

# 2025 Community Health Needs Assessment Implementation Plan

## Overview

UNC Health Nash, in partnership with the Nash County Health Department, has conducted the Nash County 2024 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) and established strategies for addressing three health priorities identified by members of the community: 1) Behavioral Health (Mental Health & Substance Abuse), 2) Access to and Quality of Healthcare, and 3) Social Drivers of Health with Emphasis on Economic Stability.

This Implementation Plan provides a descriptive overview of existing and planned strategies for addressing the priorities identified through the 2024 CHNA process. It shows how UNC Health Nash is using the findings from the CHNA as a guide for strategic planning and as a tool for accountability. It is not designed to encapsulate all the activities that will be initiated to impact the three identified priorities.

## Priority 1: Behavioral Health (Mental Health & Substance Use)

Justifications identified through the Community Health Needs Assessment:

- **Community Need:** Both primary and secondary data sources highlight mental health and substance use disorder (SUD) as key concerns in Nash County.
- **Stigma:** Stakeholder conversations emphasize stigma as a persistent barrier to care, particularly for SUD and harm reduction services.
- **Access Barriers:** Limited availability of mental health providers, lack of funding, and gaps in insurance coverage restrict access.
- **Health Impact:** Mental health challenges influence outcomes in multiple other domains, making behavioral health a foundational priority for community well-being.

### Goal:

Strengthen behavioral health infrastructure through expanded access, reduced stigma, increased care coordination, and investment in recovery supports.

### Action Plan:

Objective	Strategy/Action Item	Responsible Parties
<b>Strengthen community engagement and stigma reduction</b>	Continue to support and expand efforts of the Coalition for Addiction Recovery and Education (CARE) through education, resource sharing, and stakeholder collaboration, including the hosting of bi-monthly community meetings	Coastal Plains Hospital, Nash County, CARE Coalition
	CARE to conduct 10+ community events focused on stigma reduction, harm prevention, and recovery support	CARE Coalition, Community Partners
	Provide community-wide Narcan education, Peer Support Training, and One-Box distribution	CARE Coalition, Public Health Partners
<b>Increase care coordination and access to services</b>	Continue the development of the UNC Nash Outpatient Psychiatric Clinic to increase outpatient appointment availability	UNC Health Nash

	Use CARE meetings as a platform to facilitate provider networking and cross-sector collaboration	CARE Coalition, Coastal Plains Hospital Providers
	Introduce standardized mental health screenings to identify issues of depression, anxiety, and substance use among patients being served by the UNC Nash Community Paramedic Program.	UNC Nash Community Paramedic Program
	Pilot Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) interventions for specific behavioral health diagnoses	UNC Nash Community Paramedic Program
<b>Build coordinated leadership around behavioral health</b>	Continue to fund and co-support a Partnership & Coalition Manager with Nash County to lead behavioral health strategy	UNC Health Nash, Nash County
<b>Expand recovery support services and outpatient access</b>	UNC Nash Foundation to invest in Recovery Support Services for patients in the Emergency Department (ED), Coastal Plains, and Outpatient Psych Clinic	UNC Nash Foundation, ED, Coastal Plains
	Expand patient assistance programs (e.g., care-kits, medication access, transportation)	UNC Nash Foundation
	Continue exploring a partnership with Coastal Plains to fund a Peer Support Specialist for shared coverage across ED and outpatient settings	UNC Nash Foundation, Coastal Plains Hospital

## Priority 2: Access to and Quality of Healthcare

Justifications identified through the Community Health Needs Assessment:

- **Community Need:** Primary and secondary data from the CHNA highlight access and quality of care as ongoing priorities for Nash County.
- **Existing Momentum:** Progress is being made in reducing uninsured rates, creating a strong base for broader healthcare expansion.
- **Stakeholder Insight:** The involvement of health system and public health leaders enables practical, community-specific intervention strategies.
- **Outcome Focus:** Stakeholders emphasized the importance of reducing rates of chronic disease, maternal health complications, and preventable hospitalizations.

Goal:

Improve access to affordable, high-quality healthcare by strengthening care coordination, expanding community-based services, and supporting maternal health and patient empowerment.

