

Executive Summary

Good Samaritan Regional Medical Center conducts a Community Health Needs Assessment every three years. This assessment was undertaken in partnership with InterCommunity Health Network Community Care Organization, the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, United Way, and the health departments of Lincoln, Linn, and Benton counties.

The assessment gathered data through:

- Online and written surveys with 2,812 respondents
- Focus groups and key informant interviews targeting marginalized populations, seniors, veterans, low-income individuals, non-English speakers, and rural residents
- Community listening sessions held in August 2022
- Secondary data from various health authorities and resources

Key health priorities identified for Benton County include:

1. **Greater Access to Healthcare:**
 - Access to medical, dental, and mental/behavioral health services
 - Suicide prevention
 - Substance use disorder treatment
 - Anxiety and depression services
2. **Healthy Communities:**
 - Food insecurity
 - Child care
 - Child abuse/neglect
 - Domestic violence
3. **Healthy Living:**
 - Housing costs and homelessness
 - Poverty reduction
 - Culturally and linguistically appropriate services

The assessment noted that GSRMC is the largest of five regional Samaritan Health Services hospitals in the tri-county area. The 188-bed Level II trauma center offers comprehensive services including cancer care, cardiology, neurosurgery, orthopedics, and inpatient mental health. It serves Benton County primarily, with its service area covering Corvallis and surrounding communities. The document also addresses the impact of COVID-19 on the community and details services provided by GSRMC in 2021, highlighting community partnerships and social support networks that promote health in the region.

Biggest Gaps in Service

1. **Mental and behavioral health services** - This is identified as the highest health need in the county, particularly for children, youth, and adults. The report notes that Oregon ranked last in the nation for mental health in 2020, and there are significant needs for services addressing substance use disorder, depression, anxiety, and suicidality.
2. **Provider workforce shortages** - The report mentions that recruiting and retaining culturally competent providers and staff is a major challenge. Provider turnover and retirement rates increased after COVID, leading to longer wait times for appointments.
3. **Cultural competence in care** - There's a significant lack of culturally appropriate facilities, policies, and workforce diversity. The report specifically mentions a shortage of trans or

trans-friendly providers and mental health providers of color with lived experience related to discrimination.

4. **Transportation barriers** - People in rural communities, people of color, people in poverty, those with disabilities, and individuals with language barriers face transportation challenges that limit their access to care, quality housing, healthy foods, and physical activity.
5. **Navigation and advocacy services** - The healthcare system's complexity can be overwhelming, especially for lower-income people, those with mental health issues, migrant workers, and people with specific linguistic or cultural needs.
6. **Affordable housing** - While not directly a healthcare service, the report emphasizes that housing instability significantly impacts health outcomes, with 19% of Benton County households affected by severe housing problems.
7. **Services for substance use disorders** - Oregon has one of the nation's highest rates of prescription and illicit drug misuse, with limited treatment options available.

Greatest Barriers to Care

1. **Lack of workforce and capacity** - The report specifically mentions difficulties in recruiting and retaining culturally competent providers and staff, especially after COVID-19, which led to increased provider turnover/retirement rates and longer wait times for appointments.
2. **Lack of insurance and insurance literacy** - Approximately 8% of people in Benton County are uninsured, and many don't understand how to effectively use their insurance coverage.
3. **System navigation challenges** - The complexity of the regional health care system is described as "daunting," especially for lower-income people, people with mental health issues, migrant workers, and those with specific linguistic or cultural needs and expectations.
4. **Cultural barriers** - The report identifies a lack of culturally appropriate facilities, policies, and workforce diversity. This leads to marginalized populations being less likely to seek care due to mistrust and trauma.
5. **Transportation limitations** - People in rural communities, people of color, those living in poverty, people with disabilities, and those with language barriers are more likely to depend on public transit while living in areas with poor transit service, making healthcare access difficult.
6. **Workforce diversity issues** - There's a specific mention of shortages of trans or trans-friendly providers and mental health providers of color with lived experience of discrimination-related stresses.
7. **Language barriers** - People with limited English skills face additional obstacles in receiving one-on-one care and in navigating the healthcare system.
8. **Affordability concerns** - While not explicitly listed as a barrier to care, the report discusses poverty's impact on healthcare access throughout, noting that Benton County's income inequality ratio is the largest in the state.

