



● ○ ● ○ ● 2026-2028

COMMUNITY HEALTH

Implementation Plan



General Information

This Community Health Implementation Plan (CHIP) is a collaboration of Mat-Su Health Foundation and Mat-Su Regional Medical Center in response to our 2025 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). Internal Revenue Service tax code requires nonprofit hospital organizations to conduct a CHNA every three years and to adopt implementation strategies that address the top health needs identified in the CHNA. For Mat-Su Health Foundation and Mat-Su Regional Medical Center, these documents are more than compliance. They serve as an opportunity to listen to community, share knowledge, and put in place meaningful action to address the top health needs, all for the betterment of our community and residents' well-being. The CHNA and Implementation plan will inform and influence the strategic plan being developed by Mat-Su Health Foundation.

Written plan adoption by the organization's governing body:

The 2026-2028 Mat-Su Community Health Improvement Plan was required to be adopted by both organizations' governing bodies on or before May 15, 2026. The plan was approved by the governing bodies on:

Mat-Su Health Foundation Board of Directors: April 27, 2026

Mat-Su Regional Medical Center Board of Directors: May 5, 2026

Estimated 3-Year Implementation Plan budget totals for each facility

Mat-Su Regional Medical Center: \$9.3 million

Mat-Su Health Foundation: \$30 million

Shared investment for behavioral health expansion: \$70 million



Address of Hospital Organization(s):

Mat-Su Regional Medical Center
2500 S. Woodworth Loop
Palmer, AK 99645

Mat-Su Health Foundation
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Introduction

Mat-Su is our home, and we approach the CHNA and CHIP knowing that it is in service to our community. The CHIP is in response to the top health priorities identified in the 2025 CHNA, which provides a comprehensive view of the health and well-being of people living in the Mat-Su. Guided by what we learned from community data and what we heard from listening to over 1,700 Mat-Su residents, this plan includes the strategies, investments, and resources identified to affect change in the Mat-Su. We are grateful for the contributions of our steering committee and those who generously gave their time and shared their perspectives, lived experiences, and stories with us.

The 2025 CHNA was purposefully structured to view health within the broader lens of “well-being,” offering a richer understanding that can guide the community in using resources and investments to enhance overall health. It also examines more closely the concepts of belonging and civic muscle and economic mobility as catalysts to improve both individual and community health. We use the Vital Conditions framework from the Rippel Foundation to organize the CHNA and implementation strategies. Vital conditions are the “properties of places and institutions that we all need all the time to reach our full potential.” This includes necessities like nutritious food and safe drinking water, humane housing, reliable transportation, access to education and meaningful work, as well as a sense of belonging and agency in community. A thriving community is possible through the investment in vital conditions, yet often there is an over-reliance on urgent services. Urgent services are “broadly defined as all of the services that anyone under adversity would need to temporarily regain or restore their health and well-being. These include everything from urgent care clinics to food pantries and homeless shelters.” Urgent services are requirements of a healthy, thriving community, however, there can be an imbalance when vital conditions are lacking and there is increased demand on urgent services.



WELL-BEING PORTFOLIO

Rippel Foundation: ReThink Health



Top Health Priorities

The 24-member Steering Committee participated in the prioritization of community health needs, which was informed by the community data in the CHNA report and people's lived experiences. The process included both data sensemaking and storytelling. Key themes were identified that resonated across secondary data and the qualitative and primary data, based on the data collected. The scope and severity of the problem, along with associated health disparities and impact on health outcomes were also considered in identifying key themes. The Steering Committee was given access to thematic summaries and summary reports from the surveys and focus groups.

The Steering Committee came together to participate in a sensemaking exercise called Collective Story Harvesting, co-facilitated by the Alaska Humanities Forum and MSHF Community Engagement department. Story Harvesting is a structured way of representing lived experience by listening to experiences of community members to guide decision-makers into empathetic thinking, deeper understanding of data, and meaningful decision-making. After engaging in listening and discussion, the group reviewed the thematic data summaries and reflected together to identify key insights, common threads, and ideas that could inform future work and conversations.

