



Community Health Needs Assessment 2021

At Buchanan County Health Center, our purpose is to become the leading community resource amidst every transition in healthcare. Our mission is to provide the best local care while leading the advancement of healthier communities.



**Buchanan County
Health Center**

Here for you. Trusted for Life.

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Buchanan County Health Center's mission is to provide the best local care while leading the advancement of healthier communities. We have taken this mission seriously by investing significant resources not just in the provision of clinical care, but also in the prevention of illness. This report is intended to demonstrate the recent work undertaken as well as the work we are planning to continue to meet the health needs of Buchanan County, Fayette County, and the surrounding areas. We have included Fayette County in this assessment as we opened Oelwein Clinic in 2019.

Buchanan County as a whole has some strengths and weaknesses in our health status. A big strength for Buchanan County is our health outcomes scores where we rank 10 out of 99 counties which is an improvement from 13 out of 99 in 2018. This is driven by a top ten ranking in quality of life due to residents in general rating themselves as in good health, minimal babies with low birth weight, and a below-average prevalence of diabetes. On the other hand, our health outcome scores for Fayette County is 51 out of 99 counties, and we recognize the needs for improvement.

There are some areas of weakness that the data demonstrates, however. Buchanan County ranks low 54/99 in the health behaviors category although we made a great improvement from 68/99 in 2018. Fayette County also ranks low at 58/99. This score is driven mainly by physical inactivity, obesity rate, and access to exercise opportunities. The other area of weakness is the number of primary care physicians per population and the overall cost of healthcare per capita. Fortunately, these are all areas BCHC is already focused on and making active progress to address.

The following pages demonstrate the plan for BCHC to address the latest community health needs assessment.

Steve Slessor, CEO



Community Health Needs Assessment 2021

Increase Access to Primary Care

Buchanan County has a population to physician ratio of 3,530 to 1, and Fayette County has 2,830:1. The average in Iowa is 1,370 to 1. The data was based on 2017. In 2019 and 2020 we opened Oelwein Clinic (Fayette County) and Jesup Clinic (Buchanan County) respectively to expand access to primary care providers. By including other primary care Advanced Practice Providers in Buchanan County and Fayette County, the ratio improves to 1,411 to 1 for Buchanan County and 1,980 to 1 for Fayette County in 2020. Access to primary care affects both the quality of care as well as the cost. BCHC is actively recruiting one more primary care physician. The more access there is to primary care, the better likelihood that a patient's chronic conditions can be appropriately managed and the need for further, more costly intervention is reduced.

Urgent Care Access

Since 2016, Buchanan County Health Center has been continuing to offer evening and weekend urgent care clinics to assist with access and reduce unnecessary ED bills.

Population Health Management

BCHC added a Director of Pharmacy and Population Health in 2020. This health professional has oversight of our accountable care organization contracts and works with a variety of departments to ensure success in our key metrics and is working on providing medication therapy management by integrating pharmacists within our primary care clinics.

Since 2018, a patient care navigator continues to serve our patients at our primary care here in Independence. This health professional focuses on helping individuals manage their chronic conditions and ensures that they are following up on receiving all necessary exams, procedures, and other tests to prevent unwanted health outcomes. This position helps access to primary care by freeing up physician time for other items and will also have a positive impact on our screening colonoscopy rates, diabetes management, and other key chronic condition metrics.

Community Health Needs Assessment 2021

Mental Health Services

Along with primary care, access to mental health providers is also a significant concern in Buchanan County. The rate of mental health practitioners per population in Buchanan County is 960:1 compared to the statewide average of 640:1. To address this critical concern, BCHC added one Psychiatric Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner who serves both Buchanan and Fayette County and one Clinical Social Worker (CSW) in 2020. We are recruiting one more mental health counselor due to the fact that our CSW is already full.

Same Day Primary Care Access

Buchanan County Health Center rolled out a new process to see patients the same day who are suffering from acute illnesses/injuries in 2018. Same-day appointment slots are left open on each provider schedule and patients will be offered other team members when their primary care provider is not available. This is still being hardwired currently.

Community Outreach / Education / Benefits

Improving the health of their communities is at the heart of our hospital's mission. BCHC has provided free flu vaccines to the local school district, and we continue to look for opportunities to add benefits to the community. Besides, BCHC has offered various educational programs before the COVID pandemic hit us. We will evaluate when we can resume offering these types of educational programs. Examples are Athletic Training services for East Buchanan and Independence Schools, Babysitting Course, Bike Rodeo, Concussion testing, Corporate wellness assessments, CPR/First Aid/ BBP courses, Family Fun Night, Family Fun Swim, Field Day at Fontana, Health Fair at Pipestone Vet Clinic, Health Career Day, Health presentations for county employees, Lifeguard certification classes, NEI3A Older Americans Walk, Living Well health column for the local newspapers, Silly with STEM" programming, SPARK! Igniting Health in Kids, Spotlight Series presentations at the library, Stop the Bleeding training, Wellness Day at the Farmer's Market, and Youth Wellness Camp.

