

Primary Children’s Hospital

Primary Children’s Hospital is a pediatric specialty hospital located in urban Salt Lake City, Utah. This hospital is one of 24 Intermountain Healthcare owned and operated hospitals in Utah and southeast Idaho and is a regional pediatric Trauma I referral center for the Intermountain West. Primary Children’s has 332 staffed beds and a broad spectrum of inpatient and outpatient medical services. In 2019, they participated in a community health needs assessment to understand how to help people live the healthiest lives possible®. This hospital participated in a collaborative, system approach to identify health indicators, gather community input, and determine the significant health needs to address over the next few years. Primary Children’s Hospital identified the significant health needs as:

Improve Mental Well-Being, Prevent Avoidable Disease & Injury, and Improve Air Quality

Primary Children’s Hospital, which is part of Intermountain Healthcare, joined 27 other agencies from Utah to co-chair a statewide collaboration that guides and implements the CHNA process with public health, behavioral health, and other not-for-profit organizations. The collaboration has improved access to data, reduced duplication of efforts, and increased ability to align strategies in addressing complex health issues. Primary Children’s Hospital community was defined as the state of Utah since this pediatric specialty hospital serves children and adolescents throughout the state and the majority of inpatient discharges reside in Utah. State data was used to assemble available data for health indicators for children and adolescents. The hospital community includes medically underserved, low-income, and minority populations.

What we heard from the community

Primary Children’s co-hosted a community input meeting with the Utah Department of Health and its local public health department. This meeting included representatives from: food pantries, health advocate groups, healthcare providers (including FQHCs), human service agencies, law enforcement, local business, local government, low-income, uninsured, underserved populations, behavioral health service providers and local mental health authorities, minority organizations, safety net clinics, school districts/higher academic institutions, state and local health departments. Highlights from this community input meeting include:

- Mental health needs among children are increasing in prevalence and acuity. Lack of pediatric specialists and follow-up after a crisis are important contributors as well as the unmet behavioral health needs of their parents.
- Children are not engaged in healthy behaviors because there is no incentive to be active as a result of increased screen time and busy lifestyles.
- Social environment is also a concern, specifically fear of school shootings and gun violence.
- The risk of uninsured and underinsured families.

What we know about the health needs

Below are health indicators that present the most opportunity to improve health in this community:

	Utah	United States
Felt sad or hopeless	33.0%	31.5%
Seriously considered attempting suicide	21.6%	17.2%
Attempted suicide	9.6%	7.4%
Students who used an illegal substance	10.6%	29.8%
Childhood immunizations	67.9%	70.4%
Adolescent immunizations – HPV among females	42.1%	53.1%
Met recommended physical activity	19.2%	26.1%
Obesity among adolescents	9.6%	14.8%
Unhealthy air days (as measured by AQI)	174	NA

Better than State Similar to State Worse than State

Why are these health issues important?

- According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), chronic conditions related to obesity, such as diabetes and poor cardiovascular health, continue to be the leading cause of death and disability in the United States. Many healthy habits that prevent chronic conditions begin in childhood.
- Mental health disorders are medical conditions that disrupt a person’s thinking, feeling, mood, ability to relate to others and daily functioning. Just like chronic diseases, mental health disorders are treatable, however, many cases often go unrecognized and untreated. There is a strong relationship between chronic disease, depression, and other mental health concerns.
- Unintentional injuries and suicides have been the leading causes of child injury deaths in Utah.
- Immunizations are one of the most cost-effective, safe, and effective health prevention measures and play an essential role in reducing and eliminating disease.
- Air quality measures the amount of pollution in the air. Poor air quality is associated with several adverse health outcomes, including reproductive health issues, poor birth outcomes, and an increase risk of asthma complications.

How are we going to address these health needs?

Based on the results of the CHNA, Intermountain Healthcare engaged representatives of state and local health departments and multiple community partners to identify potential implementation plans. Partners who participated in the previous community input meeting were invited again to discuss strategies, in addition to representatives from community libraries and case managers. These planning efforts were used to develop a three-year plan outlining health improvement strategies for Primary Children’s Hospital to address the significant health needs using evidence-based programs.

Primary Children’s implementation plan leverages system and local resources to create partnerships that will improve health outcomes, with a particular focus on low-income, underserved, and uninsured populations. The implementation plan, which is reported in a separate document, includes a description of the resources Intermountain has committed to the strategies and how such resources will be augmented by collaborative partnerships in each hospital community. Outcome measures will be tracked and reported annually through the evaluation process.

For more information about Intermountain Healthcare’s community health efforts, contact: Mikelle Moore, Chief Community Health Officer and Senior Vice President, mikelle.moore@imail.org Stephanie Croasdell Stokes, Consultant, Strategic Research, stephanie.stokes@imail.org