



2024-2027 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) in response to the 2023 Kent County Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA)

Introduction

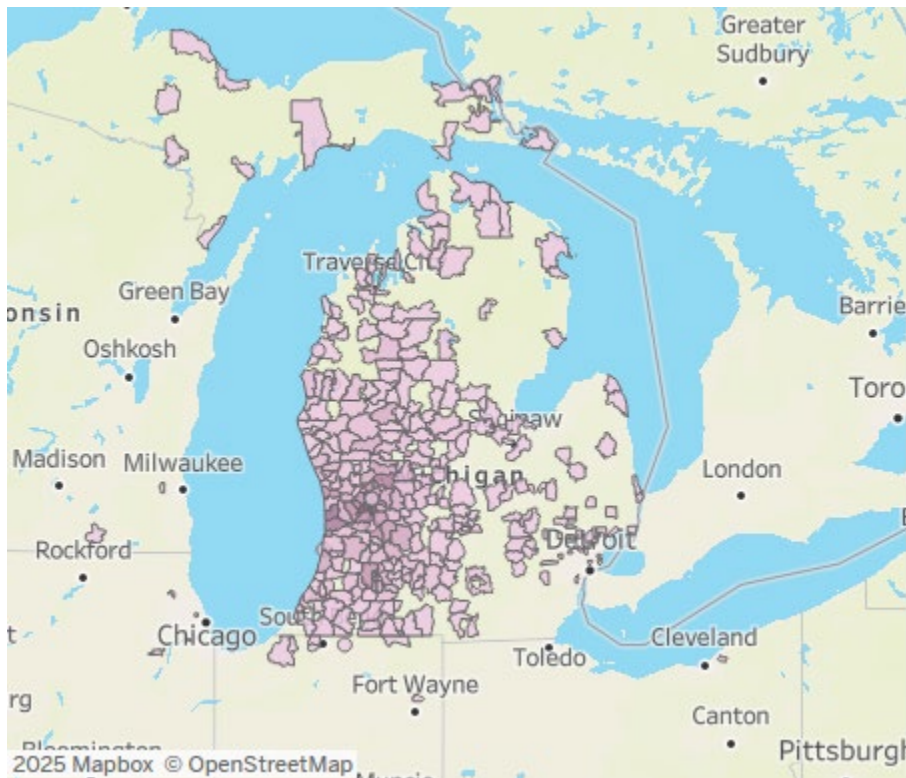
A Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) is part of an ongoing, collaborative health improvement process; the CHNA aims to identify, understand, and prioritize the health-related needs of residents (2023 CHNA, pg. 3).

Results from the CHNA are used as a guide to develop a Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) to address priority areas. The CHNA/CHIP cycle ensures that strategies to improve population health are data-driven and focused on the current needs of those who live, learn, work, and play in Kent County (2023 CHNA, pg. 3).

The 2023 CHNA was conducted by the Kent County Health Department (KCHD), local health systems, and over 60 community-based organizations and dedicated partners, with Mary Free Bed serving as a trusted partner and collaborator in this work.

Mary Free Bed Scope

As a comprehensive rehabilitation provider and one of the largest not-for-profit, independent rehabilitation hospital systems in the country, Mary Free Bed offers specialized physical medicine and rehabilitation (PM&R) programs and services. While Mary Free Bed's CHIP is focused on the results of the Kent County CHNA, we recognize our system includes an alliance of hospitals, including inpatient and outpatient locations across Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Virginia and West Virginia; and therefore, we have a responsibility to support all patients of all counties we serve through our improvement plan.



February 2025 Tableau Graphic of SDoH Dashboard

Dual-Impact

Mary Free Bed employs nearly 2300 employees and serves over 100,000 patients annually. Of those numbers, roughly 1500 employees reside in Kent County, with nearly 50% of the patients we serve also located in Kent County.

Because of this, Mary Free Bed is approaching the 2024-2027 CHIP with an emphasis on an improvement plan that focuses on both employees and patients. This focus allows for a holistic approach in improving the health needs of our community.

Access to Medical Care

Importance and Impact: Access to medical care refers to the timely use of personal health services (such as preventive, diagnostic, treatment, and follow-up care) to achieve the best possible health outcomes. Although access to medical care was prioritized, it's important to note that many of the issues identified by residents also impact access to mental health and dental care. (2023 CHNA, pg. 7)

▪ **Impact Goal #1: TextCare and Mary & Me Health Navigation**

Description:

TextCare: Mary Free Bed began their partnership with TextCare in January 2024 to provide zero-cost medical care option to our employees and their family members. TextCare is a 24/7 virtual health service that provides care by giving our employees and their family members the ability to text a licensed medical provider with any questions big or small regarding their health. All TextCare visits are not cost to our employees and their family members and can save them a trip to a provider, urgent care, or the emergency room. TextCare can treat things like colds, infections, and write or fill prescriptions for non-controlled substances.

