

Fiscal Years FY 2026 – 2028

# Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) Implementation Strategy



**Saint Mary's Hospital completed a comprehensive Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) that was adopted by the Board of Directors on July 24, 2025.** Saint Mary's Hospital performed the CHNA in adherence with applicable federal requirements for not-for-profit hospitals set forth in the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). The assessment considered a comprehensive review of secondary data analysis of patient outcomes, community health status, and social influencers of health, as well as primary data collection, including input from representatives of the community, community members and various community organizations.

The complete CHNA report is available electronically at <https://www.trinityhealthofne.org/about-us/community-benefit/community-health-needs-assessments> or printed copies are available at **56 Franklin St. Xaiver 5, Waterbury, CT 06706.**

## Our Mission

### Our Mission

We, Trinity Health, serve together in the spirit of the Gospel as a compassionate and transforming healing presence within our communities.

### Our Vision

As a mission-driven innovative health organization, we will become the national leader in improving the health of our communities and each person we serve. We will be the most trusted health partner for life.

### Our Core Values

**Reverence:** We honor the sacredness and dignity of every person.

**Commitment to Those Experiencing Poverty:** We stand with and serve those who are experiencing poverty, especially those most vulnerable.

**Safety:** We embrace a culture that prevents harm and nurtures a healing, safe environment for all.

**Justice:** We foster right relationships to promote the common good, including sustainability of Earth.

**Stewardship:** We honor our heritage and hold ourselves accountable for the human, financial and natural resources entrusted to our care.

**Integrity:** We are faithful to who we say we are.

## Our Hospital

Saint Mary's Hospital is a Catholic, not-for-profit, acute care, community teaching hospital that has served Greater Waterbury since 1909. In 2016, Saint Mary's Hospital became part of Trinity Health Of New England, an integrated health care delivery system that is a member of Trinity Health, Livonia, Michigan, one of the largest multi-institutional Catholic health care delivery systems in the nation serving communities in 26 states. Licensed for 347 beds, Saint Mary's is designated as a Level II Trauma Center, offers award-winning cardiac and stroke care and houses the region's only pediatric emergency care unit. As the leading provider of surgical services in Greater Waterbury, Saint Mary's was the first to introduce the daVinci® Robotic Surgery System. The hospital's satellites and affiliates extend from Waterbury to Wolcott, Cheshire, Naugatuck, Southbury, Prospect and Watertown.



## Our Community Based Services

**Community Health Worker Hub**—providing social care support to patients including allocation of clothing and hygiene kits. This program provides essential clothing to patients in need during their stay at the Emergency Department, fostering a smoother discharge process.

**Diabetes Prevention Program**—SHAPE-U, offering free preventative services to community members in and around Waterbury.

### **Connecticut Early Detection and Prevention Program (CEDPP)**

Through the Family Health Center, the CEDPP offers essential services like free mammograms, pap tests, HPV tests, and cardiovascular screenings to uninsured or underinsured individuals. Serving 4,400 women annually across Connecticut, the program's primary goal is to increase the number of women who receive timely breast and cervical cancer screenings, along with diagnostic and treatment referrals. All services are provided at no cost through the Connecticut Department of Public Health.

### **Saint Mary's Foundation Breast Fund**

For patients needing further testing beyond the initial mammogram covered by CEDPP, the Saint Mary's Foundation Breast Fund steps in to provide additional support. The fund ensures that necessary follow-up tests are covered, with requests made by breast surgeons directly to the Foundation.

### **Medical Home Program**

As part of a national initiative overseen by the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Medical Home Program at Saint Mary's focuses on building strong partnerships between families and their pediatric care providers. This model ensures that children receive comprehensive care from trusted providers, and it emphasizes collaboration between caregivers and healthcare professionals to identify and meet both medical and non-medical needs.

### **Putting on Airs Program**

The Putting on Airs Program complements the Medical Home Program by providing in-home asthma education and management. An asthma education specialist works with clients and their families to review prescribed medications, provide proper usage instructions, and educate them on recognizing asthma signs and symptoms. Additionally, an environmental specialist conducts home assessments to identify potential asthma triggers, offering low-cost remediation strategies. Referrals to this program can be made through various sources, including emergency departments, healthcare providers, and school health services.

