



North **Arkansas**

**REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER**

**Community Health Needs Assessment**

**March 2022**



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## **Introduction**

Every three years, tax-exempt hospitals are required to assess the health needs of their communities and adopt implementation strategies to address significant identified needs. These requirements are imposed by federal law and include:

- Conducting a community health needs assessment every three years.
- Adopting an implementation strategy to meet the significant community health needs identified through the assessment.
- In each subsequent assessment, evaluating the impact of previous implementation strategies on identified needs.

The community health needs assessment must take into account input from persons who represent the broad interest of the community served by the hospital facility, including at least one state or local public health official and members of medically underserved, low-income and minority populations within the community. The hospital facility must make the community health needs assessment widely available to the public.

This community health needs assessment is intended to document North Arkansas Regional Medical Center's compliance with these requirements. Health needs of the community have been identified and prioritized so that North Arkansas Regional Medical Center (the Medical Center) may adopt an implementation strategy to address specific needs of the community.

The process involved:

- A comprehensive evaluation of the implementation strategy that was developed as a result of the community health needs assessment conducted in March 2019.
- Collection and analysis of a large range of data, including demographic, socioeconomic and health statistics, healthcare resources and patient use rates.
- Interviews with key interviewees who represent a) broad interests of the community, b) populations of need or c) persons with specialized knowledge in public health.

This document is a summary of all the available evidence collected during the community health needs assessment required by the IRS during tax year 2022. It will serve as a compliance document as well as a resource until the next assessment cycle.

## ***Acknowledgements***

The community health assessment research team would like to thank all those who contributed to the community health assessment described herein. We are grateful for the many key informants that gave their time and expertise to inform both the direction and outcomes of the study. We greatly appreciate the contribution of their stories.

### ***Summary of Community Health Needs Assessment***

The purpose of the community health needs assessment is to understand the unique health needs of the community served by the Medical Center and to document compliance with the federal laws outlined above.

The Medical Center engaged **BKD, LLP** to conduct a formal community health needs assessment. **BKD, LLP** is one of the largest CPA and advisory firms in the United States, with approximately 3,030 partners and employees in 41 offices in 19 states. BKD serves more than 900 hospitals and healthcare systems across the country. The community health needs assessment was conducted from September 2021 through March 2022.

The following steps were conducted as part of the Medical Center's community health needs assessment:

- An evaluation of the impact of actions taken to address the significant health needs identified in the March 2019 community health needs assessment was completed to understand the effectiveness of the Medical Center's current strategies and programs. This evaluation is included at page 16.
- Population demographics and socioeconomic characteristics of the community were gathered and reported utilizing various third parties (see references in Appendices). The health status of the community was then reviewed. Information on the leading causes of death and morbidity information was analyzed in conjunction with health outcomes and factors reported for the community by CountyHealthrankings.org. Health factors with significant opportunity for improvement were noted.
- An inventory of healthcare facilities and resources was prepared and evaluated for unmet needs.
- Community input was provided through interviews of eight key interviewees, and any comments received providing feedback on the previous assessment and implementation strategy. Results and findings are described in the Key Interviewee and Community Health Input sections of this report.
- Information gathered in the above steps was analyzed and reviewed to identify health issues of uninsured persons, low-income persons and minority groups and the community as a whole. Health needs were then prioritized taking into account the perceived degree of influence the Medical Center has to impact the need and the health needs impact on overall health for the community. Information gaps identified during the prioritization process have been reported.

### ***General Description of the Medical Center***

The Medical Center is an Arkansas nonprofit organization, located in Harrison, Arkansas. A nine-member board of directors governs the Medical Center and ensures that medical services are available to the residents of Harrison and surrounding areas.

The Medical Center is an integrated healthcare provider serving residents of north Arkansas for more than 60 years. The Medical Center proudly offers a wide range of services and specialties to meet the needs of Arkansans close to home. With more than 750 employees, including 31 physicians, physician assistants and APRNs, the Medical Center is made up of an experienced and dedicated team.

The Medical Center also operates three rural health clinics, located in Lead Hill, Marshall and Jasper, Arkansas. These clinics provide primary care services to the residents of the Medical Center’s community who live in more remote areas and might otherwise have difficulty obtaining medical care. The Medical Center also has rural ambulance stations in Lead Hill, Marshall, and Jasper. The Medical Center also owns 13 additional physician clinics serving the rural communities of North Arkansas.

The Medical Center provides healthcare solutions with compassion and respect for the uniqueness of every individual. Guided by a values-based culture to consistently deliver clinical and service excellence to our patients, the Medical Center strives for excellent care, every time.

## **Mission**

Our mission is to provide comprehensive healthcare to north central Arkansas.

## **Vision**

Our vision is to be the most trusted and preferred healthcare resource.

## **Values**

### SAFETY

It is our collective responsibility to make safety our highest priority by:

- Creating a culture of “First Do No Harm.”
- Taking individual responsibility for providing a clean environment.
- Effectively communicating and handing off critical information.
- Real time reporting and the immediate correction of hazards.
- Ongoing adherence, evaluation and revision of safety policies and procedures.

### QUALITY

Performance at the highest level of quality is maintained throughout our organization by:

- Utilizing evidence-based guidelines.
- Promoting innovation and creativity.
- Recognizing the human ability to fail and utilizing the performance improvement process to implement positive change.
- Continually educating team members on standards, policies and procedures.

### INTEGRITY

We exemplify our integrity with honor and professionalism on an individual and corporate level by:

- Promoting an environment of trust that supports open and honest communication.
- Holding ourselves accountable for our successes and failures and reacting responsibly.
- Respecting the diversity of the community and individual.
- Protecting privacy and confidentiality.

