We are of this place, not just from it.

COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT
FY 2020-2022
Essentia Health-Northern Pines (Aurora)
## Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Summary</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essentia Health at a Glance</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital Service Area</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demographics &amp; Socioeconomic Factors</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of 2016-2019 Implementation Plan</td>
<td>8-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020 – 2022 CHNA Process &amp; Timeline</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assess &amp; Prioritize</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Input</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Findings</td>
<td>13-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design &amp; Conclusion</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation Plan</td>
<td>17-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix A – Data Information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix B – Survey Questions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lead Parties on the Assessment

Jenna Ballinger, Community Health Specialist

Acknowledgements

This report is based on a collaborative process with the following community members and organizations. Essentia Health would like to express our gratitude to the many steering committee members and community members for their contribution to planning, development, and analysis of community health needs. Additional thanks to the community members who shared their expertise and helped us include the voices of diverse sectors of our community.

- Mesabi East School District*
- St. Louis County Public Health and Human Services*
- Aurora Food Shelf
- IGA Foods*
- City of Aurora
- Mesabi East Environmental Education Center*
- Mesabi East Youth in Action
- Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency (AEOA)*
- Rutabaga Project*
- East Range Police Department*
- Community Health Board*
- Housing Redevelopment Authority*
- LEO/SADD*
- Northland Learning Center/Alternative Learning Center
- Opioid Abuse Response Strategies (OARS) North Group
  - Virginia Police Department
  - Lakeview Behavioral Health
  - Fairview Range
  - Arrowhead Center
  - Family Services Collaborative
  - Sexual Assault Program for St. Louis County
  - Community Health Board
  - Rural Aids Action Network
  - St. Louis County Probation
  - Hibbing Police Department
  - UCare
  - Senator Amy Klobuchar’s Office
  - St. Louis County Commissioners’ Office
  - University of Minnesota College of Pharmacy, Duluth Campus

*Committee Members
Executive Summary

Essentia Health—Northern Pines Hospital is part of Essentia Health, a nonprofit, integrated health system caring for patients in Minnesota, Wisconsin, North Dakota and Idaho. Essentia Health is called to make a healthy difference in people’s lives. To fulfill that mission, we seek opportunities to both enhance the care we provide and improve the health of our communities.

Every three years, each Essentia Health hospital conducts a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) to systematically identify, analyze and prioritize community health needs. The process is conducted in collaboration with many community partners including other health care systems, local public health departments, and organizations or individuals that represent broad interests in the community, including members of medically underserved, low-income, and populations at higher health risk.

Once priority health needs are identified, Essentia Health–Northern Pines Hospital designed an implementation strategy to address the needs with internal stakeholders and community partners. The plan is designed to leverage existing community strengths and resources available to improve health.

From July-December 2018, Essentia Health–Northern Pines Hospital analyzed data, convened community partners, sought input from community members, and led a process to identify the following priority areas for the 2020 – 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment:

1. Mental health
2. Healthy food and active living
3. Youth substance abuse

The 2020-2022 Implementation Plan outlines the multiple objectives, activities and strategies to address each priority area.

**Mental Health Goals:** The community becomes free of mental health stigma by educating people about mental health and working on prevention in schools.

**Healthy Food and Active Living Goals:** The community has access to healthy eating and active living opportunities by supporting efforts like community gardens and community education programming.

**Youth Substance Abuse Goals:** Youth are drug-free by working on policies around tobacco in East Range cities and supporting programming in the schools.
Introduction

Essentia Health is called to make a healthy difference in people’s lives. To fulfill that mission, we seek opportunities to both enhance the care we provide and improve the health of our communities. In conducting the Community Health Needs Assessment, Essentia Health has collaborated with community partners to embrace these guiding principles:
Headquartered in Duluth, Minnesota, Essentia Health combines the strengths and talents of 14,400 employees, who serve our patients and communities through the mission of being called to make a healthy difference in people’s lives.

Essentia Health-Northern Pines is part of Essentia Health. The 16-bed Critical Access hospital in Aurora, Minnesota, offers high-quality, compassionate care. Essentia Health-Northern Pines is a Level IV Trauma Center.

Essentia Health-Northern Pines makes it easy to get a wide range of medical care on the Iron Range. The hospital is located in the same building as the Essentia Health-Northern Pines Clinic and Essentia Health-Northern Pines Care Center. The hospital is surrounded by 20 acres of beautiful forest off Highway 110. Essentia Health-Virginia is another hospital located in Virginia, Minnesota, about 30 miles away.

