



2026–2028 Community Health Implementation Plan

Mercy Health — St. Rita's Medical Center, LLC
LIMA, OH

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Adopted by the Mercy Health — St. Rita’s Medical Center Board of Directors
April 30, 2026

As part of Bon Secours Mercy Health, Mercy Health — St. Rita’s Medical Center, LLC is honored to uphold nearly two centuries of dedication to the communities we serve. This commitment has continually evolved to address the most pressing needs in each community, based on input of residents, businesses and other community members.

Guided by our Mission to extend the compassionate ministry of Jesus, Mercy Health works to improve the health and well-being of our communities and bring good help to those in need — especially people who are poor, underserved and dying.

By listening to community voices from our partners and neighbors, Mercy Health — St. Rita’s has identified the greatest needs in our community. The Community Health Implementation Plan (CHIP) ensures our resources and strategies for outreach, prevention, education and wellness are directed where they can make the greatest impact.

We welcome written comments regarding the health needs identified in this CHIP. Please direct your feedback to Director, Community Health, Tyler Smith at tssmith1@mercy.com.

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Mercy Health CHIP
Short Link:
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Introduction

This Community Health Implementation Plan will address the prioritized significant community health needs listed through the CHNA. The Plan indicates which needs Mercy Health — St. Rita’s, will address and how, as well as which prioritized needs will not be addressed and why.

Beyond the programs and strategies outlined in this plan, Mercy Health — St. Rita’s will continue to address the needs of the community by operating in accordance with its mission to extend the compassionate ministry of Jesus by improving the health of its communities with an emphasis on the poor and underserved. This includes providing care for all individuals regardless of their ability to pay.

The strategies in the Implementation Plan will provide the foundation for addressing the community’s significant needs between 2026 to 2028. However, Mercy Health — St. Rita’s anticipates that some strategies and even the needs identified, may evolve over that period. Mercy Health — St. Rita’s plans a flexible approach to addressing the significant community identified needs that will allow for the adaptation of potential changes and collaboration with other community agencies and partners.

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Executive Summary

Background and Process

Mercy Health — St. Rita's identified the significant needs of its community by participating in a collaborative effort across key stakeholders from Allen, Auglaize and Putnam counties. Mercy Health — St. Rita's utilized data from the Allen, Auglaize and Putnam County Health Departments Community Health Needs Assessments (CHNA), that included primary and secondary data from multiple sources and combined such data with the results from a written survey of adults and youth in the community. Input from the community was obtained through various methods as detailed in the Mercy Health — St. Rita's CHNA.

Key stakeholders from Mercy Health — St. Rita's, including but not limited to clinical leaders, physicians, administration and community agency representatives from Allen, Auglaize and Putnam counties, participated in the CHNA prioritization for Mercy Health — St. Rita's Medical center on March 12, 2025. Based on the data presented (attached to the CHNA appendix), over 60+ stakeholders identified 17 significant health needs.

Identifying Significant Needs

The 60+ key stakeholders ranked all 17 significant health needs by magnitude, the seriousness of the consequence and the feasibility of correcting the problem. This method of ranking allows for health needs to be ranked as objectively as possible based on the data. The committee then voted and determined the final list, prioritizing health priorities for collective action.

Implementation Plan

Mercy Health — St. Rita’s is committed to addressing the prioritized significant health needs of the community through the strategies described in this Implementation Plan.

Prioritized Significant Health Needs

The table below lists the prioritized significant health needs identified through the CHNA and specifies which needs Mercy Health — St. Rita’s will address.

Prioritized Significant Health Needs	Hospital Addressing Need
Access to Health Care	Yes
Adult and Adolescent Mental Health	Yes
Housing Access and Affordability	No
Maternal, Infant and Child Health	Yes
Preventive Care for Chronic Disease	Yes
Transportation	No

Implementation Strategies to Address Community-Level Social Determinants of Health Needs

Access to Health Care

Description

Access to health care remains a critical priority area, as many individuals face barriers, including lack of transportation, limited provider availability, financial constraints and inadequate health insurance coverage. Rural residents and underserved populations often experience long travel times, limited appointment availability and challenges navigating the health care system. These barriers contribute to delayed care, poorer health outcomes and increased emergency department utilization. Efforts in this CHIP will focus on improving health care accessibility, affordability and coordination to ensure that all residents receive timely and equitable care.

