Allegheny Health Network — AHN Forbes Hospital

Community Health Needs Assessment

2024 Report

AHN FORBES Hospital

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A Message From Our Presidents

A Healthier Future: Community Health Needs Assessment Results

Dear Valued Members of our Community,

Earlier this year, we embarked on a journey to understand the health needs of our community through the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). This comprehensive process involved gathering valuable insight from thousands of residents, hundreds of health care providers, community organizations, and local leaders. This collective effort has provided us with a clear picture of the health priorities that matter most to our community.

The CHNA identified several key areas of focus, and AHN Forbes Hospital is committed to taking action. We are developing a strategic plan that will address the priorities, as summarized below:

Social Determinants of Health: Many residents face challenges accessing affordable health care and healthy foods, particularly in underserved areas. In addition, community members are searching for family sustaining employment while the health care system is looking for qualified and dedicated team members.

Behavioral Health and Substance Abuse: We believe that everyone deserves access to comprehensive and compassionate care for their mental health and substance use needs. However, many individuals continue to struggle in silence.

Chronic Disease Management: Chronic diseases, such as cancer, are a growing concern in our community. These conditions not only impact individual health and well-being but also place a significant strain on our loved ones, health care system and local economy.

Health Equity: We believe that everyone in our community deserves access to quality health care and the opportunity to live a healthy life. We must ensure that all residents have equal access to quality, culturally appropriate health care, regardless of background, primary language or socioeconomic status.

This is not just a hospital initiative; it's a community-wide effort. We invite you to join us in building a healthier future for our community. Together, we can make a difference.

Sincerely,

Jim Benedict, JD, CPA, MAFIS, FACHE
President, Allegheny Health Network

Mark A. Rubino, MD, MMM, FACOG
President, AHN Forbes Hospital

About This Report

Community Health Needs Assessment Overview

As a nonprofit organization, Allegheny Health Network (AHN) Forbes Hospital (AHN Forbes) is mandated by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to conduct a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) every three years. The CHNA report from AHN Forbes complies with the guidelines set forth by the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and meets IRS requirements. This document comprehensively analyzes primary and secondary data, examining socioeconomic, public health, and demographic information at the local, state, and national levels. AHN Forbes proudly presents its 2024 CHNA report and findings to the community.

The community health needs assessment is vital for AHN Forbes as it provides a thorough understanding of the health needs and challenges faced by the local population. The hospital can identify key concerns and prioritize resource allocation effectively by systematically collecting and analyzing data on socioeconomic factors, public health trends, and demographic information. This process highlights critical health issues and reveals social and environmental barriers that affect health outcomes. For AHN Forbes, conducting a CHNA is essential for developing targeted strategies to enhance health services, improve patient care, and address the needs of underserved and vulnerable communities. By engaging stakeholders, including community-based organizations (CBOs) and public health experts, AHN Forbes fosters a collaborative approach to health improvement, promoting a healthier, more resilient community.

AHN Forbes's CHNA utilized a systematic method to identify and address the needs of underserved and marginalized communities within the hospital's service area. The CHNA report and the subsequent Implementation Strategy Planning (ISP) report outline strategies to improve health outcomes for those affected by diseases and social and environmental barriers.

The community needs assessment process involved significant engagement and input collection from community-based organizations, establishments, and institutions. The CHNA spanned multiple counties in Pennsylvania and New York and encompassed 261 ZIP codes. Managed and consulted by Tripp Umbach, the CHNA process incorporated insights from community representatives, particularly those with specialized knowledge of public health issues and data concerning underserved, hard-to-reach, and vulnerable populations.

AHN Forbes expresses gratitude to the region's stakeholders, community providers, and community-based organizations participating in this assessment and appreciates their valuable contributions throughout the CHNA process.

Internal Revenue Service Mandate

The CHNA report thoroughly analyzes primary and secondary data, exploring local, state, and national demographic, health, and socioeconomic factors. This report fulfills the requirements of Internal Revenue Code 501(r)(3), as stipulated by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), which mandates that nonprofit hospitals conduct CHNAs every three years. AHN Forbes's CHNA report aligns with the guidelines established by the Affordable Care Act and adheres to IRS regulations, ensuring a comprehensive assessment of community health needs and guiding effective strategies to address them.

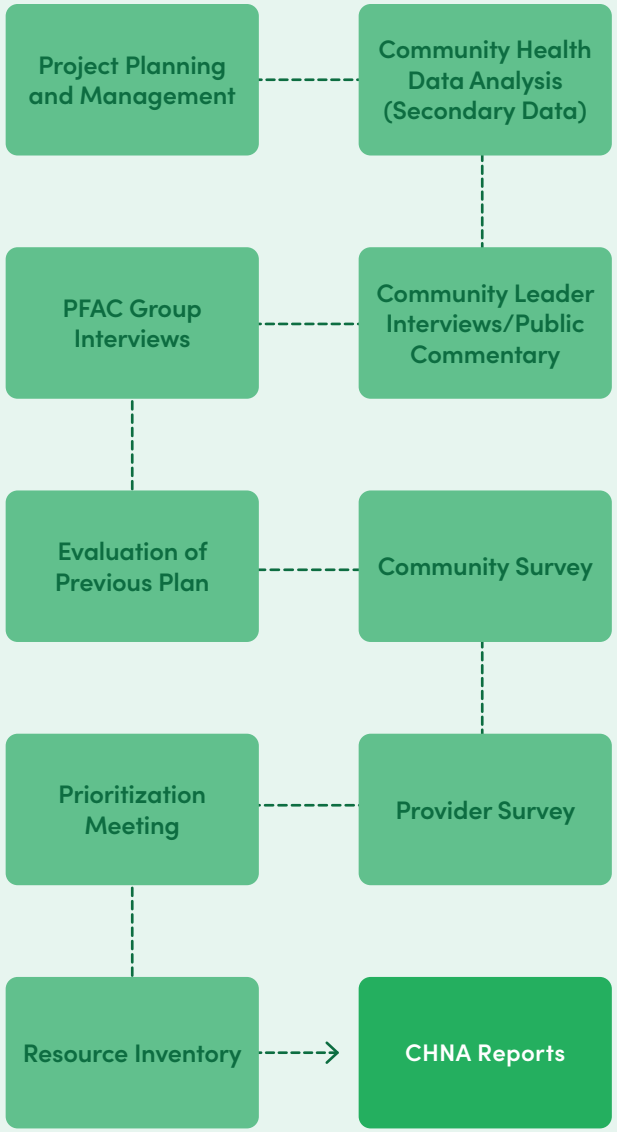
Community Health Needs Assessment Methodology

AHN and AHN Forbes partnered with Tripp Umbach to carry out the 2024 CHNA for AHN Forbes. This assessment complies with IRS regulations for 501(c)(3) nonprofit hospitals and includes input from a range of stakeholders who reflect the varied needs of the communities served by AHN Forbes. To meet IRS requirements related to the ACA, the study methodology included qualitative and quantitative data methods to identify the needs of underserved and disenfranchised populations. While multiple steps made up the overall CHNA process, Tripp Umbach worked closely with members of the CHNA working group to collect, analyze, and identify the results to complete AHN Forbes Hospital's assessment.

Community Health Needs Assessment Process

The CHNA roadmap was crafted to involve every segment of the community, including residents, community-based organizations, health and business leaders, educators, policymakers, and health care providers. Its purpose is to pinpoint health care needs and propose viable solutions to the identified health issues.

Figure 1: Roadmap for the Community Health Needs Assessment



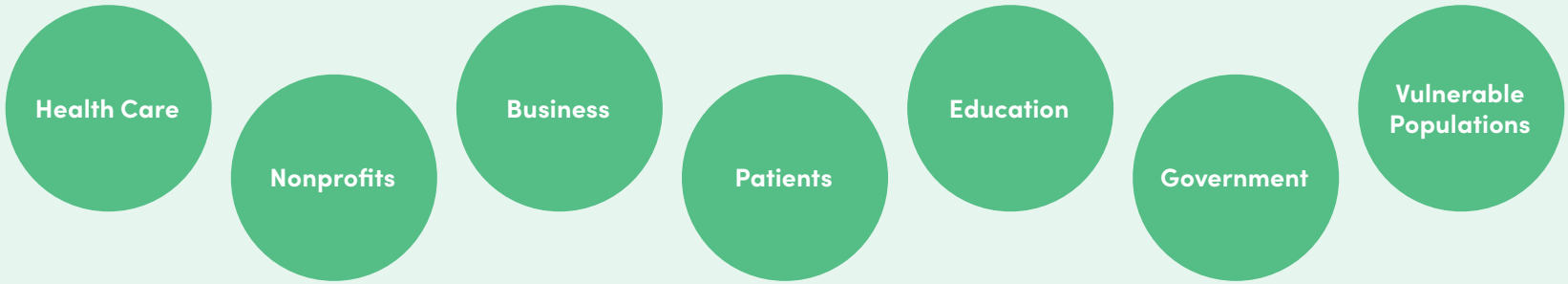
Community Engagement

The CHNA process commenced in April 2024, with the collection of quantitative and qualitative data concluding in October 2024. During this needs assessment, a diverse group of residents, educators, government and health care professionals, and leaders in health and human services from AHN Forbes Hospital's service area participated in the study. Feedback from these leaders offered valuable insights into community issues, factors related to health equity, and overall community needs. AHN Forbes Hospital gathered data through community and key informant surveys, stakeholder interviews, and focus groups to capture the community's perspectives.

County demographics and chronic disease prevalence data were obtained from local, state, and federal databases to compile secondary data. Community surveys and interviews with stakeholders and low-income residents were conducted to encourage participation from everyone living or working in the primary service area. The information collected helped identify needs, high-risk behaviors, barriers, social issues, and concerns affecting underserved and vulnerable populations. The data collection phase also included input from focus groups with seniors and health care professionals who work with residents facing chronic conditions.

Although the CHNA process consisted of multiple steps, Tripp Umbach collaborated closely with a working group and steering group to collect, analyze, and identify the findings necessary to complete the hospital's assessment.

Figure 2: Key Stakeholders



About AHN and AHN Forbes

AHN

Allegheny Health Network is a leading nonprofit health system based in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, dedicated to providing high-quality, comprehensive health care services to the communities it serves. AHN, which is part of the Highmark Health enterprise, operates 14 hospitals, employs over 22,000 people, and has more than 250 locations providing care. AHN is an integrated health system dedicated to providing exceptional care to people in the local communities. Serving 12 Pennsylvania counties and two counties in New York, AHN brings together the services of AHN Allegheny General Hospital, AHN Allegheny Valley Hospital, AHN Canonsburg Hospital, AHN Forbes Hospital, AHN Grove City, AHN Jefferson Hospital, AHN Saint Vincent Hospital, AHN West Penn Hospital, AHN Westfield Memorial Hospital, AHN Wexford Hospital, and AHN Neighborhood Hospitals (AHN Brentwood Neighborhood Hospital, AHN Harmar Neighborhood Hospital, AHN Hempfield Neighborhood Hospital, and AHN McCandless Neighborhood Hospital).

AHN provides exceptional quality care to the region. AHN employs diverse health care professionals, including physicians, nurses, allied health staff, and support personnel. Its staff includes over 3,000 physicians, residents, and fellows; 6,000 nurses; and 22,000 employees.[1] The facilities have nine surgical centers, six regional cancer centers, and six health and wellness pavilions.

AHN encompasses a wide range of health care services, including acute care, outpatient services, rehabilitation, emergency care, and specialty programs. AHN is also recognized for its cutting-edge technology and research initiatives, focusing on advancing medical science and enhancing patient care.

AHN is a vital component of the health care landscape focused on delivering high-quality, patient-centered care. Through its extensive services, community engagement, and commitment to health equity, AHN strives to improve the health and well-being of the communities it serves. With a dedication to innovation and excellence, AHN continues to play a crucial role in shaping the future of

Figure 3:
AHN Primary Service Area (PSA)

- Allegheny County, PA
- Armstrong County, PA
- Beaver County, PA
- Butler County, PA
- Crawford County, PA
- Erie County, PA
- Lawrence County, PA
- Mercer County, PA
- Venango County, PA
- Warren County, PA
- Washington County, PA
- Westmoreland County, PA
- Cattaraugus County, NY
- Chautauqua County, NY

[1] Allegheny Health Network

health care in the region.

Mission Statement: To create a remarkable health experience, freeing people to be their best.
Vision Statement: A world where everyone embraces health.

AHN Forbes

AHN Forbes has provided exceptional health care services to Monroeville and the eastern suburbs of Pittsburgh for over 40 years. Established in 1978, AHN Forbes has grown to become a key provider of advanced medical care, offering a comprehensive range of services, including emergency care, surgery, cardiology, orthopaedics, oncology, and women's health. The hospital is renowned for its commitment to high-quality, patient-centered care, supported by a team of highly skilled physicians, nurses, and medical professionals who prioritize the health and well-being of their patients.

The hospital is staffed by a dedicated team of 947 physicians, along with nurses and health care professionals, who are committed to delivering exceptional, patient-centered care. AHN Forbes is known for its advanced technology and specialized programs, such as its Level II Trauma Center, stroke care certification, and cutting-edge robotic surgery capabilities.

As part of the AHN system, AHN Forbes benefits from access to the latest research, treatments, and medical innovations, ensuring that patients receive top-tier care. The hospital plays an active role in the community, offering wellness programs, preventive care, and educational outreach initiatives aimed at promoting long-term health. With its strong emphasis on quality, safety, and compassionate care, AHN Forbes continues to meet the diverse health needs of its patients while maintaining a focus on improving the overall well-being of the communities it serves.

With a team of nearly 1,000 physicians and a commitment to excellence, AHN Forbes has earned a reputation as one of the region's leading medical institutions, providing comprehensive and innovative health care in a community-oriented setting.

Defined Community

In the context of a CHNA, the "defined community" refers to the specific population or geographic area that the assessment targets. This community can be identified based on geographic boundaries (such as counties, cities, or neighborhoods), demographic factors (age, race, or socioeconomic status), or the population served by a health care provider or organization. Accurately defining the community is crucial for assessing health needs effectively, as it ensures that the collected and analyzed data accurately reflects that particular population's unique characteristics and health challenges.

By concentrating on a well-defined community, the CHNA delivers detailed and actionable insights, aiding in the creation of targeted health interventions, policies, and programs tailored to the residents' needs. This approach ensures that health resources are allocated efficiently and that efforts to improve health outcomes are focused where they are most needed, ultimately enhancing the overall well-being of the community.

For AHN Forbes, the defined community is the geographic area from which a substantial number of patients accessing hospital services come. Although the CHNA considers other health care providers, AHN Forbes is the primary provider of acute care services in the region. Therefore, using hospital service data offers the most accurate representation of the community.

In 2024, 45 ZIP codes were identified as the primary service area for AHN Forbes. The following table highlights the study area focus for AHN Forbes Hospital's 2024 CHNA.

Figure 4: 2024 AHN Forbes's Primary Service Area

Zip Code	Town	County
15035	East McKeesport	Allegheny
15068	New Kensington	Westmoreland
15085	Trafford	Westmoreland
15104	Braddock	Allegheny
15110	Duquesne	Allegheny
15112	East Pittsburgh	Allegheny
15120	Homestead	Allegheny
15131	McKeesport	Allegheny
15132	McKeesport	Allegheny
15133	McKeesport	Allegheny
15135	McKeesport	Allegheny
15137	North Versailles	Allegheny
15129	Oakmont	Allegheny
15140	Pitcairn	Allegheny
15145	Turtle Creek	Allegheny
15146	Monroeville	Allegheny
15147	Verona	Allegheny
15148	Wilmerding	Allegheny
15218	Pittsburgh	Allegheny
15221	Pittsburgh	Allegheny
15235	Pittsburgh	Allegheny
15239	Pittsburgh	Allegheny
15601	Greensburg	Westmoreland

Zip Code	Town	County
15611	Adamsburg	Westmoreland
15613	Apollo	Armstrong
15615	Ardara	Westmoreland
15617	Arona	Westmoreland
15618	Avonmore	Westmoreland
15623	Claridge	Westmoreland
15626	Delmont	Westmoreland
15632	Export	Westmoreland
15634	Grapeville	Westmoreland
15636	Harrison City	Westmoreland
15637	Herminie	Westmoreland
15642	Irwin	Westmoreland
15644	Jeannette	Westmoreland
15647	Larimer	Westmoreland
15663	Madison	Westmoreland
15665	Manor	Westmoreland
15668	Murrysville	Westmoreland
15672	New Stanton	Westmoreland
15675	Penn	Westmoreland
15678	Rillton	Westmoreland
15684	Slickville	Westmoreland
15692	Westmoreland City	Westmoreland

AHN Forbes Awards and Recognitions

AHN Cardiovascular Institute at Forbes: Top heart surgery program in the northeastern United States for coronary artery bypass surgery and aortic valve replacement surgery.

AHN Forbes Primary Stroke Center: American Heart Association Get With The Guidelines®-Stroke Gold Plus and Target: Stroke Elite Award.

International Board of Lactation Consultants Care Award: This award is reserved for hospitals and community-based facilities that promote, protect, and support breastfeeding.

Keystone 10 designation for Quality Improvement in Breastfeeding.

American Heart and American Stroke Association's Gold Plus status for both Get With The Guidelines® heart failure and stroke programs.

CORE (Center for Organ Recovery & Education) Donate Life Platinum Award.