Caring for our Community: Our commitment to our community’s health and wellness goes well beyond the work of the Community Health Needs Assessment. Through contributions of over $1 million annually to numerous community organizations, we’re working together with our communities to improve the health and vitality of our neighborhoods. In addition, we’re proud to say our employees donated more than 22,000 hours of their time and talents to a variety of programs and outreach efforts. Our community investments are designed to promote better health, help lessen inequities in our communities, improve access to health care and strengthen the fabric of our communities.
Hospital Service Area

Essentia Health-Northern Pines serves the East Iron Range area. The community defined in this assessment is made up of the ZIP codes where 80 percent of inpatients resided in the fiscal year of 2018 and surrounding cities. This includes ZIP codes 55750 (Hoyt Lakes), 55705 (Aurora), 55708 (Biwabik), and 55741 (Gilbert). Also included is the Town of White (White Township). The community was defined based on the hospital’s ability to have the greatest impact with the available resources. This hospital is committed to building and sustaining partnerships with area organizations to extend its reach to all areas within the region.

Due to the region’s rural nature, data for populations smaller than county level are frequently unavailable or of limited value. Therefore, in the following assessment, data are presented at the county and state level to ensure stability of the estimates. When available, ZIP code or census tract level data will supplement the county level information to provide a deeper understanding of the health needs of the community.
Demographics & Socioeconomic Factors

Table A. Overall demographics (2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>St. Louis County</th>
<th>Aurora</th>
<th>MN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>200,353</td>
<td>1,714</td>
<td>5,450,868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population age 65 and over (%)</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>779,405</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Poverty**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>St. Louis County</th>
<th>Aurora</th>
<th>MN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Median household income</td>
<td>$49,395</td>
<td>$42,217</td>
<td>$63,217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People of all ages living in poverty (%)</td>
<td>15.5%</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People under 18 years living in poverty (%)</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
<td>18.5%</td>
<td>13.69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment rate</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
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**Educational Attainment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>St. Louis County</th>
<th>Aurora</th>
<th>MN</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population ages 25+ with less than or equal to high school education (%)</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
<td>51.2%</td>
<td>33.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population ages 25+ with bachelor’s degree or higher</td>
<td>27.8%</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td>24.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Housing**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>St. Louis County</th>
<th>Aurora</th>
<th>MN</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percent of owner-occupied homes (%)</td>
<td>70.7%</td>
<td>71.8%</td>
<td>71.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population spending more than 30% of income on rent (%)</td>
<td>52.1%</td>
<td>48.8%</td>
<td>47.3%</td>
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**Transportation**

<table>
<thead>
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<th></th>
<th>St. Louis County</th>
<th>Aurora</th>
<th>MN</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Households with no motor vehicle available (%)</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2016, American Community Survey*

Table B. Race/Ethnicity Distribution (2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race Distribution - Aurora</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>1,714</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>1,724</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>-0.58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Race</td>
<td>1,712</td>
<td>99.90%</td>
<td>1,720</td>
<td>99.80%</td>
<td>-0.47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>1,641</td>
<td>95.70%</td>
<td>1,662</td>
<td>96.40%</td>
<td>-1.26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.10%</td>
<td>-100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian and Alaska Native</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.20%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.20%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>4.00%</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>3.10%</td>
<td>28.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Race</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or More Races</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.10%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.20%</td>
<td>-50.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.10%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.10%</td>
<td>-50.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2014-2016, American Community Survey*

Residents of this service area experience higher rates of poverty, disabilities, lower education levels, and have increased rates of single-parent households. The region’s rural nature makes transportation and isolation two barriers to accessing care.
Evaluation of 2016–2019 Implementation Plan

During 2016-2019, Essentia Health addressed significant needs identified in the 2016 assessment: behavioral health, obesity, and mental health. Some activities were led by the hospital, while others were part of larger collaborative efforts with local partners. The following describes significant accomplishments and outcomes.

Priority Area #1: Behavioral Health

In 2018 Essentia Health–Northern Pines started the East Range Substance Abuse Coalition. The coalition’s mission is to increase resiliency and reduce substance abuse use among youth. It’s made up of several community members, school staff, law enforcement, and Essentia Health employees.

The Essentia Health-Virginia Clinic’s tobacco treatment specialist educated a Mesabi East eighth grade class about how nicotine effects their brain development in 2018 and in 2019 she also educated a group of Mesabi East School staff. E-cigarette use was a concern of the school district so in February 2019, Essentia Health, the American Lung Association, Mesabi East School District, and St. Louis County Public Health educated parents about e-cigarettes and the Tobacco 21 policy.

Essentia Health is now exploring opportunities to pass the Tobacco 21 policy in Iron Range cities. Both the East Range Substance Abuse Coalition and the Chemical Health Coalition in Hibbing are taking an active role in these efforts.

