

Each Critical Access Hospital must conduct a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) once every three years as mandated by law. Local public health units, seeking to gain/maintain accreditation, conduct an assessment every five years. CHNAs completed by the Center for Rural Health (CRH) include secondary data review, community focus groups, key informant interviews, and a community survey. This fact sheet presents key community strengths and opportunities from the Turtle Lake service area 2022 CHNA.

The Turtle Lake service area comprises central McLean, Sheridan, and Oliver counties whose population is approximately 12,842 per 2018 census. The percentage of residents, ages 65 and older, is 8.5% higher for McLean County (24.2%) than the North Dakota average (15.7%).

### Community Strengths

The top three assets identified in the community survey included that people in this area are friendly, helpful, and supportive; healthcare was one of the best things about service and resources; along with it being an active faith community. Other community assets include the availability of recreational and sports activities. The community also reports that people who live here are involved in their community.

### Health Outcomes and Factors

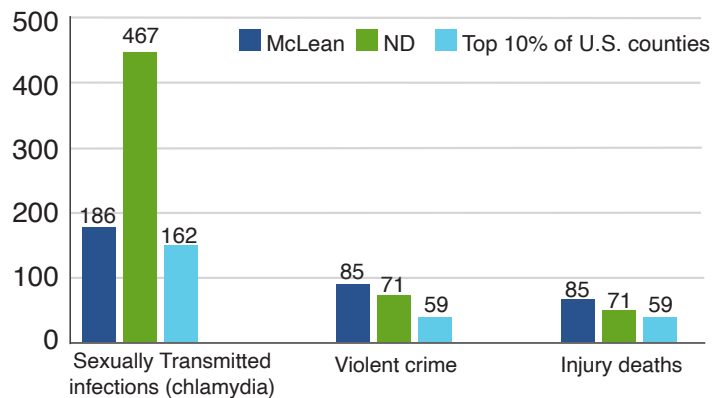
In review of secondary data, only 15% of McLean County residents reported poor or fair health. However, the county had a greater percentage of residents reporting excessive drinking, physical inactivity, adult smoking, and obesity. See Table 1.

**Table 1. Health Factors by % of Population, 2021**

	McLean	ND	Top 10% U.S.
Uninsured	9%	8%	6%
Excessive drinking	24%	24%	15%
Access to exercise opportunities	29%	74%	91%
Physical inactivity	27%	23%	19%
Adult obesity	35%	34%	26%
Adult smokers	20%	20%	16%

Injury deaths were more prevalent in McLean County (89 deaths per 100,000 residents) than in the state overall (71 per 100,000 residents) and the top 10% of U.S. counties (59 per 100,000 residents). See Figure 1.

**Figure 1. Cases per 100,000 Population, 2021**



In 2019, data show victims of child abuse and neglect, requiring services (rate per 1,000 children ages 0-17), was 14.44 in McLean County, while ND was 9.98. Medicaid recipients (% of population ages 0-20) were 35.1% for McLean County, which is higher than the ND average of 26.6%. See Table 2 for more information on children’s health factors.

**Table 2. Children’s Health Factors by % of Population**

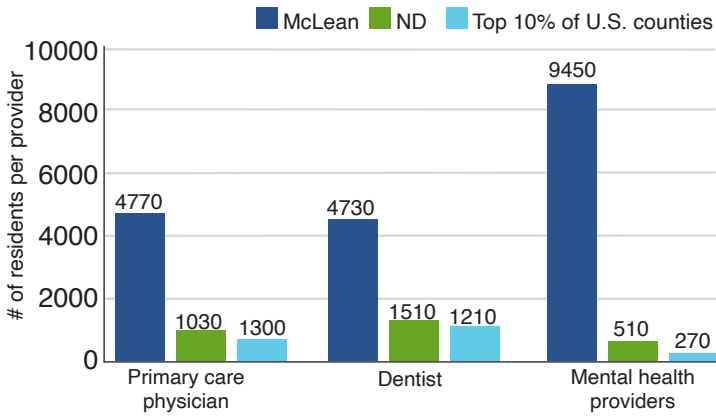
	McLean	ND
Victims of child abuse and neglect requiring services (2019)	14.44	9.98
Child food insecurity (2019)	13.8%	9.6%
Medicaid recipients (2019)	35.1%	26.6%
Children enrolled in Healthy Steps (2020)	1.91%	1.6%
Receiving SNAP (2020)	12.7%	16.9%