### COMMUNITY

We recognize community constitutes the reason for our professions and accept our responsibility to serve the fundamental needs of the community. We fulfill this responsibility by:

- Creating a work environment where the collective energy and intelligence of all team members can flourish.
- Willingly serving all members of the community.
- Providing education and prevention services to improve the overall health of the community.
- Celebrating our successes.

### **Community Served by the Medical Center**

The Medical Center is located in Harrison, Arkansas, in Boone County. Harrison is approximately an hour and a half east of Fayetteville, Arkansas, and an hour and a half south of Springfield, Missouri, the closest metropolitan areas. One divided highway serves the area from the north.

#### ***Defined Community***

A community is defined as the geographic area from which a significant number of the patients utilizing hospital services reside. While the community health needs assessment considers other types of healthcare providers, the Medical Center is the single largest provider of acute care services. For this reason, the utilization of hospital services provides the clearest definition of the community. During the initial community health needs assessment process, an analysis of inpatient discharges and outpatient visits was performed to determine where the Medical Center's patients resided. This analysis showed that the large majority of the Medical Center's patients were from Boone, Carroll, Newton and Searcy Counties, as well as western Marion County, all located in central northern Arkansas.

In the years since the initial community health needs assessment was conducted, there have not been significant changes in the population of the area, nor have any new hospitals been opened. Therefore, Medical Center management believes that their community has remained unchanged from the previous community health needs assessment. This report will include data from the five community counties listed above.

### **Community Characteristics**

#### ***Community Population and Demographics***

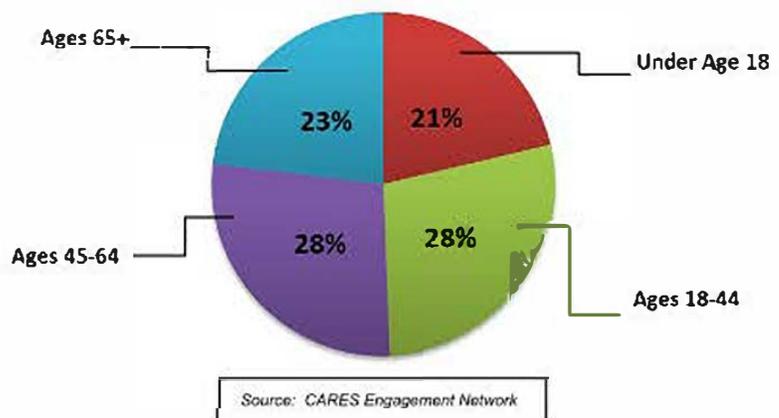
The community served by the Medical Center is a primarily rural area in north central Arkansas. According to the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2015–19 five-year estimates, about 97,000 people live in the five counties included in the community. The Medical Center is located in Harrison, Arkansas, which is the largest town in the community with a population of around 13,000 people.

The population of the community is about 95% white, making it much more racially homogenous than either the state of Arkansas or the United States as a whole. Most of the remaining population is Hispanic or Latino, and about a third of this group has limited English proficiency.

Although this group is small relative to the total populations, they may have unique health needs that should be considered during the preparation of this needs assessment.

A major distinguishing feature of the Medical Center’s community is the age breakdown of this population. The chart to the right shows the breakdown of the community’s population by age group. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, about 23% of the community’s population is over age 65, which is much higher than in Arkansas (17%) or the United States (16%) as a whole. This age group uses more health services than any other.

**Community Population by Age Group**



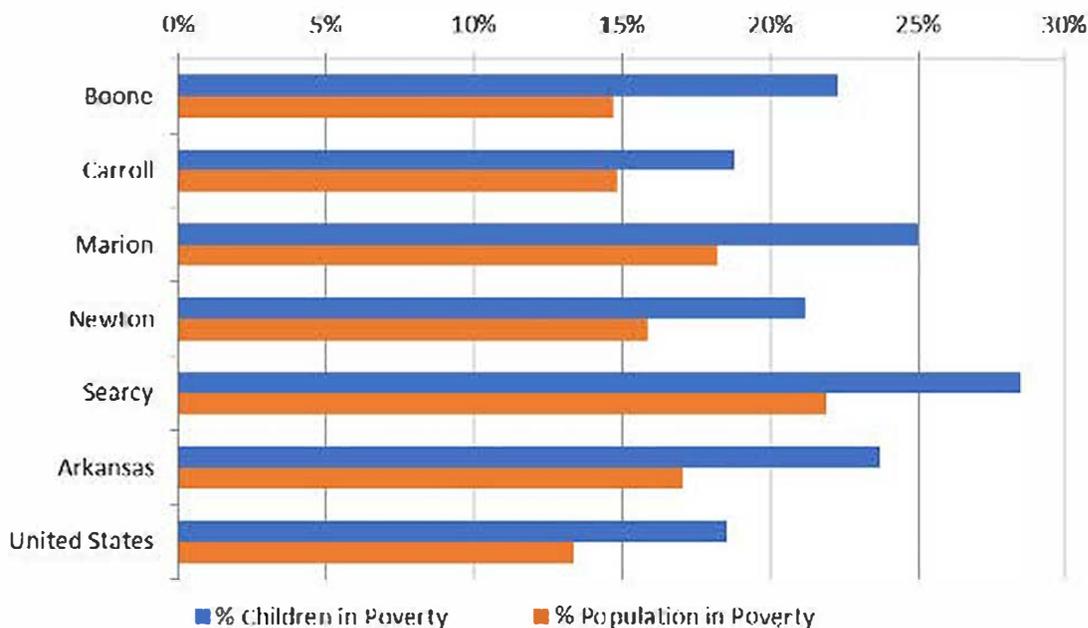
**Socioeconomic Characteristics of the Community**

The socioeconomic characteristics of a geographic area influence the way residents access healthcare services and perceive the need for healthcare services within society. Factors such as educational attainment, poverty levels, unemployment rates and insurance coverage levels contribute significantly to the health status of a community.

