



**St. Francis  
Health**

**2024**

**Community Health Needs Assessment**

## ST. FRANCIS HEALTH

# COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT

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***For more than a century, St. Francis Health's mission of extending the healing ministry of Jesus Christ to those most in need has remained constant. From our modest beginning in July 1913 as a three-story red brick building with 75 patient beds, today St. Francis Health includes 321 beds with a Level III trauma center, Graduate Medical Education program, accredited chest pain center, and the area's only Level II PICU, Level III NICU, OB-ED, and Level III OB unit.***

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Assessing Ouachita Parish's health needs and developing appropriate plans through a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) to address those needs are essential steps in improving and sustaining the community's health and wellbeing. To do so, the community must be defined, the needs must be identified, and the process for moving forward must be outlined. Strategies incorporate multiple community-based organizations that can collaborate utilizing available resources to generate effective, positive impacts for the community.

The CHNA will help guide St. Francis Health's community benefit planning and the development of implementation strategies to address Priority Areas. St. Francis Health's CHNA research spotlighted health disparities and social determinants of health, needs of vulnerable populations, and service gaps. The CHNA fulfills the requirements of Internal Revenue Code section 501(r)(3) to conduct a CHNA to determine if the services and programs provided as part of St. Francis Health's non-profit status appropriately address the needs of the people it is privileged to serve, but it is not simply a response to the ACA requirement. This CHNA represents St. Francis Health's commitment to addressing the needs of our community/service area. Service, Reverence and Love for All of Life, Joyfulness of Spirit, Humility, and Justice are St. Francis Health's Core Values as an organization, and the outcomes of the implementation strategies will help ensure the people of Region 8 are served with appropriate, high-quality care.

Most services of St. Francis Health are provided to Ouachita Parish residents, which is the area (supported by demographic and survey data) that St. Francis Health defines as its community. St. Francis Health is the tertiary care center for Region 8 in Northeast Louisiana, thereby serving as the front line of defense for many residents needing care. Among its many important services, St. Francis Health provides outpatient physical therapy, cardiopulmonary rehabilitation, laboratory, pharmacy, and radiology; neurology; respiratory therapy; surgical services; women's and children's services, and the vital provision of around-the-clock emergency care through the Level III trauma center.

## Our Ministry

St. Francis Health does not define its community to exclude medically underserved, low-income, or minority populations. When determining how to define its community/service area for the purposes of this assessment, St. Francis Health considered all patients without regard to whether (or how much) they or their insurers pay for the care received or whether they are eligible for assistance under its financial assistance policy.

## Our Vision

*To make a significant difference in our communities through Catholic health services*

## Our Mission

Inspired by the vision of St. Francis of Assisi and in the tradition of the Roman Catholic Church, we extend the healing ministry of Jesus Christ to God's people, especially those most in need. We call forth all who serve in this healthcare ministry, to share their gifts and talents to create a spirit of healing – with reverence and love for all of life, with joyfulness of spirit, and with humility and justice for all those entrusted to our care. We are, with God's help, a healing and spiritual presence for each other and for the communities we are privileged to serve.

## Our Core Values

SERVICE: The privilege of reaching out to meet the needs of others.

REVERENCE AND LOVE FOR ALL OF LIFE: Acknowledging that all of life is a gift from God.

JOYFULNESS OF SPIRIT: An awareness of being blessed by God in all things.

HUMILITY: Being authentic in serving as an instrument of God.

JUSTICE: Striving for equity and fairness in all relationships with special concern for those most in need.

## Consultants

St. Francis Health received feedback from an internal stakeholders group comprised of both clinical and non-clinical sources, including Ancillary Services, Case Management, Education, Finance, Human Resources, Mission Integration, and Nursing. St. Francis Health also consulted with an external stakeholders group comprised of individuals representing organizations in the community from the business world, non-profits, educational institutions, and government agencies. Each of these organizations are ideally suited to work with medically underserved, low-income, and/or minority populations and have contributed significantly to the community in and around Ouachita Parish.

### **KPMG**

St. Francis Health worked with KPMG LLP, an audit, tax, and advisory firm, to assess the CHNA and implementation strategies to determine whether they meet the requirements of Internal Revenue Code section 501(r)(3). KPMG is the U.S. member firm of KPMG International Cooperative (“KPMG International”) and is a global network of professional firms providing audit, tax, and advisory services. Operating in 155 countries with more than 162,000 employees working in member firms around the world, KPMG delivers a globally consistent set of multidisciplinary services based on deep industry knowledge.