## Action Plan:

Objective	Strategy/Action Item	Responsible Parties
<b>Expand care access through innovative delivery models</b>	Expand the capability of in-home follow-up care for medium-to-high-risk patients to reduce readmissions	UNC Nash Community Paramedic Program
	Provide no-cost ongoing wellness interventions to empower patients in managing chronic disease and avoiding unnecessary ED visits	UNC Nash Community Paramedic Program, Population Health
	Expand mobile clinics and virtual care platforms to reach underserved areas, including more rural and vulnerable populations	UNC Nash Population Health, Community Paramedic Program, Primary Care Network/Partners
<b>Improve maternal health access and outcomes</b>	Launch lactation support and breast pump rental program to provide outpatient breastfeeding support post-discharge, especially for Medicaid recipients	UNC Nash Women's Center, Foundation
	Expand community paramedic program partnerships with external OB-GYN practices to engage mothers at risk of pregnancy-induced hypertension	UNC Nash Community Paramedic Program, OB-GYN Partners
<b>Increase health literacy and patient engagement</b>	Continue participation in and production of community education initiatives and health fairs	UNC Health Nash, Community Partners
<b>Strengthen care coordination and physician capacity</b>	Conduct a Community Physician Needs Assessment every three years, updated annually by the Medical Staff Development Committee (MSDC)	UNC Health Nash Physician Recruitment
	Strengthen primary care partnerships and streamline referrals across care settings	UNC Health Nash, Local Primary Care Providers (PCPs)
<b>Improve healthcare affordability and reduce access barriers</b>	Expand access to financial counseling, charity care enrollment, and insurance navigation services	UNC Nash Eligibility Services

## Priority 3: Social Drivers of Health with Emphasis on Economic Stability

### Justifications identified through the Community Health Needs Assessment:

- **Community Need:** Primary and secondary data from the CHNA indicate that key social drivers—including food access/insecurity, employment/income stability, and housing/homelessness—are major health priorities for the community.
- **Access Barriers:** Basic needs such as housing, food, and income are essential for individuals to begin addressing or even identifying other health concerns. Without economic stability, medical compliance and overall health management are often compromised.

- **Health Impact:** Addressing these root-level social concerns is vital for improving health outcomes and reducing compounded, cyclical health issues across vulnerable and marginalized populations.
- **Stakeholder Insight:** Supporting individuals' basic needs contributes to the creation of an environment where people can achieve complete physical, mental, and social well-being.
- **Community Development Impact:** The "trickle-down" impact of increased economic and resource security is seen as a catalyst for sustainable community development, greater resilience, and improved population health.

#### Goal:

Address economic barriers to health by supporting food security, transportation access, financial assistance, and partnerships that stabilize patients' lives and promote recovery.

#### Action Plan:

Objective	Strategy/Action Item	Responsible Parties
<b>Support patients experiencing financial hardship</b>	Utilize the Nash UNC Health Care Foundation's Patient Assistance Funds to provide short-term support for medical and social needs for eligible patients	UNC Nash Foundation
	Assist eligible patients with medications, transportation, and medical equipment to reduce barriers to care	UNC Nash Foundation, Case Management
	Improve capture and enrollment assistance for those in need of private insurance, Medicaid, and Disability	UNC Nash Eligibility Services
<b>Improve food access for vulnerable patients</b>	Provide a diet-specific food supply for food-insecure inpatients at the time of discharge to meet short-term needs, along with area food resource referrals for extended needs	UNC Nash Food Pantry, Foundation, Case Management
<b>Screen for and respond to SDOH through home-based care</b>	Expand in-home Community Paramedic visits to assess and address social needs such as food insecurity, housing quality, and transportation gaps, providing referrals for support	UNC Nash Community Paramedic Program
	Strengthen referral partnerships with local organizations to close identified social needs gaps	UNC Health Nash, Community Partners
<b>Improve healthcare accessibility</b>	Explore innovative care delivery models, including mobile clinics, bridge clinics, and increased telehealth services with extender services	UNC Health Nash, Partner Agencies
<b>Increase community understanding of economic barriers to health</b>	Partner with local organizations to curate health education opportunities that highlight the role of socioeconomic factors in long-term wellness	UNC Health Nash, Local Community-Based Organizations (CBOs)
<b>Train staff and providers to recognize economic barriers</b>	Ensure that clinical and support staff are trained to screen for social drivers of health on five domains: Financial Strain, Food Security, Housing & Utility Challenges, Transportation Challenges, and Interpersonal Safety	Nursing Education
<b>Improve transportation access</b>	Promote community education on non-emergency transportation resources that assist with navigating services	UNC Health Nash, Local Agencies