

A Vital Bridge with the Community

PeaceHealth Sacred Heart Medical Center, University District

2022-2025 Community Health Needs Assessment



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PeaceHealth

Message from leadership:

Our downtown Eugene community has grown vastly over the years. It is now a landscape of change, with an abundance of new eateries, hotels and sports complexes positioned between community dining halls, temporary housing and within blocks of tent-filled parks.

Amidst these changes and differences, our community comes together and unites to help those in need and to advocate for justice. Our focus is on the most vulnerable and at risk in our community; low-income families, seniors, the unhoused and at-risk youth; Black, Indigenous and People of Color; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex; and those needing support with mental health and substance abuse.

Social distancing diminished the limited safe shelter space available in the area and put additional stress on the daily lives of the unhoused in our community. The Lane County Poverty and Homelessness Board—with its many housing-focused community agencies—placed collective energy into creating safe sleeping space and alternate distanced sheltering when we needed it most.

When wildfires forced hundreds out of their rural homes and into the City of Eugene seeking housing, our lodging industry opened its doors while our community partners organized. They provided food, clothing, emergency supplies and other family supports: Wi-Fi for distance learning, accommodations for family pets, access to grief counseling and more. They are too numerous to name, but each of these organizations deserves hero recognition for their monumental efforts.

We are a community of activists, with more than 7,000 people amassing in the summer of 2020 in solidarity to protest racial injustice. This year challenged us to rethink how we collaborate as a community, to bring more dignity, respect and humility to our work. We are humbled by our community's response and, realize through all of this, there is even more work to be done.

It is a process, a learning experience and an evolutionary journey that we are ready for. PeaceHealth is committed to confronting racism in healthcare and will advocate for social and health justice to fulfill our PeaceHealth Mission of treating each person in a loving and caring way. We are honored to be a part of this work and stand beside our partners, those we serve and our community.

With gratitude,



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alicia Beymer'.

Alicia Beymer
Chief Administrative Officer



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susan Blane'.

Susan Blane
Director of Community Health

Our report to the community

The importance of a Community Health Needs Assessment

Every three years, each PeaceHealth location conducts a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) as required by the 2010 Patient Care and Affordable Care Act.

Tax-exempt hospitals like ours—as defined by IRS Section 501(r)—use the CHNA to report current community needs, statistics and activities. We are also expected to develop an implementation strategy outlining our plans to improve the health and well-being of the communities we serve.



We see our CHNA report and implementation strategy as much more than a requirement or obligation. Through this narrative, we are presenting the story of our dedication and service to the community and people we serve. Beyond traditional medical services and care, we are committed to helping people in need.

Click to view previous editions of our [CHNA](#) and [implementation strategy](#)

WHAT IS OUR COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT PROCESS?

The Live Healthy Lane Community Health Improvement Plan partners—PeaceHealth Oregon, Lane County Public Health, Lane Community Health Council, Trillium Community Health Plan and United Way—conducted extensive community-wide needs assessments from January through July 2020, engaging community stakeholders from multiple sectors and referencing recent community studies and reports.

OUR KEY FINDINGS

Social justice consistently rose to the top of our community's stated priorities. We identified a critical call for improved health equity for Black, Indigenous and People of Color; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex; those living in rural and remote areas; and other vulnerable and at-risk members of our community. Live Healthy Lane data indicated inequities led to higher risk behaviors such as tobacco and binge drinking, and reduced access and utilization of healthcare services. These, in turn, result in higher rates of disease and increased mortality.

Investments in **housing availability and affordability for families** is a key theme, as is the need for support services including **childcare and access to healthy food and healthcare**. **Investing in more community health workers**, Peer Support Specialists, navigators and other traditional health worker roles—and locating them in schools for families, children and adolescents—is also a priority in our community.

The assessment further identified the need for **access to mental healthcare and substance abuse prevention**, noting a concerning trend of worsening mental health among Lane County residents, **especially youth**.

We hear these needs, and we are committed to leveraging our resources, funding, voices and partnership to address disparities and gaps to provide whole-person care in Lane County.

WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE BELIEVE IN

Eugene, Oregon is a vibrant social center known for education and innovation. Located in the heart of the “Emerald City,” PeaceHealth Sacred Heart Medical Center, University District continues that tradition as a source of health education and support for our rapidly growing and increasingly diverse surrounding community.

That is why it is critical that PeaceHealth—as the region’s major hospital system, together with our medical groups and network of primary and specialty clinics—provides equal access to high-quality, appropriate and integrated community care. We work closely with Federally Qualified Health Centers such as Community Health Centers of Lane County and White Bird, safety net and free clinics like Volunteers in Medicine, and community-based service organizations.

PeaceHealth Sacred Heart Medical Center, University District serves the community with nonsurgical inpatient hospital care, inpatient rehabilitation, much-needed behavioral health services and a highly utilized level 3 emergency department. Outpatient services focus on innovative behavioral health programs and youth services, and the emergency department aligns with community services like [Crisis Assistance Helping Out On The Streets \(CAHOOTS\)](#) and ShelterCare to maximize support to unhoused patients.

The hospital works closely with youth programs like 15th Night and Looking Glass to ensure at-risk youth arriving at our doors receive coordinated, compassionate, whole-person care—as well as access to support services when leaving the hospital.

