



2026-2028 UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS

COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

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BOARD ADOPTION

University Hospitals adopted the 2026-2028 Community Health Implementation Strategy on March 19, 2026.

It includes the following UH facilities located in Lorain County, referred to in this report as the “Hospitals”:

- University Hospitals Elyria Medical Center
- University Hospitals Avon Rehabilitation Hospital

COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY AVAILABILITY



The Implementation Strategy can be found on University Hospitals’ website at www.UHhospitals.org/CHNA-IS or a hard copy can be mailed upon request at CommunityBenefit@UHhospitals.org.

WRITTEN COMMENTS

Individuals are encouraged to submit written comments, questions or other feedback about this Implementation Strategy to CommunityBenefit@UHhospitals.org. Please make sure to include the name of the UH facility that you are commenting about and, if possible, a reference to the appropriate section within the Implementation Strategy.

HOSPITAL MISSION STATEMENT

As wholly owned subsidiaries of University Hospitals, the Hospitals are committed to supporting the UH mission, “To Heal. To Teach. To Discover.” by providing a wide range of community benefits including clinical services, community health improvement programs, medical education and research. UH is an integrated delivery system and thus can provide benefits by coordinating within and among various entities.

INTRODUCTION

University Hospitals (UH) presents the 2026–2028 Implementation Strategy (IS) for Lorain County developed in response to the 2025 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). University Hospitals Elyria Medical Center and University Hospitals Avon Rehabilitation Hospitals (the “Hospitals”) conducted a community health needs assessment (a “CHNA”) compliant with the requirements of Treas. Reg. §1.501(r) (“Section 501(r)”) and Ohio Revised Code (“ORC”) 3701.981. The 2025 Lorain County CHNA served as the foundation for developing University Hospital’s Implementation Strategy (“IS”) to address those needs that, (a) the Hospitals determine they are able to meet in whole or in part; (b) are otherwise part of UH’s mission; and (c) are not met (or are not adequately met) by other programs and services in the county. The IS identifies the means through which the Hospitals plan to address a number of the needs that are consistent with UH’s charitable mission as part of its community benefit programs. Together the CHNA and IS serve to align hospital resources and activities to address health needs identified in the CHNA.

Likewise, the Hospitals are addressing some of these needs simply by providing care to all, regardless of ability to pay, every day. They anticipate that the strategies may change and therefore, a flexible approach is best suited for the development of its response to the 2025 Lorain County CHNA.

The purpose of this Implementation Strategy is to describe how UH will

address the priority health needs identified through the 2025 CHNA. These priorities include Behavioral Health, Chronic Disease, and Maternal and Child Health. To support coordinated planning and alignment with UH strategic priorities, the CHNA findings are organized under UH’s Community Health Investment (CHI) Strategy priority areas: Maternal and Child Health, Well-being, and Economic Opportunity as seen in Figure 1.

