



2024

COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT

EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH
ASCENSION PARISH

A JOINT ASSESSMENT OF THE FOLLOWING ORGANIZATIONS:

BATON ROUGE GENERAL MEDICAL CENTER
LANE REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER
OCHSNER MEDICAL CENTER - BATON ROUGE
OUR LADY OF THE LAKE REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER
SURGICAL SPECIALTY CENTER OF BATON ROUGE
WOMAN'S HOSPITAL



Mission Statement

“To foster a movement based on communication, coordination, and collaboration that promotes a better and healthier life for all people of the great city of Baton Rouge.”

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"Together, we can improve the health of our community and make a real impact on the lives of our friends, neighbors and family members. I firmly believe that with collaboration and accountability, we can create the best plan forward."

- Edgardo Tenreiro, President & CEO, Baton Rouge General

"At Lane Regional Medical Center, our mission is to provide exceptional health-care services to every patient, every time. We have a proud history of investing in community health programs and partnering with other organizations to identify and address the most urgent health needs in the communities we serve. We are pleased to be part of such a collaborative effort that will benefit the entire region."

- Larry Meese, CEO, Lane Regional Medical Center

"Being part of the joint Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) and Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) for Healthy BR and the Mayor's Healthy City Initiative is essential for Ochsner because it aligns with our commitment to improving community health. This collaboration enables us to identify and address critical health challenges, enhance access to care, and promote preventive health measures. By joining forces, we can effectively mobilize resources and expertise to create lasting health benefits for the people of Baton Rouge, fostering a stronger, healthier community for everyone."

- Chuck Daigle, CEO, Ochsner Baton Rouge

"Our Lady of the Lake Health has served our community for more than 100 years and has been fortunate to serve alongside many community partners, organizations, and leaders to enhance the lives of people in Greater Baton Rouge. By combining our collective resources, we have made an impact of greater magnitude that best serves our patients, team members, and community."

- Chuck Spicer, President, Our Lady of the Lake Health

"Our involvement in the Community Health Needs Assessment underscores our dedication to tackling the major health challenges within our community. By collaborating with other local hospitals, we can pool our resources and expertise to make a meaningful and lasting impact on the well-being of our community and build a healthier future for all."

- Rene Ragas, President & CEO, Woman's Hospital



Healthy BR

I am pleased to present the 2024 Community Health Needs Assessment, a comprehensive health analysis of East Baton Rouge Parish. Healthy BR is an example of true collaboration, bringing together hospitals, non-profit organizations, local businesses, schools, and governmental institutions to shift health priorities in our city and parish in the direction of the needs.

Since taking office in 2017, making Baton Rouge a healthier place for all the people living here has been a priority. As Mayor-President, I have seen first-hand how health equity disparities negatively impact the health of our entire community.

In March 2020, Baton Rouge was hit by the COVID-19 virus. Thousands in East Baton Rouge Parish were infected, and hundreds tragically died from it. The pandemic helped us see that our community’s health issues do not exist in a vacuum: they are interwoven, complex, and rooted in racial disparity. While the pandemic exacerbated our health issues, our response was grounded in health equity and lessened the impacts compared to other communities.

Today, while there is no blanket solution to these disparities, Healthy BR and our City-Parish together remain committed to addressing these challenges using this critical analysis of health needs as expressed by our residents. Our City-Parish government will continue to partner with our health care providers to address what our East Baton Rouge Parish residents have identified as their primary health concerns.

As Mayor-President, it is my sincere goal that this public health assessment continues to serve as a model for other communities.

Sincerely,
Sharon Weston Broome
Mayor-President, City of Baton Rouge/President of East Baton Rouge Parish.

Healthy Ascension

“According to CountyHealthRankings.org, in 2024, Ascension Parish was ranked one of the healthiest parishes in Louisiana. While we are currently at the top of this list, I know we can always do more to improve the health of our residents. I value the partnerships with our local hospitals, which help us address gaps in healthcare services and ensure healthcare access for all residents. Our collaborative work will help us remain the healthiest parish in the state.”

– Clint Cointment, President, Parish of Ascension

Introduction

When Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome took office in 2017, her vision for East Baton Rouge Parish was one of peace, prosperity, and progress. Part of her vision has always included promoting health and well-being throughout the Parish. For this purpose, Mayor Broome leads a coalition of organizations and stakeholders named the Mayor’s Healthy City Initiative or HealthyBR. Originally established in 2008, HealthyBR serves as the conduit through which healthcare organizations, city and state agencies, for-profit businesses, educational institutions, faith-based organizations, and nonprofit agencies join forces to impact the health of our community positively.

The HealthyBR Board of Directors oversees this coalition of more than 100 organizations and 400 individual members. HealthyBR’s collective impact model allows organizations and individuals to work together and share information to solve complex problems. Overall, the HealthyBR coalitions work to address the significant health needs identified through a joint Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) and Community Health Implementation Plan (CHIP). (Page 24)

Since the 2021 CHNA, Ascension Parish has established Healthy Ascension, a community-based collaborative modeled after HealthyBR to address the unique population health needs of Ascension Parish. For the 2024 Community Health Needs Assessment, East Baton Rouge Parish and Ascension Parish are the primary service areas, with HealthyBR and Healthy Ascension working collaboratively to identify and address community health priorities. These partnerships exemplify a shared commitment to improving health outcomes through coordinated efforts and collective impact.

A CHNA workgroup combined and analyzed local, state, and national data sources, assessed current programs and identified gaps. The Med BR Advisory Board and community members supported the process. This inclusionary process identified emerging trends not visible in historical data. Consultation with partner organizations, healthcare providers, and community members shaped the top 10 list of health priorities, helping us select the top five Significant Health Needs in our community.

The CHNA, following a local life expectancy case study, has been adopted by Baton Rouge General Medical Center, Lane Regional Medical Center, Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center, Surgical Specialty Center of Baton Rouge, and Woman’s Hospital.

All of the participating hospital facilities have defined for the purpose of this CHNA the same community - East Baton Rouge Parish and Ascension Parish. All of our participating hospitals do not define their communities to exclude medically underserved, low-income, or minority populations. When determining how to define their communities/service area for the purposes of this assessment, the hospital facilities considered all patients without regard to whether (or how much) they or their insurers pay for the care received or whether they are eligible for assistance under its financial assistance policy.

All previous Community Health Needs Assessments (2012, 2015, 2018, and 2021) are published publicly on the HealthyBR website. The current CHNA is published on the websites of Baton Rouge General Medical Center, Lane Regional Medical Center, Ochsner Medical Center - Baton Rouge, Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center, Surgical Specialty Center of Baton Rouge, and Woman’s Hospital. All participating hospitals have internal processes for providing a written copy of the CHNA upon request. This document may be printed at your discretion. No prior authorization or approval is required. The general public submitted no written comments or questions to HealthyBR and their partner hospitals related to the published 2021 CHNA. The participating hospitals and the HealthyBR Board of Directors are open to feedback on the following 2024 CHNA. All questions and feedback may be emailed to Healthybr@brla.gov.

Baton Rouge General Medical Center

Organization Type: Baton Rouge General was the area's first full-service hospital, with more than 600 licensed beds between three campuses. The hospital opened its doors in 1900 and has provided the southeastern region with high-quality healthcare for generations. Also affiliated with BRG is Baton Rouge General Physicians, an employee network of more than 60 physicians and 20 practices owned and operated under General Health System.

Services Offered: With a staff of nearly 800 physicians representing more than 80 medical specialties and subspecialties and 3,500 employees, BRG is a regional leader in primary care and specialty programs. Treating about 300,000 patients each year, BRG offers programs including Emergency; the states only verified Regional Burn Center, Pediatrics, Heart and Vascular, Cancer, Birth Center, Behavioral Health, Hyperbaric, and Wound Care, Imaging and Radiology, Robotic Surgery, Neurosciences, Orthopedics, Rehabilitation, and Wellness and Lifestyle. An accredited teaching hospital since 1991, Baton Rouge General is affiliated with several medical school programs and offers other medical education programs, including a School of Nursing, School of Radiologic Technology, Family Medicine Residency Program, Internal Medicine Residency Program, and Sports Medicine Fellowship Program.

Primary Service Area: For the purposes of the Joint CHNA, Baton Rouge General Medical Center defines its primary service area as the parishes of East Baton Rouge and Ascension.

Secondary Service Areas: include Livingston Parish and the surrounding parishes of St. Helena, West Feliciana, Pointe Coupee, and West Baton Rouge.

Lane Regional Medical Center

Organization Type: Lane Regional Medical Center values community and takes pride in their role as caregivers. Lane began as a community hospital in 1960. Over the years, they evolved into a 131-bed healthcare system by continually adding new capabilities and technologies. With more than 850 dedicated team members, Lane is the largest employer within the city of Zachary. The hospital continues to grow and invest in the community by recruiting new physician specialists and providing access to exceptional healthcare services, technologies, and programs. Lane's core values are Quality, Service, Stewardship, Teamwork, and Innovation.

Services Offered: Offering a full range of inpatient and outpatient diagnostic services, Lane supports Interventional Cardiology, Medical & Radiation Oncology, OB/GYN, Gastroenterology, Pediatrics, Wound Care and Hyperbaric, as well as Orthopedics, Labor & Delivery, ENT, General Surgery, In-Patient Rehabilitation, Home Health, Family Medicine, Allergy, Occupational Medicine, Outpatient Therapy, Emergency Services, and After-Hours Urgent Care.

Primary Service Area: For the purposes of the Joint CHNA, Lane Regional Medical Center defines its primary service area as the parishes of East Baton Rouge and Ascension. Being located in the northern part of the parish, it serves Zachary, the surrounding region of Baker, and Central.

Secondary Service Area: Includes Clinton, Jackson, St. Francisville, New Roads, and Southern Mississippi.

Ochsner Medical Center - Baton Rouge

Organization Type: Ochsner Health is a system delivering health to the people of Louisiana, Mississippi, and the Gulf South with a mission to Serve, Heal, Lead, Educate and Innovate. Ochsner Health is a not-for-profit committed to giving back to the communities it serves through preventative screenings, health and wellness resources, and partnerships with innovative organizations sharing our vision. Ochsner Health healed more than 900,000 people from across

the globe in 2020, providing the latest medical breakthroughs and therapies, including digital medicine for chronic conditions and telehealth specialty services. Ochsner Health is a national leader, named the top hospital in Louisiana and a top children's hospital by U.S. News & World Report. As Louisiana's leading healthcare educator, Ochsner Health and its partners educate thousands of healthcare professionals annually. Ochsner Health is innovating healthcare by investing in new technologies and research to make world-class care more accessible, affordable, convenient, and effective. Ochsner's team of more than 32,000 employees and 4,500 providers are working to reinvent the future of health and wellness for the people of Louisiana, Mississippi, and the Gulf South.

Services Offered: Ochsner Baton Rouge delivers quality healthcare for families throughout the region. With over 25 locations in the Capital Area including a 150-bed hospital, Cancer Center, and pediatric super-clinic, Ochsner is known for comprehensive, convenient care. Ochsner offers a full range of inpatient and outpatient services, including Family Medicine and Pediatrics; Emergency Services; Women's Services, including midwifery; Cancer Treatment; Cardiology; Orthopedics; Bariatric Surgery; Gastroenterology; Neurology; Imaging Services, and much more.

Primary Service Area: For the purposes of the Joint CHNA, Ochsner Medical Center - Baton Rouge defines its primary service area as the parishes of East Baton Rouge and Ascension.

Secondary Service Area: Includes the surrounding areas, offering over 13 health centers, two emergency rooms, and several urgent care locations.

Our Lady of the Lake Health

Organization Type: Our Lady of the Lake is a not-for-profit hospital system based in Baton Rouge, Louisiana with more than 7,500 employees and over 2,900 active physicians, including more than 650 employed physicians, committed to serving the Capital Region and building a healthy community through excellence in patient care and education. In its 100th year, Our Lady of the Lake is a 900 licensed beds Regional Medical Center. It is a primary teaching site for graduate medical education programs and is recognized in the areas of heart and vascular, trauma and emergency care, stroke, cancer care, minimally invasive procedures and more.

Care Across The Region Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center is the largest hospital campus in the Baton Rouge region with a network that consists of campuses across several parishes to meet the needs of our growing communities.

Services Offered:

Leading Children's Hospital And Health Network Our Lady of the Lake has led the region's healthcare efforts in pediatric services for many years. With more than 360,000 square feet and home to more than 25 pediatric specialties, the regions' only Pediatric Level II Trauma Program, 24/7 pediatric emergency room and one of only two 24/7 pediatric intensive care units in Louisiana, our children's hospital is an anchor for advanced pediatric care and specialized programming for patients and families from across Louisiana and the surrounding region. – Our stand-alone children's hospital boasts an emergency room that sees more than 35,000 patients annually, a surgical suite of five operating rooms where over 5,000 pediatric surgeries are performed annually, a 30-bed intensive care unit, 40 medical/surgical in-patient beds and a hematology/oncology floor with 30 in-patient specialized beds and one of only eight outpatient St. Jude Affiliate clinics in the nation. The Region's Leader In Heart, Cancer And Neurotrauma Care For decades, Our Lady of the Lake has been the region's leader for high-level heart and vascular care. With the opening of the Our Lady of the Lake Heart & Vascular Institute in 2013,

the recognition has only continued to grow. Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center is accredited as an American College of Cardiology's (ACC) Chest Pain Center and was recognized as the first facility in Louisiana to be awarded their Atrial Fibrillation (AFib) Accreditation. – Our Lady of the Lake Cancer Institute is the region's leader in providing comprehensive prevention, early detection, treatment and survivorship care. We are accredited as a comprehensive community cancer program by the Commission on Cancer, affirming the highest standards in research, treatment, prevention and education and meeting successful completion of a rigorous review process. – Our Lady of the Lake is Louisiana's neuroscience leader with a team of dedicated clinicians at all levels of care. The growing footprint includes the state's most advanced dedicated neuro ICU, a renowned stroke center of excellence, the region's only designated trauma center, and the most advanced imaging capabilities. Our Lady of the Lake is the majority partner in the Spine Hospital of Louisiana, one of the country's largest spine hospitals. – [Growing Physician Enterprise](#) With a growing network of more than 100 healthcare locations throughout Louisiana and beyond, Our Lady of the Lake Physician Group provides advanced care to our communities. With more than 650 providers in Baton Rouge, we cover a robust spectrum of care from primary care to the most advanced specialties. The physician group footprint extends across the Baton Rouge region and into the Northshore region, where Louisiana is seeing its greatest population growth.

Primary Service Area: For the purposes of the Joint CHNA, Our Lady of the Lake Health defines its primary service area as the parishes of East Baton Rouge and Ascension.

Secondary Service Area: Includes the surrounding parishes of Livingston, St. Helena, West Feliciana, Pointe Coupee, and West Baton Rouge. Fifty-four percent of the inpatient discharges from OLOLRMC come from their primary service area, and 19% from their secondary service area.

Surgical Specialty Center of Baton Rouge

Organization Type: Located in the state capital of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Surgical Specialty Center of Baton Rouge (SSCBR) is a healthcare provider for the Greater Baton Rouge area and surrounding parishes. The hospital opened in April 2003 and has eight operating rooms, two minor procedure rooms, and 16 licensed beds. The hospital provides surgical services in the following specialties: ENT, General Surgery, General Pediatric Surgery, Hand, Orthopedics, Spine, and Urology. Other services include Imaging (CT, X-Ray), Lithotripsy, and Pain Management. SSCBR completed a joint venture with Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center (OLOLRMC) in September 2008. SSCBR has nearly 150 physicians on staff and 200 team members. SSCBR has 16 licensed inpatient beds and admitted more than 1,000 patients to the inpatient unit in 2020. SSCBR performed approximately 10,000 surgical procedures 750 Lithotripsy procedures in 2020. Additionally, 5,500 Imaging studies were conducted. As a licensed hospital, SSCBR is accredited by The Joint Commission.

Services Offered: SSCBR and staff Urologists have provided free prostate screenings since 2005, conducting approximately 40 free screenings per year. SSCBR provides services to those with Medicare and Medicaid coverage and charity care.

Primary Service Area: For the purposes of the Joint CHNA, Surgical Specialty Center of Baton Rouge defines its primary service area as the parishes of East Baton Rouge and Ascension.

Secondary Service Area: Includes the surrounding parishes of Livingston, St. Helena, West Feliciana, Pointe Coupee, and West Baton Rouge.

Woman's Hospital

Organization Type: As the nation's only freestanding, non-profit specialty hospital for women and infants, Woman's is consistently recognized for innovative programs and quality care. With more than 2,000 team members, Woman's has 168 licensed adult hospital beds and 84 licensed NICU beds and provides an array of treatments for women and infants. Woman's is currently the 17th largest delivery service in the U.S. and the largest in Louisiana; patients deliver nearly 8,000 babies at Woman's every year. With a mission to improve the health of women and infants, Woman's performs more than 7,000 surgeries and more than 30,000 breast procedures annually. Woman's was recently listed on Newsweek's list of World's Best Hospitals and America's Best Cancer Hospitals 2024, one of only 16 specialty hospitals in the United States to earn this distinction for care provided at the Pavilion. Woman's is accredited by The Joint Commission, is a Magnet-designated hospital, and maintains patient engagement scores in the 95th percentile. An accredited teaching hospital, Woman's has partnered with Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center, Louisiana State University, and Tulane University Medical School to provide Graduate Medical Education for residents in Obstetrics and Gynecology, General Surgery, Emergency Medicine, Plastic Surgery, Psychiatry, and Pediatric programs. More information can be found at www.womans.org.

Woman's also operates the Woman's Center for Wellness, which includes fitness, therapy, and nutrition services. The Foundation for Woman's is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization whose primary purpose is to raise and manage private support for Woman's Hospital.

Services Offered: Woman's provides an array of services for patients in East Baton Rouge Parish and the surrounding communities, including Obstetrics and Gynecology, Antepartum and Postpartum Care, Neonatal, Pediatric, and Adult Intensive Care, Neonatal Transport, Breast and Gynecologic Cancer Surgery, Cosmetic Surgery, Bariatric Surgery, General Surgery, Fetal Surgery, Maternal-Fetal Medicine, and Perinatal Mental Health. Outpatient services include Same-Day Surgery, Nutrition and Weight Loss Counseling, Audiology, Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy and Speech Therapy for men, women, and children, and Laboratory and Imaging services, in addition to a variety of outpatient clinic services. In addition, Woman's offers a pharmacy residency program that builds upon the doctor of pharmacy education to develop pharmacist practitioners with knowledge, skills, and abilities as defined in the education competency areas, goals, and objectives, thus leading to diverse patient care. Woman's is accredited by the Association for Accreditations of Human Research Protection Programs for our research programs.

Primary Service Area: For the purposes of the Joint CHNA, Woman's Hospital defines its primary service area as the parishes of East Baton Rouge and Ascension.

