Community Health Needs Assessment

Valley County Health System

Between July 2015 and June 2016, a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) was conducted by Valley County Health System for the approximately 31,140 residents in their designated service area in central Nebraska. This service area includes the nine county (Blaine, Custer, Garfield, Greeley, Howard, Loup, Sherman, Valley, and Wheeler) area referred to as the Loup Basin.

Valley County Health System operates a 16 bed hospital, a medical clinic in Ord (Valley County) and medical clinics in Loup City (Sherman County), Burwell (Garfield County) and North Loup (Valley County). Valley County Health System provides progressive care with compassion in this rural service area.

Valley County Health System

- In the summer of 2015, Valley County Health System continued work with the Loup Basin Public Health Department (LBPHD) to update our Community Health Needs Assessment.
- Loup Basin Public Health Department (LBPHD) completed a Community Health Status Assessment (CHSA) and continues to work on an updated Mobilizing for Action Through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP) process. The information obtained through the process was used as the primary source of secondary data.

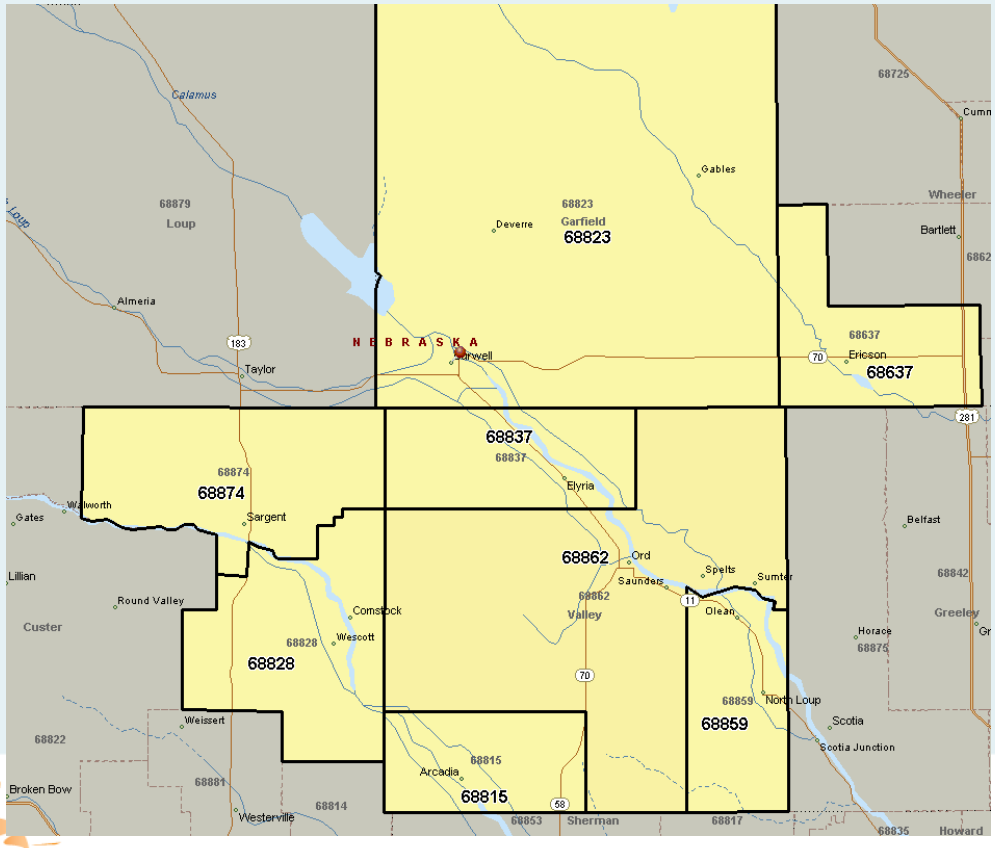
Valley County Health System

To ensure input from persons with broad knowledge of the health of the community, a Community Advisory Committee was organized with representative individuals from the community served. The Community Needs Committee identified individuals representing various community, business, and educational groups throughout the nine county area. Information was also used from the 2014 Valley County Health System Strategic Plan completed by National Healthcare Associates.

Valley County Health System

Defining the Community

The eight primary admit zip codes in the service area are included in four county map below:



Hospital Unique Patient from 7/1/14 to 6/30/15

68862	Ord	1700	38.20%
68823	Burwell	845	19.00%
68859	North Loup	200	4.50%
68815	Arcadia	131	2.90%
68637	Ericson	123	2.80%
68874	Sargent	122	2.70%
68828	Comstock	78	1.80%
68837	Elyria	64	1.40%
	Other	538	12.10%
		3801	82.70%

82.7% of patients are from 8 zip codes defined above.

