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Your Feedback Makes Us Better

We welcome your comments, ideas and questions about this report, and all Community Health Needs Assessment and Community Health Implementation Plan documents at Northwestern Medicine.

Please share your feedback by calling the Northwestern Medicine Community Affairs Department at 312.926.2301 (TTY: 711) or by emailing communityhealth@nm.org. Please include your name, organization (if applicable) and any questions or feedback you have about the report content.

Public availability

This report and all Northwestern Medicine Community Health Needs Assessment and Community Health Implementation Plan documents are public information. You can access them at nm.org/about-us/nm-community-impact/reports.

You can also request reports at no cost by calling the Northwestern Medicine Community Affairs Department at 312.926.2301 (TTY: 711) or by emailing communityhealth@nm.org.



Introduction

Northwestern Medicine is committed to:

- Delivering world-class care and experience regardless of the patient's ability to pay
- Deepening our relationships with our community to improve health equity
- Advancing discovery and medical knowledge

We are a nonprofit, integrated academic health system committed to serving a broad community. We provide world-class care at 11 hospitals and more than 200 diagnostic and ambulatory locations in communities throughout Chicago and the surrounding suburbs.

Our hospitals are pillars in their respective communities and lead efforts to positively impact the health of the populations they serve. From collaborating with community organizations to serving as a major economic driver, Northwestern Medicine helps make communities stronger.

Northwestern Medicine is a strategic partnership between Northwestern Memorial HealthCare and Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine.



11 hospitals



200+ locations

Northwestern Medicine Kishwaukee Hospital

Located in DeKalb, Illinois, Northwestern Medicine Kishwaukee Hospital is an acute-care, 98-bed community hospital with an enduring commitment to the residents of DeKalb County. Because of the low ratio of primary care physicians and advanced practice providers to residents in DeKalb County, portions of the county have been designated by the federal government as a medically underserved population. Kishwaukee Hospital provides much-needed access to quality health care in its community. In fiscal year 2024, the medical staff of more than 380 physicians treated patients through more than 6,200 inpatient admissions and more than 35,000 emergency department visits.



Community Benefits Plan

Northwestern Memorial HealthCare and Northwestern Medicine Kishwaukee Hospital are guided by a Community Benefits Plan. The Community Benefits Plan includes comprehensive financial assistance and presumptive eligibility policies, as well as vast research, education and other community benefit activities. This Community Health Implementation Plan (CHIP) is aligned and coordinated with the Community Benefits Plan. Together, these strategies help to improve the health of the communities we serve.

About the Community Health Implementation Plan

In alignment with our mission and in accordance with the requirements of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, Northwestern Medicine Kishwaukee Hospital works with community organizations every three years to complete a comprehensive Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) that identifies the significant health needs of residents of the community it serves.

This CHIP is a companion document to the Kishwaukee Hospital 2024 CHNA, which can be accessed at nm.org/about-us/nm-community-impact/reports. The goal of the CHIP is to use CHNA data to guide initiatives that improve the health of our community.

In this report, we summarize the significant health needs identified in the 2024 CHNA. We identify which of these needs we will prioritize over the next three years and explain why we will not be addressing other significant health needs identified in the 2024 CHNA.

In addition, for each priority health need, we will explain:

- Actions or strategies planned to address the need
- Anticipated impact of those strategies
- Resources we intend to commit to those strategies
- Planned collaborations between Kishwaukee Hospital and other organizations to address the need

We rely on help from our community

Kishwaukee Hospital values input from local community members and uses their insights during development of the CHIP. One way we gather feedback is through our Community Engagement Council.

The Community Engagement Council is a diverse group of representatives from community-based organizations and Northwestern Medicine staff. Council members are people who have expertise in a broad range of areas and have demonstrated a strong, ongoing commitment to improving the health of the communities we serve. Council members were invited to participate based on their role within their respective organizations and their commitment to improving the health of the community.



Community Served by Northwestern Medicine Kishwaukee Hospital

The Northwestern Medicine Kishwaukee Hospital Community Service Area (CSA) covers 11 ZIP codes in DeKalb County, Illinois.