The Cardiothoracic Intensive Care Unit won a three-year, bronze-level Beacon Award for Excellence by the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses.

Blue Distinction™ Center+ designation for efficiency in delivering high-quality care and better overall outcomes for cardiac care and knee and hip replacement.

Top 10% of hospitals in the nation for Patient Safety in Neurological Care.

Rated the #1 hospital in western PA for Medical Excellence in Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease.

Primary Data Analysis

Community Stakeholder Interviews

Community stakeholder interviews are essential in a CHNA as they provide valuable insights into the local population's unique challenges, priorities, and strengths. These interviews captured the perspectives of key leaders and service providers who have firsthand knowledge of health disparities, barriers to care, and available resources. Engaging stakeholders fosters collaboration, builds trust, and ensures the assessment reflects the community's needs and priorities. Their input informs the development of targeted strategies and promotes more effective and sustainable solutions, leading to improved health outcomes and stronger community partnerships.

For the CHNA, telephone interviews were conducted with community stakeholders in the service area to gain a deeper understanding of the changing environment. These conversations provided an opportunity for community leaders to offer feedback on local needs, recommend secondary data sources for review, and share other relevant insights for the study. The interviews with stakeholders took place from July to September 2024 and involved individuals from the below organizations.

1. AHN Cancer Institute
2. Allegheny County Health Department
3. Allegheny Family Network
4. Allen Place Community Services, Inc.
5. Alliance for Nonprofit Resources, Inc.
6. Canonsburg Borough
7. Chautauqua Health Department
8. City Mission, Hope for the Homeless
9. Community Health Clinic Inc. – Greensburg
10. Erie County Health Department
11. Grove City Area United Way
12. Grove City Chamber of Commerce
13. Grove City Police Department
14. Grove City School District
15. Jeannette City Schools
16. Jefferson Regional Foundation
17. Life Options Pittsburgh
18. Municipality of Monroeville
19. Neighborhood Resilience Project
20. North Side/Shore Chamber
21. Sheep Health Care Center
22. The Monroeville Foundation
23. Westfield Memorial Hospital Board
24. Westfield Memorial Hospital Foundation
25. Westmoreland Chamber of Commerce
26. Westmoreland Transit

As part of the assessment, 30 interviews were conducted with community leaders and stakeholders.[3] The qualitative data collected from these interviews capture the opinions, perceptions, and insights of the CHNA participants, offering valuable perspectives that enriched the qualitative analysis. Through these discussions, key health needs, themes, and concerns were identified. Each broad theme included several specific issues. Below are the primary themes highlighted by community stakeholders as the most significant health concerns in their area.

1. Affordability
2. Behavioral health (mental health and substance abuse)
3. Transportation issues
4. Health literacy
5. Insurance coverage/issues
6. Health care coordination (lack of health care coordination services)
7. Chronic conditions/diseases (heart disease, diabetes, cancers, etc.)
8. Affordable housing
9. Lifestyle and health habits (unhealthy eating habits and inadequate physical activity)
10. Aging problems

Figure 5: Community Stakeholder Summary Analysis

Key Stakeholders		
Largest Barriers (Top 5) 1. Affordability 2. Lack of transportation 3. Health literacy 4. No insurance coverage 5. Lack of health care coordination services **Persistent Health Problems (Top 5)** 1. Behavioral/Mental Health 2. Heart Disease/Stroke 3. Obesity 4. Diabetes 5. Substance Use Disorder/Addiction	**Significant Barriers to Improving Health and Quality of Life (Top 5)** 1. Access to substance use/drug/alcohol resources 2. Access to behavioral health resources 3. Access to affordable prescription and OTC medication 4. Affordable, quality childcare 5. Affordable, quality housing/utilities **Persistent High-Risk Behaviors (Top 5)** 1. Being overweight/obese 2. Drug abuse 3. Poor eating habits 4. Lack of exercise/physical inactivity 5. Alcohol abuse	**Vulnerable Populations (Top 3)** 1. Older adults 2. People living with mental illness 3. Low-income **Persistent Health Problems (Top 5)** 1. Preventive health care services 2. Health promotion and education 3. Behavioral health/stress management 4. Community engagement and support 5. Access to healthy foods

[3] It is important to note that while 26 organizations are listed, multiple individuals were interviewed representing the same organization.

Public Commentary

As part of the CHNA, Tripp Umbach gathered feedback on the 2021 CHNA and Implementation Strategy Plan on behalf of AHN Forbes. Input was requested from community stakeholders identified by the working group. This process allowed community representatives to respond to the methods, findings, and actions taken as a result of the 2021 CHNA and ISP. Stakeholders addressed questions developed by Tripp Umbach. The public comments below summarize the feedback provided by stakeholders regarding the previous documents. The study's data collection took place from July to September 2024.

In the assessment, 54.5% of respondents confirmed that input from community members or organizations was included. Additionally, 33.3% indicated that the report did not exclude relevant community members or organizations. When asked about unrepresented health needs in the community, 42.8% stated no such needs.

Respondents identified several benefits of the CHNA and ISP for their community. They highlighted improved care quality, which enhances patient outcomes and reduces provider biases, as a significant advantage. There was also an expanded understanding of social determinants of health and behavioral health services. Data provided by the CHNA supported funding and planning efforts, though some felt the initiatives did not achieve their intended impact. Participants noted consistent perceptions of health care needs across organizations and appreciated engagement in community meetings and support for events through AHN. While new initiatives, such as a café and a more diverse staff, were introduced, respondents emphasized the need for increased collaboration and follow-through, particularly regarding pediatric and mental health services. Additionally, there were concerns about the lack of implementation of proposed initiatives. Overall, respondents recognized the CHNA as a valuable tool for hospitals to better understand the root causes of health issues and to serve as a useful framework for future planning.

Group Interviews

Group interviews were conducted to gather diverse perspectives and foster collaborative dialogue among key stakeholders. This approach encourages participants to share insights, identify common challenges, and explore potential solutions in a collective setting.

The group interviews allowed more stakeholders to actively participate in the CHNA by creating a collaborative environment where multiple voices could be heard simultaneously. This format encouraged open dialogue, allowing participants to share their experiences, insights, and concerns freely. It also allowed individuals who might not have engaged in one-on-one interviews to contribute their perspectives, fostering inclusivity. This collective input enriched the CHNA, ensuring a more well-rounded and representative understanding of the community's health priorities.

Qualitative data was collected from two group interviews representing the Patient Family Advisory Council (PFAC) at AHN. The group interviews had seven participants. Feedback from the PFAC interviews provided information through the lens of representatives who provide services and directly interact with community residents.

PFAC Group 1

The PFAC group identified the following as the most significant barriers and issues for people not receiving care:

- Continuity of care, especially for older people with multiple providers and little coordination. This led in part to the opioid crisis.
- Obtaining appointments promptly – need more providers.
- Management of chronic illnesses such as diabetes and hypertension must be improved.
- Reimbursement and insurance issues, including cost of care and copays.
- Domestic violence with an increase in elder abuse.
- Food insecurity in children and elderly population.
- Transportation is a significant barrier, especially in rural communities, leading to less preventive care access.
- Need for an integrated technology system that brings all providers and care – not just medical – to coordinate care and health maintenance.
- Housing insecurity, transportation, and food insecurity.
- They ask SDOH questions upon intake but don't follow up. It feels more like a "check the box" with no intention of doing anything. There are not enough community health and social workers to follow up.
- Behavioral health services that integrate with medical and wellness services are needed; the systems are separate and not coordinated.
- Staffing issues and lack of workforce have resulted in experienced providers who provide poor care.
- The staffing of health care workers who provide care navigation and health coordination must be increased.
- Must take services to where people are and expand public health models that work to provide services much earlier.
- More church food banks where education and screenings are provided where folks are picking up food.
- Mobile vans that bring care into the community regularly.
- The economic design of health care must change from the old model of investing billions in health care facilities and expensive equipment to using the money for prevention and wellness.
- It sends a mixed message in the community that hospitals invest billions in facilities for sick care when the community needs population health investment.
- Health fairs, health literacy classes, and care coordination with patient engagement through technology are more often controlled by the patients.

PFAC Group 2

The PFAC group identified the following as the most significant barriers and issues for people not receiving care:

- Lack of clear communication with patients.
- Health literacy and issues with patients using technology.
- Poor navigation between insurance and care delivery throughout the entire health care system.
- Not enough specialists cause impossibly long wait times that impact care and health.
- Long wait times for care and even to talk with someone to help patients know what to do.
- Impossible to navigate the system.
- Solutions for staying healthy include focusing the health care system on chronic conditions, especially with older patients.
- Better health care coordination is essential.
- Education on treatments, medication, how to pay, and how to work with insurance companies.
- Health improvement and maintenance are overlooked in a sick care-focused system, and they must become a priority, as in other countries.
- There is a need for patient health coordinators who prioritize preventive care, but there is a power struggle between what is suitable for patients and what is best for the health care system's bottom line.
- The health care system must move from passiveness to a proactive health-first organization that fights for patients' health, not their dollars.
- The system must be accountable and look at inefficiencies and waste, like building new buildings.
- There is a need to advocate for better public policy that promotes collaboration among health care systems and does not promote competition.
- Focusing on telehealth can be a beneficial, cost-effective model of care, but the government and payers need to support this financially.
- The ability for patients to finally see their medical reports represents a massive change for good. The patient must drive the entire system, not the provider or insurance company.

Community Survey

A community survey was conducted to collect data from residents within AHN's service area and the broader region. The survey highlighted specific health needs and concerns, including those of vulnerable populations that may not be apparent through other methods. By obtaining detailed input from community members and stakeholders, organizations can make more informed decisions on resource allocation and develop targeted interventions. Ultimately, the community survey ensures that health and social initiatives align with the community's needs, leading to more effective and efficient health care delivery.

Working with the CHNA working group, a quality-of-life survey instrument was created and distributed to patients and community residents using AHN services.

The community survey was active from July to September 2024, and 3,437 surveys were collected and used for analysis. Below are the top "health problems" AHN Forbes residents reported in their community, descending from the most to the least identified.

1. Overweight/obesity/diabetes
2. Behavioral health (anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, suicide, etc.)
3. Heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure
4. Cancer
5. Aging problems (hearing or vision loss, memory loss, etc.)

Below are the top "risky behaviors" AHN Forbes residents reported in their community, descending from the most to the least identified.

1. Substance use/drug/alcohol/smoking/tobacco
2. Lack of exercise/physical activity
3. Poor eating habits
4. Unsafe driving
5. Unmanaged stress or anxiety

Figure 6: Community Survey Summary Analysis

Community Residents		
Significant Health Problems (Top 5) 1. Overweight/Obesity/Diabetes 2. Behavioral Health 3. Heart disease/stroke/highblood pressure 4. Cancer 5. Aging Problems **Risky Behaviors (Top 5)** 1. Substance use/drug/alcohol/smoking/tobacco 2. Lack of exercise/physical activity 3. Poor eating habits 4. Unsafe driving 5. Unmanaged stress or anxiety	**Health Factors Contributing to Healthy Communities (Top 3)** 1. Access to preventive screenings and vaccinations 2. Access to affordable prescription and OTC medication 3. Access to affordable healthy food options **Social Factors Contributing to Healthy Communities (Top 3)** 1. Overall feeling of safety and security 2. Safe places to walk/play 3. Affordable, safe, quality housing/utilities	**Factors that Improve Quality of Life in the Community (Top 5)** 1. Safe places to walk/play and accessible, affordable community activities 2. Access to affordable healthy food options 3. Affordable, safe, quality housing/utilities 4. Access to affordable prescriptions/OTC medication 5. Access to mental health resources

Provider Survey

A provider survey was employed to capture health care professionals' unique insights and experiences interacting directly with the community. Providers offer perspectives on emerging health trends, service gaps, barriers to care, and population health challenges. Their input helps identify unmet needs and existing resources, guiding the development of targeted strategies to improve health outcomes. Additionally, provider surveys enhance the credibility of the CHNA by incorporating expert opinions, ensuring that recommendations align with the realities of health care delivery and the population's specific needs.

The provider survey was conducted from September 4 through September 15, 2024, during which 232 surveys were collected for analysis. The responses below summarize the key results from the survey.

Figure 7: Provider Survey Summary Analysis

Community	Economics	Health	Population
Most Important Health Factors (Top 3) 1. Access to affordable prescription and OTC medication 2. Access to mental health resources 3. Access to healthy food options **Most Important Social Factors (Top 3)** 1. Affordable, safe, quality housing 2. Adequate employment 3. Overall feeling of safety and security **AHN Hospitals** 1. Address the needs of diverse and at-risk population 2. Ensure access to care for everyone, regardless of race, gender, education, and economic status	**Barriers to Care (Top 5)** 1. Affordability 2. Availability of services 3. No insurance coverage 4. Lack of transportation 5. Lack of health care coordination services **What is needed to improve quality of life and health** 1. Access to affordable prescription and OTC medication 2. Access to mental health resources 3. Access to affordable healthy food options 4. Affordable, safe, quality housing 5. Affordable, quality child and/or senior care options	**Most Significant Health Problems** 1. Behavioral Health 2. Overweight/obesity/diabetes 3. Substance use disorder/addiction (tie) 4. Heart disease/stroke/high blood pressure (tie) **Overall health concerns** 1. Behavioral Health 2. Overweight/obesity/diabetes 3. Substance use disorder/addiction 4. Heart disease/stroke/high blood pressure 5. Cancer	**Vulnerable Populations** 1. Seniors 2. Mentally ill 3. Low-income **Top solution to health vulnerable populations meet health needs:** 1. Community outreach services

Evaluation of Previous Community Health Needs Assessment and Implementation Strategy Plan

Over the past three years, representatives from AHN Forbes have focused on developing and implementing strategies to address the health needs and concerns in the study area. Additionally, AHN Forbes has evaluated the effectiveness of these strategies in meeting its goals and tackling health challenges within the community. This review of the previous implementation strategy aimed to assess how well the methods and approaches from the prior ISP were executed.

The working group reviewed each goal, objective, and strategy to identify ways to enhance their effectiveness. Internal self-assessments were used to track progress and refine each strategy and action step over the next three years. AHN Forbes has addressed the following strategies.

SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

Health Priority: Transportation

Goal: To transform transportation services for AHN Forbes patients and families.

Figure 8: SDOH Transportation Strategies from 2021 CHNA and ISP

Strategies	Action Steps	2022	2023	2024	Metrics Per Year	Summary of outcomes 2022 – June 30, 2024
Improve access to transportation services for patients and families.	• Assess current transportation services. • Educate primary care physicians (PCPs) and patients on transportation services. • Conduct screening for Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) to determine transportation needs. • Market transportation resources on social media outlets. • Assess opportunity to work with local transportation provider for wheelchair discharges along with discharges to skilled nursing facilities. • Collaborate with prehospital care services to utilize a centralized coordination center.	X	X	X	• Reduced missed appointments due to inability to access transportation services. • Reduced Emergency Department (ED) admissions due to inability to access transportation services for medical appointments. • Number of riders on Heritage and Port Authority Transit bus lines. • Number of participants in gas card program through Pressing On. • EPIC - SDOH	• Held 5,010 Televisits • Distributed 180 Heritage Valley transport courtesy cards • Provided of 2,430 ZTrip Transportation Vouchers @ value of $100,249 • Provided 1142 Lyft Transports @ value of $28,962

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Health Priority: Substance Use Disorder

Goal: Increase knowledge and access to substance use disorder programs and services.

Figure 9: Behavioral Health, Substance Use Disorder Strategies from 2021 CHNA and ISP

Strategies	Action Steps	2022	2023	2024	Metrics Per Year	Summary of outcomes 2022 - June 30, 2024
To increase access to services in the ED for post overdose management. Strengthen partnership with Monroeville Recovery Center of America. Continue collaboration with AHN Addiction Services. Development of an enclosed BH Unit within the ED that is operated by behavioral health staff.	• Re-assess ED pathway for initiation of Medication Assisted Therapy (MAT) and warm hand off programs • Educate ED providers on substance use disorder MAT as an effective treatment for post overdose management. • Re-assess warm hand-off to MAT treatment services. • Identify patients who may need support. • Assess current behavioral health needs within the ED	X	X	X	• Number of trainings for hospital staff. • Number of patients screened for eligibility for MAT. • Number of referrals • Warm hand-offs • Reduction in crisis response events • Number of individuals served	• Established REAL Committee comprised of designated Forbes Team members — providing ways to support, assist patients based on SDOH • Hosted/participated in several community-based, shared behavioral health materials; 2,500+ attendees • Total Crisis Response Codes 107 trained, Level 1 = 1, Level 2 = 8, Level 3 = 97, Level 4 = 1 • AvaSure Telesitter – average patient count 80.5 with a total of 665 • AvaSure hours — 31,705 • Developed/funded enclosed BH Unit within the ED • Trained 196 staff/units in non-violent crisis intervention

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Health Priority: Mental Health Services

Goal: Increase knowledge and access to mental health services.