The remaining 17.3% of patients are from Loup City, Taylor and Scotia.

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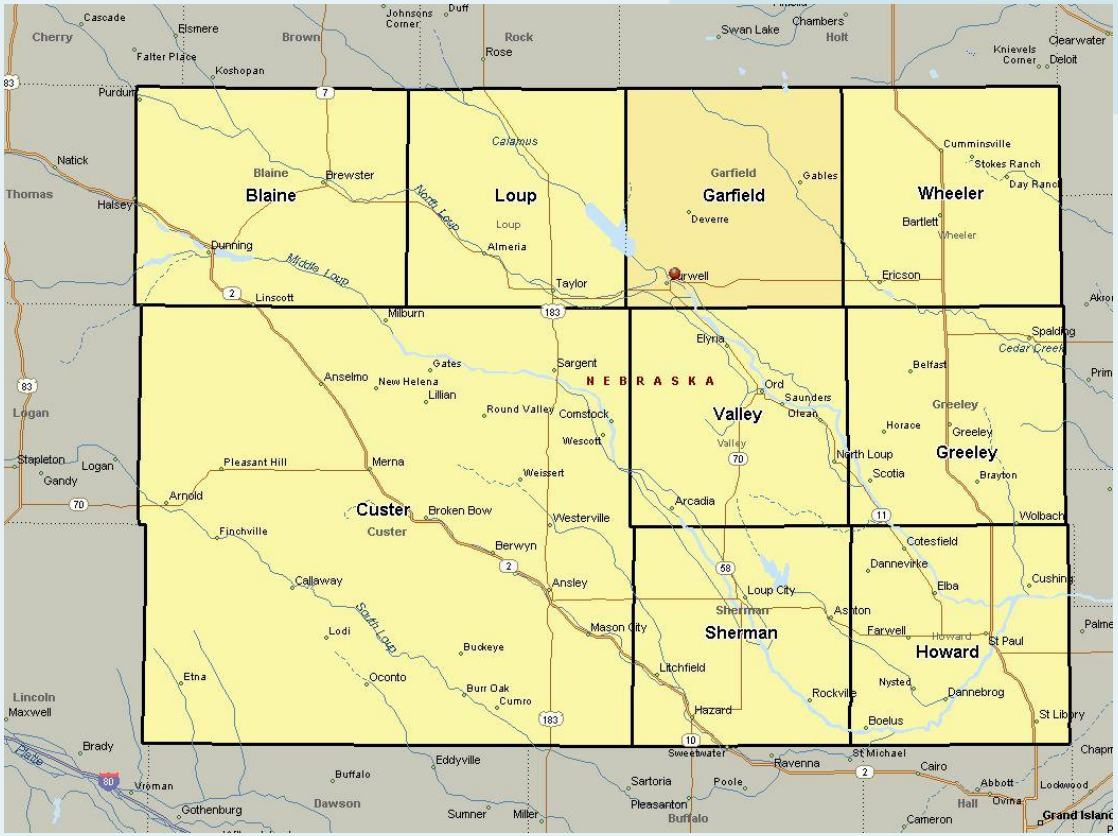
Defining The Counties

The Loup Basin Public Health Department analysis focused on the nine surrounding county service area:



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The Committee then reviewed demographic information for the Loup Basin based on information from the U.S. Census 2010 http://www.census.gov/2010census/popmap/index.php and Nebraska Department of Economic Development http://www.neded.org/files/research/stathand/bsect13.htm as well as additional information from county, state and national sources.

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2015 Demographics

The nine counties served by Valley County Health System are predominantly rural areas dominated by agricultural economic pursuits. They have a strong sense of community with many small businesses. The communities are geographically spread out and the largest community has a population of approximately 3,559 people. The 2010 census estimates a population of 31,140 people and an average population density of 4.4 residents per square mile. The service area population is estimated to experience a decrease in total population between 2010 and 2019 (-5.8%) which slowed from (-8%) on our previous CHNA. However, the percentage of individuals in the 65 and older age group is expected to increase by approximately 7% from 2014 to 2019 (Claritas, Inc and VCHS Strategic Plan.)

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2015 Demographics

Median household income in the service area in 2014 is $46,060 and the average household income is $50,110. These income values are below the median and average for both the state of Nebraska and the United States.

Unemployment rates for the service area for 2014 range from 2.4% to 4.5% (U.S. Dept. of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.) These rates compare favorably to the state of Nebraska and the United States.

