



2024

ARMSTRONG CENTER FOR MEDICINE AND HEALTH

Strategic Plan to Address Community Needs

Methodology

ACMH Hospital, which is a part of the Pennsylvania Mountains Care Network (PMCN), offers its community health needs assessment (CHNA) implementation strategy for 2024-2027. The implementation strategy is a result of the Hospital's CHNA, adopted by the ACMH Board of Directors on 6/25/2024.

The ACMH CHNA identified 11 areas of opportunity. After reviewing prioritization criteria, the ACMH Board of Directors approved 5 pillars of focus. Complete details are available within the ACMH CHNA, which can be viewed at <https://www.acmh.org/chna>.

Setting Priorities to Address the Health Needs of the Community

The CHNA steering committee and Board of Directors approved the following the prioritization methodology:

- Most common causes of premature death
- Most prevalent chronic disease conditions
- Recent trends in our mortality and chronic disease rates
- The comparison of Armstrong County's statistics to benchmarks
- Comments received from community members, especially those with knowledge of public health
- The ability of ACMH to impact outcomes

The steering committee and Board of Directors determined that the following factors would be used to determine community needs that would not or could not be addressed in this plan:

- ACMH Hospital lacks the ability to affect change.
- ACMH has determined that other community organizations are addressing the need.

Areas of Focus

Based on the analysis of the statistics reviewed and the data collected through community stakeholders, along with the steering committee and Board of Director's prioritization methodology, ACMH has identified the following pillars to focus on:

- Social Determinants of Health
 - Housing
 - Food insecurity
 - Transportation
 - EMS
- Substance Abuse
- Outpatient Mental Health
- Health Behaviors
 - Prevention and management of chronic disease
 - Tobacco use
 - Diet and exercise
- Provider Engagement
 - Healthcare education

- Provider training
- Provider shortages

Needs For Which Plans Will Not Be Made

The CHNA steering committee and ACMH Board of Directors determined that the following findings would not be prioritized by the Hospital:

- Low-income levels
 - Due to the inability of the organization to address
- Healthcare costs
 - ACMH has little control over drug and supply cost. Financial assistance is offered to all patients who qualify
- Broadband internet
 - Armstrong County government officials continue to develop plans to provide broadband internet access to all residents in the county.

Implementation Strategy Action Plan

Social Determinants of Health

When conducting the most recent CHNA, it was found that the population of Armstrong County has a high rate of transportation barriers and homelessness. A number of survey responders also stated there is a lack of emergency housing, low-income housing, and adequate housing. Many Armstrong County constituents are experiencing overall poor economic status. As was found in the 2021 CHNA, much of the population also experiences food insecurity and/or inadequate access to healthy foods.

As a part of the [Healthy People 2030](#) initiative and the [2022 – 2032 CMS Framework for Health Equity](#), the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) have mandated, as of January 1, 2024, that all patients admitted to a hospital shall be assessed for social determinants. This represents priority 1 (one) of their 5 (five) priority plan (pictured below) to increase equitable access and eliminate healthcare disparities.



Social determinants of health (SDOH) are defined as the conditions in the environments where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age. These circumstances affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks. They are grouped into five domains: economic stability, education access and quality, healthcare access and quality, neighborhood and built environment, and social and community context.

ACMH Hospital started conducting Social Determinant of Health Assessments in July 2023. The intervention covers topics surrounding a patient's access to housing, utilities, transportation, personal safety, physical abuse, emotional/verbal abuse, and food insecurity. Since the initiation, the facility has monitored the results, noting all positive screens and reporting the outcomes through quality committees, in which there is Executive representation. The Hospital is currently involved in developing programs and relationships with community-based organizations (CBO) to help address their patients' needs. Depicted below are the strategic programs developed or expanded to benefit our patient population.

