA 15905 or by telephone 814-532-0100 or via the website <https://www.1889foundation.org/>
- 1889 Jefferson Center for Population Health, 1 Pasquerilla Plaza, Floor 2 Suite 128, Johnstown, PA 15901 or by telephone 814-535-5156 or via the website <https://www.1889jeffersoncenter.org>
- United Way of the Laurel Highlands 422 Main St. Ste. 203, Johnstown, PA 15901 and 218 North Kimberly Avenue, Somerset, PA 15501 or by phone 814-535-2563 or via the website <https://www.uwlaurel.org>

Conemaugh Health System's board of directors approved this assessment on **April 30, 2023**

Overview, cont.

To successfully make our community healthier, it is necessary to have a collaborative venture which brings together all of the care providers, citizens, government, schools, churches, not-for-profit organizations and business and industry around an effective plan of action. The community health needs assessment was completed previously and posted on The Partnership's website.

Based on the results of the CHNA, The Partnership has selected the identified significant health needs to address.

1. Mental/Behavioral Health
2. Access to Social Determinant of Health Needs/Healthcare
3. Obesity/Health Living
4. Substance Use Disorder
5. Socioeconomics/Jobs Training
6. Early Childhood
7. Violence/Abuse/Safety

The Vision Together 2025 Health and Wellness Committee will continue to provide community oversight of the Community Health Needs Assessment Plan and ensure the priority goals are implemented, as well as identify any additional opportunities or initiatives needed to improve the health of our community.

The Health and Wellness Committee is comprised of representatives from community member and community agencies including 1889 Foundation, 1889 Jefferson Center for Population Health, Cambria County Behavioral Health/Intellectual Disabilities, Cambria County EMA, Cambria County Drug Coalition, CamTran, Community Action Partnership of Cambria County, Community Foundation for the Alleghenies, Conemaugh Health System, Croyle-Nielsen Associates, Goodwill Industries, Greater Johnstown School District, Greater Johnstown YMCA, Johnstown Housing Authority, Lee Initiatives, Richland Family Health Center, St. Francis University, and United Way of the Laurel Highlands.

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The Committee plans to meet the **Substance Use Disorder** significant health need by working with the Cambria County Drug Coalition, Cambria County Drug and Alcohol, Somerset County Drug and Alcohol, and other community partners, to continue to reduce and eliminate illegal drug use and overdose deaths, expand prevention efforts, communicate treatment options for addiction, and lessen drug-related crimes.

The community will continue to promote the availability of Medication Assisted Treatment in the Emergency Department (ED) with the Conemaugh Health System, which offers first dose suboxone treatment to individuals who present to the ED in withdrawal. Conemaugh Health System will also continue to connect individuals who present with an overdose in the ED to the Center of Excellence at Alliance, which has Certified Recovery Specialists available to meet with individuals in the ED and discuss treatment options available to them.

The Conemaugh Health System continues to receive grant funding through Cambria County to support the MARC (Maternal Addiction Resource Center). This program works directly with expectant mothers who currently have, or have had in the past, an issue with substance abuse.

The Committee plans to meet the **Obesity/ Healthy Living** significant health need by continuing to focus on the many initiatives underway. Programming has included education sessions and health clinic hours for residents at the JHA communities, education on health literacy, and community-wide health education events. “Wellness Wednesdays” were launched in the fall of 2022 and will continue over the next three years, bringing health and human service fairs to at-risk JHA residents.

The Richland Family Health Center has launched a mobile health unit to serve the citizens of Cambria and Somerset counties and plans to grow the footprint of the unit over the next three years. Isolation from health and human services prevents individuals and families from accessing needed care and community supports. The mobile unit provides services for at-risk individuals with limited transportation options or those who may be hesitant to seek care. Clinical and dental care will be provided, as well as general education and outreach on additional health topics.

The Greater Johnstown YMCA, FWA gym, 1st Summit Arena, and Big Dawg Built launched a health and wellness initiative to provide safe places for at-risk youth. Through this collaboration, they strive to create a series of overlapping programs for distinct age groups, each weekend. They provide positive role models, encourage strong character development, present substance abuse and mental health interventions, along with physical activity, and quality in-person social interactions. These programs are varied, age appropriate, community centered and coordinated, and supported by a variety of local stakeholders. From out of school tutoring time, to weekend activities and programs, the collaboration provides options and positive opportunities for youth and plans are to grow this programming to serve more youth in the future.