Priority Area #2: Obesity and Physical Activity

Essentia Health-Northern Pines provided financial support for the Aurora Food Shelf to make infrastructure improvements to better serve its growing clientele. The hospital also worked with Arrowhead Transit and the Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency to have a grocery bus route from Aurora to Virginia, as there is no grocery store in the area. This project was not successful due to low ridership, but the hospital continues to work with partners to find a solution.

Essentia Health-Northern Pines partners with the Mesabi East School District through the Mesabi East Environmental Education Center. The hospital provided funding for two handicapped-accessible community gardens that promote intergenerational activity at the Carefree Living facility and Essentia Health-Northern Pines Care Center in Aurora. Students can visit with residents and garden together. The hospital provided funding for seven aero-gardens, an electronic garden that allows students to learn about soil nutrition, when to water, and when to harvest. With the same grant from Essentia Health, the Mesabi East Environmental Education Center purchased 80 microgreen trays, 120 heavy-duty trays, 75 bags of soil,
and four LED light systems for their greenhouse. About 15 students work in the greenhouse a few days each week during the school year. The microgreens have been used in school lunches at Mesabi East in the 2018-2019 school year. The hospital also participates in Farm to School work with Mesabi East by connecting them to local resources and sitting on the Farm to School Committee.

**Priority Area #3: Access to Mental Health Care**

To better serve the community, Essentia Health-Northern Pines has increased its ability to provide care by adding an additional physician and nurse practitioner to its staff. There also is an integrative behavioral health model in the primary care clinic. The hospital has increased telehealth availability, including patient access to psychiatry.

In June 2018, Essentia Health-Northern Pines hosted a mental health event in the local community center. A local artist had a gallery set up that showcased people who have a mental illness and their story. Resources were made available for community members, including information from the National Alliance on Mental Illness and information about local behavioral health resources. A speaker from Northland Healthy Minds talked about mental health stigma and the “Make It Ok” campaign. This event pulled in more than 30 community members from the East Range.

In March 2019, Essentia Health-Northern Pines partnered with Fairview Range to provide a Mental Health First Aid course for the community. The class was set over two days and 25 community members, including local school staff, hospital staff, and career center staff were trained and received certificates. The feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive.
2020-2022 CHNA Process and Timeline

Essentia Health’s Community Health Advisory Committee developed a shared plan for the 15 hospitals within the system. The plan was based on best practices from the Catholic Hospital Association and lessons learned from the 2016-2019 CHNA process. The process was designed to:

- Incorporate input from persons representing broad interests of the community
- Collaborate with local public health and other health care providers
- Utilize multiple sources of public health data to make data-driven decisions

Each individual hospital worked with community partners to carry out the plan in their service area. Aspects of the plan were adapted to meet the unique needs of each location. Hospital leadership teams and local hospital boards received and approved each implementation plan, followed by final approval by the Essentia Health Board of Directors. The following visual describes the assessment steps and timeline.

**Adoption of implementation strategy:** The Community Health Needs Assessment and implementation strategy were approved by the Essentia Health East Region Board of Directors on May 2, 2019, and the Northern Pines Board of Directors on June 19th, 2019.
**Assess**

Secondary data was collected and analyzed through [www.bridginghealthnorth.org](http://www.bridginghealthnorth.org), a web-based community health data platform developed by Conduent Healthy Communities Institute. The site brings non-biased data, local resources, and reporting tools to one accessible, user-friendly location. The site includes a comprehensive dashboard of over 100 community indicators covering over 20 topics in the areas of health, determinants of health, and quality of life. The data is primarily derived from state and national data sources including: Bridge to Health Survey, Minnesota Department of Health, Minnesota Student Survey, County Health Rankings.

Due to the rural nature of the community, data for populations smaller than county level are frequently unavailable or of limited value. In the assessment, data are presented at the county and state level, and when available, ZIP code or census tract.

Data was reviewed and discussed with the Essentia Health-Northern Pines CHNA Community Committee, which represents the broad interests of the community. Agencies represented on the committee included: Essentia Health-Northern Pines, Aurora Food Shelf, Mesabi East School District, St. Louis County Public Health and Human Services, community members, East Range Age to Age group, Mesabi East Environmental Education Center, Rutabaga Project, Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency and LEO/SADD.

**Prioritize**

The data review process was done via a survey completed by the Essentia Health-Northern Pines CHNA Community Committee that took into consideration what the most pressing issues were in each community based on data and collective knowledge about the community.

Through this process, three priorities were identified for action.

1. Mental health
2. Youth substance abuse
3. Healthy food and active living

**Significant needs not addressed in the CHNA:** Other issues identified through the process but not included among the top three priorities included transportation and oral health. These needs are being addressed by other community partners. Essentia Health will partner on these issues when applicable.
Community Input

After priority issues were identified through reviewing data and the formal prioritization process, Essentia Health solicited broad feedback from the community on the priorities chosen and how to address the needs.