Following the data sensemaking and story harvest process, the Steering Committee members were asked to participate in a survey to prioritize significant health needs. They came together one more time to discuss the results of the survey and finalize the list of top priorities. The priorities are listed in no particular order.

Six top health priorities were identified, and each is written with accompanying definitions. Additionally, the Steering Committee identified two key themes related to the health needs to be considered in the health improvement planning process: belonging as a determinant of health and systemic barriers that create instability.



Safe & Stable Housing | The Mat-Su housing continuum lacks pathways to safe and stable housing and coordinated supportive wrap around services for all residents.



Safe, Reliable & Affordable Transportation | Mat-Su transportation infrastructure struggles to keep pace with population growth and development, causing safety concerns and limited options for essential travel.



Accessible & Affordable Childcare | Mat-Su parents and caregivers face high costs and limited options for childcare.



Nutritious Food | Rising food costs and inconsistent access to fresh, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food causes Mat-Su residents to experience hunger and food insecurity.



Health Services for All Residents | Residents are experiencing increased mental health concerns, inability to afford the cost of care and/or insurance, and limited provider availability for primary, specialty, and behavioral healthcare.



Community Places & Spaces | The Mat-Su has few indoor physical places for community connection or recreation, and spaces are often capacity-limited, resulting in residents experiencing social isolation and lack of belonging, especially during winter months.

Belonging as a Determinant of Health

- Well-being is tied directly to connection and belonging within community. This is noted in the Well-Being Portfolio model.
- Belonging (or social isolation) is as impactful as any formal service. The services that had the most tangible impact were ones that developed a strong connection with those they serve, while experiencing social isolation undermines any efforts or resources.
- Belonging happens at the Intersections of Health, Family, and Community. Individual well-being cannot be separated from family and community context. Caregiving is inseparable from family-unit health; family structure and peer networks shape recovery and belonging; residents find purpose through advocacy opportunities and meaningful employment.

Systemic Barriers Create Instability

- Poorly designed systems, often inflexible and siloed, leave people vulnerable during moments of crisis, undermine recovery and well-being, and compound health-risks:
 - » Housing programs are fragmented, rigid, and poorly communicated
 - » Lack of postpartum and addiction support
 - » Transportation barriers
 - » Legal histories (felony convictions) often reduce or block access to housing, employment, and support services
- Healing and recovery depend largely on timing and readiness of support systems. Lack of coordination or limited capacity often results in missing critical “windows of readiness,” failing to meet individuals “in the moment” when they are ready for help, leaving gaps that perpetuate instability and undermine long-term success.
- Recognition of disparities: Data collection efforts often fall short in capturing the unique challenges faced by underrecognized groups including Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, people with disabilities, LGBTQ+, foreign born residents, and Alaska Native tribal members, leading to a disconnect between the reported numbers and the reality of life in the Mat-Su.



Overarching Approach

Driven by a shared vision for a more resilient and connected community, Mat-Su Health Foundation and Mat-Su Regional Medical Center will work together over the next three years to continue to create a healthier Mat-Su region. This collaborative CHIP supports community health by taking a holistic dual-track approach to strengthen healthcare access and clinical services while simultaneously addressing the vital conditions that help communities thrive.

High-Level Strategies	MSHF and MSRMC will work collaboratively over the next three to five years to improve transitions of care, expand hospital services, and increase workforce capacity.			Over the next three to five years, MSHF will invest in and resource opportunities that support the economic stability and mobility of Mat-Su residents.		
Top Health Priorities	Safe, Reliable, & Affordable Transportation	Health Services for Every Resident	Accessible & Affordable Childcare	Safe & Stable Housing	Nutritious Food	Community Places & Spaces
Distinct Approaches	Build community capacity to implement a coordinated system of non-emergent medical transport.	<p>Increase capacity and coordination in the adult and adolescent behavioral health continuum of care.</p> <p>Expand services and invest in workforce development to increase capacity for primary and specialty care.</p> <p>Collaborate with the State of Alaska on efforts in the Mat-Su to ensure compliance with recently adopted Medicaid laws and regulations.</p>	Support and expand quality childcare and early education in the Mat-Su.	Support a functioning community coalition to implement the housing action plan.	Expand local food access and resources that support long-term stability to reduce food insecurity.	Invest in and resource initiatives that foster community connections, belonging, and civic muscle.



