



Klickitat Valley Health

Community Health Improvement Plan

2026-2028

May 12, 2026

Klickitat Valley Health Community Health Improvement Plan 2026-2028

Purpose

This Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) serves as Klickitat Valley Health's written implementation strategy under Section 501(r)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. It is based on the 2026-2028 Klickitat County Community Health Needs Assessment and describes the significant community health needs KVH plans to address during this implementation period, the actions KVH intends to take, and the significant health needs KVH does not plan to address directly, together with the reasons why. Specific actions KVH intends to take are contained in the 2026 KVH strategic plan.

Community Served

Klickitat Valley Health serves Public Hospital District No. 1, including Goldendale, Centerville, Wahkiacus, Klickitat, Wishram, and Roosevelt. The KVH district population was estimated at 8,978 in 2024 and is projected to grow to 9,377 by 2029. The district is older than the average rural Washington community and the state overall, with nearly 31% of residents age 65 and older in 2024 and 34% projected by 2029.

CHNA Basis for This Plan

The 2026-2028 CHNA was a collaborative effort of Klickitat County Department of Health, Klickitat Valley Health, and Skyline Health. Funded by Klickitat County Department of Health, with contracted support from Health Facilities Planning and Development, it included primary and secondary data, a countywide survey conducted from March to May 2025 with 348 responses, and listening sessions in both hospital districts in June 2025. The CHNA notes that when sub-county data is available, district-level differences should be considered.

The CHNA identified these priority areas for 2026-2028 implementation planning:

1. Access to behavioral health services
2. Access to healthcare
3. Health education and the prevention and management of chronic conditions
4. Access to healthcare and services for seniors to age in place
5. Social determinants of health

The CHNA also found that countywide, housing, childcare, and mental health/addiction services were the most selected community health needs. In the KVH service area specifically, respondents selected mental health/addiction recovery slightly above housing and childcare, and they selected affordable food and health education/prevention at higher rates than Skyline respondents.

Significant Health Needs KVH Will Address

Priority 1: Improve Access to Behavioral Health Services

Need statement

The CHNA identifies behavioral health as a major need. County adults report more mentally unhealthy days than state and national averages. Mental health/addiction services were among the top community needs in the survey. The county is designated as a mental health professional shortage area. Countywide listening sessions also highlighted gaps in outpatient mental health, coordinated crisis response, and support for youth and families in crisis.

Actions

1. Recruit, retain, and support behavioral health providers and related staff.
2. Maintain and strengthen local access to outpatient behavioral health services.
3. Continue Medication-Assisted Treatment pathways begun in the emergency department and strengthen referral and follow-up processes.
4. Improve coordination among primary care, emergency services, behavioral health, schools, and community partners for screening, referral, and follow-up.
5. Increase awareness of behavioral health resources, including 988 and local access points.

Anticipated impact

1. Increased access to behavioral health care.
2. Reduced wait times for behavioral health appointments.
3. Improved continuity of care for patients with mental health and substance use disorder needs.
4. Better coordination for youth and families in crisis.
5. Reduced reliance on the emergency department and other crisis systems for non-emergent behavioral health needs.

Resources committed

1. CEO and senior leadership team
2. Human Resources
3. Behavioral Health Department
4. Family Medicine Clinic leadership and providers
5. Emergency Department leadership and staff
6. Care coordination and case management staff

Planned collaboration

1. Klickitat County Behavioral Health
2. Klickitat County Health Department

3. Local schools and youth-serving partners
4. EMS and law enforcement partners
5. Washington Gorge Action Programs
6. Other regional behavioral health partners

Priority 2: Improve Access to Healthcare Services

Need statement

Access to care remains a major need for KVH's service area. The CHNA found that 40% of KVH respondents reported waiting too long or not receiving needed care in the past year. Almost 40% of KVH respondents reported traveling more than 30 miles for healthcare. Preventive care measures, including routine medical visits, dental visits, mammography, and flu vaccination, lag state benchmarks. The county also has primary care, dental, and mental health shortage designations.

