

2026-2028 Community Health Implementation Plan



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Your Feedback Makes Us Better

We welcome your comments, ideas and questions about this report, and all Community Health Needs Assessment and Community Health Implementation Plan documents at Northwestern Medicine.

Please share your feedback by calling Northwestern Medicine Community Health at 312.926.2301 (TTY: 711) or by emailing communityhealth@nm.org. Please include your name, organization (if applicable), and any questions or feedback you have about the report content.

Public availability

This report and all Northwestern Medicine Community Health Needs Assessment and Community Health Implementation Plan documents are public information. You can access them at nm.org/about-us/nm-community-impact/reports. You can also request reports at no cost by calling Northwestern Medicine Community Health at 312.926.2301 (TTY: 711) or by emailing communityhealth@nm.org.



Introduction

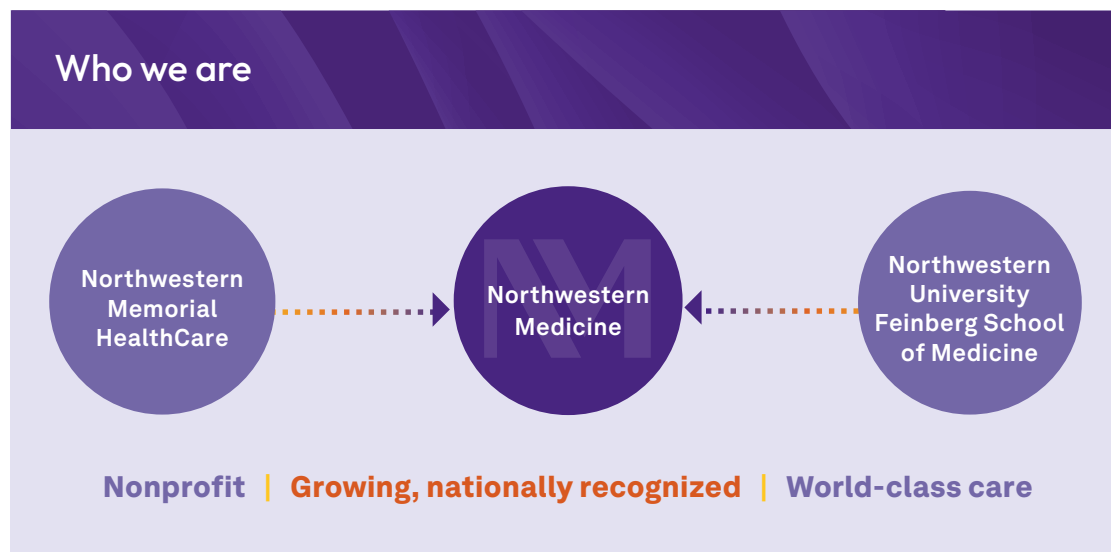
Northwestern Medicine is committed to:

- › Providing quality medical care regardless of a patient's ability to pay
- › Transforming medical care through clinical innovation, breakthrough research and academic excellence
- › Improving the health of the communities we serve

We are a nonprofit, integrated academic health system committed to serving a broad community. We provide world-class care at 11 hospitals and more than 200 diagnostic and ambulatory locations in communities throughout Chicago and the surrounding suburbs.

Our hospitals are pillars in their respective communities and lead efforts to positively impact the health of the populations they serve. From collaborating with community organizations to serving as a major economic driver, Northwestern Medicine helps make communities stronger.

Northwestern Medicine is a strategic partnership between Northwestern Memorial HealthCare and Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine.



About Northwestern Medicine Catherine Gratz Griffin Lake Forest Hospital

Catherine Gratz Griffin Lake Forest Hospital has a rich history of caring for our community



114 beds

1,043 physicians

>72,000 emergency department visits

>11,500 inpatient admissions



Acute care



**Located in
Lake Forest,
Illinois**

**Services:
Primary, specialty
and emergency care**

Data reflects fiscal year 2024.