The Unique Needs of the Community

1. **High income inequality** - Despite having a higher median household income than neighboring counties, Benton County has the largest income inequality ratio in Oregon. This creates disparate health needs across the population.
2. **University population impact** - As home to Oregon State University, Corvallis has a large and highly diverse population of international students with specific healthcare needs and access challenges.

3. **Rural-urban divide** - While Corvallis is a metropolitan service area, the county also includes smaller rural communities like Alsea, Monroe, Adair Village, and Philomath that have limited services, resources, grocery stores, healthcare providers, and public transportation options.
4. **Housing affordability crisis** - Renters in Benton County spend the largest proportion of household income on rent in the tri-county region, with 54.1% of households spending more than 30% of income on rent, affecting health outcomes.
5. **Specific demographic health disparities** - The report identifies significantly higher poverty rates for American Indian/Alaska Native (24%), Black/African American (35%), and Hispanic/Latino (27%) residents compared to state averages.
6. **Mental health needs** - Benton County has the region's highest prevalence of serious and persistent mental illness among InterCommunity Health Network CCO members.
7. **Youth substance use concerns** - In 2019, eighth graders in Benton County had the region's second-highest rate of substance use for alcohol (12.3%) and e-cigarettes (7.5%).
8. **Unique food access patterns** - 42% of residents lived within half a mile of a grocery store, while 49% lived the same distance from a tobacco vendor, creating challenges for healthy food access.
9. **Need for culturally specific services** - The report emphasizes the necessity of building trust with culturally specific organizations and overcoming historical and current exclusion of marginalized communities.
10. **Limited childcare resources** - The county has only eight childcare centers per 1,000 children under 5, impacting child development and family access to healthcare and employment.

What the Hospital or CCO is Doing Well

1. **Comprehensive medical services** - GSRMC is described as a 188-bed Level II trauma center (one of only five such facilities in Oregon) with many specialties including comprehensive cancer care, full-service cardiology and cardiovascular surgery, neurosurgery, orthopedic and spine surgery, and inpatient mental health services.
2. **Robust outpatient network** - The hospital maintains 44 outpatient clinics across Benton County offering specialty care, family medicine, and urgent/walk-in care.
3. **Community funding support** - During the pandemic, GSRMC provided nearly \$540,000 to more than 20 agencies through social accountability funding and in-kind support, plus additional assistance for organizations helping with food, child care, rent, and other basic services.
4. **Pandemic response** - GSRMC served as a first responder for many medical, mental/behavioral, dental, and social needs during COVID-19, continuing to provide emergency care, birthing services, and urgent surgeries while treating COVID patients.
5. **Alternative care models** - The hospital provided transportation, telehealth, and home visits to over 60,000 people in Benton County, expanding access beyond traditional facility-based care.
6. **Health education** - GSRMC offered both in-person and virtual education through health fairs, workshops, and classes on topics like Adverse Childhood Experiences, Understanding Stigma for Substance Use Disorder, Implicit Bias, and Addressing Homelessness.
7. **Strong partnerships** - The report highlights GSRMC's strong collaborative relationships with organizations and agencies throughout Benton County and across the region.

8. **Inclusive assessment process** - For the Community Health Needs Assessment itself, the hospital ensured diverse input from various racial/ethnic groups, LGBTQIA2S+ community members, veterans, non-English speaking people, and other marginalized populations.
9. **Regional collaboration** - GSRMC participates in the Coast to Cascades Community Wellness Network, a consortium of tri-county leaders that works with local coalitions to identify and address regional health issues.

Priorities

1. Greater Access to Healthcare

- **Objective:** Increase community access to medical, dental, and mental/behavioral health services
- **Priority Areas:**
 - Access to health care
 - Suicide prevention
 - Substance use disorder treatment
 - Anxiety and depression services

2. Healthy Communities

- **Objective:** Increase community access to healthy food, child care, and safety
- **Priority Areas:**
 - Food insecurity
 - Child care
 - Child abuse/neglect
 - Domestic violence

3. Healthy Living

- **Objective:** Increase housing, employment, and supportive services in the community
- **Priority Areas:**
 - Housing costs and homelessness
 - Poverty
 - Culturally and linguistically appropriate services