

Highpoint Hospital Sewanee Ascension Saint Thomas

**Implementation Strategy for the 2025 CHNA
Grundy County, TN**

Highpoint Health



The purpose of this Implementation Strategy (IS) is to describe how the hospital plans to address prioritized health needs from its current Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). The significant health needs the hospital does not intend to address are identified, and a rationale is provided. Special attention has been given to the needs of individuals and communities at increased risk for poor health outcomes or experiencing social factors that place them at risk.

Hospital legal name: Highpoint Health – Sewanee with Ascension Saint Thomas

Hospital Address: 1260 University Ave., Sewanee, TN 37375

Hospital website: <https://www.highpointhealthsystem.com/sewanee>

Hospital phone: 931-598-5691

Hospital EIN/Tax ID: 27-2618766

The 2025 Implementation Strategy report was adopted by the Highpoint Health with Ascension Saint Thomas Governing Board of Directors on March 3, 2026 (2025 tax year), and by the Ascension Saint Thomas Board of Directors on April 23, 2026 (2025 tax year) applies to the following three-year cycle: July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2029. This report can be found on Highpoint Health’s public website.

We value the community's voice and welcome feedback on this report. Please visit our public website (<https://highpointhealthsystem.com/chna>) to submit your comments.

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Introduction

About Highpoint Health- Sewanee with Ascension Saint Thomas

Highpoint Health – Winchester with Ascension Saint Thomas and Highpoint Health – Sewanee with Ascension Saint Thomas (formerly Southern Tennessee Regional Health System – Winchester and Southern Tennessee Regional Health System – Sewanee) serve the communities of Southern Middle Tennessee with comprehensive, high-quality care. The recent rebrand reflects a continued commitment to clinical excellence, compassionate service, and enhanced regional collaboration.

Highpoint Health – Sewanee with Ascension Saint Thomas, located on the campus of the University of the South, is a 41-bed facility offering 21 general acute care beds and 20 skilled nursing beds. It includes a 4-bay Emergency Department that treats more than 5,000 patients each year. Known for its individualized care and strong connection to the community, the Sewanee campus provides high-quality healthcare in a setting defined by collaboration, compassion, and service.

About Ascension

Ascension is one of the nation's leading non-profit and Catholic health systems, with a Mission of delivering compassionate, personalized care to all, with special attention to those most vulnerable. In FY2025, Ascension provided \$1.7 billion in care of persons living in poverty and other community benefit programs along with \$1.8 billion of unreimbursed care for Medicare patients. Across 17 states and the District of Columbia, Ascension's network encompasses approximately 97,000 associates, 23,400 independent providers, 90 wholly owned or consolidated hospitals, and ownership interests in 29 additional hospitals through partnerships. Ascension also operates 22 senior living facilities and a variety of other care sites offering a range of healthcare services.

Ascension's Mission provides a strong framework and guidance for the work done to meet the needs of communities across the US. It is foundational to transform healthcare and express priorities when providing care and services, particularly to those most in need.

Mission: Rooted in the loving ministry of Jesus as healer, we commit ourselves to serving all persons with special attention to those who are poor and vulnerable. Our Catholic health ministry is dedicated to spiritually-centered, holistic care which sustains and improves the health of individuals and communities. We are advocates for a compassionate and just society through our actions and our words.

For more information about Ascension, visit <https://www.ascension.org/>.

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Ascension Saint Thomas

Ascension Saint Thomas is a leading health care system with a 125-year history of providing care to the community, and is the only faith-based, non profit health system in Middle Tennessee. Today, the health system offers a highly comprehensive system of care, with more than 350 sites of care that cover a 45-county area in Tennessee consisting of 18 hospitals and a network of affiliated joint ventures, medical practices, clinics and specialty facilities. Across the state, Ascension Saint Thomas and its partner organizations employ more than 13,000 dedicated associates who care for millions of patients each year.

Overview of the Implementation Strategy

Needs Prioritization

Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010, more commonly known as the Affordable Care Act (ACA), requires all not-for-profit hospitals to conduct a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) and adopt an implementation strategy every three years. Included in Code Section 501(r)(3) is the requirement that hospitals must provide a description of the process and criteria used to determine the most significant health needs of the community identified through the CHNA, along with a description of the process and criteria used to determine the prioritized needs to be addressed by the hospital. Accordingly, Highpoint Health – Sewanee with Ascension Saint Thomas used a phased prioritization approach to identify the needs of Grundy County. The first step was to determine the broader set of community identified needs. The CHNA narrowed community identified needs to a group of needs determined most crucial for community stakeholders to address.