Strategy 1

Mat-Su Health Foundation and Mat-Su Regional Medical Center will work collaboratively over the next three to five years to improve transitions of care, expand hospital services, and increase workforce capacity.

To effectively bridge the gap between clinical care and community wellness, Mat-Su Health Foundation and Mat-Su Regional Medical Center are launching a five-year strategy centered on system integration and workforce sustainability to fill gaps in health service delivery. By addressing critical access barriers—such as the lack of non-emergent medical transport, limited behavioral health beds, and the shortage of local childcare—this collaborative aims to create a seamless continuum of care that extends far beyond the hospital walls.

The intended outcomes focus on measurable regional improvements: reducing emergency department strain and readmission rates through better transitions of care, shortening Medicaid enrollment windows to improve financial access, and expanding the local healthcare talent pipeline through the establishment of a Teaching Health Center and recruitment incentives. Ultimately, this plan seeks to build a health services ecosystem where logistical barriers are removed and residents can receive timely, high-quality, specialized care without leaving the Mat-Su Borough.

Each approach and related activities are detailed below, along with the alignment to the vital conditions and urgent services of the Well-Being Portfolio. Each approach identifies impacts, outcomes, and outputs defined as follows:

- **Implementation Activities, Inputs, and Outputs:** These are directly tied to the effectiveness of the hospital and Foundation, and focus on what we do and how we do it.
- **2030 Outcomes:** These are the measurable changes we hope to achieve based on what we do and how we do, often having direct effect on individuals.
- **Anticipated Impact:** This is the outcome we aspire to achieve and have the least direct influence over. We can use population health indicators as background vital signs for the systems we're hoping to change.



Approach 1

Build community capacity to implement a coordinated system of non-emergent medical transport.

Well-Being Portfolio

- Reliable Transportation
- Basic Needs for Health & Safety

Anticipated Impact: These efforts will improve access to non-emergent, follow-up, and routine care—including prescription services—reducing delays in accessing care, preventable hospital stays, and overuse of emergency services for non-emergent needs and improving health outcomes.

Implementation Activities & Inputs

- Identify gaps and explore opportunities, e.g. mobile integrated health
- Convene partners willing to operate and/or scale services
- Determine feasibility and associated costs
- Fund and/or leverage funds for community organizations to provide services

Implementation Outputs

- Gaps and opportunities identified
- Identified partners and number of convenings
- Feasibility study completed
- Number and amount of grants awarded
- Number of patients served and for what purpose

2030 Outcomes

- Decreased readmissions
- Increased participation in post-discharge follow-up care
- Decreased non-emergent EMS calls
- Reduced avoidable delays from transportation barriers

Approach 2

Increase capacity and coordination in the adult and adolescent behavioral health continuum of care.

Well-Being Portfolio

- Acute Care for Illness & Injury
- Basic Needs for Health & Safety
- Addiction Treatment

Anticipated Impact: Building on 12+ years of systems work in behavioral health (BH), this approach will ensure adults and adolescents experiencing behavioral health crises have the appropriate level of care, reducing overuse of the emergency department (ED), improving transitions of care, and expanding access to routine behavioral healthcare.

Implementation Activities & Inputs

- Expand inpatient behavioral health capacity for adult and adolescent acute care services
- Identify gaps in transitions of care, especially for adolescent services
- Build capacity and fund community organizations to fill gaps
- Expand the mental health professional and provider workforce

Implementation Outputs

- BH hospital admissions
- Gaps identified in transitions of care for adults and adolescents
- Number and amount of grants funded to fill gaps
- Number of new BH providers (paraprofessional and professional) from grant dollars
- Number of new BH providers hired to MSRMC

2030 Outcomes

- Decreased readmissions
- Decreased ED utilization for emergent BH needs
- Decreased patient wait times
- Increased number of BH paraprofessionals and professionals across the continuum
- Community members report improved experiences accessing care

Approach 3

Expand services and invest in workforce development to increase capacity for primary and specialty care.

