

COLUMBUS COMMUNITY HOSPITAL

COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT 2023-24



 **COLUMBUS**
COMMUNITY HOSPITAL

    columbushosp.org

Serving our community

At CCH, our mission is to improve the health of the communities we serve. We do this, in large part, by fostering partnerships that impact the well-being of our neighbors. Every three years, we gain a deeper understanding of the areas in which we live through the Community Health Needs Assessments. We develop implementation strategies in response to identified, unmet health needs.

Our mission

Our mission is to improve the health of the communities we serve.

Our vision

Our vision is to compassionately deliver the state's highest quality patient care.

Our values

- Integrity
- Compassion
- Accountability
- Respect
- Excellence

Message from our CEO



Columbus Community Hospital cares about community members' health and wellness, regardless of their ability to pay.

As a not-for-profit hospital, we play a vital role in addressing people's health needs. This includes ensuring that those who face health disparities and are unable to afford care have access to high-quality patient care, close to home.

The data we report here includes uncompensated health care costs provided to the underinsured or uninsured. It also comprises community health initiatives, education for health care professionals and the donation of services and funds to help further our mission and goals.

Please take a moment to review this report and read about the many ways we are building toward a healthier tomorrow for you and everyone in the community.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Hansen". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Mike Hansen, FACHE, CEO
Columbus Community Hospital

ON THE COVER

Top: Serving the growing health care needs of the community is our top priority. CCH opened Columbus Dermatology Clinic to ensure people have access to the health care services they need for a healthy life.

Bottom left: A key component of health and wellness is experience. CCH built the Columbus Fieldhouse to ignite the community's passion for a healthier lifestyle. We want to make wellness a way of life here in Columbus.

Bottom right: CCH offers many free events, such as the Kids Cook 101 class, which is hosted by the hospital's registered dietitians. These events educate both adults and children on how to create a healthier lifestyle and a happier life.



What is community benefit?

Community benefit is a compilation of initiatives that focus on prevention, improved access to health care, and/or improvement in the health and lives of persons particularly vulnerable to health disparities.

Why is it necessary?

Community benefit programs and activities demonstrate how CCH carries out its mission to improve the health of the communities we serve, including caring for those most vulnerable in our community, regardless of their ability to pay.



Beginning in 2008, tax-exempt hospitals have been required to file an IRS Form 990, Schedule H, to report their community benefit activities and other information related to tax exemption. By sustainably improving health status and quality of life, we hope to reduce the demand for high-cost emergency department and inpatient visits to treat preventable health problems.

What are the objectives of community benefit?




Improve access to health care services.

Enhance public health.



Advance increased general knowledge.

Relieve or reduce the burden of the government to improve health.



2023-24 contributions

We are pleased to share with you our accomplishments and community contributions from May 2023 through April 2024.

Community health improvement

\$2,473,951

Activities or programs for the express purpose of improving community health (community health education, community-based services, health care support services, etc.).

- **Complete Health Improvement Program.**
- **Meals on Wheels** — served more than 11,000 meals for the 2023-24 fiscal year.
- **National Diabetes Prevention Program** — registered dietitians taught this program.
- **Safe at Home program.**
- **VIP Transportation services.**
- **Athletic training services.**
- **Columbus Fieldhouse.**
- **CCH support groups.**

Health professional education

\$14,887

Programs that address current and future shortages of health professions, and assure that communities preserve access to health care.

Cash & in-kind contributions

\$44,955

Includes contributions to nonprofits that address one or more of our community health needs.

Community benefit operations

\$51,465

Efforts to address priority needs, including conducting both community health needs assessments and community benefit administration and reporting.

Community building activities

\$242,221

Activities that protect or improve the community's health or safety by addressing underlying causes of health problems, and thus improving health status and quality of life.

Financial assistance

\$585,667

Free or discounted health care services provided to persons who cannot afford to pay for care, and who qualify for financial assistance.

Medicaid/Means-Tested Program shortfalls

\$6,539,453

Deficits created when CCH receives payments from the government that are less than the cost of care for public programs.

TOTAL AMOUNT OF COMMUNITY BENEFIT

\$9,952,599



Community programs and services

We strive every day to do whatever it takes to help everyone in our region — not just inside our hospital, but also beyond our walls. By working with partners to provide medical services and advocate for the under-resourced, we make life safer and healthier for everyone in the community.