Their industry focus helps KPMG professionals develop a deeper understanding of clients’ businesses and the insight, skills, and resources required to address industry-specific issues and opportunities. KPMG is committed to providing high-quality, professional services in an ethical manner to entities that are listed on capital markets around the globe. Their Transparency Report articulates the steps they take to uphold their professional responsibilities and describes the firm’s structure, governance, and approach to quality control. To learn more about KPMG and to view the report, visit [www.KPMG.com](http://www.KPMG.com).

## The CHNA Approach: Data and Sources

Input from community stakeholders, including community partners and healthcare providers providing care to medically underserved, low-income, or minority populations and those with knowledge of the specific needs and existing resources of the community, was obtained in summer 2024 via paper surveys and SurveyMonkey (176 responses received) and personal interviews. Needs were also identified through collection of statistical data and compared to the community’s input. The resulting data was used to identify the Priority Areas. The data was deemed sufficient, and there were no information gaps identified during the collection and analysis process.

<b>Ouachita Parish, Louisiana<sup>1</sup></b>	
<b>POPULATION ESTIMATES, JULY 1, 2023</b>	<b>157,568</b>
Population estimates base, April 1, 2020	160,370
Population, percent change - April 1, 2020 (estimates base) to July 1, 2023	-1.7%
<b>AGE AND SEX</b>	
Persons under 5 years, percent	6.3%
Persons under 18 years, percent	24.5%
Persons 65 years and over, percent	16.3%
Female persons, percent	52.0%
<b>RACE AND HISPANIC ORIGIN</b>	
White alone, percent	58.8%
Black or African American alone, percent	38.%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone, percent	0.4%

<sup>1</sup> Retrieved September 4, 2024, from <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/ouachitaparishlouisiana>

Asian alone, percent	1.1%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone, percent	0.1%
Two or More Races, percent	1.5%
Hispanic or Latino, percent	3.7%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino, percent	56.1%

Ouachita Parish has several large employers, such as Entergy, Graphic Packaging, Angus Chemical, Ouachita Parish School System, JP Morgan Chase, and St. Francis Health, just to name a few. The economy of Ouachita Parish employs 68,400 people, with the largest industries being health care and social assistance (13,146 people), retail trade (8,536 people), and educational services (7,328 people).<sup>2</sup> The parish’s median household income is \$49,261, and 23.5% (a decrease of 0.4% since the 2021 CHNA) of families live below the poverty line. In Ouachita Parish, 12% of residents over the age of 25 did not graduate from high school, a number that has improved from 13.5% in 2021. Of residents under age 65, 9.6% are living with a disability, and 7.6% do not have insurance.

## Ouachita Parish Health Outcomes

“Health Outcomes tell us how long people live on average within a community, and how much physical and mental health people experience in a community while they are alive. Ouachita Parish is faring worse than the average parish in Louisiana for Health Outcomes, and worse than the average county in the nation.”<sup>3</sup>

HEALTH OUTCOMES			
Length of Life	Ouachita Parish	Louisiana	United States
Premature Death	12,700	11,500	8,000
Quality of Life	Ouachita Parish	Louisiana	United States
Poor or fair health	2%	19%	14%
Poor physical health days	4.2	4.2	3.3
Poor mental health days	5.8	5.7	4.8
Low birthweight	13%	11%	8%

## Ouachita Parish Health Factors

“Many things influence how well and how long we live. Health Factors represent those things we can improve to live longer and healthier lives. They are indicators of the future health of our communities. Ouachita Parish is faring about the same as the average parish in Louisiana for Health Factors, and worse than the average county in the nation.”<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Retrieved online September 23, 2024 at <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/ouachita-parish-la/>

<sup>3</sup> Retrieved online October 14, 2024, at <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/health-data/louisiana/ouachita?year=2024#health-outcomes>