Secondary Service Area: Includes the surrounding parishes. More than 50 percent of patients are from East Baton Rouge Parish.

CASE STUDY:

LIFE EXPECTANCY BETWEEN NEIGHBORS IN EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH AND ASCENSION PARISH

The Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) published an article in 2017 titled, "Inequalities in Life Expectancy among US Counties, 1980 to 2014: Temporal Trends and Key Drivers." (1) The researchers' key findings were inequalities exist in life expectancy among counties based on socioeconomic and race/ethnicity factors, behavioral and metabolic risk factors, and health care factors. The two case studies below will explore this research in the local context of East Baton Rouge Parish (EBRP) and neighboring Ascension Parish (AP).

East Baton Rouge Parish

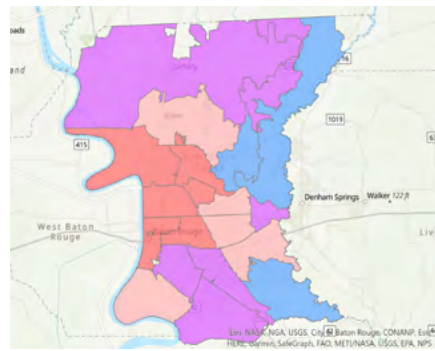


Figure 1. Life Expectancy of East Baton Rouge Parish

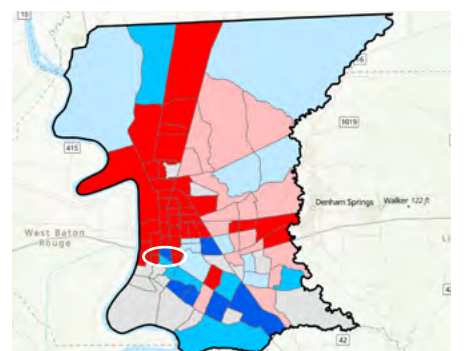


Figure 2. Life Expectancy Census Tract 22 and 23



Figure 3. Map of Census Tract 22 and 23

In EBRP, the findings published in JAMA are demonstrated by an analysis of two neighboring U.S. Census tracts.

A census tract is a spatial grouping used by the United States Census Bureau to count people. Made up of between 1,200 and 8,000 residents, each census tract is assigned a reference number based on the county or parish in which they are located. Figure 2 above shows the census tracts of East Baton Rouge Parish, with two specific tracts circled in white. Figure 3 above shows where the two specific census tracts are located within the City of Baton Rouge.

Park Boulevard separates the two census tracts used for this case study. The community to the west of Park Boulevard is 79% Black, with a median age of 34.7. Of the people who live within this census tract, 31% live below the poverty line, 33% are unemployed, 25% of people over the age of 25 do not have a high school diploma, and only 20% have a bachelor's degree or higher. The household median income in the community is \$22,100. Additionally, only 34% of residents own a home, with a median home value of \$76,900.

The statistics are vastly different to the east of Park Boulevard. The east of Park Boulevard community is 95% white with a median age of 40.3. Only 5% of people in this census tract live below the poverty line, and 24% are unemployed. Of people over the age of 25, a mere 2% do not have a high school diploma, while 78% of people have a bachelor's degree or higher. The household median income in this community is \$89,722. Additionally, 78% of residents own a home, with a median home value of \$314,400.

A breakdown of relevant demographic and socioeconomic data between the two census tracts is displayed below. The chart below is a continuation of the comparison of the two census tracts but narrowed to the comparison of the neighborhoods on either side of Park Boulevard in Baton Rouge:

EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH CASE STUDY (US CENSUS DATA 2020)					
	Census Tract: 22(2)	Census Tract: 23(3)		Census Tract: 22(2)	Census Tract: 23(3)
DEMOGRAPHIC			DEMOGRAPHIC		
POPULATION	1,226	2,444	POPULATION	1,226	2,444
RACE			EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE		
WHITE	19.7%	94.5%	# of people who could be in the labor force	1,067	2,020
BLACK	79.8%	2.7%	% in Labor Force	67%	76.6%
OTHER	0.5%	2.8%	Education (over the age of 25)		
AGE			Did not Graduate High School	25%	2.1%
MEDIAN AGE	34.7	40.3	High School Diploma	32.2%	4.5%
0-24	33.9%	26.7%	Some College or Associate's Degree	22.8%	15.7%
25-64	52.4%	56%	Bachelor's Degree	14.8%	41.5%
65+	13.7%	17.3%	Masters or higher	5.2%	36.2%
ECONOMIC			HOUSING		
# OF PEOPLE LIVING IN POVERTY*	382 (31% OF THE POPULATION)	140 (5.7% OF THE POPULATION)	Housing Units	694	1421
WHITE	51	129	% Vacant	35.7%	17.1%
BLACK	325	-	Owner Occupied	34.8%	77.9%
OTHER	6	11	Renter Occupied	65.2%	22.1%
INCOME			Median House Value	\$76,900	\$314,400
INDIVIDUAL INCOME	\$16,283	\$53,435	HEALTHCARE		
HOUSEHOLD INCOME	\$22,100	\$89,722	Health Insurance Coverage		
WHITE	\$33,750	\$88,889	% of People with No Coverage	24.4%	1.9%
BLACK	\$20,913	-	Private Coverage	38.1%	86.3%
			Public Coverage	46%	20.3%

*To learn more about how the US Census defines poverty, visit: <https://www.census.gov/topics/income-poverty/poverty/guidance/poverty-measures.html>

West of Park Boulevard (Census Tract: 22)	East of Park Boulevard (Census Tract: 23)	Difference
79.8% Black	94.5% White	
The median age of 34.7	The median age of 40.3	6.6 years difference
31% living in Poverty	5% living in Poverty	26% difference
25% without a high school diploma	2% without a high school diploma	23% difference
20% with a bachelor's degree or higher	77.7% with a bachelor's degree or higher	57.7% difference
\$22,100 household median income	\$89,722 household median income	\$67,622 difference
34.8% homeownership	86.3% homeownership	48.2% difference
\$76,900 median home value	\$314,400 median home value	\$237,500 difference

Ascension Parish

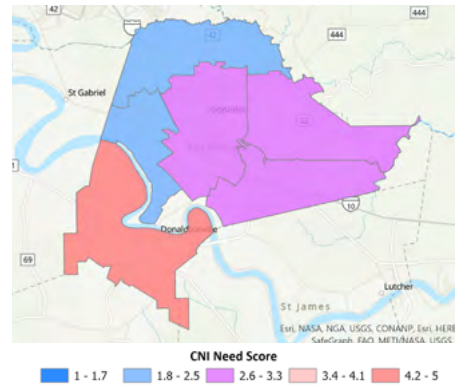


Figure 4. Life Expectancy of Ascension Parish

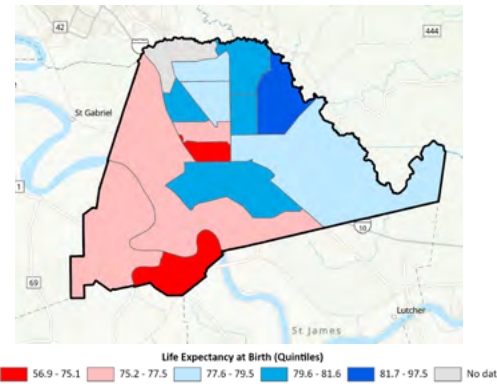


Figure 5. Life Expectancy Census Tract

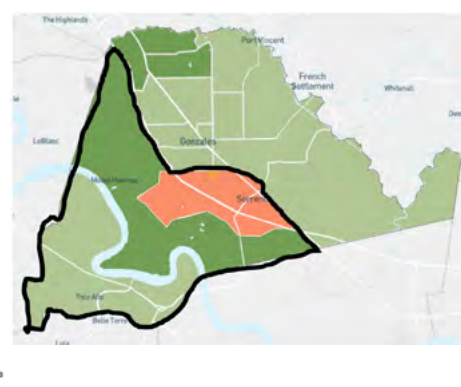


Figure 6. Life Expectancy Census Tract

In Ascension Parish, the JAMA findings are most evident in two sets of neighboring census tracts, one set west of the Mississippi River and another east of the Mississippi.

The community west of the Mississippi River is 66.6% Black, with a median age of 38. Of the people who live in this census tract, 30% live below the poverty line, 50.2% are unemployed, and 22% of people over the age of 25 do not have their high school diplomas. Only 15% of people in this area have a bachelor's degree or higher. The household median income is \$32,909, with White residents making 36.6% more than their Black neighbors. Additionally, 60% of residents own a home, with a median home value of \$125,250.

The statistics differ to the east of the Mississippi—where 70% of residents are White with a median age of 34. 8.5% of people live below the poverty line, with 28.5% unemployed. 10% of people over the age of 25 do not have a high school diploma, while 23.6% have a bachelor's degree or higher. The household median income in this community is \$82,780. Additionally, 77% of residents own a home, with a median home value of \$200,100.

On the next page is a table with the breakdown of demographic and socioeconomic data between the two neighborhoods:

ASCENSION PARISH CASE STUDY DATA (US CENSUS DATA 2020)		
	Census Tract: 309(4) & 310(5)	Census Tract: 303(6) & 306(7)
DEMOGRAPHIC		
POPULATION	11,422	22,746
RACE		
WHITE	30.8%	70.3%
BLACK	66.6%	25.6%
OTHER	2.6%	4.1%
AGE		
MEDIAN AGE	38.65	34.3
0-24	30.2%	38.2%
25-64	51.2%	52.1%
65+	18.6%	9.7%
ECONOMIC		
# OF PEOPLE LIVING IN POVERTY*	3,444 (30% OF THE POPULATION)	1,943 (8.5% OF THE POPULATION)
WHITE	163	922
BLACK	3,135	845
OTHER	146	176
INCOME		
HOUSEHOLD INCOME	\$32,909	\$82,780
WHITE	\$71,400	\$93,634
BLACK	\$21,214	\$57,875

*To learn more about how the US Census defines poverty, visit: <https://www.census.gov/topics/income-poverty/poverty/guidance/poverty-measures.html>

East of the Mississippi	West of the Mississippi	Difference
66.6% Black	70.3% White	
30% living in Poverty	8.5% living in Poverty	21.5% difference
22.8% without a high school diploma	10.2% without a high school diploma	12.6% difference
15.3% with a bachelor's degree or higher	23.6% with a bachelor's degree or higher	8.3% difference
\$32,909 household median income	\$82,780 household median income	\$49,871 difference
60.4% homeownership	77.4% homeownership	17% difference
\$125,250 median home value	\$200,100 median home value	\$74,850 difference

What does this have to do with health?

The case studies on pages 10-13 outline the data surrounding the existing disparities in these neighboring communities. Each of these data points represents the Social Determinants of Health (SDOH). The Center for Disease Control (CDC) defines the SDOHs as the “Conditions in the places where people live, learn, work, and play that affect a wide range of health risks and outcomes.” These SDOH affect every aspect of a person’s daily life, including life expectancy.

The data points outlined above demonstrate how a community’s economic stability, physical environment, and education can affect the community’s overall health, just as the JAMA research suggested. **In East Baton Rouge Parish, the life expectancy difference between either side of Park Boulevard is 17 years.** The life expectancy of the residents west of Park Blvd is 66 years, while to the east, the life expectancy is 83.1. ⁽⁸⁾ Similar to Ascension Parish, the life expectancy of the residents west of the Mississippi River is 74.8 years. In comparison, the residents who live east of the Mississippi have a life expectancy of 78.25 years. What is more drastic in Ascension Parish is the difference in household median income. **The difference between household median incomes is \$49,871 depending on which side the Mississippi residents live on.** The household median income for a home east of the Mississippi River is \$32,909 compared to \$82,780 for a household west of the Mississippi River.



Conducting the 2024 Community Health Needs Assessment:

Identifying Community Needs

HealthyBR began writing the 2024 CHNA in the Spring of 2024. The CHNA workgroup identifying the 2024 top 10 health needs consisted of representatives from Baton Rouge General Medical Center, Lane Regional Medical Center, Ochsner Health System – Baton Rouge, Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center, and Woman’s Hospital. Additional stakeholders providing input were Pennington Biomedical Research Center, The Baton Rouge Clinic, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Louisiana, Louisiana Department of Health, East Baton Rouge Parish School System, American Heart Association, The Bridge Center for Hope, Gilead Focus Initiative, Nikky Scott Inc., Impact Nurse Consulting, and community residents.



East Baton Rouge Parish and Ascension Parish Demographic Analysis		
Age and Racial Demographic Data(9)	Ascension Parish	East Baton Rouge Parish
Population estimates, July 1, 2023,	126,604	440,059
Population, percent change	18.10%	-0.10%
Persons under five years, percent	7.00%	6.50%
Persons under 18 years, percent	26.60%	22.70%
Persons 65 years and over, percent	12.30%	14.60%
Female persons, percent	50.80%	52.30%
White alone, percent	72.60%	47.60%
Black or African American alone, percent	24.00%	47.20%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone, percent	0.40%	0.30%
Asian alone, percent	1.40%	3.40%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone, percent	0.10%	Z
Two or More Races, percent	1.50%	1.60%
Hispanic or Latino, percent	6.00%	4.40%
Housing, Education, Health and Economic Data(9)	Ascension Parish	East Baton Rouge Parish
Housing units, July 1, 2023	49,462	196,145
Owner-occupied housing unit rate	81.50%	59.80%
The median value of owner-occupied housing units	\$207,400	\$194,000
Median gross rent	\$982	\$933
Households	43,032	164,346
High school graduate or higher, % of persons age 25 years+	88.60%	90.50%
Bachelor's degree or higher, % of persons age 25 years+	26.40%	34.90%
With a disability, under age 65 years, percent	9.20%	11.20%
Persons without health insurance, under age 65 years, percent	6.50%	8.80%
Median household income (in 2019 dollars)	\$80,527	\$54,948
Persons in poverty, percent	9.60%	17.70%

Data Collection and Analysis

The workgroup compiled information from more than 40 local and national community data sources (Appendix A), and various external agencies supplied additional data. This information was analyzed to identify areas of need, deficiencies in services or access to care, and duplicative efforts and to provide baseline measures for action planning. The following key data sources were used to identify the top health priorities for EBRP and AP.

County Health Rankings

The County Health Rankings (CHR) Report measures how long people live (mortality) and quality of life (morbidity). These outcomes are the result of a collection of health risk factors. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation works with the National Center for Health Statistics, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Dartmouth Institute to calculate the data for each state's counties (parishes). EBRP ranks 21st of 64 parishes in Louisiana in health outcomes (2 spots less than in 2021) and 19th of 64 in health factors (14 spots worse than in 2021). AP was ranked 3rd in health outcomes (one spot less than 2021) and 3rd in health factors (one spot less than 2021).

County Health Rankings Comparison				
Category	East Baton Rouge 2021	East Baton Rouge 2024	Ascension 2021	Ascension 2024
Premature Death Rate (per 100,000)	10,300	9,700	7,300	7,100
Life Expectancy (years)	74.3	75.1	78.5	78.8
Obesity Rate (%)	38	35	33	30
Physical Inactivity (%)	30	27	25	23
Primary Care Physician Ratio	1,130:1	1,080:1	1,010:1	990:01:00
Uninsured Rate (%)	12	10	9	8
Children in Poverty (%)	28	25	15	12
Violent Crime Rate (per 100,000)	764	700	310	280

Category	East Baton Rouge 2021	East Baton Rouge 2024	Ascension 2021	Ascension 2024
Air Pollution (Âµg/mÂ³)	10.8	10.5	9.2	9
Drinking Water Violations	Yes	No	Yes	No
Severe Housing Problems (%)	20	18	12	10

East Baton Rouge Parish - County Health Rankings Comparison 2021 - 2024

2021 Highlights:

- Health Outcomes: East Baton Rouge Parish had significant health challenges with high rates of premature death (10,300 per 100,000) and low life expectancy (74.3 years).
- Health Behaviors: The parish had high obesity rates (38%) and substantial physical inactivity (30%).
- Clinical Care: Limited access to primary care physicians with a ratio of 1,130:1, and the uninsured rate was 12%.
- Social and Economic Factors: High rates of children in poverty (28%) and violent crime rate (764 per 100,000).

2024 Highlights

- Health Outcomes: Slight improvement with premature death rate reduced to 9,700 per 100,000 and life expectancy increased to 75.1 years.
- Health Behaviors: Obesity rate decreased to 35%, and physical inactivity dropped to 27%.
- Clinical Care: Improved access to primary care physicians with a ratio of 1,080:1, and the uninsured rate decreased to 10%.
- Social and Economic Factors: Children in poverty reduced to 25%, and violent crime rate fell to 700 per 100,000.

Ascension Parish - County Health Rankings Comparison 2021 - 2024

2021 Highlights:

- Health Outcomes: Ascension Parish had better health outcomes compared to East Baton Rouge with lower premature death rate (7,300 per 100,000) and higher life expectancy (78.5 years).
- Health Behaviors: Lower obesity rates (33%) and physical inactivity (25%).
- Clinical Care: Better access to primary care physicians with a ratio of 1,010:1, and uninsured rate was 9%.
- Social and Economic Factors: Children in poverty rate was 15% and violent crime rate was 310 per 100,000.

2024 Highlights

- Health Outcomes: Maintained low premature death rate at 7,100 per 100,000 and life expectancy slightly increased to 78.8 years.
- Health Behaviors: Obesity rate decreased to 30%, and physical inactivity reduced to 23%.
- Clinical Care: Continued improvement with a primary care physician ratio of 990:1, and uninsured rate dropped to 8%.
- Social and Economic Factors: Children in poverty further reduced to 12%, and violent crime rate decreased to 280 per 100,000.

Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE)

The 2024 ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) report shows that a significant portion of households in both East Baton Rouge Parish (EBRP) and Ascension Parish (AP) continue to struggle financially, even though they are above the federal poverty level.

For East Baton Rouge Parish, 50% of households (approximately 89,677) are below the ALICE threshold, meaning they are either ALICE households or live in poverty. This is consistent with previous trends but reflects the impact of economic challenges, such as inflation, rising living costs, and post-pandemic. For Ascension Parish, 38% of households are considered ALICE, indicating that a portion of the population remains financially precarious despite being employed and above the poverty line. These figures underscore the ongoing struggle for many households to meet basic living expenses, including housing, transportation, food, and healthcare.

Community Needs Index

Dignity Health developed the Community Need Index (CNI) in partnership with Solucient (now part of IBM Watson Health) to identify the socioeconomic barriers to health care within communities. The CNI evaluates five key barriers:

1. **Income:** This factor looks at poverty levels within a zip code. Communities with higher percentages of people living below the federal poverty line score higher on the index, reflecting a greater need.
2. **Education:** Educational attainment is another critical factor. Zip codes with higher percentages of people without a high school diploma or with lower overall educational achievement score higher, as education is closely linked to health outcomes and access to care.
3. **Insurance:** Lack of health insurance is a significant barrier to accessing healthcare. The CNI considers the percentage of uninsured individuals in each community. The higher the percentage of uninsured people, the higher the score, indicating greater community need.
4. **Cultural:** This barrier includes language barriers, which can prevent non-English speakers from accessing or understanding healthcare services. Communities with large non-English-speaking populations tend to score higher in this category.
5. **Housing:** This metric includes housing instability, including higher percentages of renters versus homeowners, crowded living conditions, and homelessness. Housing issues can contribute to poor health outcomes due to environmental stressors and a lack of stable, healthy living conditions.