Figure 10: Behavioral Health, Mental Health Services Strategies from 2021 CHNA and ISP

Strategies	Action Steps	2022	2023	2024	Metrics Per Year	Summary of outcomes 2022-June 30, 2024
Provide education to public about mental health issues and treatment options. Collaborate with behavioral health consultants into primary care practices. Develop and implement outpatient child and adolescent mental health services. Development of intensive outpatient center for behavioral health. Development of an enclosed BH Unit within the ED that is operated by behavioral health staff.	• Sponsor Mental Health First Aid train-the-trainer and community MHFA trainings to the public. • Identify patients who may be in need of behavioral health support. • Administer the PHQ-2 at every primary care visit and PHQ-9 for patients who screen positive on the PHQ-2. • Offer consultation and treatment with the practice's BHC. • Monitor PHQ-9 scores over time for improvement • Collaborate with Psychiatric and Behavioral Health Institute to develop strategies and funding to implement outpatient facility. • Assess current mental health needs. • Assess current behavioral health needs within the ED.	X	X	X	• Number of events • Number of participants • Number of patients referred to inpatient or outpatient facilities • Reduction in crisis response events	• Opened BHU Unit • Served 7,348 MAT patients

CHRONIC DISEASE

Health Priority: Diabetes

Goal: To improve quality outcomes associated with diabetes.

Figure 11: Chronic Disease, Diabetes Strategies from 2021 CHNA and ISP

Strategies	Action Steps	2022	2023	2024	Metrics Per Year	Summary of outcomes 2022-June 30, 2024
Strengthen chronic disease specialty center in AHN Forbes. Provide access to Healthy Foods Center at AHN Forbes.	• Embed RN Navigators AHN Forbes. • Assess the development diabetes transition of care models. • Assess the development of inpatient care pathways. • Educate PCPs and patients on diabetes management. • Promote lifestyle change interventions and intensive case management to reduce risk of diabetes and cardiovascular disease in high-risk individuals. • Receive quarterly data summary of practice and region performance on diabetes measures. • Provide workflow redesign support for diabetes quality improvement (QI) efforts initiative.	X	X	X	• Number of RN Navigators • A1C levels for target population • Number of individuals served by RN Navigators • Performance on diabetes measures	• Participated in CommUNITY Day, Monroeville Convention Center — Senior Health Expo annually • AvaSure Telesitter — average patient count 80.5 with a total of 665 • AvaSure hours — 31,705 • REaL Committee discussions regarding implementing "Front Door" initiative • Healthy Foods Center continues to provide healthy food education, recipes. Referrals are made using the AHN SDOH Survey: Served 2,312 patients. Served 123 with Heart/ Diabetes. # in Household — 5,117. # Meals Served – 51,150

CHRONIC DISEASE

Health Priority: Heart Disease

Goal: Improve quality outcomes associated with heart disease.

Figure 12: Chronic Disease, Heart Disease Strategies from 2021 CHNA and ISP

Strategies	Action Steps	2022	2023	2024	Metrics Per Year	Summary of outcomes 2022-June 30, 2024
Strengthen chronic disease specialty center at AHN Forbes. Provide access to Healthy Food Center at AHN Forbes	• Embed RN Navigators at AHN Forbes Hospital. • Assess transition of care models. • Assess inpatient care pathways. • Educate PCPs and patients on heart disease management. • Educate patients. • Access to nutritional food based on individual's needs. • Educate food center recipients on healthy eating and living lifestyles	X	X	X	• Number of RN navigators embedded throughout the hospital • Development of chronic disease care model • Number of individuals served by RN Navigator • Number of individuals served at Healthy Food Center	• Established Ethnicity & Language Committee, providing ways to support/ assist patients based on SDOH • Event – Monroeville CommUNITY Day – provided free blood pressure screenings to public in attendance. • AvaSure Telesitter – average patient count 80.5 with a total of 665 • AvaSure hours – 31,705 • REaL Committee discussions regarding implementing "Front Door" initiative • Healthy Foods Center continues to provide healthy food education, recipes. Referrals are made using the AHN SDOH Survey: Served 123 with Heart/ Diabetes # in Household – 5,117 # Meals Served – 51,150

CHRONIC DISEASE

Health Priority: COPD

Goal: Transform pulmonary care for Forbes Hospital patients.

Figure 13: Chronic Disease, Obesity Strategies from 2021 CHNA and ISP

Strategies	Action Steps	2022	2023	2024	Metrics Per Year	Summary of outcomes 2022-June 30, 2024
Strengthen chronic disease specialty center at AHN Forbes. Provide access to Healthy Foods Center at AHN Forbes	• Embed RN Navigators at AHN Forbes Hospital. • Assess transition of care models. • Assess inpatient care pathways. • Educate PCPs and patients on heart disease management. • Educate patients. • Access to nutritional food based on individual's needs. • Educate food center recipients on healthy eating and living lifestyles	X	X	X	• Number of RN navigators embedded throughout the hospital • Development of chronic disease care model • Number of individuals served by RN Navigator • Number of individuals served at Healthy Food Center	• Healthy Foods Center continues to provide healthy food education and recipes, referrals made using the AHN SDOH Survey. Served 337 total patients Served 8 Heart/Diabetes patients # in Household – 799 # Meals served – 7,990 • Served 229 patients with Avasure Telesitter; for total of 20,860 Avasure hours

HEALTH EQUITY

Goal: To increase the number of providers that can effectively, competently, and compassionately care for transgender, non-binary, and LGBTQ+ patients.

Figure 14: Health Equity Strategies from 2021 CHNA and ISP

Strategies	Action Steps	2022	2023	2024	Metrics Per Year
Train staff on basic cultural competency module. Modify care delivery model to be more affirming and welcoming to LGBTQ+ patients.	• Establish guidelines for implementation, using the Health Care Equality Index as a metric. • Share model with other AHN hospitals. • Collaborate with Forbes (DEI) committee • Evaluate and modify policies and procedures, using established best practices and patient advocacy.	X	X	X	• Pre- and post-training assessments • Use Health Care Equality Index • Training provided to staff • Number of staff participants in DEI projects/events • EPIC-SDOH

Summary of outcomes 2022-June 30, 2024		
• Celebrated special ethnic holidays with emails, newsletters • Held 3 EEHI DEI Talk sessions designed to create thought provoking conversations • Provided educational training by Transgender Health Program Manager to 14 staff participants and two Employee Health Staff, Dec 2023 • Provided 78 New Hires to DEI and culture of Forbes • Offered Inclusivity Reset Training offered to staff through myLearning • Celebration of Black History Month: Information provided at tabling events in hallway along with Posters for all that included: recognizing and honoring contributions that Black individuals have made to society, including health care field.	• DEI Council hosted several activities: Octoberfest Celebration of German American Heritage with daily activities, games, German menu, foods, desserts in cafeteria, gift card to Hofbrauhaus; Staff with German heritage spotlighted on main hallway bulletin board with background and pictures of their culture. • Distributed EEHI Newsletter to staff and featured three team members in EEHI 4th quarter newsletter for outstanding efforts in DEI by the Enterprise Equitable Institute. • Shared info on AHN LGBTQIA+ Readiness Assessment, for staff to complete, to better identify and understand gaps in access to care for patients in LGBTQIA+ community; provided QR code for easy access. • Providing reflection and education displays/ materials.	• Educated 426 staff in DEI Reset Training • Provided DEI Reset & Transgender Trg to 450+ staff; Introduced 365 new hires to DEI; Emphasized DEI through "talk" sessions, numerous ethnic celebrations and publications • Annual Celebrations of Mental Health Awareness Month: activities and information provided. • Inclusion Week – Speaker/education material and conversation participation shared with staff from DEI for Inclusion Week to attend: – Addressing issues facing LGBTQ patients – Racial differences in maternal health – Reflections on workplace diversity – Military role in advancing national diversity and inclusion

Secondary Data Analysis

A robust secondary data compilation provided a comprehensive and objective foundation for understanding the community's health status. The data included credible information such as public health records, census data, and behavioral health information, which offer insights into trends such as chronic disease prevalence, mortality rates, and social determinants of health. Utilizing secondary data complements findings from the primary data (e.g., interviews and surveys) and allows for comparisons with regional, state, or national benchmarks.

Information was gathered to create a regional community health profile based on the location and service areas of AHN Forbes. The main data source was Community Commons, a publicly available dashboard aggregating health indicators from national data sources. This enabled the analysis of historical trends and changes in demographics, health, social, and economic factors. Additional data sources included County Health Rankings and the U.S. Census Bureau. The data is also peer-reviewed and validated, ensuring high credibility. This data compilation identifies key health priorities, informs evidence-based decision-making, and ensures the CHNA reflects a broader, data-driven understanding of the community's needs.

The comprehensive community profile generated a deeper understanding of regional issues, particularly in identifying regional and local health and socioeconomic challenges. The secondary quantitative data collection process included the following:

1. America's Health Rankings
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
3. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
4. Community Commons Data
5. County Health Rankings
6. Dartmouth College Institute for Health Policy & Clinical Practice
7. Federal Bureau of Investigation
8. Feeding America
9. Kids Count Data Center
10. National Center for Education Statistics
11. Pennsylvania Department of Health
12. U.S. Department of Agriculture
13. U.S. Census Bureau
14. U.S. Department of Health & Human Services
15. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
16. U.S. Department of Labor

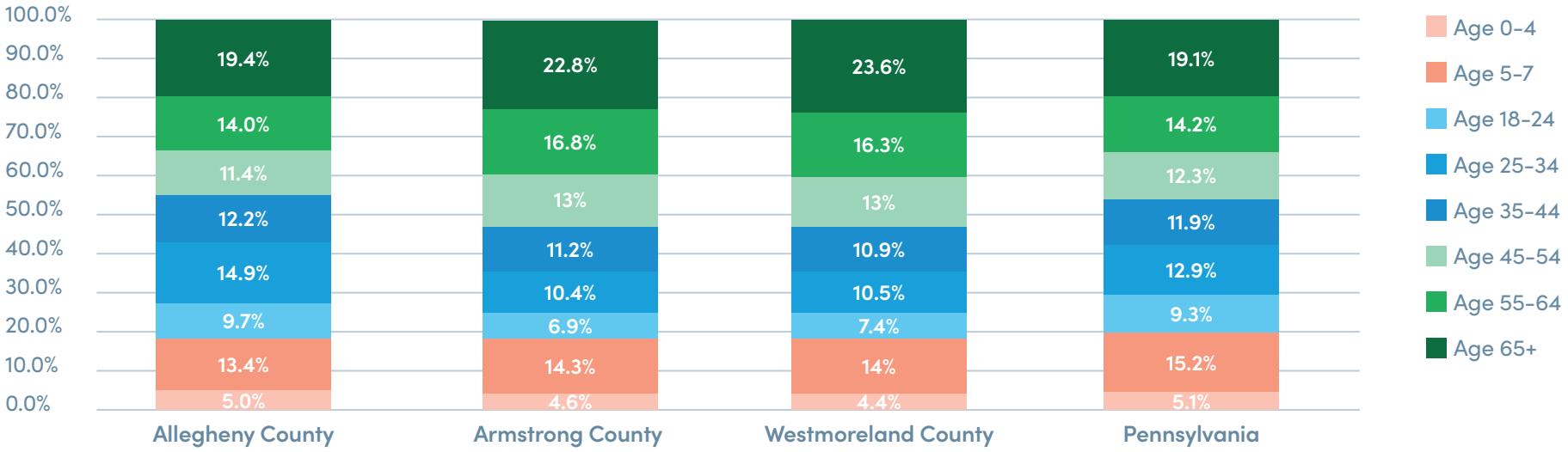
AHN Forbes Community At-A-Glance

Figure 15: Population

	Total Population	Males	Females
Allegheny County	1,245,310	607,557	637,753
Armstrong County	65,538	32,862	32,676
Westmoreland County	354,414	175,081	179,333
Pennsylvania	12,989,208	6,410,766	6,578,442

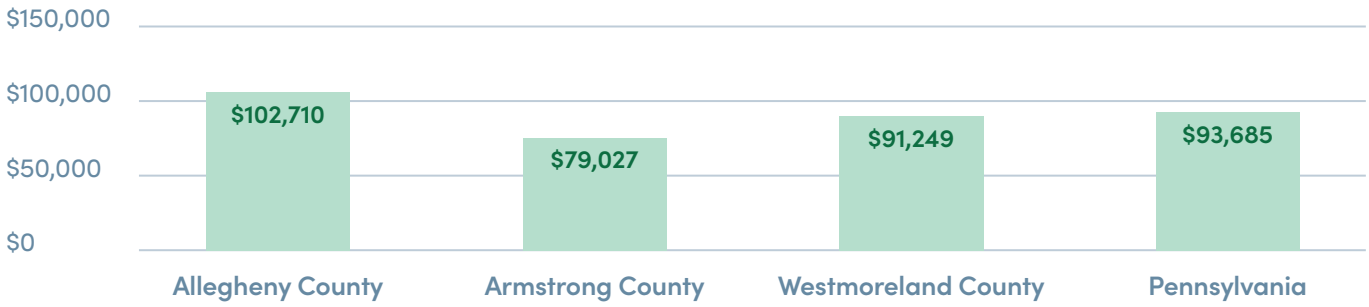
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2018 – 2022

Figure 16: Age Distribution



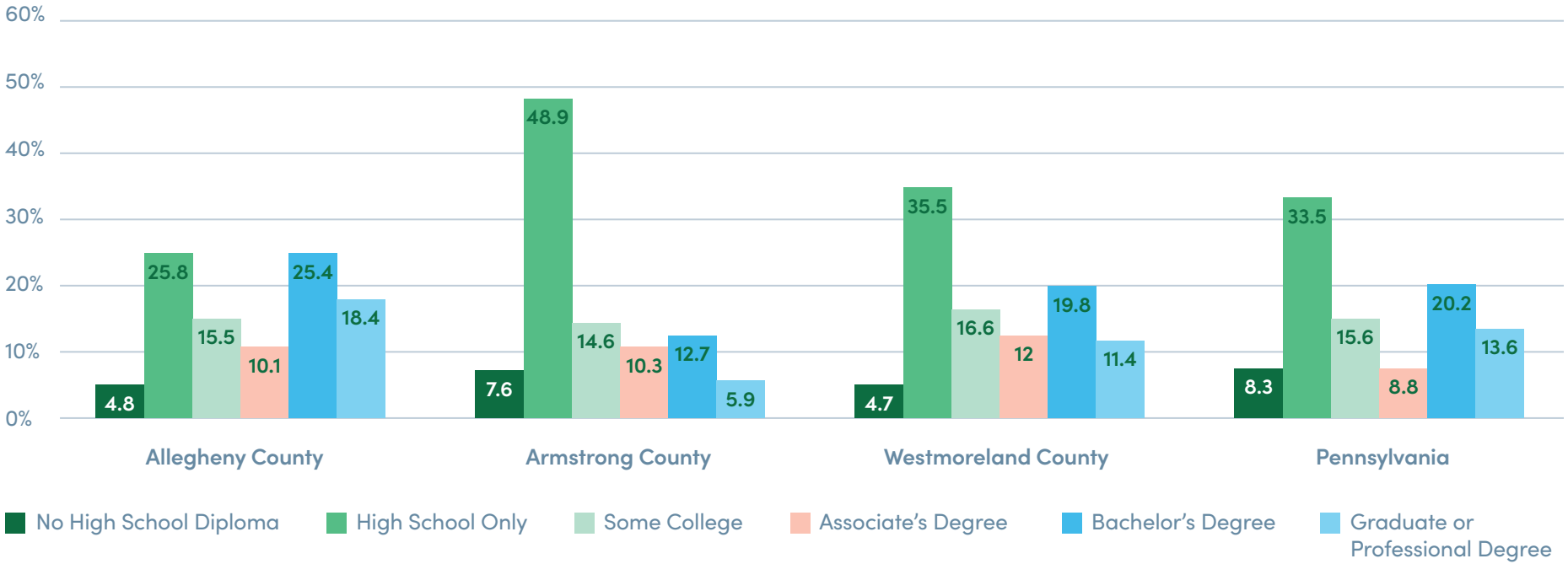
Source: Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2020

Figure 17: Median Household Income



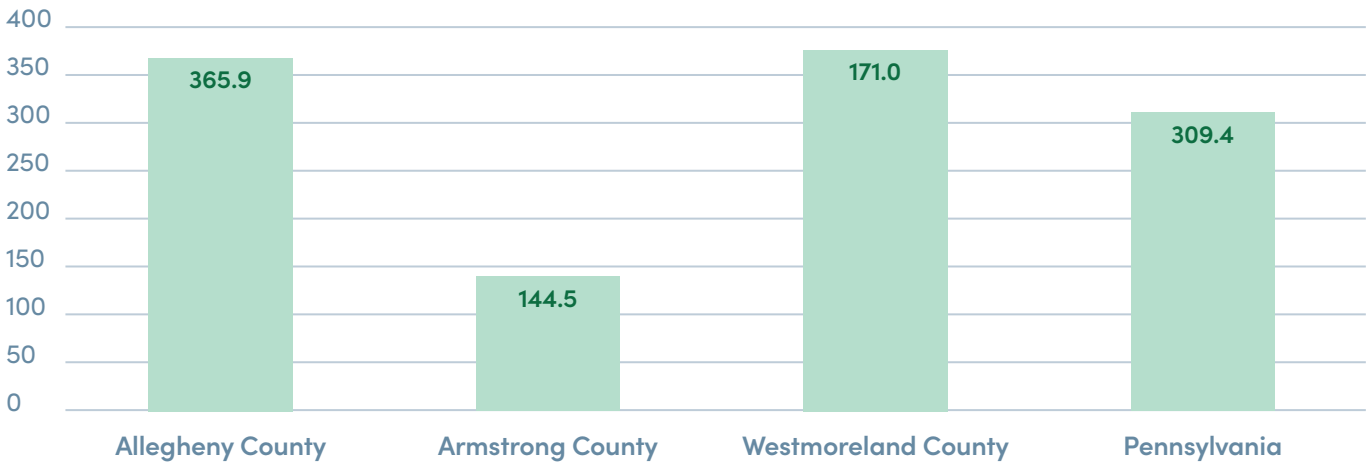
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2018 – 2022

Figure 18: Education



Source: Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2020

Figure 19: Violent Crime (per 100,000)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2020

Figure 20 below reports the number and percentage of owner- and renter-occupied housing units having at least one of the following conditions: 1) lacking complete plumbing facilities, 2) lacking complete kitchen facilities, 3) with one or more occupants per room, 4) selected monthly owner costs as a percentage of household income greater than 30%, and 5) gross rent as a percentage of household income greater than 30%.