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

## HEALTH FACTORS

<b>Health Behaviors</b>	<b>Ouachita Parish</b>	<b>Louisiana</b>	<b>United States</b>
Adult smoking	22%	20%	15%
Adult obesity	27%	39%	34%
Food environment index	6.2	4.8	7.7
Physical inactivity	31%	28%	23%
Access to exercise opportunities	74%	75%	84%
Excessive drinking <sup>20</sup>	17%	20%	18%
Alcohol-impaired driving deaths	26%	31%	26%
Sexually transmitted infections	721.8	730.1	495.5
Teen births	31	27	17
<b>Clinical Care</b>	<b>Ouachita Parish</b>	<b>Louisiana</b>	<b>United States</b>
Uninsured	9%	9%	10%
Primary care physicians	1,070:1	1,440:1	1,330:1
Dentists	1,550:1	1,690:1	1,360:1
Mental health providers	190:1	290:1	320:1
Preventable hospital stays	4,188	3,575	2,681
Mammography screening	43%	43%	43%
Flu vaccinations	42%	40%	46%
<b>Social &amp; Economic Factors</b>	<b>Ouachita Parish</b>	<b>Louisiana</b>	<b>United States</b>
Unemployment	3.6%	3.7%	3.7%
Children in poverty	34%	25%	16%
Income inequality	6.3	5.7	4.9
Children in single-parent households	39%	35%	25%
Social associations	12.1	9.4	9.1
Injury deaths	104	106	80

Physical environment	Ouachita Parish	Louisiana	United States
Air pollution – particulate matter	7.3	8.6	7.4
Severe housing problems	15%	15%	17%
Driving alone to work	81%	80%	72%
Long commute – driving alone	21%	34%	36%

## Areas of Need

In preparing this CHNA, St. Francis Health interviewed Stalanda Butcher, MPH, M.Ed., Chief Advocacy Officer with The Center for Children & Families, which represents medically underserved, low-income, and minority populations. Her extensive career in public health shed interesting light on the issues at hand. Ms. Butcher echoed the findings of the surveys and stated she would like to see a focus on access to more trauma-focused behavioral health care, as well as access to healthy foods with the possible addition of more community gardens in the area. She also felt it was important to increase the number of Spanish-speaking health providers available to patients and implement more of a health literacy focus within clinics. According to Ms. Butcher, a top priority in the area should be “health care access through neighborhood clinics in partnership with Housing Authority organizations to provide primary care, education, prevention, and wellness programs.”

St. Francis Health also interviewed Janie Milby, director of the St. Francis Foundation, who previously worked with the United Way of Northeast Louisiana. Ms. Milby’s expertise intersects both the broader community and those who are medically underserved, low-income, and/or minority. According to Ms. Milby, the four areas of focus that are most important in this region should be adequate insurance coverage and financial support, utilization of prevention screenings, support for overcoming addictions and unhealthy habits, and mental and behavioral health. “We already provide quality health care and have systems in place to make it accessible,” she said, “but the underlying issue that prevents many from using these services is financial. Even with insurance, copays, deductibles, and out-of-pocket expenses can be insurmountable barriers for individuals who lack disposable income. Addressing economic stability – whether through financial assistance programs, partnerships for affordable services, or educational efforts on available resources – would empower more people to prioritize their health without the fear of financial strain.”

Additionally, St. Francis interviewed Robert Hines, MSPH, CQIA, Deputy Director of Planning and Performance for the Bureau of Planning and Performance at the Louisiana Office of Public Health. Mr. Hines’ expertise represents both the broader community and those who are medically underserved, low-income, and/or minority. Mr. Hines’ primary focus for addressing the social determinants of health in Region 8 would be educational attainment and making “high level education or trade freely available to all residents. This improves a number of other determinants, including access to health care, economic stability, housing, access to healthy foods, and health literacy.” Additionally, he believes the top four health needs in Region 8 are Access to Care (cardiovascular/diabetes, behavioral), Prenatal/Postnatal Care and Resources, Broadband Access, and Access to Healthy Food.

Written comments regarding the previous CHNA and implementation plan were welcome to be submitted by contacting Vice President of Mission Integration, 309 Jackson Street, Monroe, LA 71201; however, at the time of publication of the 2024 St. Francis Health CHNA, no comments or feedback had been received.

Considering all data analysis, stakeholder discussions, and surveys results, St. Francis Health determined the top significant needs to be (in rank order based on a survey asking respondents to choose the top 4 health needs of the community; 176 responses received with 89 of them being from the community served):

- Mental health
- Heart disease and stroke
- Substance abuse
- Basic understanding of health and wellness
- Care for the elderly
- Access to healthy food
- Cancer
- Lack of providers
- Transportation
- Women's and children's health

