

**2025 Community Health Needs Assessment**

# **Implementation Strategy**

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**Rapides Regional Medical Center**

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# **Community Health Needs Assessment**



## About Rapides Regional Medical Center

In the spring of 2025, Rapides Regional Medical Center (RRMC) embarked on a comprehensive Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) process to identify and address the key health issues for our community.

Rapides Regional Medical Center (RRMC), based in Alexandria, Louisiana is a for-profit, 346-bed hospital serving central Louisiana. With approximately 1,500 employees, RRMC provides services primarily to residents of Rapides, Avoyelles and Grant parishes. RRMC is accredited by The Joint Commission.

It is RRMC's mission to provide high quality, efficient and compassionate healthcare for our patients and community. Rapides Regional Medical Center provides the following medical services: General Medicine, Trauma, General Surgery, Cardiovascular Surgery, Cardiac Rehabilitation, Neurology, Neurosurgery, Intensive Care and Telemetry, Oncology Services, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Orthopedic Services, Respiratory Services, Lithotripsy and various Outpatient Services. The Medical Staff includes more than 250 physicians and more than 60 specialties.

Rapides Regional Medical Center maintains a department dedicated to addressing its outreach objectives of serving the entire community, not only those who come through its doors. Building on a long tradition of service, the Community Outreach Department utilizes hospital strengths alongside those of other well-established community partners. This strategy allows RRMC to better understand and reach the most vulnerable sectors of the community, while meeting pressing healthcare needs. The goal is to improve the community's health status by empowering citizens to make healthy life choices.

Hospital facts and figures:

- 346 licensed beds

RRMC completed its last Community Health Needs Assessment in 2022.

## Definition of the Community Served

RRMC's community, as defined for the purpose of the Community Health Needs Assessment, includes the three-parish Service Area in Central Louisiana, including Avoyelles, Grant, and Rapides parishes. This community definition was determined based on the ZIP codes of residence of recent patients of Rapides Regional Medical Center. A geographical description of the study area is illustrated in the following map.



## Significant Health Needs of the Community

The following “Areas of Opportunity” represent the significant health needs of the community, based on the information gathered through this Community Health Needs Assessment. From this data, opportunities for health improvement exist in the area with regard to the following health issues (see also the summary tables presented in the following section).

The Areas of Opportunity were determined after consideration of various criteria including: standing in comparison with benchmark data (particularly national data); identified trends; the preponderance of significant findings within topic areas; the magnitude of the issue in terms of the number of persons affected; and the potential health impact of a given issue. These also take into account those issues of greatest concern to the community stakeholders (key informants) giving input to this process.

### AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY IDENTIFIED THROUGH THIS ASSESSMENT

ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE SERVICES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Barriers to Access               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Appointment Availability</li> <li>○ Difficulty Finding a Physician</li> <li>○ Lack of Transportation</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Primary Care Physician Ratio</li> <li>▪ Reliance on the Internet for Health Care Information</li> <li>▪ Ratings of Local Health Care</li> </ul>
CANCER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Leading Cause of Death</li> <li>▪ Cancer Deaths               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Including Lung Cancer and Colorectal Cancer Deaths</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Cancer Incidence               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Including Lung Cancer and Colorectal Cancer</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Cancer Prevalence</li> <li>▪ Female Breast Cancer Screening</li> <li>▪ Cervical Cancer Screening</li> </ul>
DIABETES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Diabetes Prevalence</li> <li>▪ Prevalence of Borderline/Pre-Diabetes</li> <li>▪ Kidney Disease Deaths</li> <li>▪ Kidney Disease Prevalence</li> <li>▪ Key Informants: <i>Diabetes</i> ranked as top concern.</li> </ul>
DISABLING CONDITIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Multiple Chronic Conditions</li> <li>▪ Activity Limitations</li> <li>▪ High-Impact Chronic Pain</li> <li>▪ Alzheimer’s Disease Deaths</li> <li>▪ Caregiving</li> </ul>
HEART DISEASE & STROKE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Leading Cause of Death</li> <li>▪ Heart Disease Deaths</li> <li>▪ Heart Disease Prevalence</li> <li>▪ Stroke Deaths</li> <li>▪ Stroke Prevalence</li> <li>▪ High Blood Pressure Prevalence</li> <li>▪ High Blood Cholesterol Prevalence</li> <li>▪ Overall Cardiovascular Risk</li> <li>▪ Key Informants: <i>Heart Disease &amp; Stroke</i> ranked as a top concern.</li> </ul>

## AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY (continued)

HOUSING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Housing Conditions</li> <li>▪ Availability of Affordable Housing</li> <li>▪ Key Informants: <i>Social Determinants of Health (especially Housing)</i> ranked as a top concern.</li> </ul>
INFANT HEALTH & FAMILY PLANNING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Low-Weight Births</li> <li>▪ Infant Deaths</li> <li>▪ Teen Births</li> </ul>
INJURY & VIOLENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Unintentional Injury Deaths               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Including Motor Vehicle Crash Deaths</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Homicide Deaths</li> <li>▪ Violent Crime Experience</li> <li>▪ Intimate Partner Violence</li> <li>▪ Key Informants: <i>Injury &amp; Violence</i> ranked as a top concern.</li> </ul>
MENTAL HEALTH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ “Fair/Poor” Mental Health</li> <li>▪ 3+ Days of Poor Mental Health in Past Month</li> <li>▪ Diagnosed Depression</li> <li>▪ Symptoms of Chronic Depression</li> <li>▪ Receiving Treatment for Mental Health</li> <li>▪ Key Informants: <i>Mental Health</i> ranked as a top concern.</li> </ul>
NUTRITION, PHYSICAL ACTIVITY & WEIGHT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Low Food Access</li> <li>▪ Difficulty Accessing Fresh Produce</li> <li>▪ Meeting Physical Activity Guidelines</li> <li>▪ Awareness of Others Being Physically Active</li> <li>▪ Local Opportunities to be Physically Active</li> <li>▪ Screen Time Daily [Children]</li> <li>▪ Overweight &amp; Obesity [Adults &amp; Children]</li> <li>▪ Professional Advice About Weight</li> <li>▪ Key Informants: <i>Nutrition, Physical Activity &amp; Weight</i> ranked as a top concern.</li> </ul>
ORAL HEALTH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Regular Dental Care [Adults &amp; Children]</li> </ul>
RESPIRATORY DISEASE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lung Disease Deaths</li> <li>▪ Pneumonia/Influenza Deaths</li> </ul>
SEXUAL HEALTH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ HIV Prevalence</li> <li>▪ Chlamydia Incidence</li> <li>▪ Gonorrhea Incidence</li> </ul>
SUBSTANCE USE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Alcohol-Induced Deaths</li> <li>▪ Unintentional Drug-Induced Deaths</li> <li>▪ Illicit Drug Use</li> <li>▪ Use of Prescription Opioids</li> <li>▪ Key Informants: <i>Substance Use</i> ranked as a top concern.</li> </ul>
TOBACCO USE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cigarette Smoking</li> <li>▪ Professional Advice to Quit Smoking</li> <li>▪ Use of Vaping Products</li> </ul>

## Community Feedback on Prioritization of Health Needs

Prioritization of the health needs identified in this assessment (“Areas of Opportunity” above) was determined based on a prioritization exercise conducted among providers and other community leaders (representing a cross-section of community-based agencies and organizations) as part of the Online Key Informant Survey.

In this process, these key informants were asked to rate the severity of a variety of health issues in the community. Insofar as these health issues were identified through the data above and/or were identified as top concerns among key informants, their ranking of these issues informed the following priorities:

1. Substance Abuse
2. Mental Health
3. Diabetes
4. Nutrition, Physical Activity & Weight
5. Injury & Violence
6. Heart Disease and Stroke
7. Housing (Social Determinants of Health)
8. Cancer
9. Tobacco Use
10. Disabling Conditions
11. Access to Health Care Services
12. Sexual Health
13. Oral Health
14. Infant Health & Family Planning
15. Respiratory Diseases

## Hospital Implementation Strategy

Rapides Regional Medical Center will use the information from this Community Health Needs Assessment to develop an Implementation Strategy to address the significant health needs in the community. While the hospital will likely not implement strategies for all the health issues listed above, the results of this prioritization exercise will be used to inform the development of the hospital's action plan to guide community health improvement efforts in the coming years.