Each zip code is scored on a scale of 1 to 5 for each barrier, with 1 indicating the lowest need and 5 representing the highest. The scores are then averaged to provide an overall CNI score for the zip code, which helps healthcare providers, and community organizations identify areas with the greatest need for resources and interventions

In summary, the CNI provides a data-driven approach to understanding where socioeconomic factors create the most significant barriers to health care access, allowing for targeted efforts to address these disparities.

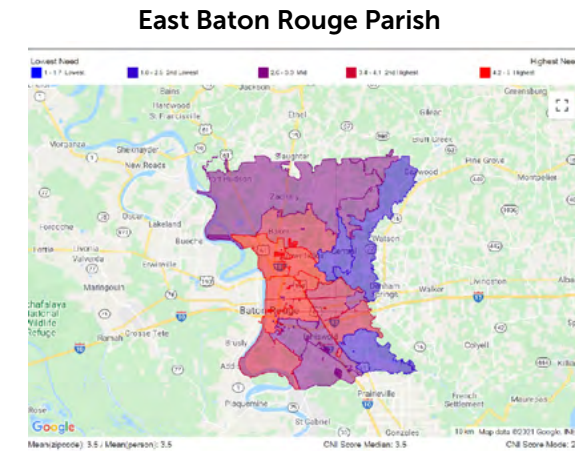


Figure 7. East Baton Rouge Parish CNI Map

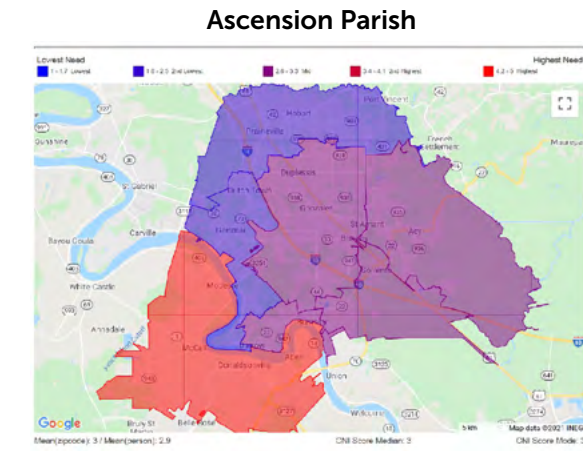


Figure 8: Ascension Parish CNI Map

The CNI score of EBRP illustrates the health disparities among residents in a specific area of the parish. Nine ZIP codes within the parish have a CNI score of 4.2 and are identified as areas of highest need based on income, culture, education, insurance, and housing barriers. Located in the northwestern part of the parish, zip codes 70801, 70802, 70805, 70806, 70807, 70811, 70812, 70713 and 70820 represent a combined total of 161,635 individuals or 35.92% of the EBRP population. Conversely, four zip codes are defined as low need with a score of 2.0 or below. These zip codes, 70817, 70818, 70739, and 70770, are located in the eastern and southern parts of the parish and have a combined population of 56,999 or 12.67% of the population. The remaining 58.59% of EBRP residents live in middle-to-high-need areas.

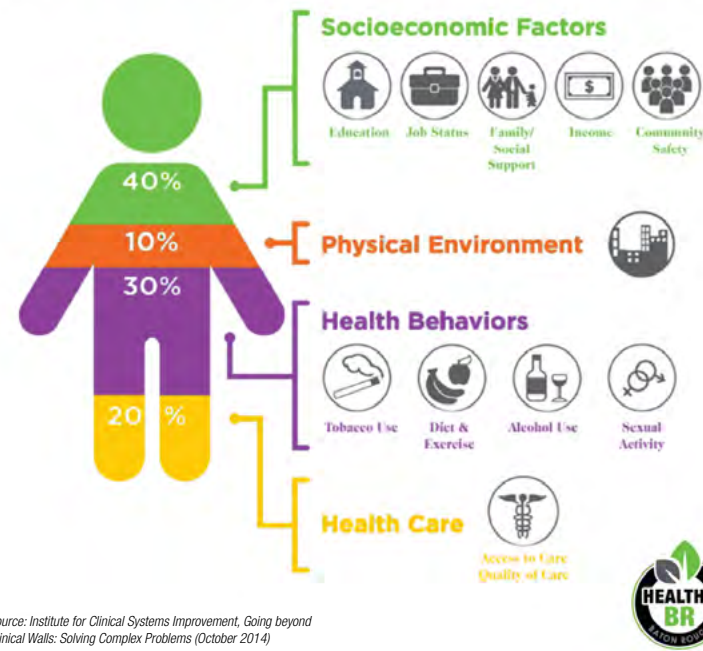
Similarly, in AP, there is one zip code with a CNI score of 5.0, which is 70346, and 70725 has a CNI greater than 4.2. There are 10,936 residents living in these ZIP codes, making up 8.16% of the total population. Conversely, two ZIP codes, 70734 and 70769, have a score of 2.0 or lower. They have 40,626 residents living in these zip codes, making up 30.32% of the population. Like Baton Rouge, AP has a geographic difference in CNI scores and geographic location. 70346 is the only 5.0 needs ZIP code and is located west of the Mississippi River, where 70734 and 70769 border each other east of the Mississippi River in Ascension Parish.

Social Determinants of Health (SDOH)

The Centers for Disease Control defines SDOH as: "Conditions in the places where people live, learn, work, and play that affect a wide range of health risks and outcomes." Efforts to improve health in the U.S. have traditionally used the healthcare system to drive outcomes. With the adoption of the Affordable Care Act and the expansion of the Medicaid program, access to health care has increased. Yet, access is only one component of the many changes needed to improve population health. Research demonstrates that health equity must also be addressed. This will require healthcare systems to evaluate and resolve issues related to SDOH.

The images on the following page, provided by the Kaiser Family Foundation, illustrate the SDOH categories and subcategories that impact health risks and outcomes.

What Goes Into Your Health?



Source: Institute for Clinical Systems Improvement, Going beyond Clinical Walls: Solving Complex Problems (October 2014)

Figure 11. What Goes into Your Health

Top 10 Community Health Needs Identified

The CHNA Steering Committee recommended the following 10 community needs based on data analysis, SDOH, and CNI disparities. The Office of Public Health for Region 2 confirmed these needs. Dr. Stephanie Henson, the Region 2 Medical Director, participated in the CHNA stakeholder meeting in the summer of 2024, which prioritized the ten community health needs and participated as a member of the MedBR Steering Committee that met in 2024 to confirm the significant health needs and develop subsequent implementation plans.

- Access to Healthcare Services
- Chronic Disease Management
- Infectious Disease Prevention/Sexually Transmitted Infections
- Injury & Violence Prevention
- Health Education & Community Outreach
- Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment/Behavioral (Mental) Health
- Maternal and Child Health
- Health Equity and Racial Disparities/Social Determinants of Health
- Healthy Living/Lifestyle/Obesity/Nutrition
- Pediatric and Adolescent Health

"The Louisiana Department of Health is proud to collaborate with local hospitals and community partners in the development of the 2024 Community Health Needs Assessment. Our engagement in this process reflects our commitment to identifying and addressing the most pressing health challenges facing East Baton Rouge and Ascension Parishes. By providing data, insights, and expertise, we support a comprehensive approach to improving population health and reducing disparities. We fully endorse the findings and strategies outlined in this assessment and remain dedicated to working alongside our partners to implement sustainable, impactful solutions."

- Dr. Stephanie Henson, Region 2 Medical Director, Office of Public Health

Identifying Significant Community Needs

Community and Stakeholder Engagement

Once we identified the Top 10 health needs, we asked members of the CHNA writing group, MedBR Steering Committee, MedBR Stakeholders and community members to rank the needs in the order that they felt was most pressing for our community.

East Baton Rouge & Ascension Parish Community Survey

HealthyBR collaborated with the East Baton Rouge and Ascension Parish Public Library Systems to assist in administering the community survey to residents across the parish to assess what residents believe are the top health needs. Nineteen library branches are scattered strategically throughout the parishes, and most are open seven days per week. In addition to the survey being available at the public libraries, the survey was also promoted in public events, on news outlets, across HealthyBR partners and on social media. The collaborating hospitals distributed the community survey to their employees. The survey consisted of the following questions:

1. Rank the top 10 community health needs from 1 (most important) to 10 (least important)*
2. What makes it hard for you to receive care when you need it?
3. What zip code do you live in?
4. What sex were you assigned at birth?
5. How would you describe yourself racially?
6. What is your employment status?
7. If you want the results of this survey, please provide your email address.

In six weeks, HealthyBR received 657 responses which is more than double the survey responses from the 2021 CHNA. The top five significant community needs are based on the overall average community survey response were Access to Healthcare, Chronic Disease, Behavioral Health (Mental and Substance Use), Maternal and Child Health, and Health Education and Community Outreach.

East Baton Rouge & Ascension Parishes Community Survey Results		
	Score	Ranked as Top 5 priority
Access to Healthcare Services	8.62	90.68%
Chronic disease management	6.09	59.87%
Infectious diseases/sexually transmitted infections	5.05	43.92%
Injury and violence prevention	5.13	44.7%
Health education and community outreach	5.31	49.44%
Substance abuse prevention and treatment/behavioral (mental) health	5.84	52.13%
Maternal and child health	5.63	48.14%
Health equity and racial disparities/social determinants of health	4.77	40.91%
Healthy living/lifestyle/obesity/nutrition	4.41	35.7%
Pediatric and adolescent health	4.16	34.43%

MedBR Stakeholder Meeting

MedBR comprises key stakeholders and organizational representatives who advise the HealthyBR coalitions while providing feedback and guidance on the CHNA and CHNA process. In July, we held a stakeholder meeting at the Goodwood Library to get their feedback on the top 10 community health needs and to prioritize the top 5. There were 31 attendees, representing 23 organizations.

Organization	Population Served	Organization	Population Served
American Association of Retired Persons (AARP)	All citizens, Medically underserved, Low income, Minority, Seniors	LSU Ag Center	All citizens, other
Baton Rouge General Medical Center	All citizens, Medically underserved, Low income, Minority, Senior, Other	LSU Women's Center	All citizens, Medically underserved, Low income, Minority, Senior, Homeless, HIV, other
Baton Rouge Health District	Other	Mary Bird Perkins Our lady of the Lake Cancer Center	Medically underserved, other
Baton Rouge Ryan White Program	Medically underserved, Low income, Minority, HIV	Ochsner Health System	All citizens, Medically underserved, Low income, Minority, Senior, Homeless, HIV, Other
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Louisiana	Other	Southern University Ag Center	All citizens, Low income, Minority, Other
Capital Area Human Services	All citizens, Medically underserved, Low income, Minority, Senior, Homeless, HIV, Other.	Our Lady of Lake Regional Medical Center	All citizens, Medically underserved, Low income, Minority, Senior, Homeless, HIV, other
Gilead	Medically underserved, HIV	Pennington Biomedical Research Center	Other
Health Care Centers in Schools	Medically underserved, Low income, Minority, Youth and Adolescent, Other	Baton Rouge Food Bank	All citizens, Medically underserved, Low income, Minority, Senior, Homeless, HIV, other
Humana	Other	The Bridge Center for Hope	All citizens, Medically underserved, Low income, Minority, Senior, Homeless, HIV, other
American Heart Association	All citizens, Medically underserved, Low income, Minority, Senior, Other	Family Road of Greater Baton Rouge	All citizens, Medically underserved, Low income, Minority, Senior, Homeless, HIV, other
Louisiana Department of Health - Office of Public Health	All citizens, Medically underserved, Low income, Minority, Senior, Homeless, HIV, Other.	Clarity Through Community	All citizens, Medically underserved, Low income, Minority, Senior, Homeless, HIV, other
Woman's Hospital	All citizens, Medically underserved, Low income, Minority, Senior, HIV, Woman, Other.		

The stakeholders' meeting attendees actively participated in the review of progress made on the Prioritized Health Needs of 2021 and voted on prioritizing the 2024 Top Ten Community Health Needs. The discussion focused on elevating the community's voice in the development and execution of the Community Health Implementation Plans. The Stakeholder group advocated for health literacy, education, and community outreach.

MedBR Steering Committee (CHNA Workgroup)

The MedBR Steering Committee (CHNA Workgroup) consists of representative hospitals, and their leadership assigned to write the 2024 CHNA and implement the Community Health Implementation Plans. The Steering Committee prioritized the following community health needs for the 2024 CHNA

1. Access to Healthcare Services
2. Chronic Disease Management
3. Maternal and Child Health
4. Health Equity/Racial Disparities/Social Determinants of Health
5. Health Education and Community Outreach
6. Substance Abuse/Mental Health

The MedBR Steering Committee had robust discussion regarding prioritizing six community needs rather than five. The committee then recommended a modification: the blending of Health Education and Community Outreach with Health Equity and Social Determinants of Health needs for the 2024 Community Health Needs Assessment and the Joint Implementation Plans. The final, prioritized top five health needs for 2024 are Access to Healthcare Services, Chronic Disease Management, Health Equity/Literacy/Social Determinants of Health, Substance Abuse/Mental/Behavioral Health, and Maternal and Child Health.

2024 Prioritized Needs

Community Input	Med BR Stakeholders	Steering Committee
Access to Healthcare Services	Access to Healthcare Services	Access to Healthcare Services
Chronic Disease Management	Chronic Disease Management	Chronic Disease Management
Substance Abuse/Mental Health	Substance Abuse/Mental Health	Maternal Child Health
Maternal Child Health	Health Equity & Racial Disparities	Health Equity/Social Determinants of Health & Health Equity
Health Education & Literacy	Maternal Child Health	Substance Abuse/Mental Health

After compiling the responses from the CHNA working group, the MedBR Stakeholders group, and community input, we found the survey responses almost identical. As a result, the top 5 identified and prioritized health needs for the 2024 CHNA are Access to Healthcare Services, Maternal and Child Health, Chronic Disease, Mental/Behavioral Health, and Health Equity/Literacy & Social Determinants of Health.

2024 Community Health Implementation Plan Process

This CHNA is only the first step in an ongoing process. HealthyBR partner organizations use this information as a resource for working within their organizations to develop strategies and partnerships to address the top 10 community health needs further. While there are common focus areas among HealthyBR partners, each individually considers resources, costs, future impacts, and limitations of an implementation plan.

The top five final significant community health needs - Behavioral Health, Chronic Disease, Access to Healthcare, Health Equity/Social Determinants & Health Literacy, and Maternal Child Health - can significantly influence more than one area of need and the most significant potential for community-wide positive impact. Partner organizations will collaborate on a three-year Joint Implementation Plan to address this issue across the EBRP and AP communities.

To elicit community engagement in developing the 2024 Community Health Implementation Plan, HealthyBR and Healthy Ascension hosted a Vision of Health Summit on Sept. 26, 2024, at The Greater King David Baptist Church, located in a ZIP code with a CNI of 5. Medical professionals, members of social services, and residents of Baton Rouge participated in developing the 2024 Community Health Implementation Plans (CHIP). Subject matter experts for the top 5 health needs introduced the content areas, shared relevant data, programs currently provided in the communities to address the need, and shared potential goals and areas of improvement to be further explored.

Community Health Need	Subject Matter Expert	Title /Organization
Behavioral Health	Dr. Jan Laughinghouse	Capital Area Human Services
Chronic Disease	Brice Mohundro	Blue Cross Blue Shield of Louisiana
Access to Healthcare Services	Dr. Mike Rolfsen	Baton Rouge Clinic
Health Equity/Literacy & Social Determinants of Health	Karen Estela	Our Lady of the Lake
Maternal and Child Health	Dena Christy & Frankie Robinson	Family Road of Greater Baton Rouge & The Amandla Group

A Driver Diagram framework was used to frame the participants' work in developing the 2024 CHIP. Driver diagrams are powerful tools for creating large-scale, sustainable social change in community efforts like HealthyBR. The structured approach used by participants in the Vision of Health Summit mapped the relationships between overarching goals and the primary and secondary drivers influencing achieving those goals. By identifying these drivers, the stakeholders focused on key factors leading to meaningful change. Having broad sector input ensured the alignment of strategies towards a common objective. The subsequent driver diagrams for each identified community health need would then allow for continuous evaluation and adjustment and ensure that the community's efforts are both adaptive and responsive to emerging needs, leading to more sustainable, long-term impact.

HealthyBR and their partner Hospitals are open to feedback on the annual CHIPs. All community members and stakeholders are invited to participate in constituency groups addressing the Community Health Implementation Plans. To get involved, please email HealthyBR at HealthyBR@brla.gov.



Top 10 Community Health Needs East Baton Rouge Parish and Ascension parish 2024-2027

Community and Stakeholder Engagement

In summary, the CHNA workgroup chose the top five significant community health needs by evaluating primary and secondary data for trends. The more than 70 partner organizations of the Mayor's Healthy City Initiative, as well as the Board of Directors of each hospital, validated the needs and confirmed them through constituent surveys.

Through this process, no significant information gaps were identified that limited our ability to assess the community's health needs. There were no circumstances where the CHNA workgroup could not obtain adequate and relevant information. As a collaborative, the participating hospitals are deeply committed to the health and well-being of the community, offering a wide range of programs and services designed to address the top 10 community health needs identified below. Along with partner organizations across the community, we dedicate resources and leverage relationships to improve health and outcomes and meet the diverse needs of the populations served.

The final top ten community needs for EBRP and AP in alphabetical order are:

- Access to Healthcare Services
- Chronic Disease Management
- Infectious Disease Prevention/Sexually Transmitted Infections/HIV/Hepatitis C
- Injury and Violence Prevention
- Health Education and Community Outreach
- Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment /Behavioral and Mental
- Maternal and Child Health
- Health Equity/Racial Disparities/Social Determinants of Health
- Healthy Living/Lifestyle/Obesity/Nutrition
- Pediatric and Adolescent Health

1. Access to Health Care Services

Definition: Access to health care services refers to the timely use of personal health services to achieve the best health outcomes. It encompasses four components: coverage, services, timeliness, and workforce. This ensures individuals have the means to receive preventive, diagnostic, and treatment services when needed.