Actions

1. Continue recruitment and retention efforts for primary care, specialty care, nursing, and other hard-to-fill positions.
2. Strengthen referral coordination and patient navigation for specialty care, especially when travel outside the district is required.
3. Continue care coordination, case management, and transitions-of-care work for high-risk patients.
4. Promote timely preventive care, including annual wellness visits, screenings, and immunizations.
5. Explore additional telehealth speciality services and continue sustainable telehealth and remote access options where clinically appropriate, while recognizing that many services still require in-person care.
6. Improve patient education and assistance related to insurance coverage, financial assistance, and appointment navigation.

Anticipated impact

1. Reduced delays in care.
2. Improved access to local and referred services.
3. Increased preventive care utilization.
4. Better continuity of care after emergency department visits and hospital stays.
5. Improved patient experience and reduced avoidable emergency department use.

Resources committed

1. CEO and senior leadership team
2. Human Resources
3. Family Medicine Clinic
4. Specialty clinic leadership and providers

5. Care coordination and case management staff
6. Patient access, referral, and discharge planning staff
7. Information Technology

Planned collaboration

1. Regional specialty providers and referral partners
2. One Community Health
3. Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic
4. Klickitat County Health Department
5. Transportation and senior service partners

Priority 3: Strengthen Health Education, Prevention, and Chronic Disease Management

Need statement

The CHNA identifies health education and prevention and management of chronic conditions as a priority area. Survey results show gaps in nutrition, activity, and prevention behaviors. The CHNA also notes lower preventive screening and flu vaccination rates and identifies opportunity for more upstream education around insurance, Medicare and Medicaid, telehealth, senior services, and prevention.

Actions

1. Promote and continue Everyday is Wellness Day access to reduced selfpay lab testing; collect benchmarking data.
2. Expand patient and community education related to prevention, nutrition, physical activity, tobacco use, alcohol use, and chronic disease self-management.
3. Use care gap outreach to improve screening and vaccination rates.*
4. Incorporate prevention and chronic disease education into annual wellness visits, follow-up care, and care coordination.
5. Provide education related to Medicare, Medicaid, insurance navigation, and available local services.
6. Support patients with chronic conditions through coordinated follow-up and self-management support. Continue growing Palliative Care program; collect benchmarking data.

Anticipated impact

1. Improved health literacy.
2. Increased screening and immunization participation.
3. Better self-management of chronic conditions.
4. Stronger connection between clinical care and prevention.
5. Reduced preventable complications.

Resources committed

1. Family Medicine Clinic
2. Nursing staff
3. Care coordination and case management staff
4. Quality staff
5. Community outreach and communications staff

Planned collaboration

1. Klickitat County Health Department
2. Klickitat County Senior Services, Senior Center, and other senior-serving organizations
3. Washington Gorge Action Programs
4. Schools and community organizations
5. Food and nutrition partners

Priority 4: Improve Support for Seniors Aging in Place

Need statement

This priority is strongly supported by district demographics and by countywide listening sessions. The KVH district has an older population than rural and state averages, and the CHNA says the need for senior access to healthcare and social services supports to age in place came through clearly and urgently in the listening sessions. Those sessions also identified concerns about assisted living access, in-home care, caregiver strain, isolation, mobility limitations, and pressure on EMS and law enforcement when supports are limited.

Actions

1. Improve identification of seniors with unmet medical, functional, transportation, caregiver, or social support needs.
2. Strengthen transitions-of-care planning for seniors moving between hospital, clinic, home, and outside services.
3. Improve referral pathways and resource navigation for seniors and caregivers.
4. Provide education on Medicare, Medicaid, telehealth, advance care planning, and available senior services.
5. Work with community partners to improve coordination around aging in place supports.

Anticipated impact

1. Better coordination of care for older adults.
2. Improved support for safe aging in place.
3. Better caregiver support and service navigation.
4. Reduced fragmentation in senior care.
5. Reduced avoidable use of emergency and crisis systems for unmet senior support needs.

Resources committed

1. CEO and senior leadership team
2. Care coordination and case management staff
3. Discharge planning staff
4. Family Medicine Clinic
5. Emergency Department and hospital leadership
6. Community outreach staff

Planned collaboration

1. Klickitat County Senior Services
2. DSHS and aging services partners
3. EMS and emergency response partners
4. Transportation partners
5. Faith-based and nonprofit community organizations

Priority 5: Address Social Determinants of Health Through Screening, Referral, and Partnership

Need statement

The CHNA shows that the KVH district has lower median household income, higher family poverty, higher low-income status, and a greater share of households below ALICE and federal poverty thresholds than the state. The CHNA also identifies affordable housing, affordable childcare, and access to healthy, affordable food as important social determinants affecting health. KVH's prior work in case management, transportation support, and community coordination provides a practical base for continued action.