Goal 1

Improve care coordination and reduce barriers to health care access, with measurable improvements achieved for at least 50% of patients through participating sites by 2028.

Strategy 1

Mercy Health — St. Rita's Medical Center will expand access to holistic care by embedding social work support across multiple care sites. It will strengthen patient connections to needed resources, reduce uninsured and no-show rates and improve overall continuity of care for underserved populations. The strategy is to implement and sustain a coordinated, multi-site community navigator initiative that screens 85% of patients for Social Determinants of Health Needs (SDOH) needs, provides individualized navigation support for at least 85% of identified needs and successfully connects at least 20% of patients to appropriate community or health care services.

Strategic Measures

- Increase in percentage of patients screened for SDOH needs
- Increase in percentage of patients receiving individualized navigation support
- Increase in percentage of patients successfully connected to community and/or clinical resources

Accountable Partners

- Mercy Health — St. Rita's
- Ohio Northern University HealthWise Mobile Clinic
- St. Rita's Internal Medicine Residency Program
- The Leipsic Community Center
- Our Daily Bread
- Lima Habitat for Humanity
- Christian Corners
- Community Medical Services

Expected Impact of the Strategy

- The strategy will expand access to holistic care by embedding community navigation support across multiple health care and community-based sites. This initiative will strengthen screening and response to SDOH needs, improve continuity of care and enhance patient connections to essential services — particularly for populations experiencing health disparities, including uninsured, underinsured, rural and low-income residents who may not be connected to a primary care provider.
 - 85% of patients screened for SDOH needs
 - 85% of identified needs addressed through individualized navigation support
 - 20% of patients successfully connected to community and/or health care services

Targeted Populations

- Underserved and uninsured populations, rural residents and individuals experiencing barriers related to transportation, financial hardship, or social determinants of health within Allen, Auglaize, Putnam and surrounding counties.

Goal 2

Improve access to care for 200 patients with chronic conditions or frequent emergency department (ED) use, decrease avoidable hospital readmissions for enrolled participants, for program participants.

Strategy 2

By December 31, 2028, implement and sustain a community paramedicine program that delivers home-based preventive and follow-up care to patients with chronic conditions or frequent emergency department (ED) use. The program will integrate referrals from local EMS, fire departments and health care providers to proactively address health and social needs, increase health literacy and connect participants to primary and behavioral health care.

Strategic Measures

- Increase in the number of participants enrolled in the program patients will be enrolled and served through community paramedicine visits
- Decrease in avoidable Emergency Department utilization for enrolled participants
- Increase in self-knowledge for enrolled participants of health literacy and chronic disease self-management will increase by more than 85%

Accountable Partners

- Mercy Health — St. Rita's Medical Center
- Local EMS and Fire Departments
- Primary care providers

Expected Impact of the Strategy

- This strategy will enhance access to preventive and follow-up care for high-risk and underserved populations, reducing avoidable emergency visits and hospital readmissions. Participants will experience improved self-management, increased connection to primary and behavioral health care and greater health literacy.
 - Enroll 200 patients in the community paramedicine program
 - Decrease avoidable Emergency Department (ED) utilization by 65%
 - Increase in patient self-knowledge of health literacy and managing conditions by 85%

Targeted Populations

- Adults with uncontrolled or complex chronic conditions (e.g., heart failure, COPD, diabetes), frequent 911 or ED utilizers, older adults with limited mobility or transportation and individuals in rural or underserved areas who face barriers to preventive or primary care

Implementation Strategies to Address Individual-Level Health-Related Social Needs

Adult Mental Health

Description

Adult mental health continues to be a significant community priority, as many individuals face barriers to care, stigma and limited awareness of available mental health resources. Factors such as stress from caregiving, financial strain, trauma and chronic disease often contribute to anxiety, depression and other mental health concerns among adults. Mercy Health — St. Rita's in collaboration with community partners, is committed to improving awareness and access to mental health support through education, outreach and connection to resources. The initiative focuses on reducing stigma, increasing mental health literacy and empowering adults to seek and sustain the support that they need for overall well-being.