Figure 20: Substandard Conditions

Report Area	No Conditions	One Condition	Two or Three Conditions	Four Conditions
Allegheny County	74.76%	24.40%	0.83%	0.01%
Armstrong County	80.91%	17.37%	1.71%	0.01%
Westmoreland County	79.65%	19.68%	0.65%	0.01%
Pennsylvania	72.77%	26.16%	1.07%	0.01%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2018 – 2022

County Health Rankings

It is important to review rankings as they provide a clear and concise way to compare performances across different entities, helping identify areas of strength and weakness for targeted improvements. Pennsylvania's score of 1 in the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's County Health Rankings & Roadmaps represents the "healthiest" county in a given measure. Figure 21 reveals that in 2023, all counties in AHN Forbes's primary service area improved the health behaviors score from 2020 to 2023.

Examining social and economic factors is essential because they greatly impact health outcomes and disparities, shaping access to key resources such as education, employment, and health care.[4] Understanding these factors allows for the identification of root causes and the development of targeted interventions to enhance community health. Social and economic conditions play a pivotal role in influencing our health and life expectancy. These determinants emphasize the deep connection between socioeconomic conditions and health, underscoring the need to address them to improve overall well-being and achieve better health outcomes across populations.[5]

Figure 21: County Health Rankings: (67 Counties in PA) (1=Healthiest)

	Year	Health Outcomes	Health Factors	Mortality	Morbidity	Health Behaviors	Clinical Care	Social and Economic Factor	Physical Environment
Allegheny County	2023	27	13	37	20	9	12	17	67
	2020	14	20	39	6	19	14	20	64
Armstrong County	2023	57	58	56	46	62	50	45	35
	2020	58	55	61	31	62	36	36	61
Westmoreland County	2023	20	14	43	10	19	20	19	3
	2020	49	18	48	40	37	17	14	25

Note: Figures highlighted in yellow indicate a value worse in 2023 than in 2020.

[4] Social and economic factors include income, education, employment, community safety, injury and death rates, social support, and the prevalence of children in poverty.

[5] County Health Rankings & Roadmaps

County Health Rankings are critical in shaping public health strategies and improving community well-being. These rankings serve as a vital benchmark, allowing counties to measure their health outcomes and contributing factors against those of other regions. This comparative analysis provides valuable insights into a county's strengths and weaknesses, helping to highlight areas where public health initiatives are successful and where improvements are needed. By identifying gaps in care or specific health challenges, counties can implement more focused and effective interventions to improve overall health outcomes.

Moreover, rankings play a significant role in the distribution of resources. Counties with lower rankings often face greater health disparities and may qualify for additional state or federal funding. This targeted financial assistance can be instrumental in addressing critical issues such as access to health care, economic instability, or social determinants of health that disproportionately affect vulnerable populations. As a result, poorer-ranked counties can prioritize investments in areas like health care access, nutrition programs, or housing improvements, directly contributing to health equity and long-term community development.

Publicizing county health rankings guides funding and intervention efforts and increases community awareness of health issues. When residents and stakeholders are informed about their county's standing in relation to others, it sparks greater public engagement and mobilizes support for health improvement programs. Community members, leaders, and advocacy groups are more likely to collaborate when they see where their county excels or lags, driving collective action and accountability.

Health departments, hospitals, and organizations rely heavily on rankings to shape strategic health improvement plans. These plans often include setting measurable goals, identifying priority areas such as chronic disease prevention, maternal health, or mental health services, and tracking progress. Rankings offer a quantifiable means of assessing whether health outcomes are improving, stagnating, or declining, and they allow for the adjustment of strategies to meet the community's evolving needs better.

Furthermore, health rankings highlight disparities among counties, underscoring inequalities that must be addressed. For instance, counties with better access to health care, higher income levels, and robust public health infrastructure often outperform counties that lack these advantages. Highlighting these inequities encourages policy changes and concerted efforts to reduce gaps in health outcomes across regions, ensuring that all residents, regardless of where they live, have equal opportunities to achieve good health.

County Health Rankings are indispensable tools in public health. They enable effective monitoring of health outcomes, facilitate community engagement, and provide a foundation for evidence-based decision-making. By identifying areas for improvement, guiding resource allocation, and raising awareness of health issues, rankings are crucial in driving health equity, improving overall well-being, and ensuring that all communities can thrive.

Identifying and Prioritizing Significant Health Needs

Identification and Prioritization Planning Session

Tripp Umbach conducted an internal hospital identification and prioritization session with steering group members to present the community health need findings and to gather input on the community's overall needs and concerns. A 90-minute virtual meeting took place to rank, target, and align resources while focusing on achievable goals and strategies to address community needs. The community health needs were identified by examining data and overarching themes from the community input process and secondary data analyses.

Criteria for Identification and Prioritization

The following decision-making criteria were used to guide prioritization processes for the assessment cycle.

- Consider the CHNA needs from the previous assessment. Were those needs addressed? Or are they still being addressed?
- What were the top needs/issues from the community stakeholder's data?
- What were the top needs/issues from the community surveys?
- What were the top needs/issues from the secondary data?
- What is the magnitude/severity of the problem?
- What are the needs of vulnerable populations?
- What is the community's capacity and willingness to act on the issue?
- What is the hospital's ability to have a measurable impact on the issue?
- What hospital and community resources are available?

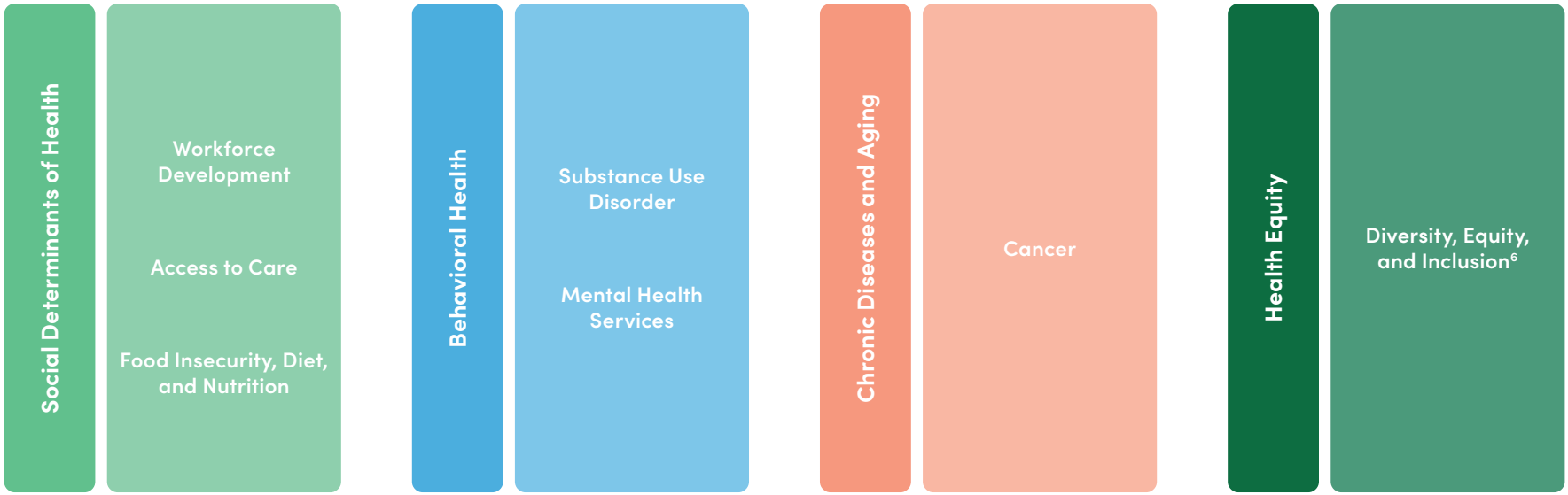
Identification and Prioritization Process

The identification and prioritization process was designed to endorse inclusivity, participation, and a data-driven approach. Participants were encouraged to review and discuss data, share narratives relevant to each community's needs, and offer their perspectives on the most pressing issues. Following an in-depth group analysis of the data, consensus was reached, and the group identified key health needs for the CHNA. This collaborative approach ensured that diverse viewpoints were considered, leading to a comprehensive understanding of the community's health priorities. The agreed-upon needs reflect the shared commitment to addressing the most urgent health concerns within the Allegheny Health Network community.

2024 Community Health Needs Assessment Final Identified and Prioritized Needs

AHN hospitals are dedicated to serving the residents of Pennsylvania and southwestern New York, as a nonprofit, community-focused organization. As a comprehensive health care provider, the 14 hospitals in AHN serve a 14-county area and employ more than 22,000 people. The 2024 CHNA for AHN Forbes Hospital highlighted the following community needs:

Figure 22: AHN Forbes 2024 CHNA Needs



[6] Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion includes LGBTQ+, cultural competency, and Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS).

Social Determinants of Health

Social determinants of health (SDOH) was identified as a community need in the stakeholder interviews, community survey, and provider survey. In addition to those three data points, SDOH was identified in the secondary data analysis. Social determinants of health (SDOH) are the conditions in which individuals are born, grow, live, work, and age, and they significantly influence a person's health and well-being. These determinants encompass a wide array of factors including socioeconomic status, education, employment, social support networks, and access to health care. These elements play a crucial role in shaping individual and community health outcomes. For example, a person's socioeconomic background can dictate their ability to afford essential resources such as nutritious food, safe housing, and quality health care services. Without these basic necessities, individuals are more susceptible to health issues, both physical and mental. Therefore, understanding and addressing SDOH is critical in promoting health equity and improving overall population health.

Economic stability is one of the most significant factors influencing health. Individuals with steady employment and higher income levels generally enjoy greater financial security, allowing them access to critical resources. These resources include the basics like food and shelter and the ability to afford health care services, including preventive care, which helps maintain long-term health. Financial stability also reduces stress levels, directly linked to better mental health. Those who experience financial hardship, on the other hand, are often at greater risk of developing chronic stress and mental health issues such as anxiety and depression. The stress of economic instability can exacerbate existing health problems and create barriers to seeking timely medical care, further contributing to poor health outcomes. Moreover, economic stability influences access to safe neighborhoods and clean environments, which are essential for preventing illnesses and promoting well-being.

Education is another fundamental determinant of health. It is pivotal in improving health outcomes by empowering individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary to make informed health decisions. Higher levels of education increase health literacy, enabling people to understand health care information, navigate the health care system more effectively, and adopt healthier behaviors. Education also opens doors to better job opportunities, improving economic stability and access to employer-sponsored health care benefits. Furthermore, educational institutions often serve as platforms for social interaction, developing community engagement and emotional support, and contributing to better mental health. In contrast, individuals with limited education may face challenges understanding health information or accessing job opportunities that offer sufficient income and health benefits. As a result, education influences individual health choices and impacts long-term health trajectories by shaping economic opportunities and social standing.

The physical environment in which individuals live is equally important. Safe housing, clean air, and access to recreational spaces influence physical health and quality of life. Living in a safe and clean environment can prevent respiratory diseases, accidents, and other health risks. For example, exposure to pollution in urban areas or hazardous living conditions in poorly maintained housing can lead to chronic respiratory problems, allergies, or other serious health issues. Additionally, access to parks, walking paths, and recreational facilities promotes physical activity, essential for preventing chronic conditions such as obesity, diabetes, and heart disease. Conversely, individuals living in environments that lack these resources are more likely to lead sedentary lifestyles, increasing their

risk of developing these conditions. Improving the physical environment by ensuring access to clean air, safe housing, and recreational facilities can greatly enhance the overall health of communities, especially in underserved or marginalized areas. Access to health care, including preventive services and timely medical interventions, ensures that health issues are addressed before they escalate, promoting better long-term health outcomes.

Equally important is the social and community context in which individuals find themselves. Strong social connections and support networks are crucial for maintaining mental and physical health. A sense of belonging within a community and access to emotional support during times of stress or hardship can significantly mitigate the impact of life's challenges. Social support has been shown to reduce the risks of mental health issues such as depression and anxiety, as well as to encourage healthy behaviors, such as regular physical activity and adherence to medical advice. On the other hand, experiences of social exclusion, discrimination, or isolation can have devastating effects on health. Discrimination and exclusion, whether based on race, gender, socioeconomic status, or other factors, can lead to chronic stress, which has been linked to a range of negative health outcomes, including cardiovascular disease, mental health disorders, and weakened immune function. Thus, creating inclusive communities and addressing social inequities is critical to reducing health disparities and ensuring all individuals have the support they need to thrive.

Figure 23: Social Determinants of Health

Access to health care is perhaps the most direct determinant of health. Obtaining timely and appropriate medical care, including preventive services such as vaccinations and screenings, is critical to maintaining good health and preventing the escalation of health problems. Individuals with regular access to health care providers are more likely to receive early diagnoses and interventions, reducing the need for costly emergency care or hospitalizations. However, many people, especially those in low-income or rural areas, face significant barriers to accessing health care, whether because of financial constraints, lack of insurance, or geographic isolation. Addressing these barriers is essential for improving health outcomes and reducing disparities. Expanding health care access through policy changes, community health initiatives, and telemedicine can help ensure that everyone, regardless of their background, has the opportunity to receive the care they need.

Ultimately, the complex interplay of these social determinants — economic stability, education, social support, the physical environment, and health care access — shapes our health and well-being. Addressing these factors is critical to promoting health equity, improving population health, and reducing

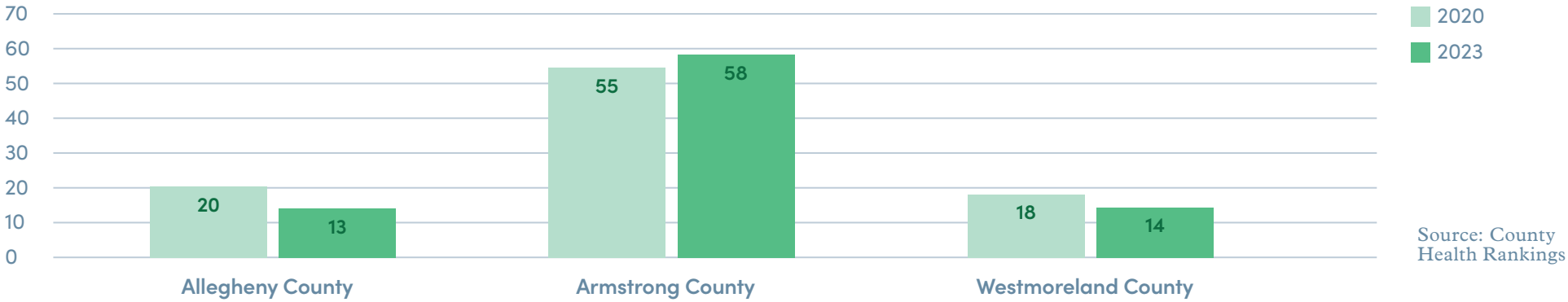
community disparities. By recognizing and addressing these underlying social drivers, we can create a more equitable health care system that ensures everyone has the opportunity to achieve optimal health. Collaborative efforts among health care providers, policymakers, and community organizations are essential to tackle these determinants effectively. By recognizing and addressing the broader social factors that influence health, we can create healthier, more resilient communities and work toward reducing health disparities for future generations.

The key themes identified across stakeholder groups — through stakeholder interviews, Patient and Family Advisory Council (PFAC) group interviews, community surveys, and provider surveys — reveal several significant barriers to accessing health care. These barriers include affordability challenges, such as high out-of-pocket costs and deductibles, lack of insurance coverage, and the cost of services. Other common issues include transportation difficulties, food and housing insecurity, and a shortage of health care providers and specialists.

Additionally, gaps in health care coordination services and health literacy were highlighted, as many individuals struggle to navigate the health care system or comprehend the information provided. Access to mental health and substance use resources, affordable medications, and preventive screenings are also prominent concerns. Long waiting times, inconvenient appointment schedules, and a lack of culturally appropriate care were issues noted in the community surveys. These findings point to significant socioeconomic and systemic barriers affecting access to quality health care services.

Health factors are based on weighted scores of health behaviors, clinical care, social and economic factors, and physical environment. Those having high ranks, e.g., 1 or 2, are considered the "healthiest." Figure 23 below shows that Allegheny and Westmoreland counties improved their health factor rankings from 2020 to 2023, whereas Armstrong County dropped rankings from 55 to 2020 to 58 in 2023.

Figure 24: Health Factors Rankings



Source: County Health Rankings

Figure 25 delineates the responses from the community leader stakeholder interviews, PFAC group Interviews, community surveys, and providers regarding the community's needs and health care barriers.

