



Veterans Memorial Hospital Community Needs Health Assessment

November 2025

Overview and Executive Summary

Veterans Memorial Hospital Community Health Needs Assessment was performed in adherence with federal requirements of the nonprofit hospital set forth in the Affordable Care Act. According to the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, Veterans Memorial Hospital is required to complete a CHNA & HIP (Community Health Needs Assessment and Health Improvement Plan) every three years. Veterans Memorial Hospital started its Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) in April 2025 with a target completion of November 2025.

In order to review the members of Allamakee County, Veterans Memorial Hospital (VMH) undertook a more in-depth approach to involving the community in identifying significant health needs. The method to this assessment was conducting an online survey in the months of April and May which was completed by 219 participants. Our methodology is outlined in greater detail within this report.

Our Community Health Needs Assessment identified priority categories of concern:

Health Problems to Address:

- Obesity
- Access and Treatment for Mental Health
- Aging, (arthritis, hearing/vision loss, dementia, etc.)
- Cancer Care
- High blood pressure/ Cardiovascular disease/stroke
- Diabetes
- Barriers to Receive Transportation for Health Care

Health Behaviors to Improve:

- Healthy Lifestyles
- Stress Reduction and Ability to Function with Stressors
- Healthy Nutritional Behaviors
- Alcohol & Drug Abuse
- Annual Screenings/Comprehensive Care
- Health Care Insurance Literacy & Coverage

The top five areas of need for health care services, according to survey respondents were:

- Preventative Care Management/Chronic Care Management
- Counseling & Mental Health Services
- Women's Services (Obstetrics and Gynecological Care)
- Alcohol and Drug Abuse Treatment
- Cancer Treatment

Veterans Memorial Hospital took into account the mission, vision and overall resources of the hospital in order to get the most accurate information for the CHNA process.

Topics Included:

- Overall community health
- Identifying health problems as well as safety concerns
- Children's health concerns
- Personal health
- Healthy behavior improvement goals, opportunities and barriers
- Concerning social issues

- Environmental health
- Disaster/Emergency Preparedness
- Demographics such as gender, age, race/ethnicity, education, income, insurance, zip code and medical services

The Veterans Memorial Hospital Board of Trustees approved this assessment and plan November 2025. The full report can be found on: <https://www.veteransmemorialhospital.com/about/chna/>.

Section 1: Background – Past Community Health Needs Assessment

The issues identified in the 2022 Community Needs Health Assessment were:

Health Problems to Address:

- Obesity
- Untreated Mental Health
- Aging, (arthritis, hearing/vision loss, dementia, etc.)
- Cancer

Health Behaviors to Improve:

- Physical Activity
- Stress Reduction and Ability to Function with Stressors
- Healthy Nutritional Behaviors
- Alcohol Abuse
- Suicide

Section 2: Defining the Community Served

Population of Service Area

For the purpose of the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA), Allamakee County and Northern Clayton County were the primary focus. Allamakee County has a current population of 14,074¹.

Demographics for Allamakee County²

	County	Iowa
Population	14,074	3,207,004
% Below 18 years of age	24.5%	22.8%
% 65 and older	23.7%	18.6%
% Non-Hispanic Black	1.7%	4.3%
% American Indian & Alaska Native	0.9%	0.6%
% Asian	0.6%	2.7%
% Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	0.3%	0.3%
% Hispanic	9.3%	7.4%
% Non-Hispanic White	87.3%	83.1%
% Not proficient in English	4%	2%
% Females	48.8%	49.9%
% Rural	100.0%	36.8%
%Disability: Functional Limitations	25.0%	26.0%