For the purposes of the 2024 CHNA, St. Francis Health, along with its internal and external stakeholder groups, has chosen to focus its efforts on three Priority Areas: Access to Healthy Living (which will encompass work in several significant areas), Heart Disease and Stroke, and Care for the Elderly. Work will take place to address the other seven significant needs in the community, including work done at St. Francis Health. For example, St. Francis Health is a partner in the Northeast Louisiana Cancer Institute and will actively seek ways to continue bringing cancer treatment innovation and education to the people of Region 8. St. Francis Health also continuously strives to address the lack of providers in the community and works with patients to address their basic understanding of health and wellness. While these efforts may expand and/or improve during the three-year measurement period, they were not chosen as Priority Areas due to the significant work already taking place. Along with the other Significant Needs that were not chosen, the reasons were simple – lack of immediate resources to make a significant impact in those areas and other organizations that are already actively working on these needs. If this reality changes during the three-year measurement period for the CHNA, St. Francis Health will modify its implementation plan to include goals related to those areas as well, and we know work will take place in these areas, as needed and possible.

St. Francis Health's action steps to address the chosen Priority Areas will be detailed in the related Implementation Plan. Following is a list of community partners St. Francis Health intends to work with to accomplish the goals and objectives that will be detailed in the Implementation Plan. Additionally, St. Francis Health will contribute financial and human resources that will be captured with amounts attached and reported on a regular basis at both the local and FMOLHS levels for community benefit accountability monitoring through Lyon Software's CBISA online database reports.

The organizations shown in the following list are collaborating partners who will work with St. Francis Health to implement the strategies defined to address the Priority Areas identified in this CHNA. Each of



these organizations are ideally suited to work with medically underserved, low-income, and/or minority populations and have contributed significantly to the community in and around Ouachita Parish.

### **Community Resources Available in Ouachita Parish to Help Address Priority Areas**

ARCO of Ouachita  
Catholic Charities of North Louisiana  
Children's Coalition for Northeast Louisiana  
Christopher Youth Center  
Families Helping Families  
Food Bank of Northeast Louisiana  
Grace Place Ministries  
HOME Coalition  
Louisiana Department of Health Office of Public Health  
Northeast Louisiana Cancer Institute  
NOVA Workforce Institute of Northeast Louisiana  
Ouachita Council on Aging  
Salvation Army  
St. Francis Foundation  
St. Vincent DePaul Pharmacy  
The Center for Children & Families  
The Wellspring  
United Way for Northeast Louisiana  
University of Louisiana at Monroe  
West Ouachita Senior Center

### **Previous Community Health Needs Assessment**

A CHNA was conducted by St. Francis Health in 2021. At that time, the Priority Areas identified were:

- Chronic Disease Management
- Access to Care
- Obesity / Sedentary Lifestyles

In Fiscal Year 22, St. Francis Health conducted a Region 8 effort to educate seniors about medication safety and prescription management. In total, 445 seniors were educated through the local Councils on Aging. A drive was held to gather socks to help the Northeast Louisiana War Veteran's Home prevent falls, which resulted in the impact of 120 lives. Seventy students in laboratory, respiratory, and radiology programs were educated through St. Francis Health for a total in-kind donation of \$138,118 in staff time. Sixty-seven community members were trained in the Stop the Bleed program, which helps reduce preventable hospital stays. Two health fairs were held with a senior resident focus, which impacted a total of 340 lives. Additionally, St. Francis Health provided 9,330 nutritionally balanced meals through Meals on Wheels in Fiscal Year 22 at an in-kind donation value of \$54,532. SFMC also provided community education through a partnership with KNOE-TV, which reached an estimated 61,073 viewers during Fiscal Year 22 with healthy eating education to combat obesity.

St. Francis Health partnered with the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals Region 8 Office of Public Health Healthy Communities Coalition and the Children's Coalition for Northeast Louisiana in Fiscal Year 23 to address access to care through work on the Healthy Communities Coalition, the Early Childhood Advisory Committee, and the Community Red Table Discussion Group. These groups shared best practices,

information about upcoming events, and assistance with community education, outreach, and resources to maximize the health outcomes in the communities served. Additionally, the St. Francis Health Tobacco Cessation Program improved access to prescription coverage for patients for both nicotine replacement therapy and traditional prescriptions by increasing the number of patients who received referrals to the St. Vincent DePaul Pharmacy and prescription assistance cards provided in partnership with the United Way of Northeast Louisiana. St. Francis Health began implementation of Findhelp/Pathway, an online referral source that allows community-based organizations to receive direct referrals from healthcare providers and utilize the system as an online case management system that allows direct contact with both the patient and the referral source (in this case, St. Francis Health). FindHelp is provided free of charge to organizations that claim their information and manage incoming referrals, thereby decreasing expenses for case management software investments and improving communication among St. Francis Health, patients, and the community-based organizations. St. Francis Health also participated in numerous health fair and community education opportunities throughout Fiscal Year 23 that touched 6,577 directly impacted lives.

