

# MONTEREY COUNTY HEALTH NEEDS COLLABORATIVE



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## Monterey County Health Needs Collaborative Community Report Outlines Top Health Needs

**(Oct. 12, 2022, Monterey County, Calif.)** — After months of data collection and tremendous input from the community, today the Monterey County Health Needs Collaborative released the results of a comprehensive assessment of population health and health needs in Monterey County.

The Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) highlights known health needs in the community, such as diabetes, nutrition and heart disease. The report also demonstrates the need to address access to care issues. It also calls to attention the need for resources and increased awareness around behavioral health and substance use.

For the first time, six organizations combined efforts to work together on identifying the greatest health needs of Monterey County. The Monterey County Health Needs Collaborative partners include Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula, Salinas Valley Memorial Healthcare System, Mee Memorial Healthcare System, Natividad, the County of Monterey Health Department, and United Way Monterey County. The Hospital Council Northern & Central California, along with Professional Research Consultants (PRC), a public opinion research consultant, were instrumental in conducting the CHNA.

The CHNA relied on key stakeholder input, phone interviews, online surveys and secondary data such as census data and vital statistics. The assessment considered more than 200 indicators in six domains including region, age, gender, race/ethnicity, income levels and sexual orientation. From March – May, responses in English and Spanish were derived from 3,149 surveys, including 801 phone-based surveys and 2,348 community outreach online surveys.

On Sept. 15, 2022, the partners of the Monterey County Health Needs Collaborative convened an online meeting attended by 136 community leaders representing a cross-section of community-based providers, agencies, and organizations. During the meeting, these stakeholders helped evaluate, discuss, and prioritize health issues for the community based on the findings of the CHNA. PRC began the

meeting by presenting key findings from the CHNA, highlighting the significant health issues identified from the research. Following the presentation of results, meeting participants were asked to rank the health issues by severity and scope as well as by the organizations' ability to address the health issues. The following issues were organized in order of priority:

1. Diabetes
2. Mental Health
3. Access to Health Care Services
4. Nutrition, Physical Activity & Weight
5. Heart Disease & Stroke
6. Substance Use
7. Housing
8. Infant Health & Family Planning
9. Injury & Violence
10. Cancer
11. Potentially Disabling Conditions

In addition to a comprehensive report for Monterey County, the Collaborative partners receive reports focused on specific geographic regions of primary and focus service areas, all of which are available for public viewing and use. It is noted priorities of health needs may differ among organizational service areas.

#### **Sampling of Specific Findings:**

The **self-reported health status** for the Monterey County population reflects 10% identify themselves in excellent health, 71% in very good or good health, and 19% as fair or poor health.

The prevalence of **diabetes** is highest in the Salinas area (15% of the population), exceeding both the state prevalence (9.8%) and the US (13.8%). Diabetes is also most notable in the 65+ age group reaching 20%.

**Mental health** indicators for Monterey County reflect that 34% of county residents consider themselves to be in fair or poor mental health, 24% report being diagnosed with a depressive disorder and more than half (51%) report having experienced symptoms of chronic depression. Those categories most impacted by symptoms of chronic depression include women, persons ages 18-39, very-low and low-income individuals and members of the LGBTQ+ community.

**Unintended drug-related deaths** climbed in Monterey County over the past four years to reach 15 per 100,000. This is equal to the state rate and below the national average of 21 per 100,000. More women in Monterey County (47%) say their life has been negatively affected by drug use by themselves or someone else than men (33%).

A significantly higher percentage of Monterey County residents report **barriers to accessing medical care** than reported nationwide. Nearly 53% expressed challenges simply getting a doctor's appointment (15% nationwide); 36% finding a doctor (9% nationwide), 34% expressed inconvenient office hours are a barrier (13% nationwide) and 30% reported the cost of a doctor's visit is a barrier (13% nationwide).

While 31% of Monterey County residents overall indicated they would be unable to pay cash for a \$400 **Emergency Expense**, that number was higher in South County (35%) and Salinas (34%) than the Monterey Peninsula (24%).

28% of Monterey County residents find it very or somewhat difficult to buy affordable **fresh produce**, with Salinas and South County residents disproportionately impacted.

The **leading cause of death** in Monterey County during 2020 (most recent county vital statistics) was cancer (18.2%), followed closely by heart disease (17.9%) while COVID-19 placed third (8.5%). The prevalence of cancer was most often detected in those age 65 and older (27.7%).

#### **Looking Forward:**

Last month United Way Monterey County presented each member of the Monterey County Health Needs Collaborative with the Community Impact Award for the partnerships that resulted in the CHNA. Each organization will use the detailed reports to prioritize health needs in geographic regions and put implementation strategies in place by the end of November. Organization-specific and strategic partnerships have been successful in raising awareness and addressing health needs such as COVID-19 vaccination, diabetes prevention programs, increasing access to care and serving the health needs of a diverse population. The Collaborative is committed to enhancing and partnering to address and impact community health needs. Reports are available at [healthymontereycounty.org](http://healthymontereycounty.org).