Socioeconomically, the community served by the Medical Center is similar to many other parts of rural Arkansas. About 18% of the population has obtained a Bachelor’s degree or higher, compared to about 32% of the U.S., while about 14% of the population does not have a high school diploma, compared to about 12% in the country as a whole. Lower levels of education have been linked to negative health outcomes, so the educational attainment of the community is relevant to the consideration of the health needs of the community.

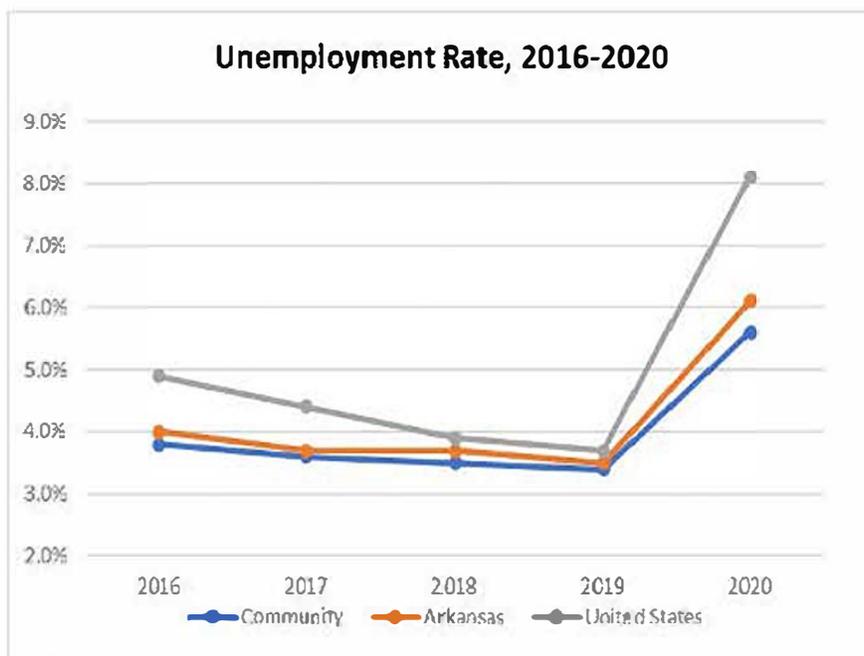
The income levels of individuals within the community also have a significant effect on their ability to access health services. The average household income in the Medical Center’s community is \$56,915, compared to \$66,557 for the state of Arkansas and \$88,607 for the United States. Lower-than-average household income suggests that many members of the community may have difficulty obtaining healthcare, especially preventative care. Additionally, in some of the counties in the community, the levels of poverty are significantly higher than the rates in the state of Arkansas and the United States. The following chart shows the percentage of the communities population living below the federal poverty line, with the percentage of children under age 18 shown separately. The specific health needs of low-income members of the community should be considered carefully throughout the preparation of this assessment.

### Population in Poverty



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey

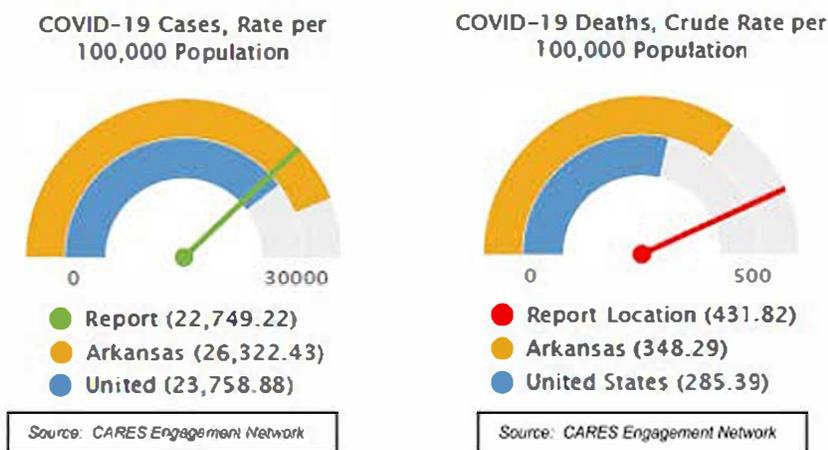
Socioeconomic measure that has been improving steadily over the past several years is the unemployment rate. The chart below shows that the unemployment rate of the community has been dropping over the past four years, along with those of the state of Arkansas and the United States. As the economy improves and more people find employment, the socioeconomic status of the community should be strengthened as access to healthcare is improved. The graph below reflects a spike in 2020 due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics

### COVID-19 Impact

This assessment was conducted amid the COVID-19 pandemic, which has exacerbated existing health inequities, especially those experienced by some racial and ethnic groups. The community of the Medical Center had 22,337 total confirmed cases of COVID-19 as of February 28, 2022. The rate of confirmed COVID-19 cases for the Medical Center’s community was below the Arkansas and the United States averages as of February 2022. However, mortality rate for the Boone, Carroll, Marion, Newton, and Searcy counties exceeded that of Arkansas or of the United States. COVID-19 virus continues to pose risks to the community of the Medical center with higher risks for communities of color due to underlying health, social, and economic disparities.



### Health Status of the Community

This section of the assessment reviews the health status of Boone, Carroll, Marion, Newton, and Searcy County residents. As in the previous section, comparisons are provided with the state of Arkansas. This in-depth assessment of the mortality and morbidity data, health outcomes, health factors and mental health indicators of the county residents that make up the community will enable the Medical Center to identify priority health issues related to the health status of its residents.

