

# 2023 Community Health Assessment Summary



**NAPA COUNTY**  
Health & Human  
Services Agency

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## UNDERSTANDING AND RESPONDING TO COMMUNITY NEEDS

The Community Health Assessment (CHA), also referred to as a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA), is an opportunity for Napa County Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) to engage community members with the goal of better understanding the unique strengths and opportunities to support and improve health in Napa County. Engaging our community, and centering their input in our day-to-day services, is fundamental to our commitment to improve the health of our community. This year, HHS partnered with Providence Queen of the Valley Medical Center to create a shared Community Health Needs Assessment. This document contains a summary of the data collection process and prioritized health themes. A full version of the Community Health Assessment, including quantitative and qualitative data, can be found [here](#).

## GATHERING COMMUNITY HEALTH DATA AND COMMUNITY INPUT

Through a mixed-methods approach, using quantitative and qualitative data, we collected information from multiple sources, including American Community Survey, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, local public health data, California Healthy Kids Survey, Feeding America, U.S. Census Bureau, and the Live Health Napa County Language Inclusion Survey. To actively engage the community, we conducted 15 community listening sessions with people from diverse communities. We also conducted 12 key informant interviews and 7 “Bubble Up” sessions with representatives from organizations that serve the Napa County Community, specifically seeking to gain deeper understanding of community strengths and opportunities. Listening session feedback resulted in ten health themes, listed below. While the forthcoming Community Health Improvement Plan will ultimately focus on only five of these categories, community collaborative partners will still work to address all health themes; we view them as interconnected and integral to community health.

- Racial Equity and LGBTQ Inclusion
- Housing
- Behavioral Health
- Economic Stability
- Food Access
- Access to Health Services
- Childcare
- Language Access
- Digital Inclusion/Education
- Transportation

## IDENTIFYING COLLABORATIVE HEALTH PRIORITIES

Napa County Health and Human Services Agency and Providence Queen of the Valley Medical Center convened community partners to review the collected qualitative and quantitative data and select 3-5 health themes to prioritize. Participants identified the following priority areas: Racial Equity and LGBTQ Inclusion, Behavioral Health, Housing, Access to Health Services, and Economic Stability. For each health theme, participants recorded information about current programs, projects or organizations working in that area. Additionally, participants used “How Might We” statements to reframe their insights into opportunities. This feedback, organized by health theme, will be used to design the Community Health Improvement Plan.

## 2023 Priority Needs

The list below summarizes the significant health needs identified through the 2023 Community Health Needs Assessment process listed in rank order:

Housing  
Behavioral Health  
Access to Health Services  
Racial Equity & LGBTQ Inclusion  
Economic Stability



### HOUSING

Key informants, community members, and caregivers emphasized the high cost of housing is a challenge for many in Napa County. Limited housing stock pushes prices so high as to be out of reach for many and creates an especially difficult situation for those with low income. There is a strong need for more affordable housing and low-income housing. Cost of living is very high and earning a livable wage is a struggle. Community participants noted that housing stability creates a foundation for further stability. Fear of, and disrespect to, unhoused individuals can result in feelings of isolation. Demand for low-cost options may lead to unfair housing practices from landlords.

- *"I grew up here and work serving the community, but I can't afford to live here and recently moved to Solano County." - Latina, Public Sector staff member*
- *"Housing is a big concern for me; it feels unattainable especially for older adults. I often ask my husband "What are we going to do?" – Low Income housing resident, Napa*
- In 2021, about one in four (24.6%) of renter households spent 50% or more of their income on housing costs in Napa County. Source: American Community Survey
- In 2012, the median home price was over just over 5 times the median income. By 2021, the median home price was almost 10 times the median income. Source: American Community Survey



### BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

The scale of the mental health crisis appears to have overwhelmed the care system. Mental health is often an unaddressed, underlying issue. There are valuable sources of mental health support outside the formal care system. The task of providing mental health support can be a heavy weight to bear. Mental health providers often experience compassion fatigue and opportunities for self-care can be difficult to access with busy caseloads. Substances such as alcohol, tobacco, and drugs may be used as a form of self-medication. There are common misconceptions about substance use (across all demographics), leading people to underestimate the harm done.

