

Community Health Improvement Plan

Waterbury, CT

2023-2026

Partnering for a Healthier Waterbury



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Waterbury Connecticut Community Health Improvement 3 Year Plan

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Introduction

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines health as “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.”¹

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines a community health improvement plan (or CHIP) as a long-term, systematic effort to address public health problems based on the results of community health assessment activities and the community health improvement process. A plan is typically updated every three to five years².

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines Health equity as “the state in which everyone has a fair and just opportunity to attain their highest level of health.” To do this, society must make concerted and sustained efforts to address historical and contemporary injustices, get past social, political, and economic barriers to health and healthcare, and end preventable health inequities³.

To determine future planning and funding priorities, existing strengths and assets on which to build, and areas for increased collaboration and coordination between organizations, institutions, and community groups, it is crucial to understand the current state of the community's health. The findings of the 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) for Greater Waterbury, Connecticut, led to the development of this Community Health Improvement plan.

Vision

Increase the quality of life and life expectancy of Waterbury residents through equitable policies and practices while fostering a nurturing and healthy community.

Process

The community has identified the following key health priorities:

1. Healthcare access and culturally responsive healthcare and medical care
2. Chronic Diseases (Hypertension, Diabetes, Asthma)
3. Mental Health
4. Maternal Health
5. Substance Abuse

The Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) Advisory Committee was convened to collaboratively develop the CHIP based on the community-identified health priorities listed above. Representatives from more than 45 agencies across all sectors were invited to participate, including clinical, community-based, faith-based, philanthropic, transportation, legislative and municipal agencies. It was important to have cross-sector representation on the Advisory Committee to ensure that the CHIP is an inclusive, comprehensive plan. The agencies who agreed to participate are listed below:

Carelon (formerly Beacon Health Options)
Community Health Center, Inc.
Community Mental Health Affiliates
Connecticut Community Foundation
City of Waterbury Department of Public Health
Grace Baptist Church
New Opportunities, Inc.
Neighborhood Housing Services of Waterbury
Northeast Transportation
Safe Haven
Saint Mary's Hospital/Trinity Health of New England
Saint Vincent DePaul
Salvation Army

StayWell Health Center, Inc.
 United Way of Greater Waterbury
 Waterbury Bridge to Success
 Waterbury Hospital
 Waterbury Police Department
 Waterbury Senior Center
 Waterbury WIC
 Waterbury Youth Services
 Wellmore
 Western Connecticut Area Agency on Aging
 Western Connecticut Coalition
 Western Connecticut Mental Health Network
 Wheeler Clinic

Using a rating matrix adapted from Health Resources in Action⁴, each committee member identified the drivers of community-identified health priorities.

Each driver was examined to rate the relevance, appropriateness, impact, and feasibility related to addressing the key health priority. Utilizing this high-level root cause analysis streamlined the focus area that service providers felt was tangible and would show positive progress in addressing the needs.

Committee members were asked to consider the following when rating each selection criteria:

Relevance – How appropriate is it?

- Burden of the problem
- Community concern
- Focus on equity and accessibility

Appropriateness – Should we do it?

- Ethical and/or moral issues
- Human rights issues
- Legal aspects
- Political and social acceptability
- Public attitudes and values

Impact – What will we get out of it?

- Effectiveness
- Amount of people it will touch
- Builds or enhances current work
- Can move the needle and demonstrate measurable outcomes
- Proven strategies to address multiple wins.

Feasibility – Can we do it?

- Community capacity
- Technical capacity
- Economic capacity
- Political capacity /will
- Social-cultural aspects
- Identifies short-term wins

The follow matrix was utilized to establish to assist with Outcome recommendations:

1 = Low Priority 2 = Medium 3 = High 4 = Very High Priority

The Advisory Committee met monthly to process the findings of this root cause exercise and identify measurable indicators to create an achievable work plan that will benefit the residents of Waterbury.

The graphic to the right illustrates the many elements of a community that impact the opportunity for residents to attain their optimal health status. Each section of the wheel represents a Social Influencer of Health. The CDC defines "Social determinants of health (SDOH) are the nonmedical factors that influence health outcomes." They are the conditions in which people are born, grow, work, live, and age, and the wider set of forces and systems shaping¹⁷. When the elements of the wheel are functioning well, residents in the community can thrive. When aspects of the wheel are lacking, barriers to optimal health result in health disparities. It is essential to address these elements to create lasting improvements in the health of a community.



Figure 1 <http://vitalysthealth.org/the-wheel/>

The following graphic illustrates the difference between equality, equity, and justice. As the graphic depicts, not only should people have the opportunity to access the tools they specifically need to improve their health, but barriers to health (the fence) need to be removed all together. In order to achieve an equitable health landscape in Waterbury, partners across sectors need to work together to improve access and eliminate barriers to achieving optimal health status. We hope that this CHIP will provide the framework for this critical work.