Current Data Comparison:

Metric	East Baton Rouge Parish	Ascension Parish	Louisiana (State)	National (Benchmark)
Uninsured Rate	10%	8%	9%	8%
Primary Care Physician Ratio	1,080:1	990:1	1,500:1	1,030:1
Residents Reporting No Regular Doctor	22%	18%	20%	17%
Suicide	54	65	50	
Order of Protective Custody Issues	1,138	1,143	1,213	
Coroner Emergency Certificate issued	7,539	7,861	7,650	

Conclusion: East Baton Rouge and Ascension Parishes have uninsured rates and primary care physician ratios that are comparable to state and national benchmarks, although they face challenges with a higher percentage of residents without a regular doctor.

Baton Rouge General (BRG): Increased access points by adding ten new clinics across the region. Through collaborations with the East Baton Rouge Parish Housing Authority, BRG screens for housing insecurity, supporting patients with essential resources that promote stability and access to healthcare.

Lane Regional Medical Center: Partners with Uber Health and Lynx for inexpensive transportation services for patients in underserved regions. Partners with local business to deliver occupational health services, including on-site drug testing, wellness screenings, and vaccinations. Offers urgent care services with extended hours and home health care. In addition to expanding its pediatric and primary care services, Lane opened two new clinics (allergy/asthma/immunology and dermatology) and added a new pharmacy with a convenient drive-thru window.

Ochsner Health: Ochsner Health offers a variety of digital medicine programs, including Connected MOM—a maternal care initiative that enables expectant mothers to monitor their health remotely with support from healthcare providers. In partnership with Southern University’s Jag Mobile unit, Ochsner also brings health screenings and education to communities while creating hands-on clinical experience for nursing students. In 2021, Ochsner opened the Ochsner Community Health - Brees Family Center in North Baton Rouge, providing primary care, pediatrics, OB/GYN, and smoking cessation services to underserved communities to promote health equity. In 2022, Ochsner expanded its reach with the opening of Ochsner Health Center - Gonzales, which offers both primary and specialty care, including gynecology, oncology, urology, interventional pain management, sports medicine, gastroenterology, and orthopedics, along with a lab and a full radiology suite featuring MRI, CT, and mammography services.

Our Lady of the Lake (LOL): Operates Health Care Centers in Schools, providing seven school-based health clinics that offer mental and physical health services. Our Lady of the Lake Physician Group partners with the Ascension Parish Government to manage the Public Health Unit and the Ascension Counseling Center. In partnership with Woman’s Hospital, LOL also brings mobile mammography to remote communities, enhancing early detection for women in rural areas.

Woman’s Hospital: Woman’s Hospital has made health equity a strategic pillar within its overall organizational plan, with executive leadership from both clinical and non-clinical roles collaborating to implement an aligned action plan. Guided by the American Hospital Association’s roadmap to health equity, the focus includes providing culturally appropriate patient care, implementing equitable and inclusive policies, utilizing data to drive actions, ensuring diverse leadership representation, fostering community collaboration, and maintaining systematic accountability. The Foundation for Woman’s Hospital supports patients experiencing financial hardship through its Patient Support Fund, which provides transportation to medical appointments, discharge medications, safe sleep spaces, car seats for newborns, and other individualized support. Woman’s is also participating in a grant-funded program to provide early access to patient navigation for women diagnosed with cancer in at-risk zip codes. Through partnerships with the University of Pennsylvania, Woman’s has implemented the Heart Safe Motherhood program for postpartum mothers with pre-eclampsia, enrolling patients at delivery and providing education, blood pressure monitors, and text-based follow-up to ensure effective treatment. Furthermore, Woman’s launched the Her Health Study to follow postpartum mothers for one year, addressing health barriers and social determinants, while embedding social workers within community clinics to provide early screenings and interventions for pregnant women, aiming to reduce preterm births.

2. Chronic Disease Management

Definition: Chronic disease management refers to an integrated care approach to managing illness which includes screenings, check-ups, monitoring and coordinating treatment, and patient education. Effective management reduces the impact of chronic diseases on individuals and improves their quality of life.

Current Data Comparison:

Metric	East Baton Rouge Parish	Ascension Parish	Louisiana (State)	National (Benchmark)
Adult Obesity Rate	35%	30%	34%	30%
Diabetes Prevalence	13%	11%	12%	10%
Hypertension Prevalence	31%	28%	30%	27%

Conclusion: Both parishes show a need for better chronic disease management, with higher rates of obesity, diabetes, and hypertension compared to national benchmarks. Their figures are close to or slightly better than state averages but still indicate a significant health concern.

Baton Rouge General (BRG): Accredited by multiple organizations for excellence in cancer care, BRG’s unique High-Risk Pancreatic Screening Program and Lung Screening Clinic offer specialized screenings based on patient history. Additionally, BRG’s partnership with the American Cancer Society provides free transportation and resources to support patients through their treatment journey.

Lane Regional Medical Center: Lane added 11 additional providers to its clinics to expand healthcare availability. Provides ongoing treatment, support and education for patients through a partnership with Cardiovascular Institute of the South to provide cardiovascular care and screenings, a partnership with Williamson Eye Center for diabetes screenings, and partnerships with area hospitals for medical and radiation oncology services. Provides wound care and hyperbaric services for diabetic wounds, radiation oncology damage, skin grafts, surgical sites, and bone infections.

Ochsner Health: Through its Digital Medicine platform, Ochsner offers remote management for hypertension and diabetes, reducing the need for in-person visits and improving chronic disease management. The Ochsner MD Anderson Cancer Center partnership enhances cancer care by providing advanced treatment options.

Our Lady of the Lake: We established comprehensive cancer support groups that have provided essential emotional and educational resources to individuals and families impacted by cancer. In addition, our health education classes have reached numerous participants, empowering them with knowledge on disease prevention, healthy living, and managing chronic conditions. We host these support groups and health education classes in Baton Rouge, Livingston, and Ascension Parishes.

Pennington Biomedical Research Center: In partnership with the Louisiana Department of Health, established a clinic to address Type 2 diabetes and pre-diabetes among underserved Medicaid recipients, aiming to support primary care efforts in preventing Type 2 diabetes and reversing its effects in those already diagnosed. Additionally, the Greaux Healthy initiative, launched in 2022, translates research into community-focused programs and resources. This initiative provides healthcare providers in childhood obesity treatment with protocols and toolkits, offering guidance on medications and surgical options to mitigate the onset of chronic diseases linked to obesity in pediatric and adolescent patients.

Woman’s Hospital:

Woman’s Hospital addresses chronic disease management through comprehensive programs targeting cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and stroke. In partnership with Mary Bird Perkins – Our Lady of the Lake Cancer Center, the hospital provides specialized care for breast and gynecological cancers at the Breast and GYN Cancer Pavilion and other affiliated clinics. For diabetes, postpartum patients diagnosed with gestational diabetes receive in-hospital counseling about managing the condition and its link to Type 2 diabetes, alongside access to a CDC-recognized Diabetes Prevention Program. Cardiovascular care includes equipping at-risk patients with blood pressure monitors and follow-up care provided by case managers, who have supported thousands of patients since 2017 through home visits and phone calls. Woman’s collaborates with Southeastern Louisiana University nursing students to educate high-risk patients about proper blood pressure management. These efforts collectively emphasize early intervention, education, and continuous follow-up to improve health outcomes for patients with chronic conditions.

3. Infectious Diseases Prevention/ Sexually Transmitted Infections/HIV/Hepatitis C

Definition: Infectious diseases are disorders caused by organisms such as bacteria, viruses, fungi, or parasites. They can spread, directly or indirectly, from one person to another. Infectious disease prevention includes a range of activities aimed at reducing the incidence of diseases caused by infectious agents. These activities include vaccination programs, hygiene education, antimicrobial

stewardship, and public health campaigns to promote practices that prevent the transmission of infections.

- **Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs):** STIs are infections that are primarily transmitted through sexual contact. Prevention and control of STIs involve strategies such as education, screening, treatment, and promoting safer sexual practices. Common STIs include chlamydia, gonorrhea, syphilis, and human papillomavirus (HPV).
- **HIV: Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)** is a virus that attacks the body’s immune system, making it difficult to fight off infections and diseases. If untreated, it can lead to Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS).
- **AIDS: (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome)** is the final stage of HIV infection, characterized by a severely weakened immune system that leaves individuals vulnerable to opportunistic infections and certain cancers.
- **Hepatitis C:** Hepatitis C is a liver infection caused by the Hepatitis C virus (HCV). It is primarily spread through contact with blood from an infected person. Chronic Hepatitis C can lead to serious liver problems, including liver damage, cirrhosis, and liver cancer.

Current Data Comparison STIs:

Metric	East Baton Rouge Parish	Ascension Parish	Louisiana (State)	National (Benchmark)
Chlamydia Rate (per 100,000)	750	420	660	540
Gonorrhea Rate (per 100,000)	330	180	320	190
Syphilis Rate (per 100,000)	70	35	60	30

Conclusion: East Baton Rouge Parish has significantly higher rates of STIs compared to both state and national benchmarks, indicating a critical need for improved sexual health education, testing, and treatment services. Ascension Parish also shows higher rates, particularly in chlamydia and gonorrhea, compared to national benchmarks.

Current Data Comparison: HIV and AIDS

Metric	East Baton Rouge Parish	Ascension Parish	Louisiana (State)	National (Benchmark)
HIV Prevalence Rate (per 100,000)	580	220	490	370
New HIV Diagnoses (per 100,000)	35	15	32	19
New AIDS Case Rates (per 100,000)	17.5	6.5	15	12.6

Conclusion: East Baton Rouge Parish has a much higher rate of new AIDS cases compared to both the state and national benchmarks, placing it among the higher ranks nationally for new AIDS cases. This indicates a significant need for intensified HIV/AIDS prevention, testing, and treatment efforts in this area. Ascension Parish, while having a lower rate, still requires continued public health efforts to prevent new infections and manage existing cases effectively.

Current Data Comparison: Hepatitis C

Metric	East Baton Rouge Parish	Ascension Parish	Louisiana (State)	National (Benchmark)
Hepatitis C Prevalence Rate (per 100,000)	580	220	490	370
New Hepatitis C Case Rates (per 100,000)	15	7	12	10

Conclusion: Both East Baton Rouge and Ascension Parishes have higher Hepatitis C prevalence rates compared to the national benchmark, indicating a need for enhanced screening, prevention, and treatment programs.

Baton Rouge General (BRG): Offers HIV/STI testing in all primary care and emergency departments, reducing undiagnosed cases in the community. BRG collaborates with Gilead and the Louisiana Department of Health to increase STI awareness through educational sessions and community events.

Lane Regional Medical Center: Incorporates HIV testing options into annual/retirement physicals, offers elective HIV testing to Emergency Room patients, and provides HIV-positive patients with resources, physician referrals, and emotional support via social services. Provides walk-in STI testing at its urgent care clinic, on-site HIV and Hepatitis B testing for local law enforcement and fire departments, and offers hepatitis vaccinations for its healthcare workers and emergency responders.

Ochsner Health: Participates in the Gilead FOCUS Program to provide opt-out HIV testing and collaborates with local organizations for STI testing events in the community. In response to community needs, Ochsner has participated in vaccination events, such as for monkeypox, supporting public health across various populations.

Our Lady of the Lake (LOL): Continues to participate in the Ending HIV Initiative, conducts point of care tests, provides education on the importance of prevention, with an emphasis on harm reduction strategies. LOL is dedicated to enhancing education and advocacy in clinic, community and school settings.

Woman's Hospital: Established the Comprehensive HIV/AIDS Management Program (CHAMP) to prevent mother-to-child HIV transmission, maintaining a transmission rate below 1% since 2005. Woman's also offers PrEP and PEP through its OB/GYN clinic to reduce STI risks in vulnerable populations.

4. Injury and Violence Prevention

Definition: Injury and violence prevention involves efforts to reduce the incidence and severity of injuries and violence, including motor vehicle accidents, falls, drownings, suicides, and violence-related injuries. It encompasses public health initiatives, policy changes, education, and community interventions.

Current Data Comparison:

Metric	East Baton Rouge Parish	Ascension Parish	Louisiana (State)	National (Benchmark)
Violent Crime Rate (per 100,000)	700	280	530	380
Unintentional Injury Death Rate (per 100,000)	65	58	70	49
Motor Vehicle Crash Death Rate (per 100,000)	14	12	16	11

Conclusion: East Baton Rouge Parish has a significantly higher violent crime rate compared to state and national averages, indicating a critical need for violence prevention strategies. Both parishes also have unintentional injury and motor vehicle crash death rates that highlight the need for targeted injury prevention programs.

Baton Rouge General (BRG): Collaborates with Safe Hopeful Healthy BR to provide support for abuse survivors. BRG has also updated its policies on workplace violence prevention, ensuring that staff and patients are protected.

Lane Regional Medical Center: Conducts free Stop the Bleed classes and implements comprehensive workplace violence prevention training for staff to manage aggressive behaviors from patients or families.

Ochsner Health: Ochsner Health took a leading role in advocating for healthcare worker safety, resulting in a new law signed by Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards. This legislation enhances penalties for violence against healthcare professionals and emergency personnel—a powerful step forward in protecting those who care for our communities. Ochsner also actively supports law enforcement outreach efforts and participates in drug take-back days to further promote community safety and well-being.

Our Lady of the Lake: Provides Stop the Bleed training in local school systems; teaches fall prevention classes, Matter of Balance, to older adults; partners with LSU Ag Center to provide ATV safety and car seat fittings are offered in partnership with both The Safety Place and The Alliance Safety Council.

Woman's Hospital: Screens patients for intimate partner violence, connecting them with safety and support resources. The hospital offers safe sleep programs to prevent infant injuries and educates the public on car seat safety. Woman's partners with Sexual Trauma Awareness and Response (STAR) to serve victims of sexual trauma. Woman's partners with The Safety Place to offer safety education focusing on car seat safety, safe sleep, and other safety topics for children.

5. Health Education and Community Outreach

Definition: Health education and community outreach involve informing and educating individuals and communities about health topics to improve health knowledge and behaviors. This includes programs in schools, workplaces, and community settings.

Current Data Comparison:

Metric	East Baton Rouge Parish	Ascension Parish	Louisiana (State)	National (Benchmark)
Residents Participating in Health Education Programs (%)	25%	28%	23%	30%
Awareness of Community Health Resources (%)	40%	45%	38%	50%

Conclusion: Both parishes lag behind national benchmarks in health education participation and awareness of health resources, indicating a need for enhanced community outreach and education efforts.

Baton Rouge General (BRG): Conducts regular grocery store tours and nutritional counseling as part of its Chef's Table program, which promotes healthy eating options within the hospital. BRG also hosts fitness events and school-based wellness activities.

Lane Regional Medical Center: Offers free health screenings and education, wellness events and classes, cooking videos, and healthy meal choices. Shares ongoing wellness education and prevention via blogs, online platforms, group classes, and printed materials. Conducts free sports physicals for area high schools. A nutritional services program led by registered dietitians was launched for both inpatients and outpatients.

LSU Ag Center: The LSU AgCenter’s Healthy Communities initiative collaborates with local residents to make Louisiana towns healthier places to live, work, and play. Focused on policy, systems, and environmental changes, the initiative works to enhance nutrition and physical activity environments by creating farmers’ markets, supporting healthy food retail programs, and implementing nutrition standards in schools, food pantries, and churches. Projects like community gardens, fitness signage in public spaces, and walkability improvements also promote active, healthy lifestyles. Using the Socio-Ecological Model, LSU AgCenter partners with schools, officials, and community stakeholders to deliver evidence-based solutions, continuously strengthening the physical and social environments that impact community health.

Ochsner Health: Ochsner Health promotes wellness and preventive care through a variety of community-focused initiatives. Its Eat Fit program provides nutrition education, partnering with local schools and organizations to support fitness and wellness events. The Tobacco Cessation Program extends educational resources and community outreach, while Ochsner’s community outreach team offers free biometric screenings at local health fairs and wellness events. Notably, in 2023, Ochsner partnered with the Urban League of Louisiana as the title sponsor for the Big Health Event, offering free health screenings and educational opportunities to the greater Baton Rouge community. Ochsner Community Health - Brees Family Center in partnership with ExxonMobil YMCA offers the Geaux Get Healthy program to provide food security and nutrition education in the North Baton Rouge community.

Our Lady of the Lake (OLOL): Our biometric screenings, paired with education on healthy living, have been pivotal in identifying at-risk individuals and providing them with the tools to make lifestyle changes. OLOL is teaching and reinforcing the importance of ongoing health management.

Southern University Ag Center: The SU Ag Center’s health programs focus on improving well-being in underserved communities by addressing key social determinants of health. Through resource fairs offering vaccines, screenings, and health resources, the Center reduces barriers to preventive care. Programs like the Communities of Color Network educate on tobacco prevention, Healthfully Whole supports senior engagement in physical and social activities, and Rural Connections enhances mental health access in rural areas. Additionally, JAG Fresh, a mobile market, brings fresh, affordable produce to campus, addressing food insecurity and promoting healthy eating. Each program fosters health equity by improving access, education, and community support.

Woman’s Hospital: Woman’s Hospital actively engages in health education and community outreach through a variety of programs and partnerships designed to improve community health and wellness. The hospital hosts free grocery tours, cooking classes, and large-scale events like community baby showers, providing essentials for new and expectant mothers. Prenatal, prepubescent, and teenage education is offered in collaboration with organizations such as Family Road of Greater Baton Rouge, Louisiana Leadership Institute, and Thrive Academy. In partnership with The Safety Place, the hospital provides safe sleep and car seat safety education, with qualifying participants receiving free car seats and cribs. Woman’s also hosts public educational events focused on equitable care in maternal health and cancer. By combining accessible resources, community collaboration, and targeted health education, Woman’s promotes healthier lifestyles and informed decision-making across diverse populations.

6. Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment/ Behavioral and Mental Health

Definition: Substance abuse prevention and treatment involve strategies and services aimed at reducing the misuse of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. This includes prevention education, treatment programs, and support for recovery.

Behavioral mental health refers to the promotion of emotional well-being, prevention of mental health disorders, and provision of treatment and recovery services for mental health conditions.

Current Data Comparison: Substance Abuse

Metric	East Baton Rouge Parish	Ascension Parish	Louisiana (State)	National (Benchmark)
Adult Smoking Rate (%)	22%	20%	21%	16%
Drug Overdose Death Rate (per 100,000)	28	24	26	21
Access to Substance Abuse Treatment (%)	18%	20%	17%	25%

Conclusion: Higher smoking rates and drug overdose death rates, along with limited access to treatment, underscore the need for robust substance abuse prevention and treatment programs in both parishes.

Current Data Comparison: Behavioral Mental Health

Metric	East Baton Rouge Parish	Ascension Parish	Louisiana (State)	National (Benchmark)
Poor Mental Health Days (per month)	4.5	4.1	4.4	3.8
Access to Mental Health Providers (ratio)	500:1	600:1	650:1	400:1
Suicide Rate (per 100,000)	14	13	15	12

Conclusion: Both parishes exhibit higher-than-national-average poor mental health days and suboptimal access to mental health providers, indicating a pressing need for improved mental health services and support.