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Population Demographics

County	2010 Census	2015 Estimate	2020 Projection
Blaine	478	367	305
Loup	632	589	541
Garfield	2,049	1,698	1,649
Wheeler	818	730	681
Custer	10,939	10,417	9,985
Valley	4,260	4,075	3,951
Greeley	2,538	1,999	1,788
Sherman	3,152	2,662	2,458
Howard	6,274	7,118	7,481
Total	**31,140**	**29,655**	**28,839**

Nebraska Department of Economic Development &
University of NE Bureau of Business Research, 2009

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Population Demographics

Age Category	2010 Census	2014 Estimate	2019 Projection
0-19	7,264	6,813	4,868
20-64	16,564	16,699	12,188
65+	6,727	6,929	5,917
Total	**30,556**	**30,441**	**22,973**

**2019 projection excludes Howard and Blaine Counties*

Many rural America service areas have seen population slightly decrease as younger populations migrate. The 65+ segment, a significant hospital population base, continues to increase.

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Below displays the unemployment rates for the United States, State of Nebraska, and the county service area:

Location	2012	2013	2014
U.S.	7.9	6.7	5.6
Nebraska	3.9	3.5	3.1
Blaine	5.3	5.1	4.5
Custer	2.9	2.7	2.4
Garfield	3	3.2	2.6
Greeley	3.6	3.4	3.2
Howard	3.6	3.6	3.6
Loup	3.8	4.5	3.7
Sherman	3.8	3.3	3.3
Valley	3.5	3.3	3
Wheeler	3.3	3.2	2.9

Valley County Health System

Assessing the VCHS 2013 CHNA

- 1. Access to healthy food choices
  - Launch of Weight Watchers Program
  - To Your Health Tuesday Lunch and Learn Education Sessions
  - Reduced lunch prices for community for use of our dining services with access to salad bar and healthy lunch choices
  - Continued services within our region are Food Pantries, WIC Program, UNL Extension Education Classes, Seasonal Farmer's Market

2. Needs of the elderly population

- Free membership for age 50+ Sterling Connection with educational programs offered
- Continued services of assisted living, in-home services, appropriate levels of care and transportation.

3. Increased access to physical activities

- Continued walking trails and outdoor activities, community wellness centers

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- 4. Workforce issues

  - Re-launched the Ord High School student school-to-work program
    - Continue to support community college, chamber of commerce educational opportunities, grants, scholarships and loans for education

- 5. Affordable dental / vision services for children

  - VCHS Child Development Committee includes pediatric dental and vision information in new parent educational bags
    - Continued support of area providers who offer specific services

- 6. Increased access to specialists

  - Successful recruitment of ENT, Podiatry, Oncology, Aesthetics and Geriatric Psychiatry outpatient clinics

  - Expansion of referral sources for outpatient services to include North Platte and Hastings

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- 7. Lack of health insurance

  - Trained staff to become a Navigator to service the Insurance Marketplace

  - Trained staff to assist in Medicaid enrollment

  - Provided SHIIP Education to senior adults

- 8. Mental health services
  - Continued operation of VCHS Heritage Program for senior adults, support of local private practices and expansion of VCHS EAP services

- 9. Extended care hours

  - Launched Urgent Care / Walk-In Clinic with extended hours of service at the Ord Medical Clinic location

  - Successful recruitment of two new VCHS employed physicians and one mid-level provider
  - Continued evaluation of the Urgent Care / Walk-In Clinic and monitor volume and usage

Valley County Health System

The Committee reviewed a summary of the MAPP project and the CHSA conducted by the Loup Basin Health Department. The entire report can be obtained by contacting the Loup Basin County Health department.

The following pages provide a summary of the issues and opportunities identified in the report that were used as a basis for discussion. This information is a summary only and does not reflect all data accumulated.

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Three assessments were completed as part of the MAPP project:

- Community Themes and Strengths-information obtained through discussions with 16 community members regarding the issues important to the community
- Local Public Health System Performance-review by the evaluation team using a tool developed by Center for Disease Control
- Forces of Change-information obtained through focus groups and interviews regarding impacts on health