Community Health Needs Assessment

East Central District partners in Nebraska (including East Central District Health Department, Boone County Health Center, CHI Health Schuyler, Columbus Community Hospital, Genoa Medical Facilities and Good Neighbor Community Health Center) strive to bring together people and organizations to improve community wellness. The community health needs assessment process is one way we can live out our mission. In order to fulfill this mission, we must be intentional about understanding the health issues that impact residents, and work together to create a healthy community.

A primary component of creating a healthy community is assessing the needs — and prioritizing those needs for impact. In 2024, East Central District partners conducted a comprehensive Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) to identify primary health issues, current health

status and other health needs. The results from the assessment provide critical information for those who are in a position to make a positive impact on the health of the region’s residents. The results also enable community members to measure impact and then develop interventions.

East Central District partners conduct CHNAs to measure and address the health status of the East Central District community. We collect both quantitative and qualitative data to make decisions about how to better meet the health needs of our community.

We want to provide the best possible care for our residents, and we can use this report to guide us.

Why is it necessary?

Hospitals use a CHNA to identify and address key health needs, and to support the development of community benefit plans mandated by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Health departments use it to identify and address key health needs, and to support the requirements for accreditation through the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB).

The CHNA is an important piece in the development of a Community Health Improvement Plan, because it helps the community to understand the health-related issues that need to be addressed.



Primary data collection from community member survey & health need ranking

COMMUNITY CONDITIONS RANKING FROM COMMUNITY MEMBER SURVEY

1. Access to child care
2. Substance use
3. Housing & homelessness
4. Access to health care
5. Food insecurity
6. Preventive care & practices
7. Income/poverty & employment
8. Education
9. Adverse childhood experiences
10. Transportation
11. Nutrition & physical health
12. Tobacco & nicotine use
13. Crime & violence
14. Internet/Wi-Fi access
15. Environmental conditions
- Not ranked: Sleep

HEALTH OUTCOMES RANKING FROM COMMUNITY MEMBER SURVEY

1. Mental health
2. Chronic diseases
3. Maternal, infant and child health
4. HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
5. Injuries

Each interview participant was asked to complete an online survey to assess and prioritize the health needs, which were identified by secondary data collection. The health department, hospitals and community partners shared the survey link with clients, patients and others who live and/or work in the community. This resulted in **727 responses** to the survey; the rankings are found in the tables above. The full health need ranking (including by county), survey questions and demographics can be found on the East Central District Health Department website at ecdhd.ne.gov.



Columbus Fieldhouse

After months of anticipation, the Columbus Fieldhouse officially opened to the public in January 2024. Hospital leaders and community members alike agreed that there is truly something for everyone in the facility.

Scott Messersmith, vice president of human resources and operations for the hospital, said he could feel the excitement from people, and he noticed several open mouths when they walked through the main doors for the first time.

“People may not realize this, but the fieldhouse is bigger than our entire hospital facility,” Messersmith said.

“The combined footprint for the Columbus Wellness Center and Columbus Fieldhouse exceeds the size of the hospital’s main campus.”

Rob Marshall, director of the Columbus Fieldhouse, said now that the facility is open, he hopes it’s filled to the brim with people of all ages, and that there are enough programs and activities for everyone.

It’s not a secret that it takes a village to complete a project of this size, and hospital leaders are grateful for the community’s outpouring of support. When community members enter the facility, they will see the donor wall of community contributors and the pendant flags hung around the gym’s perimeter. In addition to those recognitions, there is a steel beam enclosed

“The combined footprint for the Columbus Wellness Center and Columbus Fieldhouse exceeds the size of the hospital’s main campus.”

— **Scott Messersmith**

Vice president of human resources and operations at CCH

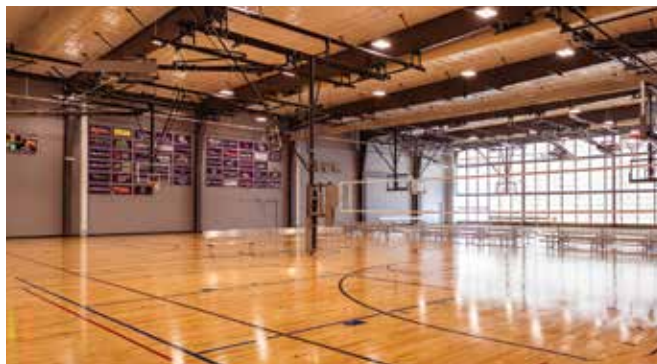
The Columbus Fieldhouse opened in January 2024. It allows community members to elevate their fitness journey and increases the health and well-being of the community.

with glass and decorated with signatures of hundreds of community members who celebrated the facility’s groundbreaking. This piece of art hangs prominently over the facility’s café entrance, serving as a reminder that community is at the heart of the fieldhouse.