Kishwaukee Hospital CSA Cities and ZIP Codes			
City	ZIP Code	City	ZIP Code
Clare	60111	Kirkland	60146
Cortland	60112	Malta	60150
DeKalb	60115	Shabbona	60550
Genoa	60135	Sycamore	60178
Hinckley	60520	Waterman	60556
Kingston	60145		

How the Community Service Area is defined



DeKalb County, Illinois



504 square miles



89,468 residents¹



Predominantly rural

The Kishwaukee Hospital CSA was determined by:

- Geographic area served by the hospital
- Main functions of the hospital
- Areas that have been historically under-resourced
- Areas where we are currently working to address priority health needs, including work with community organizations

The defined CSA takes into account populations that are:

- Medically underserved
- Low income
- Historically underrepresented, minority populations

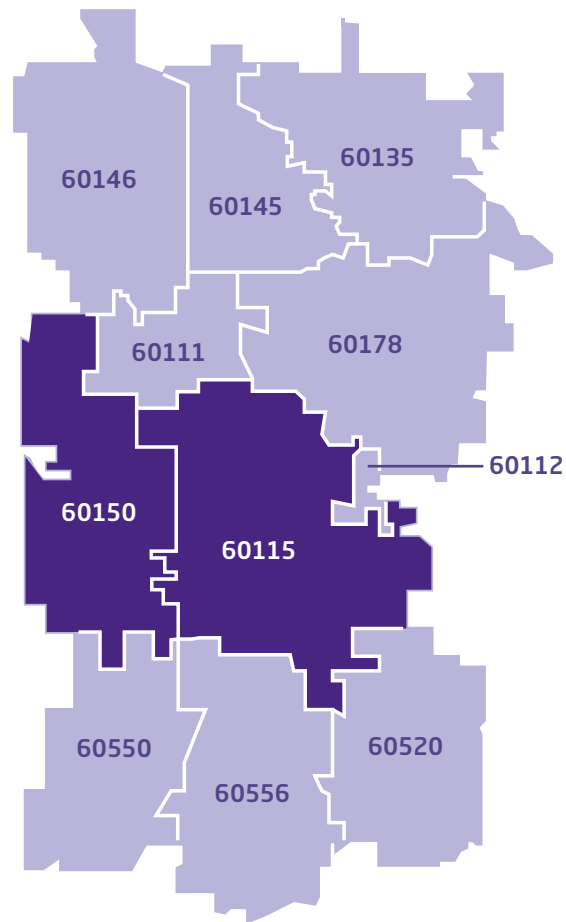
Our CSA definition does not consider how much patients or their insurers pay for care or whether patients are eligible for financial assistance through Northwestern Medicine.

Identifying communities with economic hardship

Once the CSA has been defined, Northwestern Medicine uses the Socioeconomic Resource Index (SERI) to identify areas experiencing economic hardship. Under-resourced areas are identified based on multiple indicators, including:

- Unemployment (for individuals older than 16 years)
- Education (those older than 25 years without a high school diploma)
- Per capita income level
- Crowded housing (more than one person per room)
- Dependents (younger than 18 years or older than 64 years)
- Poverty (income below 200% of the federal poverty level)

The strategies identified in this report focus on these under-resourced areas in an effort to address health disparities within the CSA.



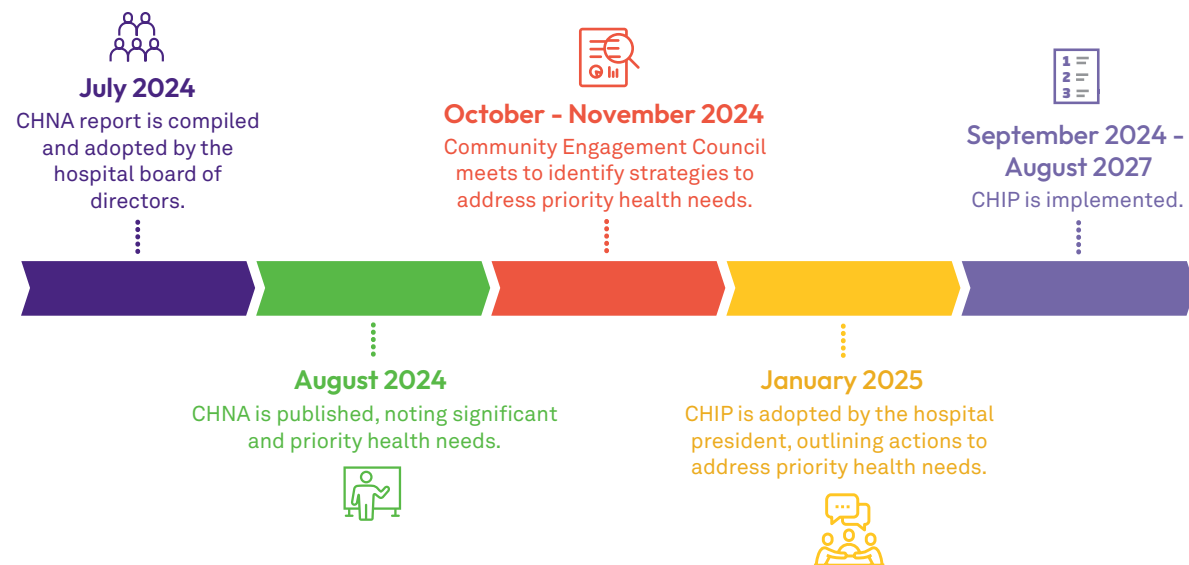
Northwestern Medicine Kishwaukee Hospital Community Service Area. Locations in dark purple (City of DeKalb and the Village of Malta) have been identified as under-resourced communities by SERI.