#### **Quotes:**

“The Hospital Council of northern and central California is proud to be part of this collaborative. The community health need’s assessment is another tool in the tool box for hospitals, the county and our community partners to use in efforts to improve the health of all the residents of Monterey County.”  
*Jo Coffaro/Regional Vice President, Hospital Council Northern & Central California*

“This Collaborative effort has been years in the making. These results provide us with real data to bolster and initiate meaningful efforts to improve the health of our community. Partnerships and engagement are key to measurable change and these entities working together have laid an impressive foundation to build upon.”  
*Katy Castagna/President and CEO, United Way Monterey County*

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#### **ABOUT COMMUNITY HOSPITAL OF THE MONTEREY PENINSULA**

Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula, established in 1934, has grown and evolved in direct response to the changing healthcare needs of the people it serves. Its parent company is Montage Health, the umbrella for entities that work together to deliver exceptional care and inspire the pursuit of optimal health. Community Hospital is a nonprofit healthcare provider with 204 staffed acute-care hospital beds and 28 skilled-nursing beds, delivering a continuum of care from birth to end of life, and every stage in between. It serves the Monterey Peninsula and surrounding communities through locations including the main hospital, outpatient facilities, satellite laboratories, a mental health clinic, a short-term skilled nursing facility (Westland House), Hospice of the Central Coast, Montage Wellness

Centers, and business offices. Find more information about Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula at [chomp.org](http://chomp.org)

#### **ABOUT SALINAS VALLEY MEMORIAL HEALTHCARE SYSTEM**

Salinas Valley Memorial Healthcare System (SVMHS) is dedicated to improving the health and wellness of the region through an integrated network of health care initiatives, services and facilities. In addition to an acute care, public district hospital licensed for 263 beds, the system includes Salinas Valley Medical Clinic, a multi-location clinic expanding access to primary and specialty care, and offers 13 urgent care locations. SVMHS is one of the area's largest employers with a staff of more than 2000, and is a leader in providing nationally recognized quality care. Collaboration is an important operating principle for SVMHS in such key areas as our Level III NICU which is operated in a joint venture with Lucile Packard Children's Hospital Stanford; The Madison Clinic for Pediatric Diabetes, partnership with UCSF; Aspire Health Plan, Monterey County's only Medicare Advantage program; and Blue Zones Project Monterey County, building a community where people live longer and live healthier. For more information, visit [www.svmh.com](http://www.svmh.com).

#### **ABOUT NATIVIDAD**

Natividad is hospital and trauma center providing compassionate high-quality health care to everyone, regardless of ability to pay. Located in Salinas, Calif., Natividad is a public health care system offering a wide range of inpatient, outpatient, emergency, diagnostic and specialty medical care for adults and children. Founded in 1886, the 172-bed medical center has more than 10,000 admissions and 42,000 emergency visits annually. Home to the area's only Level II Trauma Center, the hospital's specialized personnel, equipment and services provide a vital local community service that saves lives and keeps patients close to home. Natividad's Baby-Friendly® facility delivers 2,200 babies every year and is affiliated with UCSF Benioff Children's Hospitals. It also operates an accredited Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, giving the tiniest and most fragile babies — some as small as one pound — the best chance for a healthy start. Through its UCSF-affiliated Natividad Family Medicine Residency, Natividad is the only teaching hospital on the Central Coast. For more information, please call (831) 755-4111 or visit [www.natividad.com](http://www.natividad.com).

#### **ABOUT MEE MEMORIAL HEALTHCARE SYSTEM**

At Mee Memorial, our highest priority is to serve the healthcare needs of our community. This includes offering an extensive array of services with a commitment to the highest possible standards, the best available technology, and the care of skilled healthcare professionals. The Mee network includes a hospital in King City including emergency services, 25 acute care beds and 48 skilled nursing beds, and three comprehensive outpatient clinics; two adjacent to the hospital (Adult Medicine and the King City Clinic, for Internal, Pain and Family Medicine) and the Albert and Donna Oliveira Clinic, a full-service, primary care facility in the city of Greenfield. MMHS is the primary healthcare organization serving the rural communities of Southern Monterey County. Overall, our healthcare professionals serve a population of nearly 70,000 within an area spanning over 55 miles between the agricultural communities of Soledad to Bradley. For more information, visit [www.meememorial.com](http://www.meememorial.com).

#### **ABOUT COUNTY OF MONTEREY HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

The County OF Monterey Health Department (HD) exists to enhance, protect, and improve the health of the people in Monterey County. To accomplish this, HD provides a wide variety of health-related services in the areas of public health, environmental health, behavioral health, and clinic services. HD is an accredited health department and has undergone a rigorous, multi-faceted, peer-reviewed

assessment process to ensure it meets or exceeds a set of quality standards and measures. For more information on programs and initiatives visit [www.mtyhd.org](http://www.mtyhd.org)

**About United Way:** [UWMC](#) stands for diversity, equity, and inclusion in our organizational practices, policies, and programs. We work for the financial stability of families with a focus on access to affordable, quality child care and housing. In addition, United Way provides a portfolio of financial support services and connections to help families become self-sufficient. Family financial stability improves student performance, increases residents' safety and health outcomes and helps our local economy grow.