Figure 25: Engaging the Community Through Primary Data Collection

Stakeholder Interviews	PFAC Group Interviews	Community Surveys	Provider Survey
• Affordability (i.e., out-of-pocket costs/high deductibles/copays) • Lack of transportation • Health literacy (i.e., inability to comprehend the information provided) • No insurance coverage (uninsured/ underinsured) • Lack of health care coordination services (i.e., not being able to navigate the health care system) • Access to substance use/drug/ alcohol resources • Access to behavioral health resources • Access to affordable prescription and over the counter medication • Affordable, quality childcare	• Health care navigation and health care coordination • Lack of providers • Food insecurity • Transportation • Housing insecurity • Not enough specialists • Cost of services	• Access to preventive screenings and vaccinations • Access to affordable prescription and over-the-counter medication • Access to affordable healthy food options • Overall feeling of safety/security • Safe places to work/play • Affordable, safe, quality housing/ utilities • Access to culturally	• Affordability • Availability of services • No insurance coverage • Lack of transportation • Lack of health care coordination services

Workforce Development

Workforce Development was identified as a prioritized health need for AHN Forbes based on the provider survey results and AHN Forbes Hospital's capacity to implement a workforce development program. Workforce development is vital in shaping SDOH by improving access to economic opportunities, enhancing job skills, and promoting overall economic stability. By providing individuals with the education, training, and support necessary to obtain quality jobs, workforce development helps secure stable employment closely tied to better health outcomes. Employment offers financial resources and access to employer-sponsored health benefits, which can significantly reduce barriers to health care. Research shows that individuals with steady, well-paying jobs are more likely to access preventive care and engage in healthy behaviors, reducing the risk of chronic illnesses.

Additionally, workforce development initiatives contribute to SDOH by promoting a skilled labor force, which ensures that health care systems and other industries have the workforce necessary to provide quality services. For example, efforts to train health care workers, especially in underserved areas, can help alleviate provider shortages and improve access to medical care. In rural communities or economically disadvantaged urban areas, workforce training programs focusing on building local health care capacity can lead to more health care professionals working in these regions, helping close the health care access gap and outcomes.

Moreover, workforce development has a broader societal impact by addressing systemic inequities. Vulnerable populations often face barriers to obtaining high-quality education and job opportunities. Workforce development programs that focus on equity, such as those providing vocational training, mentorship, or job placement services, can help break the cycle of poverty and reduce health disparities. When more individuals from these communities have access to stable employment and financial security, they are better positioned to afford housing, transportation, and other key health determinants.

In the long term, investing in workforce development strengthens the economy and reduces societal costs associated with poor health outcomes. When individuals have access to jobs that pay a living wage and offer health benefits, they are less reliant on public assistance programs and emergency health care services, which reduces the strain on public resources. Additionally, by building a workforce that can adapt to changing economic demands, communities become more resilient, and individuals are better prepared to weather economic downturns, further supporting long-term health and well-being.

Figure 27 to the right shows the household income ratio at the 80th percentile to income at the 20th percentile. This means when the incomes of all households in a county are listed from highest to lowest, the 80th percentile is the level of income at which only 20% of households have higher incomes, and the 20th percentile is the level of income at which only 20% of households have lower incomes. A higher inequality ratio indicates a greater division between the top and bottom ends of the income spectrum.

Figure 26: Percentage of Unemployed Population >16 but Seeking Work

	Year	Unemployment
Allegheny County	2022	4.2%
	2021	6.1%
Armstrong County	2022	5.3%
	2021	7.6%
Westmoreland County	2022	4.6%
	2021	6.3%

Source: County Health Rankings

Figure 27: Income Inequality

	Unemployment
Allegheny County	5.1
Armstrong County	4.1
Westmoreland County	4.6
Pennsylvania	4.8

Source: County Health Rankings, 2018-2022

Access to Care

Access to care was identified as a prioritized health need for AHN Forbes based on the stakeholder interviews, community survey, and provider survey results as well as the secondary data analysis. In addition to those data points, AHN Forbes considered their capacity to implement programming to improve access to care. Access to health care is a critical factor in achieving positive health outcomes and reducing health disparities. When individuals can easily access medical services, they are more likely to receive preventive care, early diagnoses, and appropriate treatments, which lead to better overall health.

The lack of access to health care disproportionately affects vulnerable populations. A study by the Kaiser Family Foundation found that 27.5 million people in the United States were uninsured in 2022, with low-income individuals, racial and ethnic minorities, and rural residents being the most affected.[7] Expanding access to affordable health care can significantly reduce these disparities, improve population health, and lower long-term health care costs by reducing reliance on emergency care and addressing health issues before they become more severe.

According to the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), a shortage of 86,000 physicians by 2036 is predicted across the United States because of a growing older patient population and physicians retiring.[8] The Robert Graham Center reports that to maintain current utilization rates, Pennsylvania will need an additional 1,039 primary care physicians by 2030, an 11% increase compared to the state's (as of 2010) 9,096 PCP workforce.[9]

Access to health care not only affects physical health but also has broader social and economic implications. When people have reliable access to care, they are more likely to remain productive, continue working, and avoid disability. The economic costs of untreated illness are significant; for example, the CDC estimates that chronic diseases cost the U.S. health care system $4.5 trillion annually.[10] By ensuring that individuals can access preventive care and timely treatment, health care systems can reduce the long-term financial burden on both individuals and society, improve quality of life, and promote a healthier, more equitable population.

Specialty services are vital for ensuring comprehensive and effective health care. Specialty services provide targeted and advanced medical attention that general practitioners may not be equipped to offer. Access to specialized care enables early detection, precise diagnosis, and personalized treatment plans that can significantly improve patients' survival rates and quality of life. Specialty services are critical for managing specific health conditions, reducing risks, and promoting overall well-being. Without such specialized care, individuals may face delayed diagnoses, inadequate treatment, and poorer health outcomes. Therefore, ensuring the availability and accessibility of specialty services like cancer care and women's care is essential for addressing complex

[7] Kaiser Family Foundation

[8] Association of American Medical Colleges

[9] The Robert Graham Center

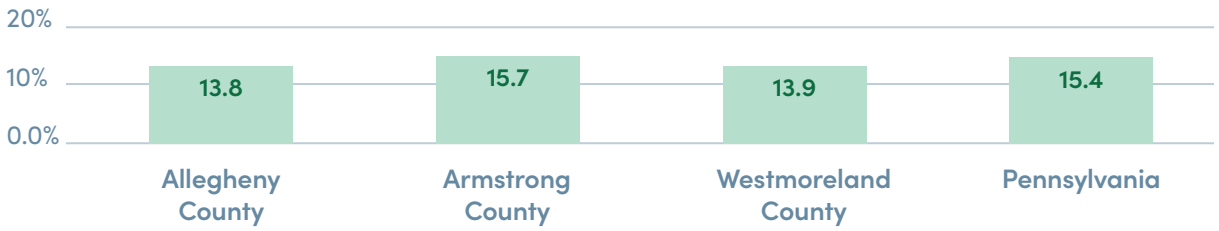
[10] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

health needs, enhancing patient outcomes, and nurturing a healthier community.

Ensuring access to care is fundamental to promoting health and well-being within a community. Improving access to care is essential for promoting health equity, enhancing the quality of life, and building a healthier population. It is vital for vulnerable groups, such as low-income individuals and those living in rural areas, who are often disproportionately affected by these barriers. Ensuring necessary health care services is fundamental to achieving overall community well-being and sustainable health improvements.

Figure 28 reports the percentage of adults aged 18 and older who self-report their general health status as “fair” or “poor.”

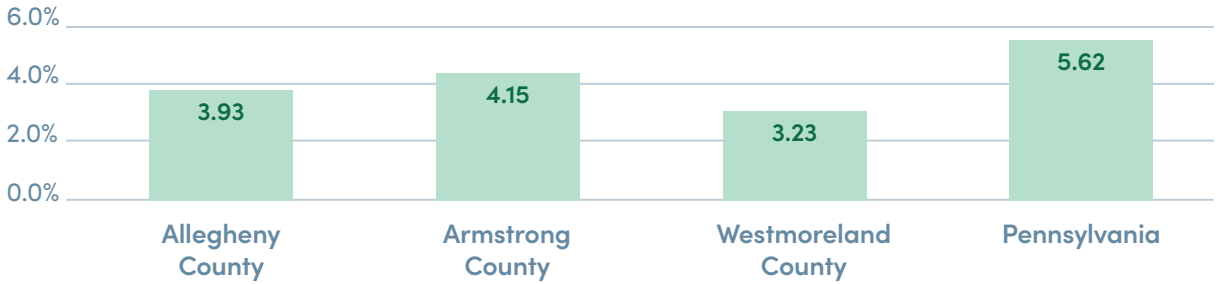
Figure 28: Health Status of Adults >18



Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System 2021

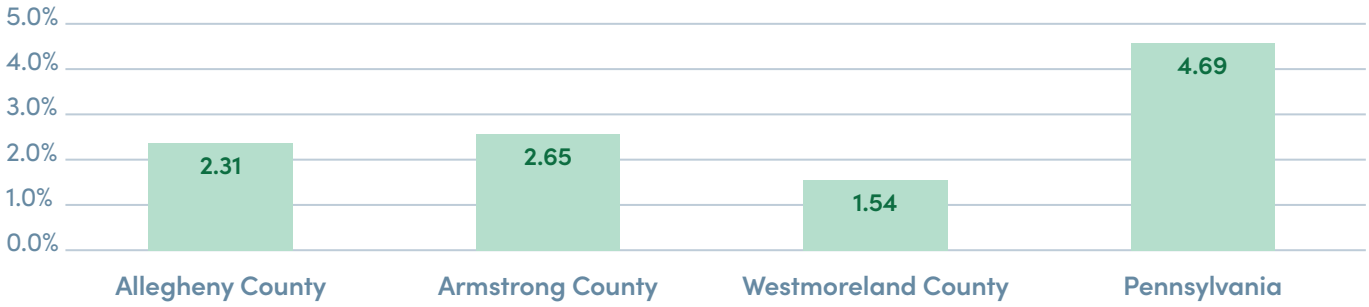
Lack of health insurance is considered a key driver of health status. Figure 29 reports the lack of health insurance as a primary barrier to health care access, contributing to poor health status.

Figure 29: Uninsured Population



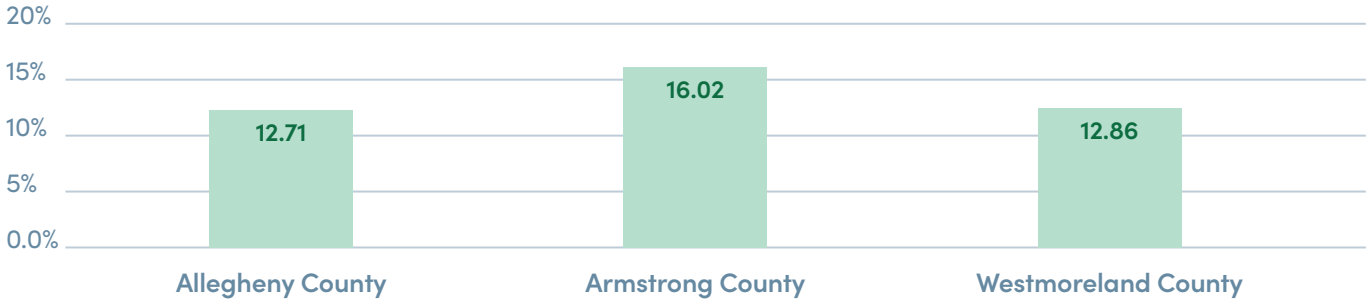
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2018 – 2022

Figure 30: Uninsured Children



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2018 – 2022

Figure 31: Public Assistance Income or Food Stamps/SNAP



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2020

Figure 32: Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs) by County

HPSAs	Dental Health	Mental Health	Primary Care	Total HPSAs
Allegheny County	9	6	9	24
Armstrong County	1	0	1	2
Westmoreland County	1	1	2	4
Pennsylvania	148	119	130	397

Source: Health Resources and Services Administration

Food Insecurity, Diet, and Nutrition

Food insecurity, diet, and nutrition was identified as a prioritized health need for AHN Forbes based on the community survey and provider survey results as well as the secondary data analysis. In addition to those data points, AHN Forbes Hospital considered their capacity to implement food insecurity, diet, and nutrition programming. Food insecurity, poor diet, and inadequate nutrition are critical social determinants of health that profoundly impact individual and population health outcomes. Food insecurity refers to the lack of reliable access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food necessary for an active and healthy life. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) reported that 33.2% of low-income individuals in the U.S. lived in food deserts, and 10.2% of households were food insecure for at least a portion of time during 2021.[11] When individuals or families face food insecurity, they are often forced to trade between purchasing food and meeting other basic needs, such as health care or housing, which directly impacts their health. According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), more than 47 million people in the United States, including one in five children, are food insecure.[12] People who are food-insecure often turn to cheaper, calorie-dense, but nutritionally poor food options, leading to increased risks of chronic diseases such as obesity, diabetes, and heart disease.

Diet and nutrition are key health factors, influencing everything from physical health to cognitive development. A diet lacking in essential nutrients can impair immune function, reduce energy levels, and increase susceptibility to illness. Furthermore, poor nutrition in early childhood has long-term consequences, including developmental delays, learning difficulties, and higher risks of chronic diseases later in life. Chronic conditions are disproportionately prevalent in low-income communities where access to healthy foods is limited because of food deserts, a term used to describe areas where residents have little access to affordable, nutritious food.

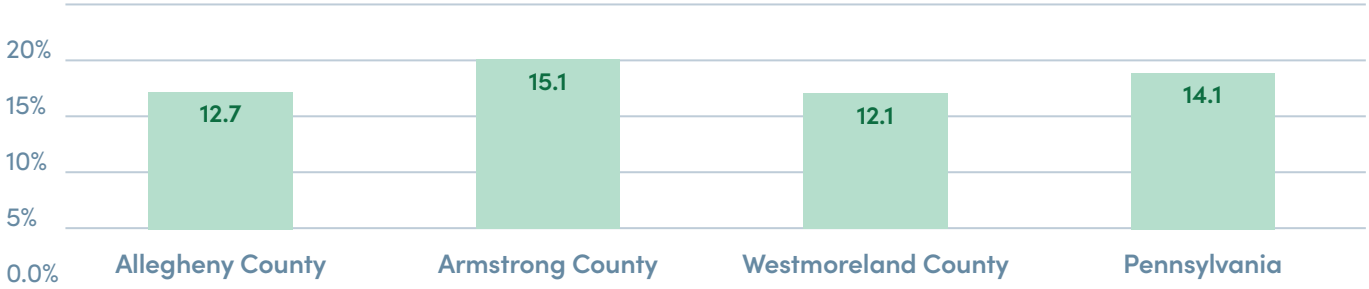
Socioeconomic disparities deepen the issue of food insecurity and poor nutrition. Low-income families are more likely to live in neighborhoods without grocery stores that offer fresh produce, relying instead on convenience stores or fast-food outlets where unhealthy, processed foods are more accessible. This imbalance perpetuates health disparities, as individuals in these communities are at greater risk for poor diet-related health outcomes. Addressing food insecurity and improving access to nutritious foods are essential to promoting health equity. By improving diet and nutrition, society can work toward reducing chronic disease rates and cultivating healthier communities, narrowing health disparities linked to food insecurity.

[11] The National Library of Medicine

[12] U.S. Department of Agriculture

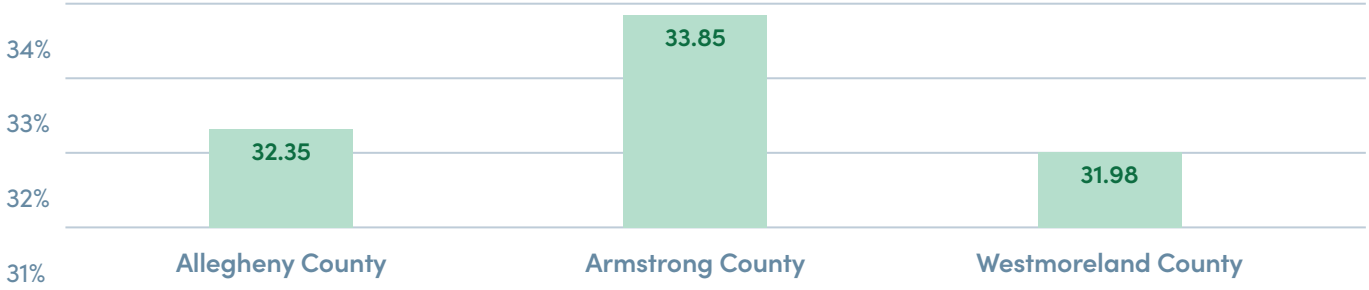
The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits are crucial because they enhance food security for low-income individuals and families, ensuring access to nutritious food and reducing hunger. On average, 41.2 million people in 21.6 million households received monthly SNAP benefits in the 2022 fiscal year, which ran from October 2021 through September 2022.[13] By improving dietary quality, SNAP contributes to better health outcomes, lowering the incidence of chronic diseases. The program also supports economic stability by freeing up household resources for other essential needs and stimulates local economies through food purchases. SNAP is vital for children's proper growth and cognitive development, contributing to better academic performance and overall well-being. Ultimately, SNAP plays a key role in alleviating poverty and promoting a healthier, more stable society.

