



St. Croix HEALTH

Community Implementation Plan 2026



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I. Introduction

Purpose of the Implementation Strategy

The purpose of this Implementation Strategy is to describe how St. Croix Health plans to address the most significant health needs identified through the 2025 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). This strategy outlines the hospital's goals, planned actions, anticipated impacts, and the resources and partnerships committed to improving health outcomes in the communities it serves.

Connection to the CHNA

The 2025 CHNA was conducted in collaboration with community partners, public health agencies, and local stakeholders to assess the health needs of the population within St. Croix Health's service area. The CHNA process included quantitative data analysis, qualitative input from community members, and feedback from key community stakeholders. This Implementation Strategy is directly linked to those findings and fulfills federal requirements for nonprofit hospitals under the Affordable Care Act and IRS regulations.

Process for Developing the Strategy

The Implementation Strategy was developed through a review of CHNA findings, discussions with hospital leadership and staff, and input from community partners. Significant health needs were prioritized based on their prevalence and severity, alignment with St. Croix Health's mission and resources, and the potential for measurable improvement through collaborative efforts.

II. Significant Health Needs Identified

The 2025 CHNA identified a range of significant health needs impacting residents in the St. Croix Health service area. These needs reflect both clinical health challenges and the broader social and economic conditions that influence health outcomes.

Significant health needs identified include:

- Access to Care & Healthcare Sustainability
- Chronic Disease Prevention & Management (e.g., heart disease, cancer, diabetes)
- Behavioral Health (mental health and substance use)
- Maternal, Child, & Family Health
- Social & Economic Drivers of Health (housing, food security, transportation, poverty, childcare)
- Health Equity (reducing disparities across populations)
- Health Literacy, Community Education & Advance Care Planning
- Care Coordination & Navigation
- Older Adult Health (aging, dementia, caregiver support)
- Violence Prevention & Community Safety
- Oral Health
- Infectious Disease & Immunizations
- Healthy Living & Physical Activity
- Environmental Health (housing conditions, water quality, air quality)
- Workforce & Economic Development
- Emergency Preparedness & Disaster Response

Criteria for Determining Significance

Health needs were considered significant if they:

- Had a high prevalence or severe impact on morbidity and mortality.
- Affected vulnerable or underserved populations disproportionately.
- Were identified as priorities by community members and stakeholders; or
- Could be improved through evidence-based interventions, collaborative partnerships, or hospital resources.

III. Addressing Significant Health Needs

St. Croix Health has carefully reviewed the findings of the 2025 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) and prioritized three significant health needs for focused action over the next three years. These priorities were selected based on the magnitude of the need, alignment with the organization’s mission, available resources, and the potential for meaningful impact through collaboration.

Priority Health Need #1: Access to Care & Healthcare Sustainability

Goal: Ensure timely, affordable, and high-quality care while strengthening the healthcare system to adapt to community needs.

- **Actions the medical center [St. Croix Health] is taking or plans to take:**
 - Recruit and retain all levels of healthcare professionals, with a focus on support within primary care and core specialty lines of service (net increase in providers).
 - Invest in facility upgrades and technology systems, to maintain and enhance high-quality rural healthcare access.
- **Anticipated impact:**
 - Reduced wait times for care and improved continuity of services.
 - Expanded access to primary and specialty close to home.
 - Increased stability of the rural healthcare workforce.
- **Resources committed:**
 - Financial and time investment in workforce development, digital health platforms, and capital improvements.
- **Planned collaborations:**
 - Local and regional care partners, strategic contracts.
 - Academic institutions for workforce pipeline development.
 - County public health agencies to support care coordination.
 - State entities and the United States Department of Agriculture for facility funding.
 - Local foundation groups supporting capital and community investment.

Priority Health Need #2: Social & Economic Drivers of Health

Goal: Work collaboratively to address the social and economic conditions—such as housing, food security, transportation, childcare, and financial stability—that shape overall health outcomes.

- **Actions the hospital plans to take:**
 - Strengthen food access programs in partnership with food pantries, mobile distribution sites, and other community-based food programs.
 - Support housing stability through referrals, advocacy, and partnership with local housing organizations.
 - Collaborate on transportation solutions for seniors, low-income residents, and those without reliable vehicles.
 - Partner with workforce development organizations to promote job readiness and financial security.
 - Collaborate with community partners to explore childcare solutions that support working families and the healthcare workforce.
- **Anticipated impact:**
 - Increased food security and improved nutrition for vulnerable families.
 - Greater housing stability and reduced barriers to maintaining employment and health.
 - Improved access to healthcare and community services through expanded transportation.
 - Enhanced workforce stability and family well-being through improved access to childcare.
- **Resources committed:**
 - Community benefit funding and grant-seeking support.
 - Staff time dedicated to partnership development and referrals.
- **Planned collaborations:**
 - Local nonprofit and faith-based organizations.
 - Workforce development agencies and local employers.
 - County health and human services.
 - Childcare coalitions, local schools, and early childhood providers.

