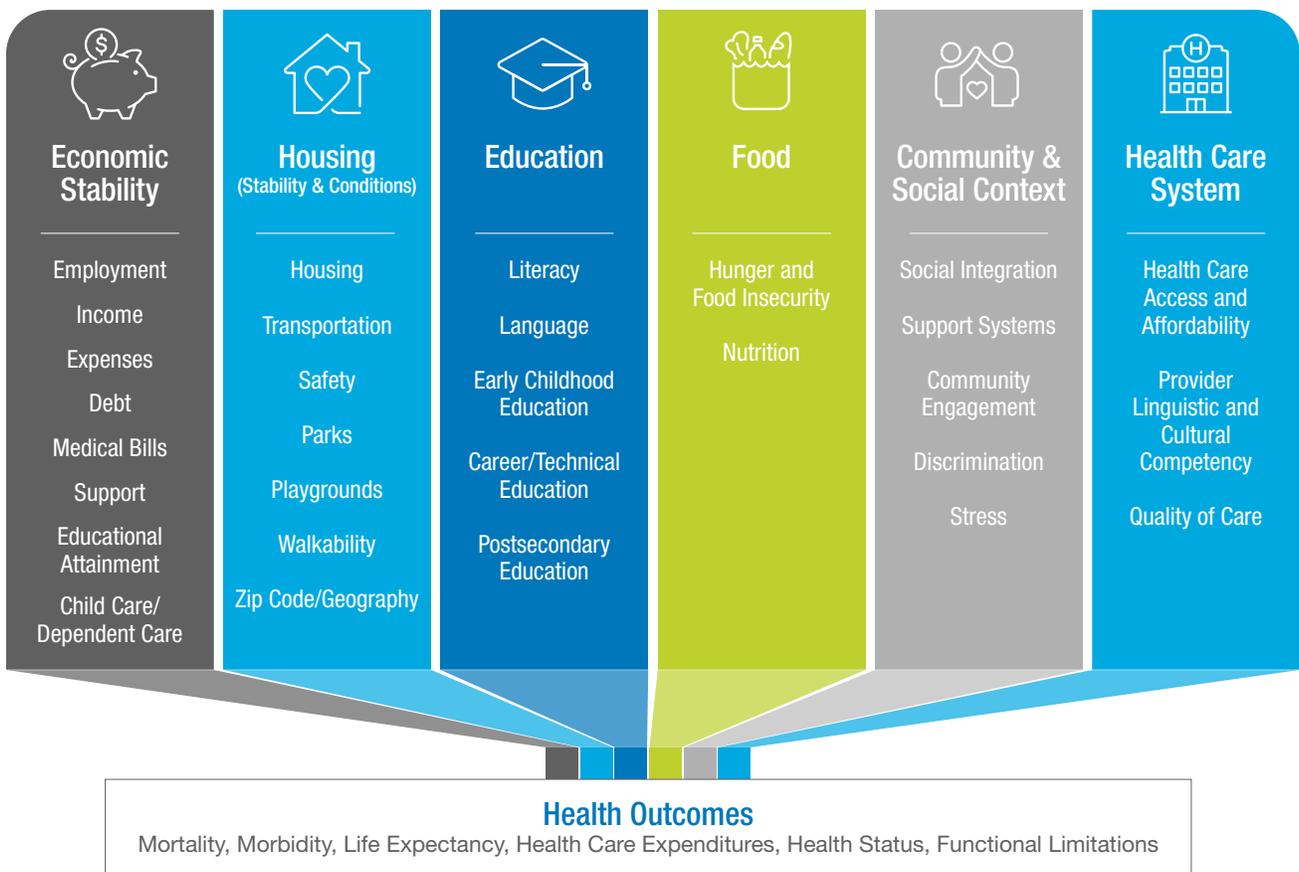




Magic Valley Community Health Needs Assessment Executive Summary

St. Luke's Magic Valley 2023 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) provides a comprehensive evaluation of residents' most important health needs in the Magic Valley region, specifically Jerome and Twin Falls counties. Identifying and addressing these needs is essential to improving population health, enhancing patient care and lowering health care costs. Our approach utilized a social determinants of health framework to determine the top priorities of our service area.



