

CHI St. Alexis Health - Williston

2022 Community Health Implementation Strategy

Adopted October 2022



Williston Medical Center

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At-a-Glance Summary

<p>Community Served</p> 	<p>Williston is located in the northwest corner of North Dakota, just 60 miles from the Canadian border and 18 miles from the Montana border. Its economy is based primarily on the oil and gas industry, agriculture, and the service sector. It is the sixth largest city in North Dakota with an estimated population of 32,189.</p>			
<p>Significant Community Health Needs Being Addressed</p> 	<p>The significant community health needs the hospital is helping to address and that form the basis of this document were identified in the hospital’s most recent Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). Needs being addressed by strategies and programs are:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="407 598 1430 867"> <tr> <td data-bbox="407 598 857 867"> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not enough affordable housing 2. Having enough child daycare services 3. Having enough quality school resources 4. Ability to retain primary care providers in the community </td> <td data-bbox="857 598 1430 867"> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Long term/nursing home care options 6. Alcohol use and abuse – youth and adult 7. Availability of resources to help the elderly stay in their homes 8. Depression/anxiety – all ages 9. Drug use and abuse – youth and adult 10. Availability of specialists </td> </tr> </table>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not enough affordable housing 2. Having enough child daycare services 3. Having enough quality school resources 4. Ability to retain primary care providers in the community 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Long term/nursing home care options 6. Alcohol use and abuse – youth and adult 7. Availability of resources to help the elderly stay in their homes 8. Depression/anxiety – all ages 9. Drug use and abuse – youth and adult 10. Availability of specialists
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<p>Strategies and Programs to Address Needs</p> 	<p>The hospital will create five workgroups to help address the identified needs through coordination and cooperation with partner organizations in the community. The five workgroups and the identified needs (corresponding number above) they will work to address will be:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.) Affordable Housing (1, 7) 2.) Behavioral Health (6, 8, 9) 3.) Childcare/Youth (2, 3, 6, 8, 9) 4.) Elder Concerns (4, 5, 7) 5.) Availability of Specialists (4, 5, 7, 10) 			
<p>Anticipated Impact</p> 	<p>We believe the work done to address these needs will improve the overall quality of life for individuals living in northwest North Dakota, especially vulnerable populations that are most impacted by many of these needs at one time. By focusing on developing solid plans to address deficiencies in the social determinants of health we will build programs that will improve the lives of our citizens and build robust support systems for them. In addition, the partnerships between various organizations will strengthen the community’s ability to meet additional challenges in the future.</p>			
<p>Planned Collaboration</p> 	<p>Collaboration will be a key component to these implementation strategies being carried out in a successful way. These workgroups will be built through the leveraging of relationships to ensure the right people are at the table to make the decisions. This will include state, county, and local leaders, business leaders and private organizations related to the topic at hand. The goal will be open and honest conversation that helps move things forward. Quarterly status meetings will be held to check on action steps and to keep things on track. Flexibility and nimbleness will be a key part of this collaboration.</p>			

This document is publicly available online at the hospital’s website. Written comments on this report can be submitted to John Odermann, Director of Mission at 1301 15th Ave W, Williston, ND 58801 or by e-mail to john.odermann@commonspirit.org.

Our Hospital and the Community Served

About the Hospital

CHI St. Alexius Health Williston is a part of CommonSpirit Health, one of the largest nonprofit health systems in the U.S., with more than 1,000 care sites in 21 states coast to coast, serving 20 million patients in big cities and small towns across America.

CHI St. Alexius Health Williston (formerly known as Mercy Medical Center) is a 25-bed Critical Access Hospital (CAH) located in Williston, North Dakota. It serves an estimated 70,000 people from western North Dakota and eastern Montana. With 375 employees, CHI St. Alexius Health Williston is one of the largest employers in the region.

Our Mission

The hospital’s dedication to assessing significant community health needs and helping to address them in conjunction with the community is in keeping with its mission.

