

Aster Health Focuses on Community Health Needs

WADENA, Minn. – Jan. 26, 2026 – Aster Health has completed its 2025 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) to learn more about the health of people in Wadena, Todd, and Otter Tail counties. Hospitals are required to conduct a CHNA every three years to maintain their tax-exempt status under the Internal Revenue Service code as a part of the Affordable Care Act to ensure hospitals are responsive to the health needs of their communities.

Aster Health asked for input from local residents, community organizations, schools, law enforcement, and public health agencies. More than 1,800 people completed surveys and shared their thoughts. Also included in the assessment were data from public health reports, internal data, and state and national health data to see where communities in the region are doing well and where help is needed.

From this information and data, three main health priorities were chosen for the next three years:

Hypertension (high blood pressure) – Many adults in the area have high blood pressure, which can lead to heart disease and stroke. Aster Health will focus on education, screenings, and support for healthy habits.

Obesity – Wadena County has one of the highest obesity rates in the state. Programs will continue to encourage physical activity, healthy eating, and regular checkups.

Substance Use Disorder – Drug and alcohol use are major community concerns. Aster Health will expand treatment options, provide prevention education, and continue to work with community partners to support those affected.

Aster Health is working with public health departments, schools, and local organizations to address these needs. Other areas like mental health, access to care, and family safety will continue to receive support through community programs.

“By working together, we can create a healthier future for everyone who calls this region home. Aster Health remains committed to improving the health and well-being of all people in our communities,” stated Shelly Gompf, chief operating officer at Aster Health. Gompf oversees community efforts and invites local organizations to participate in Aster’s Community Health Forums that occur twice a year, in June and December. Local organizations can reach out to the marketing department at contact@asterahealth.org for more information about or invitations to the Community Health Forums.

To read the full assessment, go to asterahealth.org/CHNA.

Photo Caption: Shelly Gompf, Chief Operating Officer at Aster Health

ABOUT ASTER HEALTH

Aster Health is a private, not-for-profit health care system based in Wadena, Minnesota. It offers care services such as primary health, surgery, cancer care, diagnostic imaging, obstetrics, orthopedics and rehabilitation. Aster Health operates a hospital and medical clinic in Wadena, and serves the counties of Wadena, Todd and Otter Tail through five satellite clinics and two physical therapy clinics in Bertha, Henning, Ottertail, Sebeka and Verndale. Visit asterahealth.org.