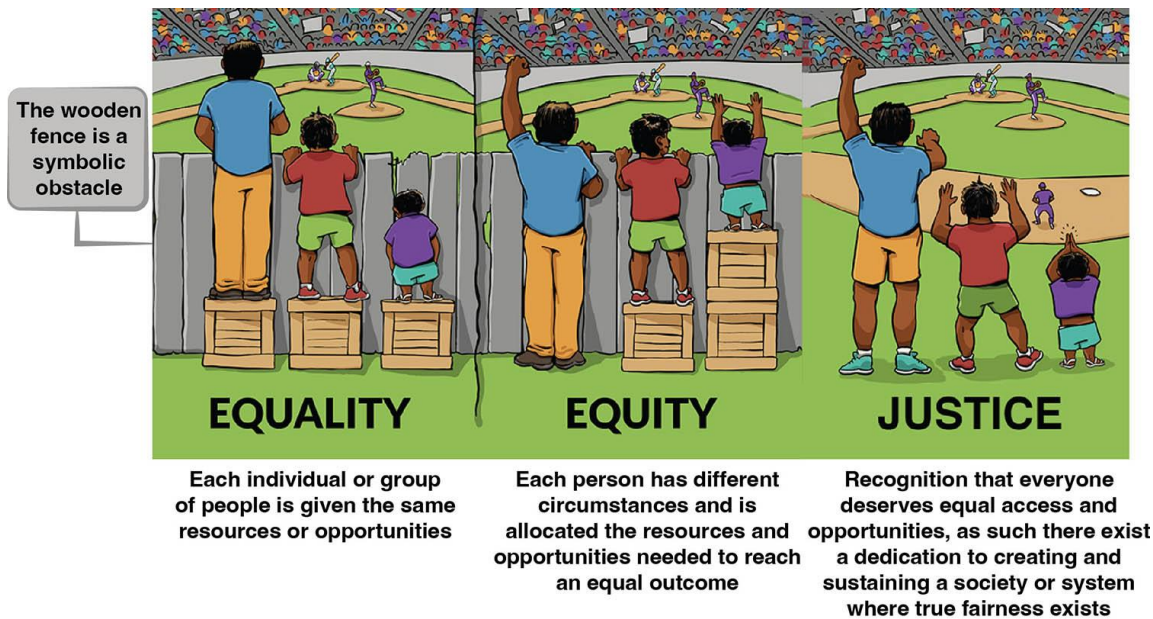


Figure 2 <https://www.lle.rochester.edu/index.php/dei-home/>



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

After participating in a 6-month planning process, the Greater Waterbury Community Health Improvement Planning Advisory Committee is honored to provide the following Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) to community members, organizations, and civic groups. The CHIP aligns with priorities identified within the 2022 Greater Waterbury Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA).

More than 30 organizations and individuals who represent a wide range of the community and all facets of health comprised the advisory committee. Quantitative and qualitative data were included in the CHNA through focus groups, a community forum, and the DataHaven Community Well-being Survey distributed to more than 1,000 Greater Waterbury individuals. Information from the Center for Applied Research and Engagement Systems helped create a complete picture of the Greater Waterbury area's health landscape. Participants in focus groups reviewed the generated data, determined and ranked the health priorities addressed in this plan.

The community health improvement plan includes goals and strategies relating to these priorities. The next step is a three-year action cycle that community partners are implementing. Recognizing that community accountability and action are vital to delivering outcome results, the CHIP monitoring committee, composed of individuals and organizations committed to improving health issues, has been formed and will meet quarterly to track the progress of the identified indicators. An annual update will be updated as an appendix to the 2023 CHIP through 2025 on the Greater Waterbury Health Partnership website. The Advisory Committee's goal is to implement these strategies through a collective approach of deploying existing resources and creating new interventions and cooperation that will hold systems accountable for both **action and inaction** related to prevalent health disparities in Waterbury.

The two hospitals in the vibrant city of Waterbury, Trinity Health of New England/ St. Mary's Hospital and Waterbury Health/Waterbury Hospital, are just two miles apart. Each hospital also identifies strategies and individual plans to help improve the community's health. You may find both Community Health Improvement Plans in this report's appendix.

Health Priority 1: Increase Community Trust

Health Equity Solutions states in a 2021 report, "Declaring racism as a public health crisis or emergency offers a clear path to intentionally acknowledging and addressing disparities and inequities. Adopting a resolution can catalyze and authorize data and policy analysis to prevent unintentional injustices." ⁵ In 2022, Waterbury declared racism a public health crisis, further galvanizing the need to implement written plans.

Addressing the need for culturally sensitive treatment and enhanced community trust in the healthcare system aligns with current efforts made by the State of Connecticut, leading to an increase in community trust and a healthier Waterbury. One of the current priorities in Health Connecticut 2025 is to "ensure all Connecticut residents have knowledge of, and equitable access to, affordable, comprehensive, appropriate, quality health care." ⁶

The influence of culturally responsive care cannot be denied. One's whole physical, social, and mental health status and quality of life are affected by access to healthcare. It's important to realize that locating a medical expert in whom you have confidence and comfort may need searching for someone who exemplifies humility in your culture and resembles the patients they treat.⁷

Linking racism to an individual's satisfaction with care and provider relationships is hypothesized in many medical journals. A study from 2006 listed in the National Library of Medicine states, "Perceived racism had both a significant, inverse direct effect on satisfaction as well as a significant indirect effect on satisfaction mediated by cultural mistrust and trust in the provider."⁸

PROVIDE CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE CARE AND INCREASE COMMUNITY TRUST

Outcomes	Strategies	Indicators
Community Members will access inclusive, cultural responsive primary and behavioral health care services, supports and treatment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) amongst Waterbury's Community Based Organizations. (CBO) • Seek funding to hire additional multilingual and multicultural staff. • Host a monthly open DEI forum for local providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 2026 CBO will list their DEI credentials or their commitment to health equity on social media platforms.
In order to meet residents where they are, providers and systems will communicate in a fashion that is linguistically appropriate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase access to the language line and provide bilingual medical and BH services • Utilize the Teach-back technique to improve patient comprehension of their visit. • Encourage wide spread usage of the Unite Us platform by increasing their in network referrals • Include multiple language signage to assist in information gathering. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 2026, increase the use of the language line by 20% over baseline. • By 2026 Unite Us network will expand by 10% from baseline for programs in Greater Waterbury
Reduce the amount of residents that experience gaps in accessing appropriate care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a homeless taskforce • Re-establish the Medical Respite work group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 2026 a medical respite pilot will be established.
The accepted standards will be person-centered, trauma-informed practices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeking funding to increase trauma informed specialized approaches in service delivery, • Host trainings on mental health with the goal of lowering stigma, boosting literacy, and giving opportunity to those with lived experience. • To enhance care, inform consumers and decision-makers about the quality standard ratings for providers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 2026, there will be a positive increase in specialized trauma informed programs in Waterbury.



Health Priority 2: Maternal Health

It is an investment in the future to safeguard and enhance newborn and maternal health outcomes. Such investments may impact present and future health issues, health outcomes, and the healthcare and social service system's resource requirements.