¹ United States Census Bureau

² 2025 County Health Rankings

Health Characteristics

Health Characteristics ³	Allamakee, IA	Clayton, IA	Iowa	United States
Adult Smoking	17%	17%	16%	13%
Adult Obesity	38%	41%	38%	34%
Food Environment Index	8.7	8.5	8.5	7.4
Physical Inactivity	27%	26%	25%	23%
Access to Exercise Opportunities	56%	61%	80%	84%
Excessive Drinking	23%	24%	25%	19%
Alcohol-Impaired Driving Deaths	9%	32%	26%	26%
Uninsured	8%	7%	5%	10%
Primary Care Physicians	1,550:1	4,260:1	1,360:1	1,310:1
Dentists	2,810:1	2,120:1	1,380:1	1,340:1
Mental Health Providers	3,550:1	4,230:1	440:1	290:1
Mammography Screening	56%	54%	54%	44%
Unemployment	3.8%	4.0%	2.9	3.6%
Children in Poverty	17%	13%	13%	16%
Children in Single-Parent Households	11%	20%	20%	25%
Suicide ⁴	5 deaths in 2021	5 deaths in 2023	496 deaths in 2023	
New Cases of Cancer 2025* ⁵	110 cases	140 cases	21,200 cases	442.3 for every 100,000 people in 2022
Currently Living with Cancer*	855 cases	1,115 cases	171,535 cases	
Deaths due to Cancer in 2025*	25 cases	45 cases	6,300 cases	141.5 for every 100,000 people in 2023

*Rates are age adjusted and per population 2017-2021

Section 3: Assessing the Community's Health

In determining the most comprehensive snapshot of the state of population health for Allamakee residents, a survey was developed as the primary tool for assessing Allamakee residents. This survey was made available via paper copies and online at county functions such as the wellness fair, sporting events and all hospital locations including the clinics. Survey was completed by 219 respondents.

³ County Health Rankings, 2025

⁴ Healthy Iowans – Iowa State Health Assessment 2022 & Iowa Public Health Tracking Portal

⁵ National Cancer Institute, National Institutes of Health, Department of Health and Human Services, 2025

Results of the survey were reviewed with a VMH task force to summarize the Health Assessment as well as develop an Improvement Plan.

An invitation to take the survey was made to the public online, in person and through social media. A survey link could be found at <https://www.veteransmemorialhospital.com/about/chna/>.

Geographic Distribution		
Zip codes	52101 – 3 52140 – 2 52146 – 4 52151 – 24 52161 – 1 52162 – 15 52172 – 130 53172 – 1	52135 – 1 52156 – 1 52159 – 3 52160 – 3 52170 – 8 52182 – 1 55044 – 1
Gender Identity		
Surveyed participants	86.06% Female 0.00% Other	11.06% Male 2.88% Prefer Not to Answer
Additional Demographics		
Race/Ethnicity	95.15% White or Caucasian 1.94% Hispanic or Latino 0.49% Asian or Asian American 2.43% Prefer Not to Answer	
Age Group	0.97% age 18-24 14.01% age 25-34 20.29% age 35-44 23.67% age 45-54 22.71% age 55-64 18.36% age 65 +	
Household Income	4.59% Under \$15,000 8.16% \$15,000 – \$29,999 22.45% \$30,000 – \$49,999 20.92% \$50,000 – \$74,999 13.78% \$75,000 – \$99,999 17.35% \$100,000 – \$150,000 5.61% \$150,000 – \$199,000 7.14% \$200,000 +	
Education Level	13.79% High School Graduate/GED 8.87% Trade School/Certificate Program 11.33% Technical College 45.81% College Graduate 20.20% Advanced Degree	

Section 4: Prioritized Description of Significant Health Needs

Community Needs Identified

The Veterans Memorial Hospital Community Health Assessment identified the following priority concerns:

- Access to Health Care- 92.20%
- Untreated Mental Health- 66.06%
- Alcohol Abuse- 57.80%
- Texting or Using Cell Phone While Driving- 61.93%
- Cancer- 73.52%

Additional areas of high concern include:

- Suicide- 55.50%
- Radon Exposure- 50.78%
- Children's Screen Time- 61.19%
- Access to Childcare/Daycare- 57.08%

Personal Health Needs Identified

- Lack of Motivation- 52.13%
- Not Enough Time- 50.71%

COMPLETE RESULTS OF SURVEY

What are the most important factors for a "Healthy Community" (those factors which most improve the quality of life in a community)?

Access to health care (doctor/hospital)	92.20%
Access to health & wellness programs	48.17%
Affordable housing	59.17%
Excellent race relations	12.39%
Good Schools	72.94%
Low adult death & disease rate	22.94%
Parks and recreations	50.00%
Arts and cultural events	12.39%
Good jobs and healthy economy	72.02%
Healthy behaviors and lifestyles	55.05%
Low crime/safe neighborhoods	64.68%
Religious or spiritual values	36.70%
Clean environment	52.75%
Good place to raise children	62.39%
Access to Healthy Foods	47.71%
Access to walking & biking trails	44.50%
Strong family life	50.00%
Access to mental health care	59.63%
Other:	6.42%

What do you think are the top health problems in your community?