Baton Rouge General (BRG): Expanded behavioral health screenings to 18 primary care clinics, leading to thousands of referrals. The BRG Recovery Health Center offers a residential program for substance use treatment.

Lane Regional Medical Center: Screens all primary care patients for behavioral health issues and all pregnant patients for substance abuse. Works with area schools and businesses to establish drug screening protocols and conduct pre-hire drug testing, random drug testing, post-accident testing, and on-site testing. Utilizes tele-psych resources to provide care for patients in need of additional mental health evaluations.

Ochsner Health: Ochsner Health partners with organizations like Conscious Moms to support maternal mental health, providing education and resources for new mothers. Additionally, Ochsner sponsors mental health awareness initiatives through collaborations with groups such as You Aren’t Alone. To further support mental well-being, Ochsner offers a range of outpatient psychiatry and behavioral health services, including specialized care in child and adolescent psychology and psychiatry.

Our Lady of the Lake (LOL): Offers a range of mental health services through the school-based health clinics in EBRP, LPG clinics, including the Ascension Counseling Center, dedicated psychiatric emergency departments at its RMC and Children’s Hospital. LOL provides inpatient services for adults and adolescents suffering from Mental illness and substance abuse disorders.

The Southern University Ag Center’s Mental Health initiative aims to improve mental health outcomes for students, faculty, and rural communities by providing individual counseling, community events, and tailored mental health support. The program focuses on reducing stigma around mental health, ensuring underserved populations have access to quality care, and fostering resilience and well-being through on-campus and off-campus workshops. This commitment to accessible, inclusive mental health services enhances the vitality and health of the communities served, empowering individuals to thrive in personal, academic, and community life.

Woman’s Hospital: Woman’s Hospital provides comprehensive support for substance abuse prevention and treatment, as well as behavioral and mental health services, with a focus on improving outcomes for women and their families. The GRACE program, established in 2018, offers care management for pregnant women misusing opioids, later expanding to include all substances, including alcohol. Enrolled participants receive Narcan kits and overdose education, with the program supporting women for one year postpartum. The Behavioral Health Clinic provides both inpatient and outpatient services for peripartum and postpartum women, focusing on medication management and psychotherapy, supported by two full-time psychiatrists. The hospital also integrates care models within LSU clinics and private practices, screening over 6,000 patients since 2018 and connecting them to necessary resources. In September 2024, Woman’s opened a 10-bed Perinatal Mental Health Unit, further enhancing support for postpartum women. These initiatives reflect Woman’s commitment to addressing substance abuse and mental health challenges through innovative, patient-centered care.

Lane Regional Medical Center: Provides comprehensive maternal care, including neonatal care in partnership with Woman’s Hospital for NICU transports, free prenatal classes, and free CPR training kits to new parents in partnership with the American Heart Association. Offers lactation consulting services to help new and expecting moms succeed with breastfeeding, including two new breastfeeding videos. Implements the ‘Skip the Wait’ red bracelet program for patients at high risk for eclampsia and a new digital footprint scanning system for enhanced infant security. Lane is certified as a Birth Ready Plus and as a Guided Infant Feeding Techniques (GIFT) facility, as well as being designated as a national Blue Distinction Center for Maternity Care.

Ochsner Health: Continues its Birth Ready Plus program, supporting maternal and infant health through partnerships with groups. At the Ochsner Family Birthing Center at Ochsner Medical Center - Baton Rouge, a wide range of birthing options tailored to meet each family’s labor and delivery preferences. Ochsner’s midwifery program, led by certified nurse midwives who specialize in traditional vaginal birth, embraces the holistic aspects of pregnancy and childbirth, addressing the emotional, spiritual, and practical needs of expectant mothers. Midwives offer personalized care, including counseling, prenatal support, labor and delivery services, and postpartum guidance, encouraging birth persons and their families to actively participate in their healthcare. Ochsner also offers prenatal classes and childbirth education, covering topics such as childbirth, breastfeeding, and newborn care.

Our Lady of the Lake: Operates a Level III NICU treatment and a NICU Transport Team. LOL also hosts a research supported educational program created to advance neonatal oral feeding practice for neonatal professionals. LOL continues to expand newborn genetic screenings as well as to offer maternal depression screenings.

Pennington Biomedical Research Center has initiated key programs to address maternal and child health in Baton Rouge. Their three-year study, Healthy Beginnings, aims to improve lifestyle habits and promote healthy weight gain for low-income mothers during pregnancy to reduce risks of heart disease and Type 2 diabetes for both mother and child. Additionally, Amanda Staiano, PhD, is leading the TEAM UP study, comparing two approaches to childhood obesity treatment: provider counseling alone and a combined approach of counseling with family-based behavioral therapy. Pennington’s Greaux Healthy initiative further supports pediatric health by translating research into community resources that prevent and treat childhood obesity, providing school health programs, and training pediatric healthcare providers.

Woman’s Hospital: Woman’s Hospital provides comprehensive maternal and child health services, emphasizing high-quality care and education to support mothers and their babies. The hospital offers perinatal services such as NICU care, lactation support, and high-risk pregnancy management, with its 84-bed NICU being the largest in Louisiana and designated as a Level III Regional Referral Center. Woman’s is a leader in innovative procedures like fetal therapy to address complex congenital conditions. Educational initiatives include distributing pregnancy journals, offering free support groups and mobile apps, and providing infant CPR kits to families. The Her Health Study supports postpartum individuals for one year with community health workers addressing social determinants of health, while the “Go the Full 40” campaign educates about the benefits of full-term deliveries. Woman’s also partners with the Louisiana Children’s Trust Fund on safe sleep campaigns and provides a wide range of public prenatal education classes. These efforts ensure that maternal and child health remains a cornerstone of Woman’s care model.

7. Maternal and Child Health

Definition: Maternal and child health focuses on the health of women during pregnancy, childbirth, and the postpartum period, as well as the health of children from birth through adolescence. Key components include prenatal care, vaccination, and early childhood development programs.

Current Data Comparison: Behavioral Mental Health

Metric	East Baton Rouge Parish	Ascension Parish	Louisiana (State)	National (Benchmark)
Infant Mortality Rate (per 1,000 live births)	8.2	7.0	8.5	5.8
Prenatal Care in First Trimester (%)	75%	80%	70%	83%
Low Birth Weight (%)	11%	9%	10%	8%
Suicide Rate (per 100,000)	14	13	15	12

Conclusion: Both parishes have higher infant mortality and low birth weight rates compared to national benchmarks, highlighting the need for enhanced maternal and child health services.

Baton Rouge General: Offers a Community Doula Program and runs the NOW Program to support mothers facing Neonatal Opioid Withdrawal Syndrome, helping vulnerable families navigate pregnancy and postpartum care.

8. Health Equity/Racial Disparities/ Social Determinants of Health

Definition: Health equity involves ensuring everyone has the opportunity to attain their highest level of health, while addressing and eliminating disparities in health outcomes among different racial and ethnic groups.

Social determinants of health are the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work, and age that affect health and quality of life. These include factors such as education, employment, social support, and housing.

Current Data Comparison: Health Equity and Racial Disparities

Metric	East Baton Rouge Parish	Ascension Parish	Louisiana (State)	National (Benchmark)
Black-White Life Expectancy Gap (years)	7.5	6.0	7.8	5.5
Racial Disparity in Low Birth Weight (%)	13%	11%	12%	10%
Disparity in Health Insurance Coverage (%)	12%	10%	13%	8%

Conclusion: Significant racial disparities in life expectancy, low birth weight, and health insurance coverage persist, indicating a critical need for targeted interventions to promote health equity.

Current Data Comparison: Social Determinants of Health

Metric	East Baton Rouge Parish	Ascension Parish	Louisiana (State)	National (Benchmark)
High School Graduation Rate (%)	82%	85%	80%	87%
Unemployment Rate (%)	6%	4%	5.5%	4%
Severe Housing Problems (%)	20%	10%	18%	15%

Conclusion: Both parishes exhibit challenges related to education, employment, and housing, with rates of severe housing problems higher than the national average.

Baton Rouge General (BRG): Supports housing initiatives with Mid City Redevelopment Alliance.

Lane Regional Medical Center: Screening prompts were built within patient registration and nursing assessments to determine possible SDOH needs and, if identified, provide a list community resources. Conducts food and diaper drives to provide emergency food boxes and diaper distribution through our primary care clinics. Provides additional staff training on cultural competence, diversity, equity and inclusion.

Ochsner Health: Ochsner’s Community Health Workers provide support to navigate both healthcare and everyday challenges that impact well-being. They work closely with individuals to identify needs, whether it’s accessing healthy food, securing reliable transportation, or finding local resources. Through the Food is Medicine program, Ochsner supports food security by distributing hundreds of food boxes to patients annually in collaboration with the Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank. Additionally, in partnership with Southern University’s Jag Mobile unit, Ochsner brings health screenings and education directly to communities, while offering valuable hands-on clinical experience for nursing students.

Our Lady of the Lake (LOL): SDOH screening takes place in both inpatient and outpatient settings and LOL has built a pathway in the electronic medical record to provide referrals to community resources to address needs identified during the screenings.

Pennington Biomedical Research Center: Diseases of aging, such as arthritis, are a growing concern for older adults. This is especially impactful for older African American adults who experience health disparities across a number of chronic diseases, including hypertension, diabetes, cancers, obesity, and dementia. To improve awareness of these conditions and treatment options, Pennington Biomedical Research Center hosts the annual Senior Black American Health Fair. Glucose, blood pressure, cholesterol, body mass index, cancer, and stroke health screenings are held throughout the day. Memory screenings are also provided to African Americans at elevated risk of developing dementia, such as Alzheimer’s Disease. Educational talks on motivation, cancer, and dementia are provided.

Southern Ag Centers: The SU Ag Center’s Rural Connections for Rural Resilience bridges the mental health care gap in rural areas, with a focus on reducing stigma and providing tailored mental health support to underserved rural populations. Our Communities of Color (CoC) Network is a tobacco education and prevention program specifically aimed at reducing health disparities in communities of color. By focusing on populations disproportionately affected by tobacco use, the CoC program provides culturally tailored education and resources to reduce smoking rates and related health issues. This initiative is a key part of our commitment to addressing health equity, ensuring that communities of color receive targeted support to improve long-term health outcomes and lessen the burden of preventable diseases.

Woman’s Hospital: Woman’s Hospital places health equity at the core of its strategic plan, aligning efforts with the American Hospital Association’s roadmap to equity. Key initiatives focus on culturally appropriate patient care, equitable organizational policies, diverse leadership, data-driven actions, community collaboration, and shared accountability. Woman’s embeds social workers in community clinics to screen for social determinants of health and provide early interventions, reducing risks such as preterm births. Cancer Pavilion social workers, navigators, and dietitians assist patients with transportation, food, and other resources during treatment. The Her Health Study connects women in at-risk zip codes with community health workers, while the Well Mama Study partners with doulas to build trust among Medicaid recipients. Woman’s also hosts poverty simulations, period poverty drives, and community education on health disparities. Workforce development programs address healthcare staffing shortages, offering training and advancement opportunities in mental health, sterile processing, facility engineering, and nursing. Through these efforts, Woman’s remains committed to fostering health equity and addressing systemic barriers to care.

9. Healthy Living/Lifestyle/ Obesity and Nutrition

Definition: Healthy living lifestyle refers to behaviors and habits that promote physical and mental well-being, such as regular physical activity, balanced nutrition, and avoidance of harmful habits like smoking.

Obesity and nutrition encompass efforts to promote healthy eating habits and reduce the prevalence of obesity through education, community programs, and policy initiatives.

Current Data Comparison: Healthy Living/Lifestyle

Metric	East Baton Rouge Parish	Ascension Parish	Louisiana (State)	National (Benchmark)
Physical Inactivity Rate (%)	27%	23%	28%	22%
Access to Exercise Opportunities (%)	75%	80%	70%	85%
Adult Smoking Rate (%)	22%	20%	21%	16%

Conclusion: Both parishes need to improve access to exercise opportunities and reduce smoking rates to align with national healthy living benchmarks.

Current Data Comparison: Obesity/Nutrition

Metric	East Baton Rouge Parish	Ascension Parish	Louisiana (State)	National (Benchmark)
Adult Obesity Rate (%)	35%	30%	34%	30%
Access to Healthy Foods (%)	65%	70%	60%	75%
Fruit and Vegetable Consumption (%)	22%	24%	21%	30%

Conclusion: High obesity rates and low access to healthy foods in both parishes indicate a need for comprehensive nutrition and obesity prevention programs

Baton Rouge General: Provides the Living Lean weight management program, healthy food options, and community fitness events like the Heart Walk.

Big River Economic and Agricultural Development Association (BREADA) founded in 1996, hosts up to four weekly Red Stick Farmers Markets and operates the Main Street Market in downtown Baton Rouge, which supports over 30 Louisiana farmers, 15 food artisans, and 4 local restaurants across 17 parishes. BREADA markets have accepted SNAP benefits for over a decade, with the Greaux the Good program matching SNAP purchases up to \$50, effectively doubling purchasing power for fresh foods. The markets also accept WIC and Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program vouchers, which, in 2023, generated significant food purchases among low-income seniors and mothers. BREADA's Red Stick Sprouts program educates approximately 30,000 children about healthy food choices, offering tokens to spend at the market, while the school garden project at Ryan Elementary engages third-graders in gardening and tasting fresh produce. Additionally, BREADA's Charlie Cart portable teaching kitchen offers hands-on cooking lessons for students, integrating science and math in fun, interactive ways.



Lane Regional Medical Center: A nutritional services program led by registered dietitians was launched for both inpatients and outpatients to provide individualized meal plans for optimal health. Offers free BMI screenings at wellness events and health screenings. Offers healthy food choices on its cafeteria menu. Offers bariatric weight loss surgery, including nutritional and psychological counseling services. Provides a free fitness walking track to the community, conducts walking and fitness challenges for area businesses, and sponsors regional walks, runs, classes, fitness tournaments and wellness events.

LSU AgCenter: The LSU AgCenter's Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP), serving Louisiana families since 1969, targets limited-resource populations to promote healthier diets and wellness practices through hands-on education. Peer educators from within the community deliver research-based lessons on food practices, physical activity, food safety, and resource management to parents, caregivers, and youth eligible for USDA assistance programs. In East Baton Rouge Parish, EFNEP partners with community agencies and reaches diverse groups, including parents with young children, pregnant teens, and youth in Title 1 schools. In 2023, EFNEP served 225 participants, with 98% improving diet quality, 86% increasing physical activity, 80% adopting better food safety practices, and 71% enhancing food security. Through partnerships with schools, camps, and afterschool programs, EFNEP also provided nutritional education to over 2,000 youth. The LSU AgCenter's Healthy Communities initiative addresses community health through policy and environmental changes, such as farmers markets and school garden programs, making nutritious foods accessible and promoting active lifestyles.

Ochsner Health: Opened in 2023, the Ochsner Wellness Center at LSU's College of Human Sciences building features a weight training area, multipurpose court, cardio fitness room, dance studio, and a jogging/walking track. The wellness center promotes wellness and active living. Ochsner's Eat Fit program supports a healthy lifestyle through community outreach and annual wellness challenges. Additionally, in partnership with the ExxonMobil YMCA, Ochsner Community Health - Brees Family Center offers the Geaux Get Healthy program, focused on food security and nutrition education for the North Baton Rouge community. Ochsner further promotes health by partnering with organizations such as the American Heart Association.

Our Lady of the Lake: The Geaux Get Healthy program addresses food insecurity by distributing fresh food boxes and providing cooking classes and grocery store tours along with ongoing support from community health workers, significantly improving nutrition among chronic disease patients.

Pennington Biomedical Research Center: Pennington Biomedical focuses on research-driven health initiatives that address obesity, diabetes, and nutrition in Louisiana. The center combines expertise in research, surgery, and behavioral interventions to create comprehensive obesity and diabetes treatments, with programs designed to support significant weight loss and sustainable lifestyle changes. Notably, Pennington discovered BAM15, a compound that boosts mitochondrial energy expenditure, offering potential treatments for obesity, diabetes, fatty liver disease, and certain cancers. Additionally, Pennington partnered with the Louisiana Department of Education in the Louisiana Fit Kids project to improve child nutrition in schools, supporting federal meal standards and establishing



the Greaux Healthy initiative, which provides practical health information to families and educators through the Virtual Health Hub.

Southern University Ag Center: The Southern University Ag Center’s SNAP-Ed Program works with SNAP recipients and eligible individuals, focusing on nutrition education and healthy food access. The program reaches nearly 900 youth participants, with 20 involved in gardening initiatives to increase fruit and vegetable consumption. Monthly, the program provides nutrition education to over 1,300 adults at senior sites and 370 adults at shelters. A Facebook Live series expands reach by educating viewers on nutrition and physical activity topics. Additionally, the Ag Center supports community gardening efforts, engaging youth at schools like GEO Prep Mid-City, where students learn about gardening and nutrition.

Woman’s Hospital: Woman’s Hospital promotes healthy living through comprehensive programs addressing nutrition, obesity, physical fitness, and disease prevention. The hospital’s Balance® program, launched in 2016, combines dietitians, fitness specialists, and health coaches to provide tailored nutrition, fitness, and accountability support. Woman’s offers free grocery tours, cooking classes, and nutrition education to the community, supported by grant-funded initiatives like providing food boxes and recipes to individuals facing food insecurity. Physical



fitness programs include Walk with Ease, in partnership with the National Arthritis Foundation, and virtual fitness classes like Fit for Birth for prenatal women. The Comprehensive HIV/AIDS Management Program (CHAMP) focuses on preventing HIV transmission during childbirth, providing free case management and education for patients and their babies. Additionally, Woman’s has implemented Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) and Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) programs to reduce HIV risk and support sexual assault survivors. These initiatives underscore Woman’s commitment to improving community health through education, prevention, and accessible resources.

10. Pediatric and Adolescent Health

Definition: Pediatric and adolescent health focuses on the health and well-being of children and teenagers, encompassing preventive care, treatment of acute and chronic conditions, and support for mental and physical development.

Current Data Comparison:

Metric	East Baton Rouge Parish	Ascension Parish	Louisiana (State)	National (Benchmark)
Immunization Coverage (%)	78%	80%	75%	85%
Teen Birth Rate (per 1,000)	35	32	38	20
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Visits (%)	22%	20%	21%	25%
Overweight and Obesity Rate (ages 2-19) (%)	28%	25%	30%	23%

Conclusion: Both parishes show significant needs in pediatric and adolescent health, particularly in the areas of immunization coverage, teen birth rates, mental health visits, and overweight

and obesity rates. These figures suggest the necessity for targeted interventions to improve health outcomes for children and adolescents.

Baton Rouge General: Supports pediatric burn survivors with an annual camp and provides educational programming at local schools to promote health and wellness.