Priority Health Need #3: Empowerment & Coordinated Health Management

Goal: Help individuals manage their health by providing education, resources, and care coordination.

- **Actions the medical center [St. Croix Health] plans to take:**
 - Expand and improve outcome measures in chronic disease management programs.
 - Provide swing bed programming to ensure patients have transitional care options close to home.
 - Promote health literacy, digital health tools, and advance care planning resources.
 - Engage schools and community organizations in health and prevention initiatives (Injury Prevention/Stop the Bleed, Stroke Education, etc.).
- **Anticipated impact:**
 - Increased patient confidence in managing chronic and acute conditions.
 - Greater participation in advance care planning and shared decision-making.
- **Resources committed:**
 - Clinical staff, care coordinators, and health educators.
 - Expansion of behavioral health integration within primary care.
 - Continued technology investments in patient education and digital care tools (EMR, DAX, AI-related technologies).
- **Planned collaborations:**
 - Internal department collaborations.
 - Collaboration with outside organization for swing-bed placement.
 - County public health departments and human services agencies.
 - Local schools and youth-serving organizations.

IV. Needs Not Being Addressed

St. Croix Health will not directly address the following health needs identified in the CHNA. These needs fall outside the hospital's scope of services but are addressed by other organizations and partners in the community.

Oral Health

- **Rationale:** Dental care is outside the hospital's direct scope of services. County-level programs, dental clinics, and public health agencies already provide oral health services (including fluoride varnish, sealant programs, and dental access for low-income residents).
- **Hospital Role:** St. Croix Health refers patients to county programs and dental providers to ensure continuity of care but does not directly deliver oral health services.

Violence Prevention & Community Safety

- **Rationale:** While St. Croix Health plays an important role in ensuring a safe care environment, broader community crime reduction falls under the responsibility of law enforcement and community safety agencies.
- **Hospital Role:** The hospital addresses safety within its scope by maintaining a secure environment for patients and employees and by screening for domestic violence and abuse, referring to appropriate community resources when needed.

Commitment to Collaboration: Although St. Croix Health cannot directly address every identified health need, the organization remains committed to collaborating with community partners, public health agencies, and local organizations to support broader efforts that improve health and well-being.

V. Collaborative Efforts

(Not an IRS defined “Joint Implementation Strategy”)

St. Croix Health recognizes that improving community health requires collaboration and partnership. Many of the strategies outlined in this Implementation Strategy are strengthened by working collaboratively with other hospitals, public health agencies, and community organizations.

This Implementation Strategy is not a joint implementation strategy under IRS definitions. St. Croix Health has developed and adopted its own separate written plan. While St. Croix Health collaborates with other facilities and community partners, it is solely responsible for the priorities, actions, and resource commitments described in this document.

Examples of Collaborative Efforts

St. Croix Health collaborates with a variety of partners, including, but not limited to:

- Amery Clinic & Hospital — Participation in regional community health assessment and planning efforts, with coordination through coalitions and shared initiatives as appropriate.
- Osceola Medical Center — Worked jointly on the 2025 Community Health Needs Assessment process.
- Polk County Public Health and the Polk County Mental Health Task Force — Coordination on public health planning, behavioral health supports, and prevention initiatives.
- Mobilizing Action through Planning & Partnerships (MAPP) – Chisago County — Engagement in countywide health improvement planning and community input processes.
- Community-based organizations — Partnerships with food pantries, housing providers, workforce development agencies, childcare partners, transportation networks, and local schools to address social and economic drivers of health.

St. Croix Health’s Role and Resources

Within these collaborative efforts, St. Croix Health contributes by:

- Participating in community health coalitions and task forces.
- Providing staff expertise, clinical input, and leadership.
- Supporting community-based initiatives through referrals, data sharing, and education.
- Committing staff time and in-kind resources to advance shared goals.

VI. Adoption of Implementation Strategy

Pursuant to the requirements of section 501(r)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and consistent with St. Croix Health’s status as a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization, the St. Croix Health Board of Trustees formally adopted this Implementation Strategy—fulfilling the hospital’s response to the 2025 Community Health Needs Assessment—on _____, 2026.

The IRS Form 990, Schedule H will reflect adoption of the Implementation Strategy, its posting status, and how identified community health needs are being addressed in compliance with federal law.

Board Approval & Signatures

Approved by the Governing Body on:



_____, 2026

Position	Name	Signature	Date
Chair of the Governing Body	Trudy Canine		
Secretary of the Governing Body	Karen Hauer		

VII. Conclusion & Next Steps

St. Croix Health is committed to carrying out this Implementation Strategy with transparency and accountability. Progress will be monitored through:

- Annual scorecard tracking of activities and outcomes.
- IRS Form 990, Schedule H reporting, documenting community benefit contributions.
- Ongoing review by hospital leadership and the Board of Trustees, ensuring responsiveness to community needs.

Through continued collaboration with public health agencies, community organizations, and regional partners, St. Croix Health will adapt strategies as needed to address evolving health challenges and strengthen the well-being of the communities it serves.