Community Health Implementation Plan Overview

CHIP Timeline



CHIP Development Process

CHNA: Identify significant health needs



Northwestern Medicine Kishwaukee Hospital collaborated with Metopio to create the 2024 CHNA. Together, we completed a comprehensive analysis of the collected data. Analysis included getting input from people in targeted under-resourced populations.

Prioritization: Select priority health needs



Once the CHNA data analysis was complete, we convened the Community Engagement Council to help identify the highest-priority health needs.

To help us prioritize, council members reviewed guiding principles and CHNA data findings and participated in robust conversations regarding community health needs for the CSA.

Strategy development: Identify actions to address priority health needs



Following the prioritization process, we had conversations with community organizations and internal teams to identify potential strategies. We then worked with the Community Engagement Council to identify actions, resources, anticipated impacts and planned collaborations to address selected priority health needs over the next three years. In developing these strategies, we were mindful of our own strengths and those of other organizations in our CSA.

This work is the basis for the CHIP.

Adoption: Three-year plan



This CHIP was adopted in January 2025 by the hospital president and will be active until August 31, 2027, in alignment with our fiscal year calendar.

Implementation: Implement strategies to address priority health needs



As we work to address priority health needs over the three-year CHIP span, the report will be reviewed and updated as needed to ensure it remains viable and to maximize our impact. We will regularly share our efforts with reporting agencies and our community.



Significant Health Needs for Northwestern Medicine Kishwaukee Hospital

The following significant health needs were identified through the Northwestern Medicine Kishwaukee Hospital 2024 CHNA. Of these, three (highlighted in orange) were selected as priority health needs.

Among the significant health needs not identified as priority health needs, many are being addressed through the ongoing, comprehensive services and programs at Kishwaukee Hospital, in collaboration with our community allies and across Northwestern Medicine.

Health Need Identified in the 2024 CHNA	Our Response
▶ Access to Health Care	This need has been identified as a priority health need. See pages 14-17 for our plan to address it.
▶ Behavioral Health	This need has been identified as a priority health need. See pages 18-20 for our plan to address it.
Cancer	This need is addressed through the hospital care delivery system.
▶ Cardiovascular Disease	This need has been identified as a priority health need. See pages 22-23 for our plan to address it.
Diabetes	This need is addressed through the hospital care delivery system.
Food Access	This need is better addressed by community organizations specializing in this field.
Homelessness and Housing	This need is better addressed by community organizations specializing in this field.
Obesity	This need is addressed through the hospital care delivery system.
Substance Use Disorders	This need is addressed through the hospital care delivery system.
Transportation	This need is better addressed by community organizations specializing in this field.

▶ Indicates priority health need



Priority Health Needs for Northwestern Medicine Kishwaukee Hospital

The following were identified as the priority health needs to be addressed by Northwestern Medicine Kishwaukee Hospital over the next three years.