Lane Regional Medical Center: Offers pediatric care and primary care services with expanded services for greater healthcare availability. Conducts food and diaper drives in partnership with area organizations to provide emergency food boxes and diapers. Collaborates with area school systems to conduct random drug screenings for students. Provides outpatient therapy for children with speech impediments. Physicians volunteer to provide free annual high school physicals at local schools and immunizations at community events. Lane also opened two new clinics to provide care for children with dermatology and allergy, asthma, and immunology conditions.

Ochsner Health: The Ochsner Baton Rouge Pediatric Super-Clinic, provides comprehensive pediatric care with over 30 pediatricians and specialists across 15 specialties, dedicated to the health and well-being of children from birth to 18 years. Specialties include pediatric gastroenterology, neurology, psychiatry, plastic and reconstructive surgery, orthopedics, oncology, and urology. In addition, the Ochsner Andrews Sports Medicine Institute’s Athletic Training Outreach Program, the largest in the Gulf South, features over 200 Certified Athletic Trainers who support athletes of all ages, including middle school and high school sports teams.

Our Lady of the Lake: Partners with Children’s Hospital New Orleans to expand pediatric services. Together, we added more than 400 new pediatric team members to advance our important work for caring for children. This expanded capacity means more access and more expertise closer to home through joint recruitment of providers in key peds specialties, including cardiology, neurology, otolaryngology, nephrology, gastroenterology, and other subspecialties.

Woman’s Hospital: Woman’s Hospital supports pediatric and adolescent health through targeted education and services to promote safety, health awareness, and personal development. The hospital offers body basics classes for preteens and advanced “Beyond Body Basics” classes for teenagers, addressing critical topics like physical changes and health education. These classes are extended to Thrive Academy students and Louisiana Leadership Institute participants. Additionally, Woman’s provides Safe Sitter education, equipping young adolescents with skills to responsibly handle emergencies and care for children. Through these programs, Woman’s ensures that young individuals receive the tools and knowledge necessary to navigate critical stages of development while fostering community well-being.

Priority Progress 2021-2024

Behavioral Health

Baton Rouge General Medical Center

Between 2021 and 2023, Baton Rouge General (BRG) worked to integrate behavioral health services across its network further. During this time, 18 primary care clinics began conducting screenings for alcohol use, substance use, depression, and anxiety. This initiative led to over 800 patient referrals for behavioral health services in 2021 alone.

Over the same period, BRG received 33,356 behavioral health referrals. The health system saw 4,106 inpatient admissions, 1,029 outpatient admissions, and 527 admissions from Baton Rouge Recovery Health and The Baton Rouge Clinic - Psychiatry. Additionally, in November 2021, BRG opened Baton Rouge Recovery Health, a residential substance use center, with Lifeline Behavioral Health Systems.

Lane Regional Medical Center

- Lane social workers worked closely with local centers to help place patients needing behavioral health services for addiction and mental health issues.
- All primary care patients were screened using a behavioral health questionnaire, which providers review and discuss with their patients.
- Lane worked with businesses in the region to provide occupational medicine services, such as establishing drug screening protocols and conducting pre-hire drug testing, random drug testing, post-accident testing, onsite drug/alcohol testing, employee assistance referrals, and on-site stress management classes.
- Lane worked with its primary care providers to increase awareness and safe practices around prescribing and dispensing controlled substances (opioids, stimulants, and benzodiazepines).
- Lane focused on improving the screening, care, and treatment of pregnant patients and infants affected by substance abuse through participation in the ICSED (Improving Care of the Substance-Exposed Dyad) collaborative initiated through the Louisiana Perinatal Quality Collaborative (LaPQC). All maternal patients were universally screened for behavioral health issues and substance abuse.
- Lane utilized tele-psych resources to provide care for patients in need of additional mental health evaluations.

Ochsner Health

- Ochsner Health is a corporate partner with You Aren't Alone Project.
 - The mission of the You Aren't Alone Project is to make mental health more accessible to everyone. They offer community programming, events, and resources that bring people together over shared journeys in order to foster safety, collaboration, connection, and hope for all.
 - Ochsner was a corporate sponsor for You Aren't Alone Project Live Art Event in 2022.
 - Ochsner continued to sponsor this initiative in 2023 and 2024.
- Ochsner Health is a corporate partner with Conscious Moms, an organization raising awareness and kindness for mothers struggling with maternal mental health.

- Ochsner Health sponsored the 2022 Christmas Tea Fundraiser
- The 2022 Conscious Moms walk is rescheduled for Spring of 2023.

June 2023 Updates

- On May 6th, 2023, Ochsner Health hosted Conscious Moms' MILES2MOMS – Maternal Mental Health Awareness Run/Walk.

Our Lady of the Lake Health

Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center (OLOLRMC) Health Care Centers in Schools operates seven school-based health clinics (SBHC) in EBRP. Social workers provide case management, crisis intervention, and individual, family, and group counseling through in-person, telehealth visits and community partnerships.

- OLOLRMC expanded the Collaborative Assessment and Management of Suicidality (CAMS) program across adult behavioral health, emergency department, and acute care settings in 2020. This comprehensive suicide program puts OLOLRMC in compliance with national standards.
- 1,798 CAMS consults provided over the last three years for OLOLRMC patients (1,477 unique patients) 34 psychiatry residents, seven psychiatry supervisors, 8 LCSWs, 7 PhD students in clinical psychology
- Trained entire COPE team in Crisis Prevention Planning in 2020
- In 2021, OLOLRMC received a new Taxpayer Identification Number for the LSU Residency Clinic at O'Donovan so the clinic would be able to bill Medicaid. Previously, OLOLRMC could only accept cash payments from patients.
- In 2021, the Family Center O'Donovan Clinic purchased a TMS (Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation) machine, a non-invasive electric brain stimulation to treat patients whose conditions have not improved through conventional approaches, such as medication and therapy. It is mainly used to treat patients with depression.
- In 2021, the Tau Center Unit increased its inpatient adolescent bed capacity by 36% from 14 to 19 beds.
- The OLOLRMC Psychology Internship program is a one-year internship required by psychology PhD and PsyD doctorate candidates. The program hosts two interns per year. The first class completed the program in 2021.
- The program has expanded its abilities to perform psychological testing, group, and individual therapy in their psychiatry units, and brief interventions with patients hospitalized on the hospital's med/surg/ICU floors.
- LPG offers the following services:

Pediatric patient services:

- Applied Behavioral Analysis therapy, parent education groups, and on-site social workers who support children with complex medical needs in the ambulatory specialty clinics. Adult patient services: Outpatient medication management and therapy, Medication-assisted treatment (MAT) for opioid addiction, Spravato treatment for major depressive disorder (MDD), group therapy, psychoeducation, and psychological testing. The psychiatric center is supported by 19 psychiatry residents, four psychology externs, and seven attending psychiatrists.

OLOLRMC has a 70-bed mental and behavioral health division that provides acute stabilization for adolescents, adults, and geriatric patients.

Our Lady of the Lake's COPE Team completes over 8,400 assessments annually and, in collaboration with a team of emergency room professionals, makes recommendations

for inpatient and/or outpatient treatment across the region. EMBH, the dedicated psychiatric emergency department at OLOLRMC, serves over 4,300 people annually. The inpatient Mental and Behavioral Health Division has 4 Inpatient units providing programming for acute stabilization of persons suffering from mental illnesses and related substance use disorders: 26 adolescent beds aged 12 - 17, 33 adult beds serving age 18 and up, and 12 geriatric beds serving age 55 and up. OLOL Mental and Behavioral Health inpatients serve over 2,400 people annually.

Woman's Hospital

- Woman's Hospital implemented an integrated care model within the LSU clinics as well as its private physician offices.
 - Since 2018, a total of 6,352 patients have been screened during their visit, and resources were provided.
- The Behavioral Health Clinic at Woman's offers both inpatient and outpatient consultations for peripartum and postpartum women with a focus on medication management and psychotherapy treatment plans. The clinic is staffed by two full-time psychiatrists.
- The GRACE (Guiding Recovery and Creating Empowerment) program was formed in 2018 to provide care management services to pregnant women misusing opioids with a goal of improving outcomes for both mom and baby. The program was funded by a three-year grant from the United Health Foundation.
- During the grant period, the program received more than 230 referrals and enrolled 154 patients; 71 patients graduated from the program. These women are supported by the GRACE team members for one year postpartum.
- Beginning in 2022, the GRACE program expanded the inclusion criteria to women misusing any substances, including alcohol. Each enrollee is given a Narcan kit and educated on the administration by a Pharmacist at Woman's Hospital.
- Woman's Hospital is opening a 10 bed Perinatal Mental Health Unit in September 2024.
- Both the Well Mama and Her Health programs provide support and resources for program participants experiencing perinatal behavioral health challenges.

Health Equity/Racial Disparities

Baton Rouge General Medical Center

- Collection of race, ethnicity and language obtained by Nursing in the electronic health record and maintained in the admission database began in 2023-2024.
- Nursing performs initial screening for Social Determinants of Health as part of the admission process; if positive, a trigger alerts Case Management, who conducts an in-depth assessment and provides resources.
- Patient-facing staff are trained in the collection of social needs
- Physicians and Nursing (patient-facing) complete cultural competency training during onboarding
- Research into unconscious/implicit bias training conducted by the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council.

Lane Regional Medical Center

In 2023-2024, Lane initiated the collection of Quality data analytics focused on Patient Demographic Data Stratification and implemented demographic data in quality metrics.

- SDOH assessment prompts built within EMR registration and nursing assessments, and SDOH reports were built to measure data assessed. SDOH Assessment/Documentation/Referral Training occurred, and a SDOH Screening Policy was developed.
- Cultural Competence Training was conducted with the following programs implemented:
 - Cultural Diversity, Patient Rights & Ethics included in new employee orientation
 - Health Equity education with a focus on inclusive patient care and alignment to LRMC mission was implemented
- SBIRT and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion training completed by Lane LDRP staff and hospital leadership.
- Assessed staff diversity mix with a new scheduling and payroll system implementation.
- Staff Development coordinated food and diaper drives related to Lane's SDOH identified areas of need: food items with Zachary Food Pantry and diapers with the Junior League of Baton Rouge.
- Lane Family Practice collaborated with the Zachary Food Pantry to provide emergency food boxes for patients in need.
- Lane Pediatrics and the Lane LDRP unit partnered with the Junior League of Baton Rouge to become a Diaper Bank distribution location.
- Established a list of community resources and designed a QR code flyer and signage to display throughout hospital and clinics. The flyer was also posted on the Lane website and social media outlets.
- Developed an agreement with Uber Health and Lynx for inexpensive transportation services for patients from underserved regions in the Baker community to be transported to the hospital and Lane clinics.

Surgical Specialty Center

Surgical Specialty Center (SSC) contributed to the 2021 Prioritized Needs in Healthy Equity and Racial Disparities by providing healthcare for Medicaid recipients, offering financial assistance, and providing resource referrals to community-based organizations when needed.

Ochsner Medical Center – Baton Rouge

- Ochsner created a DEI dashboard to assess quality metrics stratified by race, ethnicity, preferred language, sex, payor, region, location, and service area.
- An SDOH questionnaire is pushed via the patient portal annually for all patients with upcoming primary care visits. SDOH is integrated system-wide into all inpatient case management documentation. Community Health Workers collect SDOH data and connect to community resources.
- The Ochsner Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion team leads regular training and workshops on inclusivity, cultural humility, microaggressions, and effective communication for leaders and employees. DEI leaders regularly meet to assess the impact of training and connect with staff. A virtual learning module has been included in employee onboarding to introduce new team members to Ochsner's DEI values.
- Ten employee-led Ochsner Resource Groups (ORGs) continue to be supported across Ochsner Health to highlight and build appreciation for the differences that make employees stronger and address the needs of every individual to feel valued and respected. Targeted skills-based training was offered for leaders on leading inclusively, psychological safety, and cultural humility. A system-wide objective has been established to increase the percentage of BIPOC leaders.

- A supplier diversity program was developed to establish and enhance relationships with suppliers owned/run by members of underrepresented groups.
- Ochsner is a partner with Southern University's School of Nursing's Jag Mobile program.
- Ochsner Community Health Brees Family Center (Howell Blvd.) in the northern part of Baton Rouge has a Community Engagement Specialist to strengthen community relationships.

Our Lady of the Lake Health

- Patient Demographic Data Stratification Project implemented in 2022 to increase the use and integration of demographic data in quality metrics & research.
- In 2021 - Social Determinants of Health screening was approved by the FMOLHS System and pilot implementation at Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center. The EMR module launched with metrics established and measured.
- SDOH dashboard is published monthly with weekly updates reporting on inpatient screening rates.
- In 2022 – 2023, implementation of Health Equity education with a focus on inclusive patient care, understanding health equity, and alignment to FMLOHS Mission was conducted System-wide. DEI with SDOH inclusion was integrated into the nurse residency curriculum in 2023. Cultural competency leadership training curriculum requirement for leadership was required in 2023; the curriculum included unconscious bias training
- Measures of success included a reduction in Minority Voluntary Turnover (starting Jan. FY 22), an increase in diverse representation in our leadership (Director and above), and an improved applicable engagement DEI Survey item (overall and EEO extraction). Dedicated and incrementally increasing spending (budgeted/allocated) for the system DEI Strategy remains.
- In 2022-2023, OLOL Health incorporated DEI and health equity into its strategic plans. It established leadership accountability through performance management, with every leader's required DEI education goal weighted at 25% of their evaluation.
- The FMOLHS system incorporated Health Equity as a pillar of its strategic plan and committed to increasing Diversity procurement spending every 12 months.
- In 2023, OLOL Health implemented Pathway, an EHR Link to resources for identified SDOH-screened needs.
- OLOL Health implemented the following programs: diabetes management programs through research efforts with Pennington and the Outpatient Comprehensive Diabetes Education Program; participation in the AHA Ambulatory Cardio Risk Registry; hosting the Health Care Centers in Schools Program; and establishing the Faith Fund, a micro-lending alternative to predatory payday lending with financial counseling and the recipient of a Safe, Hopeful, Healthy grant.

Woman's Hospital

- In 2023 – Woman's Hospital conducted REaL Data Validation. Implemented a plan to use demographic data in quality metrics & research.
- In 2023, Woman's completed the AHA Health Equity Transformation Assessment and put an action plan in place.
- SDOH screening via Meditech for all inpatients was implemented. There were low Health Relation Social Needs reported therefore an improvement project was commissioned. Currently, a research study is in process for Postpartum patient navigation using CHWs.
- Launched SDOH Screening in Ambulatory Setting in 2024.

- DEI and Health Equity are taught in orientation for all employees; Unconscious Bias Training and Poverty Simulations are conducted quarterly and are open to the Community.
- An Equity assessment was completed through Talent Management Lifecycle lens in 2023, and Minority Turnover and Minority New Hire Turnover metrics were tracked. A Leadership Representation Metric was established in 2024.
- DEI and Health Equity Structure was created and is now operational. Inclusion Council Members and SME Group Leaders were identified.

Healthy Living

Baton Rouge General Medical Center

- Nutrition/Food Access
 Baton Rouge General (BRG) offers a range of programs to promote nutrition, wellness, and obesity treatment. In partnership with Rouses Market, BRG conducts monthly grocery store tours to teach participants how to choose fresh, healthy foods and to properly read nutrition labels.
 The Living Lean Management program helps individuals achieve and maintain a healthy weight. Separately, BRG's employee wellness program incentivizes staff to meet health criteria based on blood pressure and waist circumference. BRG also provides healthy food options for employees, guests, and patients, with the nutritional care team participating in various community events.
 The Chef's Table, a highlight of BRG's healthy eating initiatives, offers nutritious food options guided by a dietitian's recommendations. These include anti-inflammatory foods, grain-free options, no preservatives, real food ingredients, and healthy oils. During National Nutrition Month in March, the Chef's Table promotes healthy eating and lifestyles.
- Obesity and Wellness
 BRG's accredited Bariatric Surgery Program, recognized by the Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery Accreditation and Quality Improvement Program, features four bariatric surgeons performing an average of 85 surgeries annually from 2021 to 2023. In 2023, the Louisiana Center for Bariatrics at Baton Rouge General opened, providing comprehensive obesity treatment, including bariatric surgeries (sleeve gastrectomy and Roux-en-Y gastric bypass), medical treatments for obesity, weight loss seminars, and support groups.
- Physical Fitness
 BRG sponsors community events that promote physical activity, such as the Mardi Gras Mambo (10k and 15k), Ryan's Walk, and the Heart Walk, and offers a gym with fitness classes at both campuses. Since 2022, the Holistic Wellness Program at Claiborne Elementary has provided teachers and administrators with information and resources on nutrition, exercise, and stress management. BRG also helps supply school materials, track uniforms, and funds for after school tutoring programs for students at eight schools in the East Baton Rouge Parish School System. Additionally, BRG sponsored the Freedom and You Foundation's 80s 5k run in 2023, supporting their mission to educate and empower communities about mental and emotional wellness, and providing resources to students and teachers to combat the stigma of mental illness.
- Smoking Cessation
 BRG's outpatient Smoking Cessation Program, which has provided over 5,000 bedside visits between 2021 and 2023, is available for patients to request upon discharge. This comprehensive five-week program addresses critical aspects of smoking cessation, including weight control, stress management, resisting the urge to smoke, and sustaining a tobacco-free lifestyle. To enhance accessibility, the program is available on various days and times.

Additionally, the Cardiac Rehabilitation team offers bedside education that includes smoking cessation resources, contact information for BRG's Smoking Cessation program, and the national Tobacco Quit line.

• Children and Youth

Each summer, in partnership with the YMCA, BRG team members visit summer camp to educate over 500 kids on movement and nutrition. BRG also collaborates with the mayor's office and Big Buddy for the mayor's youth work program, offering 8-week summer employment for youth aged 15-21 at our Mid City and Bluebonnet campuses. Between 2022 and 2023, the hospital hosted 26 students who worked in various hospital departments, including nutritional care, central supply, pharmacy, lab, and pediatric rehabilitation. Additionally, the hospital hosted 31 students in 2022-2023 through the East Baton Rouge Parish School System's student intern program.

At the Claiborne Elementary Clinic, operating between 2022 and 2023, BRG provided weekly medical care for under-resourced elementary students. Services included immunizations, treatment for injuries, medication distribution, and illness management. Throughout the year, the clinic served approximately 150 students. BRG residents and physicians also participated in community events like Trunk or Treat and Back to School Bash at Claiborne Elementary. Since 2022, BRG has partnered with Park Medical Academy and Capitol High School to develop a medical academy, offering hands-on experiences in healthcare professions to students from Pre-K to 12th grade, with the goal of guiding students toward declaring a medical career interest by their sophomore year at Capitol High.

• Community Outreach

BRG has hosted numerous health events in collaboration with Rouses and Matherne's Market. The hospital is actively involved in the ICARE program, participating in its annual Prevention Day and serving on its advisory committee. BRG's Graduate Medical program includes a team of residents who regularly educate students in their classrooms on various healthy habits.

