

Community Health Needs Assessment Implementation Plan 2025



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Letter from the President and CEO

November 14, 2025

Dear Community Member,

Thank you for your interest in the health of our community. We appreciate your review of the many ways in which National Jewish Health serves those in need. In fact, we were originally founded in 1899 during the last respiratory pandemic to care for indigent tuberculosis patients. More than 126 years later, National Jewish Health is the leading respiratory hospital in the nation, a home to excellence in multispecialty care, and dedicated exclusively to groundbreaking medical research and treatment of adults and children. We see patients regardless of ability to pay and provide millions of dollars in free care each year.

We care for patients from around Colorado and the nation who suffer from the most challenging respiratory and other diseases, including those with cardiac, gastrointestinal, neurological, immune and related illnesses, and many others. We are committed to caring for all patients on a first-come, first-served basis. Each year, we educate and care for up to 90 children with chronic diseases in our free K-8 school, Morgridge Academy, located on our main health campus in Denver. We conduct basic, translational and clinical research that brings new treatments to patients around the world. We have support groups to educate our patients, as well as community members, about disease diagnosis and management.

In 2025, we assessed community health needs. We reviewed a wide range of published data, conducted focus groups with community members, consulted with health providers and queried experts within our own walls to better understand the community health needs and how we can help meet those needs.

Our focus this year continues to be centered on key areas where we believe we can make the greatest difference: improving access to specialty care, addressing pediatric respiratory health needs, expanding health education and literacy to empower patients, families and community providers with knowledge to prevent and manage disease. These results are published [here](#), in our 2025 Community Health Implementation Plan.

Through shared purpose, deep compassion and rigorous innovation, we will continue to make meaningful strides toward meeting health needs and improving the well-being throughout our region. We appreciate your interest and invite your feedback and guidance as we work together to meet the needs of our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michael Salem".

Michael Salem, MD
President and CEO

About National Jewish Health

National Jewish Health is an academic, specialty care hospital, providing research, education and patient care. Today, National Jewish Health is the only facility in the world dedicated exclusively to groundbreaking medical research and treatment of patients with respiratory, cardiac, immune and related disorders and to providing excellence in multispecialty care. Patients and families come to National Jewish Health from around the world to receive innovative, comprehensive and coordinated care.

National Jewish Health provides community benefits through its patient care, community outreach, patient and physician education and extensive research. All patients, including Medicaid patients are served on a first-come, first-served basis.

Located in Denver, National Jewish Health is a tertiary specialty care hospital and national referral center with more than 18 practice locations across Colorado. Here, doctors, caregivers and researchers work together to provide excellence in care and dedication to innovative research to constantly improve care. Patient referrals come from around the nation, many with conditions that cannot be successfully treated anywhere else.

Physicians at National Jewish Health provide continuity of care for their patients when they require hospitalization through our joint operating agreement with Intermountain Health Saint Joseph Hospital in Denver. This relationship also taps the expertise of the National Jewish Health pulmonologists, cardiologists and critical care specialists to serve all inpatients at Saint Joseph Hospital and after discharge when they need follow-up care. Collaboration is extended to other hospitals, both locally and nationally, to focus on ways to elevate care and further research.

National Jewish Health faculty and staff conduct extensive basic, translational and clinical research that informs local and national communities on a wide variety of respiratory, immune and related diseases, laying the groundwork for discovery and improvement of care. About \$59.3 million in grant revenue is received annually, primarily from the federal government, especially the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The organization is in the top 6% of institutions in the country funded by the NIH (in absolute dollars). We invest another \$20 million each year in research.

National Jewish Health also operates the Morgridge Academy, a free K-8 school for students with chronic illnesses, located on its Denver campus. For most of these students, medical conditions keep them from thriving in regular school programs. Morgridge Academy is the only school of its kind.

Health care education is a central element of the National Jewish Health mission. From educating patients about how to better take care of themselves and manage their conditions, to faculty-led training for medical students and postgraduate fellows, education is a primary focus. In addition, a fully developed Professional Education Department organizes accredited seminars, webinars and hands-on workshops around the country to help health care professionals learn about respiratory-related illnesses and ultimately lead to better patient care.

Introduction

National Jewish Health is pleased to present its 2025 Implementation Plan.