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the United States has the highest rate of maternal death among high-income nations. HHS has made resolving the maternity care crisis a major priority⁹. Waterbury residents prioritized Maternal Health in the 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment. Correlating with National efforts will strengthen maternal health outcomes with shared alignment for an increased funding structure. In 2021, there were nine Waterbury infant deaths, of which 100% of the babies whose race is known were of color¹⁰.

REDUCE MATERNAL HEALTH DISPARITIES

Outcomes	Strategies	Indicators
Increase access to maternal health education and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase utilization of Home visiting services and the Health Steps and Women's and Children's Program #Day43 Program Commonsense Childbirth Institute Non-clinical Maternal Health Provider training Expand the Swaddle of Support Program Create a more extensive and inclusive network of resources for family planning and behavioral and mental health professionals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 2026 Waterbury will have increased its maternal health services by 10% from baseline.
Establish maternal health screening standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a maternal health screening analysis and strategy development of implementation and data collection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 2026 screening data will be available
Launch the Waterbury Baby Bundle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build and further develop the Maternal Health Workgroup Create a data warehouse for maternal health data Raise awareness of the Swaddle of Support Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 2026 Waterbury will have established a circle of community support around pregnancy and postpartum as Waterbury's Baby Bundle



Health Priority 3: Mental Health and Substance Use

A few of the various facets of behavioral health include access to mental health services, crisis intervention, pain management, and prevention and treatment programs for substance use disorders¹¹. A route to a stable and secure life can be found by successfully implementing care that is well-coordinated and effectively integrated. The Waterbury community can benefit from removing barriers to care and services and implementing a data-informed evaluation method for our behavioral health programs and policies.

Many community members identify and internalize struggles with behavioral health. The data tells us that more than 2/3 of the Waterbury community knows someone who has experienced depression or is without hope¹². Although rates of anxiety and depression are at all-time highs, more than half of persons with mental illnesses do not receive any treatment. A worsening opioid epidemic killing tens of thousands of Americans each year still gravely impacts Waterbury, and it's clear our communities and patients need help. As clinicians diagnose and treat behavioral and mental health issues across all practice settings, supporting them is essential to curb this crisis¹³.

Supporting behavioral health clinicians to connect to the state's official Health Information Exchange (CONNIE) is one of the priorities listed in Connecticut's Five-Year Statewide Health IT Plan. The State of Connecticut Office of Health Strategy (OHS), with the help of strategic planning and guidance from the Health Information Technology Advisory Council (HITAC), launched behavioral health engagement in 2022¹⁴. CONNIE could aid in closing the gap between medical and behavioral healthcare allowing for two different systems to communicate.

IMPROVE ACCESS TO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH TREATMENT SERVICES AND COMMUNICATION

Outcomes	Strategies	Indicators
Prevent mortality from the misuse of various substances, including opioids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support harm reduction methods by providing naloxone and Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) trainings. Strengthen the referral process for Substance Use Disorders (SUD) treatment Create a transportation system that will allow people to access care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unite Us network will increase by 10% from baseline for Greater Waterbury initiatives by 2026.
Increase community awareness of services and specialized programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase awareness of the necessity of more substantial and long-term state support for local public behavioral health services. Analyze the availability of behavioral health services in Greater Waterbury. Make a website with current program availability, wait times, and consumer-level guidance for program engagement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 2026, monthly meetings for programmatic updates will be held by the Waterbury behavioral health providers.
Create a community-wide mental health infrastructure to advance trauma-informed care and the use of data systems to foster cooperation and service planning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a broad network of therapeutic modalities available to the Waterbury community. Encourage quality benchmarks related to treatment outcomes to support additional funding. Increase crisis behavioral support services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50% of the behavioral health organizations in Waterbury will include Quality Outcomes on the Waterbury Resource Website by 2026.



Health Priority 4: Chronic Disease Prevention

Disease and death rates are the most direct measures of health and well-being in a community. In the United States, premature disease and death are primarily attributable to chronic health issues¹⁵. Cultivating informed decision-making that results in healthy behaviors are among the primary prevention efforts to prevent illness and chronic conditions.

In an analysis listed in the 2022 Greater Waterbury CHNA, The Connecticut Hospital Information Medical Exchange (CHIME) data that is population and age-adjusted, Waterbury surpasses all other towns with 5,000 more residents in the surrounding towns as well as Connecticut’s rates for Asthma, Hypertension, and Type II Diabetes¹².

Connecting those at risk for or living with chronic diseases to local resources can help them live better, prevent or halt the progression of their illness, avoid complications, and require less medical attention overall. Improved links between the community and clinical settings often mean clinicians can refer patients to proven programs¹⁶.

INCREASE ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE AND PROMOTING CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION

Outcomes	Strategies	Indicators
Strengthening health care systems to provide preventative services that keep individuals healthy and early illness detection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilizing more allied health professionals, such as patient navigators and community health workers, to provide high-quality treatment. Measure and report both successful and failed modifications to the health system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 2026 clinical service providers will increase their allied health professional workforce by 25%.
Establishing connections between clinical services and community-based efforts to aid in the prevention and management of chronic illnesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the HIE more frequently to support clinical decisions and help with patient reminders. Provide wellness and case management services directly in neighborhoods. Provide wrap around care management services in the Greater Waterbury public schools. Increase program capacity for chronic care patients Increasing access for populations with limited or no access to healthcare. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80% of the BH organizations in Waterbury will take part in CONNIE by 2026. Provide case management and health education services directly in communities throughout Waterbury by 2026.
Eliminating barriers in access to healthcare and health education to empower residents in taking a more active role in their health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using social media to aid in increasing knowledge of chronic disease. Facilitate health education presentations for community members and provide incentives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 2026, quarterly data briefings will be published about specific health topics in Waterbury.



Conclusion

A growing understanding that health encompasses well-being and the absence of illness is one-factor fueling interest in health improvement and performance monitoring. Health is influenced by various factors, including social and economic circumstances, human behavior, genetic makeup, and medical care, for both individuals and groups.

