

Executive Summary

This CHNA was conducted in 2022 to identify and prioritize the health needs of the community served by St. Charles Bend and St. Charles Redmond hospitals. The community is defined as Deschutes County, Oregon. Methodology included reviewing secondary data and conducting a phone/text survey of over 700 community members.

Key findings from the survey:

- 92% of residents report satisfaction with quality of life
- Top factors to improve quality of life: affordable housing, affordable healthy food, living wage jobs
- 93% have health insurance, but lower rates for dental and vision coverage
- Biggest barriers to care are wait times for appointments and cost
- 54% have used telemedicine in the past 2 years

Based on all data, the prioritized significant health needs identified are:

1. Stable Housing and Supports
2. Behavioral Health: Increase Access and Coordination
3. Substance and Alcohol Misuse Prevention and Treatment
4. Address Poverty and Enhance Self Sufficiency
5. Upstream Prevention: Promotion of Individual Well-Being
6. Promote Enhanced Physical Health Across Communities

The CHNA will inform St. Charles' implementation strategy to address these needs over the next 3 years. The report includes an evaluation of impact from the previous CHNA cycle's efforts. The CHNA provides a comprehensive overview of community health needs to guide St. Charles Bend and Redmond in their community benefit and health improvement efforts.

Biggest Gaps in Service

1. Behavioral health services: Mental health and substance use services, access to mental health providers.
2. Dental care: Access to affordable dental services.
4. Timely access to care: Long wait times for appointments. There is a gap in having enough provider capacity to meet demand in a timely way.
5. Services to address social determinants of health: Other prioritized health needs related to social determinants of health, such as addressing poverty, enhancing self-sufficiency, and promoting individual well-being. There are gaps in services that tackle root causes of health inequities.

Greatest Barriers to Care

1. Long wait times for appointments: This was the top barrier cited.
2. Cost of care: Cost was the second most cited barrier.
3. Time away from work.

4. Lack of insurance: This disproportionately impacted people of color, lower and middle-income residents, and Jefferson County residents.
5. Affordable housing: More affordable housing would improve quality of life and community health.
6. Location of services and transportation for some residents, especially those in more rural areas.

The Unique Needs of the Community

1. Rapid population growth: Strains existing health and social service infrastructure.
2. Aging population: The county has a sizable older adult population, with 24% of residents aged 65 and older. This demographic faces unique health needs related to aging, chronic conditions, and access to services.
3. Tourism-based economy: The region's economy is heavily reliant on tourism and hospitality industries. Jobs in these sectors may be more likely to be seasonal, lower-wage, and lacking comprehensive health benefits, impacting affordability of care and insurance coverage.
4. Housing affordability challenges: Deschutes County residents consistently identified affordable housing as a top need. The county has high housing costs that have not been matched by wage increases, contributing to housing instability and homelessness. This has ripple effects on health.
6. Behavioral health and substance use: The assessment notes increasing complexity of behavioral health needs.
7. Health disparities: Affect access, affordability, and health outcomes for residents based on socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, and where in the county they live.

What the Hospital or CCO is Doing Well

1. Community Benefit: In 2021, St. Charles Bend provided over \$97 million in community benefit to the population it serves, including charity care, unreimbursed costs of Medicaid and other public programs, and community benefit activities. St. Charles Redmond provided over \$4.4 million in community benefit.
2. Collaboration: The report highlights St. Charles' collaboration with other community organizations, particularly through the Central Oregon Health Council. This collaboration allows for a more comprehensive approach to community health needs assessment and improvement.
3. Adapting to Telemedicine: While not specific to St. Charles, the report notes that 54% of residents have attended a telemedicine visit in the last two years, suggesting that the health care system (including St. Charles) has adapted to provide care remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic.
4. Comprehensive Services: The report lists St. Charles Bend as a Level II Trauma Center offering specialty care and outpatient clinics, suggesting a wide range of services available to the community.

5. Provider Network: St. Charles Medical Group is mentioned as providing a wide range of specialties, indicating a robust network of health care providers available to the community.

6. Previous CHNA Efforts: While COVID-19 disrupted some plans, St. Charles was able to implement a new policy regarding alcohol-related event sponsorship and provided funding and volunteer hours to organizations working on alcohol misuse prevention.

7. Transparency and Compliance: The report itself demonstrates St. Charles' commitment to transparency and compliance with IRS requirements for community health needs assessments.

Strengths of the Community

1. High Quality of Life: 92% of Deschutes County residents report satisfaction with their quality of life.

2. High Health Insurance Coverage: 93% of residents report having health insurance, which has remained stable since 2016 and represents an increase of 12 percentage points from 2013.

3. Adoption of Telemedicine: More than half of residents (54%) have attended a telemedicine or virtual visit in the last two years, showing adaptability to new health care delivery methods.

4. Education: The high school graduation rate in Deschutes County was 93.8% in 2021, which is higher than the state average.

5. Life Expectancy: The life expectancy at birth for Deschutes County was 81.7 years, which is higher than neighboring counties.

6. Overall Health Ranking: Deschutes County is ranked as the fifth healthiest county out of 35 ranked counties in Oregon, according to the 2022 County Health Rankings.

7. Economic Indicators: The median household income in Deschutes County (\$68,937 in 2020) is higher than neighboring counties.

8. Community Engagement: The report mentions that community members are aware of community needs and actively engage in solutions through conversation and volunteerism.

9. Collaboration: There's a strong sense of collaboration among local organizations, including health care providers, mental health services, law enforcement, businesses, and non-profits.

10. Natural Resources: While not explicitly stated as a strength, the report mentions beaches, parks, and other natural attractions that contribute to quality of life and tourism in the area.

11. Community Knowledge: The report highlights that community members have significant knowledge about addressing needs and supporting each other, particularly within specific groups like the LGBTQ2SIA+ and Latino/a/x communities.

Priorities

- The assessment identified 6 priority health needs for Deschutes County:

1. Stable Housing & Supports
2. Address Poverty & Enhance Self Sufficiency
3. Upstream Prevention: Promotion of Individual Well-Being
4. Substance & Alcohol Misuse Prevention & Treatment
5. Behavioral Health: Increase Access and Coordination
6. Promote Enhanced Physical Health Across Communities

- Top health issues identified by community members include:

1. Affordable access to health insurance
2. Old age - general
3. Obesity/overweight

- Top factors to improve quality of life:

1. Affordable housing
2. Affordable healthy foods
3. Living wage jobs

- Major barriers to care include long wait times for appointments and cost of care

- 93% of residents have health insurance, but only 66% have dental and 59% have vision coverage

- Use of telemedicine has increased, with 54% of residents having a virtual visit in the past 2 years

Methodology:

- Review of secondary data sources
- Phone survey of over 700 community members
- Input from community organizations and stakeholders

Next Steps:

- Develop implementation strategies to address the identified priority needs
- Continue partnerships with community organizations to improve health

The assessment will guide St. Charles Bend and Redmond's community benefit efforts over the next three years to address the most pressing health needs in Deschutes County.