In 2021, the teen birth rate for McLean County was 24 births per 1,000 females (15-19 years old), compared to the state average of 20 per 1,000 but higher than the top 10% of U.S. counties (12 per 1,000).

### Healthcare Access

Based on the provider to population ratio, McLean County has fewer residents per single provider in all categories (dentist, primary care physicians, and mental health providers). Mental health providers topped at 9,450 residents per one provider, compared to the state at 510 and the top 10% of the U.S. at 270. In addition, primary care physicians and dentists followed suit. See Figure 2.

**Figure 2. Provider to Population Ratios, 2021**



## Community Concerns

In a survey conducted by CRH, residents identified up to three primary community concerns. The top two concerns were attracting and retaining young families and alcohol use and abuse for youth. Drug and alcohol use and abuse for adults, smoking and tobacco use, and not enough places for exercise/wellness activities made the top six. See Table 3.

**Table 3. Community Concerns, 2022**

Community Concerns	%
Alcohol use and abuse—youth	20
Attracting and retaining young families	20
Assisted living options	17
Bullying/cyberbullying—youth	17
Not enough jobs with a livable wage	16
Drug use and abuse—youth	15

### In September 2021, a community focus group identified their top concerns as:

1. Attracting and retaining young families
2. Availability of resources to help the elderly stay in their homes
3. Having enough child daycare services
4. Not enough places for exercise/wellness activities

### In the survey, community members also identified perceived barriers (up to three), specifically related to accessing local healthcare. The top five barriers were:

1. Concerns about confidentiality (39%)
2. Not enough specialists (39%)
3. Don't know about local services (17%)
4. Poor quality of care (11%)
5. Not enough providers (MD, DO, NP, PA) (11%)

Individuals also indicated what specific healthcare services, if any, they felt should be added locally. The number one desired service to add locally was mental health services. Other requested services included cardiac rehab, fitness programs, and palliative care.

## Steps Undertaken Since 2019 CHNA

CHI St. Alexius Health Turtle Lake has taken steps to address all five of the top concerns identified in the 2019 assessment. CHI St. Alexius Health Turtle Lake met with the Turtle Lake Community Association (TLCHA) in regard to retaining primary care providers and nurses, as this item was one of the concerns. TLCHA matched student loan repayment funds in a repayment program. In an effort to keep the elderly population in their homes, they now are doing telehealth visits, and the clinic will consider implementing chronic care management as well. The hospital recently did a marketing wage adjustment for nonprofessional positions and are in the process of reviewing other positions. CHI St. Alexius Health Turtle Lake has offered “fitness” challenges with incentives for community members in regard to fitness options. These challenges are usually offered once or twice a year.

## Implementation Strategies

Hospitals and local public health units prepare implementation strategies as a blueprint for meeting needs identified in a CHNA. Access the complete and community-specific CHNA Reports and Implementation Strategies at, [ruralhealth.und.edu/projects/community-health-needs-assessment/reports](http://ruralhealth.und.edu/projects/community-health-needs-assessment/reports).

### Full Report

Long, H., & Nissen, K., Turtle Lake Service Area: Community Health Needs Assessment, 2022.

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### For More Information

Visit the website, [ruralhealth.und.edu/projects/community-health-needs-assessment](http://ruralhealth.und.edu/projects/community-health-needs-assessment) or contact:

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