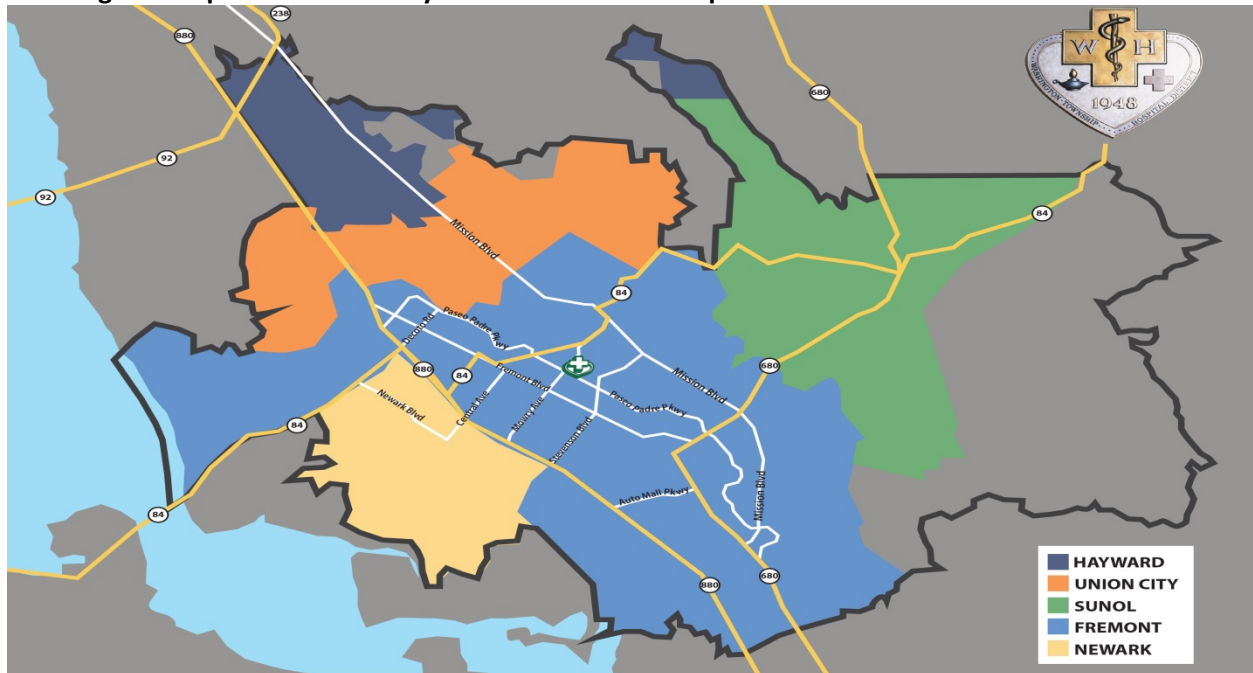


Washington Hospital Healthcare System
Community Health Needs Assessment
2020 Health Improvement Plan

Washington Hospital Healthcare System is a district hospital that opened in 1958. It is governed by an elected Board of Directors made up of five members. Washington Hospital serves the residents of Fremont, Newark, Union City, unincorporated Sunol, and a small portion of Hayward. This primary service area, also known as the Washington Township Health Care District, encompasses approximately 124 square miles of Southern Alameda County. The area's population is about 365,000, which represents nearly 21.8 percent of the county.

Washington Hospital Healthcare System: Service Area Map



MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to meet the healthcare needs of local residents through medical services, education, and research. Washington Township Health Care District is committed to assuming the leadership role in improving and maintaining the health status of the residents by:

- Identifying and assessing community healthcare needs.
- Developing mechanisms to respond to the identified need within the financial capabilities of the District.
- Committing to a culture of patient safety and accountability.
- Adopting identified best practices.
- Providing access to high quality, cost-effective health services through an integrated delivery system.
- Partnering with a diverse medical staff, academic medical centers, and other providers to meet the healthcare needs of District residents.
- Providing appropriate employee, professional, and community educational resources to enhance patient care and health promotion throughout the District.