Aging (arthritis, hearing/vision loss, dementia, etc.)	51.14%
Cancer	73.52%
High blood pressure/Cardiovascular disease/stroke	44.75%

Injuries (falls, cars accidents, drowning)	10.50%
Limited or no access to dental care	12.79%
Sexually transmitted disease	1.37%
Diabetes	34.25%
Infectious disease	2.28%
Limited or no access to healthcare provider	12.79%
Teenage pregnancy	2.74%
Asthma	1.83%
Access and treatment for mental health	52.05%
Obesity	53.88%
Poor nutrition	32.42%
Agricultural incidents	10.05%
Other:	6.85%

What do you think are the top safety concerns in your community?

Alcohol Abuse	57.80%
Suicide	55.50%
Driving while drunk or high	47.71%
Illegal drug use	45.87%
Lack of physical activity	38.53%
Not getting vaccines to prevent disease	11.47%
Not wearing a helmet on bike/motorcycle	14.22%
Not using a seatbelt/child safety seat	12.39%
Texting or using cell phone while driving	61.93%
Prescription drug abuse	12.39%
Unsafe sex	4.59%
Using tobacco	22.02%
Untreated mental health	66.06%
Other:	2.75%

What do you think are the top health concerns related to children's health in your community?

Access to health care	16.44%
Access to mental health services	54.79%
Access to immunizations	6.85%
Affordable fresh foods	35.16%
Affordable health insurance	41.55%
Affordable and accessible dental care	31.05%
Bullying	54.34%
Child care/day care availability	57.08%
Developmental services for children	16.89%
Depression/suicide	48.40%
Healthy diets	31.05%
Nutritious school lunches	11.87%
Physical activity opportunities	17.35%
Screen time	61.19%
Responsible sexual behavior	7.31%

Substance abuse	20.09%
Structured, safe or supportive living environment	27.40%
Other:	3.65%

How would you describe your physical health?

Very Healthy	11.87%
Healthy	52.05%
Somewhat Healthy	29.22%
Unhealthy	6.85%
Very Unhealthy	0.00%

How would you describe your mental health?

Very Healthy	15.98%
Healthy	60.27%
Somewhat Healthy	18.72%
Unhealthy	4.57%
Very Unhealthy	0.46%

Where do you go for routine (regular) health care?

Medical Provider/Doctor's Office	98.63%
Urgent Care/ After Hours Clinic	14.16%
Emergency Room	8.68%
Holistic Medicine (chiropractor/massage therapy/acupuncture)	15.53%
I don't receive routine care	2.28%
Other:	2.74%

What top healthy behaviors would you like to start or improve?

Drinking more water	49.77%
Decreasing stress, anxiety and depression	45.62%
Getting adequate sleep	42.40%
Getting vaccines	0.46%
Eating more fruits or vegetables	51.61%
Getting more physical activity	64.06%
Quit smoking, chewing or vaping	3.69%
Reducing alcohol intake	5.53%
Routine cancer screenings	10.60%
Routine dental care	10.60%
Routine physicals	4.61%
Other:	4.61%

What do you feel prevents you from being healthier?

Financial concerns	28.44%
Lack of motivation	52.13%
Not enough time	50.71%
Lack of access to vaccines & medications to prevent sickness	0.00%
Nowhere to exercise	2.84%
Need education on healthy choices	6.64%

Physical health is too poor	3.32%
Too expensive to buy healthier foods	28.91%
No health insurance	1.42%
Lack of childcare	3.79%
Other:	11.85%

What would help you start or maintain a healthy lifestyle?

Additional recreational trails/sidewalks	45.83%
Affordable wellness & fitness facilities	34.90%
Community physical activity programs	22.40%
Employee wellness program	29.17%
Local school wellness programs	8.33%
Health education classes (diabetes prevention/management, heart disease, arthritis, cooking, etc.)	15.10%
More fresh food and produce available	29.69%
Transportation assistance to fitness/food markets	4.17%
Other:	13.02%

What are the top social issues facing people in your community?