According to the World Health Organization, good health can be defined as a state of physical, mental and social well-being, rather than the absence of disease or infirmity. According to *Healthy People 2020*, the national health objectives released by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, individual health is closely linked to community health. Community health, which includes both the physical and social environment in which individuals live, work and play, is profoundly affected by the collective behaviors, attitudes and beliefs of everyone who lives in the community. Healthy people are among a community’s most essential resources.

Numerous factors have a significant impact on an individual’s health status: lifestyle and behavior, human biology, environmental and socioeconomic conditions, as well as access to adequate and appropriate healthcare and medical services.

Studies by the American Society of Internal Medicine conclude that up to 70 percent of an individual’s health status is directly attributable to personal lifestyle decisions and attitudes. Persons who do not smoke, who drink in moderation (if at all), use automobile seat belts (car seats for infants and small children), maintain a nutritious low-fat, high-fiber diet, reduce excess stress in daily living and exercise

regularly have a significantly greater potential of avoiding debilitating diseases, infirmities and premature death.

The interrelationship among lifestyle/behavior, personal health attitude and poor health status is gaining recognition and acceptance by both the general public and healthcare providers. Some examples of lifestyle/behavior and related healthcare problems include the following:

Lifestyle	Primary Disease Factor
Smoking	Lung cancer Cardiovascular disease Emphysema Chronic bronchitis
Alcohol/drug abuse	Cirrhosis of liver Motor vehicle crashes Unintentional injuries Malnutrition Suicide Homicide Mental illness
Poor nutrition	Obesity Digestive disease Depression
Driving at excessive speeds	Trauma Motor vehicle crashes
Lack of exercise	Cardiovascular disease Depression
Overstressed	Mental illness Alcohol/drug abuse Cardiovascular disease

**Health Outcomes and Factors**

An analysis of various health outcomes and factors for a particular community can, if improved, help make that community a healthier place to live, learn, work and play. A better understanding of the factors that affect the health of the community will assist with how to improve the community’s habits, culture and environment. This portion of the community health needs assessment utilizes information from County Health Rankings, a key component of the Mobilizing Action Toward Community Health (MATCH) project, a collaboration between the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute.

The County Health Rankings model is grounded in the belief that programs and policies implemented at the local, state and federal levels have an impact on the variety of factors that, in turn, determine the health outcomes for communities across the nation. The model provides a ranking method that ranks all 50 states and the counties within each state, based on the measurement of two types of health outcomes for each county: how long people live (mortality) and how healthy people feel (morbidity).

These outcomes are the result of a collection of health factors and are influenced by programs and policies at the local, state and federal levels.

Counties in each of the 50 states are ranked according to summaries of a variety of health measures. Those having high ranks, *e.g.* 1 or 2, are considered to be the “healthiest.” Counties are ranked relative to the health of other counties in the same state on the following summary measures:

- Health Outcomes – rankings are based on an equal weighting of one length of life (mortality) measure and four quality of life (morbidity) measures.
- Health Factors – rankings are based on weighted scores of four types of factors:
  - Health behaviors (nine measures)
  - Clinical care (seven measures)
  - Social and economic (nine measures)
  - Physical environment (five measures)

A more detailed discussion about the ranking system, data sources and measures, data quality and calculating scores and ranks can be found at the website for County Health Rankings ([www.countyhealthrankings.org](http://www.countyhealthrankings.org)).

As part of the analysis of the needs assessment for the community, the five counties that comprise the majority of the community will be used to compare the relative health status of each county to the state of Arkansas as well as to a national benchmark. A better understanding of the factors that affect the health of the community will assist with how to improve the community’s habits, culture and environment.

The table below illustrates changes in the county health rankings for health outcomes, length of life, and quality of life.

**Changes in County Health Rankings**

	Boone	Carroll	Marion	Newton	Searcy
<b>Health Outcomes</b>					
2015 Ranking	3	23	12	51	28
2018 Ranking	5	13	39	9	31
2021 Ranking	14	17	45	26	32
<b>Length of Life</b>					
2015 Ranking	4	38	13	60	33
2018 Ranking	17	18	16	5	45
2021 Ranking	19	34	53	45	35
<b>Quality of Life</b>					
2015 Ranking	2	8	14	32	30
2018 Ranking	5	10	23	21	9
2021 Ranking	9	4	36	10	37

*Source: County Rankings & Roadmaps*

The table on the following page from County Health Rankings summarizes the 2021 health outcomes for the five counties that comprise the majority of the community for the Medical Center. Measures underperforming the state average are highlighted in red.