“As CommonSpirit Health, we make the healing presence of God known in our world by improving the health of the people we serve, especially those who are vulnerable, while we advance social justice for all.”

Financial Assistance for Medically Necessary Care

It is the policy of CommonSpirit Health to provide, without discrimination, emergency medical care and medically necessary care in CommonSpirit hospital facilities to all patients, without regard to a patient’s financial ability to pay. This hospital has a financial assistance policy that describes the assistance provided to patients for whom it would be a financial hardship to fully pay the expected out-of-pocket expenses for such care, and who meet the eligibility criteria for such assistance. The financial assistance policy, a plain language summary and related materials are available in multiple languages on the hospital’s website.



Description of the Community Served

Williston is a small town with many amenities that has experienced amazing and positive growth in the last few years. The U.S. Census Bureau characterized it as the “Fastest Growing Micropolitan Area” in 2014. Brisk growth has also made it a city with virtually no unemployment and a per capita income of over \$43,500.

In response to this growth, a new airport was built north of the city. Williston Basin International Airport (XWA) opened in 2019 at an estimated price tag of \$265 million. Despite record growth and the ebb and flow of oil prices, the Williston area remains a very attractive place to live due in part to the people, the sense of community, and the many outdoor attractions and activities available here. A nationally ranked golf course is just minutes away as is the Lewis and Clark State Park, the North Unit of the Theodore Roosevelt State Park, and Forts Buford and Union historical sites.

Western North Dakota is one of the country's premiere deer and game bird hunting regions, and Lake Sakakawea, located 16 miles east of Williston, is one of the largest manmade reservoirs in the nation and is a top fishery for walleye and northern pike. In fact, the annual Abu Garcia Top 100 Places to Fish in the USA (March 2021) ranked Lake Sakakawea east of Williston 28th on their list! The Babe Ruth World Series returns to Williston in 2022 (14 year old division). Williston last hosted the series in 2016 (and 2013) with more than 40,000 fans attending. Games are played in Williston's Ardean Aafedt Stadium, which began as the home of a minor league team in the early 1950s, the Williston Oilers. It now plays host to local high school and American Legion Baseball, and whenever possible, the Babe Ruth World Series!

Williston Parks and Recreation constructed a 225,000 square foot recreational and fitness center that opened in January of 2014. The Williston ARC (Area Recreation Center) contains meeting rooms, exercise rooms, free weight area, cardio and weight machine area, four basketball courts, an indoor track, an indoor walking track, three indoor tennis courts, an indoor turf field, and three swimming pools, golf simulator, and racquetball courts, and a large childcare center complete with indoor playground equipment. In addition, on the other side of town, the Raymond Family Center also features racquetball courts, basketball courts, meeting rooms, dressing rooms, and a multi-purpose ice arena—home to Williston State College's championship hockey teams. An Olympic-sized iced rink at the fairgrounds, just north of the city limits, is home to the Williston Coyotes and local teams, sponsored by the Williston Basin Skating Club. Next door to that rink is a curling center, managed by the Williston Basin Curling Club. Williston also has a skate park and 11 city parks that offer an abundance of facilities for softball, baseball, tennis, sand volleyball, horseshoes, basketball, and fishing as well as walking trails, playground equipment, picnic shelters, and a band amphitheater.

In addition to CHI St. Alexius Health, Williston, other hospitals are located in the service area. Specifically, other Critical Access Hospitals are located in Crosby, Tioga, and Watford City, North Dakota as well as Poplar, Sidney, and Wolf Point, Montana. Indian Health Service also maintains a service unit in Roosevelt County, Montana, with facilities in Poplar and Wolf Point. Other healthcare facilities and services in the North Dakota portion of the area include a 168-bed nursing home in Williston, a 19-bed basic care and rehabilitation center in Williston, a 71- bed basic care facility in Williston, a 42-bed nursing home in Crosby, a 16- bed basic care facility in Crosby, a 47-bed nursing home in Watford City, a nine -bed basic care facility in Watford City, a 30-bed nursing home in Tioga, and several independent living communities for seniors. In addition to the pharmacy at CHI St. Alexius Health, Williston, there are four retail pharmacies in Williston. Retail pharmacies are also located in Crosby, Tioga, and Watford City. On the Montana side, other health care facilities include a 40-bed assisted living facility in Sidney, and eight- bed assisted living facility in Savage, a 93-bed long-term care facility in Sidney, and a 60-bed long-term care facility in Wolf Point.