In an effort to further support the community, BRG hired a Community Relations Director and established a community outreach department. The community outreach department focuses on partnerships with community organizations, local nonprofits, and community leaders to address disparities in access to care. Between 2021 and 2023, BRG spent over \$300,000 on sponsorships. Through these efforts, BRG has worked at numerous community events, hosting screenings, educational classes, and information tables to educate the public on various health topics.

BRG also collaborates closely with the school system to set up clinics, back-to-school screenings, immunizations, and physicals for families. The hospital supports schools with activity days and special events focused on health and wellness for both teachers and students. Additionally, BRG completed a health and wellness program at a local elementary school, promoting mental wellness, healthy eating, and physical fitness for all teachers. The program rewarded teachers with fresh food, shoes, free assessments, and concierge doctor appointments at the school. BRG also partners with local first responders to provide free and confidential mental health services and no-wait doctor's visits.

Lane Regional Medical Center

Healthy Living/Lifestyle

- Lane provided free heart health screening and stroke education through business and community events and speaking engagements.
- An annual employee wellness program was offered with cash incentives for better health, including nicotine, BMI, blood pressure, glucose, cholesterol and flu vaccines.
- A variety of healthy food choices were offered on the hospital's cafeteria menu.

Obesity and Wellness

- Lane offered a variety of free wellness classes and screening events to organizations and

community members to help reduce obesity, including healthy cooking classes, healthy recipes, and biometric screenings.

- Lane Nutrition Services offered both inpatient and outpatient nutrition services. Our team of registered dietitians provided individualized plans for inpatients to help them achieve optimal health.
- Our team of registered dietitians provided Medical Nutrition Therapy services for outpatients with conditions such as diabetes, gestational diabetes, cardiovascular disease, kidney disease, gastrointestinal disease, and cancer.
- Lane offered bariatric weight loss surgery, including nutritional and psychological counseling services.

Physical Fitness

- The hospital provided a free fitness trail to the community and conducted several walking programs on its fitness trail and established walking and fitness challenges for area businesses.
- Lane sponsored 16 area organizations for their walks, runs, classes, fitness tournaments, and wellness events.

Smoking Cessation

- Free smoking cessation programs were available in partnership with Cardiovascular Institute of the South's Commit to Quit program.

Children and Youth

- Lane collaborated with the Zachary, Baker, and St. Francisville school systems for random drug screenings for students and flu vaccinations and wellness screenings for staff.
- Lane physicians volunteered for various community events, such as annual high school physicals and trunk or treat, school fairs, and back-to-school events.

Community Outreach

- Lane participated in 168 community and business events and classes to provide flu vaccines, blood pressure screenings, glucose and cholesterol screenings, eye exams, cancer screenings, and various health education information.
- Lane partnered with the Zachary Fire Department to provide annual physicals.
- Lane partnered with the Zachary Food Pantry as a food collection site.
- Lane partnered with Junior League of Baton Rouge's Diaper Bank Program to support area families in need with diaper donations.
- Ongoing education for chronic diseases and prevention was provided through newsletters, social media posts, group classes, brochures, flyers, and website blogs.

Ochsner Medical Center – Baton Rouge

- In 2022, the Lifestyle and Wellness clinic opened in the Baton Rouge area.
 - The lifestyle and wellness team works closely with each patient to make holistic lifestyle changes through clinical assessment, nutrition education, exercise goal planning, and program monitoring to improve physical and mental well-being.
- In 2022, multiple leaders with Ochsner Health were part of the Go Red executive leadership team.
- Ochsner remains a corporate partner with American Heart Association and corporate sponsor with American Heart's Go Red Luncheon and American Heart's Capital Area Heart Walk.
- In 2021, Ochsner Health gifted \$4 million to LSU's College of Human Sciences & Education, establishing the Ochsner Wellness Center within the Huey P. Long Field House, which opened in October 2023.
 - The Ochsner Wellness Center will promote health-enhancing physical activity programs for all Louisianians, provide practical experience for LSU students pursuing careers focused on human wellness, and directly impact the health of LSU students, faculty and staff. The College of Human Sciences & Education's School of Kinesiology will use the center as an instructional laboratory where, under faculty supervision, students will provide routine health screenings

and exercise testing and design exercise programs. The center will also expand the campus community's physical and mental wellness programs.

- Ochsner Digital Medicine empowers individuals to manage high blood pressure and/or Type 2 diabetes with guidance, support, and home monitoring.
 - Digital Medicine allows patients to take blood pressure or blood sugar screenings at home with a device that connects to their smartphone.
 - A licensed clinician makes real-time adjustments to medications.
 - The goal is to create healthy habits for blood pressure and blood sugar control with support from a health coach.
- Ochsner's Healthy State by 2030 Initiative
 - Ochsner's Healthy State
 - In 2020, Ochsner Health teamed up with officials from the state and local government and organizations throughout Louisiana to launch Healthy State, a bold plan to achieve better health for every Louisianian. By engaging with healthcare, community, education, and policy organizations across the state, we are working together to tackle the leading causes of poor health.
 - Healthy State Priorities:
 - Smoking Cessation
 - Food Security
 - Cancer and Chronic Condition
 - Wellness and Obesity
 - Broadband
 - Workforce and Education
 - Community Screenings
 - In September of 2022, Southern University's School of Nursing's Jag Mobile unit made its maiden voyage into the community. Ochsner Health is the healthcare partner in this collaboration, creating community health clinical experiences for senior-level nursing students.
 - Screenings offered through this collaboration include:
 - Biometric screenings
 - Cancer screenings (breast, cervical, colorectal, prostate)
 - HIV/STI rapid testing in collaboration with another outreach group
 - Medication adherence and education
 - Food is Medicine boxes in collaboration with a local food bank
 - Hearing screenings in collaboration with Southern University Speech and Language Pathology Department
 - From 2023 – 204 Ochsner Health participated in over 68 community events providing services at no charge to participants. Services included COVID-19 vaccination, flu vaccination, blood pressure screenings, glucose and cholesterol screenings, and cancer screenings.
 - Ochsner's partnership with Southern University's Jag Mobile unit remains strong, and they completed their fourth cohort of BSN students in May of 2024.
 - On October 7, 2023, Ochsner Health was the presenting sponsor for Urban League's Big Health Event to promote health equity and build stronger communities. The goal was to improve healthcare access, advance health equity, and improve health outcomes among

Louisiana's underserved communities. A total of 274 individuals were in attendance and impacted by the event.

- May 2024 - Ochsner Health designated 'WellSpot' by La. Dept. of Health
 - Well-Ahead Louisiana's WellSpot designation is the first voluntary designation program of its kind in the state, encouraging organizations and individuals to make small, healthy lifestyle changes in spaces where Louisiana residents spend most of their time.
 - Ochsner's WellSpot designation is based on numerous benchmarks and programs benefiting employees and the wider community, including:
 - Ochsner Eat Fit, which provides easy-to-access, real-world education on wellness and nutrition
 - Serving as a statewide leader on a tobacco-free policy and smoking cessation
 - Comprehensive worksite wellness
 - Breastfeeding-friendly policies
 - Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative
 - Chronic disease prevention screening
 - Healthy menus for cafeterias
 - Community-based obesity prevention

Additional benchmarks include culturally and linguistically appropriate services, diabetes self-management education, team-based care implementation, and designation under the state's Gift program for improving breastfeeding rates at birthing facilities.

Our Lady of the Lake

Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center Hospital (OLOLRMC) Health Care Centers in Schools operates seven school-based health clinics (SBHC) in EBRP. Social workers provide case management, crisis intervention, and individual, family, and group counseling through in-person, telehealth visits and community partnerships to provide high-quality, culturally sensitive healthcare to underserved communities at clinics located in seven schools throughout EBRP. Health Care Centers in Schools (HCCS) supports summer well-check events at school-based clinics partnering with Healthy Blue and updates students on well-checks and vaccinations.

HCCS Health Educator teaches various health topics, which include smoking cessation, asthma education, COVID-19 education, puberty education, healthy relationships, and healthy eating.

Nutrition/Food Access - (year/year-number of participants) 20/21-1,449; 21/22-4,223; 22/23-12,948

Obesity/Wellness/Physical Fitness - (year/year-number of participants) 20/21-1,449; 21/22-4,223; 22/23-12,948

BMI and Medical Child Visits - (year/year-number of participants) 20/21-3,138; 21/22-7,070; 22/23-5,326

Smoking Cessation activities and education include: (year/year-number of participants) 20/21-0; 21/22-500; 22/23-28

Well Child Visits - (year/year-number of participants) 20/21-503; 21/22-891; 22/23-585

- Geaux Get Healthy
 - The Geaux Get Healthy Clinical Program at Our Lady of the Lake Hospital is a program addressing food insecurity by providing cooking classes, nutrition classes, and grocery store tours along with ongoing community health worker support and access to other community resources. Resources provided include connection to the community partners listed below along with access to Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank resources such as their network of food banks and pantries and SNAP

enrollment assistance. The Geaux Get Healthy Clinical Program at Our Lady of the Lake is a collaborative effort with the larger Geaux Get Healthy Coalition through work with an academic institution (LSUHSC- Baton Rouge Regional Campus), hospital system (Our Lady of the Lake Hospital and FMOL), local government (Mayor’s Healthy City Initiative), and many community-based organizations of varying sizes (American Heart Association, Topbox, Baton Roots). The program has been growing since its inception in 2020 to include 2 locations within OLOL. Our Lady of the Lake and LSU Health Baton Rouge Regional Campus examine the impact of this program through an affiliated research study that has shown improvements in food security scores, nutrition behaviors, and depression scores.

Since 2021, the Geaux Get Healthy Clinical Program at Our Lady of the Lake has provided:

- 207 educational experiences through cooking classes, nutrition classes, and grocery store tours utilizing the American Heart Association Healthy for Life Curriculum
- 806 people in high-risk communities have been screened for food insecurity through this program, with 646 of these individuals having food insecurity (80%)
- 314 people have enrolled in the program since 2021. Of the 646 people with food insecurity, we could not contact 48 of these individuals, and 284 of the remaining community members were not interested in participating in the program.
- 207 boxes of fresh food have been delivered to the homes of our participants through our partner, Topbox Foods.
- This work has been presented nationally twice at the American Heart Association’s Scientific Sessions and this spring at the American Hospital Association’s Accelerating Health Equity Conference.

OLOL Health Community Outreach –

Over the past few years, OLOL has made significant strides in improving health outcomes in East Baton Rouge and Ascension Parishes. Our efforts have been wide-ranging, prioritizing both physical and mental well-being, with a focus on accessibility and community engagement.

- **Cancer Support and Health Education:** We established comprehensive cancer support groups that have provided essential emotional and educational resources to individuals and families impacted by cancer. In addition, our health education classes have reached numerous participants, empowering them with knowledge on disease prevention, healthy living, and managing chronic conditions. We host these support groups and health education classes in Baton Rouge, Livingston, and Ascension Parishes.
- **Biometric Screenings & Healthy Lifestyle Classes:** Our biometric screenings, paired with education on healthy living, have been pivotal in identifying at-risk individuals and providing them with the tools to make lifestyle changes. These screenings are coupled with tailored healthy lifestyle classes initially delivered in Donaldsonville where the need is greatest and access to such programs is the scarcest. OLOL is teaching and reinforcing the importance of ongoing health management.
- **Hands-Only CPR Training:** OLOL Health recognized the need for life-saving skills and made it a priority to teach Hands-Only CPR throughout our communities. By expanding this training, we’ve enabled countless individuals to be educated on how to act swiftly in emergencies which will directly impact the survival rates of those experiencing cardiac events.
- **Mental Health Partnerships:** Understanding the critical importance of mental health, we strengthened partnerships with organizations like NAMI and Beacon Health, broadening our ability to offer mental health support to the community. Through these collaborations, we’ve expanded mental health awareness, support services, and access to resources.
- **Comprehensive Health Programming:** Our dedication to improving health outcomes extends to various service lines that aim to reduce the prevalence of falls, strokes, sexually transmitted disease, and fatal bleeding. These targeted programs have been instrumental in enhancing the quality of life for individuals at risk of or living with these conditions.

- **Parish Nurse Program:** The Parish Nurse program has been a cornerstone of our approach to holistic care. Our nurses continue to care for local congregations and their surrounding communities, focusing on case management to address social determinants of health (SDOH). This program provides health programming, making a direct impact on individuals’ overall well-being.
- **American Heart Association Partnership:** Our ongoing collaboration with the American Heart Association has allowed us to co-brand health education and programming throughout the region. Together, we’ve provided valuable resources, fostering awareness and encouraging heart-healthy behaviors in our communities.

Through these initiatives, we remain committed to addressing both the immediate and long-term health needs of East Baton Rouge and Ascension Parishes, continually working towards a healthier future for all.

Surgical Specialty Center

- SSC posted healthy living signs by elevators encouraging more walking; and contracted with a dietary provider to promote a healthy diet for patients on-site.

Woman’s Hospital

- **Nutrition/Food Access**
 - Woman’s offers grocery tours, cooking classes, and nutrition education free of charge to the community. Woman’s social media includes links to healthy recipes and blogs on nutrition education.
- **Obesity/Wellness**
 - Grant funding by the Foundation for Woman’s and partnership with Rouses Market and Family Road of Baton Rouge, Woman’s provided 100 food boxes, recipes, and simple cooking videos to those experiencing food insecurities.
 - Woman’s launched the Balance® program in 2016, which utilizes registered dietitians, fitness specialists, and health coaches to provide participants with nutrition, fitness, and accountability.
- **Physical Fitness**
 - Woman’s offers Walk with Ease, a free program provided in conjunction with the National Arthritis Foundation for anyone who suffers from arthritis.
 - Woman’s offers online virtual fitness including a virtual Fit for Birth workout for prenatal women.
- **Smoking Cessation**
 - Pharmacists completed LDH’s Connect2Quit training to assist patients with smoking cessation resources.
 - Smoking cessation resources are provided if needed in both the Well Mama Program and Her Health Program.
- **Children and Youth**
 - Woman’s has partnered with The Safety Place to provide safety education to children in the community.
- **Health Education and Community Outreach**
 - A part of Woman’s partnership with The Safety Place is to provide safe sleep and car seat safety education to the public. Those who qualify have the opportunity to earn a free car seat and crib.
 - Woman’s partnered with Healthy Blue, SU Ag Center, and YWCA to host a community baby shower providing necessary baby items to pregnant moms and community members.

Maternal and Infant Health

Baton Rouge General Medical Center

- BRG trained all NICU parents and guardians on CPR techniques. The NOW Program at BRG's Birth Center aims to treat patients who are pregnant and struggling with substance abuse, supporting both the patient and baby through Neonatal Opioid Withdrawal Syndrome at no cost.
- Encouraged all parents, grandparents, and babysitters to take an infant CPR class
- Offered classes for infants, Baby Food Basics, which was led by speech-language pathologists and feeding specialists.
- BRG offered patients the opportunity to donate their placenta through Telegen, which can then be used for other treatments, including severe burns.
- Pelvic Health Rehabilitation was offered for post-partum mothers who are experiencing pelvic issues
- Offered a series of childbirth preparation classes, including childbirth preparation, baby care basics, and breastfeeding basics
- Offered support for post-partum moms dealing with breastfeeding and lactation issues with BRG's certified lactation support team.
- Started a partnership with Mary's Hands Network and served as the pilot location of a Community Doula Program starting in December 2023. Patients have access to a doula at any time of day for delivery and before/after delivery, too, at no cost to the patient.
- Training is offered to volunteer doulas at no cost as well.
- Over the last three years, BRGMC has safely delivered 2,346 babies.

Lane Regional Medical Center

- As Level 2 obstetrical center, Lane provided care for well babies, as well as sick babies that require Level 2 neonatal care in partnership with Woman's Hospital for NICU transports.
- Lane established a Lactation Consulting Services program for inpatients and outpatients taught by a certified nurse to help new and expecting moms succeed with breastfeeding.
- Lane implemented a new Certa-Scan Digital Footprint scanning system to enhance infant identification and security measures.
- Lane was re-designated as a Birth Ready Plus facility for consistent healthcare improvement for perinatal health outcomes by the Louisiana Department of Health and the Louisiana Perinatal Quality Collaborative (LaPQC).
- Lane is a recipient of the national Blue Distinction® Center for Maternity Care designation and is recognized for delivering quality specialty care safely and effectively based on objective measures developed with input from the medical community.
- Lane is a certified GIFT (Guided Infant Feeding Techniques) facility.
- Lane offered free 'The ABCs of Breastfeeding' classes and produced two educational videos for new and expecting moms.
- Lane offered free "After Baby Comes" education for new and expecting parents and caregivers.
- Lane offered free CPR training kits to new parents through a partnership with the American Heart Association.
- Lane focused on improving the screening, care, and treatment of patients and infants affected by substance abuse through participation in the ICSED (Improving Care of the Substance-Exposed Dyad) collaborative initiated through the LaPQC.

- Lane implemented the "Skip the Wait" red-bracelet program to improve awareness, recognition, and treatment of postpartum patients at high risk for eclampsia.
- Lane is committed to improving care for patients who have experienced fetal loss. All LDRP staff received Perinatal Grief Training and implemented new measures to provide follow-up care for these patients.
- Lane provided continuing education and awareness through newsletters, educational materials, social media posts and website blogs.

Ochsner Medical Center – Baton Rouge

- Ochsner Health supported the Hear Her Concerns Baton Rouge campaign.
- Ochsner Health is a corporate partner with Conscious Moms, an organization raising awareness and kindness for mothers struggling with maternal mental health. Ochsner Health sponsored the 2022 Christmas Tea Fundraiser, the 2023 Conscious Moms' MILES2MOMS – Maternal Mental Health Awareness Run/Walk. Ochsner Health continues to offer its Connected MOM program with digital medicine.
- Ochsner Medical Center – Baton Rouge achieved the Birth Ready Plus Designation in 2021. The Louisiana Department of Health and the Louisiana Perinatal Quality Collaborative (LaPQC) recognized 16 Louisiana hospitals for committing to practices that improve quality and outcomes for people giving birth. Labor classes were provided three times a month for people giving birth. Baby basics class is offered monthly through Pediatrics. Ochsner Medical Center – Baton Rouge remains a milk collection depot of The Mother's Milk Bank of Louisiana at Ochsner Baptist. Ochsner Medical Center – Baton Rouge maintains its status as The Gift Shining Star.
- Ochsner Health and Louisiana Women's Healthcare partnership remains strong. Ochsner Medical Center – Baton Rouge was recognized as part of Newsweek's list of Best Maternity Hospitals for 2023. Baton Rouge was one of eight recognized hospitals in Louisiana and 384 nationwide. Ratings were based on a national survey of hospital managers and maternity healthcare professionals, hospital performance data related to maternity care, and patient satisfaction data.
- Ochsner Medical Center – Baton Rouge remains a Birth Ready Plus Designation for 2023.