Community Benefits Plan

Northwestern Memorial HealthCare and Northwestern Medicine Catherine Gratz Griffin Lake Forest Hospital are guided by a Community Benefits Plan. The Community Benefits Plan includes comprehensive financial assistance and presumptive eligibility policies, as well as vast research, education and other community benefit activities. This Community Health Implementation Plan (CHIP) is aligned and coordinated with the Community Benefits Plan. Together, these strategies help to improve the health of the communities we serve.

About the Community Health Implementation Plan

In alignment with our mission and in accordance with the requirements of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, Northwestern Medicine Catherine Gratz Griffin Lake Forest Hospital works with community organizations every three years to complete a comprehensive Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) that identifies the significant health needs of residents of the community it serves.

This CHIP is a companion document to the Catherine Gratz Griffin Lake Forest Hospital 2025 CHNA, which can be accessed at nm.org/about-us/nm-community-impact/reports. The goal of the CHIP is to use CHNA data to guide initiatives that improve the health of our community.



In this report, we summarize the significant health needs identified in the 2025 CHNA. We identify which of these needs we will prioritize over the next three years and explain why we will not address other significant health needs identified in the 2025 CHNA.

In addition, for each priority health need, we will explain:

- › Actions or strategies planned to address each need
- › Anticipated impact of those strategies
- › Resources we intend to commit to those strategies
- › Planned collaborations between Catherine Gratz Griffin Lake Forest Hospital and other organizations to address the need

We rely on help from our community

Catherine Gratz Griffin Lake Forest Hospital values input from local community members and uses their insights during development of the CHIP. One way we gather feedback is through our Community Engagement Council.

The Community Engagement Council is a diverse group of representatives from community-based organizations and Northwestern Medicine staff. Council members are people who have expertise in a broad range of areas and have demonstrated a strong, ongoing commitment to improving the health of the communities we serve. Council members were invited to participate based on their role within their respective organizations and their commitment to improving the health of the community.

The image shows the exterior of the Catherine Gratz Griffin Lake Forest Hospital. The main entrance is a modern building with large glass windows and a white canopy. A large white sign in the foreground reads "Northwestern Medicine Catherine Gratz Griffin Lake Forest Hospital Main Entrance 1000". The building's entrance is marked with "1000 Main Entrance" and "1000".

Community Served by Northwestern Medicine Catherine Gratz Griffin Lake Forest Hospital

1000 Main Entrance

 Northwestern
Medicine

Catherine
Gratz Griffin
Lake Forest Hospital

Main Entrance

1000

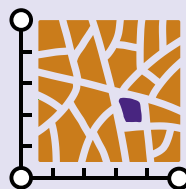
The Northwestern Medicine Catherine Gratz Griffin Lake Forest Hospital Community Service Area (CSA) covers 28 ZIP codes in Lake County, Illinois, and small parts of Cook, Kane and McHenry Counties on the southern and western edges of the CSA.

Catherine Gratz Griffin Lake Forest Hospital CSA Cities and ZIP Codes			
City	ZIP Code	City	ZIP Code
Antioch	60002	Long Lake	60041
Barrington Hills	60010	Libertyville	60048
Buffalo Grove	60089	Lincolnshire	60069
Deerfield	60015	Mundelein	60060
Fort Sheridan	60037	North Chicago	60064
Fox Lake	60020	North Chicago	60088
Grayslake	60030	Old Mill Creek	60083
Gurnee	60031	Round Lake	60073
Highland Park	60035	Vernon Hills	60061
Highwood	60040	Wauconda	60084
Lake Bluff	60044	Waukegan	60085
Lake Forest	60045	Waukegan	60087
Lake Villa	60046	Winthrop Harbor	60096
Long Grove	60047	Zion	60099

How the Community Service Area is defined

Catherine Gratz Griffin Lake Forest Hospital Community Service Area

Cook, Kane, Lake and McHenry counties in Illinois*



478 square miles



737,195
residents



Predominantly
suburban

*The CSA mostly comprises Lake County ZIP codes, with only small parts of Cook, Kane and McHenry counties on the southern and western edges of the CSA.