The University District hospital is the original PeaceHealth campus in Oregon and has served the community since 1936 when the Sisters of St. Joseph were invited to Eugene to help the struggling hospital. Now, PeaceHealth is embarking on the biggest change to the campus since the hospital was expanded in the 1980s. The oldest of the original buildings is being torn down to create open greenspace, while several public areas in the hospital are being modernized to create warmer, welcoming spaces for hospital visitors.



About PeaceHealth Sacred Heart Medical Center, University District

63

Combined average daily census of Inpatient Medical, Behavioral Health and Rehab Units

10.85

Average daily census

117

Total licensed beds

4.51

Average length of stay (days)

879

Inpatient discharges

16,347

Outpatient clinic visits

1,217

Employees

845

Active medical staff

27,849

Emergency Department visits

Source: PeaceHealth FY 2021;
Active medical staff as of October 2021

Supporting health justice for all

From our very beginning to the present day

PeaceHealth was founded by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace, who traveled west in 1890 to care for early settlers and people in need. Their legacy continues today as we recognize that achieving health and well-being is a lifelong journey.

We are committed to our Mission: We carry on the healing Mission of Jesus Christ by promoting personal and community health, relieving pain and suffering, and treating each person in a loving and caring way. We are driven by our belief that good health, prevention and community well-being are fundamental rights. We support health justice for all and are especially called to be in service to the most vulnerable members of our community. And we believe that every person should receive safe and compassionate care—every time, every touch.

BUILDING A NETWORK OF CARE FROM THE INSIDE OUT

Inspired by a challenge from the [Catholic Health Association's "We Are Called" Pledge](#), we have embarked on a journey to "put our own house in order." We recognize that change starts from within, believing that our employees can best focus on others when we put our focus on caring for them. This has been an essential element in preserving our 130-year legacy of community service and care.

With more than 5,400 employees in Lane County—1,217 of those throughout the Sacred Heart Medical Center, University District service area—PeaceHealth is one of the largest employers in Lane County. Our employees are a vital part of our community. Like everyone else, they have been deeply impacted by the pandemic. With this, we recognize the weight and responsibility of caring for both our community and our employees.

Over the last two years, 637 employees in the Lane County area have received support with housing and utilities (51%), access to care or basic services like internet and transportation (31%) and food

“We have a responsibility to shine a light on the profound effect inequities have on health and well-being, and to do something about it. We are called to promote the inherent dignity of each person, to further the common good and seek justice through solidarity, especially in service to the most vulnerable.”

– Liz Dunne, President and Chief Executive Officer, PeaceHealth



access (18%). This is just the beginning. In addition to providing care and resources, PeaceHealth continues to refine our hiring practices to encourage the growth of a diverse workforce. We are committed to implementing change reflective of our Core Values: respect, stewardship, collaboration and social justice.

But we need to do more—and we cannot do it alone. This is why community-based partnerships like the ones described in this CHNA report are crucial to our community's success. They enable all of us to address social determinants of health and improve care and access—regardless of where individuals are in their health journey.

STRIDES FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

Strides for Social Justice launched in February 2021 at a pivotal time in our cities, state and country. The urgency for crucial conversations around social justice and the need for understanding the history of racism in Lane County crossed all sectors of our community.

Before the pandemic closed many social and community events, PeaceHealth partnered with the Eugene Marathon to create an inclusive, family-friendly program to engage and educate participants on the contributions and challenges of Black residents in our community while generating financial resources to support organizations focused on social justice initiatives.

MOVING PEOPLE PHYSICALLY, MENTALLY AND EMOTIONALLY

The free Strides for Social Justice app guides participants to various landmarks, mapping a journey through local Black history. The app engages participants at each landmark, demonstrating the historical milestones, contributions and achievements of Black residents while also promoting health and wellness.

Our hope is to influence our community, effect changes that enhance physical and mental health, and contribute to a socially just and unified Eugene/Springfield by:

- Fostering a greater appreciation and understanding of how Black history, Black residents and the Black experience have shaped our community.
- Engaging community members in healthy physical activities like walking, running or riding between landmarks.
- Connecting with community members in practices of reflection and inspiring movements of the heart.
- Encouraging patronage of local Black-owned businesses.
- Generating funds toward programs providing opportunities for the NAACP's Mattie Reynolds Scholarship, Oregon Black Education Foundation and other similar organizations.



PROMOTING SOCIAL JUSTICE ACROSS LANE COUNTY—AND BEYOND

PeaceHealth has taken steps to increase awareness of social inequities and promote health justice among patients, employees in our organizations and across the greater healthcare community. We also recognize the significant journey that lies ahead—with partners and with our community—to move the needle on health justice, equity and inclusion.

The people of Lane County still identify as predominantly white, but that is changing as our community grows. According to the U.S. census, Lane County’s population increased by more than 10% from 2010 to 2020 while also becoming more diverse. This trend toward greater diversity has accelerated in the last three years, bringing with it the need for more awareness, inclusive education and different ways to bring healthcare and social services to the people most in need.

RECOGNIZING INEQUITIES AND ELEVATING PARTNERSHIPS

During these unprecedented times, it has become evident that Black, Indigenous and People of Color communities are at higher risk for chronic medical conditions. With less access to healthcare, immigration concerns, language barriers, higher poverty rates and the likelihood of working in close contact with other people in essential worker jobs, these members of our community are at a higher risk of severe outcomes from COVID-19.