- *"The challenge is unrecognized mental health issues and unaddressed physical needs. People are self-medicating." - Healthcare staff, Napa*

- *“Spanish-speaking mental health [support] is hard to get in Napa and you have to wait six months if you do. [People tell me] I’ll be fine in 4 months: I need it now.” - Healthcare staff, Napa*
- 43% of 11th graders reported chronic sadness or hopelessness in the previous 12 months, with the number rising to 70% for 11<sup>th</sup> graders who identified as gay, lesbian or bisexual. Source: California Healthy Kids Survey, 2019-2020
- The 3-year age adjusted death rate due to drug overdose increased from 7.6 deaths/100,000 in 2002-2004 to 18.9/100,000 in 2020-2022, an increase of almost 150%. Source: California Community Burden of Disease Engine



## ACCESS TO HEALTH SERVICES

Participants named cost and inability to navigate systems as barriers to accessing healthcare. Because many people have no stable relationship with a primary care provider and wait times for appointments can be months, the emergency room often becomes the first access point for care. It is difficult to access transgender care in Napa County. There is concern around lack of access to health insurance for mixed status families as well as people losing their insurance due to job loss during the pandemic. Caregivers and community members shared that accessing dental care can be very difficult for all ages because there are few dental appointments available locally.

- *“People get frustrated because they can't keep the same provider and they understand that Medi-Cal Emergency covers ER visits. That's why they go to ER instead of a PCP [primary care provider]”. - Healthcare staff, Napa*
- *“I used to have to get to Oakland to get to a trans-specific group, but [I'm getting older and] I can't make that drive anymore.” - Transgender adult, Napa*
- *“When we go to the clinic, the first thing they ask for is insurance so people are afraid. Then they ask you for so much paperwork or proof and it makes us fear going.” - Farmworker, Calistoga*
- Napa County residents who identified as Hispanic/Latine or as “Other” reported being uninsured at rates 2.5 to 3.5 times higher than non-Hispanic white and black residents. Source: American Community Survey, 2016-2020.
- Although black residents of Napa County were more likely to have health insurance than other race/ethnic groups, they had higher rates of preventable hospitalizations (1,166 per 100,000) compared to other groups. Source: Department of Health Care Access and Information, 2017-2019.



## RACIAL EQUITY & LGBTQ INCLUSION

Racism is often seen as a barrier to health by Napa County residents of color. It is felt during system navigation, in a lack of representation in leadership positions, and in day-to-day interpersonal interactions with law enforcement and other community members. Marginalized groups often experience prejudice and hate speech that make them feel isolated and fearful. Many consider cultural community events to be inauthentic and created for tourists. Community members seeking to be allies are concerned about “doing it wrong”.

- *“Police encounters at school haven't been good. I feel like I'm on the radar with the teachers and principal watching me, how I dress, what I look like, my beanie and hoodie.” - Latine youth, Napa*

- *“None. There is no representation at all for the black community [in Napa County].” – Public Sector staff member, Napa*
- Among 11th graders, school connectedness (the belief that peers and adults in the school support, value, and care about your individual wellbeing as well as your academic progress) was lowest among African American (42%) and Hispanic/Latine (54%) youth. Source: California Healthy Kids Survey, Napa County, 2021
- Youth in 11<sup>th</sup> grade who identified as gay, lesbian, or bisexual or who reported being unsure of their sexual orientation reported lower levels of school connectedness compared to youth who identified as straight or heterosexual. Source: California Healthy Kids Survey, Napa County, 2021

## ECONOMIC STABILITY

Participants overwhelmingly spoke to the need for living wage jobs and increased wages to meet the high cost of living in Napa County. They shared that families with low incomes often experience housing instability and use most of their income to meet basic needs, often being forced to make spending tradeoffs. A large proportion of employment opportunities center around agriculture and hospitality, which often come with low wages and can sometimes have poor working conditions. Many people that work in Napa, including teachers, librarians and others who serve the community, cannot afford to live here. Youth are highly aware of the financial stress of their families and fear for their own financial future.

- *“Stuff is expensive. I live day by day. Sometimes I don't eat.” - Parent of young child, Napa*
- *“[I feel anxious] when I think about my future, about money.” - Youth, Calistoga*
- *“The cost of living goes up but salaries stay the same.” – Low Income housing resident, Napa*
- While 83.9% of white residents reported a living wage, only 58.5% of Pacific Islander residents and 60.8% of Hispanic/Latine residents had living wages. Source: Racecounts.org
- Napa County residents with less than a high school education had the lowest median earnings on average (\$35,657 annually) and the highest proportion experiencing poverty (12.5%). Source: American Community Survey, 2017-2021

## Next Steps

Community partners will take the identified health priority areas and formulate goals, strategies and an action plan related to those issues. The result is a Community Health Improvement Plan, and subsequent Community Health Action Plan. This process requires, and centers, the continued expertise of community members. If you are interested in collaborating, please contact [LHNC@countyofnapa.org](mailto:LHNC@countyofnapa.org).