Health Outcome/Factor	Boone County		Carroll County		Madison County		Newton County		Sevier County		National Benchmark
	Metric	Rank	Metric	Rank	Metric	Rank	Metric	Rank	Metric	Rank	
<b>Health Outcomes</b>											
Length of life	34	17	41	26	43	28	37	31	38	22	
Premature death – Years of potential life lost before age 75 per 100,000 population (age-adjusted)	9,200	10,100	11,300	10,800	10,200	9,300	5,400				
<b>Quality of Life</b>											
Poor or fair health – Percent of adults reporting fair or poor health (age-adjusted)	24%	18%	25%	24%	27%	23%	14%				
Poor physical health days – Average number of physically unhealthy days reported in past 30 days (age-adjusted)	5.1	5.0	5.5	5.2	5.7	4.8	3.4				
Poor mental health days – Average number of mentally unhealthy days reported in past 30 days (age-adjusted)	5.0	4.8	5.4	5.2	5.5	5.3	3.8				
Low birthweight – Percent of live births with low birthweight (1-2500 grams)	7%	6%	8%	6%	6%	9%	6%				
<b>Health Behaviors</b>											
Adult smoking – Percentage of adults who are current smokers	25%	22%	26%	25%	28%	24%	16%				
Adult obesity – Percent of adults that report a BMI >= 30	29%	30%	27%	40%	25%	35%	26%				
Food environment index – Index of factors that contribute to a healthy food environment; 0 (worst) to 10 (best)	6.8	7.6	6.6	5.8	5.6	5.1	8.2				
Physical inactivity – Percent of adults age 20 and over reporting no leisure time physical activity	32%	34%	30%	29%	30%	30%	19%				
Access to exercise opportunities – Percentage of population with adequate access to locations for physical activity	34%	52%	19%	59%	23%	64%	91%				
Excessive drinking – Percentage of adults reporting binge or heavy drinking	17%	17%	18%	17%	16%	17%	15%				
Alcohol-impaired driving deaths – Percentage of driving deaths with alcohol involvement	17%	40%	13%	15%	17%	26%	11%				
Sexually transmitted infections – Number of newly diagnosed chlamydia cases per 100,000 population	334.4	250.3	213.1	242.7	163.8	587.9	163.2				
Teen birth rate – Number of births per 1,000 female population, ages 15-19	37	43	43	42	34	36	12				
<b>Clinical Care</b>											
Uninsured adults – Percent of population under age 65 without health insurance	9%	13%	10%	9%	10%	10%	6%				
Primary care physicians – Ratio of population to primary care physicians	1,340:1	1,090:1	8,360:1	3,910:1	1,510:1	1,030:1					
Dentists – Ratio of population to dentists	1,780:1	8,350:1	5,540:1	2,630:1	2,100:1	1,210:1					
Mental health providers – Ratio of population to mental health providers	760:1	1,230:1	8,130:1	3,890:1	460:1	420:1	270:1				
Preventable hospital stays – Number of hospital stays for ambulatory-care sensitive conditions per 100,000 Medicare enrollees	4,068	2,793	4,589	3,735	4,848	4,769	2,865				
Mammography screening – Percent of female Medicare enrollees ages 65-74 that receive mammography screening	40%	36%	41%	39%	42%	38%	51%				
Flu vaccinations – Percentage of fee-for-service (FFS) Medicare enrollees that had an annual flu vaccination	46%	46%	37%	37%	23%	48%	55%				
<b>Social and Economic Factors</b>											
High school graduation – Percentage of ninth grade cohort that graduates in 4 years	87%	86%	87%	86%	82%	87%	94%				
Some college – Percentage of adults aged 25-44 years with some post-secondary education	61%	44%	52%	62%	45%	59%	73%				
Unemployment – Percentage of population ages 16 and older unemployed and seeking work	3.2%	3.1%	4.0%	3.5%	4.6%	3.5%	2.6%				
Children in poverty – Percentage of children under age 18 in poverty	19%	19%	27%	31%	34%	22%	10%				
Income inequality – Ratio of household income at the 80th percentile to that at the 20th percentile	3.9	4.4	4.5	5.1	4.3	4.8	3.7				
Children in single-parent households – Percentage of children that live in household headed by single parent	22%	15%	24%	14%	18%	29%	14%				
Social associations – Number of membership associations per 10,000 population	11.5	13.5	7.8	3.8	6.3	12.0	18.2				
Violent crime rate – Violent crimes per 10,000 population	551	337	342	316	127	516	63				
Injury deaths – Number of deaths due to injury per 100,000 population	88	113	106	115	130	83	59				
<b>Physical Environment</b>											
Air pollution-particulate matter days – Average daily density of fine particulate matter in micrograms per cubic meter (PM2.5)	8.4	8.3	8.6	8.0	8.5	9.1	5.2				
Drinking water violations – Indicator of the presence of health-related drinking water violations. Yes indicates the presence of a violation, No indicates no violation	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes						
Severe housing problems – Percentage of households with at least 1 or 4 housing problems: overcrowding, high housing costs, or lack of kitchen or plumbing facilities	17%	16%	13%	17%	13%	14%	9%				
Drive alone to work – Percentage of workforce that drives alone to work	83%	81%	79%	82%	73%	83%	72%				
Long commute-driving alone – Among workers who commute in their car alone, the percentage that commute more than 30 minutes	23%	24%	33%	44%	37%	27%	16%				

Note: Blank values reflect unreliable or missing data.

## Healthcare Resources

The availability of health resources is a critical component to the health of a county’s residents and a measure of the soundness of the area’s healthcare delivery system. An adequate number of healthcare facilities and healthcare providers is vital for sustaining a community’s health status. Fewer healthcare facilities and healthcare providers can impact the timely delivery of services. A limited supply of health resources, especially providers, results in the limited capacity of the healthcare delivery system to absorb charity and indigent care as there are fewer providers upon which to distribute the burden of indigent care. This section will address the availability of healthcare resources to the residents of Boone, Carroll, Marion, Newton and Searcy Counties.

