

The year of publication for the current community health needs assessment.

Sky Lakes Medical Center published its most recent Community Health Needs Assessment in April 2022, and the Community Health Improvement Plan in December of 2022. The needs assessment is based on data collection and analysis conducted during 2021 and includes comments collected in late 2021 and early 2022 after public review of draft versions. This Community Health Needs Assessment reflects the work of the Healthy Klamath Coalition, a multi-sector partnership established to guide community health improvement efforts in Klamath County.

The assessments are regularly reviewed and are updated every three years to serve as a process to move Klamath County toward a healthier future. The current edition marks the fourth assessment, with its earliest version appearing in 2013.

The CHNA describes:

- The community served by Sky Lakes Medical Center
- The community demographics
- How data were obtained
- The health needs of the community
- Primary and chronic disease needs and other health issues of uninsured persons, low-income persons, minority groups, and under-served populations
- The process for identifying and prioritizing community health needs and services to meet those needs
- The process for consulting with persons representing the community's interests
- Information gaps that limit the hospital facility's ability to assess the community's health needs

The top health needs identified in the hospital's most recent community health needs assessment. Include information on geographies, populations or demographic groups affected.

To better understand the health needs of the community it serves, Sky Lakes Medical Center worked with an assortment of community partners to develop a comprehensive Community Health Needs Assessment, which informed the most recent Community Health Improvement Plan, published in 2023. Together, the documents describe and help us understand the population's health and potential ways to address those needs as we work to improving the health of the people in the communities we serve.

The major partners with which Sky Lakes Medical Center engaged for the Community Health Assessment include Klamath County Public Health; Klamath Health Partnership (a.k.a. Klamath Open Door), which operates local federally qualified family medicine and dental clinics; and Cascade Health Alliance, the local Coordinated Care Organization (COO), which oversees care for more than 18,000 Medicaid recipients in the area, also based in Klamath Falls.

Additionally, Klamath Basin Behavioral Health, which serves adults, children and adolescents who are eligible for Medicaid coverage under the Oregon Health Plan in Klamath County, and Sky Lakes Medical Center's Healthy Klamath Department, which actively promotes health-improvement initiatives that align with the Community Health Improvement Plan, contributed time and resources to help complete the assessment. These and other community partners are organized in the Healthy Klamath Coalition.

The coalition represents the talent, assistance and support of local organizations, agencies and businesses including Cascades East Family Medicine Center, a rural residency program and clinic in Klamath Falls; Klamath Tribal Health & Family Services; Oregon Health & Science University's nursing program at Oregon Institute of Technology (OIT) in Klamath Falls; Cascade Health Alliance, the local COO; Klamath Basin Behavioral Health, the local mental health agency; the City of Klamath Falls and Klamath County governments and others.

Sky Lakes, the local Public Health agency, Klamath Health Partnership, and Cascade Health Alliance, the COO, comprise the Healthy Klamath Coalition core leadership. It is this collaboration that also proved instrumental in bringing the Blue Zones Project to Klamath Falls and sustaining its work locally.

Data collected on behalf of Healthy Klamath have helped determine priority areas for the Community Health Improvement Plan. The Healthy Klamath staff continue to coordinate the coalition's activities.

The CHNA documents key findings and recognizes there are myriad causes for poor health; the problem is too large for any one organization to take on alone, further reinforcing the collaborative nature of the Healthy Klamath Coalition.

While the geographic area served by Sky Lakes and its partners covers more than 10,000 square miles in four counties, two of them in northern California, the population is concentrated within the Klamath Falls Urban Growth Boundary (UGB).

[Some data](#) presented via HCI and on the HealthyKlamath.org site include smaller communities within Klamath County. Community health improvement efforts are primarily implemented within the UGB to have the greatest impact on the highest concentration of residents.

[Klamath County's population](#) is approximately 68,739 (2020) with Klamath Falls being the largest city with a large suburban population. The UGB's estimated population is approximately 60% of the total. The region is predominantly non-

Hispanic white, 76.8% (2020). The population of people identifying as Hispanic or Latino is steadily rising at 14.1% in 2020, up from 10% in 2010. The region is also unique in that it has a strong American Indian presence that makes up 5% of the population.

Age plays a significant role on the health of a community, as different life stages tend to experience health outcomes unique to their age. In Klamath County, those 65 and older comprise 22.1% of the population while those under 18 comprise 21.7% (2020).

The median household income in Klamath County is reported to be \$41,900 (2020, down from \$53,000 in 2019), compared to \$67,800 for Oregon, with 65% of children eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (2020). That compares to 32% nationally and 51% in Oregon.

The primary goal of the CHNA is to better understand the health of our community and to develop local strategies to address our community's specific needs and identified priority issues. The CHNA helps set community priorities, establishes benchmarks and monitors trends in the health status of Klamath County residents.

The top health specifically identified in the CHNA include the following: 1) Food insecurity, hunger, 2) Health promotion: Access to services, 3) Mental health, 4) Physical activity; 5) Substance use, 6) Equity.