Community input was primarily gathered through focus groups and key informant interviews. Over the course of two months, more than 55 community members provided input on the priority issues in their community.

A list of questions was asked to discern community strengths, health issues and barriers.

1. Do you confirm the top three priorities?
2. What are the strengths and weaknesses in this community related to those priorities?
3. Out of the weaknesses listed, which ones do you think are the most important to address?
4. What do you think our community should do differently or support in the future to address these issues?

The room was split up into smaller groups that discussed the priorities and what strengths and weaknesses they saw in the community. They wrote comments on Post-it notes and each group shared with the larger group.

Participants in focus groups or key informant interviews came from the following areas:

- Essentia Health-Virginia (hospital) staff
- Essentia Health-Virginia Clinic staff
- Essentia Health-Northern Pines staff
- St. Louis County Public Health and Human Services
- Opioid Abuse Response Strategies (OARS) North Group
  - Virginia Police Department
  - Lakeview Behavioral Health
  - St. Louis County Public Health and Human Services
  - Fairview Range
  - Arrowhead Center
  - Family Services Collaborative
  - Sexual Assault Program for St. Louis County
  - Community Health Board
  - Rural Aids Action Network
  - St. Louis County Probation
  - Hibbing Police Department
  - UCare
  - Senator Amy Klobuchar’s Office
  - St. Louis County Commissioners’ Office
  - University of Minnesota College of Pharmacy, Duluth Campus
- Mesabi East Youth in Action
- Northland Learning Center/Alternative Learning Center
Key Findings

Supporting Data:

- 25.8% of adults in St. Louis County reported being told by a health care provider that they suffer from depression, compared to the Minnesota state value of 18.9% (Bridge to Health Survey 2015, BRFSS)
- 9% of adults in St. Louis County have considered suicide (Bridge to Health Survey 2015)
- 19% of 9th grade Mesabi East students felt down, depressed, or hopeless in the last 2 weeks. The Minnesota state 9th grade average is 39.7%. (Minnesota Student Survey 2016)
- Over 12% of 9th grade Mesabi East students have seriously considered suicide. The Minnesota state 9th grade average is almost 23%. (Minnesota Student Survey 2016)

Community Input:

Students at Mesabi East seemed most concerned about mental health and many felt that it wasn’t given enough attention. They said it’s hard to get help due to the lack of resources on the East Iron Range. They didn’t feel like there was a lot of support within or outside the school. They’d like to talk more about it, but stigma around mental health keeps them from being open.

Community members and Essentia staff had similar comments about mental health stigma. It seems to deter people from asking for help. There’s also a lack of mental health education in the community. They also mentioned that in-patient resources for children are hard to come by and can be over three hours from them. Some suggestions were to have more positive programming for kids and mental health checkups in school.

Community Strengths and Resources Available:

Though there are few mental health resources on the East Iron Range, there are a few in Virginia and Eveleth, which are less than 30 miles from Aurora. Range Mental Health Center in Virginia offers outpatient services to youth and adults. They also run a crisis center for adults in Eveleth called the Wellstone Center. There is a mobile crisis team housed there as well. There are a few private therapists in Virginia.

Mesabi East has the REACH program, which is focused on social-emotional learning and skills. It stands for responsibility, education, accountability, character, and hard work. Students learn about goal-setting, emotion regulation, mind-body skills, and more. It is offered during the school day. The program currently serves only 7th grade students, but there are plans to expand to other grades in the future. The school is also hiring a social worker who will be housed in the school.
Supporting Data:

- Currently there is no grocery store in Aurora, which makes it harder to access healthy food
- The St. Louis County obesity rate for adults age 20 and older is 27.8%, compared to 27.3% in Minnesota overall (Bridge to Health Survey 2015)
- The St. Louis County rate for adults age 20 and older who are sedentary is 21.6%, compared to 19.8% in Minnesota overall (Bridge to Health Survey 2015)
- 26.9% of 9th grade Mesabi East students are overweight or obese, compared to 24.2% in Minnesota overall (Minnesota Student Survey 2016)
- 40% of 9th grade Mesabi East Students ate three or less vegetables in the 7 days prior to the survey, compared to 39.8% in Minnesota overall (Minnesota Student Survey 2016)

Community Input:

Students were concerned about school lunches. They mentioned the lack of nutritional value and how they seem very processed. They also talked about how fast food was cheaper to purchase than items at the grocery store. If they could have more meals prepared from fresh ingredients, they felt it would improve their health. When talking about physical activity, many students weren’t aware of what is available to them besides the school’s fitness room. They wanted more places to be active. Giants Ridge was mentioned but the price seemed to be too high for many students.