### Hospitals and Health Centers

The Medical Center has 120 acute beds and is the only hospital located in the community with the exception of the critical access hospitals in Berryville and Eureka Springs. Residents of the community also take advantage of services provided by hospitals in neighboring counties. The chart below summarizes hospital services available to the residents of Boone, Carroll, Marion, Newton and Searcy Counties:

						Annual	
		Facility Type	Miles from NARMC	Bed Size	Annual Discharges	Patient Revenue (in Millions)	
Mercy Hospital Berryville	Berryville, Arkansas	Critical Access	29	25	233	\$	54
Cox Medical Center Branson	Branson, Missouri	Short-term Acute Care	34	111	5,912	\$	776
Eureka Springs Hospital	Eureka Springs, Arkansas	Critical Access	43	22	138	\$	10
Baxter Regional Medical Center	Mountain Home, Arkansas	Short-term Acute Care	50	169	9,083	\$	706
Ozark Health, Inc.	Clinton, Arkansas	Critical Access	72	25	318	\$	64
Mercy Hospital Springfield	Springfield, Missouri	Short-term Acute Care	73	672	35,453	\$	4,012
Washington Regional Medical Center	Fayetteville, Arkansas	Short-term Acute Care	74	397	14,790	\$	1,482
CoxHealth	Springfield, Missouri	Short-term Acute Care	77	624	30,655	\$	4,081
Stone County Medical Center	Mountain View, Arkansas	Critical Access	81	25	476	\$	57
Mercy Medical Center	Rogers, Arkansas	Short-term Acute Care	82	253	10,981	\$	1,345

Source: [Costroportdata.com](http://Costroportdata.com)

The following is a brief description of the healthcare services available at each of these facilities:

**Mercy Hospital Berryville** – Located in Berryville, Arkansas, Mercy Hospital Berryville is approximately a 35-minute drive west from Harrison. It offers cancer, diabetes, orthopedic and other health services.

**Mercy Medical Center** – Located in Rogers, Arkansas, Mercy Medical Center is approximately a one hour and 50-minute drive from Harrison. It is a large hospital offering a full range of inpatient and outpatient services.

**Cox Medical Center Branson** – Located in Branson, Missouri, Cox Medical Center is approximately a 40-minute drive from Harrison. It is a large hospital offering a full range of inpatient and outpatient services.

**Eureka Springs Hospital** – Located in Eureka Springs, Arkansas, Eureka Springs Hospital is approximately a one-hour drive west of Harrison. It offers counseling, laboratory, physical therapy, radiology and surgical services.

**Baxter Regional Medical Center** – Located in Mountain Home, Arkansas, Baxter Regional Medical Center is approximately a one-hour drive east from Harrison. It is a large hospital offering a full range of inpatient and outpatient services.

**Ozark Health, Inc.** – Located in Clinton, Arkansas, Ozark Health, Inc. is approximately a one-and-a-half-hour drive southeast of Harrison. It offers family practice, cardiology, dermatology, nephrology, orthopedic, podiatry, urology and surgical services.

**Mercy Hospital Springfield** – Located in Springfield, Missouri, Mercy Hospital Springfield is approximately a one-and-a-half-hour drive north from Harrison. It is a large hospital offering a full range of inpatient and outpatient services.

**CoxHealth** – Located in Springfield, Missouri, CoxHealth is approximately a one-and-a-half-hour drive north from Harrison. It is a large hospital offering a full range of inpatient and outpatient services.

**Washington Regional Medical Center** – Located in Fayetteville, Arkansas, Washington Regional Medical Center is approximately a one-and-a-half-hour drive west from Harrison. It is a large hospital offering a full range of inpatient and outpatient services.

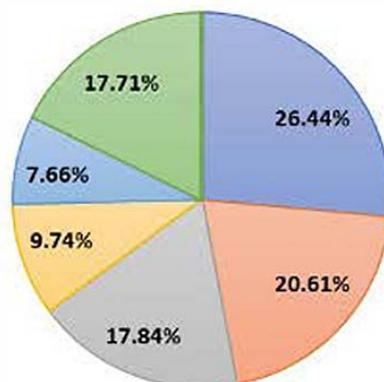
**Stone County Medical Center** – Located in Mountain View, Arkansas, Stone County Medical Center is approximately a one-and-a-half-hour drive southeast from Harrison. It is a critical access hospital offering numerous services to its community.

### **Medical Center Market Share**

The market share of a hospital relative to that of its competitors may be based largely on the services required by patients and the availability of those services at each facility. For this study, the market share of the Medical Center was considered based on the type of services required by those patients in the community. The ability to attain a certain relative market share (percentage) of the community varies based on a number of factors, including the services provided, geographical location and accessibility of each competing facility.

The following chart presents the relative market share of each hospital that had discharges of residents from the community (Boone, Carroll, Marion, Newton, and Searcy Counties). This table presents an analysis of data for the most currently available year, showing the percentage of total Medicare discharges from each hospital. This information provides an idea of summary market share as well as the outmigration of patients from the community. The Medical Center maintained approximately 21 percent of all discharges from the community with Baxter Regional Medical Center capturing around 26 percent, Washington Regional Medical Center capturing about 18 percent, Cox Medical Center capturing about 10 percent, and Mercy Medical Center capturing about 8 percent of all discharges. The remaining 18 percent of discharges is made up of numerous hospitals, each with less than 5 percent of the total community discharges.

### Market Share by Medicare Discharges, 2020



-  Baxter Regional Medical Center
-  North Arkansas Regional Medical Center
-  Washington Regional Medical Center
-  Cox Medical Center Branson
-  Mercy Medical Center
-  All other hospitals (<5% each)

Because Arkansas law prohibits the Arkansas Department of Health from providing hospital-specific discharge information, the data in the chart above was estimated based on Medicare discharges by ZIP code and hospital, which is available from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

#### Other Healthcare Facilities and Providers

**Vantage Point** – Located in Harrison, Arkansas, Vista Health Services provides day treatment, outpatient and school-based psychiatric care to adults and children.

**Health Resources of Arkansas** – With several locations throughout Arkansas, this organization provides a wide range of behavioral health services to adults and children. The Harrison, Arkansas, location offers community integration services to adults with chronic psychiatric disabilities.