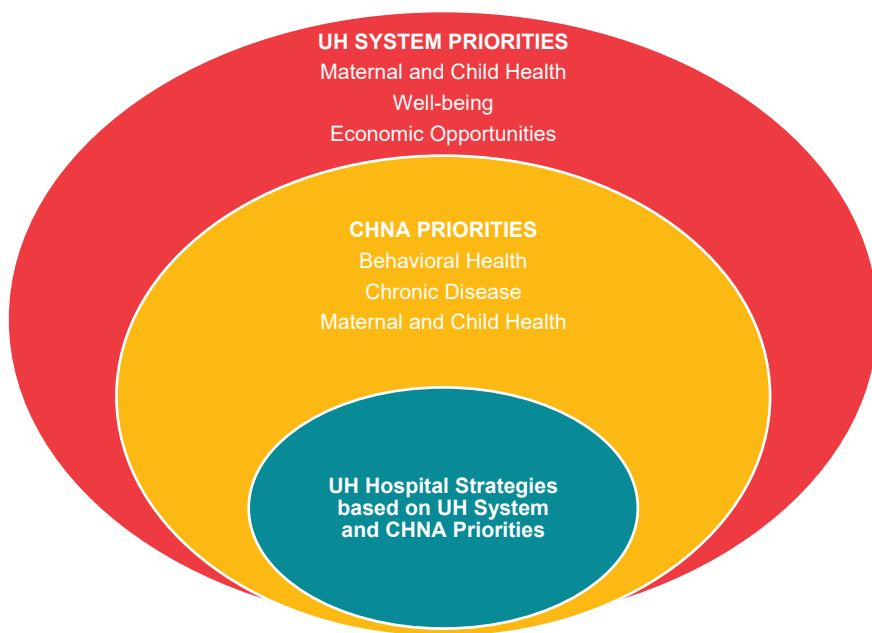


Figure 1. UH Priorities Alignment

This IS outlines the goals, objectives, and strategies that UH hospitals will implement, both independently and in collaboration with community partners, to address these priority health needs. The strategies were developed through a series of virtual planning workshops involving UH staff.

The strategies outlined in this IS are designed to leverage existing community resources, strengthen cross-sector partnerships, and guide UH's community health improvement efforts from 2026 through 2028.

ALIGNMENT WITH LOCAL AND STATE STANDARDS

Ohio law requires local health departments (LHDs) and tax-exempt hospitals to submit their Community Health Improvement Plans and Implementation Strategy reports to the Ohio Department of Health (the department). As of January 1, 2020, Ohio law also requires LHDs and tax-exempt hospitals to complete assessments and plans “in alignment on a three-year interval established by the department.”

While the Ohio Revised Code does not mandate alignment with specific state-level assessments or plans, the department encourages consistency with the Ohio State Health Assessment (SHA) and the Ohio State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) to promote coordinated public health priorities across the state. As a result, many communities choose to align their CHNA and Implementation Strategy timelines, indicators, and strategies with those of their local health departments and with broader statewide goals.

University Hospitals meets these expectations by coordinating its CHNA process with local health departments within its service area and by submitting its CHNAs and Implementation Strategies to the Ohio Department of Health in accordance with state requirements. UH's CHNAs and Implementation Strategies also maintain broad alignment with the priorities and focus areas outlined in the SHA and SHIP, supporting consistency between local needs and statewide health improvement efforts.

COMMUNITY DEFINITION

The service area for University Hospitals (UH) IS in Lorain County, Ohio, outline includes an estimated population of 314,588 residents, whose health needs and outcomes are the focus of this Implementation Strategy (see Figure 2).

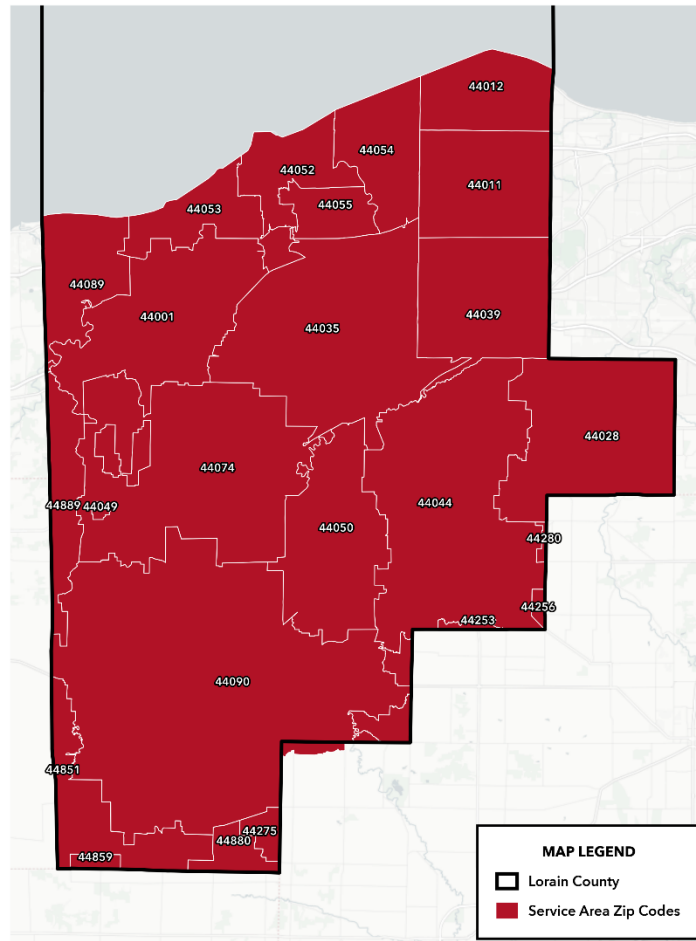


Figure 2. UH Service Area

Clearly defining the service area establishes the geographic scope of the IS and supports a coordinated, comprehensive approach to addressing identified community health priorities across Lorain County.