Note: An evaluation of the hospital's past activities to address the needs identified in prior CHNAs can be found as an appendix to this report.



# **Implementation Strategy**





## Implementation Strategy Adoption

This summary outlines Rapides Regional Medical Center's plan (Implementation Strategy) to address our community's health needs by 1) sustaining efforts operating within a targeted health priority area; 2) developing new programs and initiatives to address identified health needs; and 3) promoting an understanding of these health needs among other community organizations and within the public itself.

On November 18, 2025, the RRMCC Community Benefit Committee approved this Implementation Strategy to undertake the outlined measures to meet the health needs of the community.

This Implementation Strategy document is posted on the hospital's website at:  
<http://rapidesregional.com/about/rapides-cares.com>

## Hospital-Level Community Benefit Planning

### Priority Health Issues To Be Addressed

In consideration of the top health priorities identified through the CHNA process — and taking into account hospital resources and overall alignment with the hospital's mission, goals and strategic priorities — it was determined that RRMCC would focus on developing and/or supporting strategies and initiatives to improve:

- Diabetes, Nutrition, Physical Activity & Weight
- Heart Disease & Stroke
- Cancer
- Injury and Violence
- Access to Healthcare services
- Maternal & Infant Health

## Priority Health Issues That Will Not Be Addressed & Why

In acknowledging the wide range of priority health issues that emerged from the CHNA process, RRMC determined that it could only effectively focus on those which it deemed most pressing, most under-addressed, and most within its ability to influence.

Health Priorities Not Chosen for Action	Reason
Mental Health	RRMC has limited resources, services and expertise available to address Mental Health and Disorders. Other community organizations have infrastructure and programs in place to better meet this need. Limited resources excluded this as an area chosen for action.
Substance Abuse & Tobacco	RRMC has limited resources, services and expertise available to address alcohol, tobacco and other drug issues. Other community organizations have infrastructure and programs in place to better meet this need. Limited resources excluded this as an area chosen for action.
Sexual Health	RRMC believes that this priority area falls more within the purview of the health department and other community organizations. Limited resources and lower priority excluded this as an area chosen for action.
Potentially Disabling Conditions	Advisory Committee members felt that more pressing health needs existed. Limited resources and lower priority excluded this as an area chosen for action.
Oral Health	Advisory Committee members felt that more pressing health needs existed. Limited resources and lower priority excluded this as an area chosen for action.
Respiratory Diseases	Advisory Committee members felt that more pressing health needs existed. Limited resources and lower priority excluded this as an area chosen for action.
Housing (Social Determinants of Health)	RRMC believes that this priority area falls more within the purview of the local government and other community organizations. Limited resources excluded this as an area chosen for action.

## Implementation Strategies & Action Plans

The following displays outline Rapides Regional Medical Center's plans to address those priority health issues chosen for action in the FY2023-FY2025 period.

## Diabetes, Nutrition, Physical Activity and Weight

### Community Partners/ Planned Collaboration

- American Diabetes Association
- American Heart Association
- Junior League of Alexandria

### Goal

**To increase awareness of nutrition, physical activity and weight status as contributing factors in chronic health diseases (diabetes, heart disease and cancer)**

### Timeframe

FY2026-FY2028

### Scope

These strategies will focus on the residents in the service area.

### Strategies & Objectives

**Strategy #1: Provide free Diabetes/Nutrition classes.**

**Strategy #2: Promote physical activity through sponsorship of active community events, i.e. 5K runs, bicycle events, sporting events.**

**Strategy #3: Provide nutritional information and healthy lifestyle recommendations at various community events/health fairs.**

**Strategy #5: Participate in Great Strides Diabetes Walk.**

### Financial Commitment

Diabetes/Nutrition Classes - \$1,000  
Community event sponsorship - \$50,000  
Health fairs/Community Events - \$1,500  
Great Strides Diabetes Walk - \$1,000

### Anticipated Impact

- 100 participants in Diabetes/Nutrition Classes
- Sponsorship of 50 community events
- Participate in 5 Community Health Fairs

### Plan to Evaluate Impact

- Report number of participants in Diabetes/Nutrition Classes
- Report number of community events sponsored
- Report Health Fair participants

### Results

*Pending*

## Heart Disease & Stroke

### Community Partners/ Planned Collaboration

- American Heart Association
- American Stroke Association
- National Institutes of Health
- American Red Cross

### Goal

To educate service area residents on cardiovascular health.