The Community Health Implementation Plan (CHIP) and the Greater Waterbury Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) provide a roadmap for addressing Waterbury's most pressing health needs. This committee is dedicated to addressing these priorities and creating and attaining quarterly targets for advancement.

Finally, we express our gratitude for reading this document. By working together, we can successfully improve everyone's health in Waterbury.

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Appendix A: Saint Mary's Hospital & Waterbury Hospital CHIPs

Please see the attached documents.



Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) Implementation Strategy

Fiscal Years FY23-25



Saint Mary's Hospital
Trinity Health

Saint Mary's Hospital completed a comprehensive Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) that was adopted by authorized body of the Trinity Health Of New England Board on 9-26-2022.

Saint Mary's Hospital performed the CHNA in adherence with applicable federal requirements for not-for-profit hospitals set forth in the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). The assessment considered a comprehensive review of secondary data analysis of patient outcomes, community health status, and social determinants of health, as well as primary data collection, including input from representatives of the community, community members and various community organizations.

The complete CHNA report is available electronically at:

<https://www.trinityhealthofne.org/about-us/community-benefit/community-health-needs-assessments>

or printed copies are available upon request at:

Department of Community Health and Well Being, Trinity Health Of New England, 56 Franklin St. (O'Brien 1st Fl.), Waterbury, CT 06706.

Our Mission and Core Values

To serve together in the spirit of the Gospel as a compassionate and transforming healing presence within our communities. Guided by our charitable mission and core values, our work extends far beyond hospital or clinic walls. We continually invest resources into our communities to meet the health needs of underserved and vulnerable community members, bringing them healing, comfort, and hope. Through our community benefit initiatives, we help to make our communities healthier places to live.

Our Core Values:

- Reverence - We honor the sacredness and dignity of every person.
- Commitment to Those Who are Poor - We stand with and serve those who are poor, especially those most vulnerable.
- Safety - We embrace a culture that prevents harm and nurtures a healing, safe environment for all.
- Justice - We foster right relationships to promote the common good, including sustainability of Earth.
- Stewardship - We honor our heritage and hold ourselves accountable for the human, financial, and natural resources entrusted to our care.
- Integrity - We are faithful to who we say we are

Our Hospital

Saint Mary's Hospital is a Catholic, not-for-profit, acute care, community teaching hospital that has served Greater Waterbury since 1909. In 2016, Saint Mary's Hospital became part of Trinity Health Of New England, an integrated health care delivery system that is a member of Trinity Health, Livonia, Michigan, one of the largest multi-institutional Catholic health care delivery systems in the nation serving communities in 26 states. Licensed for 347 beds, Saint Mary's is designated as a Level II Trauma Center, offers award-winning cardiac and stroke care and houses the region's only pediatric emergency care unit. As the leading provider of surgical services in Greater Waterbury, Saint Mary's was the first to introduce the daVinci® Robotic Surgery System. The hospital's satellites and affiliates extend from Waterbury to Wolcott, Cheshire, Naugatuck, Southbury, Prospect and Watertown.



Our Community

Saint Mary's service area and community refers to three primary geographic areas: (1) Waterbury/urban core; (2) the inner ring, which includes towns contiguous to Waterbury (Naugatuck, Prospect, Cheshire, Wolcott, Middlebury, Watertown, Thomaston); and (3) the outer ring, which includes all remaining towns in the region (Beacon Falls, Oxford, Southbury, Woodbury, Bethlehem, Morris, Litchfield, Goshen, Warren, Washington, Roxbury, Bridgewater, New Milford). The community encompasses western Connecticut and is relatively large with a population of approximately 313,000 residents. The geographic area was defined by primary service area (PSA) and secondary service area (SSA). The PSA is the area that the hospital predominantly serves and the hospital's main catchment area. It comprises all of Waterbury and has a population of approximately 114,000 residents. A snapshot of Waterbury from the 2020 US Census shows: 42,135 households; \$46,329 median household income; 48,392 total housing units; 17.1% with a bachelor's degree or higher; 39% Hispanic or Latino descent; and 7.6% without healthcare coverage.

Our Approach to Health Equity

While community health needs assessments (CHNA) and Implementation Strategies are required by the IRS, Trinity Health ministries have historically conducted CHNAs and developed Implementation Strategies as a way to meaningfully engage our communities and plan our Community Health & Well-Being work. Community Health & Well-Being promotes optimal health for those who are experiencing poverty or other vulnerabilities in the communities we serve by connecting social and clinical care, addressing social needs, dismantling systemic racism, and reducing health inequities. Trinity Health has adopted the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's definition of Health Equity - "Health equity means that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible. This requires removing obstacles to health such as poverty, discrimination, and their consequences, including powerlessness and lack of access to good jobs with fair pay, quality education and housing, safe environments, and health care."

This implementation strategy was developed in partnership with community and will focus on specific populations and geographies most impacted by the needs being addressed. Racial equity principles were used throughout the development of this plan and will continue to be used during the implementation. The strategies implemented will mostly focus on policy, systems and environmental change as these systems changes are needed to dismantle racism and promote health and wellbeing for all members of the communities we serve.

Health Needs of the Community

The following provides a brief overview of the key findings from the 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment for the region. This includes findings as they relate to the top health priorities that were selected for additional community health improvement planning at a regional level. Each priority lists a subset of focus areas that are representative of issues most affecting the community of Greater Waterbury. These priority areas were established through a combination of community input and partner review of data and have been carefully examined to ensure inclusiveness of issues that contribute to health disparities in the community. Data in this report reflects a direct correlation to main priorities and focus area subsets.:

Access to Care

- Readmissions
- Language
- Care Coordination

Outreach & Community Trust

- Health Education
- Culturally Competent Care
- Maternal Health

Systems Change

- Substance Abuse
- Mental Health
- Chronic Disease Prevention

Hospital Implementation Strategy

Significant health needs to be addressed

Saint Mary's Hospital, in collaboration with community partners, will focus on developing and/or supporting initiatives and measure their effectiveness to improve the following health needs:

1. **Culturally Competent Care – CHNA pages 16, 20-24**
2. **Maternal Health – CHNA pages 16, 60-65**

Significant health needs that will not be addressed

Saint Mary's Hospital acknowledges the wide range of priority health issues that emerged from the CHNA process and determined that it could effectively focus on only those health needs which are the most pressing, under-addressed and within its ability to influence. Saint Mary's Hospital does not intend to address the following health needs:

- **Access to Care (Readmissions, Language, Care Coordination) – These needs are currently supported via our Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) department's focus on Race, Ethnicity & Language (REL) in guiding quality improvement efforts along with our preventable hospitalizations and social-care hub work. They will also be latently impacted through addressing culturally competent care.**
- **Outreach & Community Trust (Health Education) – This need will be addressed through the provision of culturally competent care which will also include building the capacity of providers which will build trust in the healthcare system for patients and the community. In addition, it is supported through the Waterbury Health Access Program (WHAP) which partners with area organizations for outreach and education.**
- **Systems Change (Substance Abuse, Mental Health, Chronic Disease Prevention) – These needs are resourced through existing collaboratives and partnerships in the City of Waterbury including internal and external behavioral health and medical health providers which include WHAP and the Community Care Team (CCT).**

This implementation strategy specifies community health needs that the hospital, in collaboration with community partners has determined to address. This implementation strategy outlines actions that will be taken in year one. An amended implementation strategy that defines actions for years two and three will be submitted after community workgroups have completed their root cause analysis and have provided suggestions for improvement to the hospital for consideration. The hospital reserves the right to amend this implementation strategy as circumstances warrant. For example, certain needs may become more pronounced and require enhancements to the described strategic initiatives. During these three years, other organizations in the community may decide to address certain needs, indicating that the hospital then should refocus its limited resources to best serve the community.

1

Culturally Competent Care



Hospital facility: Saint Mary's Hospital
CHNA reference pages: 16, 20-24

Brief description of need:

- Data shows clear evidence of continued health disparities based on race and ethnicity.
- Linguistic isolation is characterized as speaking English less than “very well.” People who struggle with English proficiency may have difficulty in school, seeking health care, accessing social services, or finding work in a largely English-speaking community.
- Inequities in access to healthcare, education, income, etc. lead to the health disparities that we observe in the data, especially when comparing outcomes based on race/ethnicity

Equitable and Inclusive SMART

Objective(s):

1. Build the capacity of 15 Saint Mary’s Hospital providers during the strategy period through awareness, education, and training in cultural humility/proficiency to improve the quality of care provided to Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC).
2. Through the work of the Transforming Communities Investment (TCI), build a collaborative of city providers to address the structural racism that continues to impact health disparities for BIPOC communities.
3. Internal analysis of 20 Saint Mary’s Hospital policies to assess for embedded racism with subsequent recommendations and changes if needed to make them culturally proficient before the final implementation strategy year.

Actions the hospital facility intends to take to address the Culturally Competent Care health need:

Strategy	Timeline			Hospital and Committed Partners (align to indicate committed resource)	Committed Resources (align by hospital/committed partner)
	Y1	Y2	Y3		
Engage staff at all levels in training in areas of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion to improve BIPOC patient experience.				Saint Mary's Hospital	In-kind staff and resources
				Bridge to Success	In-kind staff and resources
	X				
				Focus location(s)	Focus Population(s)
			Waterbury inner-city	BIPOC, priority zip codes 06702, 06704, 06705, 06706, 06708, 06710	
Strategy	Timeline			Hospital and Committed Partners (align to indicate committed resource)	Committed Resources (align by hospital/committed partner)
	Y1	Y2	Y3		
Development of collaborative with multi-disciplinary, cross-sectoral partners providing services to target populations for system(s) analysis, and strategy development.				Saint Mary's Hospital	Portion of TCI Funding – up to \$300,000 total per year
				Bridge to Success	In-kind staff and resources
				Hispanic Coalition	In-kind staff and resources
				Waterbury Public Schools	In-kind staff and resources
				Waterbury Department of Health	In-kind staff and resources
	X				
			Focus location(s)	Focus Population(s)	
			Waterbury	Cross-sectoral organizations serving Waterbury residents in areas of education, healthcare, social services, etc.	
Strategy	Timeline			Hospital and Committed Partners (align to indicate committed resource)	Committed Resources (align by hospital/committed partner)
	Y1	Y2	Y3		
Policy and legislative analysis through equity lens to identify opportunities for legislative advocacy and internal policy change.				Saint Mary's Hospital	In-kind staff and resources
				Trinity Health Of New England	In-kind staff and resources
	X				
			Focus location(s)	Focus Population(s)	
			Saint Mary's Hospital	Internal depts., THOfNE Gov't Relations	

Anticipated impact of these actions:

Impact Measures	Baseline	Target	Plan to evaluate the impact
Likelihood to Recommend (patients)	Current LTR Data	TBD	Data trends year over year
Beliefs and Attitudes Surveys (Staff)	TBD	TBD	Survey data year over year
Policy, protocol, practice changes based on recommendations	Existing PPP	20 PPP Eliminated or amended	TBD

2

Maternal Health



Hospital facility: Saint Mary's Hospital
CHNA reference pages: 16, 60-65

Brief description of need:

- Access to quality, culturally competent prenatal care is a key factor in birth and maternal health outcomes.
- Prenatal care is essential for monitoring the health of babies and birthers and provides the opportunity for early intervention if complications arise.
- Access and engagement in quality, culturally competent postpartum care and services, is associated with better health outcomes for mothers, birthers and their babies. Mothers, birthers and babies of color experience severe disparities in preterm birth, low-birth rate, maternal morbidity/mortality and infant mortality.