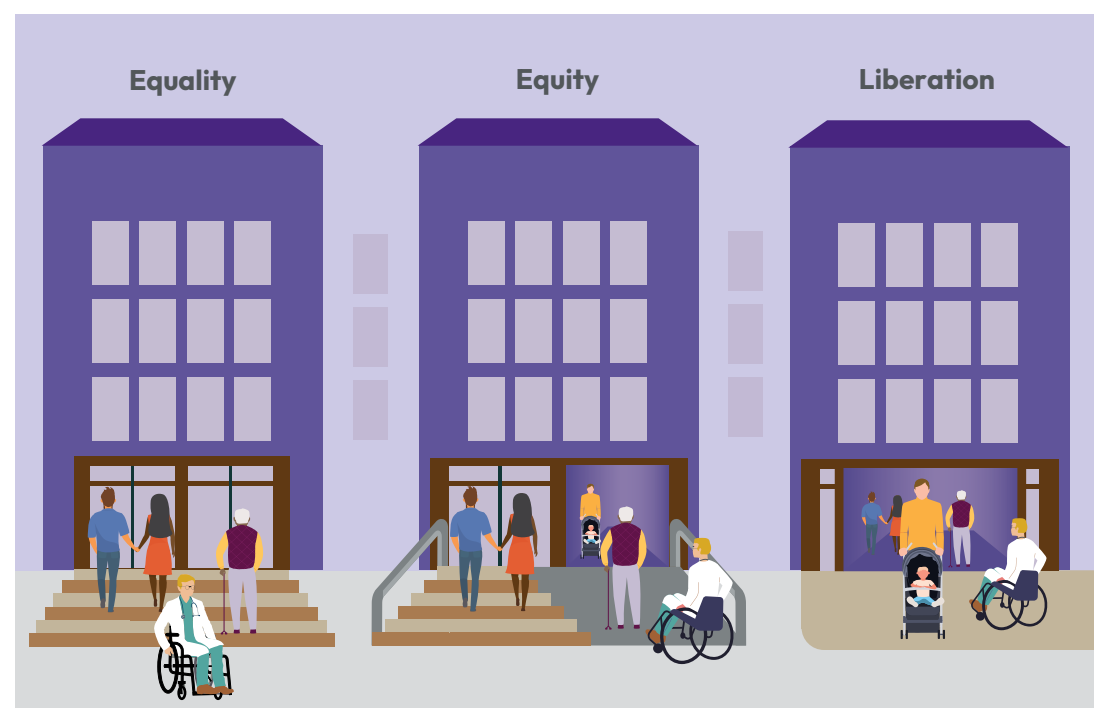
Three circular icons are arranged horizontally. The first is purple with a white stethoscope icon and the text 'Access to Health Care'. The second is yellow with a white brain icon and the text 'Behavioral Health'. The third is green with a white heart icon and the text 'Cardiovascular Disease'.

Our commitment to health equity

To achieve equity for those we serve, Northwestern Medicine continually works to:

- Overcome structural inequities and bias
- Improve coordination and connection to community resources
- Provide culturally and linguistically appropriate care

These three areas are integrated in every strategy we have for addressing the priority health needs of our community. These are foundational issues that Northwestern Medicine is addressing both within the organization and across our communities. The long-standing resolve to address them is embedded throughout the work of Northwestern Medicine.



Community Health Implementation Plan



Priority Health Need: Access to Health Care

Goal: Increase access to comprehensive, high-quality healthcare services.

Access to Health Care was identified as a priority health need in the Northwestern Medicine Kishwaukee Hospital CSA. From survey results to in-depth interviews with persons who represent the broad interests of the community, the need for access continuously emerged in our findings. It was elevated in conversations as a concern that impacts individual health and significantly influences the overall well-being of the community.

Specific themes included the affordability of medical professionals, insurance and medication, as well as access to transportation.

We heard you

“We hear about a lot (of access challenges) just because of where we are geographically, and how wide the distance is within our county to be able to get places. Most of our social services and healthcare resources are centralized in the DeKalb-Sycamore area. And so, we hear a lot about those who are in the north part of the county or in the south part of the county maybe not having equal access to those services.”

– Focus group participant³

Survey respondents identified these important community issues as factors that impact access to health care:

39.4%

Access to health care and affordable medical professionals



31.1%

Access to affordable insurance



38.3%

Access to affordable medication



24.6%

Access to transportation



Action 1: Capacity

Provide more support for federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) and free and charitable care clinics.

Anticipated Impact

- Increased number of patients able to receive care at community sites

Resources

- Funding

Collaborations

- FQHCs
- Free clinics

Action 2: Grants and Donations

Provide funding to community organizations and programs that provide healthcare services and resources to populations that have historically had limited access to these resources.

Anticipated Impact

- Increased funding to organizations that provide access to healthcare services for underserved populations
- Increased collaboration with community-based organizations that align with the Northwestern Medicine vision

Resources

- Funding

Collaborations

- Community organizations

Action 3: Community Education and Programs

Deliver community-based screenings and educational programs.

Anticipated Impact

- Increased number of community-based programs
- Increased number of participants using available programs

Resources

- Staff time
- Educational materials

Collaborations

- Community organizations

Action 4: Social Determinants of Health

Collaborate with community organizations to help remove barriers to care.

Anticipated Impact

- Increased funding for programs
- Socioeconomic needs addressed for more community members

Resources

- Funding
- Public support and advocacy

Collaborations

- Community organizations



Priority Health Need: Behavioral Health

Goal: Improve access to and increase use of services that address behavioral health.