Well-Being Portfolio

- Meaningful Work & Wealth
- Basic Needs for Health & Safety
- Acute Care for Illness & Injury

Anticipated Impact: These activities help create pathways to skilled careers in healthcare by training locally and recruiting talented workforce to the Mat-Su, improving access to care and residents' ability to receive care without leaving the Mat-Su.

Implementation Activities & Inputs

- Participate in the development of a Teaching Health Center
- Complete workforce assessment to determine gaps and needs in Mat-Su health services workforce
- Explore opportunities to invest in local training programs
- Explore options for incentivizing recruitment, e.g., loan repayment
- Recruit providers to MSRMC to fill gaps in services

Implementation Outputs

- Number of residents enrolled in Teaching Health Center
- Workforce assessment completed, gaps and opportunities identified
- Additional training opportunities identified
- Number and type of providers recruited to fill gaps in services

2030 Outcomes

- Increase in the number of primary care providers
- Increase in the number of specialty care providers
- Expansion and utilization of services at MSRMC
- Community members report improved experiences accessing care
- Community members report ability to receive needed care in the Mat-Su



Approach 4

Collaborate with the State of Alaska on efforts in the Mat-Su to ensure compliance with recently adopted Medicaid laws and regulations.

Well-Being Portfolio

- Basic Needs for Health & Safety
- Acute Care for Illness & Injury

Anticipated Impact: These efforts will sustain or improve Medicaid enrollment, mitigate the potential loss of benefits, and retain methods of payment and access to preventative, routine, and urgent health services for low-income, Medicaid eligible residents.

Implementation Activities & Inputs

- Explore staffing and contracting models with the state Medicaid office
- Establish a local enrollment specialist to expedite Medicaid enrollment

Implementation Outputs

- Determined model and agreement with state Medicaid office
- Local enrollment specialist established in the Mat-Su
- Number enrolled in Medicaid vs Number of Medicaid eligible
- Number of days to enroll in Medicaid

2030 Outcomes

- Decrease in the number of days to enroll in Medicaid
- Sustained or increased Medicaid eligible enrollment
- Sustained Medicaid revenue

Approach 5

Support and expand access to quality childcare and early childhood education in the Mat-Su.

Well-Being Portfolio

- Meaningful Work & Wealth
- Lifelong Learning

Anticipated Impact: These activities will improve capacity of and access to childcare services in the Mat-Su, especially for the healthcare workforce, improving workforce participation, kindergarten readiness, and early childhood protective factors.

Implementation Activities & Inputs

- Determine need and feasibility of childcare services at MSRMC and outpatient locations
- Include childcare workforce as part of the broader healthcare workforce assessment
- Explore how MSHF could support capacity building, quality, and stability for childcare and early education providers beyond funding
- Fund projects that expand capacity, quality, and stability of childcare and early education

Implementation Outputs

- Needs assessment and feasibility completed and opportunities identified
- Workforce assessment completed, gaps and opportunities identified
- Number and amount of grants funded to fill gaps and increase capacity
- Number of new childcare and early education providers from grant dollars
- Number of new childcare spots added by MSRMC and grant funded projects

2030 Outcomes

- MSRMC workforce participation and satisfaction
- Increase in Mat-Su childcare provider quality ratings utilizing the Learn and Grow Framework
- Decreased number of families on waitlists



Strategy 2

Over the next three to five years, Mat-Su Health Foundation will invest in and resource opportunities that support the economic stability and mobility of Mat-Su residents.