Mary & Me: The Mary & Me Healthier Together with Nurse Concierge program is designed to enhance employee health, reduce healthcare costs, and guide individuals through the healthcare system. The Nurse Concierge team specializes in navigating the complexities of your health plan, ensuring you get the most cost-effective options for health care. Our dedicated, knowledgeable nurses are passionate about supporting your health and saving you both time and money.

Goal:

Textcare: To increase the unique utilization user percentage of TextCare services by 10% (annually) to decrease healthcare costs and improve access to care.

Mary & Me: To increase employee participation in the Mary & Me Healthier Together program by 5% each year to improve employee well-being, lower healthcare expenses, and assist employees with accessing appropriate healthcare.

Implementation Strategy:

Textcare: Mary Free Bed introduced the TextCare to employees in January 2024, with our baseline unique utilization user percentage at the end of 2024 at 41.8%. The goal will be achieved by promoting the program through multiple channels, including employee onboarding, Human Resources newsletters, flyers in employee spaces, and other

communication methods, ensuring that employees are well-informed about this convenient, no-cost healthcare option.

Mary & Me: Mary Free Bed introduced the Mary & Me Healthier Together with Nurse Concierge to employees in April 2024 with a baseline employee participation percentage at the end of 2024 of 64%. The goal will be achieved by promoting the program through multiple channels, including employee onboarding, Human Resources newsletters, flyers in employee spaces, and other communication methods, ensuring that employees are well-informed about program's benefits.

Chris McFarlin, Health Navigation Manager, to provide updated TextCare user utilization percentage each year and updated Mary & Me employee participation percentages each year.

■ **Impact Goal #2: Inclusive Care**

Description:

DEIB: Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation is dedicated to advancing diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging (DEIB) through a comprehensive plan that is a priority in our system-wide strategic plan.

Mary Free Bed is committed to embedding DEI+B efforts across the entire system through:

- The hiring of the organization's inaugural Director of DEI+B & Strategic Initiatives in June 2023.
- The development and launching of the organization's DEI+B Council, comprised of members across strategic units that drive planning, implementation, and outcomes.
- A data driven approach that analyzes and measures the organization's progress in areas of diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging as it relates to those we serve and employ.
- The expansion of DEI+B learning and development opportunities, inclusive but not limited to cultural competence and implicit bias training, foundational DEI training, and inclusive leadership development.
- Communications and outreach to support cohesive messaging for internal and external engagement.

Translation Services: Mary Free Bed provides interpreter services to ensure patients receive personalized care. Interpreting services are free of charge for patients and available in person, by phone, and by video conference. Services are provided in various languages for all Limited English Proficient (LEP) patients. We also offer American Sign

Language for patients and families of the deaf and hard of hearing. These services are an important part of the mission of Mary Free Bed because they allow for effective communication between staff and patients.

Goal:

DEIB: To provide a minimum of 15 trainings/workshops centered on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging topics per year to department and/or system site employees to continue to promote an inclusive and equitable workplace where diverse perspectives are valued, and every individual feels respected, heard, valued, and supported.

Translation Services: To increase our archive of translated documents for the top three languages in Kent County for patients and family members by a minimum of 5-10 documents per year.

Implementation Strategy:

DEIB: Mary Free Bed is committed to expanding its DEIB training capacity by sponsoring eight employees to become trained DEIB facilitators, helping to strengthen the organization's culture of inclusivity, equity, and belonging. Additionally, various workshops/presentations at the intersection of health care and DEI+B are offered throughout the year for staff to participate/engage in. This learning and development initiative will ensure a sustainable, internal network of DEIB advocates who can effectively lead sessions, engage employees, and drive ongoing DEIB efforts across the system.

Translation Services: The goal will be achieved by prioritizing key documents and partnering with translator resources. Regular feedback and progress tracking will ensure that 5-10 documents are added per year, enhancing care for LEP patients and family members.

Adriana Almanza, Director DEIB and Strategic Initiatives, to provide DEIB training numbers per year. Adriana Almanza, Director DEIB and Strategic Initiatives, and Ashley Brown, Director Care Management, to provide translated document number per year.

■ **Impact Goal #3: Strokes of Resilience**

Description: Strokes of Resilience is a proposed community-based peer support program for stroke survivors and their caregivers to facilitate transition to participation in the community following rehabilitation. The proposal for this project partners with two community groups; the YMCA and the Area Agency on Aging, in the Grand Rapids and Saginaw regions. This program is intended to better reach and support the approximately 500 stroke survivors served annually on the inpatient unit in Grand

Rapids and increase their access to medical care through Care Navigators within their community.