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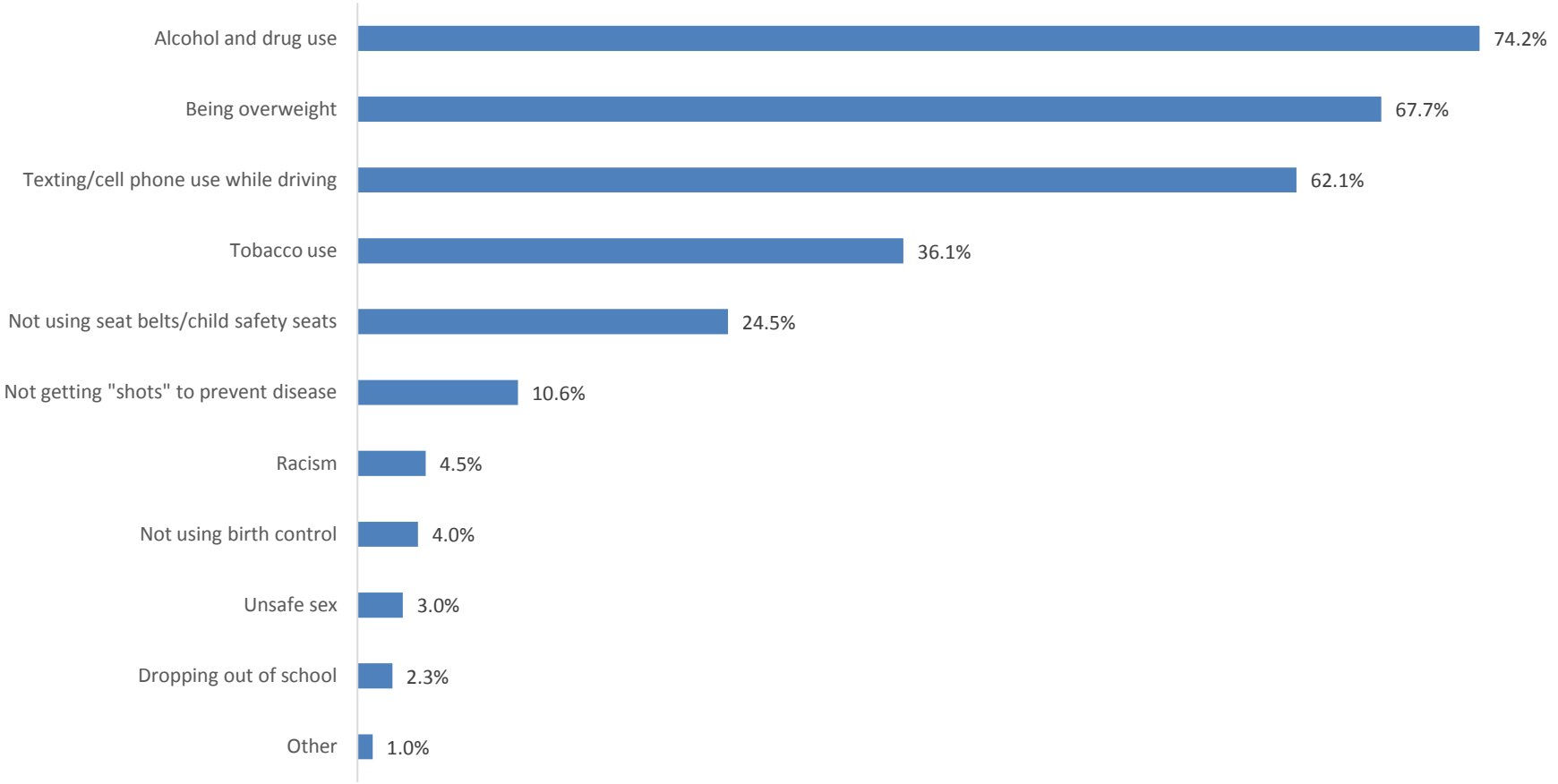
LBPHD Community Themes Strength Assessment
Overall Statistics