VISION

To support the fulfillment of the mission, the District's strategic vision is to be the regional medical center of choice in Southern Alameda County, offering quality services that span the full range of care within the available financial resources.

VALUES STATEMENT

Our organizational values stem directly from the origins of the Hospital District in 1948. The District was formed to provide access to patient care services for the residents of the Township, at a time when people had to leave their community and travel significant distances to find hospital care. The District serves its community by providing high quality, affordable, and convenient care. We are committed not only in law, but in spirit, to local accountability.

Healthcare is an intensely personal service. Underlying all that we offer is the recognition that healthcare is not a commodity. Our essential purpose is to improve the human condition. Our reason for being begins and ends with our patients and our community, and we are committed to a patient-first ethic. To our patients we owe comfort, compassion and, whenever possible, a cure. Our efforts are focused not just on individuals and families, but also on the overall health of the community.

It is our obligation to provide responsible stewardship of our resources, acting in all areas of our healthcare system with integrity, professionalism, and respect for a patient's right to choice.

To our fellow employees, volunteers, and members of our medical staff we owe a commitment to perform all of our responsibilities with loyalty, perseverance, self-discipline, and dependability. We achieve these goals through our organizational commitment to innovation, process improvements, and pursuit of excellence.

COMMUNITY BENEFIT PROGRAMS

Each year, Washington Hospital provides a host of innovative and impactful community benefit programs and services to underserved and underinsured residents. The hospital's community benefit programs and activities are designed to:

- Meet the specific healthcare needs of targeted populations
- Expand availability of healthcare to those who need it most
- Provide health information and education resources
- Teach participants about healthy lifestyles and the importance of staying active and eating nutritiously.

2019/2020 COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Washington Hospital conducted the Community Health Needs Assessment in the summer of 2019 in collaboration with local hospitals serving southern Alameda County -- Kaiser Foundation Hospitals Fremont and San Leandro, St. Rose Hospital, Sutter Health Eden Medical Center and UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital Oakland.

The hospitals began the CHNA cycle with the goal to collectively gather community feedback, understand existing data about health status, and prioritize local health needs. Community input was obtained through key informant interviews with local health experts and through focus groups comprised of community leaders, residents, and representatives. The assessment also analyzed qualitative data obtained from the Alameda County Public Health Department, the U.S. Census Bureau, and other publicly available sources

SIGNIFICANT HEALTH NEEDS IDENTIFIED IN THE 2019/2020 CHNA

As a result of the 2019/2020 Community Health Needs Assessment, Washington Hospital identified key community health needs to address based on the prevalence and the severity of the health need.

The 2019/2020 CHNA identified the following key community health needs:

- Behavioral Health
- Housing and Homelessness
- Healthy Eating/Active Living
- Healthcare Access and Delivery
- Social Determinants of Health
- Diabetes, Heart Disease, Hypertension, and Stroke
- Respiratory Health

In follow up to this assessment, Washington Hospital will develop a three-year Health Improvement Plan that addresses each of these health needs. Hospital resources will be deployed to mitigate the impact of these health needs and bring prevention and education to the most disproportionately impacted populations throughout the District.

- 1. Behavioral Health.** Behavioral health, including mental health and substance use, is a high priority for community members interviewed for the assessment. Depression and stress were the most common issues raised, and trauma and adverse childhood experiences were identified as drivers of behavioral health problems. The emergency department (ED) visit rates for severe mental illness in Newark and unincorporated Sunol are significantly higher than the Alameda County rate. In Union City, the rate of ED visits for self-injury exceeds the county rate. The suicide rates in Fremont and Newark are not higher than the county benchmark, but they are increasing.