Community members commented on the large population that is food insecure. They don’t think there are enough programs like food shelves and soup kitchens. Many people were concerned about the obesity rate in the area and the bad diets they see among community members. Many had positive things to say about the school greenhouse and the push for Farm to School program in the 2019-2020 school year.

Community Strengths and Resources Available:

There are many places for people to be active. A dance studio in Aurora has classes available for youth. Hoyt Lakes has an ice arena with open skating times during the winter. There are several sliding hills available. There are parks throughout the East Range that are open to the public. There is also the Mesabi Trail that people can use for biking, running, walking, snowshoeing, and cross-country skiing.

Giants Ridge is in Biwabik, less than 15 miles from Aurora, and offers many outdoor activities with a season pass. They have ski and snowboarding hills, biking opportunities, a golf course, and areas to swim and hike as well.

There are two grocery stores within 15 miles of Aurora, with one in Hoyt Lakes and one in Biwabik. The food shelf in Aurora is open from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Tuesdays. Mesabi East Environmental Education Center, which is part of the Mesabi East School District, has classes that come in to learn about running a greenhouse and growing plants, including vegetables and fruits. Mesabi East is going to implement a Farm to School program in the 2019-2020 school year.
Supporting Data:

**Minnesota Student Survey 2016**

- 9th grade students’ perception of the risk to their future health of drinking 5 or more alcoholic beverages once or twice a week: 17% no risk, 17% slight risk, 35% moderate risk, and 31% great risk
- 31% of 11th grade students drink twice a month or more, compared to 10.8% in Minnesota overall
- 25% of 11th grade students drove a motor vehicle while using alcohol or drugs, compared to 19.1% in Minnesota overall
- 36.8% of 11th grade students, 13.8% of 9th grade students, 6.1% of 8th grade students used tobacco products in the past 30 days. In Minnesota overall, rates are 12.8% of 11th grade students, 5.8% of 9th grade students, and 3.7% of 8th grade students.

Community Input:

Students seemed to recognize substance use is a problem but didn’t feel very educated on the subject. The biggest concern for them was the rise in e-cigarette use they were seeing in the school. They mentioned that older students were selling the products, like Juuls, to underage kids in school. Most students were aware how addicting nicotine is, which is why they’re so concerned. The school resource officer showed concern around the use of the devices as well. They had a drawer full of e-cigarettes, e-liquid, and packaging that had previously contained THC products for e-cigarettes. These were found in students’ cars, lockers, backpacks, and on their person.

Community members felt there was a lack of education about substance abuse disorder, which lead to stigma about the disease. People feel isolated in a small town and that could lead to drug abuse. Also, the social norms around drinking alcohol and using tobacco products makes it seem like many people don’t take them seriously when it comes to addiction.

Community Strengths and Resources Available:

There are a few resources for substance abuse disorder in other parts of the Iron Range. Arrowhead Center in Virginia provides an adolescent outpatient treatment program focused on chemical dependency. It’s available for youths ages 13-18. They also provide chemical dependency programming for adolescents who are involved in the criminal justice system. They provide treatment for the Northland Learning Center/Alternative Learning Center students. It counts as a class credit for students involved. They also have an adult outpatient treatment program.

Range Treatment Center provides treatment for chemically dependent individuals and their families. Range Detoxification Service is a 24-hour medically monitored short-term stabilization program for acutely intoxicated individuals.
Design

Essentia Health worked with internal stakeholders as well as community partners to design a strategy to address each of the priority needs identified in the CHNA process. The plan outlines actions that will be taken to respond to the identified community needs including goals and measurable objectives, strategies, tactics, and performance indicators.

The implementation plan is a three-year plan to address priority needs. The implementation plan will be reviewed annually, with progress shared with hospital leadership and the Board of Directors on an annual basis.

Additionally, the following three priorities were determined by the Community Health Advisory Committee (CHAC) at a retreat in January 2019. The retreat included input from Community Health staff from across the Essentia Health system. Prioritization was based on common themes from the 15 Community Health Needs Assessments.

- Mental health and wellness
- Substance use
- Nutrition and physical activity

During the FY 2020-FY2022 assessment cycle, some activities will be led by the individual hospitals/markets, while others will be coordinated across the health system. This will help Essentia Health make the greatest impact with available resources.

No written comments were received from the 2013 CHNA. Any comments would have been taken into consideration in the report.

Conclusion

As a nonprofit health system, Essentia Health is called to make a healthy difference in people’s lives. This needs assessment illustrates the importance of collaboration between our hospitals and community partners. By working collaboratively, we can have a positive impact on the identified health needs in our community in FY 2020-2022.