Figure 33: Population Receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2021

Figure 34: Unmarried Partner Households Receiving SNAP Benefits



Source: The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, 2020

[13] Pew Research Center

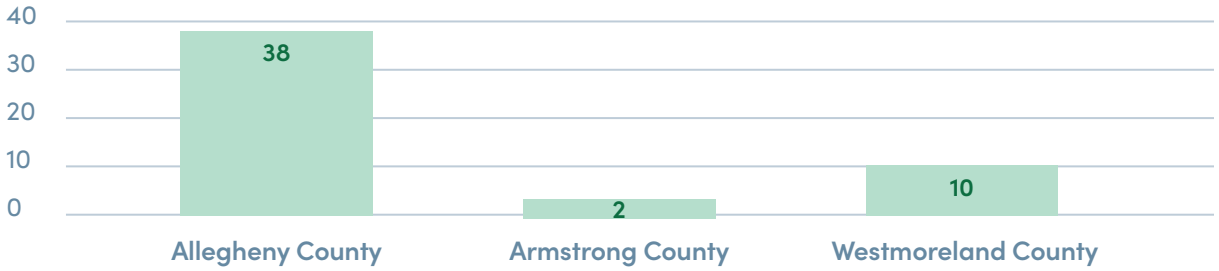
Access to healthy foods supports healthy dietary behaviors, and grocery stores are a major provider of these foods. Grocery stores are defined as supermarkets and smaller grocery stores primarily retailing a general line of food, such as canned/frozen foods, fresh fruits/vegetables, and fresh/prepared meats, fish, and poultry. Delicatessen-type establishments are also included. Convenience stores and large general merchandise stores that also retail food, such as supercenters and warehouse club stores, are excluded.

Figure 35: Food Environment — Grocery Stores (per 10,000 population)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The USDA Food Access Research Atlas defines a food desert as any neighborhood that lacks healthy food sources because of income level, distance to supermarkets, or vehicle access.

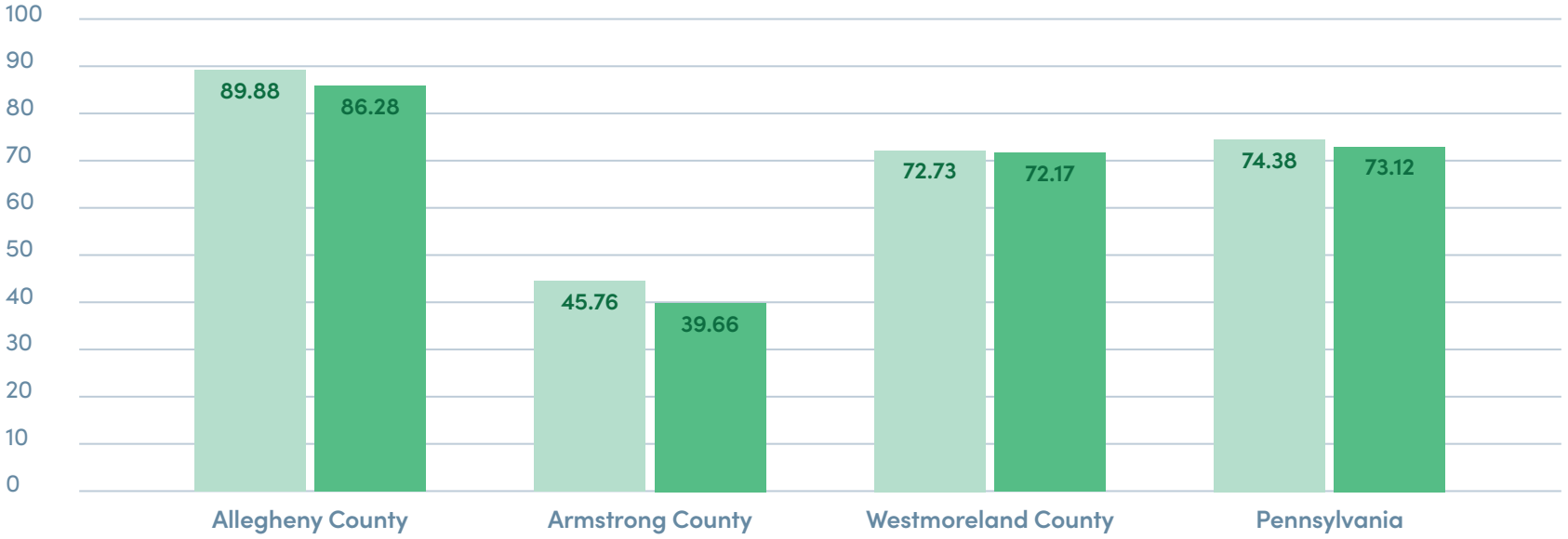
Figure 36: Food Environment — Food Desert Census Tracts



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019

The prevalence of fast-food restaurants provides a measure of access to healthy food and environmental influences on dietary behaviors. Fast food restaurants are limited-service establishments primarily providing food services (except snack and non-alcoholic beverage bars) where patrons generally order or select items and pay before eating.

Figure 37: Food Environment — Fast Food Restaurants (per 10,000 population)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Behavioral Health

Behavioral health was identified as a prioritized health need for AHN Forbes based on stakeholder interviews, community survey, and provider survey results as well as the secondary data analysis. In addition to those data points, AHN Forbes considered their capacity to implement behavioral health programming. Behavioral health is a critical issue in Pennsylvania, as the state faces rising challenges related to mental health and substance use disorders. Behavioral health encompasses mental health and substance use conditions, and Pennsylvania has taken significant steps to address the growing demand for services in these areas. According to the Pennsylvania Department of Health, nearly 20% of adults in Pennsylvania reported experiencing a mental illness in the past year; while, in 2021, there were 4,081 opioid overdose deaths in Pennsylvania, which accounted for 75% of all drug overdose deaths in the state.[14] Mental health is an important part of Pennsylvanians' overall health and well-being, and the prevalence of mental health-related issues is increasing. Access to adequate behavioral health care remains a significant concern, especially in rural areas of the state, where provider shortages and transportation barriers further limit care options.

Including behavioral health in the CHNA allows communities to gain deeper insights into the prevalence and impact of mental health and substance use issues. This data-driven approach enables targeted interventions and the strategic allocation of resources to address these challenges effectively. By incorporating behavioral health, communities can identify obstacles to accessing care, such as stigma, lack of insurance coverage, and limited provider availability, often preventing individuals from seeking the help they need.

In Pennsylvania, the shortage of mental health professionals, particularly in rural areas, amplifies access challenges. The CHNA process highlights these disparities, allowing communities to advocate for increased funding, policy reforms, and implementing programs that expand access to behavioral health services. These actions improve individual health outcomes and strengthen the community's overall resilience and well-being. Addressing behavioral health concerns requires a collaborative approach, engaging health care providers, policymakers, community organizations, and residents to develop effective solutions that enhance mental health care across the region.

Figure 38: Behavioral Health Measures, Pennsylvania State Rankings

Measure	2020	2023
Depression	24	25
Excessive Drinking	19	25
Frequent Mental Distress	24	16
Smoking	32	31
Suicide	19	13

Source: America's Health Rankings

[14] Kaiser Family Foundation

Substance Use Disorder

Substance use disorder was identified as a prioritized health need for AHN Forbes based on stakeholder interviews, community survey, and provider survey results as well as the secondary data analysis. In addition to those data points, AHN Forbes considered their capacity to implement substance use disorder programming. The opioid crisis has been particularly devastating in Pennsylvania, one of the states hardest hit by the epidemic. In 2022, Pennsylvania had one of the highest opioid overdose death rates in the country, with 5,146 drug overdose deaths were reported.[15] An average of 14 Pennsylvanians die every day from overdose, and based on available data, the death toll will only continue to rise.[16]

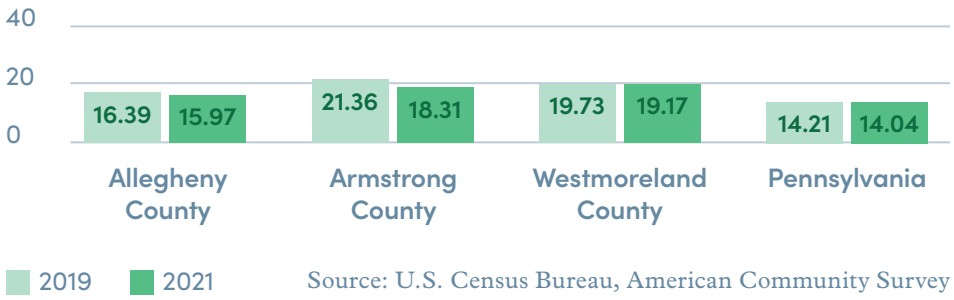
Besides opioids, other substances, including alcohol and methamphetamines, contribute to the state's substance use issues. Recent data indicate that alcohol use disorders affect a significant portion of the population, escalating health problems and leading to higher rates of hospitalization and emergency room visits. Moreover, the emergence of methamphetamines as a prevalent substance in Pennsylvania has raised concerns among communities.

Addressing substance use disorder requires a comprehensive approach that encompasses prevention, treatment, and recovery support. Pennsylvania has made strides in expanding access to treatment services, including medication-assisted treatment (MAT) and behavioral therapies, to meet the needs of individuals struggling with addiction. However, barriers remain, such as stigma, lack of insurance coverage, and insufficient provider availability, especially in rural areas. To combat these challenges, the state has implemented initiatives aimed at improving access to care, promoting public awareness, and enhancing coordination among health care providers, community organizations, and law enforcement agencies.

By prioritizing substance use disorder within the health care framework, Pennsylvania can work toward reducing the prevalence of addiction and its associated consequences. Collaborative efforts that include education, outreach, and support can help create healthier communities and aid resilience among individuals and families affected by substance use disorder.

Alcohol and tobacco use are root causes and can aggravate behavioral health conditions. In Pennsylvania, alcohol and tobacco use pose significant health risks. The number of liquor stores per 10,000 population provides a measure of environmental influences on dietary behaviors and the accessibility of healthy foods. Note this data excludes establishments preparing and serving alcohol for consumption on premises (including bars and restaurants) or which sell alcohol as a secondary retail product (including gas stations and grocery stores).

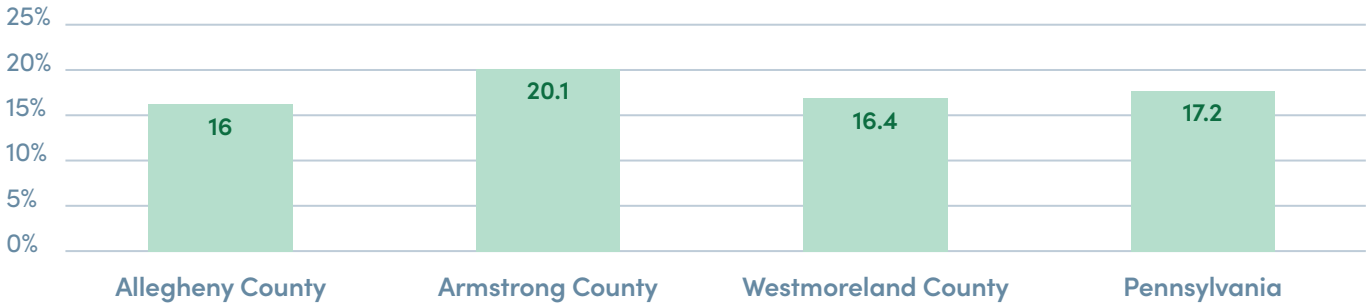
Figure 39: Built Environment — Liquor Stores (per 10,000 population)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey

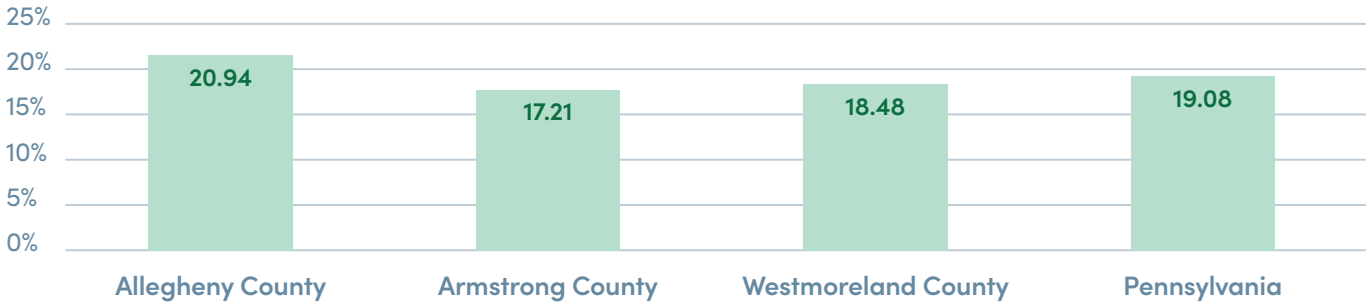
[15] Pennsylvania Department of Health
[16] Pennsylvania Office of the Attorney General

Figure 40: Current Smokers, Percentage



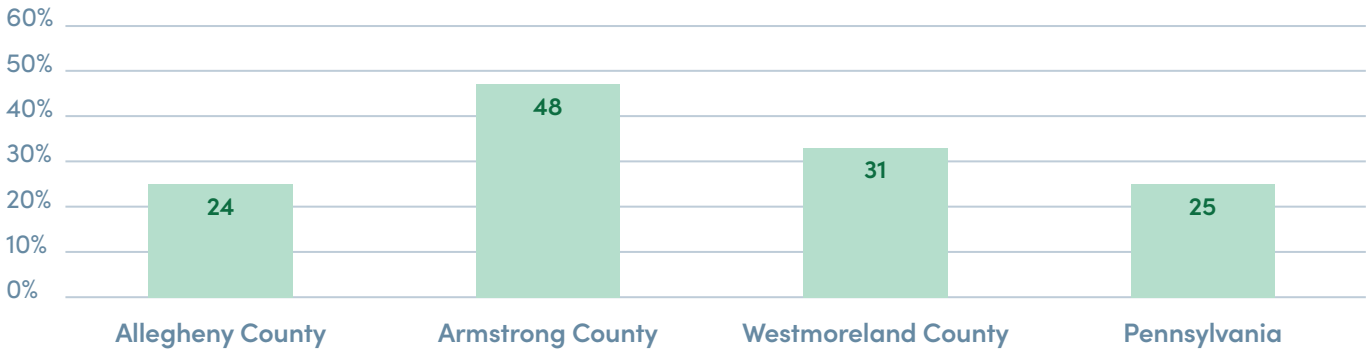
Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2021

Figure 41: Adults Reporting Excessive Drinking



Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2021

Figure 42: Alcohol-Impaired Driving Deaths



Source: County Health Rankings, 2017 – 2021

Mental Health Services

Mental Health Services was identified as a prioritized health need for AHN Forbes based on stakeholder interviews, community survey, and provider survey results as well as the secondary data analysis. In addition to those data points, AHN Forbes considered their capacity to implement mental health programming. The mental health care landscape in Pennsylvania is similarly complex. The demand for mental health services has surged in recent years, worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic, which led to increases in anxiety, depression, and stress-related conditions among the population. Around 19.7% of adults, nearly 2 million people, experience some form of mental illness, placing Pennsylvania 17th in the nation for mental illness prevalence. In Pennsylvania, 51.9% of adults with mental illness do not receive the treatment they need, impacting more than 1 million Pennsylvanians. This issue is even more critical considering the state's suicide rate, which includes 482,000 adults suffering from suicidal thoughts.[17]

On September 2023, the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS) announced its intent to increase rates paid in its Behavioral HealthChoices program, which provides access to mental health, substance use disorder, and other behavioral health services for Medicaid recipients. "Access to mental and behavioral health care is essential to our overall health and wellbeing. If we cannot get the care we need, our ability to participate in and engage fully in our responsibilities like work, school, and family will not be possible," said DHS Secretary Val Arkoosh.[18]

Expanding access to mental health services, ensuring adequate insurance coverage, and addressing barriers such as provider shortages are essential to tackling these challenges. Additionally, targeted interventions are required for underserved populations, including those facing socioeconomic hardships and specific demographic groups disproportionately affected by mental health issues, such as minorities and the LGBTQ+ community.

Figure 43 shows the average number of mentally unhealthy days reported in the past 30 days (age-adjusted). Mental Health Providers is the ratio of the population to mental health providers. The ratio represents the number of individuals served by one mental health provider in a county if providers were equally distributed across the population.