This plan follows the development of the hospital's 2025 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA), which was adopted June 25, 2025. The CHNA report can be accessed on the hospital's [website](https://www.nationaljewish.org/about-us/community-benefits). <https://www.nationaljewish.org/about-us/community-benefits>

Implementation Plan Purpose

The purpose of this implementation plan report is to identify the goals, objectives and strategies that National Jewish Health will employ from 2025 to 2028 to address the health priorities identified in the most recent CHNA report.

Developing Strategic Implementation Plans

The National Jewish Health 2025-2028 implementation plan includes strategies that are designed to make a difference in the priority health needs identified while addressing social determinants of health that have a major impact on people's health and quality of life. This implementation plan is developed to leverage hospital and community resources, and to collaborate with community partners. A series of virtual meetings were conducted to identify goals, objectives and strategies documented in this plan that will guide health improvements by National Jewish Health over the next three years.

Findings from the 2025 CHNA

During 2025, National Jewish Health conducted a Community Health Needs Assessment that was approved by the National Jewish Health Board of Directors June 25, 2025.

Community Definition. The National Jewish Health community is geographically defined as Adams, Arapahoe, Denver, Douglas and Jefferson counties in Colorado, where about 75% of our patients reside. As a multispecialty care hospital with national leadership in respiratory health and related specialties, we have further defined our community as those who have or are at risk for respiratory or related diseases, particularly those who reside in the above-named counties. Ultimately, patients needing our specialized services come from across Colorado, the United States and from around the world.

Assessing Health Needs. To assess the health needs of our community, we examined a wide variety of published health data, with a special eye on the social determinants of health. We also conducted community benefit meetings in 2023, 2024 and 2025 (the most recent 2025 meeting recording can be found [here](#)), annually surveyed multiple community health providers and gathered input from National Jewish Health community health experts.

Identified Health Needs. Following input and analysis from various published sources and human resources, we identified key community health needs that could benefit from our specialized expertise. We have divided them into two categories: respiratory health and social and behavioral health. Within those two categories, the identified community health needs are:

- **Respiratory Health**
 - Asthma & COPD — Asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) are the most common and burdensome respiratory diseases among the community.
 - Sleep Apnea — Public health data shows that insufficient sleep affects thousands in our community, while community physicians commented that sleep apnea is a common and burdensome respiratory disease among their patients.
- **Social and Behavioral Health**
 - Tobacco Use
 - Education
 - Access to Specialty Care
 - Air Quality
 - Health Care Costs

Air quality, limited access to specialty health care, inadequate patient and provider education and tobacco use all contribute to poor respiratory health in Colorado. Additionally, tobacco use, air quality, access to specialty care, education and health care costs were identified by community physicians as the highest needs for their patients.

Selected Areas of Focus

Guided by both identified local priorities and the strengths of National Jewish Health, the following areas will be the primary focus of the National Jewish Health Community Health Implementation Plan to improve community health.

Pediatric Respiratory Health

Rates of asthma emergency room visits and hospitalizations among children living in the National Jewish Health community, along with universal mention of asthma, food allergy and eczema among pediatric community health providers, suggests this is a large, ongoing community health need. National Jewish Health has the expertise, knowledge, capacity and tools to improve diagnosis and treatment of children with acute, chronic and complicated respiratory conditions.

Education

Both health care providers and patients could benefit significantly from better understanding respiratory health and ways to protect it, including educating physicians about handling difficult respiratory cases and educating patients about managing their disease and reducing exposure to respiratory irritants.

Access to Specialty Care

The high rates of emergency care and hospitalizations for asthma and COPD, poor air quality, an aging population and availability to specialized care among Medicare and Medicaid populations indicate that respiratory patients in our community need better access to the knowledge and expertise of National Jewish Health.

Health Needs Not Addressed

All of the identified significant health needs are important to National Jewish Health. However, the institution must focus its leadership, time and resources on the selected needs in order to make a difference in the community's health. The selected needs were ones to which National Jewish Health brings unique and extraordinary expertise and capabilities not widely available in the community. Limitations of funding, staff and expertise at the hospital were considered barriers to effectively addressing the unselected needs. Unselected needs were also ones that could be addressed by other organizations.