Equitable and Inclusive SMART

Objective(s):

1. Develop a high-level collaborative between community-based organizations and both area hospitals to analyze infant mortality and propose policy/legislative changes.
2. Identify and further develop a continuum of care with internal and external partners for new and expectant mothers in the areas of education, awareness, outreach, funding opportunities and programming

Actions the hospital facility intends to take to address the maternal health need:

Strategy	Timeline			Hospital and Committed Partners (align to indicate committed resource)	Committed Resources (align by hospital/committed partner)	
	Y1	Y2	Y3			
Develop cross-collaborative team to analyze current practices and policies at SMH	X			SMH	In-kind staff and resources	
				Bridge to Success	In-kind staff and resources	
				Waterbury Hospital (TBD)	In-kind staff and resources	
					Focus location(s)	Focus Population(s)
			SMH, WH, Waterbury, State	Providers, legislators		
Strategy	Timeline			Hospital and Committed Partners (align to indicate committed resource)	Committed Resources (align by hospital/committed partner)	
	Y1	Y2	Y3			
Partner with local CBO to work with Doulas to focus on expanding access to education and services for women of color..	X			SMH	Portion of TCI Funding – up to \$300,000 total per year	
				Woman’s Choice Charitable Assoc.	In-kind staff and resources	
					Focus location(s)	Focus Population(s)
					Waterbury	BIPOC Women/Birthers
Strategy	Timeline			Hospital and Committed Partners (align to indicate committed resource)	Committed Resources (align by hospital/committed partner)	
	Y1	Y2	Y3			
Work with local agencies to create collaborative continuum of care for BIPOC mothers/birthers.	X			SMH	Portion of TCI Funding – up to \$300,000 total per year	
				GWHP	In-kind staff and resources	
				Woman’s Choice Charitable Assoc.	In-kind staff and resources	
				OBGYN providers	In-kind staff and resources	
					Focus location(s)	Focus Population(s)
			Waterbury city proper	BIPOC women/birthers, general public, and providers		

Anticipated impact of these actions:

Impact Measures	Baseline	Target	Plan to evaluate the impact
Increase the capacity of providers in the area of culturally proficient care for BIPOC new and expectant mothers.	TBD	TBD	Beliefs and attitudes assessment pre/post engagement in training/educational activities
# of Doulas trained and # of caseloads per Doulas trained as part of the strategy implementation	TBD	TBD	Work with partner(s) to determine adequate metrics including patient survey for qualitative data
Infant mortality rate for BIPOC	Black 5.1% Latina/o/x 5.3% (Infant Mortality per 1k live births) St. Mary’s 2022 CHNA, page 62	TBD	Work with partner(s), and providers to determine target metric

Adoption of Implementation Strategy

On February 14, 2023, the authorized body of the Trinity Health Of New England Board reviewed the 2023-2025 Implementation Strategy for addressing the community health needs identified in the 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment. Upon review, the authorized body approved this Implementation Strategy and the related budget.



Syed Ahmed Hussain, M.D., Senior Vice President and Chief Clinical Officer, Trinity Health Of New England

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STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS

Selection of the Community Health Priorities and Future Planning

The Greater Waterbury Health Partnership (GWHP) has collaborated with clinical and community partners on a comprehensive Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) to evaluate the health needs of individuals living in and around Waterbury, Connecticut beginning in 2021. The purpose of the assessment is to gather information about local health needs and health behaviors. The assessment examines a variety of indicators including risky health behaviors (alcohol use, tobacco use) and chronic health conditions (diabetes, heart disease).

The objectives of the session were to:

- Review compiled DataHaven Health and Wellbeing data and highlight key research findings.
- Gather feedback from community representatives about community health needs; and
- Prioritize the community health needs based on select criteria.

IDENTIFIED HEALTH PRIORITIES

The Greater Waterbury Health Partnership reviewed the findings and priority areas were established through a combination of community input and partner review of data and have been carefully examined to ensure inclusiveness of issues that contribute to health disparities in the community. Data in this report reflects a direct correlation to main priorities and focus area subsets. The following priority areas for Waterbury were adopted for the 2023-2026 implementation plan in order to touch on several health initiatives:

Access to Care

1. Readmissions
2. Language
3. Care Coordination

Outreach & Community Trust

1. Health Education
2. Culturally Competent Care
3. Maternal Health

Systems Change

1. Substance Abuse
2. Mental Health
3. Chronic Disease Prevention

WATERBURYHOSPITAL'S IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Waterbury Hospital's Implementation Strategy illustrates the hospital's specific programs and resources that will support ongoing efforts to address the identified community health priorities. This work will be supported by community-wide efforts and leadership from the executive team.

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The goal statements, related strategies, and inventory of new and existing initiatives and resources for each of the priority areas are listed below.

ACCESS TO CARE

Strategy: Improve access to comprehensive, culturally competent, quality health services focusing on plain and culturally appropriate language, increased care coordination and reduction in readmissions.

Objectives:

1. Enroll patients in insurance or DSS entitlement programs through the Waterbury Health Access Program (WHAP) and refer patient to a primary care provider and other social services if needed.
2. Identify high utilizers of the hospital's emergency department and care will be managed by the Community Care Team.
3. Use plain language materials for hospital patients including patient guide and discharge instructions.
4. Focus efforts on readmission reduction programs with strong focus on transition of care nurses

Action Steps:

Short-term	Long-term
Introduce an ED concierge to help patients follow up with appointments and educate them about follow up care	High utilizers of the hospital EDs will be managed by the Community Care Team. Connect ED and hospital patients to health and wellness resources including those available by the partnership.

Resources:

Community Care Team

With the Greater Waterbury Health Improvement Partnership, we are working on creating a Community Care Team to provide cross-organization case management for high utilization emergency department visitors between both hospital EDs and a comprehensive array of community organizations.

Waterbury Health Access Program

The Waterbury Health Access Program (WHAP) improves access to high-quality medical care by providing comprehensive case management, pharmacy assistance, and access to primary and sub-specialty medical care for the uninsured and underinsured residents of the Greater Waterbury region.

Be Well Bus

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In order to ensure that patients have access to medical appointments, at the hospital and at local physicians' offices, Waterbury Hospital's Be Well Bus provides transportation services to patients from Waterbury and eleven of its surrounding towns.

