



2022 Community Health Needs Assessment Executive Summary

Background & Methodology:

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 requires charitable hospital organizations to conduct a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) and to adopt an implementation strategy to meet the community health needs identified through the CHNA at least once every three years. The overall goal of the assessment is to identify important health challenges in our community. Our research focused on adding to the growing body of knowledge about people with disabilities and their health by emphasizing diversity, equity, and inclusion of people with disabilities; social isolation and societal attitudes toward people with disabilities (key social determinants of health and potential barriers to inclusion for people with disabilities); and access to health-related services via telemedicine and virtual health care services. Our CHNA was conducted by the Muhlenberg College Institute of Public Opinion (MCIPO) utilizing a multi-pronged research method. First, this study updated and extended information derived from key secondary sources of data. Second, this study summarized findings from a telephone-based survey administered to a randomly selected sample of 1,019 residents in Lehigh, Northampton, and Monroe counties. Third, this study included findings from two forums of key stakeholders (e.g., people with disabilities, heads of public and private agencies serving the disability community, educators, elected representatives, etc.) where participants shared additional insight about diversity, equity, and inclusion concerns for disabled people and validated the secondary and survey data. Lastly, this study reflected on what was learned from the previous CHNA conducted in 2018-2019. Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Network's (GSRN) senior leadership team and other key leaders reviewed the research to determine our health priorities moving forward this cycle.

Health Priority 1: Produce and Promote Opportunities for External Education

- * Although our community has made notable progress in some areas of life for people with disabilities, much work remains.
- * There are gaps in perceptions of community inclusiveness which suggest that disability is not only an axis of inequality, but also intersects in important and complex ways with other categories of identity.
- * Many disabled individuals continue to experience discrimination and unfair treatment, including in health care settings.
- * To continue to move the needle forward, education needs to be provided to organizations and companies on how to interact with individuals with disabilities and the importance of including disability with DEI efforts.

Health Priority 2: Produce and Facilitate Opportunities for Internal Education

- * As an organization that serves individuals with disabilities, Good Shepherd needs to apply the findings from the research conducted to ensure that its lives what it preaches.
- * Just as our community needs to be educated on how to interact with individuals with disabilities, so too does all current and future Good Shepherd Associates.
- * Organizationally, it is also important to include disability with DEI efforts.

Health Priority 3: Foster partnerships with colleges, universities, and community organizations for further education and research

- * To meet the need of improving the lives of individuals with disabilities, there are opportunities to seek partnerships with higher education institutions for additional research in partnership with Good Shepherd Learns, Creates and Research/Innovation Grants.
- * It is also important to seek out and facilitate speaking opportunities to disability/diversity, equity and inclusion at area colleges, universities and community organization to provide further education.