**North Arkansas Partnership for Health Education (NAPHE)** – Located in Harrison, Arkansas, NAPHE is a partnership between North Arkansas College and North Arkansas Regional Medical Center. It exists to coordinate continuing education and training for healthcare-related learning and to improve the overall quantity of healthcare by providing a more competent labor pool in healthcare occupations. It also provides community education based on needs identified in the community, as well as teen pregnancy home visiting, prescription drug assistance and substance abuse prevention services.

**Area Agency on Aging of Northwest Arkansas (Agency)** – Located in Harrison, Arkansas, the Agency provides various services to senior citizens in the community, including adult day care, emergency response systems, housing, caregiver support programs, medical supply delivery, diabetes self-management education services and in-home care.

**Hometown Health Initiative** – A community-driven initiative facilitated by the Arkansas Department of Health, the Hometown Health Coalition is a volunteer organization made of representatives from all aspects of the community. They identify the community’s own unique health issues and work to implement solutions that improve the health of local citizens.

**County Health Departments** – The Health Departments of Boone, Carroll, Marion, Newton and Searcy Counties exist to prevent, promote and protect the public’s health. The local health units provide WIC (Women, Infants and Children), which provides nutritious foods, physical assessments and nutrition counseling for women, infants and children who meet certain nutritional guidelines. Other services include family planning, prenatal care, immunizations, communicable disease follow-up, sexually transmitted disease and HIV testing, tuberculosis testing and treatment, breast care and cervical cytology follow-up, environmental services, home health and personal care services.

**Area Nursing Homes** – There are several nursing homes in the area. They provide residential, medical and rehabilitative services to the elderly and disabled in the community.

**Harrison House of HOPE** – Located in Harrison, Arkansas, House of HOPE opened in July 2012 and is a day center for the homeless in Boone County. The shelter provides services such as transportation, access to other service providers in the area, life skills training, meals and toiletry items.

## Key Interviewees

Speaking with key interviewees (community stakeholders that represent the broad interest of the community with knowledge of or expertise in public health) is a technique employed to assess public perceptions of the county’s health status and unmet needs. These interviews are intended to ascertain opinions among individuals likely to be knowledgeable about the community and influential over the opinions of others about health concerns in the community.

## Methodology

Dialogues with eight key interviewees were conducted in February and March 2022. Interviewees were determined based on their specialized knowledge or expertise in public health or their involvement with underserved and minority populations.

Interviews were conducted via telephone, or the interviewee answered the interview questions via email; whichever was more convenient for the interviewee.

All interviews were conducted by BKD personnel using a standard questionnaire. A copy of the interview instrument is included in the appendix. A summary of their opinions is reported without judging the truthfulness or accuracy of their remarks. Community leaders provided comments on the following issues:

- Health and quality of life for residents of the primary community
- Barriers to improving health and quality of life for residents of the primary community
- Opinions regarding the important health issues that affect community residents and the types of services that are important for addressing these issues
- Delineation of the most important healthcare issues or services discussed and actions necessary for addressing those issues

Interview data was initially recorded in narrative form. Interviewees were assured that personal identifiers such as name or organizational affiliations would not be connected in any way to the information presented in this report.

This technique does not provide a quantitative analysis of the leaders' opinions, but reveals community input for some of the factors affecting the views and sentiments about overall health and quality of life within the community.

### **Key Interviewee Interview Results**

As stated earlier, the interview questions for each key interviewee were identical. The questions on the interview instrument are grouped into four major categories for discussion:

1. General opinions regarding health and quality of life in the community
2. Underserved populations and communities of need
3. Barriers
4. Most important health and quality of life issues

While many issues were raised during the interviews, a few items stood out as being mentioned consistently by nearly all of the interviewees. These issues are summarized below:

- COVID-19 pandemic continues to negatively impact the health and quality of life in the Medical Center's community. The pandemic affected employment, social involvement, and overall mental health. Interviewees mentioned a need for continued education on COVID-19 vaccinations and testing.
- Health education and specialized programs on topics such as obesity, heart health, diabetes, substance abuse, mental health, are needed to be promoted in order to improve health and quality of life in the community. Accessibility to affordable exercise facilities and community centers were also mentioned by several of the interviewees.
- The Medical Center has opportunities for further outreach in the more remote parts of the community. The elderly and low-income population often struggle to obtain health services due to lack of reliable transportation, financial barriers, or lack of home care. In addition, many of these individuals, especially in rural areas, do not have internet access, which makes it difficult for them to obtain information about available services offered by the Medical Center.
- With the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the addiction and illegal substance abuse, access to mental health services in the area continues to be a significant need that was mentioned by all of the interviewees.
- Accessibility to quality health care, including primary care, dental care, specialized services, were also mentioned by almost all of the interviewees as a significant need in the community. As is common in rural areas, many residents have to commute to more urban areas, such as northwest Arkansas or Springfield, Missouri, to receive specialty care not available at the Medical Center.

## **Evaluation of Response to 2019 CHNA**

The Medical Center prepared an implementation strategy in response to the needs identified in its March 2019 needs assessment. A listing of those needs, along with the steps taken by the Medical Center to address them, is below.

- Recruitment of additional physicians and practitioners
  - Addition of 10 providers with increased access to primary care through telemedicine
  - Partnership provided with CoxHealth to improve specialty access to medical care in the community
  - Addition of cardiology clinic in the community by partnership with CoxHealth
  - Expanded services in Berryville and Marshall for physical therapy services
  - Opened a viral screening clinic in response to COVID-19 demand for testing
  - Provided over 200 vaccination clinics for COVID-19
  - Enhanced COVID-19 treatment modalities provided such as monoclonal antibody, Convalescent plasma, etc.
- Mental health
  - Enhanced geriatric mental health services
- Rural outreach
  - United work with community college, local health unit, law enforcement, city and county agencies to provide covid resources and support
- Elder care
  - Collaborated with local nursing homes to support needs through pandemic with covid cases, care at their facilities, and resources
- Healthcare accommodations for non-English speakers
  - Enhanced translator services for hospital and clinics for education and communication about health needs
- Health education
  - Orchestrated processes for plasma donations to support the community needs through community blood centers
  - Collaborated with community employers to support COVID-19 mitigation and management of occupational health needs

The Medical Center made its 2013, 2016 and 2019 community health needs assessments available to the public by posting them on its website. The posting included an email address where feedback on the needs assessment could be provided to the Medical Center. The Medical Center received feedback from other healthcare organizations in the community, which stated that they found the needs assessment helpful in designing programs of their own to better serve the community.