Actions

1. Screen patients, as feasible, for social needs that affect health, including food insecurity, transportation barriers, financial stress, housing instability, and related barriers to care.
2. Strengthen referral pathways to community-based services and public programs.
3. Continue participation in community partnerships and interagency coordination.
4. Improve staff awareness of local resource options so patients can be connected more consistently.

Anticipated impact

1. Improved identification of non-medical barriers to health.
2. Increased referrals to community resources.
3. Better follow-through on care plans.
4. Improved coordination for patients with multiple barriers to care.
5. Stronger alignment between healthcare services and community support systems.

Resources committed

1. CEO and senior leadership team
2. Care coordination and case management staff
3. Registration and patient financial services staff
4. Community outreach staff
5. Department leaders across hospital and clinic operations

Planned collaboration

1. Goldendale Interagency
2. Klickitat County Health Department
3. Washington Gorge Action Programs
4. Food access and nutrition partners
5. Housing and human services partners
6. School and faith-based community partners

Significant Health Needs Identified in the CHNA That KVH Does Not Plan to Address as Stand-Alone Priorities

The IRS requires the implementation strategy to identify any significant health need the hospital does not intend to address and explain why. KVH recognizes the following as significant needs identified in the CHNA, but does not plan to address them as stand-alone operational priorities during 2026-2028. KVH may still support them indirectly through referral, partnership, education, and advocacy.

Affordable Childcare Capacity

Affordable childcare was identified in the CHNA as a significant community need. KVH does not plan to directly operate or expand community childcare capacity as a stand-alone priority because childcare system development requires specialized licensing, workforce, facilities, operating infrastructure, and financing beyond KVH's core healthcare role and current organizational capacity. KVH will continue to support families through referral and partnership where appropriate.

Affordable Housing Development

Affordable housing was identified in the CHNA as one of the most significant community needs. KVH does not plan to directly develop or operate housing as a stand-alone priority because housing development requires capital, expertise, real estate capacity, and long-term operating structures beyond the scope of a critical access hospital's direct healthcare mission. KVH will continue to support this need through screening, referral, partnership, and participation in community discussions where appropriate.

Broadband Infrastructure Expansion

The CHNA identifies internet access as a community issue affecting access and telehealth. KVH does not plan to lead broadband infrastructure expansion because telecommunications infrastructure requires public policy authority, utility-scale investment, and specialized providers outside KVH's direct role and resources. KVH will continue to use practical telehealth and patient access strategies within available infrastructure.

Communitywide Transportation System Expansion

Transportation barriers affect access to care, especially in rural areas. KVH does not plan to build or operate a larger regional transportation system as a stand-alone priority because that work requires regional transit planning, operating support, and infrastructure beyond KVH's direct capabilities. KVH will continue to provide limited transportation support when feasible and connect patients with available community resources.

Direct Dental Service Expansion

The CHNA identifies oral health access as part of broader access needs. KVH does not plan to develop or operate stand-alone dental services during this implementation period because of limited organizational capacity and the specialized staffing, equipment, reimbursement structure, and operational model required for direct dental expansion. KVH will continue to provide care to medicaid patients with direct dental services and support referral and navigation where feasible.

Dissemination of Information

KVH will make the CHIP readily available to the public, through the following communication channels:

- KVH website
- KVH Facebook page
- KVH internal all staff email
- Radio presentation and/or advertising
- Press release to local news organizations

Evaluation

KVH will monitor progress on this Community Health Improvement Plan throughout the 2026-2028 period using available data related to service utilization, access, screening, referrals, care coordination, outreach, and community partnership activity. Annual review may result in adjustments based on staffing, funding, reimbursement, community conditions, and partnership opportunities.

Adoption

This Community Health Improvement Plan will be presented to the Klickitat Valley Health governing board for review and adoption. The IRS states that an authorized body of the hospital facility must adopt the implementation strategy on or before the 15th day of the fifth month after the end of the taxable year in which the CHNA is completed.