Additional details describing the Lorain County community, including demographics and social and economic determinants of health, can be found in the CHNA report on the UH website at: uhhospitals.org/CHNA-IS.

2025 LORAIN COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

University Hospitals (UH) began its 2025 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) in August 2024 to identify and prioritize the most significant health needs in the community. The CHNA was designed to guide planning and inform community health improvement efforts.

Lorain County Public Health was responsible for project management, secondary data, and report development. Primary data were provided by Mercy Health Lorain, conducted by Moxley Public Health. Secondary data included community health indicators from state and national sources, while primary data were collected through community stakeholder interviews, a resident survey, and resident focus groups. All data were analyzed using standardized methods, and findings were organized by health topic. Results from both data sources were combined to identify the community's most significant health needs.

Qualitative findings and quantitative findings were taken into account to identify the three priority health issues that affect Lorain County residents: Behavioral Health, Chronic Disease, and Maternal and Child Health.



**CHNA Priority Area 1:
Behavioral Health**



**CHNA Priority Area 2:
Chronic Disease**



**CHNA Priority Area 3:
Maternal and Child
Health**

For more information on the CHNA findings and the identification of significant health needs, please refer to the 2025 CHNA report at: uhhospitals.org/CHNA-IS.

2026-2028 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY OVERVIEW

This section presents the strategies, objectives, and activities that University Hospitals (UH) hospitals intend to deliver, support, or collaborate on to address significant, prioritized community health needs over the next three years. Planned actions are aligned with current community needs as well as UH's mission, vision, and strategic initiatives. The plan may be amended as circumstances change, including shifts in community needs or available resources.

Implementation Strategy Planning Process

The University Hospitals (UH) Implementation Strategy (IS) planning process involved a series of virtual workshops and electronic communication from November 2025 through February 2026. Participants included hospital staff with expertise in community needs and services for each priority area.

Illuminology facilitated the workshops. During the first virtual session, Illuminology guided participants in reviewing CHNA priorities and identifying:

- Desired changes based on CHNA results to inform goals and community-level indicators
- Potential actions to shape strategies

Following the initial workshop, virtual follow-up sessions were held to refine draft overarching goals, community-level indicators, and implementation plans for each priority area.

The resulting work plans outline strategies for each hospital focusing on the selected priority areas, including:

1. Broad overarching goals and community-level indicators to track long-term progress
2. Strategies with measurable short-term objectives
3. Specific activities, timelines, and responsible teams or individuals

Work plans will be reviewed and updated to reflect evolving community needs, available resources, and ongoing activities.

The number one priority for UH Community Health Investment for 2026–2029 and beyond is the UH Medicaid Enrollment Optimization Program (MEOP). This focus is driven by anticipated federal changes under the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (HR1), which will significantly tighten Medicaid eligibility requirements for adults in the Medicaid expansion group (ages 19–64) beginning January 1, 2027. Key provisions include

requiring 80 hours per month of work, volunteering, or schooling; more frequent eligibility redeterminations every six months instead of annually; and shortening retroactive eligibility from three months to two months. With more than 774,000 Ohioans currently enrolled in Medicaid expansion, these shifts are expected to increase the risk of coverage loss. While UH is still working through final systemwide MEOP strategies, we expect to adjust and refine approaches to meet these changing conditions. Many of our existing strategies will also be leveraged to educate the community, strengthen connections to coverage, and proactively identify individuals at risk of becoming uninsured or disenrolled through socio-medical touchpoints. This implementation plan includes a Medicaid enrollment strategy that operates at the system level but will be operationalized and supported across our hospitals. (see page 14 for the MEOP strategy).