Community Assessment and Significant Needs

The health issues that form the basis of the hospital’s community health implementation strategy and programs were identified in the most recent CHNA report, which was adopted in April 2022. The CHNA contains several key elements, including:

- Description of the assessed community served by the hospital;
- Description of assessment processes and methods;
- Presentation of data, information and findings, including significant community health needs;
- Community resources potentially available to help address identified needs; and
- Discussion of impacts of actions taken by the hospital since the preceding CHNA.

Additional detail about the needs assessment process and findings can be found in the CHNA report, which is publicly available on the hospital’s website or upon request from the hospital, using the contact information in the At-a-Glance Summary.

Significant Health Needs

The CHNA identified the significant needs in the table below, which also indicates which needs the hospital intends to address. Identified needs may include specific health conditions, behaviors and health care services, and also health-related social needs that have an impact on health and well-being.

Significant Health Need	Description	Intend to Address?
Not enough affordable housing	“Affordable” housing for underemployed, homeless, or other populations	•
Having enough child daycare services	Not enough daycare spaces in community to meet demand	•
Having enough quality school resources	Support services/resources for students and educators	•
Ability to retain primary care providers in the community	Recruitment and retention of providers to the community	•
Availability of specialists	Dermatology, Oncology, Cardiology, ENT, etc.	•
Long term/nursing home care options	Availability and capacity for nursing home placement	•
Alcohol use and abuse – youth and adult	Substance abuse counseling opportunities	•
Availability of resources to help the elderly stay in their homes	Affordable housing, in-home care, transportation, other services	•
Depression/Anxiety – All ages	Behavioral Health Services, recreational opportunities	•
Drug use and abuse – Youth and Adult	Substance abuse counseling opportunities	•

2022 Implementation Strategy

This section presents strategies and program activities the hospital intends to deliver, fund or collaborate with others on to address significant community health needs over the next three years, including resources for and anticipated impacts of these activities.

Planned activities are consistent with current significant needs and the hospital's mission and capabilities. The hospital may amend the plan as circumstances warrant, such as changes in community needs or resources to address them.

Creating the Implementation Strategy

The hospital is dedicated to improving community health and delivering community benefit with the engagement of its management team, board, clinicians and staff, and in collaboration with community partners.

Hospital and health system participants included all members of the Senior Management Team, including the President/CEO, CFO, CNO, Human Resources Manager, Director of Mission, and Clinic Director. In addition, members of the leadership teams, which includes all managers and directors throughout the facility were asked for their input on the plan and encouraged to bring ideas forth from within their departments. Community input or contributions to this implementation strategy included representatives from:



Community input or contributions to this implementation strategy included the initial input from the steering committee and community meetings. Throughout the next three years, community relationships will be leveraged to build out teams and workgroups to help address the identified needs as there are several community entities that could help us work to move these needs forward. Will need to work on relationship building and create a good collaborative environment to address the needs identified.

Community Health Strategic Objectives

The hospital believes that program activities to help address significant community health needs should reflect a strategic use of resources and engagement of participants both inside and outside of the health care delivery system.

CommonSpirit Health has established four core strategic objectives for community health improvement activities. These objectives help to ensure that our program activities overall address strategic aims while meeting locally-identified needs.



Create robust alignment with multiple departments and programmatic integration with relevant strategic initiatives to optimize system resources for advancing community health.