Child abuse/neglect	22.97%
Crime and violence	6.70%
Domestic abuse	22.49%
Lack of transportation services	23.44%
Lack of health insurance coverage	32.06%
Poor parenting skills	49.76%
Poverty	40.67%
Single parent families	40.67%
Social equality, diversity and inclusion	13.88%
Unemployment	13.40%
Other:	10.53%

What do you think are the top public health and environmental health issues in your community?

Abandoned private wells	2.59%
Abandoned properties	5.18%
Emergency response times	11.92%
Contaminated food supply	7.25%
Transportation services for rural community members	40.41%
Lead exposure	9.84%
Lack of fluoride in drinking water	4.15%
Children not getting immunizations against communicable diseases	30.57%
Old septic system	10.88%
Radon exposure	50.78%
Outdoor air quality (asthma triggers)	21.76%
Un-sewered communities	1.55%
Unsafe drinking water	16.06%
Other:	9.33%

Do you feel you/your family are prepared for a natural or man-made disaster?

Yes	49.28%
No	50.72%

What prevents you from being prepared for an emergency?

Access to supplies (no transportation, no place to purchase supplies)	4.19%
Need more information about how to prepare for an emergency	31.94%
Not a priority	25.65%
Not enough time	8.90%
Too expensive to purchase supplies	20.42%
Not applicable - My family is prepared	31.41%
Other:	6.81%

Which of the following emergency preparedness statements are true for you/your family?

My family has a cell phone with charger	98.07%
My family has a first aid kit	82.61%
My family has discussed a central meeting place	41.55%
My family has practiced a fire drill at home	26.09%
My family has practiced a tornado drill at home	35.27%
My family keeps a supply of bottled water and extra non-perishable food items on hand	48.79%
My family has a weather radio, flashlight and batteries in our home	53.14%
My family keeps a list of current medications and important paperwork for each family member	24.64%
My family has made a list for emergencies (kids know how to call another family member & use 911)	24.15%

Where/how did you hear about this survey?

Church	0.00%
Community event or meeting	3.85%
Grocery store/shopping mall	0.00%
Mail	2.40%
Newspaper	14.90%
Newsletter	3.37%
Personal contact	8.65%
Restaurant	0.00%
Social Media	16.35%
Website	3.85%
Workplace	42.79%
Other:	20.19%

Are you/your family members covered by health insurance?

Yes - Covered by a family plan	36.06%
Yes - Covered by a personal plan	22.12%
Yes - Covered by Employer Insurance	40.38%
Yes - Covered by a governmental plan	22.60%

Yes - Self-Insured	1.92%
No one in my family is covered by health insurance	0.00%

What medical services do you feel are most needed in your community?

Adult primary care services	46.57%
Alcohol and drug abuse treatment	29.90%
Cancer treatment	45.59%
Counseling/mental health services	68.63%
Diabetes care	27.45%
Emergency/trauma care	35.78%
Cardiology	23.04%
Orthopedic (bone and joint) care	30.39%
Urology	16.18%
Dermatology	27.94%
ENT	18.63%
Pediatric services	25.49%
Women's Services (Obstetrics and gynecological care)	35.78%
Other:	11.27%

Section 5: Implementation Strategy

Five priorities were identified in the Community Health Needs Assessment conducted by Veterans Memorial Hospital in 2025. Those five priorities are: access to health care, untreated mental health, alcohol abuse, cancer, and texting or using cell phone while driving. Over the next three years, Veterans Memorial Hospital will continue to work on improving quality of life to all our patients, providing resources to our community members, and access to health care. The improvement plan outlines the actions by Veterans Memorial Hospital on how we are addressing these five priorities.