The second strategy focuses on the Social Determinants of Health (SDOH), prioritizing long-term economic mobility and household stability for residents over the next three to five years. By investing in vital conditions—specifically affordable housing, nutritious food, and community connectivity—MSHF aims to move beyond emergency relief toward upstream solutions.

This approach leverages high-functioning community coalitions to drive the regional housing action plan and strengthen the food security infrastructure. The strategy also expands on the Foundation’s efforts to support belonging and civic muscle by investing in communities and developing relationships.

Each approach and related activities are detailed below, along with the alignment to the vital conditions and urgent services of the Well-Being Portfolio. Each approach identifies impacts, outcomes, and outputs defined as follows:

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Approach 1

Support a functioning community coalition to implement the housing action plan.

Well-Being Portfolio

- Humane Housing • Homeless Services

Anticipated Impact: These efforts will lead to a more holistic housing continuum in Mat-Su with coordinated pathways out of homelessness, services for homelessness prevention, and access to affordable and supportive housing.

Implementation Activities & Inputs

- Invest in capacity building of the Mat-Su Community Homeless Action Board
- Fund community-based organizations and capacity building to expand housing continuum
- Fund infrastructure developments that increase access to affordable housing
- Expand data infrastructure for housing needs and homelessness

Implementation Outputs

- Gaps in housing continuum addressed
- Number and amount of grants funded to fill gaps
- Number and types of beds available
- Number and types of units available
- Number of organizations participating in coordinated entry
- Identified data gaps

2030 Outcomes

- Functioning Community Homeless Action Board
- Action Board milestones are achieved
- Improved local data on housing needs and homelessness

Approach 2

Expand local food access and resources that support long-term stability to reduce food insecurity.

Well-Being Portfolio

- Basic Needs for Health & Safety • Unemployment & Food Assistance

Anticipated Impact: These activities aim to move resources upstream to support infrastructure, policies, and education that increase food security by addressing the four main dimensions: availability, access, utilization, and stability.

Implementation Activities & Inputs

- Strengthen advocacy capacity of the Mat-Su Food Coalition
- Increase awareness of federal funding to support infrastructure development and sustainability, e.g. Mat-Su farmer participation in TEFAP
- Fund community-based organizations and capacity building that support stability and education

Implementation Outputs

- Number and amount of grants funded to support stability and/or education
- Number and type of infrastructure funded
- Number and type of education opportunities funded
- Number of Mat-Su farmers participating in TEFAP
- Amount of local produce distributed through TEFAP

2030 Outcomes

- Increase farmer participation in the emergency food assistance program (TEFAP)
- Advocacy outcomes of the Alaska Food Coalition and Mat-Su Food Coalition that benefit the Mat-Su

Approach 3

Invest and partner in initiatives that foster community connections, social capital, and belonging.

Well-Being Portfolio

- Belonging & Civic Muscle

Anticipated Impact: These activities will strengthen the social fabric and empower individuals in the Mat-Su to reduce social isolation, increase civic participation, and garner an increased sense of belonging among residents.

Implementation Activities & Inputs

- Invest in community infrastructure and programs that facilitate community connections and expand access to recreation, arts, education, and third spaces
- Explore opportunities best suited to foster community connection and belonging, especially among priority populations experiencing loneliness, isolation, and low economic mobility
- Create and support intentional spaces for parents and caregivers to connect (e.g., Hello BABY, community baby showers)
- Invest in parent leadership development and culturally grounded family engagement (e.g., Parent Learning Series, Braided Stories, Parent leadership and professional development)

Implementation Outputs

- Number and amount of infrastructure and program grants funded
- Identified initiatives to foster connection and belonging
- Number of MSHF hosted connection events
- Number of participants at MSHF hosted connection events
- Number of individuals with lived experience engaged in MSHF programmatic work

2030 Outcomes

- Expanded access to recreation, arts, education, and third spaces
- Increased partnerships for promoting social connection, belonging, and civic participation
- Increased engagement and connection with priority populations
- Increased grant funding outside of the core area
- Increased number of first-time applicants to MSHF for grants and scholarships



 **Mat-Su**
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