The Catherine Gratz Griffin Lake Forest Hospital CSA was determined by:

- › Geographic area served by the hospital
- › Main functions of the hospital
- › Areas that have been historically under-resourced
- › Areas where we are currently working on addressing priority health needs, including work with community organizations

The defined CSA considers populations that are:

- › Medically underserved
- › Low income
- › Historically underrepresented, minority populations

Our CSA definition does not consider how much patients or their insurers pay for care or whether patients are eligible for financial assistance through Northwestern Medicine.



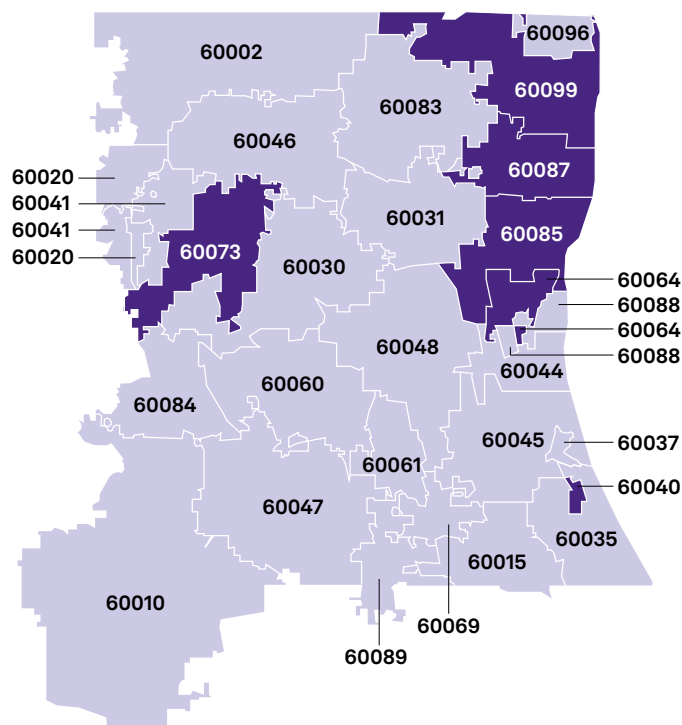
Identifying communities with economic hardship

Once the CSA has been defined, Northwestern Medicine uses the Socioeconomic Resource Index (SERI) to identify areas experiencing economic hardship. Under-resourced areas are identified based on multiple indicators, including:

- › Unemployment (for individuals older than 16 years)
- › Education (those older than 25 years without a high school diploma)
- › Per capita income level
- › Crowded housing (more than one person per room)
- › Dependents (younger than 18 years or older than 64 years)
- › Poverty (income below 200% of the federal poverty level)

The strategies identified in this report focus on these under-resourced areas in an effort to address health disparities within the CSA.

Catherine Gratz Griffin Lake Forest Hospital Community Service Area. Locations in dark purple have been identified as under-resourced communities by SERI. Under-resourced ZIP codes are mainly concentrated in the northeast corner of the CSA, except for 60073 on the western edge and 60040 in the southeastern area.