Implementation Strategy

Pediatric Respiratory Health

Goal: Serve more children with asthma and respiratory diseases.

Objectives

- **Improve access through telehealth.** We are evaluating the possibility of extending telehealth availability to engage with pediatric patients across the Denver metro area and Colorado. This will allow more patients convenient access to our pediatric respiratory experts.
- **Grow availability through faculty and staff.** We have hired additional pediatric pulmonologists who will be able to care for more children. We will continue to monitor the community's needs and add physicians when appropriate.
- **Partner with HCA HealthONE Rocky Mountain Children's at Presbyterian St. Luke's (RMHC).** Our pediatric physicians leverage our services and expertise to provide expanded pediatric pulmonary care for RMHC patients, including post neonatal intensive care unit patients, to reach more children in need.
- **Lead community projects to improve lung health.** We have expanded efforts to build capacity and partnerships among patients, families, schools, public health and health care providers in Colorado's San Luis Valley, Lower Arkansas Valley and are expanding into Weld, Morgan counties, the Pikes Peak area and the communities of Delta, Mesa and Montrose in Colorado.
- **Lead community advisory boards.** Continue to lead community advisory boards around Colorado to identify community problems, issues, priorities and resources.
- **Offer lung function testing at health fairs in rural areas.**

Measurement

- Track numbers of patient and geographic expansion within target areas.

Goal: Provide better care for children with asthma.

Objectives

- **Clinical trials of new medications.** National Jewish Health consistently conducts clinical trials of experimental medications for pediatric asthma patients, many of which lead to approvals for new medication treatments or pediatric asthma. This practice will continue in the coming years.
- **Training providers.** The National Jewish Health *for Kids Asthma Toolkit Bootcamp* program has trained more than 500 general practitioners in Colorado to better diagnose and manage pediatric and adult asthma in communities that are under-resourced. The program has been taken to La Plata, Chaffee, Custer, Fremont, Huerfano, Las Animas, Lake, Park, Pueblo, Teller and El Paso Counties in Colorado, as well as provided in the Denver area. Additionally, we extended the program and provider education to the Navajo Nation, Southern Ute Nation, and the Apache Nation in Colorado, New Mexico and Arizona. We will also offer this training to additional clinics in the Navajo Nation and at select clinics in the Tahono O'odham Nation.
- **Asthma action plan.** The hospital will ensure that pediatric patients have an asthma action plan to use at home. An action plan provides a personalized, written guide for managing asthma by outlining daily treatment, how to recognize and respond to worsening symptoms or attacks and when to seek emergency medical help. Action plans are proven effective in helping control asthma, preventing asthma attacks and managing asthma attacks safely when they do occur. Asthma action plans are also part of our Hospital Transformation Project.

Measurement

- Track research studies and published findings. Document grants and research.
- Document pediatric asthma action plans.

Education

Goal: Educate patients and their families on how to manage asthma and other respiratory diseases.

Objectives

- **Morgridge Academy.** National Jewish Health operates a free, K-8 school for up to 90 chronically ill children on the organization's main campus in Denver. The school teaches students how to manage their diseases and helps improve student academics. Most of the students have fallen behind scholastically due to absences caused by asthma and other chronic diseases. Many of the students are from families with limited resources. Through an active information campaign and outreach efforts, we will work to increase the number of students served by the school to help more children with respiratory and other chronic diseases.
- **Health content.** National Jewish Health uses a robust library of health content, overseen and authored by experts at National Jewish Health, both in print and online. The educational material ranges from targeted patient-facing education on conditions, tests, and medications used to support direct patient care, to larger Understanding booklets on key health conditions, to dozens of instructional videos on topics such as inhaler technique and "What is COPD?" We will continue to support and update our consumer-facing health content, with special focus on increasing our library of educational videos. We continue to explore innovative and effective ways to help patients find educational content.
- **Patient education and support groups.** National Jewish Health will continue to focus on providing one-on-one patient education and support of patients with chronic illnesses and will strive to expand access to patient education and support groups.
- **Suicide and depression screening.** National Jewish Health is committed to improving the care we provide to patients who are experiencing suicidal ideation. Educating patients about suicide and depression facilitates early detection, promotes effective treatment and helps reduce the stigma surrounding mental illness. All inpatients over the age of 12 are screened for symptoms of depression and suicidal ideation at the time of admission. This activity is part of our Hospital Transformation Project and coincides with an organizational initiative to assess staff knowledge, practices and confidence while adopting a system-wide approach to caring for individuals who are at risk for suicide. We participate in the Hospital Quality Improvement Program, and we follow the Zero Suicide program.