### Timeframe

FY2026-FY2028

### Scope

These strategies will focus on the residents in the service area.

### Strategies & Objectives

**Strategy #1: Provide educational materials, presentations and screenings to community residents on cardiovascular health.**

**Strategy #2: Educate the community on availability of free resource – Heart Health profiler.**

**Strategy #3: Provide Basic Life Support (BLS) training to community organizations.**

**Strategy #4: Educate the community on stroke awareness with Tackle Stroke and Bag a Stroke program.**

### Financial Commitment

Education Materials - \$1500  
Community BLS training - \$1,000  
Stroke Community Events - \$2500

### Anticipated Impact

- 500 service area residents educated on cardiovascular health
- 500 Heart Health Profiler assessments completed
- BLS training to 100 community residents
- 2,000 Tackle Stroke/Bag A Stroke participants

### Plan to Evaluate Impact

- Report number of service area residents educated on cardiovascular health
- Report number of Heart Health profiler assessments completed
- Report number of community residents trained in BLS
- Report number of Tackle Stroke/Bag a Stroke participants

### Results

*Pending*

<b>Cancer</b>	
<b>Community Partners/ Planned Collaboration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cancer Screening Project</li> <li>• American Cancer Society</li> <li>• Colon Cancer Alliance</li> <li>• American Academy of Dermatology</li> <li>• National Council on Skin Cancer Prevention</li> </ul>
<b>Goal</b>	<b>To educate service area residents on cancer prevention and screenings</b>
<b>Timeframe</b>	FY2026-FY2028
<b>Scope</b>	These strategies will focus on the residents in the service area.
<b>Strategies &amp; Objectives</b>	<p><b>Strategy #1: Provide educational materials on cancer (colorectal, skin, breast, prostate, cervical, lung) to community groups/health fairs/events.</b></p> <p><b>Strategy #2: Offer a skin cancer screening event.</b></p> <p><b>Strategy #3: Partner with National Council on Skin Cancer Prevention and the American Academy of Dermatology to increase awareness of signs and symptoms of skin cancer by promoting “Don’t Fry Day.”</b></p> <p><b>Strategy #4: Provide monetary support for cancer research and prevention to American Cancer Society.</b></p> <p><b>Strategy #5: Promote breast cancer awareness through Quack for a Cure.</b></p> <p><b>Strategy #6: Participate in Kick Cancer with local high schools to raise cancer awareness and donate money to the American Cancer Society.</b></p>
<b>Financial Commitment</b>	<p>Education materials for cancer awareness/screening -\$1,000</p> <p>Don’t Fry Day - \$250</p> <p>Skin Cancer Event - \$500</p> <p>ACS Donation - \$5,000</p> <p>Quack for A Cure - \$1500</p> <p>Kick Cancer - \$5,000</p>
<b>Anticipated Impact</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 150 participants for “Don’t Fry Day”</li> <li>• 50 participants for skin cancer screening</li> <li>• 500 participants in health fairs/community events</li> <li>• Donation to ACS for cancer research</li> <li>• Donation amount for Kick Cancer</li> </ul>
<b>Plan to Evaluate Impact</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report number of participants for “Don’t Fry Day”</li> <li>• Report number of participants for “Spot Me”</li> <li>• Report number of participants in health fairs/community events</li> <li>• Report ACS donation</li> </ul>
<b>Results</b>	<i>Pending</i>

## Injury and Violence

### Community Partners/ Planned Collaboration

- Louisiana State Police
- Safe Kids
- National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration
- Rapides Senior Citizen Centers
- American College of Surgeons
- Louisiana Passenger Safety Task Force

### Goal

**To decrease traumatic injury in defined service area**

### Timeframe

FY2026-FY2028

### Scope

These strategies will focus on the residents in the service area.

