

# Community Health Needs Assessment

Chittenden and Grand Isle Counties, Vermont



2025

## THE 2025 COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT

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A Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) is a process that non-profit hospitals complete every three years in partnership with community-based organizations to learn more about the significant health needs in the greater community. These valuable insights inform strategic investment and guide community programming to improve the identified priorities.

The UVM Medical Center and 14 members of the 2025 CHNA Steering Committee collaborated on the 2025 CHNA for its designated Health Service Area of Chittenden and Grand Isle Counties.

### 2025 CHNA GOALS

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1. To conduct an inclusive and high-quality assessment, through the lens of racial and health equity, of community health needs and assets in Chittenden and Grand Isle Counties.
2. To partner with diverse stakeholders resulting in: a) consensus of priority needs to address, b) shared buy-in for implementation strategies, c) support of complimentary community initiatives and assessments.

## DATA GATHERING AND COMMUNITY HEALTH PRIORITIES

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The 2025 CHNA process was inclusive and robust, with an intentional focus on equity. To better understand community needs, we collected new data from surveys and focus groups and examined existing health indicators for the two counties.

-  **COMMUNITY HEALTH INDICATORS REPORT:** 70+ health indicators
-  **COMMUNITY SURVEY:** Offered in 12 languages with 1,497 survey responses
-  **FOCUS GROUPS:** 6 sessions held with populations of focus

### COMMUNITY HEALTH PRIORITIES SESSIONS:

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- Two virtual sessions were held in May 2025 to engage community leaders and champions in prioritizing six health priorities that emerged from the data gathering phase.
- 66 participants from 28 different organizations and agencies participated and provided ratings by three criteria: Impact, Community Readiness and Equity.

### THE TOP 3 COMMUNITY HEALTH PRIORITIES, IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER,:

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- **Building Community Connectedness**
- **Engaging on Mental Health**
- **Increasing Health Care Access**

## COMMUNITY HEALTH PRIORITIES AND KEY FINDINGS

Addressing Cultural Humility and Inclusive Health Care	Building Community Connectedness	Engaging on Mental Health
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Survey results show that 54% of Hispanic/Latino respondents and 62% of Black/African American respondents felt their cultural identity was respected by providers, compared to 72% of White respondents</li> <li>Focus group participants frequently cited stigma and judgment in health care as a barrier to maintaining their health (19% of responses)</li> <li>There is a need to increase workforce diversity across race, ethnicity, language, and lived experience to better reflect and serve the community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loneliness and social isolation were highlighted by focus groups as root causes of poor mental health and barriers to wellbeing</li> <li>According to the Community Survey, 46.1% of adults age 65 and older in Chittenden County live alone</li> <li>88.8% of Community Survey respondents said the region is a good place to raise children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health indicator data show an increase in the number of adults experiencing mentally unhealthy days</li> <li>Expanding youth mental health programs was the top choice among Community Survey respondents for improving schools</li> <li>71% of Community Survey respondents agreed they can access mental health services in their community, and 74% said the same for substance use treatment</li> </ul>
Improving Community Safety	Increasing Health Care Access	Workforce Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>16% of focus group responses identified personal safety concerns as a barrier to health</li> <li>1 in 4 high school students in the UVM Medical Center Health Service Area reported experiencing bullying in 2023</li> <li>In the Community Survey, 20% of respondents selected “more safety options for walkers and bikers” as their top choice for improving their community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More than one in three Community Survey respondents identified appointments outside 9–5 weekday hours as the top improvement needed for better access to care</li> <li>Even when services are available and financially accessible, focus group participants described a fragmented and opaque system, where attempts to seek care often ended without receiving any services</li> <li>Not all residents have the same access to health insurance, with coverage gaps affecting people of different racial, ethnic, and income groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More than 60% of Community Survey respondents said increasing affordable housing units is essential to improve health and wellbeing</li> <li>Over half of respondents reported that affordable childcare is not available in their community, limiting families’ stability and workforce participation</li> <li>Gaps in median income by race, ethnicity, and gender continue to undermine economic security and equitable health outcomes</li> </ul>

## NEXT STEPS: MOVING FROM ASSESSMENT TO ACTION

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- The CHNA will advance to the UVMHC Board for adoption and ratification of the health priorities to focus on. The CHNA report will be made available publicly.
- The CHNA findings will inform the development of the 2026-2028 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) that UVMHC will develop in collaboration with key partners.

### The CHIP process will:

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- Facilitate inclusive community engagement to generate solutions that builds upon strengths and addresses inequities
- Communicate shared goals, strategies and resources to make measurable improvements

To learn more about Community Health Improvement or the 2025 CHNA/CHIP process, please visit:

[www.UVMHealth.org/medcenter/about-uvm-medical-center/the-community/needs-assessment](http://www.UVMHealth.org/medcenter/about-uvm-medical-center/the-community/needs-assessment)

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