Initiatives

- Continue collaborating with UCSF Adolescent Behavioral Health Services to develop an outpatient mental health clinic for youth, providing ongoing care for teens exhibiting mental health issues.
 - Partner with Medical Explorers Post 539, a youth program, to develop a webpage focusing on adolescent mental health hosted on the Washington Hospital website.
 - Expand adult outpatient and inpatient behavioral health services. A psychiatrist affiliated with Washington Township Medical Foundation will continue providing an inpatient psychiatric consultation service.
 - Promote mental health education and awareness through Washington Hospital's Health and Wellness programming.
- 2. Housing and Homelessness.** Maintaining safe and healthy housing also ranked high as a community priority. The physical condition of a home, its neighborhood, and the cost of rent or mortgage are strongly associated with the health, well-being, educational achievement, and economic success of residents. In addition, following a countywide trend, the number of people experiencing homelessness in Fremont, Newark, and Union City grew at an alarming rate in

2019. People experiencing homelessness have been shown to have more healthcare issues, are at greater rate of preventable illnesses, require longer hospital stays, and ultimately face a greater risk of premature death.

Initiatives

- Strengthen the partnership with the Fremont Police Department and Fremont Human Services Department on the Mobile Evaluation Team (MET) to provide a more comprehensive level of service to community members, particularly the homeless population.
- Continue participating on the City of Fremont Homeless Task Force. The Task Force tracks community concerns, focuses efforts on the greater needs of the community, facilitates collaboration of homeless services and resources throughout the area.

- 3. Healthy Eating/Active Living.** This health need covers concerns about obesity, nutrition, diet, and fitness. Nutrition and exercise are important aspects of a healthy lifestyle. The benefits of a healthy diet include preventing high cholesterol and high blood pressure, reducing the risk of developing cancer and diabetes, and helping to reduce the risk of obesity. Yet despite the well-known benefits, most people do not follow recommended healthy food and exercise guidelines.

For many District residents, a poor diet and lack of regular exercise can result in adult and childhood obesity, a serious and costly health concern that is one of the leading causes of preventable death. Youth in Union City fare significantly worse in meeting aerobic capacity standards than their peers in Alameda County overall. Based on measures of body composition, youth in Newark and Union City are more likely to be at health risk than their peers countywide.

Initiatives

- Explore a collaboration with East Bay Regional Park District to participate in Park Prescriptions: Stay Healthy in Nature Every day (SHINE) program. SHINE is a low-cost recreational program promoting the health benefits of nature including outdoor physical activity. Through SHINE, care providers may prescribe time in nature for children and adults with chronic illnesses.
- Explore Meal Prescription models for care providers to write a “prescription” for their patients to receive medically tailored meals that align with their particular health conditions.
- Raise community awareness of the importance of proper nutrition, healing foods, and healthy lifestyles through Washington Hospital’s Health and Wellness programming.

- 4. Healthcare Access and Delivery.** Access to comprehensive healthcare is important to everyone’s health and quality of life. Access to care frequently rests upon insurance coverage and an adequate number of primary and specialty care providers. Likewise, delivery of care can be impacted by quality, transparency, timeliness, and cultural competence. These barriers can lead to unmet health needs, delays in receiving appropriate care, and an inability to attain preventive services. Statistics reveal that close to one in five people speak limited English across our district.

Initiatives

- Explore additional options with Alameda Alliance to broaden access to health care for MediCal members, as well as consider adding an additional health plan in the Alameda County MediCal market.
- Explore pricing options with Canopy Health Plan and United Health to establish some reduced priced plan options for low-income or uninsured community members.

5. **Social Determinants of Health.** The CHNA revealed that community members understand that the health of a population is impacted by social factors well beyond the provision of health care. Many social and economic factors contribute to a community's health, including access to quality education and job opportunities, public safety, and mass transit. Educational attainment, employment rates, and household income are key indicators that show the economic vitality of an area and the buying power of individuals, including their ability to afford basic needs such as housing and healthcare. A wide variety of experts and community members expressed concerns that local jobs often do not offer sufficient wages to afford the high cost of living in the Bay Area.

Initiatives

- Continue partnering with local Chamber of Commerce and other business-focused organizations to promote and foster business growth to expand employment opportunities.
- Explore career exploration programs for college students to learn about potential health care careers and educational path to support career development in these fields.