Wellness Series

The Wellness with a Pulse Series is an on-line and social media-based program that using knowledge of Waterbury HEALTH medical staff on different topics and offers advice and opportunity for the public to ask questions. The series is available to all and covers a variety of health topics including heart health, depression, muscles and joint pain, osteoporosis, healthy eating, asthma, bone health, and a range of other medical topics.

OUTREACH AND COMMUNITY TRUST

Strategy: Promote health and reduce chronic disease through culturally appropriate programs that target all populations including non-English speaking populations and women.

Objectives:

1. Incorporate regular information sessions and classes on diabetes, heart health, nutrition, birthing, mom and baby care classes, bariatric etc. that will be open to the public.
2. Continued Diversity, Equity and Inclusion training for all Waterbury HEALTH employees including on bias training and cultural sensitivities.
3. Will partner with community organizations to offer programs on maternal health including in African American and Hispanic organization. This includes community outreach programs in Spanish.

Action Steps:

Short-term	Long-term
Start patient and community e-newsletter with information about programs, classes, and events focusing on health and wellness.	Restart the Waterbury HEALTH Club focusing on health and wellness post COVID-19 including mental health, disease prevention classes and exercise programs.

Resources:

Wellness Series

The Wellness Series includes wellness community education presentations open to the public about a variety of health topics including heart health, depression, muscles and joint pain, osteoporosis, healthy eating, asthma, bone health, and a range of other medical topics.

Comprehensive Weight Management Program

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The Comprehensive Weight Management Program offers medical and surgical weight loss options for patients. Services include medical nutrition therapy, medical weight loss, and surgical weight loss. Medical Nutrition Therapy with a registered dietitian is available to patients with a variety of medical conditions such as diabetes, chronic kidney disease, hypertension, high cholesterol, as well as for those who are looking to lose weight.

Cardiac Rehab

Waterbury Hospital's cardiopulmonary rehabilitation is a medically supervised program to optimize the physical, psychological and social functioning of patients with cardiac and/or respiratory issues. Cardiopulmonary Rehabilitation can stabilize, slow and even reverse the progression of underlying cardiac issues.

Waterbury Hospital's program is staffed with Registered Nurses, Respiratory Therapists and Exercise Specialists and is accredited by AACVPR (American Association of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation). This program is accredited by AACVPR (American Association of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation).

Transition of Care Team

Our Transition of Care team, visits patients at home by referral. For these patients she does education, medication review and nutrition coaching.

- A *Transition of Care Nurse* is positioned at Waterbury Hospital to facilitate a safe discharge into the community for high-risk patients.
- An additional *Transition of Care Nurse* is out in the community at Skilled Nursing Facilities to ensure that quality safe continuum of care is maintained.

Heart Failure Center

The Heart Failure Center at Waterbury Hospital provides comprehensive outpatient care to patients who have received a heart failure diagnosis. Our goal is to help patients manage their disease so they can achieve the best quality of life possible.

Our team includes a cardiologist with expertise in heart failure management, nurse practitioners and a nutritionist. The team monitors each patient to ensure they are getting the best care and are following proper medication guidelines and a proper diet.

Our Services include heart failure disease management, symptom and weight tracking, medication review and tracking, intravenous diuretic (water tablets) administration, dietary consults, activity/exercise recommendations

Palliative Care

There were more than 700 geriatrics/palliative care consultations are done a year focusing on of inpatient and outpatient Consultations on End-of-life care, goals of care discussions, addressing polypharmacy, dementia assessments, help with management of chronic behavioral disturbances in dementia and an acute agitated delirium in medical/surgical/orthopedic units.

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Waterbury Hospital provides a robust education for nursing staff regarding care for frail geriatric patients on the floors, teaching rising professionals of Internal Medicine residency program and PA Yale School of medicine about complexity and vulnerability of elderly patients.

We have a multidisciplinary team building with case managers, social workers, physical and occupational therapists, speech and language pathologists, pharmacists, volunteers, pall care/hospice agencies and rehabilitation centers in the community to provide the best care for geriatric patients.

Waterbury HEALTH Club

The Club will offer fitness classes including weight training and yoga, wellness classes, and health education presentations on a variety of topics are presented by healthcare professionals. The Club will resume activities in 2024, to include a newsletter to patients and the community.

Food for Life Program

The Food for Life Program is an innovative program that provides access to fresh fruits and vegetables and enrollment in exercise programs to qualified HIV patients at no cost. The program offers a fitness and yoga class monthly and Nutrition, Health, and Wellness Support Group biweekly to engage patients in positive activities.

Diversity Equity and Inclusion Committee

The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee was created in 2021 with the following Mission and Vision.

Mission

Waterbury HEALTH is committed to providing an environment that is welcoming, inclusive, diverse and respectful. We value inclusion and diversity so all patients, families, colleagues and physicians will be empowered to share their unique difference and similarities with each other. By fostering an inclusive workplace environment, we seek to support innovative solutions to meet the needs of our patients and colleagues.

Vision:

Our WH Diversity, Equity and Inclusion committee is designed to serve our colleagues, patients, visitors and communities. The committee is made up of employees and leaders at WH that promote and embrace inclusion and diversity.

The committee's work includes educating staff on topics such as bias, micro aggression, LBGTQ community, religious diversity and more. This important work is expected to continue with education of staff on diversity, equity and inclusion and efforts to change hiring practices that will make the organization more diverse.

Waterbury HEALTH Website

Multilanguage Function

The Waterbury HEALTH website is a source of information for the community promoting services in the network, classes, support groups for diverse patient populations.

In addition, since 2021, the Waterbury HEALTH website is multilingual offering the user options to have the entire content of the website in a language of their choosing, helping users receive information in their prefer language, eliminating language barrier to this information.

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Calendar of Events

Designed with the community in mind, the calendar of events offers both in person and on-line classes, information and support for different patient populations, including expecting and new parents, orthopedic and bariatric patients and more.

SYSTEMS CHANGE

Strategy: To promote real systems change for patients with substance abuse and mental health disorders and chronic disease prevention.