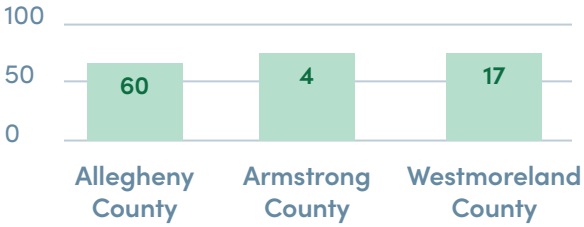
[17] Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, [18] Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Figure 43: Poor Mental Health Days

	Average Number of Mentally Unhealthy Days
Allegheny County	5.1
Armstrong County	5.1
Westmoreland County	5.2
Pennsylvania	4.7

Source: County Health Rankings, 2021

Figure 44: Facilities That Provide Mental Health Services



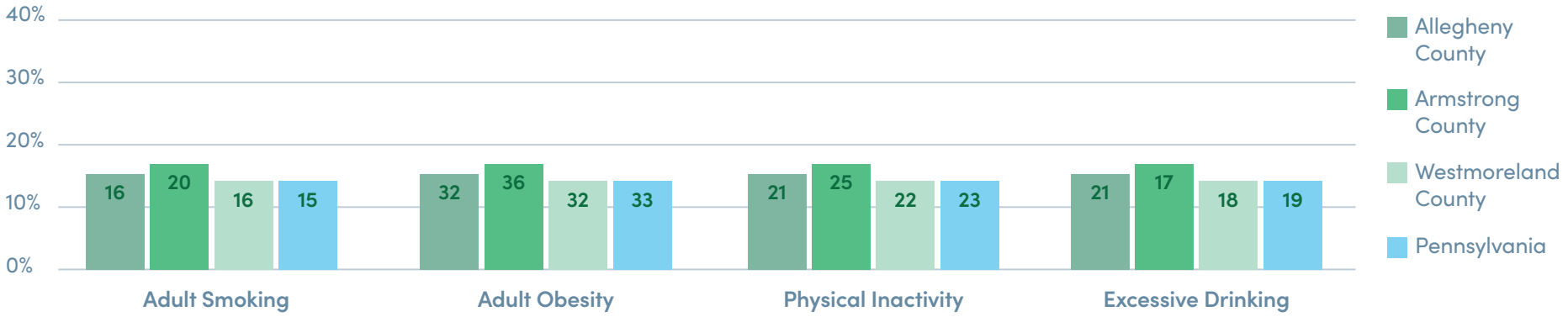
Source: The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), 2020

Figure 45: Ratio of Population to Mental Health Providers

	Mental Health Providers Rate (per 100,000 population)
Allegheny County	220:1
Armstrong County	650:1
Westmoreland County	490:1
Pennsylvania	370:1

Source: County Health Rankings, 2023

Figure 46: Behaviors Leading to Chronic Conditions



Source: County Health Rankings, 2021

Chronic Diseases and Aging

Chronic diseases and aging was identified as a prioritized health need for AHN Forbes based on the stakeholder interviews, community survey, and provider survey results as well as the secondary data analysis. In addition to those data points, AHN Forbes considered their capacity to implement chronic disease and aging programming. Chronic diseases and the effects of aging pose significant health challenges and have far-reaching impacts on individuals and society. Defined as long-lasting conditions that often require ongoing medical attention, chronic diseases include conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, and cancer (plus aging). These diseases can lead to severe health complications, reduced quality of life, and increased health care costs. An estimated 129 million people in the United States have at least one major chronic disease, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.[19] Addressing these risk factors is crucial for prevention and management strategies.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 90% of the nation's $4.5 trillion in annual health care expenditures are for people with chronic and mental health conditions.[20] Chronic care costs are often higher because of the increased risk of patients ending up in an emergency room or hospital. Patients with chronic conditions and "highly fragmented care" were 13% to 14% more likely to visit the ER.[21]

[19] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
[20] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
[21] Fragmented care often means lack of continuity in care and treatment plans. These

Additionally, chronic diseases contributed to 60% of all ER visits, and 4.3 million visits were likely preventable. Avoiding these preventable visits would save $8.3 billion yearly in health care costs.[22] This financial strain affects health care systems, businesses, and communities through increased insurance premiums, lost productivity, and disability costs. Moreover, individuals suffering from chronic diseases often face limitations in daily activities, leading to diminished work capacity and economic stability.

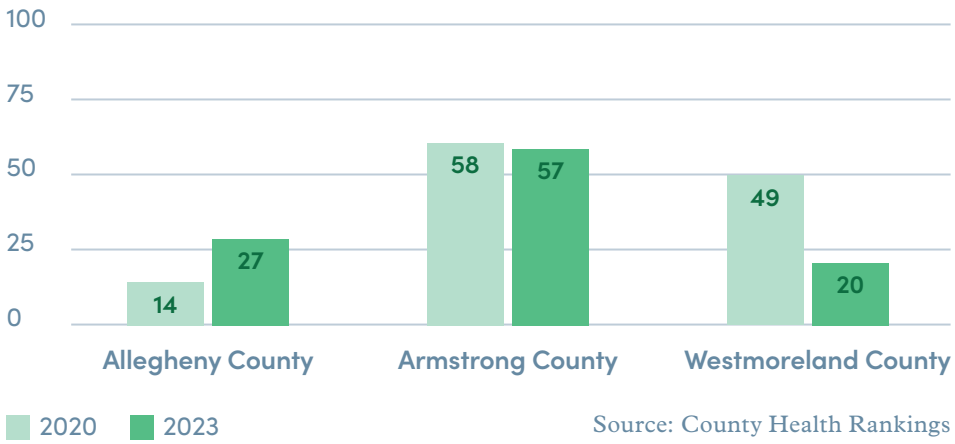
The impacts of chronic diseases extend beyond physical health; they also significantly affect mental and emotional well-being. People living with chronic illnesses frequently experience anxiety, depression, and social isolation. This interplay between physical and mental health can complicate treatment and management strategies, necessitating an integrated approach that addresses both aspects.

Adopting healthy behaviors and positive habits, including regular exercise, sufficient sleep, a nutritious diet, and avoiding tobacco and excessive alcohol, can greatly lower the risk of disease and enhance overall quality of life. Maintaining a healthy lifestyle is crucial for managing specific health issues, ensuring general well-being, and decreasing the chances of being diagnosed with chronic illnesses.

Chronic diseases, though prevalent, are among the most preventable health problems. Proper management of chronic diseases involves a combination of regular screenings, routine checkups, and vigilant monitoring of treatment plans. These proactive measures help in early detection and effective management of conditions, thereby improving patient outcomes. Patient education is also crucial, as it empowers individuals to manage their conditions better, adhere to prescribed treatments, and make lifestyle changes that promote overall well-being. Multiple chronic conditions may involve or cause a person's immune system to not function properly.

Rankings for health outcomes are based on equal weighting of one length of life (mortality) measure, and four quality of life (morbidity) measures. Those having high ranks, e.g., 1 or 2, are considered the "healthiest." A ranking of Figure 23 below shows that Allegheny County's health outcomes rankings got worse from 14 in 2020 to 27 in 2023, while Washington County's health outcomes rankings improved from 33 in 2020 to 30 in 2023.

Figure 47: Health Outcomes Rankings



Source: County Health Rankings

[22] Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield

The data collected from stakeholder interviews, PFAC group interviews, community surveys, and provider surveys highlight several major health concerns within the community. Behavioral health issues, such as anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, and suicide, are consistently emphasized across all sources. Other prevalent concerns include chronic conditions such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and cancer and issues related to substance use disorders, including opioid abuse and alcohol addiction.

Being overweight and obese, often tied to poor eating habits, lack of physical activity, and unmanaged stress, are recurring themes. Aging-related problems such as memory loss, vision or hearing loss, and mobility challenges are also significant. Additionally, some groups highlighted the dangers of unsafe driving practices (e.g., DUI, speeding) as a public health concern. Overall, the findings reflect a broad spectrum of health issues, from mental and behavioral health to chronic disease management and lifestyle-related challenges.

Figure 48 delineates the responses from the community leader stakeholder interviews, PFAC group interviews, community surveys, and provider surveys regarding the top health problems the community is facing.

Figure 48: Engaging the Community Through Primary Data Collection

Stakeholder Interviews	PFAC Group Interviews	Community Surveys	Provider Survey
• Behavioral health (anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, suicide, etc.) • Heart disease and stroke • Being overweight/obesity (lack of exercise/physical inactivity) • Diabetes • Substance use disorder/addiction (including alcohol abuse) • Aging problems (i.e., hearing or vision loss, memory loss, etc.) • Cancer • Poor eating habits	• Opioid abuse • Chronic illnesses (diabetes, cancer, heart disease) • Behavioral health	• Overweight/obesity/diabetes • Behavioral health (anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, suicide, etc.) • Heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure • Cancer • Aging problems (hearing or vision loss, memory loss, etc.)	• Behavioral health • Overweight/obesity/diabetes • Substance use disorder/addiction • Heart disease/stroke/high blood pressure • Cancer

Cancer

Cancer was identified as a prioritized health need for AHN Forbes based on the community survey results as well as the secondary data analysis. In addition to those data points, AHN Forbes Hospital considered their capacity to implement cancer-related programming. Cancer is a significant chronic disease in Pennsylvania, affecting thousands of residents each year. Specifically in Allegheny County, cancer is the second-leading cause of death, accounting for 18% of all deaths in 2020.[23] In a study by the American Cancer Society, the number of cancer diagnoses and deaths is expected to climb in 2024.[24] The study says about 89,410 people in Pennsylvania are projected to be diagnosed with cancer for 2024, and 27,570 people are expected to die. That is slightly up from the organization's 2023 projection of 88,450 diagnoses and 27,460 deaths.

Figure 50 below reports the percentage of female Medicare beneficiaries aged 35 and older who had a mammogram in most recent reporting year. The American Cancer Society recommends that women aged 45 to 54 should get a mammogram every year, and women aged 55 and older should get a mammogram every other year.

Several factors contribute to the prevalence of cancer in Pennsylvania, including lifestyle choices, environmental exposures, and genetic predispositions. Risk factors such as tobacco use, poor diet, physical inactivity, and obesity have been linked to an increased risk of developing cancers. Additionally, environmental factors, including exposure to carcinogens in air and water, can heighten cancer risk. Understanding these risk factors is crucial for implementing effective public health initiatives for cancer prevention and education.

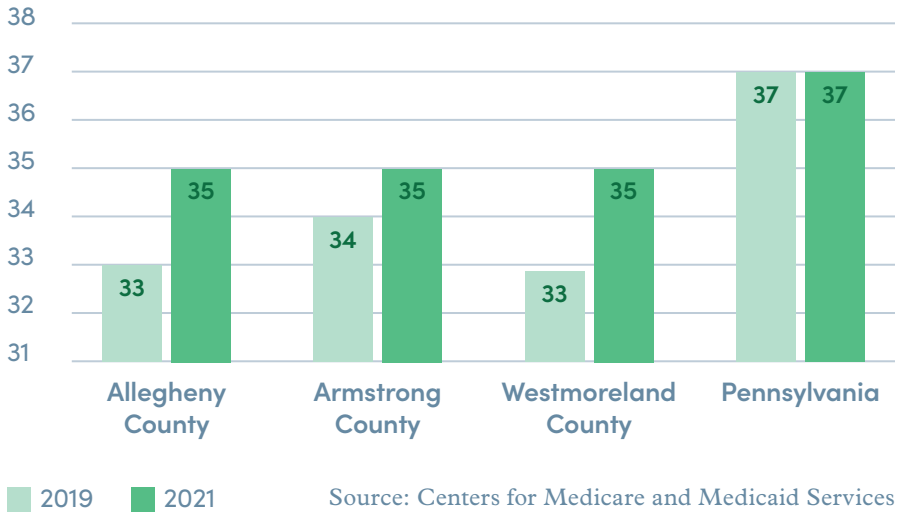
[23] Allegheny County Health Department
[24] American Cancer Society

Figure 49: Pennsylvania New Cancer Diagnoses Estimates, 2024

Type of Cancer	2024 Diagnosis Estimate	2024 Death Estimate
Female Breast	13,370	1,820
Colon and Rectum	6,550	2,230
Leukemia	2,710	1,070
Lung and Bronchus	11,200	5,570
Melanoma of the skin	3,870	N/A
Non-Hodgkin Lymphoma	3,610	930
Prostate	13,010	1,500
Urinary Bladder	4,290	N/A
Uterine Corpus	3,460	N/A

Source: America's Health Rankings

Figure 50: Mammogram Screenings



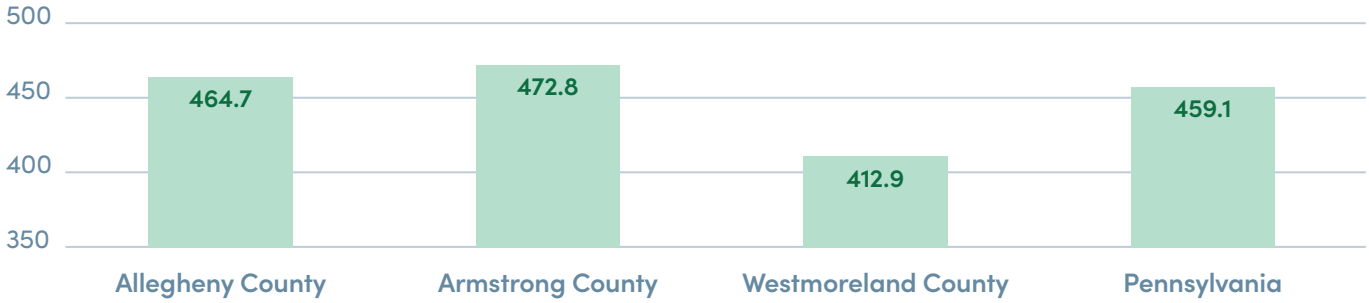
Source: Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services

Figure 51: Age-Adjusted Rates of Selected Causes of Death

	Allegheny County	Armstrong County	Westmoreland County	Pennsylvania
All Causes of Death	824.40	896.5	858.1	821.9
Cancer	154.7	162.3	156.3	152.9

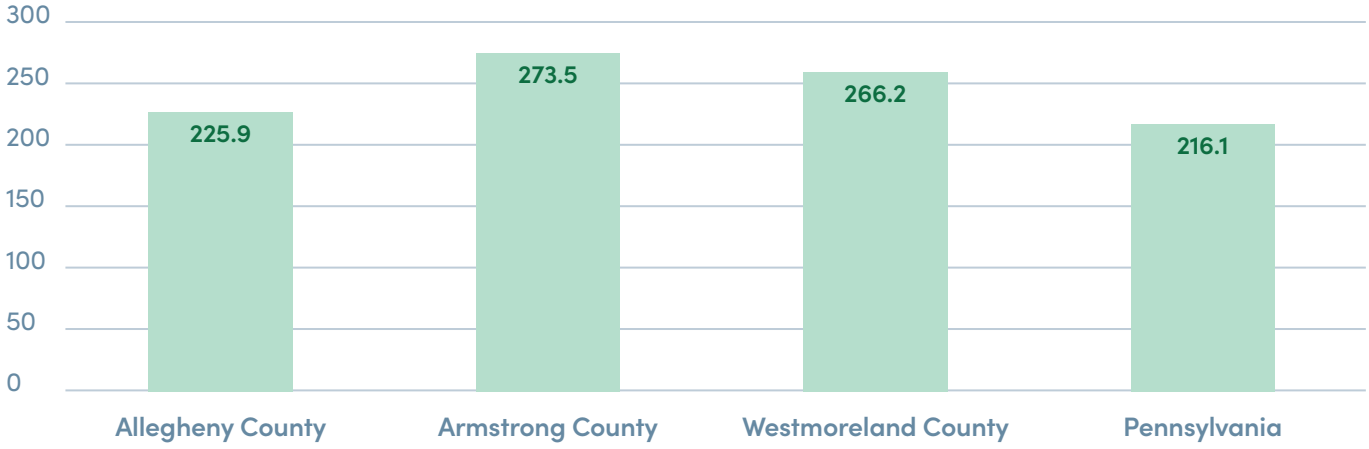
Source: Pennsylvania Department of Health, 2018 – 2022

Figure 52: Cancer Incidence Rate (Per 100,000 Population)



Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CDC, 2017 – 2021

Figure 53: Cancer Mortality Rate (Per 100,000 Population)



Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CDC, 2018 – 2022

Figure 54: Incidence Rates by Type of Cancers

	Allegheny County	Armstrong County	Westmoreland County	Pennsylvania
All Cancers — Male	471.0	512.2	405.1	468.0
All Cancers — Female	443.2	417.4	379.2	424.1
Breast — Female	140.9	115.3	110.2	129.1
Colon and Rectum — Male	42.4	48.5	39.1	41.5
Colon and Rectum — Female	31.4	32.5	29.2	32.7
Lung and Bronchus — Male	65.3	78.0	53.2	63.1
Lunch and Bronchus — Female	57.4	52.3	42.8	51.9
Melanoma of the skin — Male	22.3	30.4	16.0	24.0
Melanoma of the skin — Female	17.4	21.5	11.6	16.3
Non-hodgkin Lymphoma — Male	23.6	25.0	18.4	22.4
Non-hodgkin Lymphoma — Female	15.9	12.9	13.8	15.8
Prostate — Male	100.5	91.5	78.4	104.6
Urinary Bladder — Male	35.1	43.2	32.1	36.5
Urinary Bladder — Female	9.9	8.6	8.9	9.4

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Health, 2017-2021

Health Equity

Health equity was identified as a prioritized health need for AHN Forbes based upon it being an enterprise-wide priority. In addition, AHN Forbes considered their capacity to implement health equity programming. Health equity is a crucial aspect of public health that aims to ensure that all individuals, regardless of socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, or geographic location, have equal access to health care resources and opportunities for optimal health. The importance of health equity lies in its potential to reduce health disparities, improve health outcomes, and enhance overall community well-being.

Disparities in health outcomes are often linked to social determinants of health, including income, education, and environmental factors, which disproportionately affect marginalized populations. We can work toward a more just health care system that benefits everyone by addressing these inequities. When health disparities are reduced, it leads to healthier populations, which can result in decreased health care costs and increased productivity.

The World Health Organization (WHO) emphasizes that reducing inequities in health can lead to improved social and economic outcomes, as healthier individuals are more capable of contributing to their communities. Health equity is achieved when everyone can attain their full potential for health and well-being. Moreover, equitable access to health care develops a sense of trust and engagement among community members, encouraging them to seek necessary care and adhere to preventive measures.