Source: Braveman, P.A., Kumanyika, S., Fielding, J, et al. (2011). Health disparities and health equity: the issue is justice. American Journal of Public Health.

We rank and score these health needs by analyzing a broad range of data, including:

- Interviews, focus groups and survey responses from community members, ensuring we had representation from medically under-resourced, low-income and minority populations.
- National, state and local health indicators collected from governmental and other authoritative sources.
- Input from community leaders.

Prioritized Community Health Needs in Jerome and Twin Falls Counties

The 2023 CHNA helps us better understand the most current, significant health challenges facing our community. In collaboration with community partners, St. Luke's will deploy resources to meet the following long-term community health objectives:

- Address high-priority health needs with a focus on prevention.
- Expand access to appropriate St. Luke's and community-based services.
- Coordinate and integrate clinical patient care and community health strategies.
- Advance health equity by addressing social determinants of health and reducing health disparities.

The following health needs were prioritized as the top health needs for our service area:

Access to Health-Related Services – Including Language and Cultural Barriers

Community members reported several difficulties accessing health care and oral health care: long waits for appointments, trouble paying for services and lack of insurance coverage or not enough coverage. These challenges are even more difficult for people relying on Medicaid or Medicare, and for migrants, immigrants, refugees and non-native English speakers who require language support. In fact, many individuals report difficulties accessing services due to language barriers and fear of mistreatment due to their immigration status. Difficulty accessing health care can lead people to neglect their health, especially preventative health, resulting in more negative outcomes and higher future medical costs.

Idaho has the lowest number of primary care physicians per capita in the country. Jerome County only has 40.5 physicians per 100,000 people; the nationwide average is 89.1 per 100,000.

In Jerome County, 72.6% of uninsured people are Hispanic/Latino. This is more than twice the rate of Twin Falls County and almost three times the statewide average. Twin Falls County has a slightly higher uninsured rate of people who are Hispanic/Latino (31.2%) compared to the statewide average (25.4%).

Mental Health and Well-Being – Including Suicide

Many residents, including youth, worry about access to affordable mental health care and substance misuse treatment in Magic Valley. A lack of these services can lead to worsening mental health outcomes. Jerome County has just 38 mental health providers per 100,000 residents; the state average is 308 providers per 100,000 residents. Although Twin Falls County exceeds the statewide average with 387 providers per 100,000 residents, those providers are likely caring for populations in neighboring counties.

In addition, Idaho consistently ranks high among states with the highest suicide mortality rates. The suicide rate for all ages stands at 22.4 per 100,000 residents in Idaho. Twin Falls County suicide rates are higher than the state average, especially among young adults. The suicide rate for young adults in the county is 49 deaths per 100,000 individuals.

Cost of Living – Including Housing, Child Care and Education

Community members were severely concerned about the costs of housing, child care and education in the region. Due to rapid growth and limited housing, residents report that it is increasingly difficult to find and pay for housing. A dwindling housing supply can drive up home prices, especially in areas experiencing as much growth as the Magic Valley. Many also struggle to obtain and pay for child care. These, and other expenses, can put households at an increased risk of financial instability. A lack of educational opportunity may also limit households' ability to improve their financial situations.

Education can lead to financial stability by increasing job opportunities and earning potential. Twin Falls and Jerome counties both have below-state-average college graduation rates. This is a concern for residents, who pointed to a need for individuals with higher educations to fill skilled positions. Hispanics/Latinos graduate high school and college at significantly lower rates than Non-Hispanic Whites. These gaps may contribute to inequitable economic outcomes between ethnic groups within these counties.

Next Steps

Visit stlukesonline.org to view the complete St. Luke's Magic Valley CHNA, which provides an in-depth look at our community's health and how we can make improvements. St. Luke's will collaborate with the individuals, leaders and organizations in our community to develop and execute plans to address the significant community health needs identified in the assessment.