Figure 10. "Risky behaviors" most concerning to the community (n=396)*



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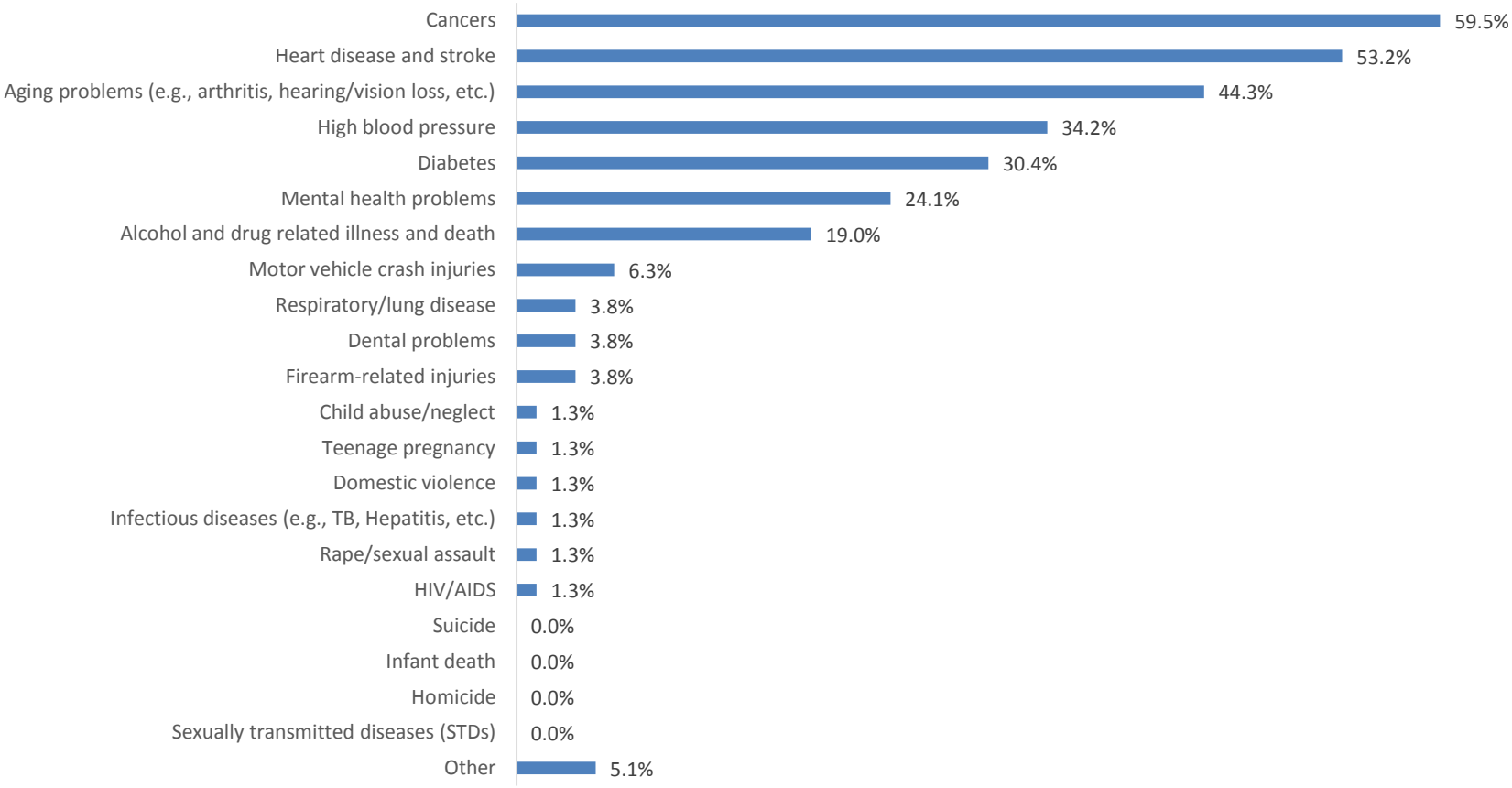
LBPHD Community Themes Strength Assessment
Valley County Statistics- specific to our service area

Figure 45. Most concerning "health problems" in the community (n=79)*



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Community Advantages: Health trends in which Loup Basin ranks more favorable than state and target levels:

- Self-inflicted injury
- Hospitalization
- Stroke death rate
- Adults who had
- Cholesterol testing
- High blood pressure
- Teen births

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Community on Par: Health trends in which Loup Basin ranks consistent in comparison with state and target levels:

- Health Insurance
- Adults at a healthy weight
- Reduction in tobacco use
- Chronic drinking
- Alcohol related deaths
- Suicide rates
- Coronary heart disease
- High cholesterol
- Cancer death rates
- Prenatal care/low birth
- Weight

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2016 VCHS Top Objectives

- Increase educational opportunities and services for the prevention and disease management in the VCHS service area:
  - Diabetic Education
  - Blood Pressure Clinics and Additional Screenings
  - Increased Respiratory Therapy Services

Valley County Health System

Next Steps

Valley County Health System is required to adopt an organization specific implementation strategy in response to the Community Health Needs Assessment report. The implementation strategy will be developed by the Community Health Needs Committee and management, approved by the Board of Directors of Valley County Health System and will be reviewed on an annual basis. The CHNA process and public report will be repeated every three years, as required by federal regulations.

Valley County Health System

Community Contact Information for CHNA

Community members who would like to provide input on the next CHNA process, or would like to provide feedback on the results of the assessment are encouraged to contact Valley County Health System with their inquiries, suggestions or comments.

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