Measurement

- Document number of Morgridge Academy students and relevant academic measures.
- Document new and updated health content.
- Document number of patients reached with education and support groups.

Goal: Educate health care professionals

Objectives

- **Physician training.** National Jewish Health provides active training programs for medical students, interns, residents and postgraduate fellows in allergy, immunology, environmental and occupation health sciences, pulmonology, pediatrics and more. At any given time, about 70 residents and fellows are receiving training at National Jewish Health for future careers in medicine. National Jewish Health will extend this training with partner Saint Joseph Hospital.
- **Continuing medical education.** The Office of Professional Education regularly develops multi-city series of education seminars at which our expert physicians educate health professionals on current topics concerning the diseases we treat, clinical strategies for severe asthma, the safety and efficacy of inhaled corticosteroids in asthma, managing airway diseases and current best practices in care of patients with interstitial lung disease. The Office will also expand online continuing medical education courses on asthma, cardiology, COPD, cystic fibrosis, cancer and other areas of expertise.
- **Conference presentations.** National Jewish Health faculty educate their peers about the care of patients at dozens of medical and scientific conferences throughout the year.
- **Outreach to community providers through Hospital Transformation Project (HTP).** We will continue to reach community providers in underserved clinics to discuss how access to specialty care can help their patients.

Measurement

- Assess how many providers reached and programs held within these areas.
- Document live and online CME programs.
- Document outreach to community providers.

Access to Specialty Care

Goal: Expand capacity to see patients.

Objectives

- **Immediate care.** To address the need for specialized immediate care and acute respiratory care, our Immediate Care Center expanded the triage services for our pediatric patients and children in the community. Through this Center we are able to triage acutely sick patients, treat them or transport them to inpatient or emergency services, if needed. We will continue to look for ways to enhance care provided in the Center.
- **Faculty and staff growth.** We anticipate continued growth in our faculty and staff so that we have the human resources to see more specialty care patients.
- **More locations.** We will work with Intermountain Health Saint Joseph Hospital and Rocky Mountain Hospital for Children to deliver National Jewish Health expertise at more locations across Colorado.
- **Create access to care through our patient portal.** Patients are able to schedule appointments through their Epic MyChart® accounts. This includes improved video visit (telehealth) capabilities that is a significant community benefit for Colorado rural, disadvantaged and disabled patients. We will continually find ways to enhance the patient portal and virtual visit experience.
- **Health Screenings.** Provide free and confidential health screenings for active and former U.S. Department of Energy workers, miners and uranium industry workers.
- **Participate in local events.** National Jewish Health will host the National Lung Cancer Screening Day, a special Saturday screening event to promote awareness of CT screening for people at high risk for lung cancer.
- **Community Events.** We participate in the Denver Walk-With-A-Doc program, offering monthly walks combined with a health-related educational talk by one of our physicians.

Measurement

- We will assess success by existing patient and community use of our Immediate Care Center.
- Document the number of patients creating MyChart accounts.
- We will develop individual measures for programs with our partners.
- We will develop measures as we identify other new programs.

Goal: Make it easier for outside health care providers to work with National Jewish Health and to refer patients.

Objectives

- **Increase access for physician-to-physician consultations.** Through our Hospital Transformation Project (HTP), we will participate in the eConsult platform through the Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing, which allows for electronic communication between primary care providers and specialty care providers to discuss patient care in a secure environment, coordinate referrals and share relevant health information.
- **Operational and technological improvements.** After changing our electronic health record to Epic® in 2023, we have continued to improve and streamline referral physician access to patient records and physician consultations.
 - Enabled Epic's Care Everywhere® function, which allows other health care facilities that are using the Epic system to directly access National Jewish Health patient records, improving communication and care continuity across Colorado and beyond. Most Colorado health care systems are on the Epic platform.
 - Enabled Epic HealthLink® as a way for referral physicians who are not using Epic to access patient records through our Epic Community Health Partner platform.
 - Connected National Jewish Health to the Colorado Regional Health Information Organization (CORHIO) as another provider access avenue for viewing patient records from within the state of Colorado.
 - Updated our Epic electronic health record to improve communication and collaboration on patient care with providers.
 - We will continue to investigate ways to update our information systems to facilitate more effective communication and interaction with patients and providers.