In response, PeaceHealth has partnered with White Bird Federally Qualified Health Center, HIV Alliance, Volunteers in Medicine, NAACP of Eugene/Springfield and Catholic Community Services of Lane County. These organizations are trusted service providers supporting the needs of Black, Indigenous and People of Color populations, as well as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex communities.

Community benefit funds totaling \$35,000 were awarded to these organizations to support pop-up COVID vaccine clinics in the

A growing community...

EUGENE:

176,654

Population

12.98%

2010-20 population growth

LANE COUNTY:

382,971

Population

10.57%

2010-20 population growth

Source: World Population Review

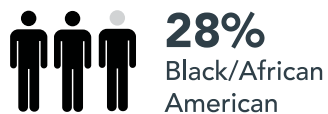
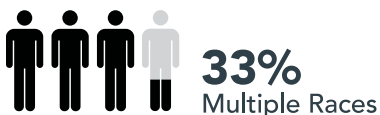
...is becoming an increasingly diverse one

% Race/Ethnicity Data of Population				
	Eugene	Lane County	Oregon	U.S.A.
White	78	81	75	60
Latinx	10	9	13	19
Multi-Racial	6	5	4	3
Asian	5	3	5	6
Black/African American	2	1	2	13
American Indian/ Alaska Native	<1	2	2	1
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	<1	<1	<1	<1

Source: U.S. Census

Poverty's expansive grip

Poverty rate by race in Eugene



Source: [U.S. Census](#)

community with special outreach to vulnerable populations. This is in addition to \$10,000 in community benefit funding to Lane County Public Health for the advancement of COVID vaccination education.

The Community Vaccination Collaborative organized by the Lane Community Health Council has closely tracked where disparities in vaccination rates in our community exist and pursued innovative methods for bringing the vaccination clinics to those who needed it most.



A year that inspired action

Answering the call of an unprecedented time in history

2020 saw a remarkable convergence of critical challenges in the United States: racial and social justice and COVID-19. The pandemic has cast a brighter light on how continuing inequities in income, education and access to health and social services inordinately affect Black, Indigenous and People of Color segments. As the pandemic has progressed, it has become clear that vulnerable members of our community were more at risk for infection, hospitalization and death. In response, we increased our inpatient rehabilitation beds at Sacred Heart Medical Center, University District by 33% and added 20 staff members to support more inpatient behavioral health patients.

We also took a closer look at data from Lane County and our PeaceHealth facilities. For example, 26.5% of patients admitted for COVID-19 identified as Latinx, yet they comprise 8% of the overall local population. This data suggests that—like other healthcare systems across the country—our facilities are seeing at least double the rate of hospitalization in the Latinx community as compared to the white population.

By the end of October 2021, 75.3% of Lane County residents had received at least one dose of any COVID-19 vaccine (Moderna, Pfizer or Johnson & Johnson). Yet disparities exist. With vaccination rates for Black, Indigenous and People of Color segments hovering near 50%, the pandemic highlights an ongoing need for change, community connectedness and creative solutions for education and care.

In addition to pandemic-related challenges, another factor looms large in further hindering access to care and health outcomes for these segments. The population of Eugene and Lane County is rapidly growing; with this growth comes the need for more care, particularly in the areas of general practice, dentistry and mental health. Yet the number of available providers for basic and critical care services is declining. This has created a significant gap in available healthcare services, driving up wait times and wait lists, and making it nearly impossible to access care in more rural communities.

Exacerbated by the grueling realities of the pandemic, there is an urgent need to address the workforce shortfall, improve the provider pipeline and establish quality community care options.

In order to meet growing care needs, it has never been more important for us to promote collaboration with our community partners while expanding community-based clinics, referral and care options, and alternative care practices.

COVID-19's Disproportionate Impact

8%

of total patients identifying as Hispanic/Latinx

26.5%

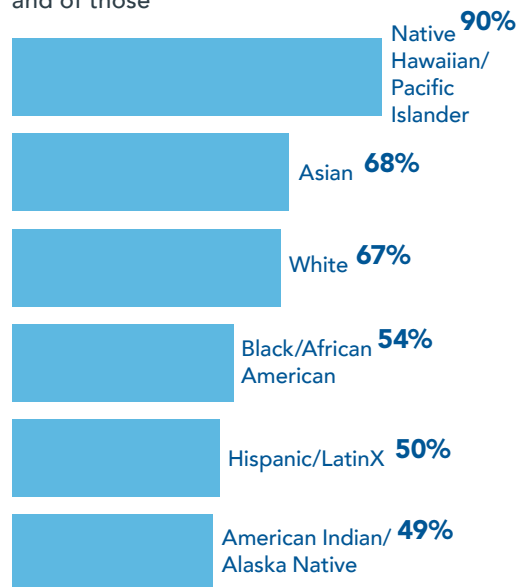
of patients testing positive for COVID-19 from Hispanic/Latinx population

Source: PeaceHealth

Percent of fully vaccinated, by race and ethnicity

60.8%

of Lane County is fully vaccinated, and of those



Source: Oregon Health Authority, as of 10/29/2021



CARING FOR ESSENTIAL WORKERS AND THEIR CHILDREN

When schools shut down in 2020, frontline healthcare and essential workers were in desperate need of childcare. Eugene Family YMCA partnered with emergency services and local school districts to set up emergency childcare, allowing these vital workers and community heroes to go to work knowing that their families were safe. PeaceHealth was able to partner with the YMCA to provide \$50,000 in funding for childcare operations and infrastructure support.