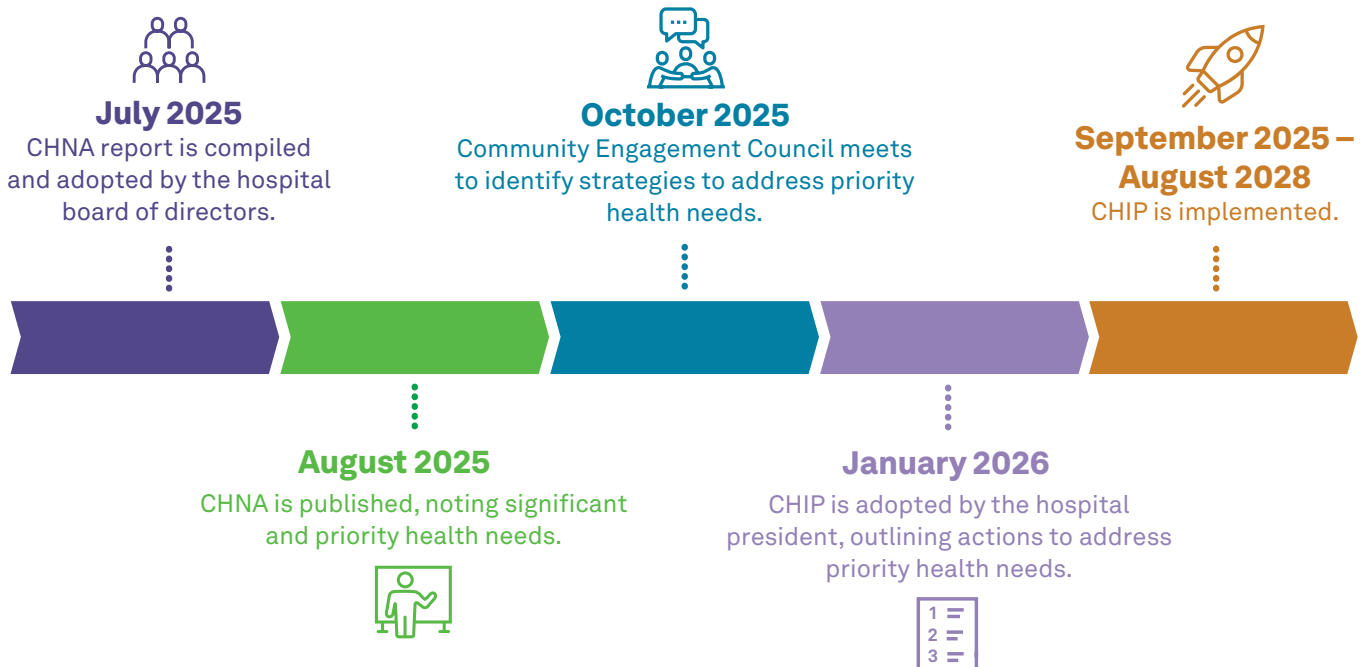




Community Health Implementation Plan Overview



CHIP Timeline



CHIP Development Process

CHNA: Identify significant health needs

Northwestern Medicine Catherine Gratz Griffin Lake Forest Hospital collaborated with Metopio to create the 2025 CHNA. Together, we completed a comprehensive analysis of the data collected. Analysis included getting input from people in targeted under-resourced populations.



Prioritization: Select priority health needs

Once the CHNA data analysis was complete, we convened the Community Engagement Council to help identify the highest priority health needs.



To help us prioritize, council members reviewed guiding principles and CHNA data findings, and participated in robust conversations regarding community health needs for the CSA.

Strategy development: Identify actions to address priority health needs

Following the prioritization process, we had conversations with community organizations and internal teams to identify potential strategies. We then worked with the Community Engagement Council to identify actions, resources, anticipated impacts and planned collaborations to address selected priority health needs over the next three years. In developing these strategies, we were mindful of our own strengths and those of other organizations in our CSA.



This work is the basis for the CHIP.

Adoption: Three-year plan

This CHIP was adopted in January 2026 by the hospital president and will be active until August 31, 2028, in alignment with our fiscal year calendar.



Implementation: Implement strategies to address priority health needs

As we work to address priority health needs over the three-year CHIP span, the report will be reviewed and updated as needed to ensure it remains viable and to maximize our impact. We will regularly share our efforts with reporting agencies and our community.





Significant Health Needs for Northwestern Medicine Catherine Gratz Griffin Lake Forest Hospital

The following significant health needs were identified through the Northwestern Medicine Catherine Gratz Griffin Lake Forest Hospital 2025 CHNA. Of these, three (highlighted in orange) were selected as priority health needs.

Among the significant health needs not identified as priority health needs, many are being addressed through the ongoing, comprehensive services and programs at Catherine Gratz Griffin Lake Forest Hospital in collaboration with our community allies, and across Northwestern Medicine.

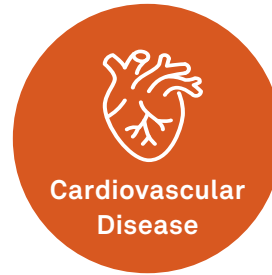
Health Need Identified in 2025 CHNA	Our Response
► Access to health care	This need has been identified as a priority health need. See pages 18-21 for our plan to address it.
► Behavioral health	This need has been identified as a priority health need. See pages 22-24 for our plan to address it.
Cancer	This need is addressed through the hospital care delivery system.
► Cardiovascular disease	This need has been identified as a priority health need. See pages 25-26 for our plan to address it.
Diabetes	This need is addressed through the hospital care delivery system.
Food access	This need is better addressed by community organizations specializing in this field.
Housing instability	This need is better addressed by community organizations specializing in this field.
Obesity	This need is addressed through the hospital care delivery system.
Substance use disorder	This need is addressed through the hospital care delivery system.

