

2025 COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT (CHNA)

Deaconess Union County Hospital Plan

2025 Priorities

Included below are the **five priorities** that emerged from the 2025 prioritization session for Union County. Listed below each priority are selected considerations offered by prioritization participants during the facilitated discussion.

ACCESS TO CARE

Access to care addresses limitations around what care is available as well as barriers to receiving care that is available. Considerations specific to the prioritization of access included:

- There are limited providers in the community, especially particular specialties (e.g., psychiatrists, therapists, cardiologists, dentists). Also, there is not currently an urgent care center in the county.
- Most providers are centrally located in Morganfield, KY. Transportation is a barrier to access for those living in other areas of the county, as well as those needing to travel outside of the county for care.

Plan of action:

- Deaconess Union County will continue to recruit more providers and specialists to the area.
- Create a “Healthy Union County” collaborative group of healthcare service providers in the county. The purpose will be to collaborate, educate and exchange information for the health of the community.
- Deaconess Union County will create and make available a list of services, providers and healthcare in the county for residents. This will be created in cooperation with a new Healthy Union County community group.

MENTAL HEALTH

The mental health priority involves both mental health needs and the relationship of mental health needs with other areas of the healthcare system. Considerations specific to the prioritization of mental health included:

- Due to limited access to mental health providers, mental health needs often involve EMS and emergency room care. Emergency room staff are limited in their ability to address mental health needs. While some referral options are available (e.g., Cumberland Hall, River Valley, Deaconess Cross Pointe), specific provider requirements can be a barrier to care (e.g., serving specific age groups, requiring use of telehealth, necessitating travel). In many cases, this also leads to inadequate follow-up care, which results in repeated trips to the emergency room for ongoing issues.

Plan of action:

- Work with Cross Pointe and other community providers to help with awareness of available services in the community.
- Work with members of new Healthy Union County community group to find more resources for Mental Health care.
- Provide education and resources for suicide awareness. (988 stickers and information)

OLDER ADULT CARE

The priority on older adult care recognizes health issues within this population and emphasizes efforts to address barriers to needed care. Considerations specific to the prioritization of older adult care included:

- Food insecurity is a particular challenge for older adults. Transportation and mobility restrictions negatively impact individuals living in areas with limited access to nutritious food. While options exist for having nutritious foods delivered, this can be a challenge for older adults who are less comfortable using mobile apps and direct their fixed income toward prescription costs.
- Older adults may lack the mobility aids (e.g., ramps, walkers, wheelchairs) they need around their homes. Many live with older spouses or alone, lacking resources to help with prescription management, meals, and telehealth. Collectively, these challenges make it difficult for older adults to age in place without negative health implications.

Plan of action:

- In many cases there is a lack of communication of available resources for seniors in the community. Deaconess Union County will work with new Healthy Union County committee to develop lists of senior resources available across the county. This list would be made available to seniors through multiple sources.
- Work with local Senior Services non-profit organizations to develop a plan on how the community can help meet the needs of seniors.

SUBSTANCE USE

Substance use includes drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and vaping. Considerations specific to the prioritization of substance use included:

- Substance use is perceived to be an issue across age groups. While an increasing number of youth and young adults are using, middle aged and older adults seem to be maintaining use.
- Specific issues involve alcohol and marijuana use and prescription drug misuse (both intentional and nonintentional).
- Efforts to provide community education and resources related to substance use prevention are currently provided at community events through the health department. These efforts were described as a starting point for additional action planning.

Plan of action:

- Work with local schools and health department to provide information on dangers of Vaping for Middle School and High School students.
- Join school district wellness committee with a representative from hospital or clinic.
- Work with wellness committee at school district level to present a Vaping education program for community members and parents.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATION AND EDUCATION

Community collaboration and education involves efforts to increase awareness around health issues and available resources in the community. Considerations specific to the prioritization of community collaboration and education.

- In some cases, healthcare is impeded by a true lack of resources (e.g., limited providers). In other cases, however, services are not received because residents do not know what resources are available. This was true among providers as well, with providers reporting a lack of shared understanding of what is and could potentially be available in the community.
- Healthy Henderson was cited as an example to be modeled in Union County. Specifically, participants prioritized formation of a coalition to develop an inventory of available resources and provide community education about what services are available through providers, churches, government, etc.

Plan of action:

- All of the issues mentioned above have elements of community collaboration and education. Our this area will be addressed at every priority listed.