Health equity is essential for creating a fair and effective health care system that serves all individuals. Addressing the root causes of health disparities and promoting equitable access to care can improve health outcomes and advance a healthier, more resilient society.

The key themes identified from stakeholder interviews, PFAC group interviews, community surveys, and provider surveys reveal a strong emphasis on improving access to preventive health care services and education about navigating the health care system. Preventive services such as health screenings, mental health and substance abuse services, and behavioral health support are consistently highlighted as critical needs.

There is also a focus on improving community engagement through health promotion and education, community-based health programs, and services that address the social determinants of health (SDOH), such as transportation assistance, access to affordable healthy food, and safe spaces for recreation. Additionally, respondents stressed the importance of having affordable, quality care for children and seniors, as well as access to affordable housing and utilities.

Many stakeholders also called for increased access to mental health resources and education on how to utilize available health care services effectively. Health literacy classes, health coordinators, and community outreach services are seen as key components in addressing these gaps, ultimately aiming to improve overall health outcomes within the community.

Figure 55 delineates the responses from the community stakeholder interviews, group interviews, community surveys, and provider surveys regarding equitable care and maintaining optimal health.

Figure 55: Engaging the Community Through Primary Data Collection

Stakeholder Interviews	PFAC Group Interviews	Community Surveys	Provider Survey
• Preventive health care services (health screenings) • Health promotion and education • Behavioral health/stress management • Community engagement and support • Access to healthy foods • Mental health and substance abuse services • Transportation assistance • Community-based health programs • Address SDOH	• Education on how to navigate the health care system • Health coordinators • Behavioral health services — education on resources • Health literacy classes • Preventive services	• Safe places to walk/play and accessible, affordable community activities (parks, trails, community centers) • Access to affordable healthy food options • Affordable, safe, quality housing and utilities • Access to affordable prescription and over-the-counter medication • Access to mental health resources	• Access to affordable prescription and over-the-counter medication • Access to mental health resources • Access to affordable healthy food options • Affordable, safe, quality housing and utilities • Affordable, quality child and/or senior care options • Community outreach services

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Diversity, equity, and inclusion was identified as a prioritized health need for AHN Forbes based upon it being an enterprise-wide priority. In addition, AHN Forbes considered their capacity to implement diversity, equity, and inclusion programming. Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in health care are essential for creating a system that addresses the needs of all patients and communities effectively. A diverse health care workforce brings perspectives, experiences, and cultural understandings that can enhance patient care and improve health outcomes. Research has shown that when health care providers reflect the diversity of their communities, patients are more likely to feel understood and receive culturally competent care.[25] This representation can lead to better communication, increased trust, and better adherence to medical recommendations. Diversity in health care also benefits financial performance and employee retention, as it emphasizes the importance of addressing bias for better patient care and employee relations. Addressing health disparities, particularly those affecting people of color and LGBTQ+ communities, can significantly reduce excess medical costs, as much as $93 billion annually.[26]

Equity in health care involves ensuring that all individuals have access to the resources they need to achieve optimal health. This includes addressing systemic barriers that disproportionately affect marginalized groups, such as racial and ethnic minorities, the LGBTQ+ community, and individuals with disabilities. By promoting equity, health care organizations can work to eliminate disparities in health outcomes and ensure that every patient receives the quality care they deserve, regardless of their background. Implementing DEI initiatives can significantly reduce disparities in treatment, diagnosis, and overall health outcomes.

Inclusion in health care focuses on representation and creating an environment where everyone feels valued and respected. Inclusive practices encourage patients to share their concerns and experiences, leading to more personalized and effective care. Health care organizations prioritizing inclusion will likely improve employee satisfaction and retention, as staff members feel empowered to contribute their unique perspectives.

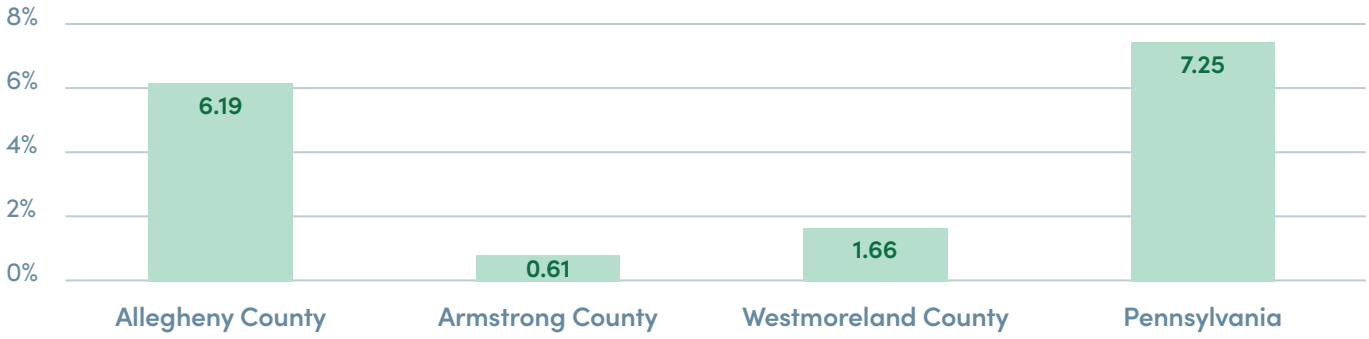
Moreover, stimulating an inclusive environment helps create a culture of safety where patients can communicate openly about their health needs without fear of discrimination or bias.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion are vital to a successful health care system. By prioritizing DEI, health care organizations can enhance patient care, reduce health disparities, and create a more supportive and effective environment for patients and health care providers.

[25] National Library of Medicine
[26] Newsweek

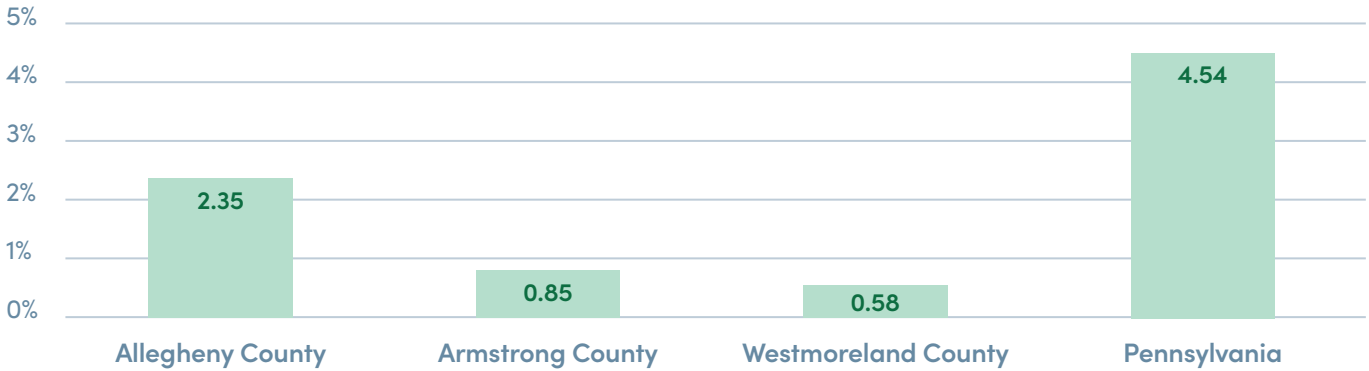
Figure 56 below reports the percentage of the population that is foreign-born. The foreign-born population includes anyone who was not a US citizen or a US national.

Figure 56: Foreign-Birth Population, Percent of Total Population



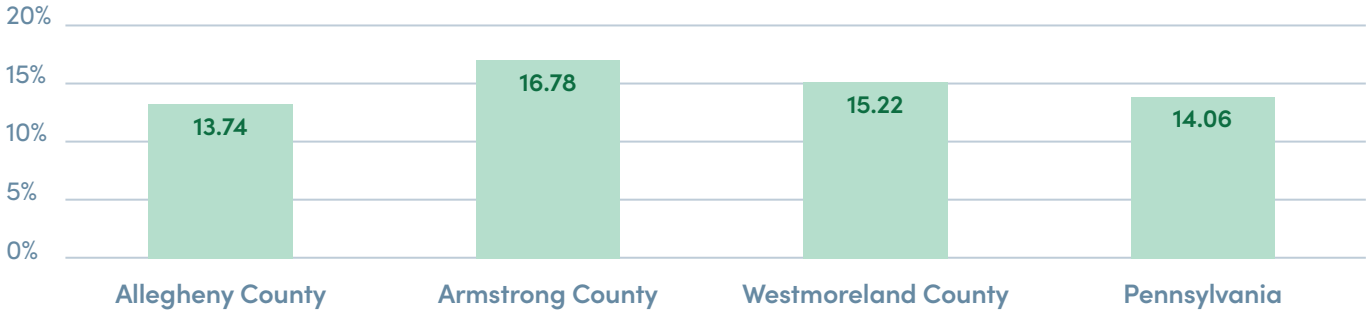
Source: US Census Bureau, 2018 – 2022

Figure 57: Population with Limited English Proficiency (age 5+)



Source: US Census Bureau, 2018 – 2022

Figure 58: Percentage of Population with a Disability



Source: US Census Bureau, 2018 – 2022

Community Resources Available to Address Identified Needs

In addition to the programs and services offered to the community through AHN Forbes, there are various existing community resources available throughout the community that have additional programs and services tailored to meet all the identified needs. The following is a list of community agencies that address the identified needs.

Figure 59: Community Resources

Identified Significant Health Needs	Local Community Resources Available to Address Needs
Social Determinants of Health — Workforce Development	The Stepping Stone Pathways, Human Services Center (HSC) Mon Valley, PA CareerLink Pittsburgh
Social Determinants of Health — Access to Care	Pennsylvania Dept. of Health, Sheep Inc. Health Care Center
Social Determinants of Health — Food Insecurity, Diet, and Nutrition	Allegheny Valley Association of Churches (AVAC), Human Services Center (HSC) Mon Valley, Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank
Behavioral Health — Substance Use Disorder	Adagio Health, Unity Recovery, Crossroads Treatment Center of Monroeville
Behavioral Health — Mental Health Services	Transformations Care Network, Milestone Centers, Inc., TCV Community Services
Chronic Diseases and Aging — Cancer	Face 2 Face Healing, Cancer and Careers, Camp Mak-a-Dream, Cancer Support Community (CSC)
Health Equity — Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	SisTers PGH, PathStone, Immigrant Services & Connections (ISAC)

AHN Community Resource Inventory

AHN created a comprehensive inventory of programs and services available in the region. The inventory includes programs and services within the service areas corresponding to each priority need area. It identified the organizations and agencies serving the target populations within these priority needs, provided detailed program descriptions, and gathers information on the potential for coordinating community activities and establishing linkages among agencies. The interactive community resource can be directly accessed at ahn.findhelp.com.

Conclusion

Achieving health equity is a multifaceted challenge that exceeds the traditional boundaries of health care and requires the collaboration of various sectors within the community. Realizing that health outcomes are shaped by social, economic, and environmental factors has prompted a growing recognition that true health equity cannot be reached through medical interventions alone. It necessitates a comprehensive approach that addresses broader systemic issues such as transportation, housing, education, and employment — all of which are integral to an individual's overall well-being. The limitations of public transportation, for example, highlight how access to health care, employment, and nutritious food are interconnected and essential to bolstering health equity.

AHN Forbes's commitment, through developing its CHNA and forthcoming implementation strategy plan, demonstrates a forward-thinking approach that values community engagement and collaboration. By incorporating feedback from stakeholder interviews, group interviews, community surveys, and provider surveys, AHN Forbes ensures that the voices of the community are heard and reflected in its health strategies. Partnering with community organizations allows AHN Forbes to address not only the medical needs of the population but also the underlying social determinants of health, laying the foundation for sustainable and impactful change. This collaborative effort is essential for reducing health disparities and promoting equitable access to health care and other critical resources.

The path to achieving health equity is long and requires persistent effort, but initiatives such as those undertaken by AHN Forbes serve as a blueprint for how health care institutions can lead the charge in building healthier, more equitable communities. By embracing a multi-sector approach and addressing the root causes of health disparities, we can move closer to a future where everyone has the opportunity to achieve optimal health, regardless of their socioeconomic status, geographic location, or background. Health equity is not just a matter of fairness but a fundamental requirement for building strong, resilient communities that can thrive for generations.

AHN Forbes is taking steps toward supporting health equity by engaging with the communities it serves. Recognizing that solutions must be informed by the lived experiences and needs of the community, AHN Forbes has committed to gathering insights through methods including surveys and interviews. These tools allow community members to share their perspectives, identify barriers to care, and suggest areas for improvement. By listening to community voices, AHN Forbes aims to ensure that its strategies are aligned with the real needs of the population. This participatory approach helps identify the root causes of health disparities and encourages trust and collaboration between health care institutions and the community. It shifts the dynamic from a top-down approach to one that empowers community members to be active partners in shaping the future of health care and health equity.

Building on the insights gathered through community engagement, AHN Forbes is preparing to develop its CHNA Implementation Strategy Plan. This plan represents a strategic roadmap for addressing the health disparities identified in the assessment phase. The CHNA Implementation Strategy Plan will be developed in close partnership with community organizations, ensuring it is grounded in the data collected and the population's unique needs.

These partnerships are critical to the success of any health equity initiative, as community organizations often have deep connections with underserved populations and a nuanced understanding of the barriers these groups face. By collaborating with these organizations, AHN Forbes can create more targeted and effective interventions that address health care needs and the broader social determinants of health. The plan will likely include strategies to improve access to health care, enhance transportation services, promote food security, and strengthen social support networks — key areas that contribute to overall health and well-being.

AHN Forbes's commitment to developing the CHNA Implementation Strategy Plan reflects a broader dedication to improving health outcomes and advancing health equity. The focus is on treating illness and creating conditions that prevent illness and promote long-term well-being. By addressing health's social, economic, and environmental drivers, AHN Forbes and its community partners are working to reduce health disparities and ensure that all individuals can achieve optimal health, regardless of their background or circumstances. This forward-thinking approach acknowledges that achieving health equity requires sustained efforts, ongoing collaboration, and a willingness to adapt as new challenges arise. It also underscores the importance of continuous dialogue between health care providers and their communities, ensuring that health equity is not a distant goal but a reality for everyone.

Additional Information

AHN will create implementation plans that utilize the organization's strengths and resources to effectively meet the health needs of their communities and enhance the overall health and well-being of community members. For more details and to share feedback, please visit the CHNA landing page at ahn.org/about/caring-for-our-community/community-health-needs-assessment.

Appendix

Data Limitations

It is important to acknowledge that the data collected for the 2024 CHNA has certain limitations. The secondary data used in the report covers a broader geographic area and is not specifically focused on AHN Forbes's primary service area. Additionally, the primary data gathered through stakeholder interviews, group interviews, community surveys, and provider surveys are limited in their representation of AHN Forbes's service area, as it was collected using convenience sampling.

CHNA Needs Reevaluated as Priorities are Met

For the 2024 CHNA cycle, AHN Forbes has shifted its priorities, choosing to no longer focus specifically on transportation as a social determinant of health or diabetes, heart disease, and COPD as chronic diseases. In previous years, transportation was identified as a significant barrier to health care access, and AHN Forbes implemented successful initiatives to address this issue. However, through ongoing efforts and community feedback, transportation is no longer seen as one of the top social factors or barriers to care. As a result, AHN Forbes has decided to refocus its resources and efforts on other community needs related to SDOH.

Similarly, AHN Forbes has had long-standing initiatives aimed at managing and improving outcomes for chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, and COPD. While these remain important health issues, the hospital has made significant progress in these areas over the years. As a regional medical center, AHN Forbes is now expanding its focus, particularly in cancer care, where the hospital has seen growing demand and potential for impact. The investment in cancer screening, treatment, and supporting resources has become a key area of emphasis for AHN Forbes, reflecting the increasing need to provide comprehensive cancer care to the communities it serves.

This strategic shift allows AHN Forbes to build on its past successes while addressing emerging health needs. By focusing on cancer care and reallocating resources to meet this growing demand, the hospital aims to continue its leadership in providing advanced medical care and enhancing the overall health and well-being of the community.

Tripp Umbach

About Tripp Umbach

Tripp Umbach, a private consulting company, is a nationally renowned firm with extensive experience in conducting CHNAs across diverse regions and populations. In fact, more than one in five Americans lives in a community where our firm has worked. With a deep understanding of health care dynamics, Tripp Umbach employs a comprehensive approach combining quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. This enables them to capture a holistic view of community health needs, including the perspectives of medically underserved and vulnerable populations. Tripp Umbach's methodology ensures that regional stakeholders, from local health care providers to community leaders, are engaged, ensuring that the CHNA reflects a broad spectrum of community insights and priorities.

Over the years, Tripp Umbach has completed numerous CHNAs for hospitals and health care systems, nonprofit organizations, and state entities. Tripp Umbach leverages expertise in identifying pressing health needs and assists organizations in developing targeted strategies to address these issues effectively. Tripp Umbach's CHNAs comply with IRS guidelines for charitable 501(c)(3) tax-exempt hospitals, ensuring that health care providers meet regulatory requirements while improving community health outcomes. Through its rigorous and inclusive process, Tripp Umbach has consistently enabled communities to enhance their health care services, address disparities, and improve overall public health.