Objectives:

1. Expand on programs for vulnerable populations including Homeless Outreach.
2. Expand on peer recovery coaches and specialists to help substance misuse patients.
3. Create and strengthen programs for patient populations with substance abuse and dual diagnosis.

Action Steps:

Short-term	Long-term
Expand Peer recovery specialist for patients with Mental Health Needs.	Implementing Partial Hospitalization Program for clients with substance abuse and psychiatric issues requiring higher level of care Implement treatment for patients with major depression disorders

Resources:

Behavioral Health

The Center for Behavioral Health offers psychiatric evaluations, OT/AT evaluations, family and group therapy, didactic educational groups, individual counseling, recreational services, and mental health services. The center also provides support groups such as parent and sibling support group, which offers emotional assistance to families who have children in treatment, and Alcoholics Anonymous.

We treat all individuals, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual preference or socio-economic status. Our goals are to optimize the individual's highest level of functioning, to promote recovery from mental illness and substance use disorders, and to lessen suffering through the delivery of high quality, compassionate and cost-effective treatment.

We employ a multidisciplinary approach and encourage the patient to be an active participant in his or her own treatment. Through a blending of biologic and psychosocial modalities we

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endeavor to reduce distress, to educate, and to heal. We utilize state-of-the-art therapies that assist our clients in achieving their goals in a manner that preserves privacy and promotes personal dignity and hope. Acknowledging the importance of family, friends, faith communities and other support systems, we strive toward the creation of meaningful and collaborative relationships.

PEER Recovery Specialist - Certified Peer Recovery Specialists provides support to patients with substance misuse disorder, with mental illness, or co-occurring disorder and help them achieve their personal recovery goals by promoting self-determination, personal responsibility, and the empowerment inherent in self-directed recovery. This successful program helps patients in the Emergency Department and their families find resources and support they need.

PEER Recovery Coach

Peer Recovery Coach provides recovery support to clients diagnosed with Substance Abuse Disorders engaging clients in the ER, outpatient setting, and the hospital to ensure clients are connected to services in the community and to support follow through of treatment recommendations.

Homeless Outreach Coordinator

For nearly 30 years the Waterbury Hospital Homeless Outreach Program has helped thousands of city residents. Through this program homeless men, women and children get connected to basic services including mental health, addictions and other health services, food, housing and jobs.

Each year, an average 120 people are helped by this program thanks to Waterbury Hospital Mental Health Clinicians. Through this work some of the most vulnerable are linked into a safety network led by United Way of Greater Waterbury that includes other social, non-for profit and health organization and entities in the city.

Partial Hospitalization Program

In the aftermath of COVID-19 with increased demand for services, Waterbury Hospital plans to implement PHP (Partial Hospital Program) for clients with substance abuse and/or psychiatric issues who need a higher level of care in outpatient setting.

Waterbury HEALTH

CHNA Implementation Work Plan Summary

Access to Care	Outreach and Community Trust	Systems Change
<p>Strategy: Improve access to comprehensive, culturally competent, quality health services focusing on plain and culturally appropriate language, increased care coordination and reduction in readmissions.</p>	<p>Strategy: Promote health and reduce chronic disease through culturally appropriate programs that target all populations including non-English speaking populations and women.</p>	<p>Strategy: To promote real systems change for patients with substance abuse and mental health disorders and chronic disease prevention.</p>
<p>Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Enroll patients in insurance or DSS entitlement programs through the Waterbury Health Access Program (WHAP) and refer patient to a primary care provider and other social services if needed. 6. Identify high utilizers of the hospital's emergency department and care will be managed by the Community Care Team. 7. Use plain language materials for hospital patients including patient guide and discharge instructions. 8. Focus efforts on readmission reduction programs with strong focus on transition of care nurses 	<p>Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Incorporate regular information sessions and classes on diabetes, heart health, nutrition, birthing, mom and baby care classes, bariatric etc. that will be open to the public. 5. Continued Diversity, Equity and Inclusion training for all Waterbury HEALTH employees including on bias training and cultural sensitivities. 6. Will partner with community organizations to offer programs on maternal health including in African American and Hispanic organization. This includes community outreach programs in Spanish. 	<p>Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Expand on programs for vulnerable populations including Homeless Outreach. 5. Expand on peer recovery coaches and specialists to help substance misuse patients. 6. Create and strengthen programs for patient populations with substance abuse and dual diagnosis.

Waterbury HEALTH

CHNA Implementation Work Plan Summary

<p>Action Steps:</p> <p><u>Short-term</u></p> <p>Introduce an ED concierge to help patients follow up with appointments and educate them about follow up care</p> <p><u>Long-term</u></p> <p>High utilizers of the hospital EDs will be managed by the Community Care Team.</p> <p>Connect ED and hospital patients to health and wellness resources including those available by the partnership.</p>	<p>Action Steps:</p> <p><u>Short-term</u></p> <p>Start patient and community e-newsletter with information about programs, classes, and events focusing on health and wellness.</p> <p><u>Long-term</u></p> <p>Restart the Waterbury HEALTH Club focusing on health and wellness post COVID-19 including mental health, disease prevention classes and exercise programs.</p>	<p>Action Steps:</p> <p><u>Short-term</u></p> <p>Expand Peer recovery specialist for patients with Mental Health Needs.</p> <p><u>Long-term</u></p> <p>Implementing Partial Hospitalization Program for clients with substance abuse and psychiatric issues requiring higher level of care</p> <p>Implement treatment for patients with major depression disorders</p>
<p>Partners:</p> <p>Saint Mary’s Hospital, Staywell Health Center, and Waterbury Department of Public Health</p>	<p>Partners:</p> <p>Waterbury Hispanic Coalition, Madre Latina, Churches serving African American and Latino populations, CT Department of Public Health, Waterbury Hospital Parent Leadership Alumni</p>	<p>Partners:</p> <p>Department of Mental and Addictions, Connecticut Community for Addictions, Homeless shelters and organizations serving the Homeless.</p>