Food insecurity:

More than 18% of 2021 Klamath County Community Health Assessment survey respondents said they worried about having enough food to eat. The 2022 County Rankings & Roadmaps indicated 15% of Klamath County residents were experiencing hunger, and 13% had limited access to healthy foods. 64% of children are eligible for free or reduced-price school lunches.

Health Promotion: Access to Service:

US News & World Report scored Klamath County 57 of a perfect 100 for hospital bed availability, people with no health insurance, and primary care doctor availability in a 2022 report. In the 2022 County Rankings & Roadmaps, 13% of Klamath County adults were uninsured, with 4% of children uninsured. In 2020, Klamath County was a health professional shortage area for primary care providers for low income clients, dental providers for low income/migrant farm worker/homeless clients, and mental health providers for the geographic region including Lake County.

Mental Health:

Frequent mental distress was experienced by 17% of the residents in the 2022 County Rankings & Roadmaps report. The same report found Klamath County residents experiencing 5.1 poor mental health days each month. There were 23 suicides in 2020, which was the most recent official data released by Oregon Health Authority.

Physical Activity:

In the 2022 County Rankings & Roadmaps, 29% of Klamath County residents were not physically active; 53% had access to exercise opportunities. In 2021, 23% were physically in active.

Substance Use:

In the 2022 County Rankings & Roadmaps, the drug overdose death rate was 41 per 100,000 people. 20% of Klamath County adults reported excessive drinking. Also, 19% of adults were smokers.

| Social determinants of health affecting strategic issues | | | | | | | Lead |
|---|--------|-----------------------|---|---------------|-------------------|---------------|------|
| | Equity | Food security, hunger | Health promotion: Access to services | Mental health | Physical activity | Substance use | |
| Economic stability: employment, income, expenses, debt, medical bills, support | X | X | X | X | | X | |
| Neighborhood and physical environment: housing, transportation, safety, parks, playgrounds, walkability, zip code, geography | X | X | X | X | X | X | |
| Education: literacy, language, early childhood education, vocational training, higher education | X | X | X | X | X | X | |
| Food: hunger, access to healthy options | X | X | X | X | X | | |
| Community and social context: social integration, support systems, community engagement, discrimination, stress | X | X | X | X | X | X | |
| Healthcare system: health coverage, provider availability, provider linguistic and cultural competency, quality of care | X | | X | X | | X | |

agencies for each strategic issue gathered small, multi-sector groups to draft work plans, with measurable objectives, strategies and tasks to form the community health improvement plan. The Community Health Improvement Plan is a living document that will evolve over its three-year lifespan, with changes to objectives, strategies and tasks.

Ways Sky Lakes Medical Center is addressing the significant needs identified in the CHNA and why some needs are not being addressed.

The top five leading causes of death in Klamath County are cancer, heart disease, chronic respiratory diseases, accidents, suicide and almost a fourth of all deaths in Klamath County are tobacco-related. According to the findings within the CHNA, more than half the people in Klamath County have one or more chronic conditions, and most have one or more risk factors for a chronic condition. Risk factors include obesity, lack of physical activity, tobacco use, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol.

Sky Lakes Medical Center is addressing obesity head-on with the programs available at the Sky Lakes Wellness Center, which offers nutrition, exercise, and stress management coaching. Many partner organizations such as Oregon State University's Extension program, often in cooperation with Sky Lakes departments and funded by Sky Lakes, implemented interventions to prevent obesity by nutrition and preparation education. Prior to that, Sky Lakes dietitians regularly presented at no charge to businesses and organizations in the community advocating for better nutrition choices. These and related community health improvement activities involving Sky Lakes amounted to approximately \$450,000 in 2022. Additionally, the community relations department in partnership with Healthy Klamath work to increase physical activity opportunities by providing free classes to the community and raising funding for playgrounds and projects that increase physical activity for all populations. Sky Lakes staff successfully raised 1.4 million dollars in grant funds to be invested in our community's parks to create more physical activity opportunities for youth.

Sky Lakes Medical Center was instrumental in the development of extensive area trails for hiking, a protected bike lane from city-center to a municipal park, the development of a family-friendly play area at a neighborhood park, and the creation of a new downtown park in response to the Blue Zone Project's guidance in collaboration with the Sky Lakes Wellness Center and other Sky Lakes departments. Additionally, Sky Lakes staff have raised funding to increase wayfinding, signage and walking paths in the community totaling \$85,000.

Additionally, Sky Lakes Medical Center has contributed financial and human resources to help create greenspaces in downtown Klamath Falls, including razing dilapidated buildings, increasing public art, and creating a nearly one square-block park, to help rehabilitate a major neighborhood park near the medical center and add a children's play area, and to help create hiking and biking trails in and around the city.