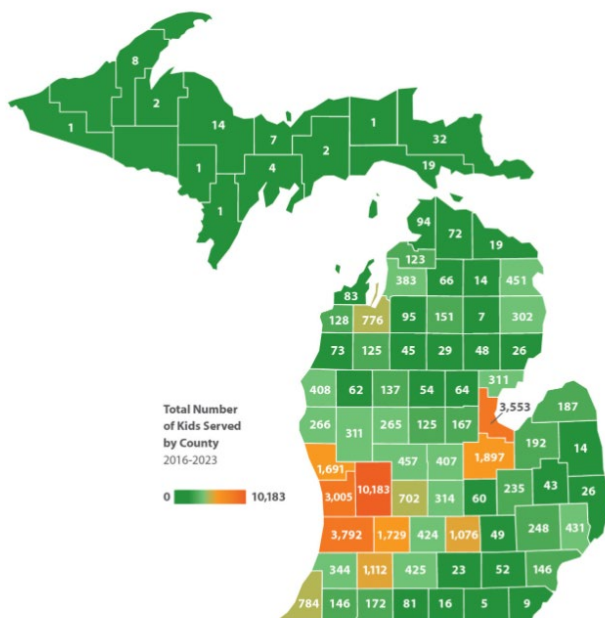
Goal: Apply for external funding and implement the Strokes of Resilience program.

Implementation Strategy: Mary Free Bed Center for Research and Innovation submitted this proposal previously to the Michigan Health Endowment Fund in 2023 and received positive feedback on the concept with concerns about sustainability. We plan to resubmit to the Health Fund's Healthy Aging opportunity in the 2025 cycle which opens in April with applications due in June. This grant mechanism offers funding of \$50,000 to \$500,000 for up to 2 years.

Ashley Fife, Research Administrator, to oversee grant application submission and provide updates about program implementation.

■ Impact Goal #4: Access to Rehabilitation Services

Description: Mary Free Bed is a statewide resource for children's rehabilitation. From 2016 through 2023, we treated 40,718 individual inpatients and outpatients in the Mary Free Bed System and cared for 1,313 out-of-state children — welcoming kids with the most serious and complex conditions. Approximately 60% of Michigan children who need inpatient rehabilitation are treated at Mary Free Bed in Grand Rapids.



In July 2022, Mary Free Bed and Corewell Health Helen DeVos Children's Hospital announced their partnership to build the state's first children's rehabilitation hospital.

The Joan Secchia Children's Rehabilitation Hospital will be designed for, and exclusively dedicated to, the rehabilitation of infants, children and teens. The 67,000 square foot hospital will include three floors of sophisticated technology and dedicated pediatric therapy spaces.

The first and second floors of the hospital will host specialized outpatient therapy gyms, Orthotics & Prosthetics + Bionics, a pediatric medical clinic, and the Intensive Feeding Program. The third level will serve inpatient rehabilitation. The unit will be home to 24 private inpatient rooms all with ventilator capability, inpatient therapy gyms, a family resource center, and an academic classroom with a dedicated teacher, so children can keep up with their studies during extended recovery periods.

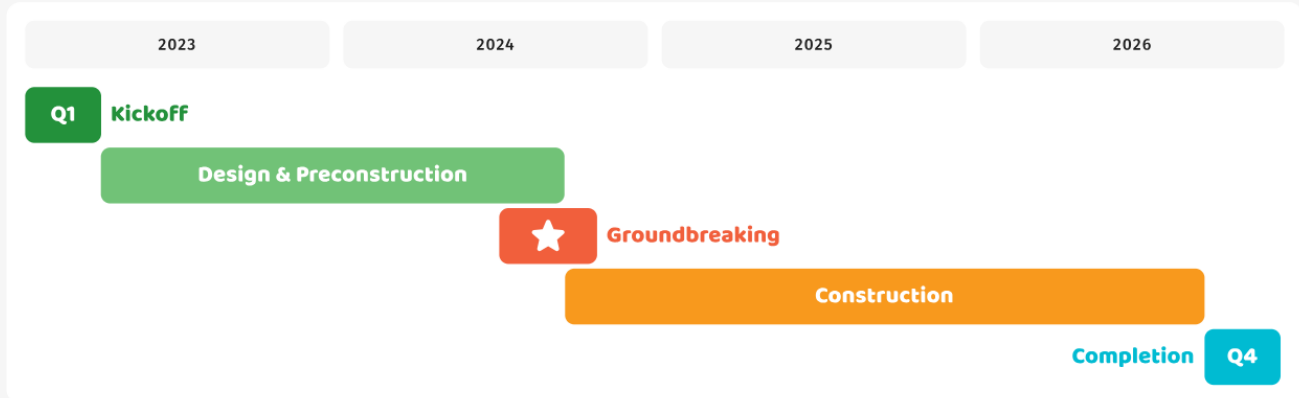
Goal: To increase access to pediatric rehabilitation medical care through the development of the state's first pediatric rehabilitation hospital projected to be completed at the end of 2026.