Community Health Assessment – Improvement Plan

Good Jobs, Schools & Healthy Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ VMH Clinic will explore the opportunity to provide occupational health services in the community workplaces.▪ VMH will continue to maintain excellent hiring and a large employment in our service area, being an exemplary employer with the goal to retain our staff.
Healthy Lifestyles and Behaviors for all Allamakee Residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Continue to provide athletic training coverage.▪ Continue to provide babysitting classes, hands only CPR and stop the bleed training multiple times during the year.▪ Promote and offer low-cost walk-in wellness lab testing to the community.▪ Provide skilled care to the community for safe recovery from hospitalization for illness or surgery.▪ Provide educational resources on Veterans Memorial Hospital's website.▪ Provide free screenings for diabetes and support group.▪ Provide free blood pressure screening at many community events.▪ Provide website links to healthy activities throughout the area▪ Work with county stakeholders to provide opportunities to increase overall health of area residents.▪ Partner with a third party vendor to provide free monthly HIV/STI screening at VMH Clinics.
Access to Care & Additional Community Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Evaluate need and provide for specialty providers and outpatient services according to needs addressed in this review.▪ Continue to provide and expand VMH Clinic hours.▪ Improve access of care with the addition of providers at the VMH Clinics.▪ Renovation of Postville Clinic to provide additional patient care space.▪ Continue community reach with Home Health and Public Health▪ Develop and continue to provide resources to patients with social services, patient navigator and patient advocate.▪ Continue to partner with the SHIP program to provide education to the community on health insurance options.
Substance Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Provide links on our website to Substance Abuse treatment/assistance options.▪ Provide annual screenings for substance use and offering education and materials at the VMH Clinics.

Mental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue strategic focus on mental health. ▪ Offer tele-psychiatry through the Emergency Room ▪ Continue mental health first aid training for staff and the community. ▪ Provide safe and accessible care in our VMH Emergency Department. ▪ Increased local access to mental health providers at VMH Clinics. ▪ Collaborate with community partners to provide timely transfers from the emergency department to tertiary care centers. ▪ Continue to promote local mental health/suicide awareness opportunities in the area. ▪ Partner with Senior Life Solutions to provide intensive outpatient group therapy for seniors. ▪ Partner with Iowa PCA Behavioral Health Systems navigators in Allamakee County to provide additional support.
Exposure to Environmental Risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintain resources and education for hazardous materials. ▪ Help promote area prescription drop off days at designated locations. ▪ Public education on radon awareness and home safety. ▪ Coordinate the biannual safety day camp to include education for children on environmental hazards. ▪ Collaborate with Allamakee Environmental Health Dept. in promoting environmental hazard education.
Community Preparedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work collaboratively with Allamakee Public Health that sits within our organization and Emergency Management to provide the community with a disaster plan. ▪ Participate in tabletop and full-scale exercise drills that occur within the area. ▪ Continue collaboration with county stakeholders to refine the Hazardous Mitigation plan for Allamakee County. ▪ Continue to promote the Allamakee Community Resources Guide.
Social Drivers of Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Optimize our patient referrals to home health care. ▪ Support patients in establishing primary care. ▪ Continue to work with community partners to provide transportation for patients. ▪ Provide individualized, comprehensive patient financial assistance and services/resources. ▪ Provide well child checks and athletic physicals for area students. ▪ Provide education to staff in communicating with non-English speaking population as well as those with different cultural backgrounds (example: Somalian, Latino, Orthodox Jew) ▪ Increase in reliable translator services for staff and patrons. ▪ Frequently provide education and current reliable health topics on media platforms.

Section 6: Adopting the Community Health Needs Assessment

Board of Trustees

The Veterans Memorial Hospital Board of Trustees (seven board members, appointed by the Board of Supervisors of Allamakee County) approved this plan November 25, 2025. We appreciate their guidance and input in the community health assessment process, as well as their dedication to both Veterans Memorial Hospital and the community.

Section 7: Collaboration

Community Partners

Survey invitations were sent to members of the Waukon Chamber of Commerce and all members of Allamakee County and Northern Clayton County.

The following media were invited to share information on the survey with the general public:

- Allamakee County Economic & Development & Tourism
- Driftless Journal
- Postville Herald Newspaper
- Monona Outlook Newspaper
- Waukon Standard Newspaper
- KVIK Radio
- KNEI Radio
- KMRV Radio
- KDEC Radio
- VMHCF Newsletter

We appreciate the input from the community on the survey from 219 people.

Section 8: Dissemination of the CHNA Results

Availability of the CHNA

Veterans Memorial Hospital will post its community health needs assessment on its website at <https://www.veteransmemorialhospital.com/about/chna/>. A paper copy will be available for public inspection also without charge at Veterans Memorial Hospital by making arrangements through Administration.