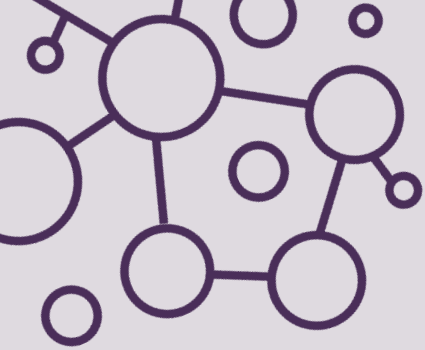
“The most exciting part of the project was building a facility with the true purpose of serving the community,” Marshall said. “There are other towns that have a fieldhouse complex, but to have a facility of this size and diversity ... no other town has that — especially a community of 20,000 people.”

Through its partnership with the Columbus Family YMCA, the Columbus Fieldhouse mirrors the hours of operation set forth by the YMCA. Community members have full access to the fieldhouse through their “Y” membership. The YMCA also has day passes available for individuals interested in accessing the facility for a single-day use. There is information about the facility’s rental options on the hospital’s website.

The fieldhouse gives the hospital another opportunity to offer health and wellness benefits to the community in a much more expanded way.



CCH built the Columbus Fieldhouse with all community members in mind. From fitness zones to sports courts, the Columbus Fieldhouse has something for everyone.



Meals on Wheels

The mission for our Meals on Wheels program is to deliver wholesome meals to individuals in need, fostering independence, health and community connection.

We strive to offer more than a meal by providing a kind face with each delivery.

The Meals on Wheels program is a collaboration between the volunteer and guest services department and nutrition services. Volunteer and guest services maintains all contact with the meal subscribers, volunteer coordinators and delivery volunteers. Volunteer and guest services also manages all subscriber billing, payments and delivery routes. Nutrition services makes the meals.

There are currently **86 active subscribers**. In March and April 2024, when volunteer and guest services began managing the program, there were more than **11,000 meals served**.



A nurse corps volunteer takes the blood pressure of a screening participant.

Nurse corps volunteers

The Columbus Community Hospital volunteer nurse corps was developed in response to an identified need in the community as a way to bring cost-effective blood pressure screenings to the workplace. Many employees in the workplace are not aware that they have elevated blood pressure and do not have a medical home. Without early intervention, elevated blood pressure can lead to other health conditions; it is also known as the silent killer.

Nurse corps volunteers are the best and brightest retired Columbus Community Hospital nurses who are no longer working under Department of Health and Human Services licensure. The program currently consists of eight volunteers. Dr. Dale Zaruba serves as the medical director and provides the necessary program oversight.

Qualifications to become a nurse corps volunteer include the following:

- Must have possessed previous RN or LPN licensure.
- Must possess outstanding interpersonal skills and demonstrate warmth, tact and caring.
- Must treat all information about patients, families, hospital personnel and physicians as confidential and with ethical and legal obligation.
- Must wear the volunteer uniform and name tag when on duty, attending meetings or representing the hospital.

All nurse corps volunteers participate in an initial orientation, which includes information on confidentiality, and they then sign a confidentiality oath. Nurse corps volunteers must also complete annual training updates.

Between May-September 2024, nurse corps volunteers have had multiple opportunities to serve in this capacity. Events included the Columbus Public Schools employee health fair, Harvest for Health, Heritage House and the Loup Public Power employee health fair.



Safe at Home

Even when you are well enough to return home after a major medical event, you and your loved ones may be concerned you will experience a medical emergency. CCH makes it easy for patients to sign up for Safe at Home, which offers personal alert response systems that allow you to enjoy life in the comfort of your own home. They also give you the freedom to go anywhere with confidence.

CCH offers on-the-go and in-home versions of these systems, which give you access to help 24 hours a day at the touch of a button.