Goal 1

Improve access to mental health care, increase mental health literacy and reduce stigma among adults by expanding community-based outreach, education and connection to mental health resources by 2028.

Strategy 1

Implement and sustain a three-year, community-based adult mental health initiative, including a speaker series and outreach programs, that reduces stigma, builds literacy around mental health and connects to at least 500 community members with resources addressing gender-specific issues, chronic disease and financial stress.

Strategic Measures

- Increase the number of community members attending a mental health workshop
- Increase in the percentage of participants demonstrating an increase in knowledge of mental health literacy and a reduced stigma
- Increase in the percentage of participants connected with behavioral health or wellness resources following workshop participation

Accountable Partners

- Mercy Health — St. Rita's Medical Center
- Mental Health and Recovery Services Board of Allen, Auglaize and Hardin Counties
- Local behavioral health agencies

Expected Impact of the Strategy

- The strategy will improve mental health awareness, reduce stigma and increase connections to behavioral health and wellness resources. By addressing gender-specific and life-stage stressors—such as caregiving, trauma, postpartum transitions and menopause — the initiative will strength overall community resilience and promote mental well-being.
 - 500 community members attending a speaker series/workshop
 - 70% of participants demonstrating a self-knowledge increase in mental health literacy and reduced stigma
 - 15% of workshop participants connected with a behavioral health or wellness resource following participation

Targeted Populations

- Adults experiencing stress related to work, caregiving, trauma, postpartum or menopause; adults managing chronic diseases with co-occurring depression or anxiety; and adults facing financial stress or limited financial literacy.

Adolescent Mental Health

Description

Adolescent behavioral health has emerged as a growing community priority, with increasing rates of depression, anxiety and crisis-level needs among children and adolescents. Many families face limited access to timely and intensive behavioral health services, often resulting in prolonged emergency department stays or the need for treatment far from home. To address this gap, Mercy Health — St. Rita's is developing a Partial Hospitalization Program (PHP) to provide structured, trauma-informed care for youth in a therapeutic, school-aligned setting. This program will bridge the gap between inpatient and outpatient care, helping stabilize youth, strengthen family engagement and support reintegration into home and school environments.

Goal 1

Reduce ED psychiatric boarding by 10% and repeat ED presentation within 30 days by at least 25%, by 2028 through implementation of a Partial Hospitalization Program (PHP) for youth ages 12-17.

Strategy 1

By December 2028, implement and sustain a two-phase Partial Hospitalization Program (PHP) for children and adolescents, providing structured, evidence-based behavioral health treatment and educational support as an alternative to inpatient hospitalization.

Strategic Measures

- Increase in the percentage of youth enrolled in the Partial Hospitalization Program (PHP)
- Decrease in the percentage of psychiatric boarding rates for youth
- Increase in the percentage of youth that will be linked to step-down or outpatient services within seven days post-discharge
- Decrease in percentage of repeat Emergency Department (ED) readmissions within 30 days post-discharge
- Increase in the percentage of family satisfaction scores after discharge

Accountable Partners

- Mercy Health — St. Rita's Medical Center
- The Mental Health & Recovery Services Board of Allen, Auglaize, Hardin Counties
- Allen County Children Services
- Allen County and Family Children First Council
- Local schools
- Local behavioral health agencies

Expected Impact of the Strategy

- The PHP will expand access to intensive, developmentally appropriate behavioral health services for youth while reducing inpatient utilization and ED boarding. The program will enhance inter-agency coordination, strengthen family engagement and improve stabilization outcomes for children and adolescents with significant emotional and behavioral needs.
 - Reduce psychiatric boarding for youth to the Emergency Department (ED) by 10%
 - Connect 80% of youth to step-down or outpatient services within 7 days post-discharge
 - Decrease Emergency Department (ED) presentations within 30 days post-discharge by 25%

Targeted Populations

- Children and adolescents ages 12-17 residing within the 10-county service region who are experiencing acute behavioral health needs requiring a level of care beyond outpatient therapy but below inpatient hospitalization.