## Our Community

Saint Mary's service area and community refers to three primary geographic areas: (1) Waterbury/urban core; (2) the inner ring, which includes towns contiguous to Waterbury (Naugatuck, Prospect, Cheshire, Wolcott, Middlebury, Watertown, Thomaston); and (3) the outer ring, which includes all remaining towns in the region (Beacon Falls, Oxford, Southbury, Woodbury, Bethlehem, Morris, Litchfield, Goshen, Warren, Washington, Roxbury, Bridgewater, New Milford). The community encompasses western Connecticut and is relatively large with about 313,000 residents. The geographic area was defined by primary service area (PSA) and secondary service area (SSA). The PSA is the area that the hospital predominantly serves and the hospital's main catchment area. It comprises all of Waterbury and has a population of approximately 115,908 residents. A snapshot of Waterbury from the 2020 US Census shows: 42,135 households; \$46,329 median household income; 47,800 total housing units; 16.1% with a bachelor's degree or higher; 28% Black/African American; 39% Hispanic or Latino descent; 11.2% two or more races; and 9.1% without healthcare coverage.

## Our Approach to Health Equity

While community health needs assessments (CHNA) and Implementation Strategies are required by the IRS, Trinity Health ministries have historically conducted CHNAs and developed Implementation Strategies as a way to meaningfully engage our communities and plan our Community Health & Well-Being work. Community Health & Well-Being promotes optimal health for people experiencing poverty or other vulnerabilities in the communities we serve by addressing patient social needs and investing in our communities through dismantling oppressive systems, including racism, and building community capacity. Trinity Health has adopted the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's definition of Health Equity—"Health equity means that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible. This requires removing obstacles to health such as poverty, discrimination, and their consequences, including powerlessness and lack of access to good jobs with fair pay, quality education and housing, safe environments, and health care."

This implementation strategy was developed in October 2025 through collaboration with Bridge to Success (BTS), the Transforming Communities Initiative (TCI) Core and Expanded Team, and additional partners including RIBA/ASPIRA, NEST, New Opportunities, Girls Trek and the Saint Mary's Community Board Subcommittee. The subcommittee includes representatives from the City of Waterbury, Grace Baptist Church, Granville Academy, Naugatuck Community College, and local residents. This collaborative focuses on populations and geographies most impacted by identified needs, applying racial equity principles throughout planning and implementation. Strategies will emphasize policy, systems and environmental changes to dismantle structural racism and promote community health and well-being.

## Health and Social Needs of the Community

The CHNA conducted in early spring of 2025 identified the significant needs for health and social drivers of health within the Stafford Springs community. Community stakeholders then prioritized those needs during a facilitated review and analysis of the CHNA findings. The significant health needs identified, in order of priority include:

- 1. Access to Health Care**
  - Long wait times in ED, for appointments and limited availability of primary care providers.
  - Many residents struggle to understand and navigate the healthcare and insurance systems.
- 2. Housing**
  - 35.39% of Waterbury's households are cost burdened, meaning 30% or more of total monthly income goes to mortgage.
  - 46.09% of all rental households are spending more than 30% of their monthly income on rent
- 3. Transportation**
  - Limited and unreliable public transit options prevent residents, especially in priority zip codes, from accessing medical services, grocery stores and other essential resources.
  - Transportation was directly linked to missed appointments and delayed care.
- 4. Food Insecurity**
  - Food insecurity remains widespread. In Connecticut 516,000 residents are affected (1 in 7). Waterbury is identified as one of the cities with the highest levels of need.
  - Local efforts, such as Interfaith Food Pantry, Connecticut Foodshare and local faith-based organizations are working to fill the gaps, but the demand exceeds the supply.
- 5. Education**
  - 50.05% of the population aged 3-4 in Waterbury is enrolled in preschool vs 60.9% of the rest of Connecticut
  - Education directly influences health, employment and quality of life.