Scale initiatives that complement conventional care to be proactive and community-centered, and strengthen the connection between clinical care and social health.



Work with community members and agency partners to strengthen the capacity and resiliency of local ecosystems of health, public health, and social services.



Partner, invest in and catalyze the expansion of evidence-based programs and innovative solutions that improve community health and well-being.

Strategies and Program Activities by Health Need

 Health Need: Affordable Housing (Availability of resources to help elderly stay in their homes, Not enough affordable housing)					
Anticipated Impact (Goal)		The hospital will work with interested community organizations and our patients to help bridge the gap between their health and the social determinant of health “shelter” through coordination with current shelters, resources, and cities to make more “affordable” housing available in the community.			
Strategy or Program	Summary Description	Strategic Objectives			
		Alignment & Integration	Clinical - Community Linkages	Capacity for Equitable Communities	Innovation & Impact
City/County code review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of the current city/county code to see if there are barriers to affordable housing developments being created in the community. Work will be done to ensure barriers are eliminated and education is provided to decision makers on what the issues are in regard to development 	●	●	●	●
Coordination and Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve coordination between entities through a common touchpoint in the community for resources and information as to resources and programs available, including budgeting/finance education. Designate owner of resource list to keep information current. 	●	●	●	●
Development programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review/update and promotion of available city and county programs, or the addition of new programs, that may encourage the development of more affordable housing in the community, whether that be lower priced homes, tiny homes, etc. Compile and promote program information from financial institutions, Stark Development, and Single Room Occupancy Unit Program. 	●	●	●	●

**Health Need: Affordable Housing**

(Availability of resources to help elderly stay in their homes, Not enough affordable housing)

Homeless/Transitional/Supportive Housing Shelter	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Assessment of the feasibility of a shelter of some kind in the Williston area.	•	•	•	•
Planned Resources	Staff time and collaboration with community leaders. Potential use of Mission and Ministry Funds (Will apply in FY23 for Planning dollars) Potential city funding for purchase/renovation/operations of shelter in start-up phase.				
Planned Collaborators	CHI St. Alexius Health City of Williston Williams County Local parishes Northwest Human Service Center North Dakota Legislature Districts 1, 2, 23, 26				



Health Need: Behavioral Health

(Alcohol use and abuse, Adults, Drug use and abuse, youth and adult, Depression/anxiety – All Ages)

Anticipated Impact (Goal)	Work toward bridging the gap in behavioral health services through a community initiative that brings inpatient and outpatient options to the area while also addressing staffing and facility shortages in the region.				
Strategy or Program	Summary Description	Strategic Objectives			
		Alignment & Integration	Clinical - Community Linkages	Capacity for Equitable Communities	Innovation & Impact
Staffing/Recruitment Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Staffing is an identified critical need and legislation or local match dollars for scholarship and tuition reimbursement programs should be leveraged to encourage individuals to go into the behavioral health field. ● Career Builders Program consider simplification of program ● Challenge Grants and associated amount of available funds ● Rural Health Grant – translate into legislation for possible expansion to application for behavioral health ● Address barriers to reciprocity for behavioral health providers licensed in other states to become licensed to practice in ND. 	●	●	●	●
Inpatient Behavioral Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue work toward bringing ten inpatient beds to CHI St. Alexius Health in Williston. This work will be funded in cooperation with CommonSpirit, local, county, and state government. ● Analyze need for juvenile placement. 	●	●	●	●
Outpatient Behavioral Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cooperative agreements and arrangements with care sites to ensure patients and customers are getting appropriate care and are referred to the appropriate place the first time as opposed to a trial and error approach. ● Review opportunities to bring outpatient options to the CHI clinic in Williston to improve availability of care. ● Analyze availability and need for juvenile services. 	●	●	●	●



Health Need: Behavioral Health

(Alcohol use and abuse, Adults, Drug use and abuse, youth and adult, Depression/anxiety – All Ages)