## **Identification and Prioritization of Health Needs**

Based on a review of the data gathered during this assessment, numerous health needs were identified. These needs were prioritized and evaluated to determine which were significant to the community. The criteria included the number of persons affected, the seriousness of the issue, whether the health need particularly affected persons living in poverty or members of an underserved population, and availability of community resources to address the need.

As a result, the following list of significant needs was identified:

- Recruitment of additional physicians and practitioners
- Mental health
- Rural outreach
- COVID-19 education and outreach
- Health and wellness education

The Medical Center will develop an updated implementation strategy to address the needs identified during the community health needs assessment. This assessment will be made publicly available on the Medical Center's website. Public comments on this assessment may be directed to Sammie Cribbs, Interim President and Chief Executive Officer, at 620 North Main Street, Harrison, AR 72601.

## APPENDICES

## KEY INTERVIEWEE INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

### KEY INTERVIEWEE INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Community Health Needs Assessment for:

#### NARMC

Interviewer's Initials:

Date:

Start Time:

End Time:

Name:

Title:

Agency/Organization:

# of years living in \_\_\_\_\_ County:

# of years in current position:

E-mail address:

**Introduction:** Good morning/afternoon. My name is {interviewer's name}. Thank you for taking time out of your busy day to speak with me. I'll try to keep our time to approximately 40 minutes, but we may find that we run over – up to 50 minutes total – once we get into the interview. (Check to see if this is okay).

[Name of Organization] is gathering local data as part of developing a plan to improve health and quality of life in \_\_\_\_\_ County. Community input is essential to this process. A combination of surveys and key interviewee interviews are being used to engage community members. You have been selected for a key interviewee interview because of your knowledge, insight and familiarity with the community. The themes that emerge from these interviews will be summarized and made available to the public; however, individual interviews will be kept strictly confidential.

**To get us started, can you tell me briefly about the work that you and your organization do in the community?**

Thank you. Next I'll be asking you a series of questions about health and quality of life in \_\_\_\_\_ County. As you consider these questions, keep in mind the broad definition of health adopted by the World Health Organization: 'Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity,' while sharing the local perspectives you have from your current position and from experiences in this community.

Questions:

1. In general, how would you rate health and quality of life in \_\_\_\_\_ County?
2. In your opinion, has health and quality of life in \_\_\_\_\_ County improved, stayed the same, or declined over the past few years?

3. Why do you think it has (based on answer from previous question: improved, declined, or stayed the same)?
4. What other factors have contributed to the (based on answer to question 2: improvement, decline or to health and quality of life staying the same)?
5. What barriers, if any, exist to improving health and quality of life in \_\_\_\_\_ County?
6. In your opinion, what are the most critical health and quality of life issues in \_\_\_\_\_ County?
7. What needs to be done to address these issues?
8. The prior community health needs assessment indicated the following as the most significant health needs. Is there anything that is not on the list that should be?
  - a. Recruitment of additional physicians and practitioners
  - b. Mental health
  - c. Rural outreach
  - d. Elder care
  - e. Health care accommodations for non-English speakers
  - f. Health education
  - g. Other needs
    - o Smoking cessation
    - o Access to exercise facilities
    - o Substance abuse
    - o Dental care
    - o Mammography screening
    - o Injury deaths
    - o Teen pregnancy
    - o Obesity
9. What do you think is the most critical health need included on the list above or other of the community?
10. Do you think any of the above have improved over the last 3 years? Why or why not? What needs to be done to continue to improve in these areas?
11. In your opinion, are any the following areas in which the hospital should be addressing? Why or why not?
  - a. Economic development

- b. Affordable housing
  - c. Poverty
  - d. Education
  - e. Healthy nutrition
  - f. Physical activity
  - g. Drug and Alcohol Abuse
12. Are you aware of the available health screenings at NARMC? If not, where would you look to obtain information of the available screenings? What can NARMC do to increase awareness?
13. Are there people or groups of people in the \_\_\_\_\_ County whose health or quality of life may not be as good as others? Who are these persons or groups?
14. Are there people or groups of people who have a more difficult time obtaining necessary/preventive medical services? If so, who are these persons or groups? Why do you think they have a more difficult time? What can be done to improve the situation?
15. How would you rate the hospital's efforts on communicating how they are addressing the identified health needs? How have you received communication regarding the hospital's efforts?
16. What do you think is the hospital's role in addressing the identified health needs of the community?

**Close:** Thanks so much for sharing your concerns and perspectives on these issues. The information you have provided will contribute to develop a better understanding about factors impacting health and quality of life in \_\_\_\_\_ County. Before we conclude the interview,

Is there anything you would like to add?

## SOURCES

## **Sources**

CARES Engagement Network,  
<<https://engagementnetwork.org/assessment/>>

Cost Report Data. Online Medicare Cost Report Worksheets and Data Sets,  
<<http://www.costreportdata.com/index.php>>

"Index." CMS.gov Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services,  
<[www.cms.gov/](http://www.cms.gov/)>

County Health Rankings & Roadmaps,  
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