# Hospital Implementation Strategy

## Significant health and social needs to be addressed

Saint Mary's Hospital, in collaboration with community partners, will focus on developing and/or supporting initiatives and measure their effectiveness to improve the following needs:

- 1 Access to care – CHNA page 9; Appendix B pages 1
- 2 Housing – CHNA pages 7-13, 2023 Equity report pages 7, 8
- 3 Transportation access – CHNA page 9

## Significant health and social needs that will not be addressed

Saint Mary's Hospital acknowledges the wide range of priority health and social issues that emerged from the CHNA process and determined that it could effectively focus on only those needs which are the most pressing, under-addressed and within its ability to influence. Saint Mary's Hospital does not intend to address the following needs:

- **Food Security**—food security as a standalone issue in its recent Community Health Needs Assessments (CHNA) and implementation strategies. While food insecurity is acknowledged as a social determinant of health, the hospital's strategic focus has leaned more toward clinical care, chronic disease management, and broader socioeconomic factors like housing and transportation. Their resource allocation and alignment with institutional goals may have led to food security being addressed indirectly or through partnerships, rather than as a central initiative
- **Substance Use Disorder**—Systems Change (Substance Abuse, Chronic Disease Prevention)—These needs are resourced through existing collaboratives and partnerships in the City of Waterbury including internal and external behavioral health and medical health providers.
- **Education**—Due to limited resources and the need to focus on areas where measurable impact and long-term sustainability are achievable, Saint Mary's Hospital may not be able to fully address education initiatives, which often require specialized staff, significant investment, and cross-sector collaboration. Instead, the hospital relies on community partners such as schools, nonprofits, and public health agencies to meet broader educational needs, while supporting complementary efforts like our Summer Job Shadowing Program for middle and high school students and participating in the Waterbury Promise scholarship initiative, through which we select a college scholarship recipient pursuing a healthcare-related degree.
- **Employment**—Saint Mary's Hospital acknowledges that it must focus on issues it can realistically and effectively influence. Employment, while a critical social determinate of health often requires, economic development strategies, workforce training programs and policy advocacy all of which are outside of the core competencies of a hospital.
- **Quality of Life**—Quality of life is a broad and multifaceted concept that encompasses factors such as housing, employment, education, safety, and social connectedness, many of which fall outside the hospital's direct scope and expertise. By focusing on areas where we can make a measurable impact with existing resources, Saint Mary's aims to allocate efforts effectively and rely on community partners to address broader social determinants that contribute to quality of life.
- **Diabetes**—Saint Mary's Hospital is preparing to roll out the CDC Diabetes Prevention Program in late fall 2025. This evidence-based initiative targets patients diagnosed with prediabetes and focuses on lifestyle changes to prevent the progression to type 2 diabetes. By implementing this program, the hospital is addressing diabetes prevention through a structured and impactful approach, allowing CHNA resources to be directed toward other pressing and under-addressed needs within its capacity to influence
- **Asthma**—Managing asthma often requires environmental interventions, home assessments, and ongoing education—areas better served by specialized community programs. The Putting on AIRS program supports asthma management through in-home education, medication guidance, and environmental assessments to identify and reduce triggers. Referrals can be made by emergency departments, healthcare providers, and schools. By leveraging this program and partnering with public health agencies, we can support asthma needs indirectly while focusing our internal resources where they can have the greatest impact.

- **Mental Health**—While mental health may not be directly addressed in the CHNA Implementation Strategy, its critical role in overall well-being is fully recognized. To support this need indirectly, we will continue to collaborate with community-based mental health providers, social service agencies, and behavioral health organizations to ensure patients have access to appropriate care. Through referrals, shared resources, and coordinated outreach, we aim to connect individuals with the support they need while focusing our internal efforts on areas where we can make the greatest impact.
- **Cardiovascular**—While cardiovascular issues are a significant health concern, they were not identified as one of the most pressing, under-addressed needs within the hospital’s ability to influence. By focusing on areas where we can make the greatest impact with our existing capabilities, Saint Mary’s Hospital aims to allocate resources effectively and avoid duplicating efforts already being addressed by other healthcare organizations or specialists.

This implementation strategy specifies community health needs that the hospital, in collaboration with community partners, has determined to address. The hospital reserves the right to amend this implementation strategy if circumstances warrant. For example, certain needs may become more pronounced and require enhancements to the described strategic initiatives. During these three years, other organizations in the community may decide to address certain needs, indicating that the hospital then should refocus its limited resources to best serve the community.

## 1. Access to Health Care

**GOAL:** To reduce inappropriate use of emergency department services for non-emergent conditions by guiding patients toward urgent care centers for minor illnesses and injuries. This initiative seeks to improve access to appropriate levels of care, alleviate emergency department overcrowding, reduce avoidable healthcare costs, and ensure emergency resources remain available for true medical emergencies.