After completing the CHNA, community significant needs were further narrowed down to the community prioritized needs that the hospital will address within the Implementation Strategy (IS). To arrive at the community prioritized needs, Highpoint Health System with Ascension Saint Thomas collaborated with the Grundy County Health Department and the Grundy County Health Council to facilitate a discussion during a Grundy County Health Council meeting on November 20, 2025 to prioritize the top three needs in the community. Highpoint Health System with Ascension Saint Thomas identified additional criteria to prioritize the needs including:

- Magnitude: How many individuals does the problem affect?
- Seriousness of consequences: What would happen if the issue were not made a priority? What level of burden on the community (economic, social or other)?
- Feasibility: Is the problem preventable, and what is the community's capacity to address?
- Equity: Is one group of people being affected more than other groups? Are health outcomes different for different groups?

After completing the CHNA assessment, significant needs were further narrowed down to community prioritized needs that the hospital will address within the Implementation Strategy (IS). To arrive at the community prioritized needs, Highpoint Health – Sewanee with Ascension Saint Thomas collaborated with the Grundy County Health Department and the Grundy County Health Committee to facilitate a discussion meeting on November 20, 2025 to prioritize the top needs in the community.

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The needs listed below were voted as top priority needs by the community key stakeholders in Grundy County.

- Access to Care
- Mental Health
- Substance Misuse
- Transportation

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Needs That Will Be Addressed

During the Implementation Strategy (IS) brainstorming phase, Highpoint Health – Sewanee with Ascension Saint Thomas, Community Benefit and leaders agreed to a collective impact model toward addressing needs that appeared in multiple counties. This model is an effort to allocate resources in ways that can more meaningfully impact priority areas. Highpoint Health – Sewanee with Ascension Saint Thomas has selected the community prioritized needs outlined below for its 2025 Implementation Strategy (IS). Highpoint Health – Sewanee with Ascension Saint Thomas has defined “community prioritized needs” as the needs which have been prioritized by the hospital to address through the three-year CHNA cycle:

- **Access to Care** - This need was selected because Access to Care is in alignment with the organizational strengths and priorities, and was identified as a top priority by Highpoint Health – Sewanee with Ascension Saint Thomas and voted as a top priority need by members of the Grundy County Health Committee.
- **Mental Health** - This need was selected because Access to Care is in alignment with the organizational strengths and priorities, and was identified as a top priority by Highpoint Health – Sewanee with Ascension Saint Thomas and voted as a top priority need by members of the Grundy County Health Committee.
- **Substance Misuse** - This need was selected because Substance Misuse is in alignment with the organizational strengths and priorities, and was identified as a top priority by Highpoint Health – Sewanee with Ascension Saint Thomas and voted as a top priority need by members of the Grundy County Health Committee.

Needs That Will Not Be Addressed

Highpoint Health – Sewanee with Ascension Saint Thomas will be addressing all community prioritized health needs listed above. Transportation will be addressed under Access to Care.

Written Comments

This Implementation Strategy (IS) has been made available to the public and is open for public comment. Questions or comments about this Implementation Strategy can be submitted via the website: <https://www.highpointhealthsystem.com/contact>

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Approval and Adoption of the IS by Highpoint Health Governing Board of Directors

To ensure the Hospital's efforts meet the needs of the community and have a lasting and meaningful impact, the 2025 Implementation Strategy was presented and adopted by Highpoint Health with Ascension Saint Thomas Governing Board of Directors on March 3, 2026 (2025 tax year), and by the Ascension Saint Thomas Board of Directors on April 23, 2026 (2025 tax year). Although an authorized body of the hospital must adopt the IS to be compliant with the provisions of the Affordable Care Act, adoption of the IS also demonstrates that the board is aware of the IS, endorses the priorities identified, and supports the action plans that have been developed to address prioritized needs.

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Action Plans

The Implementation Strategy (IS) below is based on prioritized needs from the hospital’s most recent Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). These strategies and action plans represent where the hospital will focus its community efforts over the next three years.