United Way, KinderCare and First Baptist Church collaborated to support the next phase with subsidized pop-up childcare and distance learning resources for families, providing easy access to supervised online education in coordination with school districts.

Since then, the community conversation has turned to a longstanding but newly highlighted need in our community: reliable licensed childcare services for all families regardless of financial status.

PROVIDING CRITICAL SUPPORT IN CHILDCARE

For families experiencing poverty, 2020-21 was particularly harrowing. Many lost their source of income during pandemic shutdowns, putting them behind on rent and living expenses. On top of struggling to keep their families safe and fed, parents suddenly found themselves juggling multiple roles as caregivers, teachers and working parents. The struggle to maintain self-care amid so many challenges and unknowns sent growing numbers of youth, parents and families into emotional and physical distress.

During school closures, 60% of families experienced a disruption in their childcare (and the percentage was even higher for families of color). This put additional strain on already limited options for families needing non-traditional hours or drop-in care for changing circumstances—and even fewer options for those with young infants or special needs children.

“As our population ages, there is a greater need for healthcare. But many of our current providers of the same age group are retiring, so we need to attract new generations of providers. In order to do so, we must address workforce disconnections around skills, benefits, consideration for health and childcare because they are dangerous sources of stress for our communities.”

– Meghan McCarthy, System Director of Community Health, PeaceHealth

KEY BENEFITS

- Supported 260+ workers contributing to the local economy in a time of crisis.
- Built a foundation for school-aged childcare solutions during pandemic closures.
- Provided subsidized childcare options and virtual education options for the community.

The cost of care also has increased significantly over the last 20 years. Federal poverty guidelines have not changed, however, leaving many low-income working families unable to access enough public funding to afford adequate childcare.

In addition, the childcare workforce has diminished by 37% and is significantly undercompensated for the skillset and training required. All 36 Oregon counties are classified as childcare “deserts” for infants and toddlers, meaning that there are at least three children under the age of 2 for every available childcare slot. With strict licensure standards in place and few training and certification programs available, the childcare workforce will continue to decrease without support for and development of appropriate training programs.

PeaceHealth hears this need in the community and is committed to exploring and supporting partnered childcare solutions that will create quality, affordable and accessible childcare in all Lane County communities.

Many parents with young children face a painful choice between spending a significant portion of their income on childcare, settling for cheaper but potentially lower-quality options or leaving the workforce entirely. This childcare crisis in our community disproportionately impacts women, often forcing them to leave their jobs to care for children.

This exodus of women from the workforce is a concern for the entire community. Not only does

Childcare realities during the pandemic

60%

families experiencing childcare disruption during pandemic

Source: [Oregon Department of Education](#)

-16%

decrease in Lane County childcare facilities, March 2020-August 2021

Source: [Oregon Department of Education](#)

All 36 OR counties

qualify as childcare deserts for infants and toddlers

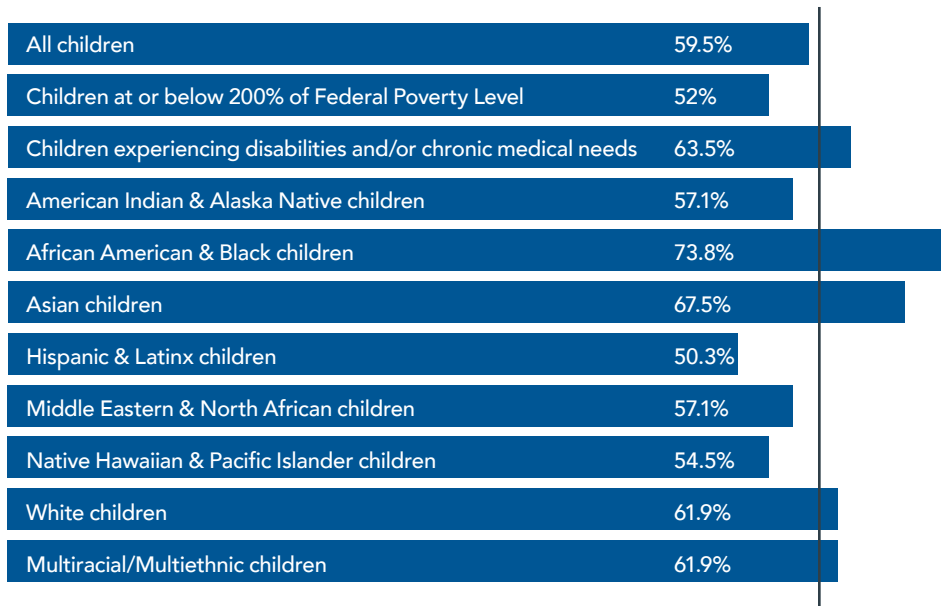
Source: [Oregon State University](#)

up to 98%

of all occupations pay more than early childhood education jobs

Source: [Center for the Study of Child Care Employment](#)

Children whose care was disrupted by COVID-19



Source: [Oregon Department of Education, Early Learning Division](#)

