

2025

Community Health Needs Assessment:

OSF St. Mary Medical Center

KNOX COUNTY

Introduction

The Knox County Community Health-Needs Assessment is a collaborative undertaking by OSF St. Mary Medical Center to highlight the health needs and well-being of residents in Knox County.

Through this needs assessment, collaborative community partners have identified numerous health issues impacting individuals and families in the Knox County region. Several themes are prevalent in this health-needs assessment – the demographic composition of the Knox County region, the predictors for and prevalence of diseases, leading causes of mortality, accessibility to health services and healthy behaviors.

Results from this study can be used for strategic decision-making purposes as they directly relate to the health needs of the community. The study was designed to assess issues and trends impacting the communities served by the collaborative, as well as perceptions of targeted stakeholder groups.

In order to perform these analyses, information was collected from numerous secondary sources, including publicly available sources as well as private sources of data. Additionally, survey data from 387 respondents in the community were assessed with a special focus on the at-risk or economically disadvantaged population. Areas of investigation included perceptions of the community health issues,

unhealthy behaviors, issues with quality of life, healthy behaviors, and access to medical care, dental care, prescription medications and mental-health counseling. Additionally, social drivers (determinants) of health (SDoH) were analyzed to provide insights into why certain segments of the population behaved differently.

Ultimately, the identification and prioritization of the most important health-related issues in the Knox County region were identified. The collaborative team considered health needs based on:

- 1. magnitude of the issue** (i.e., what percentage of the population was impacted by the issue)
- 2. severity of the issue in terms of its relationship with morbidities and mortalities**
- 3. potential impact through collaboration**

Using a modified version of the Hanlon Method, the collaborative team prioritized three significant health needs:

- **Behavioral Health** – mental health and substance use
- **Healthy Behaviors** – defined as nutrition, exercise and impact on obesity
- **Access to Healthcare**

Behavioral Health

Healthy Behaviors

Access to Healthcare

Community Health Needs Assessment

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Sustaining Health Equity

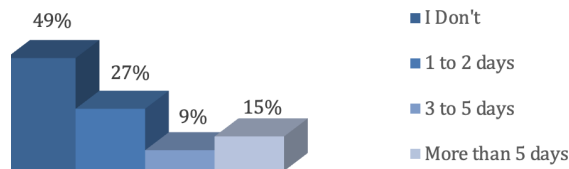
Behavioral Health

Self-perceptions of mental health can provide important insights to help manage population health. These perceptions not only provide benchmarks regarding health status but also offer insights into how accurately people perceive their own health.

MENTAL HEALTH

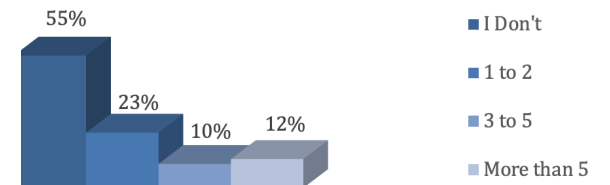
The CHNA survey asked respondents to indicate prevalence of specific issues, namely depression and stress/anxiety. Of respondents, 51% indicated they felt depressed in the last 30 days and 45% indicated they felt anxious or stressed in the last 30 days. Depression tends to be rated higher by younger people, those with less income and those living in an unstable housing environment. Stress and anxiety also tend to be rated higher for younger people, those with less income and those living in an unstable housing environment. Respondents were also asked if they spoke with anyone about their mental health in the last year. Of respondents 38% indicated that they spoke to someone, the most common response was to family/friends (37%). In regard to self-assessment of overall mental health, 18% of respondents stated they have poor overall mental health. In the 2025 CHNA survey, respondents indicated that mental health was the most important health issue.

FELT DEPRESSED LAST 30 DAYS



Source: CHNA Survey

FELT ANXIOUS OR STRESSED LAST 30 DAYS



Source: CHNA Survey

Behavioral Health

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SUBSTANCE USE

Of survey respondents, 17% indicated they consume at least one alcoholic drink each day. Alcohol consumption tends to be rated higher by men, those with less education, and those in an unstable housing environment. Of survey respondents, 12% indicated they improperly use prescription medications each day to feel better and 13% indicated they use marijuana each day. Note that misuse of prescription medication (oftentimes opioid use) tends to be rated higher by those with less education, those with lower income and those living in an unstable living environment. Marijuana use tends to be rated higher by men, younger people, Black people, those with lower education, those with lower income and those living in an unstable living environment. Finally, of survey respondents, 4% indicated they use illegal drugs on a daily basis. Use of illegal drugs tends to be rated higher by men, younger people, LatinX people, those with lower education, and those in an unstable housing environment.

In the 2025 CHNA survey, respondents rated drug use (illegal) as the most prevalent unhealthy behavior (24%) in Knox County, followed by alcohol use (16%).

