Aurora Medical Center – Fond du Lac
Community Health Implementation Strategy

January 1, 2026 - December 31, 2028

Community health improvement is an effective tool for creating a shared vision and supporting a planned and integrated approach to improving health outcomes. The basic premise of community health improvement is that entities identify community health issues, prioritize those that can be addressed, and then develop, implement, and evaluate strategies to address those issues. Tax-exempt hospitals are required to conduct a community health needs assessment (CHNA) and develop an implementation strategy to document how the hospital will address prioritized community health needs. The following outlines a summary of the CHNA process and provides details on how Aurora Medical Center – Fond du Lac plans to address their prioritized community health needs.

SUMMARY OF CHNA PROCESS

In 2024, Aurora Medical Center – Fond du Lac (Aurora Fond du Lac) participated with the Healthy Fond du Lac County collaborative to conduct a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) in Fond du Lac County, which consisted of a comprehensive presentation and analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data.

The Aurora Fond du Lac CHNA relies on three sources of primary data information, gathered through the collaborative:

Community Health Survey: 499 online surveys were completed between April 1 and June 1, 2024, to gain insight from the community on top health needs in the community, individuals' perception of their overall health, access to health services and social drivers of health.

Key Stakeholder Interviews: 10 interviews were conducted in August 2024 to provide qualitative data regarding community needs. Key stakeholders interviewed were considered community experts who can provide valuable insight on pressing health issues in the Fond du Lac County community.

Community Conversations: 12 community conversations occurred in August 2024 throughout the county to deepen public engagement and create space for diverse voices - especially those from underserved and vulnerable groups - to share perspectives that might otherwise go unheard.

Additionally, Aurora Health Care analyzes secondary data, or existing information gathered from various sources, to provide valuable insights and context from the following sources:

Metopio: Aurora Health Care has a contract with Metopio to provide an internet-based data resource for their hospitals. This robust platform offers curated data from public and proprietary sources for information on health behaviors and health risks, health outcomes, health care utilization, demographic, and community-level drivers of health like economic, housing, employment, and environmental conditions. Data for each indicator is presented by race, ethnicity, and gender when the data is available. All data collected through Metopio was quantitative and included data comparisons between county, state and United States data.

County Health Rankings & Roadmaps – Fond du Lac County: A program of the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute and supported by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the County Health Rankings & Roadmaps (CHR&R) provides a snapshot of health for nearly every county in the nation, based on a variety of public health data. CHR&R advocates for an understanding of data and evidence to develop methods to improve health and equity. (County Health Rankings & Roadmaps, About Us, 2024)

The top health issues identified in the Aurora Fond du Lac CHNA were:

- Access to Care
- Alcohol and Substance Use
- Chronic Disease and Prevention
- Community Safety
- Economic Stability
- Mental Health

The top health issues identified were presented to the hospital's leadership team and community steering council, and members were asked to rank the issues based on the following criteria: size and seriousness of the problem; effectiveness of available interventions; available resources to address the health issue; whether the health care system is adequately positioned to address the issue; alignment with a defined community need identified through data; potential for the issue to impact other health and social issues; and the ability to effectively address or impact the issue through collaboration.

Using these criteria, Aurora Fond du Lac has prioritized the significant health needs to address in 2026-2028:

Significant Need	Implementation Strategy Selection Reasoning
Mental Health	This need was selected because mental health issues continue to rise in the county, including mental health crises such as suicide and self-harm. There are also concerning disparities for certain groups being greatly affected by depression. The hospital is committed to supporting access to care and community initiatives to support better mental health for all.
Community Safety	The Aurora Fond du Lac team decided to focus efforts on community safety, as there are concerning trends, especially relating to accidents and fall mortality. The hospital will strive to align resources to impact outcomes and work with partners in the community to prevent injuries and respond to trauma.

For each prioritized health need, the hospital plans to commit resources, which may include staff time, information technology systems, outreach, promotions and educational materials, funding, medical supplies, and other resources as available.

PRIORITY: Mental Health

IMPACT:
Improve access to care and increase awareness on mental health issues to better promote overall well-being for all community members.

DESCRIPTION OF HEALTH NEED DATA:

- The suicide death rate in Fond du Lac is higher than the Wisconsin and United States rates.
- Fond du Lac County has far fewer mental health providers per capita than the state and nation, which may lead to less access to mental health services for community members.
- Community members that were surveyed voted for mental health as the top health condition, with 14% of respondents stating their household did not receive the mental health care they needed.

ALIGNMENT WITH EXISTING STRATEGIES

LOCAL: Healthy Fond du Lac County Community Health Improvement Plan

- Decrease number of deaths by suicide.
- Increase access to behavioral health services.

STATE: Wisconsin State Health Improvement Plan

- Pursue population-level prevention of and intervention for mental health and substance use issues.
- Increase accessibility of mental health and substance use intervention and recovery services.

NATIONAL: Healthy People 2030

- Improve mental health.