60%

1 in 4

women who reported becoming unemployed during pandemic due to lack of childcare

Source: [Americanprogress.org](#)

15 million

single U.S. mothers most severely affected by school closures

Source: [National Bureau of Economic Research](#)

60%

childcare provided by women in two-parent households where both work fulltime

Source: [National Bureau of Economic Research](#)

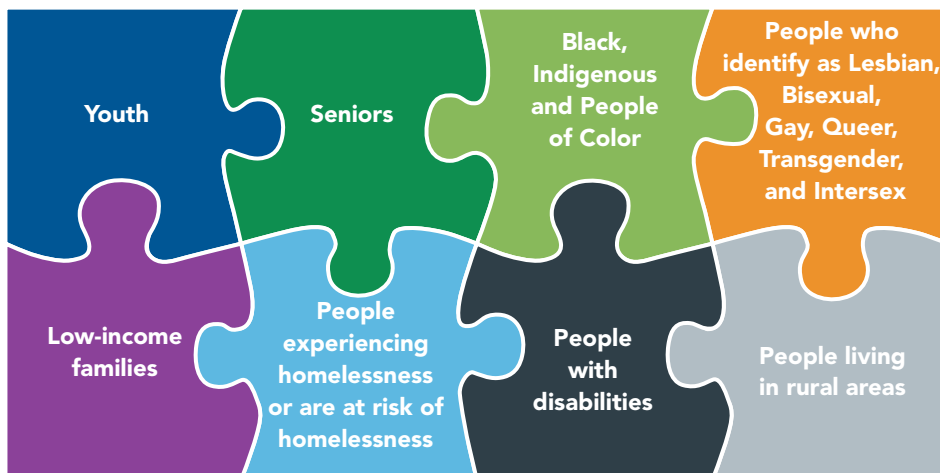
it accelerate the workforce shortage, it also destabilizes family income. This puts families at risk for food and housing insecurity, mental health issues and other key community health risk factors. Childcare is a community concern and must be addressed to support a thriving and well-balanced future economy in our region.

OUR FOUR PILLARS OF COMMUNITY HEALTH

We are determined to help create a healthy community beyond the walls of our medical centers and clinics. That purpose is informed by our four pillars of community health. Across these pillars is the awareness of our solemn responsibility to protect the most vulnerable and underserved people in our communities while promoting diversity, equity and inclusion in everything we do. These four pillars include: HOME: Improve access to service-enriched housing; HOPE: Increase education, access to treatment and prevention of dependence; CARE: Expand knowledge, access and engagement with community caregivers; and NOURISH: Address food insecurities to enhance family and child well-being.

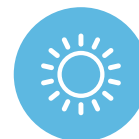
SHINING A LIGHT ON EQUITY

Our priority is to provide the overall best care possible to our entire community. To do this, we need to provide an equitable system of support that recognizes needs, focuses on overcoming barriers and builds resiliency for key segments in our community, including:



HOME

Improve access to service-enriched housing



HOPE

Increase education, access to treatment and prevention of dependence



CARE

Expand knowledge, access and engagement with community caregivers



NOURISH

Address food insecurities to enhance family and child well-being





Enlightened housing solutions

Restorative, housing-first models for individuals experiencing chronic homelessness

Lane County has few housing options for the large number of residents who cannot afford to purchase a home. As of 2019, 58% of the population rented versus owned and, by 2021, the county's vacancy rate had plunged to little more than 2%. During the pandemic, an eviction moratorium has helped keep some families and individuals out of homelessness, but this safety net will soon be ending. Our community will most likely see rent increases—and a new wave of homelessness and unsheltered living.

PeaceHealth directly invests in developing housing focused on preventing future homelessness. To accomplish that goal, these housing investments must be affordable and include integrated social services. To that end, PeaceHealth is partnering with agencies and nonprofit organizations to holistically address community wellness through supportive and stable housing.

While our community response to building more service-rich housing options has been growing, it is not enough to match the disparity between availability and lack of income. We must do more.

THE COMMUNITY SPOKE—AND WE LISTENED

We are working with our partners to target efforts that support homeless prevention services and upstream approaches for whole person care.

Heading into 2020, the number of people experiencing homelessness had been steadily rising in Lane County, including the Eugene area. Driven by the COVID-19 pandemic and physical distancing guidelines, traditional shelters were forced to limit capacity, further putting pressure on an already vulnerable community.

[Research](#) shows that people experiencing chronic homelessness consume more than half the available shelter space, utilize a higher percentage of hospital emergency services, require longer care, and have higher rates of incarceration and repeat offenses.

As a result, PeaceHealth partnered with Homes for Good, Lane County and others to launch The Commons on MLK housing, which opened in early 2021. The facility focuses on those who experience homelessness the longest, who access the most resources and who have traditionally been the hardest to

Housing realities of Lane County

58%

of Lane County resident rents

2.01%

vacancy rate

Source: [Department of Numbers](#)

serve. These individuals often struggle with complex, overlapping physical and mental health issues as well as substance abuse disorders.

PROVIDING PERMANENT HOUSING TO PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

The Commons on MLK follows the [model of Housing First](#) to provide a safe and stable home foundation so that residents can focus on improving their health and quality of life. This approach features 24/7 wraparound services and supportive programs that are more effective than shelters and transitional housing systems alone.