### Strategies & Objectives

**Strategy #1: Partner with Louisiana State Police to conduct Sudden Impact programs including hospital based, on-site, mock crash and mock trial.**

**Strategy #2: Educate community on ATV safety through various events.**

**Strategy #3: Provide fall prevention education targeting senior citizens in service area.**

**Strategy #4: Provide monthly child passenger safety seat checks.**

**Strategy #5: Provide hemorrhage control education to service area residents.**

### Financial Commitment

Sudden Impact - \$12,000  
 ATV Safety Events - \$500  
 Fall Prevention Education - \$500  
 Child Passenger Safety Seat Checks - \$1,500  
 Hemorrhage Control - \$300

### Anticipated Impact

- 2,500 participants in Sudden Impact
- 500 participants in ATV safety events
- 100 participants in fall prevention education
- 100 child seat checks
- 100 participants in hemorrhage control education

### Plan to Evaluate Impact

- Report number of participants in Sudden Impact
- Report number of participants in ATV safety events
- Report number of participants in fall prevention education
- Report number of child seats checked
- Report number educated on hemorrhage control

### Results

*Pending*

## ACCESS TO HEALTH SERVICES

### Community Partners/ Planned Collaboration

- Primary Care Physicians in the Service Area
- Louisiana State University Family Residency and Oral Maxillofacial Programs
- Tulane Gynecology
- Louisiana State University at Alexandria (LSUA)
- Northwestern State University (NSU)
- Central Louisiana Area Healthcare Education Center (CLAHEC)

### Goal

**To increase access to care in the service area  
To provide funding to increase graduation rate, quality of healthcare workforce**

### Timeframe

FY2026-FY2028

### Scope

These strategies will focus on residents in the service area.

### Strategies & Objectives

**Strategy #1: Provide transportation for patients.**

**Strategy #2: Support the LSU Family Residency, LSU Oral Maxillofacial Residency, Tulane Gynecological Residency which provides access to care to the service area residents.**

**Strategy #3: Provide funds to local universities to increase healthcare workforce development.**

**Strategy #4: Collaborate with AHEC to participate in AHEC of a Summer and MedStart programs.**

**Strategy #5: Provide Phlebotomy class and MLS programs.**

### Financial Commitment

Transportation Funds - \$25,000  
LSU Family Residency Program - \$2,500,000  
Nursing Schools - \$50,000  
LSU OMFS Residency - \$300,000  
Tulane Gynecology Residency - \$750,000

### Anticipated Impact

- Provide \$25,000 in transportation funds for patients
- 18 LSU Family Practice residents
- 30 nursing graduates
- 12 AHEC students

### Plan to Evaluate Impact

- Report amount of transportation funds distributed to patients
- Report number of LSU Family residents
- Report number of nursing graduates
- Report amount spent on transportation services

### Results

*Pending*

<b>Maternal/Infant Health</b>	
<b>Community Partners/ Planned Collaboration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nurse Family Partnership</li> <li>• Department of Health and Hospitals/FIMR</li> </ul>
<b>Goal</b>	<b>To improve maternal/infant health in the service area</b>
<b>Timeframe</b>	FY2026-FY2028
<b>Scope</b>	These strategies will focus on the residents in the service area.
<b>Strategies &amp; Objectives</b>	<p><b>Strategy #1: Provide free Childbirth Classes to service area residents – Prepared Childbirth, Breastfeeding, and Sibling.</b></p> <p><b>Strategy #2: Distribute baby packets to expectant mothers providing education, community resources and safe sleep information.</b></p> <p><b>Strategy #2: Participate in local community sponsored baby showers.</b></p>
<b>Financial Commitment</b>	Childbirth Classes - \$3,000 Baby Packets - \$600 Community Baby Showers - \$500
<b>Anticipated Impact</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100 participants in Childbirth Classes</li> <li>• 200 Baby Packets distributed to expectant mothers</li> <li>• 100 participants in Community Baby Showers</li> </ul>
<b>Plan to Evaluate Impact</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report number of participants in Childbirth Classes</li> <li>• Report number of baby packets distributed to expectant mothers</li> </ul>
<b>Results</b>	<i>Pending</i>