Columbus Community Hospital offers a variety of personal emergency response system products, including:

- **HomeSafe** – This is an alert system, available in landline and wireless versions, that allows you to get help inside and around your home at the push of a button. With this system, you wear a help button as a pendant or on a wristband. When you press the button, you are quickly connected to the response center for assistance.
- **HomeSafe with AutoAlert Fall Detection** – This is an alert system that automatically detects falls in and around your home, and quickly gets help for those who have fallen. Its proven fall detection technology is designed to automatically detect true falls with a low rate of false alarms. It is the most widely adopted and proven fall detection technology in the U.S. today.
- **On-the-Go Mobile** – This is a wireless alert system that provides you with 24/7 access to emergency assistance, both inside and outside of your home. Its AutoAlert system can automatically detect falls wherever you go. The system uses a network and state-of-the-art locating technology to identify your location anywhere in the continental United States. To use it, you just need to push a button on your alert pendant to be connected to a 24/7 response center.

There are currently 162 active Safe at Home subscribers.

Our community benefit priorities

CCH worked with partners in the community, including the East Central District Health Department (ECDHD) and other hospital facilities, to address five areas of greatest concern. These areas were identified in the 2021 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) for the communities of Boone, Colfax, Nance and Platte counties. The CHNA identified the following areas of concern:

- **Mental health.**
- **Drug abuse and misuse.**
- **Ongoing diseases** such as heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, diabetes, cancer and respiratory problems.
- The difficulty of **finding housing** that is safe and affordable.
- **Bullying.**

CCH has chosen to focus on addressing four of the five areas of concern. The City of Columbus, the Columbus Area Chamber of Commerce and Habitat for Humanity are already working on creating housing that is safe and affordable, so CCH is focusing its resources elsewhere.

The hospital is working hand in hand with the ECDHD and other health- and business-related agencies to focus on these community needs. The following pages detail some of our recent accomplishments.

Mental health

Platte County and the surrounding areas continue to experience an increase in mental health care needs — both inpatient and outpatient.

Columbus Psychiatry Clinic

CCH has utilized its resources to enhance and expand mental health care in the community. One way of completing this includes recruiting top-level mental health physicians and other providers to the area. The hospital expanded its service offerings in 2019 by opening Columbus Psychiatry Clinic. The clinic now includes multiple psychiatrists, nurse practitioners and licensed independent mental health providers.

Another way of expanding the clinic is through a partnership with the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC). The clinic is serving as the primary teaching venue for fourth-year psychiatry residents under the direct supervision of Dr. Venkata Kolli. During their rotation, each resident completes an eight-week stay. They work alongside Kolli to perform diagnostic evaluations, psychotherapy and treatment, and help manage patients' medication. Dr. Emily Royer was the first of three residents to join the clinic as part of the program.

Royer has now returned to Columbus as a licensed psychiatrist for Columbus Psychiatry Clinic.

Kolli said the residency program benefits the hospital and community. Furthermore, having another physician in the clinic reduces mental health access issues and lowers health disparities. The program also helps the hospital train the next generation of psychiatrists, which ensures access to high-quality care, close to home.

CCH's senior behavioral health unit

CCH has also collaborated in establishing a senior behavioral health unit at the hospital. It is a 10-bed, short-term, inpatient treatment program for adults 55 and older who are experiencing severe behavioral or emotional symptoms. The treatment team is composed of physicians, nurses and various other caregivers who provide a coordinated approach to care.

Common life changes that can trigger symptoms and a need for specialized psychiatric intervention include:

- Physical disability — long-term illness.
- Dementia-causing illness.
- Physical illnesses that can affect thought, memory and emotion.
- Change of environment, such as moving out of the family home.



- Illness or loss of a loved one.
- Medication interactions.
- Alcohol or substance abuse.
- Poor diet or malnutrition.

Symptoms that may indicate the need for treatment include:

- Sad or depressed mood lasting longer than two weeks.
- Social withdrawal; loss of interest in things that used to be enjoyable.
- Onset of confusion, disorientation or problems with concentration or decision-making.
- Increase or decrease in appetite; changes in weight.
- Memory loss — especially abrupt recent or short-term memory problems.
- Feelings of worthlessness or thoughts of suicide.
- Agitation, aggression or threats/attempts to harm others.
- Hallucinations and/or delusional thoughts.
- Loss of interest in personal appearance/hygiene.
- Refusal to take prescribed medications.