The 51-unit housing community at The Commons on MLK is guided by the understanding that many residents have likely experienced trauma. This is why a variety of healing elements are built into the structure: soothing colors, big windows providing light and sightlines to nearby trees, calming water features and private rooms for peer interaction. Behavioral health services are also supported through ongoing case management and connection to the community. The complex is within walking distance of Lane County Behavioral Health and its first floor is dedicated to supportive services.

The usual barriers of poor credit, low income or criminal history do not prevent residency at The Commons on MLK. Residents apply to the Lane County Centralized Waitlist and receive housing as it becomes available. The county provides economic support through assisted rent until residents can support themselves.

PeaceHealth's \$750K in funding supports both capital and supportive service costs of the \$13 million building project. Funding from PeaceHealth supports service coordination as well as funding to assist with building 51 studio apartments—including six American Disability Act (ADA) compliant units.



HOME - Community priorities: Develop housing-first models

The success of The Commons on MLK has demonstrated the restorative impact of housing-first models. Yet gaps in care and housing remain unaddressed in our community; individuals with complex healthcare needs and those experiencing chronic homelessness continue to fall through the cracks. PeaceHealth continues to build strong partnerships with community organizations that support and fund the development of innovative housing models supporting chronically unhoused individuals make permanent change in their lives.

KEY BENEFITS

- Directly targets chronic homelessness.
- Incorporates coordinated care and integrated systems of care into housing.
- Unifies and aligns healthcare and community partners on housing efforts.



“This building is really unique because it’s a permanent supportive housing apartment community for people experiencing chronic homelessness. But more than that, it will house people who are frequent users of emergency services.”

– Jacob Fox
Executive Director, Homes for Good





Personalized support without stigma

Help in overcoming challenges before integrating back into daily life

For the past 18 years, the Patterson Street Guest House has been a beautiful, spacious and tranquil “home away from home” for families of newborns in intensive care. When the new Heartfelt House opened to serve NICU patients at the nearby Sacred Heart Medical Center at RiverBend, PeaceHealth repurposed the Patterson Street Guest House as a Crisis Stabilization Center to increase access to mental health treatment in our community. Conveniently located near PeaceHealth Sacred Heart Medical Center, University District, the new Guest House Crisis Stabilization Center is a short-term residential program for up to 10 individuals (ages 18+) experiencing a mental health crisis not needing the medical capabilities of an acute care hospital.

KEEPING GUESTS SAFE WHILE STABILIZING SYMPTOMS

The program provides personalized support in a non-stigmatizing, cost-effective setting. Guests are welcomed into a warm, homelike environment by a caring and professional staff providing 24/7 therapy and support services. They keep guests safe while stabilizing their acute symptoms, helping them return to more familiar living situations and support systems as soon as possible. Well over half of the individuals admitted for service have been discharged to home settings, avoiding circumstances in which they would otherwise experience homelessness.

PeaceHealth is partnering with ColumbiaCare—a Medford-based nonprofit behavioral health services agency—and leases them the building at no cost while they provide on-site crisis stabilization services. Guests are referred

“What makes this program really special is how the community has come together to help local citizens. We are very proud to be operating such an important and much-needed program.”

– Stacey L. Ferrell,
Executive Director, ColumbiaCare

Guest House Program by the numbers, 2021

212

total client referrals

137

individuals admitted for services

81

discharges to home

11.4 days

average length of stay

Source: Guest House Monthly Census,
December 2020 through October 2021



by ColumbiaCare’s Hourglass drop-in program, PeaceHealth’s inpatient Behavioral Health Unit and local emergency departments.

The Guest House Crisis Stabilization Center provides an alternative to hospital emergency department and inpatient psychiatric services, giving individuals additional time and the right amount of support to overcome challenges before they integrate back into daily life.

The behavioral health crisis impacts every segment of our society: young and old, rich and poor, urban and rural. In service to our Mission, PeaceHealth collaborates with community partners like ColumbiaCare to bring healing to patients and families in need of behavioral health services. Our community health team targets overall behavioral health strategies, education and referral efforts to improve wellness and health justice for the entire community.

THE COMMUNITY SPOKE—AND WE LISTENED

We are working with our community partners to increase individual, community and systemic resilience for behavioral health through increased access to a coordinated system of prevention, treatment and recovery.

Traditional treatment usually provides services in either mental health or addictions—but not both. The reality is that many clients have co-occurring mental health and addiction disorders, often exacerbated by chronic physical health conditions or developmental disabilities.

Most treatment options are provided on an outpatient basis with a lack of residential stabilization options. The result is a core group of individuals whose needs are not adequately met in outpatient environments as they continue to cycle through the crisis system.



HOPE - Community priorities: Increase access to care

Beyond programs serving adult populations, there is an urgent need among youth and young adults for increased access to mental healthcare and addiction treatment in schools and in other community settings. Community Benefit Organizations like 15th Night (providing services to youths experiencing homelessness) and Looking Glass (offering residential and outpatient treatment services to children, teens and young adults) provide partnership opportunities in addressing mental health crisis amongst youth and preventing early addiction to help ensure the future of our community.

KEY BENEFITS

- Individuals experiencing mental health crises now have access to a residential care option.
- Ability to coordinate behavioral health services with a continuum of care through expanded community resources.
- Downtown location allows residents to remain close to their families and support systems.