► Indicates priority health need

A photograph of two women sitting in a hospital room. The woman on the left has curly hair and is wearing a white t-shirt and dark pants. The woman on the right is wearing blue scrubs with a 'Northwestern Medicine' logo and a name tag. They are both looking at each other and appear to be in conversation. Medical equipment is visible in the background.

Priority Health Needs for Northwestern Medicine Catherine Gratz Griffin Lake Forest Hospital

The following were identified as the priority health needs to be addressed by Northwestern Medicine Catherine Gratz Griffin Lake Forest Hospital over the next three years.



Our commitment to removing barriers to better health

Northwestern Medicine remains deeply committed to ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to achieve their highest level of health. We are focused on addressing the factors that contribute to gaps in health outcomes by improving access, enhancing coordination with community resources and delivering care that is respectful of and responsive to every person's needs. This focus is integrated in every strategy we have for addressing the priority health needs of our community.

Community Health Implementation Plan



Priority Health Need: Access to Health Care

Goal: Increase access to comprehensive, high-quality healthcare services.

Access to health care was discussed at length in most focus groups and key interviews. Many residents face barriers to getting the care they need, which can lead to worsening health outcomes and higher healthcare costs in the long run. Improving access to care is essential to promoting better health and preventing disease within the community.

We heard you

“[The] complexities of navigating the health system or insurance are definitely huge challenges that impact basically any health condition.”

“Having a physician that’s your physician, your primary care physician, to help you with a lot of things; that’s not something that happens.”

Key interview participants³

Survey respondents indicated access to the following are among the top challenges in their community³:



**Affordable
medical providers**



**Affordable
medication**



**Health care for
older adults**



**Affordable
insurance**

Action 1: Reduce barriers

Build alliances with aging-sector partners and other community organizations to implement evidence-based programs that address social and health needs of the 65 years and older population.

Anticipated impact

- Optimized collaboration with community organizations
- Increased access to services
- Meet CMS Age Friendly Hospital Measure

Collaborations

- External Affairs
- Quality
- Government entities
- Family Medicine residents
- Community organizations

Resources

- Community Health Institute grant funding
- Family Medicine residents
- Team NM
- Community Outreach Council

Action 2: Health education and prevention

Support and grow collaboration with community organizations to increase resources available to address health needs.

Anticipated impact

- Optimized collaboration with community organizations
- Increased number of available screenings

Collaborations

- Community organizations

Resources

- Staff time and resources

Action 3: Reduce barriers

Enhance access to specialty care for uninsured patients through collaboration with Access Lake and coordinated consultation between medical home and specialist clinicians.

Anticipated impact

- Increased access to specialty care appointments for uninsured patients in Lake County

Collaborations

- Advocate Condell Medical Center
- Advocate Good Shepard
- City of Hope
- Endeavor Highland Park
- Erie Family Health Centers
- Lake County Health Department
- Lake County Board District 13

Resources

- Funding (community funding and operational funds)
- Internal staffing

Action 4: Reduce barriers

Address the number of patients who are connected to a medical home at discharge. Implement the Population Health Nurse Navigator program.

Anticipated impact

- Increased number of patients with a medical home
- Successful launches to Federally Qualified Health Center partners

Collaborations

- Population health
- Primary Care physicians
- Transitional Care Clinic

Resources

- Funding
- Population health
- Community Based Health Centers





Priority Health Need: Behavioral Health

Goal: Improve access to and increase use of services that address behavioral health.

Behavioral health care is one of the most urgent needs in our community. According to experts in the community, accessing behavioral health care is a challenge that many individuals and families face, and resources are desperately needed to address a multitude of needs. Mental health affects all aspects of life, from physical health to relationships and overall quality of life. Action is needed to provide support and resources for those in need.