For questions or comments about the community health needs assessment, please contact: chna.comments@essentiahealth.org

Copies of this plan can be downloaded from our website: https://www.essentiahealth.org/about/chna/
Essentia Health-Northern Pines CHNA Community Committee

Our Mission: Build a Healthy and Vibrant Community

The Essentia Health-Northern Pines CHNA Community Committee is made up of community members, Essentia Health employees, local business owners, and other organizations and agencies. The committee is dedicated to improving health and wellness on the East Range. The Essentia Health system has outlined an allocation of resources available to each hospital as a percentage of net revenue to address the priorities set forth in the Community Health Needs Assessments. Progress on goals will be monitored and reported to hospital leaders routinely.

Our Results

Youth are drug-free

Community is free of mental health stigma

Community has access to healthy eating and active living opportunities

Our Indicators

- Number of drug overdose deaths in St. Louis County
- Percentage of Mesabi East students who used an e-cigarette in the past 30 days
- Percentage of St. Louis County residents who failed or delayed asking for help for emotional problems excluding Duluth
- Percentage of 8th, 9th, and 11th grade Mesabi East students who have seriously considered suicide
- Percentage of overweight or obese people in St. Louis County excluding Duluth
- Percentage of Mesabi East students who are overweight or obese
**Result: Youth are drug-free**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Partners who can help</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minnesota Department of Health</strong></td>
<td>American Lung Association, LEO/SADD, Mesabi East School District, City of Aurora, East Range Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition, Community Health Board, City of Hoyt Lakes, City of Biwabik, Libraries, St. Louis County Public Health and Human Services, local businesses, Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency (AEOA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2016 Minnesota Student Survey</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Drug Overdose Deaths in St. Louis County**

**Mesabi EAST Students Who Used an E-Cigarette in the Past 30 Days**

**Story behind the data**

**Factors that have contributed to improvements:**
- Youth Groups (LEO/SADD, Youth in Action, Student Council)
- East Range Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition
- St. Louis County Naloxone trainings
- OARS mental health and substance abuse series

**Limiting factors:**
- Easy access to substances
- Little to no coping mechanisms
- Drinking and smoking is a social norm
- Rising use of e-cigarettes with youth because of companies marketing new flavors and easy-to-hide devices

**What we are going to do**

**Strategy #1: Increase substance abuse programming in East Range schools**

**Action Steps:**
- Support local schools in implementing programs to reduce substance use/abuse (E.g. eCHECKUP TO GO)
- Research and support alternative methods of tackling substance abuse (i.e. basic life skills classes, alternative therapies)

**Strategy #2: Increase the age to buy commercial tobacco products to 21**

**Action Steps:**
- Work with American Lung Association on education and policy drafting
- Educate and present Tobacco-21 policy idea to the Range Association of Municipalities and Schools
- Work with local substance abuse prevention coalitions on messaging to the community
**Result: Community is free from mental health stigma**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Partners who can help</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bridge to Health Survey</td>
<td>Age to Age, school district, local businesses, local city government, libraries,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>other community groups, nursing homes, police department, fire department,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Northern Pines Care Center, Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>local fitness establishments, St. Louis County Public Health and Human Services,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency (AEOA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota Student Survey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Story behind the data**

**Factors that have contributed to improvements:**
- Community gardens
- Chronic pain management classes
- Support groups (Ex. Grief Support at Essentia)
- Outdoor activities (trails, parks)
- Mental Health First Aid Training

**Limiting factors:**
- Isolation
- Lack of family support
- Financial strain
- Mental health stigma
- Have not identified many partners

**What we are going to do**

**Strategy #1: Launch a mental health anti-stigma campaign in Northern St. Louis County**

**Action Steps:**
- Provide Mental Health First Aid and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) trainings in the community
- Work with Northland Healthy Minds – Northern St. Louis County group and the Early Childhood Mental Health Initiative to develop a mental health anti-stigma campaign

**Strategy #2: Promote and increase programs that positively effect mental health**

**Action Steps:**
- Support youth and school-based programs and groups (Ex. Mesabi East Environmental Education Center, REACH)
- Research best practices on screening all students for mental health issues in the school system and doing mental health checkups
- Encourage and support K-12 schools to implement trauma specific interventions (E.g., Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools, UCSF Hearts, Alternatives to Seclusion and Restraint)

**Strategy #3: Promote intergenerational programming and activities**

**Action Steps:**
- Join East Range Age to Age group as a collaborative partner
- Increase opportunities for intergenerational activities at Essentia Health-Northern Pines Care Center
**CHNA 2020-2022 Implementation Plan**