Implementation Strategies to Address Clinical Health Needs

Preventive Care for Chronic Disease

Description

Preventive Care for Chronic Disease remains a key community health priority, as many adults continue to face challenges in managing conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, cancer and heart disease. Limited access to primary care, medication adherence barriers and gaps in ongoing monitoring contribute to higher rates of uncontrolled chronic illness and preventable hospitalizations. Through initiatives led by Community Health Workers (CHW's), Mercy Health — St. Rita's aims to strengthen prevention and early intervention by improving hypertension screening, education and follow-up care. This approach focused on empowering patients to better manage their health, enhance medication adherence and reduce long-term cardiovascular risk across the region.

Goal1

Improve hypertension detection, monitoring and control among patients enrolled with Community Health Workers (CHWs) to reduce cardiovascular risk and improve long-term health outcomes.

Strategy 1

By December 2028, implement and sustain a Community Health Worker (CHW) led hypertension management program that screens patients for blood pressure control and social determinants of health (SDOH) needs. Patients who screen positive for both uncontrolled or elevated blood pressure and one or more SDOH needs will be enrolled in the program and receive individualized education, navigation and follow-up. Program outcomes will be monitored to assess improvements in hypertension management and reductions in uncontrolled hypertension rates.

Strategic Measures

- Increase in percentage of patients screened for Blood Pressure (BP) and Social Determinants of Health (SDOH)
- Increase in the number of patients who screen positive for both and are enrolled in the program
- Increase in the percentage of enrolled patients who receive CHW education and follow-up
- Increase in percentage of patients enrolled who improve BP control and reduce hypertension

Accountable Partners

- Mercy Health — St. Rita's Medical Center
- Pathways HUB of Northwest Ohio
- Primary Care Providers
- Care Coordination team

Expected Impact of the Strategy

- The strategy will improve the early identification and control of hypertension, support patients in managing chronic disease at home and strengthen connections to preventive and primary care services. Expected outcomes include improved blood pressure control, reduced cardiovascular risk and greater patient engagement in long-term health management.
 - Decrease uncontrolled hypertension among program participants by 20%
 - Increase blood pressure self-management for 70% of enrolled patients
 - Provide follow-up to 85% of enrolled patients by CHW

Targeted Populations

- Adults enrolled with Community Health Workers, patients with a history of hypertension or elevated cardiovascular risk and individuals with limited access to primary care or difficulty managing chronic disease at home.

Maternal, Child and Infant Health

Description

Maternal, infant and child health remain a key community priority, as many expectant mothers face barriers such as food insecurity, limited transportation and lack of access to prenatal education and support services. These challenges can contribute to adverse outcomes, including low-birth weight infants and poor maternal health.

Goal 1

Improve maternal and infant health outcomes by increasing access to nutrition education, food assistance and community resources for expectant mothers.

Strategy 1

By December 2028, implement and sustain the Mom RX Program, which provides nutrition education, food assistance and community resource connections for expectant mothers enrolled in the Pathways Program. The program will address food insecurity, transportation barriers and access to prenatal education to reduce low-birth-weight deliveries and improve maternal and infant health outcomes.

Strategic Measures

- Increase enrollment and participation in the Mom RX Program
- Increase percentage of enrolled mothers that are connected to one or more community resources
- Increase in percentage in self-reported nutrition knowledge among participating mothers
- Decrease in percentage of low-birth-weight deliveries among program participants compared to baseline
- Decrease in percentage of food insecurity status among enrolled mothers

Accountable Partners

- Mercy Health — St. Rita's Medical Center
- Pathways HUB of Northwest Ohio
- West Ohio Food Bank
- Lima Regional Transit Authority (LRTA)
- Local community organizations

Expected Impact of the Strategy

- The Mom RX Program will improve maternal nutrition and food security, enhance prenatal health knowledge and reduce barriers to accessing care and resources. Expected outcomes include a decrease in low-birth weight deliveries and improved overall maternal and infant health in Allen County.
 - Sustain Mom RX Program and CHW-led resource navigation
 - Connect 70% of mothers enrolled in the program to community resources
 - 50% increase in self-reported nutrition knowledge compared to baseline
 - 15% reduction in low-birth-weight deliveries among program participants

Targeted Populations

- Expectant mothers who qualify for the Pathways HUB Program, screen positive for food insecurity and plan to deliver their infants at Mercy Health — St. Rita's Medical Center.