Health in the heart of the community

Wraparound support services embedded in schools across the region

PeaceHealth and our partners are delivering preventative, holistic healthcare in diverse settings throughout the community. One of the most crucial places where youths and young adults are receiving integrated healthcare is through their local schools.

When 4J School District reached out for help in 2017 to keep their student health centers from closing, PeaceHealth Medical Group quickly responded to ensure students had uninterrupted access to physical and mental health services for the school year. With the help of Oregon School-Based Health Alliance and Lane County Mental Health, the first 4J PeaceHealth school-based health centers opened on the 4J Churchill and North Eugene high school campuses.

THE COMMUNITY SPOKE—AND WE LISTENED

We recognize that access to physical and mental healthcare and emotional well-being are important social determinants of health. When the pandemic threatened to limit access to services, we worked with our partners to bridge the gap and ensure continued access to care for students. The 4J School-Based Health Centers continually strive to improve and increase student access to care, and provide the supports that youth need to be successful in school and in life.

With the assistance of more than \$300k in PeaceHealth community benefit funding to date, thousands of students have had healthcare visits with dedicated nurse practitioners and mental health services provided by Lane County Public Health. These centers are vital in the community; because they can easily access services at school, school-aged youth can address physical and mental health needs in a convenient, trusted environment.

The services provided include:

- Well-child visits
- School/sports/camp physicals
- Injury/sick treatment
- Immunizations
- Mental health assessments and visits
- Follow-up for various healthcare needs
- Referrals for specialty care
- Reproductive health services
- Lab testing

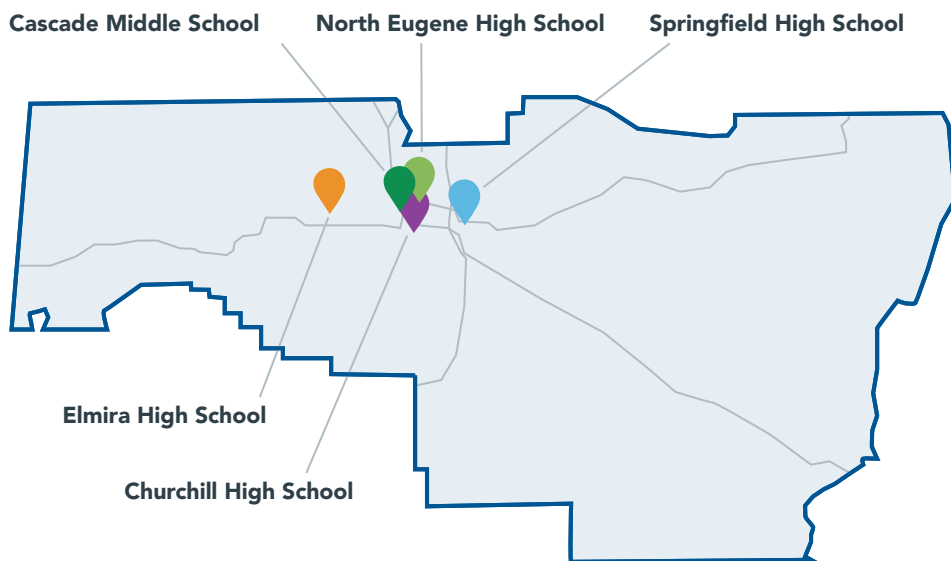


ACCESS TO CARE, DECREASE IN ABSENTEEISM

School-based health centers provide accessible physical and mental healthcare, regardless of a family's ability to pay. By co-locating services, students are often able to get same-day or next-day care appointments. This partnership has also supported student learning by decreasing absenteeism.

School-based health centers were impacted as their campus locations closed at the start of the pandemic. While the total use of traditional health services dropped, demand for mental health services increased, highlighting the need in the community. School-based health centers pivoted in response, offering limited telehealth services to help fill the gap. Online services have continued to help address higher demand even as schools reopened. But the need continues, and wait times for these vital services are still extremely long.

As of October 2021, there are now five certified school-based health centers in Lane County and 78 across Oregon. Because schools often serve as community hubs where families connect with one another, the more we can increase these partnerships and build upon school foundations, the more we can provide access and maximize growth in these communities. Co-location of services around schools is vital.



KEY BENEFITS

- Support for youth, young adults and their families addressing whole person care.
- Partnerships create comprehensive behavioral health services on site at schools.
- Provides a youth-centered clinic model enhancing services to populations in need.

Students accessing school-based health centers, 2018-2021

4,565
healthcare visits provided

487
average unique individual students served annually

1,031
BIPOC students served

Source: PeaceHealth Medical Group encounter data



CARE – Community priorities: Growing traditional health worker roles

When it comes to community care, the engagement of community health workers to connect healthcare and social supports is a proven path to success. Our community has galvanized around this initiative and is blessed with strong traditional health worker leadership focused on developing and funding training programs that are bilingual, multicultural and engage the full scope of traditional health worker roles: doulas, peer support specialists, community health workers, personal health navigators, peer wellness specialists and others.

These trusted, trained health workers play a vital role in reducing healthcare disparities through advocacy and empowering individuals to achieve their healthcare goals in schools, homes, community centers and any setting where people are living their lives outside of traditional healthcare settings. PeaceHealth is excited to be a part of building the community infrastructure that will ensure a robust army of community health workers dedicated to serving everyone in the community.