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES



SYSTEMWIDE INITIATIVE



Medicaid Enrollment Optimization Program: System-wide initiative

University Hospitals is implementing the Medicaid Enrollment Optimization Program (MEOP) as a system-wide initiative to help eligible individuals maintain and attain coverage and to ensure our hospitals and community partners are ready for forthcoming policy changes. While MEOP will touch every part of UH, early operational focus are concentrated at UH locations within Cuyahoga, Lorain, Lake, and Portage counties where high utilization and risk are especially high. Piloting at sites within these communities will allow rapid learning and scaling across the system. As part of this effort, UH will work closely with community-based organizations, government partners, managed care entities, and other health systems to develop shared strategies, aligned workflows, and coordinated communication plans that support consistent messaging and maximize impact across the region.

Why coverage matters across CHNA priorities

Consistent health insurance coverage is a foundational component supporting all priority areas identified across UH Community Health Needs Assessments. Reliable access to coverage plays a critical role in ensuring that individuals and families can obtain the care and resources they need. Strengthening these connections aligns with UH's Community Health Investment framework particularly the Economic Opportunity priority, as insurance coverage is a critical gateway to financial stability, reduced medical debt, and improved access to preventive and ongoing care.

Medicaid Enrollment Optimization will serve as a shared systemwide goal and will be reflected across implementation plans throughout the UH footprint. This marks the first time a systemwide strategy has been integrated into implementation plan development. While the full program design is still in progress, planning efforts are underway, and updates will be incorporated as the implementation plan evolves.

What's at stake if people lose Medicaid

Forthcoming federal and state changes-work requirements, shorter redetermination intervals, and other eligibility and cost-sharing shifts-could increase churn among expansion adults and other populations. Loss of coverage threatens continuity of care, produces avoidable coverage gaps, and increases the likelihood that patients re-enter the system through higher-acuity, higher-cost settings.

For hospitals, these shifts can lead to rising uncompensated care, operational strain, and worsened outcomes, which in extreme cases could affect the viability of

departments or facilities due to unsustainable reimbursement levels. For communities, coverage loss widens inequities and destabilizes families.

Our approach

MEOP mobilizes cross-functional workstreams—education, communications, operational workflow, government & community outreach, and data—to build a repeatable, scalable model for enrollment and re-enrollment. The program roadmap moves from discovery and solution design to pilot and scale, so that by **January 2027** UH and partners have a tested workflow embedded in operations across priority hospitals and community settings. This approach reflects the program’s OKRs and phased timeline already socialized with stakeholder.

UH Community Health Investment (CHI) Priority Area: Economic Opportunities					
CHNA Priority Area: Overarching Strategy					
Hospital: Systemwide Strategy					
Goal: Improve access to and continuity of Medicaid coverage by optimizing enrollment, re-enrollment, and redetermination workflows across UH and community settings.					
Community-Level Indicators to track long-term outcomes: Medicaid enrollment and retention rates; Reduction in uninsured ED utilization; Reduction in coverage gaps (churn); Increased patient awareness of Medicaid requirements					
Strategy 1: Implement a system-wide Medicaid Enrollment Optimization Program that integrates education, workflow standardization, data analytics, and community partnerships.					
Objective 1: By January 2027, deploy a scalable MEOP workflow across priority UH sites and community settings to support eligible individuals in maintaining or attaining Medicaid coverage.					
Activities	Measures	Collaborators	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Develop standardized Medicaid education materials and scripts	Materials developed and deployed		X		
Map and standardize Medicaid enrollment workflows	Workflow documented and implemented		X	X	

Launch MEOP pilot at priority UH hospitals and community sites	# of pilot sites		X	X	
Train caregivers and community partners	# trained		X	X	X
Scale MEOP system-wide	Sites expanded			X	X
Host/participate in community outreach events in priority locations	# of events		X	X	X
Patients connected to UH or partner organizations for work requirements	# of patients			X	X

UH Community Health Investment (CHI) Priority Area: Maternal and Child Health

CHNA Priority Area: Maternal and Child Health

Hospital: University Hospitals Elyria Medical Center

Goal: Reduce food insecurity among children.

Community-Level Indicators to track long-term outcomes:
 - Child food insecurity rate (baseline: 19.3% according to HealthyNeo)

Strategy 1:
 - Provide lunches to families as part of summer lunch program.