Community Health Needs Assessment 2021

Employee Benefits

BCHC is pleased to offer a comprehensive benefits package to its 340+ employees that live, work, and play in Buchanan and surrounding counties. As the largest employer in Buchanan County, who provides healthcare services, we understand the value of supporting the “whole” person. Therefore, we value offering generous benefits that have the ability to support the overall well-being and support as many of the seven dimensions of wellness as possible. We specifically offer comprehensive health, dental, and vision insurance plans, as well as disability plans. Employees can also take advantage of a free membership to our 24/7 wellness center. Paid time off and extended sick leave are also generous benefits to support an employee’s healthy disconnect from their valuable work that is done in a supportive teamwork environment. We recognize financial well-being is also critical! So in addition to competitive wages, to support this area, BCHC offers tuition assistance, life insurance, and two retirement programs that include both a defined benefit and defined contribution plan (403b and Iowa Public Employers’ Retirement System). Other items BCHC is proud to offer its employees is a free Employee Assistance Program (EAP) extended to all employees and their household/dependents. Then, most recently to complement this mental and emotional health program, BCHC also offers its employee free & confidential access to an on-site Licensed Independent Social Worker. Last, financial stress can be a large burden on an individual and/or family unit with a potential impact on their other wellness dimensions. BCHC most recently offered all employees access to SmartDollar, which a Dave Ramsey Product to help support individuals achieving their financial goals and address this stressor.

Community Health Needs Assessment 2021

Improve Health of Buchanan County and Fayette County Residents

Buchanan County and Fayette County have the larger percentage of obesity 33% and 34% respectively and it is similar to the state average of 33%. The unfortunate fact is still a third of our residents are obese which contributes to many health-related issues. The issue seems to stem partly from physical activity as Buchanan County and Fayette County scores lower in access to exercise opportunities and higher in the percentage of physically inactive residents 31% and 33% respectively in 2020. We would want the trend to go down.

Additional Wellness Center in Jesup Under Consideration

BCHC is considering expanding the Wellness Center in Jesup onto the BCHC Jesup Clinic campus to accommodate the needs of the community as the long-running center, Jesup Gym was closed in 2020. BCHC continues to work with the Jesup City Council and a Jesup focus group. The Wellness Center at BCHC Independence completed a significant expansion in 2018 which included new equipment targeted to get younger generations engaged in healthy lifestyles. We added additional free-weight equipment and the latest technology in treadmills and ellipticals. BCHC hit its record membership numbers of 1040 in early spring 2020 before COVID hit us. The new expanded Wellness Center also includes a new aerobics studio which enables additional classes and class sizes. BCHC is currently offering 20 classes but we plan to gradually increase as the COVID vaccine rollout continues.

Community Health Needs Assessment 2021

Improve Health of Buchanan County and Fayette County Residents

Response to COVID and COVID Vaccine Clinic

At BCHC we responded to the COVID-19 pandemic in a quick and coordinated effort to help decrease the spread of disease while increasing access to necessary healthcare. We implemented a COVID-19 call center line staffed by nursing and medical providers to provide guidance on quarantine, answer questions, provide a telehealth visit if warranted, and coordinate testing if indicated. An outdoor testing site was developed to help decrease the number of patients entering our facility with symptoms and exposures if testing was their only need. Changes were made to our inpatient unit, outpatient areas, and waiting areas to reduce the risk of transmission. Coordinated efforts helped ensure the timely vaccination of over 200 of our healthcare workers and over 1,200 of our eligible patients before the focus was shifted to providing mass community vaccine clinics. We have worked closely with our local public health departments to plan, staff, and execute mass vaccination clinics to ensure timely vaccine access for all eligible community members. As of the end of March 2021, at BCHC Oelwein retail pharmacy we have recorded approximately 1,900 vaccinations of prime/boost doses given with about 1,400 boost doses yet to come in the next 3-4 weeks. These numbers include the large Pfizer clinic that was coordinated with the Dept. of Public Health in Buchanan County.

Mammography Screening

BCHC replaced the 2D mammography machine with the Genius 3D mammography machine in 2017 for the hospital. The same 3D mammography machine was installed in Oelwein Clinic when the clinic was open in fall 2019. The mammography screening rate declined from 67% in 2018 to 46% in 2020 for Buchanan County, and from 67% to 52% for Fayette County. The biggest reason for the decrease has been COVID. Many patients delayed their annual screening physical which drives the screening mammograms. Also, with the COVID vaccine patients need to schedule out a few weeks after receiving, so we have had some patients that got a last-minute call on getting a vaccine and had to push their mammogram back. BCHC expects to see numbers rise back up as screening services reopen and get caught up. We will also be focusing, with the patient navigators in the primary care clinics, to help use reports and catching these overdue screening tests prior to appointments.

Community Health Needs Assessment 2021

Improve Health of Buchanan County and Fayette County Residents

	Buchanan	Fayette	Iowa	Rank Buchanan	Rank Fayette
Health Outcomes Overall				10/99	51/99
Quality of Life				5/99	46/99
Fair or poor health	12%	14%	14%		
Low birth weight	5%	6%	7%		
Frequent mental distress	11%	11%	11%		
Diabetes	9%	13%	10%		
Length of Life				34/99	55/99
Health Factors Overall				51/99	75/99
Health Behaviors				54/99	58/99
Smoking	16%	16%	17%		
Obesity	33%	34%	33%		
Physical Inactivity	31%	33%	24%		
Access to Exercise	75%	78%	83%		
Excessive drinking	21%	21%	22%		
Alcohol Impaired Driving Deaths	18%	20%	27%		
STIs	273.6	227.3	441.6		
Teen Births	14	21	19		
Motor Vehicle Crash Deaths	12	18	11		
Insufficient Sleep	28%	28%	28%		
Clinical Care				58/99	54/99
Uninsured	5%	5%	5%		
Primary Care Physicians	3,530:1	2,830:1	1,370:1		
Dentists	2,650:1	2,460:1	1,500:1		
Mental Health Providers	960:1	2,810:1	640:1		
Preventable Hospital Stays	3,472	3,076	3,808		
Flu Vaccinations	50%	37%	53%		
Mammography Screening	46%	52%	51%		
Other Primary Care Providers	2,120:1	983:1	990:1		
Social and Economic				44/99	79/99
Physical Environment				66/99	87/99