Growing our community, one garden at a time

Teaching the lifelong value of healthy eating

Access to healthy, affordable food is a critical issue affecting children and families in our communities. We are called to nourish them not just because we believe everyone should have access to nutritious food, but because food insecurity can lead to a lifetime of negative consequences. There is a clear connection between food insecurity and high levels of stress, poor nutrition and chronic diet-related diseases like obesity and diabetes.

The COVID-19 pandemic erased decades of progress in reducing food insecurity. In 2018, [an estimated 1 in 9 Americans](#) was food insecure—or more than 37 million Americans, including more than 11 million children. That number peaked in 2020 and still has not returned to pre-pandemic levels.

THE COMMUNITY SPOKE—AND WE LISTENED

We are working with our partners to increase equitable access to culturally appropriate, nutritious food and breaking down social or structural barriers by addressing the underlying issues in food availability.

We are also expanding fruit and vegetable community programming, food education and low-barrier nutritional access points.



Food insecurity is part of a complex web of issues related to not having enough resources to meet basic needs. Households experiencing even periodic food insecurity are often struggling with multiple factors including lack of access to affordable housing, healthcare, steady employment and a living wage. The result is often a series of tradeoffs. While food insecurity is related to poverty, not all people experiencing food insecurity live below the poverty line.

Lane County Food Access

7.5/10

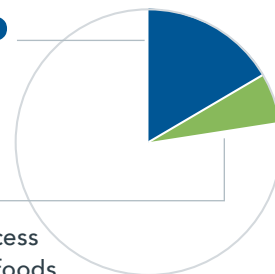
Food Environment Index
in Lane County

14%

Food
insecurity

6%

Limited access
to healthy foods



Source: [County Health Rankings](#)

A food environment index indicates access to healthy foods by considering the distance an individual lives from a grocery store or supermarket, locations for healthy food purchases in most communities and the inability to access healthy food because of cost barriers. The food environment index ranges from a scale of 0 (worst) to 10 (best) and equally weights two indicators of food environment: 1) limited access to healthy foods and 2) food insecurity.

PROMOTING ACCESS TO HEALTHY AND CULTURALLY SENSITIVE FOODS

While some areas of Lane County align with the national average for a positive food environment, a significant portion of our community faces food insecurity and limited access to healthy food. There is strong evidence that these “food deserts” are correlated with higher rates of obesity and premature death. Access to healthy and culturally sensitive food is critical for maintaining vitality and long-term positive outcomes in our communities.

Creating affordable options for healthy food and strengthening our relationships with food distribution centers—like food banks, mobile food options and subsidy programs including Veggie RX and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)—can enhance opportunities for all members of our community to have access to healthy and culturally sensitive foods.

PLANTING SEEDS THAT CAN FEED FOR YEARS

Even more powerful is a new generation learning to grow their own healthy food. PeaceHealth is partnering with the School Garden Project of Lane County, providing \$20,000 in community benefit funding. The program curriculum helps educate kids and families through plant science classes, hands-on learning through planting and maintaining vegetable gardens on school campuses, and providing supplies for students to plant gardens at home.

When the pandemic closed schools, the School Garden Project of Lane County pivoted to supporting nourishing efforts virtually. They gave online teachers remote access to curriculum videos, provided guest instruction by a garden educator during virtual class time and links to menus to help students and their families learn to cook healthy meals at home.

KEY BENEFITS

- Students learn sustainable gardening practices and how to grow their own food.
- Kids are encouraged to try new fruits and vegetables.
- Families learn healthy eating habits and are empowered to make healthy food choices.

Nourishing future generations

23

schools served in Lane County

1,415

students reached

7,075

hours of garden and science lessons

*Source: School Garden Project of Lane County
2019-2020 Annual Report*



NOURISH—Community priorities: Expanding food partnerships

Imagine a food security system in our community where healthy, nutritious foods are offered as an integrated part of healthcare. Innovative programs that combine healthcare coverage, healthcare delivery and food security are happening in our community right now; they will only continue to grow in the years to come as the link between good health and healthy nutrition gains increased evidence and recognition.

Partnerships between PeaceHealth, Coordinated Care Organizations, School Garden Project of Lane County, Centro Latino Americano, Huerto de la Familia, and multiple food pantries and farmers markets across Lane County have been central to this work.

Together, we have produced community gardens, school gardens, Veggie RX programs, Double Up food bucks and free produce pick-up programs through which access to fresh fruits and vegetables is low-barrier and close to home.

The good news is that food insecurity appears to have been lower than anticipated in 2020-21, thanks to the response from federal and local governments and generosity in the private sector. But the future is still uncertain for many families and young people are at particular risk for a lifetime of health concerns because of childhood food insecurity. We must continue to empower them with access to healthy food and education for healthy food choices.



Final thoughts

For times ahead

Our Community Health Needs Assessment process holds us accountable to listening and learning from our communities. PeaceHealth recognizes that our work is far from over. The needs are forever evolving—and so are we.

We are humbled and honored to serve and learn from our communities. We pledge to continue our collaborative work, standing beside our partners during these challenging times. We invite you to join us in our pursuit of health justice for all.

TOGETHER WE WILL BUILD THE FUTURE.