

Kaiser Permanente Northwest

Community Health Needs Assessment



As a nonprofit health care provider, Kaiser Permanente Northwest is dedicated to caring for the health needs of the community, and addressing the social and environmental factors that create barriers to health.

In order to better understand the needs of each community we serve, we regularly conduct a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). This process not only informs our community investments, helping us make long-term, sustainable change, but it also allows us to deepen the relationships we have with partner organizations and holds us accountable to our mission as we work together to improve community health.

Our carefully selected investments, the dedication of our organizational resources, and our long-standing commitment to providing high-quality care and service are an investment in the total health of the communities where we all live, learn, work, play, and thrive.

Our process

Kaiser Permanente conducts a CHNA every three years to inform its community investments and meet federal regulatory obligations. The CHNA process provides a rigorous method for identifying high-priority health needs in communities and developing corresponding strategies to address those needs.





During the CHNA process, Kaiser Permanente collects information using a variety of tools and sources – public data and analytical mapping tools, online surveys, and listening sessions conducted with community members, representatives of underserved populations, community health workers, and local health system leaders – to identify a list of community health needs.

We then select which needs to focus on by considering which needs are most pressing and which needs we are best equipped to address with our unique organizational assets.



What we discovered

The Kaiser Permanente Northwest 2022 CHNA process illuminates four high-priority health needs that are most critical to the health and well-being of the communities we serve. These health needs will serve as the foundation for our community health efforts through 2025:

-  **Housing** – Affordable, safe, and stable housing; preventing homelessness; strengthening homeless systems of care; and improving care coordination
-  **Mental Health, Addiction, and Behavioral Health** – Mental health, addiction, and behavioral health care available for all; safe and supportive learning environments in schools; preventing and mitigating intergenerational trauma; and growing the workforce of culturally responsive mental health clinicians
-  **Economic Opportunity/Income and Employment** – Reducing structural barriers and improving opportunities for inclusive economic mobility through education, workforce development, and growing diverse small businesses
-  **Food Security** – Increasing purchasing power by supporting programs that extend food dollars; supporting meal/nutrition distribution in underserved communities; and championing policy, research, and advocacy efforts

How we respond

Kaiser Permanente employs a variety of approaches – grant making, employee volunteerism, strategic collaboration, resource sharing, and internal programs – to respond to community health needs. We work with community partners and key stakeholders to invest in solutions for creating health that are tailored to the strengths and needs of each community we serve.



Housing

GOAL: All people have access to safe, affordable, and stable housing and homelessness becomes a rare, brief occurrence.

OUR RESPONSE

- Provide resources for preserving and increasing the supply of affordable housing.
- Prevent homelessness by supporting evidence-based housing stabilization assistance and expand housing-related legal support for at-risk tenants.
- Strengthen homeless systems of care through data driven approaches to reduce homelessness.
- Support improved coordination among Continuum of Care programs, social service organizations, and housing providers.



Access to Health Care

GOAL: Increase the ability of low-income and underserved individuals in the community to receive the right care, at the right times, in the right settings, from a diverse workforce that meets their needs.

OUR RESPONSE

- Increase access to high quality, culturally appropriate physical, dental, and mental health care and coverage for low-income and underserved populations through Medicaid, charitable health coverage, medical financial assistance, and community access programs.
- Partner with and provide support to safety net organizations and community-based organizations to implement initiatives appropriate for the needs of the populations they serve to advance racial and health equity, including bringing mobile health care services to hard to reach, low-income communities and people experiencing homelessness.
- Invest in growing the diverse, well-supported, trauma-informed workforce, including Traditional Health Workers.



Economic Opportunity/Income and Employment

GOAL: Reduce structural barriers and improve opportunities for inclusive economic mobility.

OUR RESPONSE

- Invest in college and career readiness through clinical placements within Kaiser Permanente and other health care training programs.
- Support organizations that provide culturally and linguistically relevant training and technical assistance to small businesses and entrepreneurs of color.
- Improve individual financial health by supporting housing, workforce development, and other organizations that embed or enhance financial coaching services.



Mental Health, Addiction, and Behavioral Health

GOAL: Improve access to mental and behavioral health for all, support safe learning environment in schools, prevent and mitigate intergenerational trauma, and grow the workforce of culturally responsive mental health providers.

OUR RESPONSE

- Support schools and districts with infrastructure gaps with culturally informed resources, tools, training, and grants.
- Increase availability of crisis services and long-term social supports for individuals with mental health challenges by supporting organizations and efforts that secure and maintain supportive housing.
- Invest in growing the workforce of culturally responsive mental health clinicians.



Food Security

GOAL: All people have consistent access to affordable, culturally specific, nutritious food.

OUR RESPONSE

- Support organizations that increase enrollment in programs that extend food dollars such as in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), and federal school meal programs.
- Support organizations that distribute food such as medical tailored meals, prepared food, produce, or other food and meals to school children, families, and those in underserved communities.
- Support local and state policy, research, and advocacy organizations leading efforts that have a direct impact on community food security strategies.



Our promise

The mission of Kaiser Permanente is to provide high-quality, affordable health care services and to improve the health of our members and the communities we serve. But we cannot do this alone. To achieve more equitable health outcomes and make a meaningful, sustainable impact in the communities we serve, we are committed to collaborating with residents, businesses, community-based organizations, social service providers, and other health systems to co-create solutions that respond to community needs.

The community health needs and strategies articulated here underscore our vision of total health, which is more than just access to medical care. The total health of a person is impacted by physical, mental, social, and community factors. We promise to address racial and health disparities and strive for the highest quality of total health for each individual, family, and community by addressing the root causes of health such as access to care, income and employment, housing, and mental and behavioral health. That's what total health means to us.

Learn more at:

- kp.org/chna
- kp.org/communityreport/nw

Kaiser Permanente Northwest's CHNA process is conducted in association with the Healthy Columbia Willamette Collaborative, a public-private partnership comprised of 15 hospitals, 4 local public health departments, and 2 coordinated care organizations in Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington counties of Oregon, and Clark County in Washington. Gratitude goes to the collaborative and the local community organizations who provide invaluable input for the CHNA.