The program is designed to quickly return patients to their optimal level of functioning outside the hospital. This is accomplished through an intensive, structured, physician-supervised program that coordinates seamlessly with medical care.

The program includes:

- Psychiatric and physical assessment.
- 24-hour nursing and medical support.
- Medical management and education.
- Access to physical and nutritional therapy.
- Individualized treatment planning.
- Diagnostic testing.
- Family education and support.
- Basic life skill enhancement.
- Recreational and/or occupational therapy.
- Placement assistance.
- Individual and group therapy.
- Motor skill development.
- Referral for follow-up services.

CCH accepts referrals for admission 24 hours a day, seven days a week from physicians, health care professionals, family members and patients.



Treatment for ongoing diseases

Diseases such as heart disease, stroke, cancer, high blood pressure and diabetes continue to take lives and reduce quality of life. CCH has embarked on many community partnerships to tackle these diseases head-on.



Diabetes

Preventing diabetes and improving advanced care for those with the disease is a top priority for CCH. The hospital's diabetes and health education department provides a variety of programs to help educate and support community members with diabetes, or those who are at risk of developing the disease. Our services include group classes and individual appointments for inpatient and outpatient diabetes education.

We also offer education in the areas of continuous glucose monitoring, insulin pump training, weight management, cholesterol-cardiac diets, self-injection of specific medications, smoking cessation and other health education or training, as needed.

Bullying

Bullying — both in-person and online — is an ongoing problem for children of all ages. CCH collaborated with Smart Gen Society to specifically address challenges facing children in the digital landscape.



Heart disease

According to the CHNA, heart disease is one of the leading causes of death in the state and across the nation. CCH has made strides in attempting to decrease those incidences in the community. One way included opening a cardiac catheterization lab at the hospital that allows doctors to perform lifesaving cardiac procedures. Concurrently, CCH opened Columbus Cardiology Clinic, which educates the community about signs of heart disease and steps people can take to improve their heart health.



Cancer care

Cancer care has been the other leading cause of death in the state and across the nation, according to the CHNA. CCH has made great strides in attempting to decrease those incidences in the community. The hospital recently acquired Columbus Cancer Care, an outpatient clinic that provides radiation oncology services. This is the first step toward creating a cancer center concept — a facility where community members can receive all the cancer services they need in one location.





Community partnerships

At CCH, our mission is to improve the health of the communities we serve. We would not be able to do this without fostering partnerships that impact the well-being of those who live in our community.

We recognize the following partners for their contributions to our community and the surrounding communities.

Alcoholics Anonymous in Nebraska

Applied Connective Technologies

Augustana Lutheran Church

Behlen Manufacturing

Boone Central Schools

Boone County Commissioners

Boone County Health Center

Camaco, LLC

Cargill Schuyler Plant

Cedar Rapids Community Club

Center for Survivors

Central Community College, Columbus Campus

Central Nebraska Community Action Partnership - Headstart

CHI Health Schuyler

City of Columbus

Colfax Senior Center

Columbus/Platte County Convention & Visitors Bureau

Columbus Area Chamber of Commerce

Columbus Area United Way

Columbus Catholic Schools

Columbus Children's Healthcare

Columbus City Council

Columbus Community Hospital

Columbus Community Hospital Foundation

Columbus Family Practice Providers

Columbus Family YMCA

Columbus High School

Columbus Medical Center

Commonwealth Electric

COR Therapeutics Services

Fisher's and Richland schools

Fullerton Area Senior Center

Genoa Community Bank

Genoa Lions Club

Genoa Medical Facilities

Good Neighbor Community Health Center

Heartland Workers

Jarecki Law

Kruse Farms

Lakeview Community Schools

Levander Funeral Homes

Lindsay Corporation

Loup Public Power

Nebraska Department of Economic Development

Nor-Am Cold Storage

Palmer Eye Care

Pillen Family Farms

Pinnacle Bank

Platte County employees

Platte Valley Literacy Association

Schuyler Community Development

Schuyler Community Schools

Schuyler Middle School

Schuyler Police Department/Colfax County

Seekers of Serenity

Sixpence Early Learning Program

St. Edward Public School

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Village of Cedar Rapids

Wagon Hammer Ranch



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