CHNA Impact Measures	2026 Baseline	2028 Target
Number of individuals reached through the public education campaign	N/A	1500 patients *Based on 6250 patients see per month
Reduction in non-emergent ED visits (tracked quarterly or annually) Increase in urgent care visits for minor illnesses and injuries	N/A	4%/250 patients
Change in patient knowledge about when to use urgent care vs. ED (via pre/post surveys)	N/A	4%/250 patients

Strategy	Timeline			Hospital and Committed Partners (align to indicate committed resource)	Committed Resources (align by hospital/committed partner)
	Y1	Y2	Y3		
Conduct a Community Needs Assessment to identify neighborhoods with high rates of non-emergent ED visits. Gather data on barriers to urgent care (e.g. awareness, transportation, insurance etc.).	X	X	X	Saint Mary's Hospital	In-kind staff and resources
				<b>Focus Location(s)</b>	<b>Focus Population(s)</b>
				Waterbury	Priority zip codes 06702, 06704, 06705, 06706, 06708, 06710

Strategy	Timeline			Hospital and Committed Partners (align to indicate committed resource)	Committed Resources (align by hospital/committed partner)
	Y1	Y2	Y3		
Develop clear, culturally relevant messaging explaining when to use urgent care vs the emergency department. The messaging should include examples of common conditions appropriate for urgent care. Campaign will be print and social media. Social media campaign to include approved Waterbury Public School High School Students who will create campaigns in English and Spanish for social media with the goal to target the large 25 yr old and under demographic.				Saint Mary's Hospital	In-kind resources & community participation
				Waterbury Public Schools— High School students	Cigna Health Equity Grant \$250
	X	X		Trinity Health's Urgent Care facilities	Resident participation
				<b>Focus Location(s)</b>	<b>Focus Population(s)</b>
				Waterbury	Priority zip codes 06702, 06704, 06705, 06706, 06708, 06710

Strategy	Timeline			Hospital and Committed Partners (align to indicate committed resource)	Committed Resources (align by hospital/committed partner)
	Y1	Y2	Y3		
Establish a Patient Navigator role to assist individuals in navigating healthcare and insurance systems. If funding permits, hire a dedicated staff member. If not, repurpose an existing position—such as a community health worker or outreach coordinator—to fulfill these responsibilities. Provide training and integrate the role into care teams to improve access, reduce confusion, and enhance patient outcomes, especially for underserved populations.				Saint Mary's Hospital	In-kind staff and resources
			X		
				<b>Focus Location(s)</b>	<b>Focus Population(s)</b>
				Waterbury	Priority zip codes 06702, 06704, 06705, 06706, 06708, 06710

## 2. Transportation

**GOAL:** To reduce transportation-related barriers to care by ensuring that patients, particularly those in priority zip code communities, can reliably and affordably access medical services, grocery stores, and other essential resources that influence health. Through collaboration with local transit authorities and optimization of bus routes, the hospital seeks to promote health equity, decrease missed appointments, and improve timely access to both preventive and acute care, as well as other key social determinants of health.



CHNA Impact Measures	2026 Baseline	2028 Target
Increase in public transit routes/stops in priority zip code areas	N/A	1 new and 3 extended routes
Number of community members reporting improved access to essential services in priority zip code areas	N/A	50 riders per route

Strategy	Timeline			Hospital and Committed Partners (align to indicate committed resource)	Committed Resources (align by hospital/committed partner)
	Y1	Y2	Y3		
Learn about the history, landscape, policies and procedures that created the systemic disparities around transportation in Waterbury, especially in the priority zip code neighborhoods.	X			Saint Mary's Hospital	A portion of TCI Funding— Up to \$300,00 total per year
				Bridge to Success	In-kind staff and resources
				Nest	In-kind staff and resources
				<b>Focus Location(s)</b>	<b>Focus Population(s)</b>
				Waterbury inner-city	Priority zip codes 06702, 06704, 06705, 06706, 06708, 06010

Strategy	Timeline			Hospital and Committed Partners (align to indicate committed resource)	Committed Resources (align by hospital/committed partner)
	Y1	Y2	Y3		
Develop a ridership survey and have TCI – CAN members administer the surveys to bus riders.  Perform Geospatial Mapping of the current routes and neighborhoods	X	X		Saint Mary's Hospital	In-kind staff resources
				Bridge to Success	Portion of TCI Funding— up to \$300,000
				Dillinger Research and Applied Data	Portion of TCI Funding
				<b>Focus Location(s)</b>	<b>Focus Population(s)</b>
				Waterbury	Priority zip codes 06702, 06704, 06705, 06706, 06708, 06010