### Result: Community has access to healthy eating and active living opportunities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Partners who can help</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bridge to Health Survey</td>
<td>City governments, parks and rec, local growers, ME3C, Mesabi East School District, Rutabaga Project, Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency (AEOA), local civic groups, Iron Range Martial Arts, Juniper, local yoga teachers, dance studios, Mesabi Family YMCA, Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP), St. Louis County Public Health and Human Services, local businesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota Student Survey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>St. Louis County WITHOUT Duluth - Obese or Overweight</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mesabi East Students Who are Overweight or Obese</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11th grade</td>
<td>9th grade</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Story behind the data**

**Factors that have contributed to improvements:**
- Community gardens
- Mesabi East Environmental Education Center
- Mesabi Trail
- Giants Ridge
- Apartment bus that brings people to Hoyt Lakes grocery store

**Limiting factors:**
- Aurora Grocery store closed
- Healthy food is perceived as expensive
- School lunches aren’t healthy
- Not enough access or knowledge of outdoor spaces
- Giants Ridge is expensive

### What we are going to do

**Strategy #1: Support Programs that increase nutritional food consumption**

**Action Steps:**
- Explore implementing Healthy RX program at Essentia Health-Northern Pines
- Support expanding community gardens
- Support Farm-to-School efforts in local schools
- Expand Meet Up and Chow Down into the East Range

**Strategy #2: Increase opportunities for physical activity**

**Action Steps:**
- Identify and contact potential partners on increasing use of outdoor spaces

**Strategy #3: Develop alternatives to get access to healthy foods**

**Action Steps:**
- Research initiatives around access to healthy foods in food deserts
Health Indicator Data

Essentia Health – Northern Pines Service Area
Demographics
Appendix A

**POPULATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Minnesota</th>
<th>St. Louis County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>5313081</td>
<td>200150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>5347740</td>
<td>200327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>5383661</td>
<td>200563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>5419171</td>
<td>200506</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>5450868</td>
<td>200353</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: US Census Bureau. American Fact Finder
Percent of People in Each Age Group (Aurora)

Source: American Community Survey 2016
Population by race/ethnicity year 2016 (Aurora)

- White: 96%
- Asian, American Indian: 4%

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey
Socioeconomics
SINGLE PARENT HOUSEHOLDS 2016

- Aurora: 54%
- Hoyt Lakes: 30%
- Bawabik: 53%
- Minnesota: 28%

Source: American Community Survey 2016
Access to Healthcare
Primary Care Provider Rate
County: St. Louis, MN

Source: County Health Rankings (2015)

Compared to:
- MN Counties
- U.S. Counties
- MN Value (90)
- US Value (75)
- Prior Value (122)
- Trend

© Essentia Health 2018
There are no dentists in Aurora. The closet one is in Biwabik, 15 minutes away.

Source: Google Maps
Maternal Health & Natality
Appendix A

 Mothers who Smoked During Pregnancy
 County: St. Louis, MN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Minnesota Department of Health (2016)

 Mothers who Smoked During Pregnancy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Douglas, WI</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Louis, MN</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pine, MN</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roseau, MN</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Minnesota Department of Health (2016)

COMPAORED TO

- MN Counties: 8.8%
- MN Value: 7.2%
- Prior Value: 17.9%
Eating Habits, Physical Activity & Chronic Conditions
Appendix A

Grocery Stores in each zip code

Source: Google Maps
Adults 20+ who are Obese
County: St. Louis, MN

Source: County Health Rankings (2014)

Comparisons:
- MN Counties (27.3%)
- U.S. Counties (28.0%)
- MN Value (27.3%)
- US Value (28.0%)
- Prior Value (27.1%)
- HP 2020 Target (30.5%)
21.6% report not participating in leisure-time activities which increases the risk of many serious health conditions.
26.9% of 9th grade students at Mesabi East are overweight or obese
Only 15.8% of 9th grade students ate vegetables the day before the survey was given. 40% ate less than 3 vegetables in the 7 days prior to the survey.
8.8% of adults have diabetes in St. Louis County.
11.9% of adults have heart disease in St. Louis County.

This rate is above the MN Value is 3.3%.

Modifiable risk factors include tobacco use, obesity, sedentary lifestyle, and poor diet.
Youth Substance Use
Amount of days 9th grade students consumed alcohol in the past 30 days

Source: 2013 & 2016 Minnesota Student Surveys (Mesabi East)
Risk 9th Grade Students think 5 or more alcoholic beverages once or twice a week have on future health

Source: 2016 Minnesota Student Survey (Mesabi East)
9th Grade Students use of Tobacco

Source: 2016 Minnesota Student Survey (Mesabi East)
Risk 9th Grade Students think one or more cigarette packs a day have on health

Source: 2016 Minnesota Student Survey (Mesabi East)
Adult Substance Use
Drug Overdose Deaths in St. Louis County

Source: MDH Drug Overdose Deaths Report
Due to changes in methodology, 2015 data should be considered a baseline year for data analysis and is not comparable to data from prior years. Please visit the Bridge to Health Survey website for more details on change in methodology.
Adults who Binge Drink (Bridge to Health Survey)

MN Value (19.5%)  US Value (15.3%)  Bridge to Health Survey Regional Value (32.3%)

Source: Bridge to Health Survey (2015)
Mental Health
The bar chart shows the percentage of adults with depression in different locations.