6. **Diabetes, Heart Disease, Hypertension, and Stroke** are among the leading causes of death nationwide. Although some risk factors for heart disease and stroke are not controllable (age, race/ethnicity, gender), many risk factors can be controlled (high blood pressure, high cholesterol, obesity, excessive alcohol consumption, smoking, an unhealthy diet, lack of physical activity). Addressing risk factors early in life can help to prevent chronic diseases later in life. Experts and community members highlighted the need for more community health education to boost healthy living choices that would reduce the incidence of obesity, diabetes, and other chronic diseases. The rates of diabetes hospitalizations in Newark and Union City surpass Alameda County's rates. Newark also has significantly higher rates of ED visits for diabetes and stroke. Hypertension is an issue in Union City (ED visits) and unincorporated Sunol (hospitalizations). Union City and unincorporated Sunol residents are more commonly hospitalized for heart disease than their peers countywide.

Initiatives

- Improve and increase community access to the diabetes self-management education program.
- Explore improvement practices to reduce readmission rates of diabetic patients through inpatient education, specialty care, better discharge instructions, coordination of care, and post-discharge support.

- Assess the existing standardized stroke protocol, Code Neuro, to further integrate departments and streamline patient flow. Expediting imaging and laboratory studies would improve the identification and treatment of stroke patients.
 - Increase community awareness about stroke symptoms and the importance of calling 911 when someone is suspected of having a stroke.
 - Explore achieving Joint Commission Thrombectomy Capable Stroke Center (TSC) certification. This advanced certification program is designed for hospitals that provide endovascular procedures and post-procedural care.
 - Establish a Structural Heart Clinic to assess patients with Aortic Stenosis and other valvular disorders
 - Provide patient education and improve awareness of critical aortic stenosis and current treatment options
 - Establish a TAVR (Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacement) program to offer patients and their families the convenience of being treated locally at WHHS
 - Participate in the Alameda County Stroke study to explore the effectiveness of self-monitoring blood pressure and behavioral changes for a healthy lifestyle to prevent a stroke
- 7. Respiratory Health.** Focus group participants emphasized the prevalence of respiratory ailments in their communities, which they thought might be caused by environmental factors. Asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder (COPD), and pneumonia—all chronic conditions—are among the most common respiratory disorders experienced by District residents. While Alameda County’s air quality is better than the state’s as a whole, Fremont’s childhood asthma prevalence rate is slightly worse than the county benchmark, and Union City’s rate nearly as high. COPD emergency department (ED) visits and asthma hospitalizations in Newark and Union City are significantly worse than the county’s rates.

Initiatives

- Explore partnering with Alameda County Public Health Department’s Asthma Start program to work with families of children with asthma by providing in-home case management services. Services include asthma education, identification of asthma triggers, prevention of asthma attacks, and understanding asthma medication(s).
 - Increase community awareness of the benefits of respiratory testing and pulmonary rehabilitation through Washington Hospital’s Health and Wellness programming.
- 8. Cancer** is the second leading cause of death in the United States, after heart disease. High-quality screening can serve to reduce cancer rates; however, complex factors contribute to disparities in cancer incidence and death rates between different ethnic and socioeconomic groups.

Statistically, Alameda County generally fares well with respect to cancer. Nearly all rates of incidence or death from various types of cancer meet or beat the state’s benchmarks.

For this reason, cancer was not identified as a health need in the 2020 Community Health Needs Assessment. However, it remains a community health concern that Washington Hospital is committed to addressing with a wide array of cutting-edge treatments and technologies

Initiative

- Introduce a state-of-the-art linear accelerator in the Radiation Oncology Center that precisely targets tumor areas while reducing the most common side effects associated with radiation treatment.
- Raise awareness of lung cancer screenings through low-dose computed tomography (LDCT) scans. LDCT screenings are an opportunity to engage patients about the risks of lung cancer, the danger of smoking, and the benefits of early detection.
- Implement a Cancer Survivorship Care Program for the prevention of new and recurrent cancers and other late effects. The service will provide an assessment of late psychosocial and physical effects built on the coordination of care between care providers and specialists
- Promote awareness of cancer prevention, early detection and treatment resources available within the District through Washington Hospital's Health and Wellness programming.