STRATEGY #1: Increase access to innovative behavioral health services

Planned Interventions	Collaborative Partners	Intended Outcomes
• Provide suicide risk screenings in the Emergency Department (ED) and refer to internal resources as needed to support patients in crisis • Provide behavioral health consults and referrals for substance use disorders through the ED Social Worker • Expand integrated behavioral health services in primary care to reduce barriers to mental health care and improve timely, coordinated access for patients	• Aurora Medical Group (AMG) • Aurora Behavioral Health • Community-based organizations within the FindHelp platform	• Increased access to mental health services • Improved coordination for mental health care • Increased referrals to resources and follow up care • Reduced mental health crisis ED and hospitalization visits

Measures

- Percent of patients screened
- Number of patients referred to services
- Number of patients screened in primary care
- Percent of patients receiving follow up mental health care

**Impact measures are subject to change depending on the direction of each intervention.*

PRIORITY: Mental Health (CONTINUED)

STRATEGY #2: Collaborate on prevention tactics in the community for improved behavioral health outcomes

Planned Interventions	Collaborative Partners	Intended Outcomes
• Mobilize system resources through investments and community service with mental health organizations • Support prevention efforts in the community through the Healthy Fond du Lac Community Health Coalition	• Community-based organizations • Healthy Fond du Lac County • Education institutions	• Increased awareness and access to mental health services in the community • Reduced stigma • Improved partnerships and reduced wait time to mental health services

Measures

- Progress Milestones
- Number of community-based organizations supported; funding provided; total hours of employee time provided

**Impact measures are subject to change depending on the direction of each intervention.*

PRIORITY: Community Safety

IMPACT:
Enhance patient safety by advancing trauma-informed care and fall prevention strategies that reduce injury risk.

DESCRIPTION OF HEALTH NEED DATA:

- Accidents is the 3rd leading cause of death in the county; Fond du Lac County has a higher unintentional injury mortality rate than both Wisconsin and the United States.
- Fond du Lac County is in the top quartile (worst 25%) for fall mortality in the state, and the fall hospitalization rate continues to increase in the county.
- Criminal sexual assault continues to be a safety concern across the county, state and nation, all with similar rates for this crime.

ALIGNMENT WITH EXISTING STRATEGIES

LOCAL: Aurora Health Care Services

- Forensic Nursing Services

STATE: Wisconsin State Health Improvement Plan

- Build systems that support and protect the physical safety of people and communities.
- Build systems that support and protect the mental and psychological safety of people and communities.

NATIONAL: Healthy People 2030

- Prevent Injuries.
- Prevent violence and related injuries and deaths.
- Prevent hospital visits and improve emergency department and hospital care.

STRATEGY #1: Enhance patient safety by advancing trauma-informed care and fall prevention strategies that reduce injury risk

Planned Interventions	Collaborative Partners	Intended Outcomes
• Promote falls prevention best practices for the hospital • Provide trauma-informed care for people who have experienced assault • Refer patients to appropriate medical, clinical, counseling, and advocacy services following a safety event	• Forensic Nursing Services • Organizations within Findhelp platform	• Reduced risk of falls and fall-related injuries among hospitalized patients • Increased awareness of fall risks and prevention strategies • Improved coordination among multidisciplinary teams to support patient safety • Increased access to trauma-informed, patient-centered care for individuals who have experienced assault • Improved patient experience through the availability of a safe, supportive, and private care environment

Measures

- Progress updates
- Number of fall-risk assessments completed
- Number of individuals provided with services
- Number of referrals / percent connected to services

**Impact measures are subject to change depending on the direction of each intervention.*

PRIORITY: Community Safety (CONTINUED)

STRATEGY #2: Promote community safety through injury prevention and improved emergency response

Planned Interventions	Collaborative Partners	Intended Outcomes
• Coordinate falls prevention partnerships and support a Stepping On program • Coordinate crisis intervention trainings with local organizations on sexual assault education and awareness • Mobilize system resources through investments and community service with safety organizations	• Physical therapy department • Aging and Disability Resource Center • Emergency first responders • Education institutions • Community-based organizations	• Increased awareness of fall risks and prevention strategies • Reduced emergency department and hospitalization rates due to falls • Increased awareness of available assault support services within the community • Strengthened connection to community-based advocacy, counseling, and support resources

Measures

- Number of education events
- Number of individuals educated
- Funds donated / hours of staff time provided

**Impact measures are subject to change depending on the direction of each intervention.*

Note: Plans to address selected CHNA priorities are dependent upon resources and may be adjusted on an annual basis to best address the health needs of our community.

Needs Not Addressed

This Community Health Implementation Strategy focuses on the above priority health needs selected by the hospital based on community input, available resources, and alignment with organizational and community partner capacity. The Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) also identified additional significant health needs, including access to care, alcohol and substance use, chronic disease and prevention, and economic stability. These needs, while also important, are not addressed in this CHIS due to factors such as limited hospital resources, the presence of existing initiatives, or a determination that the hospital is not best positioned to lead efforts in these areas at this time. Aurora Health Care will continue to collaborate with community partners and share resources, when appropriate, to support progress on these needs within the community.

Adoption of the Implementation Strategy

The Community Health Implementation Strategy report was adopted by the Aurora Health Care Metro Board, the authorizing body of the hospital, on April 20, 2026.