Strategy: Build a Bridge Between Communities and Healthcare	
Prioritized Health Need: Access to Care	
Collaborators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Highpoint Health with Ascension Saint Thomas Hospitals ● Ascension Saint Thomas Hospitals ● Community Partners ● Government Agencies ● Providers 	
Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Time ● Talent ● Dollars 	
ACTION STEPS	ROLE/OWNER
1. Collect and analyze data on social factors	Hospital Leadership, Case Management, Quality
2. Identify and recommend actions to address social factors	Hospital Leadership, Case Management, Quality
3. Implement program, activities and interventions to address social factors	Hospital Leadership, Case Management, Quality
4. Collaborate with community based organizations and nonprofits and local civic groups on sharing data and activities	Hospital Leadership, Case Management, Quality
ANTICIPATED IMPACT	
Improved health outcomes and reductions in health disparities.	

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Strategy: Strengthen the Healthcare Workforce	
Prioritized Health Need:	
Access to Care	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Collaborators ● Highpoint Health with Ascension Saint Thomas Hospitals ● Ascension Saint Thomas Hospitals ● Community Partners ● Government Agencies ● Providers 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Resources ● Time ● Talent ● Dollars 	
ACTION STEPS	ROLE/OWNER
1. Participate in community activities and forums that promote reduction in healthcare workforce shortages	Hospital Leadership, Nursing, Workforce Development
2. Expand access to healthcare career pathways for students, community members, and internal associates	Hospital Leadership, Nursing, Workforce Development
3. Explore scaling school based Scholars Program/Curriculum to incorporate a total of 8 counties/number of schools for training	Hospital Leadership, Nursing, Workforce Development
ANTICIPATED IMPACT	
Increased health outcomes, increased productivity and economic growth	

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Strategy: Improve Overall Well-being of Older Adults	
Prioritized Health Need:	
Access to Care	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Collaborators ● Highpoint Health with Ascension Saint Thomas Hospitals ● Ascension Saint Thomas Hospitals ● Community Partners ● Government Agencies ● Providers 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Resources ● Time ● Talent ● Dollars 	
ACTION STEPS	ROLE/OWNER
1. Collect and analyze data on social factors impacting older adults	Nursing, Hospital Leadership, Skilled Nursing
2. Identify and make recommendations to address the needs of older adults	Nursing, Hospital Leadership, Skilled Nursing
3. Actively partner, engage and serve on community based organizations and nonprofits whose mission is to support older adults and their caregivers	Nursing, Hospital Leadership, Skilled Nursing
ANTICIPATED IMPACT	
Improved health and well-being of older adults	

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Strategy: Strengthen Social Infrastructure to Increase Community Connections	
Prioritized Health Need: Mental Health	
Collaborators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Highpoint Health with Ascension Saint Thomas Hospitals ● Ascension Saint Thomas Hospitals ● Community Partners ● Government Agencies ● Providers 	
Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Time ● Talent ● Dollars 	
ACTION STEPS	ROLE/OWNER
1. Assess and build knowledge about social infrastructures that build community connections	Hospital Leadership, Nursing, Communications and Marketing
2. Identify and create a communication plan that will increase community connections	Hospital Leadership, Nursing, Communications and Marketing
3. Engage with local community based organizations and nonprofits partners who are strengthening social infrastructures that increase community connections	Hospital Leadership, Nursing, Communications and Marketing
ANTICIPATED IMPACT	
Improved well-being and resilience	

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Strategy: Supporting Substance Misuse Prevention and Education Efforts	
Prioritized Health Need: Substance Misuse	
Collaborators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Highpoint Health with Ascension Saint Thomas Hospitals ● Ascension Saint Thomas Hospitals ● Community Partners ● Government Agencies ● Providers 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Resources ● Time ● Talent ● Dollars 	
ACTION STEPS	ROLE/OWNER
1. Explore launching the infrastructure to an opioid stewardship plan	Hospital Leadership, Pharmacy
2. Explore opportunities for collaborations with community based organizations and nonprofits on opioid use reduction training and services	Hospital Leadership, Pharmacy
3. Partner with community organizations and nonprofits addressing safe practice for opioid stewardship	Hospital Leadership, Pharmacy
4. Engage with community based organizations and nonprofits by serving on councils, boards and forums	Hospital Leadership, Pharmacy
ANTICIPATED IMPACT	
Reducing the harms related to drug use for individuals and the community	

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with  Ascension
Saint Thomas

Evaluation

Highpoint Health – Sewanee with Ascension Saint Thomas will develop a comprehensive measurement and evaluation process for the implementation strategy. The Hospital will monitor and evaluate the action plans outlined in this plan for the purpose of reporting and documenting the impact these action plans have on the community. Highpoint Health – Sewanee with Ascension Saint Thomas uses a tracking system to capture community benefit activities and implementation.