Objectives:
 - By December 31, 2026, establish baseline number of lunches provided.
 - By December 31, 2028, increase food provided to families by 10%.

Activities	Measures	Collaborators	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Conduct summer lunch program	# of lunches provided	Sodexo	X	X	X

UH Community Health Investment (CHI) Priority Area: Well-being

CHNA Priority Area: Chronic Disease & Behavioral Health

Hospital: University Hospitals Elyria Medical Center and University Hospitals Avon Rehabilitation Hospital

Goals:
 - Improve the well-being of adults in Lorain County via increased chronic disease prevention and self-management, especially for diabetes and hypertension.
 - Strengthen community knowledge and access to essential health and support services to improve community wellbeing.

Community-Level Indicators to track long-term outcomes:
 - Adults 20+ with Diabetes (baseline: 10.8% according to HealthyNeo)
 - High Blood Pressure Prevalence (baseline: 38.2% according to HealthyNeo)
 - Adults who Experienced a Stroke (baseline: 3.9% according to HealthyNeo)
 - Age-Adjusted Death Rate due to Cerebrovascular Disease (Stroke) (baseline 44.1/100,000 according to HealthyNeo)
 - Poor Mental Health: Average Number of Days (baseline: 6.3 according to HealthyNeo)

Strategy 1:

- Increase community outreach education, events, and screenings in Lorain County.

Objective:

- By December 31, 2028, increase number of outreach events.

Activities	Measures	Collaborators	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Host and participate in community events offering free screenings and health education to engage and support residents.	Number of screenings	Numerous community organizations	X	X	X
Deliver educational sessions through lifestyle speakers at local community organizations.	Number of participants	Numerous community organizations	X	X	X
Provide materials at all events to bring awareness of UH programs and other resources in the community (e.g., financial aid programs, information for those who are uninsured or underinsured)	Number of events	Numerous community organizations	X	X	X
Implement get-connected programs in communities	Number of get connected programs implemented		X	X	X
Continue to partner with United We Sweat to offer educational programs	Number of participants Number of events	United We Sweat	X	X	X

Strategy 2:

- Build new strategic partnerships to expand community reach in Lorain County.

Objective:

- By December 2028, establish 10 new strategic partnerships with local community organizations and internal departments.

Activities	Measures	Collaborators	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
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Establish connections with new partners to plan, coordinate, and implement at least 2 events per year that promote community health and education.	Number of new partnerships		X	X	X
Initiate and coordinate new programs with internal departments to host two events each year that advance organizational and community goals.	Number of new programs		X	X	X

UH Community Health Investment (CHI) Priority Area: Well-being					
CHNA Priority Area: Chronic Disease					
Hospital: University Hospitals Elyria Medical Center					
Goal: Stop the upward trend of age-adjusted heart disease and deaths through culinary literacy education.					
Community-Level Indicators to track long-term outcomes: - Adults who experienced coronary heart disease (baseline: 8.5% according to HealthyNeo)					
Strategy 1: - Refer residents to culinary literacy talk series and program.					
Objective: - By December 31, 2028 refer residents to culinary literacy events and programs.					
Activities	Measures	Collaborators	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Refer residents to a talk series and program on the topic of culinary literacy conducted by the Lorain Public Library System	Number of referrals	Lorain Public Library System, Lorain County Public Health	X	X	X

Significant Health Needs Not Being Addressed by the Hospital

The hospital is implementing strategies that address all three 2025 priority areas: Behavioral Health, Chronic Disease, and Maternal and Child Health.

Community Collaborators

UH commissioned this document and is aligning its implementation plan with local public health partners, including Lorain County Public Health and the Lorain County Board of Health. Once the health department's improvement plan becomes available, it will be incorporated into UH's Implementation Strategy.

Consultants

University Hospitals commissioned Illuminology to support the facilitation and development of the Implementation Strategy for University Hospitals 2026-2028. Illuminology is a central Ohio based research firm with 27 years of experience related to research design, analysis, reporting, and strategic planning, and has conducted numerous community health needs assessments and strategic planning projects. The lead consultant for this project was Karen Hines, Ph.D., Senior Researcher.

To learn more about Illuminology, visit Illuminology.net.

Contact Information

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