One of the quality projects St. Francis Health has undertaken recently to help address the social determinants of health (SDOH) for patients is a partnership with Beacon Community Connections that launched in Fiscal Year 23 and continued into Fiscal Year 24. Beacon's goal is to provide community care navigation for social determinants of health for referred patients. Beacon arranged, managed, and coordinated the provision of services to 100 St. Francis Health patients during the contract period from February 1, 2023, to December 31, 2023, with a base of 103 referrals. Beacon's social care identified 215 needs. The top needs were medical (49%), food (16%), housing (15%), and transportation (9%). Patients had 215 needs identified, and 170 were successfully resolved for a resolution rate of 91%. The non-clinical case management program also assisted with lower readmission rates for enrolled clients at the end of the project period. Beacon's clients had a 30-day hospital readmission rate of 7% and a 30-day emergency department revisit rate of 33%. This is a significant reduction from a nearly 100% emergency department revisit rate.

Also in Fiscal Year 23, St. Francis Health worked with its Women's and Children's Services programming to present breastfeeding as a first-line option for families in Northeast Louisiana through four primary areas: childbirth preparation classes, breastfeeding education classes, the St. Francis WIC Clinic, and all mothers delivering babies at St. Francis Health. Breastfeeding is considered a best practice in combatting obesity<sup>5</sup>. In total, SFMC presented breastfeeding education to approximately 4,000 community members in Fiscal Year 23. SFMC also addressed food insecurity in Northeast Louisiana. Programs to address this goal included volunteering at the Food Bank of Northeast Louisiana to pack food boxes for seniors, serving food at Grace Place Ministries for vulnerable populations, holding food drives to support local Councils on Aging and food pantries, and supporting the St. Vincent DePaul weekend meal program providing meals to residents who would otherwise not have access to nutritional food. In total, 919 residents were directly affected by the efforts in an 8-month period. Additionally, St. Francis Health provided 9,237 nutritionally balanced meals through Meals on Wheels in Fiscal Year 23 at an in-kind donation value of \$53,454. SFMC also provided community education through a partnership with KNOE-TV, which reached an estimated 52,300 viewers during Fiscal Year 23 with healthy eating education to combat obesity.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/pdf/bf-guide-508.pdf>

In Fiscal Year 24, St. Francis Health expanded its Community Health Improvement Advocacy through participation in activities such as the Catholic Health Association Community Benefit Work Group and the Louisiana State Health Improvement Plan committees. St. Francis Health also mentored a Reginald F. Lewis Scholar from Grambling State University and participated once again in the Black Male Summit to continue advancing its Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion efforts at the local level. The Reginald F. Lewis Scholars from around Region 8 helped St. Francis Health in planning a digital literacy program as well that was free and open to the public. A total of 327 residents were served through St. Francis Health volunteer efforts at Grace Place Ministries free lunch and clothing closet, and 435 benefited from volunteerism at the Food Bank of Northeast Louisiana Senior Food Distribution Day.

Recruitment of physicians to fill Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) roles totaled \$458,859 (in part), and \$1,834,592 was invested in the Graduate Medical program to educate residents from the Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine through the University of Louisiana at Monroe. A total of 93 students were educated on-site with hands-on experience in laboratory, respiratory, and radiology. Additionally, St. Francis Health provided 9,386 nutritionally balanced meals through Meals on Wheels in Fiscal Year 23 at an in-kind donation value of \$54,316. SFMC also provided community education through a partnership with KNOE-TV, which reached an estimated 52,797 viewers during Fiscal Year 24 with healthy eating education to combat obesity.

Paper copies of this CHNA are available for public inspection upon request and without charge at St. Francis Health at 309 Jackson Street, Monroe, LA 71201. Digital copies are available at [www.FMOLHS.org](http://www.FMOLHS.org). Search using the words "Community Health Needs Assessment" or "CHNA." Comments and other feedback about this CHNA can be provided to St. Francis Health by contacting Community Impact at 318-966-4185 or emailing [Rebecca.Mixon@fmolhs.org](mailto:Rebecca.Mixon@fmolhs.org).

## **Next Steps**

St. Francis Health will continue dialogue with collaborators and community members to develop an implementation plan for strategies and programs to address the identified Priority Areas. Existing programs will continue to be monitored for effectiveness and developed, as needed.