Behavioral Health Professionals Education Programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination with Williston State College, the North Dakota University System, and the State of North Dakota to meet the needs through the development of educational programs that will provide staff for behavioral health. • Internship and job shadowing programs for individuals to see if they'd like to pursue a career in behavioral health. • Explore existing and identify new clinical training opportunities. 	•	•	•	•
Coordination and Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve coordination between entities through a common touchpoint in the community for resources and information as to resources and programs available. 	•	•	•	•
Planned Resources	<p>Staff time and collaboration with community leaders. Financial support when deemed appropriate. The hospital will also provide community health educators, outreach communications, and program management support for these initiatives.</p>				
Planned Collaborators	<p>CHI St. Alexius Health City of Williston Williams County Local parishes Northwest Human Service Center North Dakota Legislature Districts 1, 2, 23, 26 Williston State College State of North Dakota North Dakota University System</p>				



Health Need: Childcare/Youth Concerns

(Alcohol use and abuse, Youth and Adult, Depression/anxiety – All Ages, Having enough child daycare services, Having enough quality school resources)

Anticipated Impact (Goal)	Provide additional childcare capacity in Williston through the renewal and utilization of grant programs and/or helping eliminate barriers to opening childcare centers, including staffing. Help support youth related activities that create an atmosphere free of judgement/bullying in our schools.				
Strategy or Program	Summary Description	Strategic Objectives			
		Alignment & Integration	Clinical - Community Linkages	Capacity for Equitable Communities	Innovation & Impact
Daycare Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued support of the daycare center opened with the assistance of CHI St. Alexius Williston in the fall of 2022 on our campus. 	•	•	•	•
Childcare programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage the development, renewal and continuation of community and state based grant programs to enable individuals to open new or expand existing daycare facilities to increase capacity. Incentives focused specifically on bringing buildings up to code. Regulatory and code review for efficiencies. 	•	•	•	•
Early Childhood Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordination with Williston State College to meet the needs through the development of educational programs that will provide staff for daycare centers. Development of programs that will incentivize individuals to participate in these programs through scholarships or tuition reimbursement Education – shadow and internship work to gain on the job experience with school credit prior to graduation 	•	•	•	•
Youth programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordination across agencies that work directly with youth, whether that be the school system, parks and recreation, or local clubs to bring additional programming to the area that may not currently be offered. Work toward improving current offerings or reassess the effectiveness of them. Early release/closed day after school programming opportunities. 	•	•	•	•



Health Need: Childcare/Youth Concerns

(Alcohol use and abuse, Youth and Adult, Depression/anxiety – All Ages, Having enough child daycare services, Having enough quality school resources)

<p>Coordination and Communication</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leverage community presence of all organizations to publicize and promote the activities currently ongoing and active in the community to address this need to increase visibility and demonstrate the commitment to addressing it. 	<p>•</p>	<p>•</p>	<p>•</p>	<p>•</p>
<p>Planned Resources</p>	<p>Staff time and collaboration with community leaders. Financial support when deemed appropriate. The hospital will also provide community health educators, outreach communications, and program management support for these initiatives.</p>				
<p>Planned Collaborators</p>	<p>CHI St. Alexius Health City of Williston Williams County Local parishes Northwest Human Service Center North Dakota Legislature Districts 1, 2, 23, 26 Williston State College State of North Dakota North Dakota University System Williston Public Schools Area school districts</p>				



Health Need: Elder Concerns

(Ability to retain primary care providers in the community, Availability of resources to help elderly stay in their homes, Long-term/nursing home care options, Not enough affordable housing)