Expert observation

“The need for behavioral health services has consistently been on the rise, and we continue to see difficulties with finding timely and/or affordable mental health services. Behavioral health services for adults and adolescents have remained a priority for our community, similar to previous years.”

Krithika Malhotra, PhD, Psychology
Northwestern Medicine

Survey respondents indicated they had difficulty accessing behavioral health services because³:



**They encountered
long waitlists for
appointments**

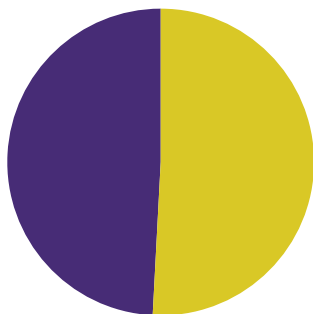


**They didn't
know where to
get services**

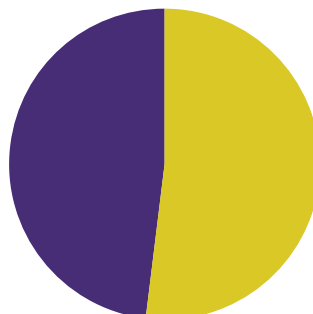


**They could not
afford the cost**

Of survey respondents³



51.0%
say adult
behavioral
health is a
top concern



52.0%
say adolescent
behavioral
health is a
top concern

Action 1: Reduce barriers

Support and grow collaboration with community organizations to increase resources available to address behavioral health needs.

Anticipated impact

- Optimized collaboration with community organizations
- Increased access to behavioral health services

Collaborations

- Josselyn Center
- Mental health community organizations
- Northwestern Medicine facilities

Resources

- Staff time
- Community Health Institute and grant funding

Action 2: Reduce barriers

Expand access within the Collaborative Behavioral Health Program (CBHP) model in the Catherine Gratz Griffin Lake Forest Hospital CSA.

Anticipated impact

- Increased access to behavioral health services at PCP level

Collaborations

- Primary Care physicians
- Northwestern Medical Group Psychiatry

Resources

- Collaborative Behavioral Health Program



Priority Health Need: Cardiovascular Disease

Goal: Improve access to services that help reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease.

Heart disease and stroke can result in poor quality of life, disability and death. These diseases are common, and they can often be prevented by controlling risk factors like high blood pressure and high cholesterol through treatment.

Rates of high blood pressure^{1,2}

CSA:
28.8%

Illinois:
29.1%



Rates of high cholesterol^{1,2}

CSA:
30.8%

Illinois:
28.2%



According to **29.0%** of survey respondents, cardiovascular disease is one of the top health issues in their community.³

Overall, stroke and heart attack hospitalization rates in the CSA are lower than the Illinois rates; however, several communities within the CSA have much higher rates⁴. Therefore, implementing strategies to address cardiovascular disease remains both important and necessary.

Action 1: Reduce barriers

Leverage community research to expand access to quality cardiovascular care and address access to cardiovascular services.

Anticipated impact

- Increased availability of cardiovascular prevention and treatment intervention in community settings

Collaborations

- Northwestern Medicine Bluhm Cardiovascular Institute
- Catherine Gratz Griffin Lake Forest Hospital Nursing Research

Resources

- Staff time

Community Health Implementation Plan Adoption

The adoption of this plan was authorized through a board resolution at the July 29, 2025, meeting of the Northwestern Medicine Catherine Gratz Griffin Lake Forest Hospital Board of Directors.

The Northwestern Medicine Catherine Gratz Griffin Lake Forest Hospital 2026 – 2028 Community Health Implementation Plan was adopted by the hospital president by January 15, 2026.

Appendix: References

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2022). *Behavioral risk factor surveillance system*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Accessed through Metopio.
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2022). PLACES. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Accessed through Metopio.
3. Community input represents information and beliefs obtained from CHNA focus groups and from individuals representing the broad interests of the community, including people who are uninsured, have low incomes and belong to certain minority groups.
4. Illinois Health and Hospital Association. (2019 – 2023). *COMPdata informatics*. Illinois Health and Hospital Association. Calculated by Metopio.





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