Community Health Improvement Plan

The Committee plans to meet the **Mental/Behavioral Health** significant health need of the community by focusing on collaboration. As the national shortage of behavioral health providers grows, rural communities are finding it more and more difficult to recruit and retain psychiatrists, psychologists, and other licensed mental health professionals. This holds true for Cambria and Somerset Counties where there is a significant need for psychiatrists who are able to provide psychological treatment and medication management. There are significant wait times for first time appointments for mental health professionals, up to six months within certain practices. While telehealth expansion during the pandemic has been helpful, there are still major barriers to utilization including reimbursement constraints, lack of broadband access, and utilizing providers based outside of the community who may not be familiar with the challenges individuals in rural communities face or who are knowledgeable about community resources/lack thereof. In order to address this barrier to care, community leaders have created a Mental Health Consortium, consisting of mental health providers in the community committed to collaboration. Areas of focus the Group Consortium will continue to work on include addressing challenges regarding significant delays in credentialing and insurance licensing process, focusing on recruitment of mental health professionals as well as support positions, providing education to enhance the skill set of Primary Care practitioners on best practice treatment/prescribing, expanding support for youth/school districts and for first responders, expanding the work of the Suicide Prevention Task Force, expanding social support programs, inpatient services/partial hospitalization services and advocating for increased reimbursement from payers.

Conemaugh Memorial Medical Center continues to offer emergent, inpatient, and outpatient psychiatric care services. During the COVID pandemic, the service relied heavily on the use of telehealth technology across a broad spectrum of services, including behavioral health.

The Committee plans to meet the **Early Childhood** significant health need by continuing to collaborate on the development of an Early Childhood Initiative (ECI), with a mission of meeting the educational, health, and social needs of our youngest, most vulnerable residents (birth to age 8). The ECI Committee is developing a systems-wide, coordinated approach, bringing all agencies together to work towards collective strategies and goals, to improve the health of our youngest residents. Utilizing the Five Freedoms for America's Children framework, proposed by U.S. Senator Bob Casey, the Committee seeks to address five profound issues impacting children in our community, including health, economic security, learning, hunger, and harm. Preliminary conversations with Senator Casey's office have been held to share the desire to pilot the Five Freedoms framework in the community. A consulting group has been hired to assist with the planning efforts, which officially launched in the fall of 2022. Surveys and focus groups of the community were implemented to launch the initiative.

The United Way of the Laurel Highlands also continues plans to expand its Diaper Bank, providing thousands of diapers to families in need through twelve regional distribution sites. Home visiting programs are also planning to grow the number of individuals served, including the Parents as Teachers, Nurse-Family Partnership and Community Care HUB programs.

Community Health Improvement Plan

The Committee plans to meet the **Social Determinant of Health/Healthcare** significant health needs of our residents by focusing on outreach initiatives.

Housing is identified as a major social determinant of health need with regard to access in the community and many initiatives are currently underway to address these needs. Preventative health clinics will continue to be held at various housing authority buildings, which have included health fairs, COVID-19 vaccine clinics, and food distributions. A partnership between Hosanna Industries, Johnstown Redevelopment Authority, and 1889 Foundation for housing stabilization continues in order to rehabilitate housing of current homeowners to reduce the number of individuals in unstable housing in our region. A Community Help Center Housing HUB concept is also being developed. A Housing Task Force has been created, with participation from many community organizations, and with support from the U.S. Department of Urban Housing and Development, in order to address housing challenges within our communities.

Access to food security has also been identified as a major initiative in the community. A new Local Food Systems Coordinator has been hired and will continue working with community partners on the following food related initiatives: developing a resource inventory of food related information, providing nutrition education, addressing food security, focusing on food as an economic driver, expanding community gardens and farmer's markets and exploring grants and best practice opportunities.

Using the electronic health record, Conemaugh Health System will screen all patients for food insecurity, housing instability, transportation needs, utility difficulties and interpersonal safety. Referrals will be made to community resources based on results of the screening. Data from the screening results will also be used to plan future initiatives to address social determinants of health/healthcare.

The Committee plans to meet the **Socioeconomics/Job Training** significant health needs of our residents a number of ways.

Conemaugh Health System plans to continue to offer training programs for certified nursing aides, nursing, radiological technology, surgical technology, histo-technology, medical laboratory science, and EMTs. They have also initiated a comprehensive loan forgiveness program for students in their School of Nursing and Allied Health.

Goodwill of the Southern Alleghenies plans to continue programming that includes a career center, adult education programs, youth employment and training services, PA Workwear program, and more. United Methodist Human Services will continue serving the community by growing the Getting Ahead program, supporting individuals in stabilizing their situations by building resources, positive social support systems, and human capital. Pennsylvania Highlands Community College has expanded programming to include many certificate programs to help support the growth of the workforce in the two-county region.

Community Health Improvement Plan

On January 26, 2023 HUD Secretary Marcia Fudge announced that the Johnstown Housing Authority was selected as an awardee for the competitive “Family Self-Sufficiency Program” (FSS), which has provided Johnstown with a new “Program Coordinator” to provide on-the-ground support for families in Johnstown’s HUD-assisted housing to boost financial empowerment, reduce or eliminate the need for welfare assistance, and make progress toward economic independence and self-sufficiency.

The Committee plans to meet the **Violence/Abuse/Safety** significant health needs by developing initiatives to focus on for this goal over the next three years. The Committee will continue to support the Hope 4 Johnstown program, which follows the Cure Violence national violence prevention model and is a grassroots organization established by members of the community to curb violence in Johnstown. Additional initiatives will also be explored/implemented over the next three years.

Community Health Improvement Plan for Cambria and Somerset Counties

Completed by The Partners in partnership with