Food Insecurity

The ACMH Hospital Care Package Program

The mission of ACMH Care Package Program is to provide nutritious food to patients in need, which will promote wellness, nourishment, and strength following discharge from the ACMH Hospital. The period immediately following a hospital stay can be a challenging time. Patients may not be well enough to cook or shop for several days. The ACMH Care Package Program provides interested patients with a three-day supply of meals to help with that transition. Food from the ACMH cafeteria is packaged into frozen meals for patients to take home upon discharge. These easy to prepare meals include a wide variety of food types with specific options for cardiac and diabetic patients when applicable. ACMH staff identify patients with food/nourishment needs upon intake. They then coordinate the delivery of the food upon discharge.

The ACMH Hospital Care Package Program originated in July 2021 on the medical/surgical and oncology units. It has since grown to serve all units of the hospital, including the emergency department. Shelf stable options are available for applicable patients. This program is in addition to The Food Pantry at ACMH.

The Food Pantry at ACMH

Over the last 20 months, in collaboration with the Greater Pittsburgh Area Foodbank (GPAFB), ACMH has had the opportunity to participate in a working group to help address food insecurity in Armstrong County. The GPAFB was awarded a grant to help address food insecurity in Armstrong, Butler, and Indiana counties. Through this working group, the Foodbank has donated ACMH a commercial size refrigerator and freezer, as well a shopping cart to help complete our space. The ACMH Emergency Food Pantry, which opened in April 2024, comes as a response to the growing concern over food insecurity, exacerbated by recent economic challenges and global uncertainties. Recognizing the importance of a reliable source of nutrition for individuals and families facing hardship, ACMH has undertaken the initiative to establish a pantry that will offer vital support to the community. The space is stocked with a diverse range of items to cater to various dietary needs and preferences, ensuring that all individuals can find something suitable to sustain themselves and their families.

The food pantry acts as a supplemental service for those already receiving monthly snap benefits or products from other local pantries. While the client is shopping the site, a food pantry representative will research resources local to each individual for long-term support.



Transportation

ACMH Hospital's 2024 CHNA identified transportation to be one of the most significant barriers to health and wellness. Being that Armstrong County is a rural area, there is an overall lack of transportation services for the residents to use. The transportation issues within Armstrong County are out of the control of the Hospital; however, the hospital continues to participate in workgroups and with local agencies in attempt to create solutions.

A new initiative the hospital has undertaken is educating the community and their patients about insurance benefit eligibility for necessary medical rides. Many patients are unaware of the benefits their health insurance offers for medical appointments.

EMS

ACMH is engaged with the Rural Health Redesign Center through the Emergency Medical and Community Health Industry Integration Partnership. The [EMCHIIP workgroup](#) is a regional collaboration aimed at strengthening the EMS and Community Health workforces in rural Pennsylvania. Its goal is to support Pennsylvania Rural Health Model (PARHM) hospitals in pursuing Mobile Integrated Healthcare solutions. These solutions are seen as a promising way to improve access to care and care management in PARHM communities by addressing transportation challenges and reducing emergency department readmissions.

ACMH Hospital remains committed to supporting continuing education within the community, especially for first responders and EMS personnel. The hospital aims to provide ongoing training opportunities, ensuring that these vital healthcare professionals stay current with the latest medical practices, resources, and hospital protocols. This commitment not only enhances the skills and knowledge of EMS staff but also strengthens the overall quality of emergency care available in the region, fostering a safer and more prepared community. ACMH is proud to be a partner in empowering those who serve on the front lines of healthcare.

ACMH Hospital is actively working to develop flexible transportation solutions by collaborating with EMS and Emergency Department providers. This initiative aims to improve patient access to timely care, especially for individuals facing transportation challenges in rural and underserved areas. By leveraging the expertise of EMS teams and emergency care providers, ACMH is creating a more responsive system

that ensures patients can reach medical services when they need them most. This collaboration not only enhances patient outcomes but also reduces barriers to care, strengthening the overall health infrastructure in the community.

Housing

The housing disparities within Armstrong County are out of the direct control of ACMH; however, the hospital remains committed to participating in work groups with local agencies in attempts to address. The data collected through the hospital administered Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) assessment is shared in hopes of being able to leverage change.