Prioritized Needs Not Being Addressed

Housing Access and Affordability

While stable housing is recognized as a key social determinant of health, Mercy Health — St. Rita's does not currently have the internal resources or service lines necessary to directly lead housing development or affordability initiatives. However, Mercy Health — St. Rita's remains committed to supporting community partners who specialized in this area- such as the Lima/Allen County Housing Consortium, Project 129 LLC and local services agencies- through referrals, participation in community planning efforts and integration of housing resource navigation within other hospital-led programs that address social determinants of health.

Transportation

Transportation barriers remain a significant challenge in accessing health care, particularly for rural and low-income residents. While Mercy Health — St. Rita's recognizes the impact of transportation on health outcomes, the hospital is not positioned to directly manage or fund large-scale transportation services. Instead, Mercy Health — St. Rita's continues to collaborate with and refer patients to community transportation partners such as Lima Regional Transit Authority (LRTA), Mercy Health Express, Black and White Cab and other local organizations that provide mobility support. The hospital will also continue to address transportation indirectly through care coordination, resources navigation and partnerships that promote access to preventive and specialty care across the region.

Resources Available

Due to the considerable and complex nature of the prioritized needs, there are several organizations within the community that may be available to address one or more of the needs listed in this implementation plan:

Health Care Facilities and Services

- Mercy Health — St. Rita’s Medical Center
 - Access to care, adolescent and adult behavioral health, chronic disease management, maternal and infant health
- Lima Memorial Health System
 - Access to health care
- Health Partners of Western Ohio
 - Access to health care
- Bluffton Hospital
 - Access to health care
- Mental Health & Recovery Services Board
 - Access to mental health services
- Prevention Awareness Support Services (PASS)
 - Access to mental health services
- Institute for Orthopaedic Surgery
 - Access to health care
- Joint Township District Memorial Hospital
 - Access to health care
- Ohio Northern University
 - Access to health care

Health Departments

- Allen County Health Department
 - Access to health care
- Putnam County Health Department
 - Access to health care
- Auglaize County Health Department
 - Access to health care

Other Local and National Resources

- Habitat for Humanity
 - Access to housing
- Project 129, LLC
 - Access to housing
- West Ohio Community Action Partnership (WOCAP)
 - Access to housing
- Allen Metropolitan Housing Authority
 - Access to housing
- New Lima — Housing for the Future
 - Access to housing
 - Access to adult and youth mental health
- Coleman Health Services
 - Access to adult and youth mental health
- Family Resource Center: Lima
 - Access to behavioral health and substance use disorder services for individuals, youth and families
- Lighthouse Behavioral Health Solutions
 - Access to substance use disorder and mental health treatment services
- Specialized Alternatives for Families and Youth (SAFY)
 - Access to behavioral health
- West Ohio Food Bank
 - Access to food access and insecurity
- Children's Hunger Alliance
 - Access to food access and insecurity
- Mercy Health Regional Transport
 - Access to transportation
- Black & White Cab Co.
 - Access to transportation
- Dispensary of Hope
 - Access to medication

Board Approval

The Mercy Health — St. Rita's Medica Center 2026-2028 Community Health Implementation Plan was approved by the Mercy Health — St. Rita's Medical Center Board of Directors on April 30, 2026

Board Signature: Kari D. Tapp

Date: 4/30/26

For further information or to obtain a hard copy of this Community Health Implementation Plan, please contact Director, Community Health, Tyler Smith at tssmith1@mercy.com.

Mercy Health CHIP Website: <https://www.mercy.com/about-us/mission/giving-back/community-health-needs-assessment>

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