Strategy	Timeline			Hospital and Committed Partners (align to indicate committed resource)	Committed Resources (align by hospital/committed partner)
	Y1	Y2	Y3		
Develop a multidisciplinary cross sector collaborative for analysis of current system in place which will lead to strategic changes to the bus routes to bring them to be more equitable and safer for Waterbury residents located in Priority.			X	Saint Mary's Hospital	In-kind staff and resources
				TCI – Collaborative Action Network	A portion of TCI Funding— Up to \$300,00 total per year
				Focus Location(s)	Focus Population(s)
				Waterbury inner-city	Priority zip codes 06702, 06704, 06705, 06706, 06010

### 3. Housing

**GOAL:** To ensure equitable, safe and affordable housing for all Waterbury residents by advocating for accountability among landlords to maintain safe, habitable living conditions. Through strategic partnerships and community engagement, the hospital and our partners aim to support eviction prevention efforts, provide tenants with access to education on their rights, and connect them with legal resources. This initiative seeks to reduce housing instability, improve overall health outcomes, and promote equitable living environments for vulnerable populations in Waterbury.



CHNA Impact Measures	2026 Baseline	2028 Target
Number of housing complaints filed and resolved related to unsafe or uninhabitable conditions.	1,041	800
Percentage of rental units inspected and brought into compliance with health and safety codes	N/A	60
Number of landlords participating in accountability or improvement programs.	N/A	30
Number of tenants attending educational workshops on eviction rights and housing laws.	N/A	50
Increase in tenant awareness of legal rights (measured through pre/post surveys).	N/A	50

Strategy	Timeline			Hospital and Committed Partners (align to indicate committed resource)	Committed Resources (align by hospital/committed partner)
	Y1	Y2	Y3		
Develop a multidisciplinary cross sector collaborative for analysis of current system in place which will lead to strategic development of policies and procedures that target improvement of housing conditions for Waterbury.	X			TCI/Bridge to Success	Portion of TCI Funding— up to \$300,000
				Saint Mary's Hospital	In-kind staff and resources
				Nest	In-kind staff and resources
				<b>Focus Location(s)</b>	<b>Focus Population(s)</b>
	Waterbury inner city	Priority zip codes of 06702, 06704, 06705, 06706, 06708, 06010			

Strategy	Timeline			Hospital and Committed Partners (align to indicate committed resource)	Committed Resources (align by hospital/committed partner)
	Y1	Y2	Y3		
Address slumlords: Advocate for accountability systems and enforcement to ensure landlords maintain safe, habitable living conditions.  Partner with city government and local agencies to provide eviction prevention supports, tenant education and access to legal resources.		X	X	Saint Mary's Hospital	In-kind staff and resources
				TCI/Bridge to Success	Portion of TCI Funding— Up to \$300,000
				City of Waterbury, permits and zoning departments	In-kind staff and resources
				City of Waterbury Housing Authority	In-kind staff and resources
				Waterbury Health Department	In-kind staff and resources
				<b>Focus Location(s)</b>	<b>Focus Population(s)</b>
					Waterbury inner-city

Strategy	Timeline			Hospital and Committed Partners (align to indicate committed resource)	Committed Resources (align by hospital/committed partner)
	Y1	Y2	Y3		
Establish a rent cap for Connecticut by collaborating with statewide partners and policymakers to promote fair rent stability policies that protect low-income families from displacement.			X	TCI/Bridge to Success	Portion of TCI Funding— Up to \$300,000
				Saint Mary's Hospital	In-kind staff and resources
				<b>Focus Location(s)</b>	<b>Focus Population(s)</b>
	Waterbury inner-city	Priority zip codes 06702, 06704, 06705, 06706, 06708, 06010			

## Adoption of Implementation Strategy

On January 15, 2026, the authorized body of the Trinity Health Of New England Board reviewed the Saint Mary's Hospital Community Health Needs FY 2026–2028 Implementation Strategy for addressing the community health needs identified in the 2025 Community Health Needs Assessment. Upon review, the authorized body approved the Implementation Strategy and the related budget.



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**February 5, 2026**