ACMH is engaged with the Connections of Armstrong County Connections Council seeking housing solutions for Armstrong County.

Substance Abuse

Addiction Recovery Mobile Outreach Team (ARMOT)

ARMOT offers case management and recovery support services to both adults and adolescents struggling with substance use disorders. The program encourages patients to involve their families in the recovery journey, allowing ARMOT staff to educate family members on how to provide the necessary support at home. This family involvement is key to fostering a supportive environment that aids in long-term recovery success.

Since the origination of the program in 2015, there have been over 3,000 referrals made throughout the three participating hospitals: ACMH, Indiana Regional Medical Center, and Clarion Hospital. ACMH Hospital continues to rely on this program to support patients in active addiction.

Medical Detox Unit

After the unit's closure in 2021, during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, ACMH is committed to reassessing and re-establishing the program if a need is identified.

Drugs Kill Dreams

ACMH Hospital and Foundation plan to continue supporting the Drugs Kill Dreams Program. Over the last twenty years, the program has been able to reach thousands of young people throughout Armstrong County and the surrounding areas.

Mental Health

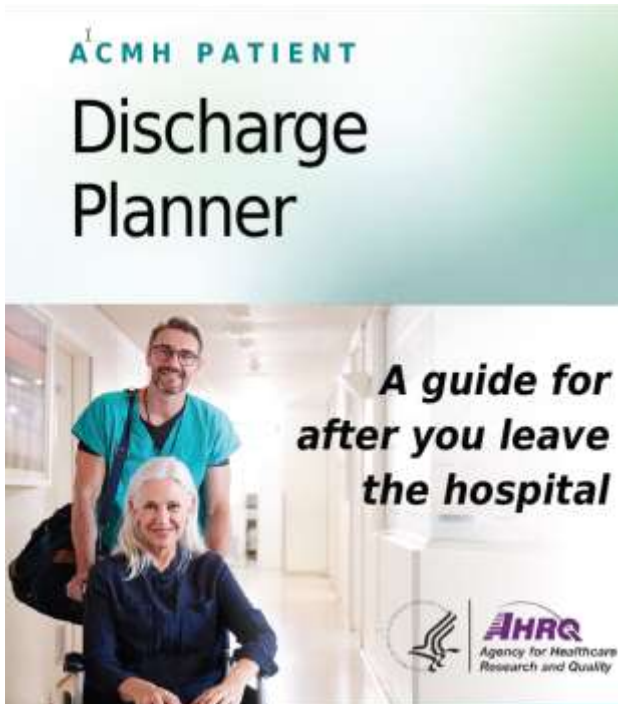
ACMH Hospital continues to evaluate and assess the needs of offering outpatient mental and behavioral health services over the next three-year period.

Health Behaviors

Prevention and Management of Chronic Disease

The RED Project

The re-engineered discharge (RED) project is an AHRQ initiative the hospital has implemented. The RED Project ensures that all discharged patients who have received the components of the RED project (the booklet shown below) understand how to care for themselves in the days following discharge. The RED Project has shown to reduce Emergency Department visits, as well as readmissions.



ACMH has hired a Discharge Nurse Navigator (DNN) to assist patients with chronic conditions and medication education. As of the beginning of this project, there will be a focus on COPD, CHF, and Sepsis diagnosed patients, with the opportunity to expand as the project evolves. Statistics show that patients and their families are highly satisfied with the care they receive when provided with the education and an understanding of their diagnosis. The Discharge Nurse Navigator will act as a liaison during the transition of care from inpatient to outpatient. Medication list will be updated to reflect any and all changes made during the hospital admission. Seven (7) day follow up appointments will be scheduled by the DNN prior to discharge.