Sky Lakes Medical Center is also a major sponsor of two children-only running series, one each in the spring and fall. Related to obesity is diabetes. Diabetes prevention and lifestyle-change strategies were the focus of a multi-media advertising and awareness campaign coordinated by Sky Lakes Medical Center's diabetes educators. Additionally, Sky Lakes was awarded funding to form a diabetes prevention network to collaborate and expand services to underserved

populations in our community. This HRSA grant funding brought an additional \$900,000 to our community to support diabetes prevention.

Mental health is a growing concern identified in the needs assessment. Klamath County is a vibrant community faced with some concerning mental health challenges. There is a high prevalence of mental health problems and few mental health providers in Klamath County. Mental health issues often lead to other social and physical health issues, creating broader, community-wide problems. Sky Lakes Medical Center operates a Behavioral Health Clinic with staff including a psychiatrist in response to this growing community need. Sky Lakes Medical Center also works in close coordination with Klamath Basin Behavioral Health (KBBH) and supports that organization's role in the community. Additionally, a new strategic priority for Sky Lakes is to form a mental health strategic plan to create a vision for the future of mental health in our community. We hosted the first strategic planning session in May of 2023 and will continue to work with partners to form a mental health collaboration and implement best practices.

Sky Lakes Medical Center also was pivotal in creating the Klamath Works agency, where staff help clients learn how to apply for and retain jobs; the agency is housed in an off-campus Sky Lakes building.

Sky Lakes Medical Center is among the agencies responsible for building a new facility to aid people in mental health crises or seeking alcohol- and substance-abuse rehabilitation therapy services. Sky Lakes Medical Center contributed \$200,000 toward the facility's construction in 2021 and continues to make significant contributions to its operation and program support.

According to the CHNA, the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) has identified Klamath County as a health professional shortage area. To help counter the shortage of providers, Sky Lakes operates the Cascades East Family Medicine Residency program in cooperation with Oregon Health & Science University and staffs the associated clinic. Eight physicians a year study for three years at the Klamath Falls program en route to gaining their Family Medicine specialty. The Sky Lakes investment amounted to \$4.88 million.

Sky Lakes investments in health professions education for nurses was \$1.21 million in 2021 with another \$618,000 for other allied health professionals.

To help develop a new generation of physical therapists, Sky Lakes Medical Center invested \$200,000 to help Oregon Institute of Technology launch a Doctor of Physical Therapy program, to be offered in partnership with Oregon Health & Science University and housed in the \$50 million Sky Lakes Collaborative Health Center on the medical center campus.

Sky Lakes Medical Center also is a major sponsor of high school and community college programs aimed at training nurses and nurse aides, and encouraging student participation in science, technology, engineering, math and medical (STEM&M) curricula.

Sky Lakes Pharmacy has an active residency program to further develop health care resources. Sky Lakes also offers students in a local community college classroom instruction regarding various aspects of bedside care.

Sky Lakes Medical Center is an enthusiastic partner with local schools in athletic as well as academic programs. We actively support a local organization called Klamath Promise, and help them provide scholarships to hundreds of students in Klamath County. Sky Lakes also encourages participation in extra-curricular activities at all levels and has historically provided funding for robotics, health occupations and academic competitions.

Besides providing high-quality healthcare, Sky Lakes Medical Center fulfills its medical mission to the community by providing or subsidizing numerous activities.

CARES (Child Abuse Response and Evaluation Services), a Sky Lakes department, conducts screenings and education to help hundreds of children. Last year, Sky Lakes contributed \$145,500 (net) for those services. At CARES, children who may be victims of abuse receive a well-child medical examination. If a disclosure of abuse is made, they are safe to share their experiences. Staff there assess nearly 400 children annually for possible abuse, most of them sexual abuse cases along with child physical abuse, drug-endangered children, exposure to domestic violence, and neglect. Even if suspected abuse is not verified during an exam, families leave CARES with professional recommendations ranging from a follow-up with a primary care physician to a referral for counseling. CARES follows the family for at least three months after the assessment. If the CARES program was not associated with Sky Lakes Medical Center, the service likely would not exist locally.

A program coordinated by Sky Lakes Family Birth Center is closely associated with the work at CARES. Sky Lakes contributes almost \$10,000 a year and provides staff to help coordinate and provide collateral support in the way of additional multi-media advertising to further the message of the local "Stop the Hurt" anti-child abuse campaign and "Periods of PURPLE Crying" anti-shaken baby campaign.

To help support other community non-profit organizations help the community flourish, Sky Lakes pledged \$60,000 over five years to the Klamath Community Foundation.

Other partnerships funded in 2022 that help ensure the success of programs include Sky Lakes support of:

- Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) for Children of Klamath County with a \$5,000 contribution to help pay for sports/activity fees, instrument rentals, and unfunded medications for children in the local CASA system.

- The “Everyone Swims” program at the community’s only municipal pool with \$15,300 in funding to provide all third-grade students from Klamath County the opportunity to enroll in a week of free swim lessons.
- Over \$100,000 in community benefit grant funds that support various programs, projects, and events to support local non-profit health improvement and community development related work.