Anticipated Impact (Goal)	Help elderly members of the community address the various needs they are faced with, including, but not limited to mental health services, transportation, cost of housing, etc.				
Strategy or Program	Summary Description	Strategic Objectives			
		Alignment & Integration	Clinical - Community Linkages	Capacity for Equitable Communities	Innovation & Impact
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase opportunities for transportation in the community for those who can no longer operate, or cannot afford to have a vehicle of their own. • Assessment feasibility of route structure and potential expansion of route. • Ensure accessibility of transportation and qualifications/proper training of transportation staff. • Look into the possibility of transportation vouchers for the less fortunate so they can get to medical appointments, shopping and employment opportunities. 	•	•	•	•
Employment/Volunteer Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of current and new opportunities for employment for the aged population in Williston to allow livable wages to support themselves and their families • Assessment of current and new opportunities for volunteering for the aged population in Williston • Providing support for the elderly to have a quality of life that respects their dignity. 	•	•	•	•
Care coordination and communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leverage community presence of all organizations to publicize and promote the activities currently ongoing and active in the community to address this need to increase visibility and demonstrate the 	•	•	•	•



Health Need: Elder Concerns

(Ability to retain primary care providers in the community, Availability of resources to help elderly stay in their homes, Long-term/nursing home care options, Not enough affordable housing)

	<p>commitment to addressing it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cooperative agreements and arrangements with care sites to ensure patients and customers are getting appropriate care and are referred to the appropriate place the first time as opposed to a trial and error approach. 				
Recruitment and Retention programs for long-term nursing and behavioral health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staffing is an identified critical need and legislation or local match dollars for scholarship and tuition reimbursement programs should be leveraged to encourage individuals to go into the long-term nursing and behavioral health field. Recruitment initiatives and programs to incentivize moving to North Dakota. International recruitment programs. 	•	•	•	•
Education programming for health professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordination with Williston State College to meet the needs through the development of educational programs that will provide staff for long-term care. Education – shadow and internship work to gain on the job experience with school credit prior to graduation Explore education options for non-traditional students at the post-high school level. Seek area employers to assist in clinical training opportunities. 	•	•	•	•
Planned Resources	<p>Staff time and collaboration with community leaders. Financial support when deemed appropriate. The hospital will also provide community health educators, outreach communications, and program management support for these initiatives. Hospital and clinic may also be able to provide community outreach to the homebound or nursing homes to help expand care.</p>				
	<p>CHI St. Alexis Health City of Williston</p>				

**Health Need: Elder Concerns**

(Ability to retain primary care providers in the community, Availability of resources to help elderly stay in their homes, Long-term/nursing home care options, Not enough affordable housing)

Planned Collaborators

Williams County
Local parishes
Northwest Human Service Center
North Dakota Legislature Districts 1, 2, 23, 26
Williston State College
Bethel Lutheran Nursing Home



Health Need: Availability of Specialists

Anticipated Impact (Goal)	Bring specialists to the community that meet the needs of the community and are financially sustainable long-term.				
Strategy or Program	Summary Description	Strategic Objectives			
		Alignment & Integration	Clinical - Community Linkages	Capacity for Equitable Communities	Innovation & Impact
Recruitment and Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvements and efficiencies in the recruitment process will be analyzed. Development of a “local prospects” list that focuses on those individuals most likely to remain in Williston or be interested in visiting Williston long-term. Build a sustainable culture among providers that encourages retention. 	•	•	•	•
Coordination and Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordination with CHI and Sanford to not duplicate efforts and provide services that do not lead to redundancy, but enhance the overall care picture of Williston and the region. 	•	•	•	•
Scholarship and Tuition Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support and development of scholarship and tuition reimbursement programs that incentive providers to come to and practice in Williston and the surrounding area. 	•	•	•	•
Identify Community Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing efforts to identify areas that make financial success to bring to the community in terms of care and are sustainable long-term. 	•	•	•	•
Planned Resources	Staff time and collaboration with community leaders. Financial support when deemed appropriate.				
Planned Collaborators	CHI St. Alexius Health Sanford Health Community Leaders				



Health Need: Availability of Specialists

Business Leaders
Williston State College