- **Douglas, WI**: 15.0%
- **St. Louis, MN**: 23.0%
- **Pine, MN**: 29.0%
- **Itasca, MN**: 30.0%

**Comparison:**
- **MN Value**: 18.9%
- **US Value**: 19.0%
- **Bridge to Health Survey Regional Value**: 25.2%

**Source:** Bridge to Health Survey (2015)
Adults Who Always Have Social and Emotional Support

Source: Bridge to Health Survey (2015)
9th Grade Students who felt down, depressed or hopeless in the last 2 weeks

Source: 2016 Minnesota Student Survey (Mesabi East)
9th Grade Students who say no to things that are dangerous or unhealthy

- Extremely or almost always: 49%
- Very or often: 25%
- Somewhat or sometimes: 24%
- Not at all or rarely: 2%

Source: 2016 Minnesota Student Survey (Mesabi East)
9th Grade Students who feel they express their feelings in proper ways

Source: 2016 Minnesota Student Survey (Mesabi East)
Causes of Death
## Top 10 leading causes of death in St. Louis County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cancer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart Disease</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronic Lower Respiratory Dis.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alzheimer’s Disease</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unintentional Injury</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stroke</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diabetes</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suicide</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cirrhosis</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pneumonia and Influenza</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: MDH County Health Tables
Appendix A

Age-Adjusted Death Rate due to Suicide
County: St. Louis, MN

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2014-2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Death Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008-2010</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2011</td>
<td>13.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2012</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-2013</td>
<td>16.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-2014</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-2015</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2016</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Compared To**

- U.S. Counties: 12.9
- US Value: 13.2
- Prior Value: 17.8
- Trend
- HP 2020 Target: 10.2
St. Louis County 100% alcohol-attributable deaths

Source: MDH
Focus Group Script

Time: 5min

Hello Everyone,

I/We would like to thank all of you for coming today. My name is (name here), and I work for (organization here). Essentia Health – Northern Pines is currently working on its Community Health Needs Assessment, or CHNA for short. A CHNA is an assessment required by the Affordable Care Act. We access an area using data and focus groups to create our priorities and goals for a three-year span of time.

Our CHNA Steering Committee identified these top 3 priorities: Mental Health (Suicide Awareness), Substance Abuse/Use, and Healthy Eating & Physical Activity. Our goal with this focus group today is to better understand where our strengths and weaknesses are related to these priorities.

First, we would like your feedback on what you think of the priorities we chose. Do you feel these are the most pressing health issues in our community? Why or why not?

_____________________________________________________________________________________

Time: 3min to explain, 10min for the exercise

We have the following categories written on the sheet beside me:

- Employment (job training, available jobs)
- Substance Abuse/Use (rehab, education, other services)
- Medical (Dental, Primary Care/Urgent Care/ER)
- Mental Health (cognitive, behavioral, and emotional)
- Community (are we fostering a sense of community)
- Environment (water quality, air quality, pollution)
- Food & Nutrition (farming, local sourcing, healthy, access to food)
- Physical Activity (Parks, Trails) (Sports, Access)

Come up with one strength and one weakness for each category, individually.

When thinking about strengths and weaknesses consider: what programs are available now? what resources are readily available? when it comes to your friends, family, and community what are your concerns for them related to these categories? where have you seen positive changes? where do you think there could be improvements?

Think about your own life and those that surround you every day. You all have opinions and concerns about these topics. We want to hear them so we can better address them. You have about 10 minutes to write down those strengths and weaknesses on separate post-it notes. It's ok if you don't have an answer for every category.

_____________________________________________________________________________________
Please get into groups of (divide room equally). Read your post-it’s to the group. Once you are finished, you will decide as a group where the post-its for each category rank in importance. Once you have them ranked we will move on to the next step.

Time: Total 25min

On the sheets, we have the categories listed. Pick someone from your group to bring up the top two weakness post-its for each category and place them on the sheet.

*Read the strengths and the weaknesses to the room

Now let’s open the room to discussion. What are your thoughts on the weaknesses and strengths that were chosen? Do you think they fit under the priorities we discussed at the beginning of the session? What do you think our community should do differently or support in the future to address these issues?

Thank you everyone for participating today!