Rural Health

ACMH through the Rural Health Model has committed to the goal of reducing rural health disparities through improved chronic disease management. Some of the ongoing activities for the hospital include:

- Partnering with frequent Emergency Department over-utilizers to reduce visit frequency and connect them with long-term healthcare resources to better address their needs.
- Collaboration with long-term care facilities to reduce the rate of acute admissions and readmissions.
- Continued education and follow up with Chronic Heart Failure (CHF) and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) patients with the goal of reducing acute admissions and readmissions.
- Remote monitoring in patient homes through the outpatient electronic health record, EClinicalWorks.

Partnership with the Lutheran SeniorLife VNA

In collaboration with Lutheran SeniorLife VNA, ACMH has launched a remote patient monitoring program to provide blood pressure cuffs and scales. This program will help to monitor the patients that do not qualify or have chosen not to use home health services.

Tobacco Use

Adagio

As a part of the “The Great American Smoke Out,” ACMH and Adagio plan to collaborate and have a table in the hospital with smoking cessation information.

ACMH plans to host a Great American Smoke Out event. This program will provide resources and support to quit smoking. This event provides an opportunity for individuals, community groups, businesses, health care providers, and others to encourage people to use the

Breathe PA – Smokeless Saturday

Pre-COVID, ACMH, in coordination with Armstrong School District, offered Smokeless Saturday. This program is an intensive education and cessation program for youth found in possession of tobacco and/or nicotine products on school property. ACMH Hospital will assess the need for this program in the community moving forward.

Anti-Vaping Campaign

Relaunching the ACMH anti-vaping campaign is crucial in addressing the growing concern of vaping, especially among teens and young adults. With new data showing an alarming rise in e-cigarette usage and the associated health risks, it's essential to renew efforts to educate the community on the dangers of vaping. A revived campaign would provide updated information, dispel myths, and offer resources for prevention and cessation. By reigniting awareness, ACMH can proactively safeguard the health of its population, especially vulnerable groups, and reinforce its commitment to promoting a smoke-free future.



Diet and Exercise

ACMH's continued collaboration with community agencies to promote diet and exercise is a powerful approach to improving the overall health of its residents. The hospital looks to work alongside local organizations, schools, and wellness programs to expand access to resources that encourage healthier lifestyles. These partnerships can facilitate educational workshops, fitness programs, and nutrition guidance tailored to the community's needs, ensuring that residents of all ages have the tools and

knowledge to make informed choices. Through these collaborations, ACMH attempts to strengthen its role as a leader in promoting preventive care and fostering a healthier, more vibrant community.

Food Bucks Rx

The AHA Food Bucks Rx program is a vital resource for ACMH patients, providing them with access to fresh, healthy foods through a prescription-based initiative. This program supports individuals struggling with food insecurity and chronic health conditions like diabetes and hypertension, empowering them to make better nutritional choices that directly improve their well-being. By offering patients vouchers to purchase fruits and vegetables, ACMH is not only addressing immediate health concerns but also promoting long-term lifestyle changes that lead to better health outcomes. The Food Bucks Rx program aligns with ACMH's commitment to holistic patient care, enhancing quality of life and reducing the burden of diet-related diseases.

ACMH Farmer's Markets

ACMH-hosted Farmer's Markets are a wonderful initiative that brings fresh, locally grown produce and other goods directly to the community, benefiting both public health and local farmers. These markets provide access to nutritious fruits, vegetables, and other wholesome foods, encouraging healthier eating habits among residents. For many in the community, the markets offer a convenient and affordable way to improve their diet, contributing to better overall wellness. Additionally, the markets foster a sense of connection by supporting local agriculture and creating a vibrant gathering space for neighbors to engage. This initiative reflects ACMH's dedication to promoting wellness beyond the hospital walls, making healthful living more accessible to everyone.



Provider Engagement

Healthcare Education

ACMH is committed to fostering a culture of continuous learning by actively seeking opportunities to bring medical staff together for education and professional development. Through workshops, seminars, and interdisciplinary collaboration, ACMH aims to create a dynamic learning environment where staff can stay updated on the latest medical advancements, technologies, and best practices. These educational opportunities encourage knowledge-sharing among physicians, nurses, and other healthcare professionals, promoting a cohesive approach to patient care. By prioritizing staff education, ACMH not only enhances the expertise and confidence of its medical team but also ensures that patients receive the highest standard of care, driven by innovation and evidence-based practices.

