

# Community Health Assessment 2022-2024

## Community Health Improvement Plan 2022-2024

Tompkins County Whole Health  
Cayuga Medical Center, a member of Cayuga Health  
Ithaca, New York  
December 2022

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TOMPKINS COUNTY  
OFFICE FOR THE AGING  
*Aging Better, Together*



Cornell Cooperative Extension  
Tompkins County

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## Executive Summary

The Tompkins County Community Health Assessment and Improvement Plan is a collaborative process with a focus on promoting health equity. Health equity occurs when every person has fair and just opportunities for optimal health and well-being. The integration of mental, physical, and environmental health allows us to envision a future where every person in Tompkins County can achieve wellness. This vision captures the recent combining of the local health department (LHD) and mental health services into one organization, Tompkins County Whole Health (TCWH). TCWH looks forward to working with partners and the community in this new capacity.

The Prevention Agenda (PA), New York State's blueprint for "the healthiest state," includes five Priorities: Prevent Chronic Disease, Promote a Healthy and Safe Environment, Promote Healthy Women, Infants, and Children, Promote Well-Being and Prevent Mental and Substance Use Disorders, and Prevent Communicable Disease. Each priority is divided into two or more Focus Areas.

Tompkins County selected two Focus Areas in the Prevent Chronic Disease priority, two in Promote Healthy Women, Infants, and Children, and two in Promote Well-Being and Prevent Mental and Substance Use Disorders. Objectives address food security and healthy eating, gaps in cancer screening, equity of care for women and infants, and opportunities to build and strengthen well-being.

Disparities are primarily across wealth and race. Inequity is also evident in housing and access to healthcare, with the latter often due to lack of transportation options. Secondary data shows an income gap between races.

Secondary data for the CHA were primarily sourced from the U.S. Census and the NYSDOH. The DOH pulls data from a variety of sources and compiles key indicators in the PA dashboard and the NYS Community Health Indicator Reports (CHIRS). These same sources have been the references for all editions of the Tompkins CHA.

Primary data was collected directly from the community through a community wide survey in which respondents were asked to rate their own health, identify choices and challenges, and weigh in on what makes a healthy community. Over 1,500 eligible responses to the survey were completed. The results clearly demonstrate the influence that social determinants of health have on an individual's perception of their health.

A Steering Committee was convened to review and coalesce all data, and to propose the PA priorities and Focus Areas most relevant to the Tompkins County community. The committee included representatives from County Whole Health, County Youth Services,

Office for the Aging, Cayuga Health, Health Planning Council, Cornell University MPH Program, and Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County (CCE-TC).

The array of programs active in Tompkins County to address social determinants of health drive strategies that are evidence-based, promising/pilot programs, and/or programs planning an expansion to serve new constituencies. These activities are aligned with CHIP goals and objectives identified by the steering committee. Promoting chronic disease activities focus on increasing the availability of fruit and vegetable incentive programs, screening for food insecurity, removing structural barriers to cancer screening, and promoting strategies to improve detection of hypertension and prediabetes.

Well-being relates to an individual's physical, mental, and social sense of health and satisfaction, along with the influence that social determinants have on experiences and quality of life. The CHIP outlines strategies to strengthen well-being and promote health equity, including in the home to support parents and young children in families, and support those living with a chronic disease or disability to learn and practice techniques to better manage their disease in a safe, social setting.

It takes a supportive community to build well-being, and the CHIP specifies that Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) courses be taught to an ever-widening audience throughout the county, including at workplaces in all sectors. The CHIP identifies activities to prevent and treat mental and substance use disorders, including increasing access to medication-assisted treatment, access to overdose reversal training and kits, and integrating trauma-informed approaches in training and policy.

Evaluating the impact of the goals, objectives, and interventions presented in this CHIP will take place through 2024. A steering committee will monitor short term process measures that track activities. Community partners will have access to a reporting matrix that will be updated quarterly and on an annual basis submitted to NYS.