Our Lady of the Lake Health

- The Infant-Driven Feeding Program hosted at OLOL Children's Hospital is an evidence-based, research-supported educational program for a systematic neurodevelopmental model of care created to advance neonatal oral feeding practice, appropriate for all neonatal professionals. OLOL Children's Hospital offered education around best practices for feeding neonates in the NICU. It promoted and incorporated positive feeding experiences as health professionals listened to babies when they communicated their readiness to feed by mouth. Objective criteria helped determine the type and quantity of oral feeds to improve care coordination among staff and caregivers.
- Maternal depression screening implemented
- Opened a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit and implemented a NICU Transport Team.
- First treatment for MPS after expanded newborn genetic screening and SMA treatment after expanded newborn genetic screening

Woman's Hospital

- Woman's was instrumental in championing the development and implementation of the Association for Woman's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nursing "Go the Full 40" campaign in EBRP. This initiative educates pregnant women and the community on the health benefits of delivering after 40 weeks of gestation.

- Woman’s distributed free pregnancy journals, offered free support groups/classes, and a free mobile phone app to educate and support healthy pregnancies.
- Woman’s offered fetal therapy, a form of highly complex surgery performed while the baby is still in the womb to correct issues such as spina bifida, congenital pulmonary airway malformation, and twin-to-twin transfusion syndrome.
- Woman’s is a designated Level III Surgical Referral Center for neonates. At 84 private beds, the NICU unit is the largest in the state.
- Woman’s sends parents home with infant CPR kits, including mannequins to practice their skills at home.
- Woman’s partnered with the Louisiana Children’s Trust Fund to implement a Safe Sleep for Newborns public awareness campaign in EBRP beginning in 2021.
- Woman’s offers a suite of prenatal education classes open to the public.

Sexually Transmitted Infections/HIV/Hepatitis C

Baton Rouge General Medical Center

- During annual physical exams at a BRG primary care clinic, patients are screened for potential STIs and HIV and, if needed, provided the necessary testing. In 2023, BRG launched HIV/STI testing in all three hospital emergency rooms in partnership with Gilead and LDH. So far, we have tested thousands of patients to help decrease the spread of undiagnosed cases in the Baton Rouge community.
- The pharmacy department was crucial by hosting four HIV educational classes for community members, covering prevention, testing, and care management topics.

Lane Regional Medical Center

- Lane incorporated HIV testing into annual physical and retirement physical protocols at primary care and urgent care clinics.
- Lane offered elective HIV testing to patients in the Emergency Room and provided HIV education and screening information to assist individuals who wanted to be tested.
- Lane social workers provided HIV-positive patients with resources, physician referrals, and emotional support as needed.



Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center

- The Primary Care 2 - Ending HIV Initiative team at Mid-City Clinic has conducted 587 point-of-care tests (POCT) for individuals seeking HIV, Syphilis, or Hepatitis C testing from 2021 to 2023. This highlights the ongoing need to educate the public about the importance of prevention and how sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are contracted. Emphasizing prevention and harm reduction strategies is crucial in reducing rates of HIV transmission and co-infections.
- There has been a positive increase in requests for PrEP and PCP linkage during OLOL’s EHE certified tester sessions. In 2023, there were 40 sessions where individuals asked for these preventative measures, compared to just 20 sessions in 2022. This rise is attributed to better education on STIs and the importance of establishing primary care, leading to a 50% increase in requests for preventative measures overall.
- OLOL Mid-City Clinic is dedicated to enhancing education and strengthening connections within the community by offering ongoing testing and educational opportunities for easy accessibility. Our goal is to improve access and promote a more inclusive approach to healthcare. However, we face challenges such as people avoiding medical care. In the 2022 article “The Psychology Behind Medical Care Avoidance,” April Boykin, LCSW, highlighted that many individuals who avoid seeking medical care do so out of anxiety, fear of death, and fear of a serious diagnosis. These fears, as Boykin pointed out, have a significant impact on individuals, causing mental and emotional distress as they navigate the conflicting emotions of illness and treatment. OLOL is committed to educating the community that HIV is no longer a death sentence, with advancements in medication allowing people to thrive while managing the condition.
- The OLOL EHE initiative addresses health disparities and builds stronger ties between the community and healthcare services. The goal is to promote early detection of individuals at high risk for HIV/STIs, as well as provide education on prevention strategies. The Mid-City Clinic has made significant strides in reducing the stigma associated with HIV by expanding its primary care services to include non-patients living with the virus. Patients, whether they have HIV/STIs or not, can now receive treatment from the same provider, including PrEP therapy. The need for “Prevention as Treatment” champions to spearhead prevention efforts have been apparent for some time. While there is still much progress to be made, the clinic emphasizes the importance of advocacy in combatting the HIV and STI epidemic in East Baton Rouge and surrounding areas.

Ochsner Medical Center

- Ochsner Medical Center – Baton Rouge remains an opt-out partner of the Gilead FOCUS Program.
 - In 2022, Gilead’s FOCUS program expanded into 6 additional hospitals in the Ochsner Health System.
- In collaboration with Ochsner’s PRIDE employee resource group, Ochsner Medical Center – Baton Rouge Emergency Department, The Baton Rouge Ending the HIV Epidemic Commission, Capitol Area Re-Entry Program, and Southern University’s School of Nursing’s Jag Mobile Program – an



HIV/STI screening day with PrEP outreach was done at the Goodwood Library in honor of National Gay Men’s HIV/AIDS Awareness Day in 2022.

- In 2022, as part of our cooperation with the Louisiana Department of Health, Ochsner Health participated in one monkey pox vaccination event to vaccinate the local LGBTQ+ community.
- Ochsner Health and Capitol Area Re-Entry Program works collaboratively with Southern University’s School of Nursing’s Jag Mobile program to provide HIV/STI testing opportunities in the community. Community Health Events resulted in 150 tests for HIV/STI performed.
- 112 tests for HIV/STI were performed as part of our cooperation with the Louisiana Department of Health; Ochsner Health participated in one community health event in April 2023, offering the pox vaccine.

Woman’s Hospital

- The PrEP (Pre-exposure Prophylaxis) program was recently started in the LSU OB/GYN Clinic. If increased risk is noted from a short risk assessment, the program is discussed, and labs are ordered. Once a patient is enrolled in the PrEP program, they are followed every three months. Education on reducing the transmission of HIV is discussed, and free condoms are provided if the patient is interested. We have increased our HIV testing rate on our GYN patients to above 30%.
- The PEP (Post-Exposure Prophylaxis) Program is available for patients who experience sexual assault. They are offered testing and a three-day pack of PEP (post-exposure prophylaxis during non-business hours. This prescription service is available at no cost.

Evaluation of 2021 CHNA

Behavioral Health

	2020	2021	2022	2023
Mental Health Providers***	240:1	220:1	310:1	310:1
Accidental OD Statistics for EBRP**	245	311	296	289
Order of Protective Custody Issues**	1,213	1,350	1,328	1,318
Coroner Emergency Certificate issued**	7,650	8,433	8,588	8,669

Maternal and Infant Health

	2021	2022	2023
Low Birthweight	220:1	130:1	128:1
Maternal Vulnerability Index EBR		47.0	61.6
Preterm Births	13:1	13.3	13.4
Preterm Birth		Grade F at 12.8%	Grade F at 12.9%
Baton Rouge, LA	188	187	180
Grade and Rate	Grade F at 1358%	Grade F at 12.8%	Grade F at 12.9%

2023 March Of Dimes Report Card For Louisiana | PeriStats | March of Dimes

Sexually Transmitted infections /HIV/ Hepatitis C

	2021	2022	2023
Region 2 Population size	834,543	851,216	**
HIV/STI			
Total People Living with HIV in Region 2 by Quarterly Report	5,099	5,160	5,179
Early Syphilis Diagnosis	200	355	416
Diagnosed with Primary and Secondary Syphilis	125	234	251
Syphilis Diagnosis Rate Per 100,000	25.6 (ranked 3rd)*	35.7 (P&S) (ranked 2nd)* 20.0 (non-P&S) (ranked 4th)*	**
Newly Diagnosed with HIV	188	187	180
Newly diagnosed with Stage 3 AIDS	77	64	70
HIV Diagnosis Rate Per 100,000	25.4 (ranked 2nd)*	24.0 (ranked 1st)*	**
Gonorrhea Diagnosis Rate Per 100,000	481.0 (ranked 1st)*	403.8 (ranked 1st)*	**
New Gonorrhea Diagnoses	3,289	2,804	**
Chlamydia Diagnosis Rate Per 100,00	935.5 (ranked 1st)*	950.1 (ranked 1st)*	**
New Chlamydia Diagnoses	6,397	6,598	**
Acute HBV Diagnoses Rate per 100,000	0.9	unavailable for regions less than 5 (<5) diagnoses	**
Acute HBV Diagnosis	6	4	**
Chronic HBV Diagnoses Rate Per 100,000	28.1 (ranked 2nd in number of diagnoses & 2nd in diagnoses per population)*	19.4 (ranked 2nd in number of diagnoses & 4th in diagnoses per population) *	**
Chronic HBV Diagnoses	192	135	**
Acute HCV Diagnosis Rate Per 100,000	9.2 (ranked 2nd in number of diagnoses & 2nd in diagnoses per population)*	3.9 (ranked 3rd in number of diagnoses & 4th in diagnoses per population)*	**
Acute HCV Diagnoses	63	27	**
Chronic HCV Diagnosis Rate Per 100,000	142.6 (ranked 1st in number of diagnoses & 1st in diagnoses per population)*	93.6 (ranked 2nd in number of diagnoses & 4th in diagnoses per population)*	**
Chronic HCV Diagnoses	974	650	**

*Regional Rankings among Louisiana’s nine public health regions
**Unavailable

Healthy Living

	2020		2021		2022		2023	
	Ascension	EBR	Ascension	EBR	Ascension	EBR	Ascension	EBR
Food Environment Index	8.1	6.5	7.9	7	7.9	7.1	7.9	7
Food Insecurity	13%	18%	11%	14%	10%	13%	10%	13%
Physical Inactivity	31%	29%	25%	27%	30%	30%	27%	28%
Access to Exercise Opportunities	73%	98%	73%	98%	70%	96%	69%	97%
Adults 20+ who are Obese*	33%	32%	35%	34%	37%	36%	31%	38%
Diabetes Prevalence								

Health Equity and Racial Disparities

	2021		2022		2023		2024	
	Ascension	EBR	Ascension	EBR	Ascension	EBR	Ascension	EBR
Quality of Life: Poor or Fair Health	18%	19%	19%	19%	15%	17%	16%	18%
Food Insecurity	11%	14%	10%	13%	10%	13%	9%	12%
Limited Access to Healthy Foods	8%	11%	10%	12%	10%	12%	10%	12%
Primary Care Physicians	2440:1	1090:1	2340:1	1080:1	2300:1	1090:1	2250:1	1150:1
Dentist	2350:1	1320:1	2800:1	1310:1	2520:1	1330:1	2370:1	1340:1
Mental Health Providers	970:1	240:1	900:1	220:1	870:1	230:1	830:1	220:1
Preventable Hospital Stays	4498	3729	3799	3270	2978	2670	2676	2517
Children in Poverty	13%	25%	13%	21%	15%	27%	12%	23%
Income inequality Ratio of household income at the 80th percentile to income at the 20th percentile.	4.7	5.6	4.5	5.4	4.6	5.8	4.5	5.6
Gender Pay Gap			0.64	0.72	0.64	0.72	0.61	0.73
Air Pollution - Particulate Matter µg/m³ (micrograms per cubic meter)	10.1	12.1	10.3	10.5	9.6	9.5	9.6	9.5
Severe Housing Cost Burden	8%	16%	9%	15%	10%	16%	9%	16%
Homeownership	82%	60%	82%	60%	82%	60%	83%	60%
Homicides	7	20	7	22	7	22	7	25
Suicides	13	12	13	12	13	12	12	12

countyhealthrankings.org

Race & Ethnicity	Ascension	East Baton Rouge
White alone	71.00%	47.60%
Black or African American alone	25.20%	46.70%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	0.50%	0.40%
Asian alone, percent	1.50%	3.50%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	0.10%	0.10%
Two or More Races	1.70%	1.70%
Hispanic or Latino	8.40%	6.80%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	63.90%	42.20%
Language		
Language other than English spoken at home, percent of persons age 5 years+, 2018-2022	6.70%	7.80%
Social factors		
Owner-occupied housing unit rate, 2018-2022	83.30%	59.80%
Median gross rent, 2018-2022	\$1,230	\$1,081
Persons per household, 2018-2022	2.74	2.54
Living in same house 1 year ago, percent of persons age 1 year+, 2018-2022	89.60%	84.00%
Median household income (in 2022 dollars), 2018-2022	\$93,800	\$62,083
Persons in poverty, percent	10.30%	18.50%
Total employment, 2022	42,431	236,005
Total employment, percent change, 2021-2022	7.00%	3.40%
Men-owned employer firms, Reference year 2017	1,037	5,748
Women-owned employer firms, Reference year 2017	307	1,518
Minority-owned employer firms, Reference year 2017	204	1,228
Nonminority-owned employer firms, Reference year 2017	1,416	7,202

U.S. Census Bureau

Conclusion

The 2024 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) reflects the power and promise of a bold and unified effort to identify and address the most pressing health concerns within East Baton Rouge and Ascension Parishes. Through our leadership commitment to the collective impact model, we have come together not as competitors but as collaborators, communicators, and advocates to align our efforts, share resources, and pursue a shared vision for improving the health and well-being of our communities. This collaborative approach demonstrates the power of partnership, trust, and shared purpose in improving health outcomes. By prioritizing collaboration over competition, we have demonstrated that our collective strengths are greater than the sum of our individual contributions.

Our collective impact approach requires intentional, sustained collaboration among diverse stakeholders united by common goals. Through this model, we have identified five prioritized health areas and have committed to a joint Community Health Implementation Plan to address them. By sharing data, strategies, and outcomes across organizations, we are breaking down silos and fostering a unified effort to “move the needle” on key health outcomes. We have created a transparent and accountable framework to measure progress on the five prioritized health areas. This approach is unique because it exemplifies leadership that is community-centered and solutions-focused. It acknowledges that improving health outcomes requires addressing the complex social, economic, and systemic factors influencing health. By working together, we leverage our collective expertise, resources, and influence to create meaningful and sustainable change.

We sincerely thank the CHNA Steering Committee for their leadership, vision, and unwavering commitment to this process. Their expertise and collaboration have been instrumental in guiding this initiative and ensuring its success.

Steering Committee	
Baton Rouge General Medical Center	Lauren Hebert-Henderson Meghan Parrish
Lane Regional Medical Center	Julie McLin
Ochsner – Baton Rouge	Charlene Ho Draeh LeBlanc Christy Reeves
Our Lady of the Lake Health	Angela Lambert Monique Marino Rebecca Mixon Rob Tasman
Surgical Specialty Center	Monique Marino
Woman’s Hospital	Dr. Rodney Anthony Renada Deschamps
CHNA Writing Group	Dr. Coletta C Barrett Dr. Leah Carter Dr. Hope Hickerson
Louisiana Department of Health – Region 2	Dr. Stephanie Henson

We remain committed to the collective impact model and implementing the 2024 Joint Community Health Implementation Plans as we move forward. This process is not just a one-time endeavor but a long-term commitment to collaboration, innovation, and accountability. By continuing to collaborate across organizational lines, we aim to make a lasting, measurable impact on the health of our communities. Together, we will continue to lead with purpose, improve health equity, and create a healthier future for the communities we serve, turning this CHNA’s vision into meaningful action.

Coletta C. Barrett, DNP, MHA, RN, FACHE
2024 CHNA Lead Facilitator
Chairman Emeritus - HealthyBR

Appendix A

Sources of Data for Each Statistic in the 10 Community Health Needs

- Access to Health Care Services
 - Uninsured Rate: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey
 - Primary Care Physician Ratio: Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Area Health Resource File
 - Residents Reporting No Regular Doctor: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)
- Chronic Disease Management
 - Adult Obesity Rate: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES)
 - Diabetes Prevalence: CDC, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)
 - Hypertension Prevalence: CDC, National Health Interview Survey (NHIS)
- Injury and Violence Prevention
 - Violent Crime Rate: Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program
 - Unintentional Injury Death Rate: CDC, National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS)
 - Motor Vehicle Crash Death Rate: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS)
- Health Education and Community Outreach
 - Residents Participating in Health Education Programs: Local health department surveys and community health assessments
 - Awareness of Community Health Resources: Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) surveys
- Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment
 - Adult Smoking Rate: CDC, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)
 - Drug Overdose Death Rate: CDC, National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS)
 - Access to Substance Abuse Treatment: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Treatment Locator
- Behavioral and Mental Health
 - Poor Mental Health Days: CDC, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)
 - Access to Mental Health Providers: Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Area Health Resource File
 - Suicide Rate: CDC, National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS)
- Maternal and Child Health
 - Infant Mortality Rate: CDC, National Vital Statistics System (NVSS)
 - Prenatal Care in First Trimester: CDC, Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS)
 - Low Birth Weight: CDC, National Vital Statistics System (NVSS)
- Health Equity and Racial Disparities
 - Black-White Life Expectancy Gap: CDC, National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS)
 - Racial Disparity in Low Birth Weight: CDC, National Vital Statistics System (NVSS)
 - Disparity in Health Insurance Coverage: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey
- Social Determinants of Health
 - High School Graduation Rate: National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)
 - Unemployment Rate: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)
 - Severe Housing Problems: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) data
- Healthy Living and Lifestyle
 - Physical Inactivity Rate: CDC, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)
 - Access to Exercise Opportunities: County Health Rankings & Roadmaps
 - Adult Smoking Rate: CDC, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)

11. Obesity and Nutrition

- Adult Obesity Rate: CDC, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)
- Access to Healthy Foods: U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food Environment Atlas
- Fruit and Vegetable Consumption: CDC, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)

12. Pediatric and Adolescent Health

- Immunization Coverage: CDC, National Immunization Survey (NIS)
- Teen Birth Rate: CDC, National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS)
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Visits: CDC, National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH)
- Overweight and Obesity Rate (ages 2-19): CDC, National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES)

13. STI/HIV/AIDS/Hepatitis C

- Vaccination Coverage: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Immunization Survey (NIS)
- Tuberculosis Incidence: CDC, National Tuberculosis Surveillance System (NTSS)
- STIs (Chlamydia, Gonorrhea, Syphilis): CDC, National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention (NCHHSTP)
- HIV Prevalence and New Diagnoses: CDC, National HIV Surveillance System (NHSS)
- Hepatitis C Prevalence and New Cases: CDC, National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System (NNDSS)
- CDC HIV Surveillance Report
- HIV.gov
- - Volunteers of America South Central Louisiana

These sources provide reliable and comprehensive data for assessing and addressing the health needs of the community

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