Community Education

Marketing Campaigns

ACMH's marketing campaigns, particularly those promoting "Don't Delay, Call 911" and "Hands-Only CPR," play a vital role in enhancing community education around emergency response. By encouraging individuals to act swiftly in emergencies, the "Don't Delay, Call 911" campaign empowers residents to seek immediate help, reducing response times and potentially saving lives. Similarly, the "Hands-Only CPR" initiative teaches simple, effective techniques that can be performed by bystanders, increasing the chances of survival for cardiac arrest victims. Together, these campaigns foster a culture of preparedness and awareness, equipping community members with essential knowledge and skills that can make a critical difference during emergencies. Through workshops, outreach, and accessible resources, ACMH strengthens community resilience and encourages proactive health behaviors. These are just a few of the many marketing campaigns that aim to educate our community members to live happier, healthier lives.



Patient and Family Advisory Council

ACMH's Patient and Family Advisory Council (PFAC), developed in January 2024, plays a crucial role in enhancing community education by ensuring that the voices of patients and their families are integral to healthcare decisions. By actively involving these stakeholders, the PFAC provides valuable insights into the needs and concerns of the community, helping to shape educational initiatives that are relevant and impactful. The council facilitates workshops, support groups, and informational sessions that empower

patients with knowledge about their health and available resources. Moreover, by fostering a collaborative environment between healthcare providers and community members, the PFAC promotes transparency and trust, ultimately leading to improved health literacy and better health outcomes. This partnership enriches the community's understanding of healthcare processes, encouraging informed decision-making and active participation in personal and communal health management.



Provider Training

Grand Rounds

ACMH Hospital is dedicated to continuing its Grand Rounds educational opportunities for healthcare providers, fostering a culture of continuous learning and professional development. These sessions bring together medical experts to share the latest research, clinical practices, and innovations in patient care. By providing a platform for providers to collaborate, discuss complex cases, and stay informed about advancements in medicine, ACMH enhances the quality of care delivered to patients. This commitment to ongoing education ensures that the hospital's medical staff remain at the forefront of healthcare excellence.

UpToDate Subscriptions

ACMH Hospital is committed to supporting its healthcare providers by investing in the opportunity to provide access to UpToDate, a trusted clinical decision support tool. By covering the cost of UpToDate licenses, ACMH will ensure that its medical staff has instant access to the latest evidence-based information and guidelines, helping them make informed decisions at the point of care. This resource empowers providers to stay current with advancements in medicine, improve patient outcomes, and enhance the overall quality of care. ACMH's investment in this tool reflects its dedication to excellence in patient care and provider education.

Provider Shortages

PMCN Physician Recruiter

The Pennsylvania Mountains Care Network (PMCN) has taken a proactive step to address the ongoing provider shortage by hiring a dedicated physician recruiter. This strategic move is aimed at attracting highly qualified healthcare professionals to meet the growing needs of the region. The recruiter will focus on identifying and securing top talent for PMCN's network of hospitals and clinics, helping to ensure that communities have access to quality medical care. By addressing gaps in provider availability, ACMH Hospital is working to enhance healthcare delivery, reduce wait times, and improve overall patient satisfaction across its service areas.

Duquesne and IUP medical schools

ACMH Hospital is excited about the upcoming opportunities to host medical residents from Duquesne University in 2026 and Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP) in 2028. This collaboration will not only provide valuable hands-on training for future healthcare professionals but also strengthen the hospital's role as a center for medical education and innovation. By welcoming residents from these prestigious institutions, ACMH will benefit from fresh perspectives and new ideas, while also helping to shape the next generation of healthcare providers. This initiative further demonstrates ACMH's commitment to fostering educational partnerships and enhancing the quality of care in the community.