Implementation Strategy:

The implementation strategy for the Joan Secchia Children's Rehabilitation Hospital will unfold in phases. Phase 1 (2023–mid 2024) will focus on finalizing the design, preconstruction activities, and securing the remaining public-private funding for the project. Groundbreaking will take place in August 2025. Phase 2 (mid 2024–mid 2026) will involve the construction of the hospital, incorporating specialized spaces and cutting-edge rehabilitation technologies. Phase 3 (late 2026) will mark the completion and opening of the hospital, ready to serve pediatric patients with specialized rehabilitation needs.

Financing and Timeline

The \$70M project is a public-private partnership. Operated as a joint venture between Mary Free Bed and **Helen DeVos Children's Hospital**, philanthropy will support important infrastructure, program enhancements and innovation.



Health Insurance

Importance and Impact: Health insurance impacts access to all types of care including dental, medical, mental health care, and prescription medications. Compared to adults with private insurance, those who were uninsured in the past year were 5 times more likely not to seek needed care because of cost. Those with Medicaid were nearly 3 times more likely than those with private insurance not to seek needed care due to cost. (2023 CHNA, pg. 6)

■ **Impact Goal #1: Addressing Uninsured Employees**

Description: Our employees and their family's needs are unique to them. That is why Mary Free Bed provides our employees with a comprehensive and flexible benefits package that can be customized to fit the needs of their personal situations including important healthcare coverage. Upon hire, employees are provided their benefit guide, resources for support through the decision process, and timeline for registration.

Goal: The goal is to decrease the percentage of uninsured employees by improving communication and support systems to ensure all employees have access to comprehensive healthcare coverage.

Implementation Strategy: In 2024, Mary Free Bed discovered the need for process improvement regarding our uninsured employee population. We plan to optimize and enhance our communication process to ensure our Health Navigator Manager is aware

of the employees that are currently uninsured and/or new employees that are approaching their registration date to offer support and guidance. In 2025 we will evaluate the discovered percentage of uninsured employees as the 2025 process improvement baseline. Then for 2026 & 2027 work to decrease that number of uninsured employees.

Chris McFarlin, Health Navigation Manager and Human Resources to provide uninsured employee percentage baseline and update each year.

Access to Medical Care, Health Insurance, Access to Healthy Food, and Housing

Importance and Impact: Along with Access to Medical Care and Health Insurance, Access to Healthy Food and Housing were also listed as community priority areas. Lack of access to healthy, whole foods (i.e., unprocessed, or minimally processed foods) is a root cause of poor health outcomes and chronic diseases such as obesity, diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease. Additionally, safe, stable, and affordable housing is a basic need that provides a foundation for achieving and maintaining good health. Together, these areas encompass various social determinants of health.

■ **Impact Goal #1: Social Determinants of Health**

Description:

Social Determinants of Health Assessment: A social determinants of health assessment is a process that helps healthcare providers understand the social needs of patients to improve treatment and referrals to appropriate services. This assessment considers various non-medical factors that influence health outcomes, such as economic stability, education access, and healthcare access. Additionally, screening instruments can aid in identifying these social determinants, helping to ensure comprehensive patient care.

Goal:

To attempt to complete SDOH assessment with 100% of inpatient population (not including those who deny assessment/resources). When a gap is determined, Care Management team will provide resources to 100% of patients in the gap.

**Patients have the right to deny assessment and/or resources. Those patients will not be included in the 100% goal; however, we remain committed to tracking denial data.*

Implementation Strategy:

Mary Free Bed strives to locate gaps in the social needs of patients that affect overall health, with the ability to influence access to resources to ensure that patients have the information needed to make educated choices. Mary Free Bed will be completing a

social determinants of health assessment on all patients during their stay and will be providing any requested resources that could affect any gaps that have been identified. This initiative will allow for patients to have the resources and information needed to make positive changes in their overall well-being.

Ashley Brown, Director of Care Management, to provide updated percentages on completion rates and gaps of SDOH.

References

Kent County Health Needs Assessment 2023. (2023). *Kent Country Health Connect*.

Joan Secchia Children's Rehabilitation Hospital. (2023). *Mary Free Bed Kids*.