Behavioral Health was identified as a priority health need in the Northwestern Medicine Kishwaukee Hospital CSA. In the survey, 24.8% of respondents indicated they needed behavioral health treatment or counseling in the 12 months preceding the survey, and of those respondents, 26.2% indicated they were unable to get the help they needed.³ The availability of healthcare professionals and high cost were the top reasons given for the inability to access services.

We heard you

“We continue to be challenged in addressing the behavioral health issues that we have in the community. The needs around behavioral and mental health services are real. We still haven’t effectively met the need locally.”

– Focus group participant³

Focus group participants identified these challenges as factors that impact behavioral health:



Improved access to treatment, including more mental health workers and adequate emergency department care for mental health crises



Improved continuity of care for individuals transitioning from hospital to home



Increased mental health services for youth

Survey respondents identified behavioral health as a top community health need:

43.4%

Adult mental health



35.9%

Adolescent mental health

Action 1: Community Education and Programs

Provide a calm and safe environment through The Living Room at Ben Gordon Center, where guests can resolve crises without intensive intervention.

Anticipated Impact

- Increased assistance and support to community members in crisis
- Increased linkage to community resources and referrals

Resources

- Staff time
- Educational materials

Collaborations

- Community organizations

Action 2: Community Education and Programs

Expand community-based behavioral health preventive and educational programs.

Anticipated Impact

- Increased number of community-based behavioral health educational programs
- Increased number of participants using available programs

Resources

- Staff time
- Educational materials

Collaborations

- Community organizations

Action 3: Capacity

Collaborate with community organizations to improve access to behavioral health services.

Anticipated Impact

- Increased funding for community behavioral health professionals
- Increased number of community members receiving behavioral health care close to where they live or work

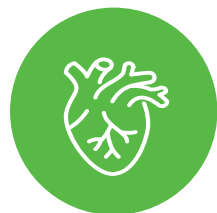
Resources

- Funding
- Public support and advocacy

Collaborations

- Community organizations





Priority Health Need: Cardiovascular Disease

Goal: Increase access to cardiovascular disease prevention education and support services.

Cardiovascular Disease was identified as a priority health need in the Northwestern Medicine Kishwaukee Hospital CSA. Healthy lifestyle factors, such as having a healthy diet, maintaining a healthy weight and getting regular exercise, can aid in disease prevention. Access to preventive education and services can help individuals control risk factors such as high blood pressure and high cholesterol.

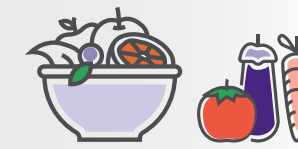
We heard you

Survey respondents report being told by a health professional that they have high blood pressure (44.6%) or high cholesterol (23.6%).³ Cardiovascular diseases were the leading cause of death in DeKalb County in 2022.²

Survey respondents identified these challenges as factors that impact cardiovascular disease:



Obesity



Healthy eating



Access to exercise and physical activity

Action 1: Community Education and Programs

Deliver community-based cardiovascular disease screening, education and programs.

Anticipated Impact

- Increased number of community-based programs
- Increased number of participants using available programs

Resources

- Staff time
- Educational materials

Collaborations

- Community organizations

Action 2: Capacity

Expand community-based programs that provide cardiovascular disease education, programs and services.

Anticipated Impact

- Increased funding for community healthcare professionals
- Increased number of community members receiving cardiovascular disease care close to where they live or work
- Increased collaboration with community-based organizations that align with the Northwestern Medicine vision

Resources

- Funding

Collaborations

- Community organizations

Community Health Implementation Plan Adoption

The adoption of this plan was authorized through a board resolution at the July 30, 2024, meeting of the Kishwaukee Community Hospital Board of Directors.

The Northwestern Medicine Kishwaukee Hospital 2025 – 2027 Community Health Implementation Plan was adopted by the president of Northwestern Medicine Kishwaukee Hospital by January 15, 2025.

Appendix: References

1. U.S. Department of Commerce. (2022). *U.S. Census Bureau 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates*. U.S. Department of Commerce. <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-kits/2022/acs-5-year.html>.
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2022). *Mortality Statistics*. National Vital Statistics System–Mortality. Accessed through Metopio.
3. Community input represents information and beliefs obtained from CHNA focus groups and from persons representing the broad interests of the community, including people who are uninsured, have low incomes and belong to certain minority groups.



Northwestern Medicine Kishwaukee Hospital

1 Kish Hospital Drive
DeKalb, Illinois 60115
815.756.1521

TTY: 711

[nm.org](https://www.nm.org)