Behavioral Health

Healthy Behaviors

Access to Healthcare

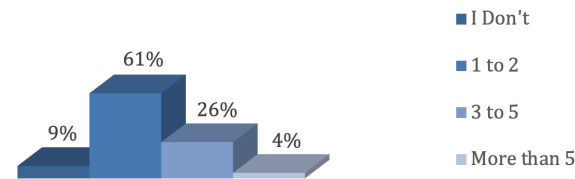
Healthy Behaviors

Healthy behaviors, such as a balanced whole-food diet and physical exercise, are critical for both physical, mental emotional well-being. Healthy behaviors can have substantial influence in reducing the risk of numerous health issues and these behaviors contribute to increased longevity and improved quality of life. Nationwide, poor nutrition and lack of physical exercise contribute to an estimated 300,000 preventable deaths per year.

NUTRITION

Over two-thirds (70%) of residents in Knox County report no consumption or low consumption (1-2 servings per day) of fruits and vegetables per day. Note that the percentage of residents who consume five or more servings per day is only 4%. The most prevalent reason for failing to eat more fruits and vegetables was cost.

DAILY CONSUMPTION OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES



Source: CHNA Survey

Behavioral Health

Healthy Behaviors

Access to Healthcare

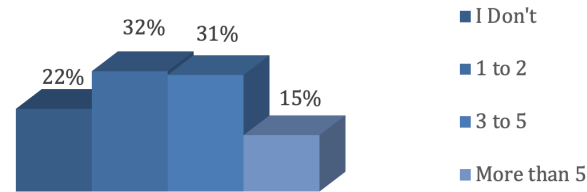
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EXERCISE

Almost one-quarter of respondents (22%) of respondents indicated that they do not exercise at all, while the majority (63%) of residents exercise 1-5 times per week. The most common reasons for not exercising were not having enough energy (27%) and dislike of exercise (25%).

DAILY CONSUMPTION OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES



Source: CHNA Survey

OBESITY

In Knox County, the percentage of obese people has increased from 38% in 2020 to 42% in 2021. This is significantly higher than the State of Illinois average, where obesity rates have increased from 33% in 2020 to 34% in 2021. In the 2025 CHNA survey, respondents indicated that obesity was the second most important health issue and was rated as the most prevalently diagnosed health condition. Research strongly suggests that obesity is a significant problem facing youth and adults nationally, in Illinois, and within Knox County. The U.S. Surgeon General has characterized obesity as “the fastest-growing, most threatening disease in America today.” According to the Obesity Prevention Initiative from the Illinois General Assembly, 20% of Illinois children are obese. With children, research has linked obesity to numerous chronic diseases including Type II diabetes, hypertension, high blood pressure and asthma. Adverse physical health side effects of obesity include orthopedic problems due to weakened joints and lower bone density. Detrimental mental health side effects include low self-esteem, poor body image, symptoms of depression and suicide ideation. Obesity impacts educational performance as well; studies suggest school absenteeism of obese children is six times higher than that of non-obese children. With adults, obesity has far-reaching consequences. Testimony to the Illinois General Assembly indicated that obesity-related illnesses contribute to worker absenteeism, slow workflow, and high worker compensation rates. A Duke University study on the effects of obesity in the workforce noted 13 times more missed workdays by obese employees than non-obese employees.

Behavioral
Health

Healthy
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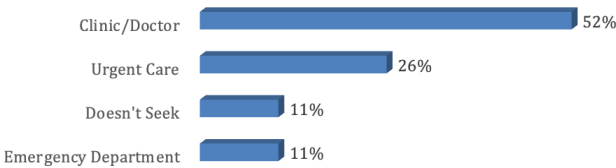
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Access to Healthcare

PRIMARY SOURCE OF HEALTHCARE

The CHNA survey asked respondents to identify their primary source of healthcare. While 52% of respondents identified clinic/doctor’s office as the primary source of care and 26% of respondents identified urgent care as the primary source of care, 11% of respondents indicated they do not seek healthcare when needed and similarly 11% identified the emergency department as a primary source of healthcare. Note that not seeking healthcare when needed is more likely to be selected by LatinX people and those living in an unstable housing environment. Selection of an emergency department as the primary source of healthcare tends to be rated higher by men, Black people, LatinX people, those with lower education, those with lower income, and those in an unstable housing environment.

CHOICE OF MEDICAL CARE

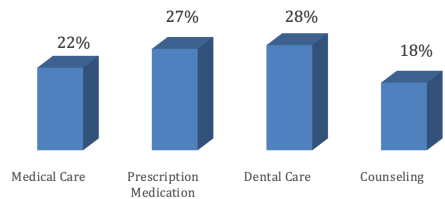


Source: CHNA Survey

ACCESS TO MEDICAL CARE, PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS, DENTAL CARE AND MENTAL-HEALTH COUNSELING

Additionally, survey results show that 22% of the population did not have access to medical care when needed; 27% of the population did not have access to prescription medications when needed; 28% of the population did not have access to dental care when needed; and 18% of the population did not have access to counseling when needed. The leading causes of not getting access to care when needed were cost and too long of a wait.

CHOICE OF MEDICAL CARE



Source: CHNA Survey

Collaborative Team

COLLABORATIVE TEAM

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