Measurement

- Document use of eConsult.
- Monitor use and fully access for benefits to patients.

Goal: Additional Specialty Services.

Objectives

- **New and expanded programs.** We are expanding programs for pulmonary, gastroenterology, neurology, oncology, rheumatology and pediatric pulmonary care. Additionally, we enhanced state-of-the-art MRI and CT imaging equipment with the addition of highly trained radiologists to enable us to better serve the high demand for imaging services.
- **Chronic care management.** The National Jewish Health Chronic Care Management™ tool provides ongoing monitoring and care between office visits, using a smartphone application and remote monitoring devices such as weight, blood pressure, blood oxygen saturation and heart rate. This tool dramatically improves access for adult patients who have more than one serious chronic condition. Every day, our chronic care management team receives notifications of abnormal vital signs and calls each patient to learn how they are doing and to identify health care needs early. With more regular home monitoring and enhanced access to the patient's National Jewish Health care team, this tool identifies health issues earlier in the disease process, helps avoid hospitalization, identifies when the patient needs to go to the hospital and prevents adverse outcomes. Developed by National Jewish Health, this tool is available to adult pulmonary, cardiology, gastroenterology, infectious disease, rheumatology, and other subspecialty patients with approximately 65 condition protocols. We are actively expanding the number and diversity of health conditions managed and the number of patients enrolled in this program to offer it to as many patients as possible.

Measurement

- Develop appropriate goals as programs are introduced.
- Count patients in Chronic Care Management program.

Additional National Jewish Health Services Provided to the Community

Free lung testing. National Jewish Health staff participates in free community outreach events in and around Colorado to provide free lung screenings to help detect lung disease that needs medical attention educational materials. We will investigate how to expand outreach efforts or develop new offerings.

Tobacco cessation. National Jewish Health currently operates the nation's largest tobacco-cessation QuitLine programs, currently offered in 26 states, including Colorado. Our "Health Initiatives" department, which manages these QuitLines, also works to develop tobacco-cessation protocols for especially impacted populations and offers a wide array of educational materials. Targeted programs for groups such as American Indians and the LGBTQ community have been successful.

Addressing the vaping epidemic. We have researched and developed MyLife MyQuit, a free QuitLine tailored specifically for teens who want to quit e-cigarettes and other vape devices. Our ongoing research into the biological and behavioral aspects of e-cigarette use so far reported negative impacts of e-cigarette vapor on the immune system and that e-cigarette use among tobacco smokers does not promote reduction of tobacco use for most smokers.

Clinical and Translational Research Center. Funded by the National Institutes of Health, the Center provides an infrastructure for community-based research in collaboration with University of Colorado.

Lung Line. A free information service for health care consumers provided by National Jewish Health, Lung Line is staffed by registered nurses, who have years of clinical experience. They provide educational information on lung, allergic and immune diseases to those who call, email or contact National Jewish Health through our website or other websites. Since Lung Line began in 1983, the staff have provided millions of answers to questions by phone and email.

The Miners Clinic at National Jewish Health. This program provides nationally recognized medical screening, diagnosis, treatment, pulmonary rehabilitation, education, counseling and prevention services through free screening programs held at various locations in Colorado.

The Black Lung Clinic. This clinic offers appointments year-round at National Jewish Health in Denver. It also holds annual outreach clinics in partnership with local hospitals in Craig, Montrose and Pueblo, Colorado, as well as Page, Arizona and Casper, Wyoming.

The Radiation Exposure Screening and Education Program (RESEP) Clinics. This program helps thousands of workers who were involved in the mining, milling and transporting uranium used to produce atomic weapons for the United States. It provides screening for diseases related to radiation exposure, referrals for patients needing further diagnostic or treatment procedures and help with documenting claims under the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA).