

Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) (Behavioral Health)

Section One – Introduction

The Affordable Care Act establishes specific statutory requirements that hospitals must meet to qualify as organizations described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and allow them to be exempt from federal income tax. As part of the IRS requirements, hospitals must conduct a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) to serve as an essential tool for developing a health improvement plan for the communities the hospital serves. A CHNA poises hospitals as leaders who have identified the health needs of their communities and are working towards solutions to meet those needs. The statutory requirements specified in the Affordable Care Act state:

- Each hospital facility must conduct a Community Health Needs Assessment at least once every three tax years and adopt an implementation strategy to meet the community health needs identified through assessment.
- The Community Health Needs Assessment must take into account input from persons who represent the broad interests of the community services by the hospital facility, including those with special knowledge of or expertise in public health.
- Must be made widely available to the public.
- Each hospital must disclose in Form 990 how it is addressing all of the needs identified in the assessment, and if not, why not.

A CHNA serves as a systematic approach to collecting, analyzing and utilizing data to identify priority areas for improving health. Hospitals use this report as a call to action, engaging community members through public awareness messages, creating effective programs and policies and collaborating with other organizations to bring positive change to their community. The long-term goal of a CHNA is to identify health priorities and develop impact strategies with all health-related stakeholders in the community.

LifeStream's methodology for conducting the CHNA included an examination of the health status indicators for the target population that is used to identify key problems and assets in Citrus, Lake and Sumter Counties (FL). The ultimate goal of a CHNA is to develop strategies to address the community's health needs and identified issues. A variety of tools were used to conduct the community health assessment; the essential ingredients are community engagement and collaborative participation.

This document serves as LifeStream Behavioral Center's fourth CHNA and Implementation Strategy (IS) and extends the effort to address our unfilled community needs identified by area leaders and the general population by two surveys, five focus groups with consumers from



LifeStream's programs and services, and community stakeholder forums conducted in the 2022 data collection cycle. The primary issue identified was **Access to Care**. Data collection strategies utilized for the CHNA involved LifeStream partnering with our Florida Department of Health local public health departments in Citrus, Lake, and Sumter Counties. The cross-county (Citrus, Lake, and Sumter Counties) results indicated Mental Health and Substance Use Services; Specialized Services (across the lifespan) for Depression; and Comprehensive Screenings were identified as unmet behavioral health needs. Housing (across the lifespan); Transportation; and Homeless Services were identified as the top three unmet needs. Results continued to strongly support that LifeStream was pursuing our community's primary issues of concern. The two main issues to be addressed in this plan is **(1.) Build a Crisis Stabilization Unit in Citrus County; and (2.) Continue to enhance and expand access to care across the continuum in the three-county region.**

Section Two – Definition of Community Served

LifeStream Behavioral Center is a nonprofit, comprehensive community mental health and substance use disorder treatment organization with a full array of services. Included in this array is a state-licensed forty-six bed psychiatric inpatient hospital serving adults and children. The organization and the hospital serve Citrus, Lake, and Sumter Counties. The psychiatric hospital is centrally located within the catchment area in Leesburg, Florida. LifeStream serves an area that is comprised of 2,117 square miles (land area) in West Central Florida and an estimated population 704,286 individuals. The area's largest community is The Villages which is situated across Lake, Sumter and Marion Counties and will have a total of over 200,000 residents when completed in the next several years. The Villages continues to demonstrate tremendous growth with a focus on expansion in North Sumter and Western Lake Counties. There are many small towns and cities throughout the three-county area which could best be described as rural and suburban, although the eastern side of Lake County borders on Orange County and is becoming more urban serving as a bedroom community to Orlando. There currently exist 8 licensed hospitals in the three-county area. Six are acute medical/surgical, one long-term acute care (Select Specialty Hospital) and one psychiatric, **LifeStream**.

Section Three – Description of Service Areas

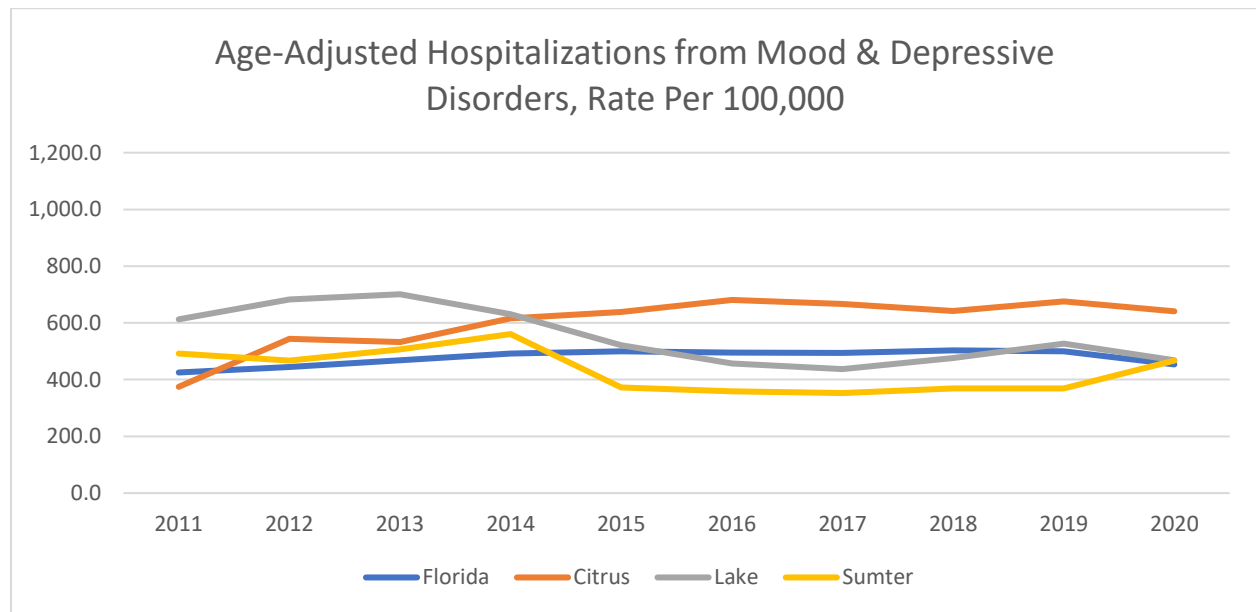
Primary sources of data were exercises orchestrated independently through the Citrus, Lake and Sumter County Community Health Improvement Plans (CHIP) and the continued participation at the CHIP meetings. The purpose of these meetings under this leadership has been to organize, plan, brainstorm and analyze data collected in a variety of ways from the citizens of the respective counties. The ultimate goal of the Core Community Support Teams was to take the information provided through citizens and determine a definitive set of goals to enhance the Citrus, Lake and Sumter Counties health care coordination and health outcomes. The purpose of these meetings is to update information and add action planning based on input from community leaders. Independent surveys were sent out to Citrus, Lake, and Sumter Counties to assess the needs, service availability, coordination, delivery and gaps. LifeStream attended community meetings, CHIP and played a central role in addressing behavioral health (mental health and substance use

disorder) issues, concerns, and areas for improvement. Meetings continue in Citrus County with the Mental Health Advisory Council that is comprised of key stakeholder and decision makers. Health Needs Assessments, Citrus, Lake & Sumter by County – Assessment of health care issues within and across the three-county area was determined through the following assessments: Community Health Needs Assessments (CHNA); Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). LifeStream was an active participant in the Central Florida Collaborative, which includes several hospitals within the larger, multisite health systems, in the development of their CHNA. Other sources of data include community meetings, county profiles, and surveys and focus groups.

Behavioral Health Profile

The analysis of the assessments, surveys, meetings, and secondary data identified Access to Behavioral Health and Social Services as the primary need across all three counties. Mental health treatment in Circuit 5 had an increase from 2019 to 2022. Statewide involuntary examinations for children have increased 19.57% from FY18/19 to 20/21, compared to a 6.12% statewide population increase from 2016 to 2021 (The Baker Act Annual Report Fiscal Year 2019/2020). There was a 37% increase in adult mental health treatment. Circuit 5 has experienced an increase in mental health and substance use. In a Circuit 5 (Citrus, Hernando, Lake, Marion, and Sumter) cross-county data review, since 2011, hospitalizations for mental disorders have remained steady. Mood and depressive disorders account for over half of the hospitalizations (Florida Department of Health, 2021). Please see the table and chart below on Age-Adjusted Hospitalizations for Mood and Depressive Disorders (Florida Department of Health, 2021):

10-Year Age-Adjusted Hospitalizations for Mood & Depressive Disorders - 2020



As indicated by the chart, the data reflects a decline of psychiatric hospitalizations at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, with the exception of Sumter County, who experienced a steady



increase in the number of hospitalizations. It is important to note that Citrus consistently remained above the State in hospitalizations while Lake and Sumter also rose above the State in 2020. More significantly, there has been a steady increase in the rate of suicides, faster than the rest of the nation, after dropping faster than the national average the year before (US Center for Disease Control, 2022). Citrus County experienced a rate increase from 238.5 per 100,000 population in 2017 to 479.8 in 2020 for youth ages 12-18. Lake County experienced an overall increase from 80.9 in 2017 to 154.3 in 2020 for youth ages 12-18. Sumter County experienced an increase for youth 12-18 from 0.0 in 2017 to 584.2 in 2020. Common mental health issues such as anxiety and depression are associated with a variety of other public health issues including substance abuse, domestic violence, and suicide.

Families in Citrus, Lake and Sumter Counties continue to experience an increase in poverty, unemployment, family violence, and challenges with mental health and substance use. The patterns between drugs, alcohol, violence, and crime can inform communities and service providers on programs and services to better assist individuals living in the community. Substance abuse—involving drugs, alcohol, or both—is associated with a range of destructive social conditions, including family disruptions, financial problems, lost productivity, failure in school, domestic violence, child abuse, and crime. Citrus, Lake, and Sumter Counties are facing unemployment, underemployment, and lack of affordable housing. The table below provides detailed information regarding the risk factors currently facing our families in Citrus, Lake, and Sumter Counties.

Risk Factors – FL, Citrus, Lake, Sumter - 2021

Risk Factors	FL	Citrus	Lake	Sumter
Population below 200% poverty level	32.9	36.8	30.5	23.8
Families under 100% of poverty with children under 18	9.4	10.1	7.7	5.6
Unemployment	2.8	4.2	2.9	4.0
Public cash assistance; food stamps	13.9	12.9	11.5	5.3
Rate (per 100,000) children 5-11 in foster care	447.4	1078.8	277	323.4
Rate (per 100,000) children 12-17 in foster care	393.8	872.6	313.2	251
Rate (per 100,000) children 5-11 child abuse	583.9	475.6	328.1	377.3
Rate (per 100,000) Child sexual violence	42.5	81.2	58.3	27
Rate (per 100,000) Domestic Violence offenses	492.2	556.1	465.8	363.1
Past 30-day use alcohol – middle school	8.2	12.2	8.7	8.7
Past 30-day use marijuana – middle school	3.8	8.6	4.4	4.4
Past 30-day use alcohol – high school	19.9	21	19.7	19.7
Past 30-day use marijuana – high school	15.9	21	15.8	15.8

Fiscal Year 19/21, in Florida, was the first year in over 20 years the number of involuntary exams decreased. The decrease is associated with the 2020 Pandemic. All age groups had a decrease



in involuntary exams from 18/19 to 19/20. Child involuntary exams decreased by 5.06%, adults by 2.80%, seniors by 4.32% and all ages by 3.98%. The decrease at LifeStream for Citrus, Lake and Sumter Counties was 3.60%.

Race and Ethnicity Distribution – Citrus, Lake, Sumter, FL

The race and ethnicity distribution for Lake, Sumter, and Citrus Counties is as follows:

Race and Ethnicity	FL	Citrus	Lake	Sumter
Caucasian/White	71.6	91.7	80	88.7
Black/African-American	15.9	2.7	10.7	7.1
American Indian/Alaskan Native	03	.3	.4	.3
Asian	2.8	1.8	2.1	1.0
Hispanic/Latino	25.8	5.9	16.1	5.8
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander	.1	0	.1	.1
Persons reporting two or more races	6	2.6	4.8	1.8

The intersecting themes among Citrus, Lake, and Sumter Counties that are impacting the quality of life for individuals and the community are identified below:

- Higher poverty
- Lack of affordable housing
- Limited transportation
- Inappropriate use of Emergency Departments for mental health and substance use.
- Access to behavioral health services

Healthy communities are defined by the conditions in the environment where individuals live, work and play. Improved and health status and community quality of life can be impacted by environment, economics, and the cultural norms and values that shape attitudes toward mental health, substance use, and engagement among families, school, and the community. Providing resources is critical to obtaining a healthy community. Resources such as access to food housing, and education; access to healthcare, transportation, public safety, health promotion and prevention services, places for recreation, and a healthy and safe environment all contribute to creating healthy families, schools, neighborhoods, and communities. When the resources are scarce, the higher the risk factors that contributes to a lower quality of life for the community and the more importantly the individuals that live in the community. Each community is unique and ways to address the needs within the community will be specific to each community.

Citrus County



Citrus County is home to over 158,009 individuals (UF BEBR). The race and ethnicity distribution are as follows:

Race and Ethnicity Table for Citrus County

Race and Ethnicity	FL	Citrus
Caucasian/White	71.6	91.7
Black/African-American	15.9	2.7
American Indian/Alaskan Native	03	.3
Asian	2.8	1.8
Hispanic/Latino	25.8	5.9
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander	.1	0
Persons reporting two or more races	6	2.6

Citrus County has a total area of 773 square miles of which 582 square miles is land and 192 square miles or 24.8% is water. The median age is 56.7 years, and the median income is \$46,689. Approximately 11.7% of the population and 8.5% of families live below the poverty line. 81.3% of Citrus County’s residents have a high school diploma with 15.7% having a bachelor’s degree or higher.

While many residents of Citrus County enjoy the quality of life that the county offers, the county has its share of challenges. Citrus County has limited opportunities in both education and work. The county is rural and widespread and there is a large senior population that has little desire to invest in infrastructure and schools. In addition, Citrus County was facing a crisis in access to care for behavioral health services. 14.8% of individuals under the age of 65 have no health insurance or are under insured (Community Health Assessment, 2020) creating ongoing issues with accessing much needed services. Specific to mental health and substance use, individuals were not seeking services due to long waitlists and a shortage of providers (Community Health Needs Assessment 2020). The WellFlorida Council Community Health Assessment identified emergency room (ER) overcrowding as a main problem within Citrus County. The overcrowding is threatening the quality and access to overall health care. Due to limited access to care, poverty, unemployment, and uninsured individuals, the ER has become a place for individuals to seek treatment for mental health and/or substance use needs. The over-crowding results in a back-up of services and lack of places to refer these individuals for subsequent care.

According to the 2020 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), 1,174 individuals were hospitalized. Seventy-two individuals were 17 years old and younger and 1,102 were 18 and over. During the same year, the total number of emergency department visits for mental health reasons was 10,274. Of this total, 330 persons were 17-year-old or younger and 9, 944 were 18 and older (CHIP 2020). The high rate of Emergency Department visits for mental health reasons in Citrus County has been an issue for many years. In the 2020 Citrus County Community Health



Assessment, September 2020 the rates of hospitalizations for mental health reasons for Citrus County residents of all ages and those from 0 to 17 years of age have remained below state rates with the exception of the latest data reporting period of January through September 2020 when the Citrus County rate for all ages was recorded at 7.1 per 1,000 in contrast to the state rate of 6.9 (2021). Rates have also increased for emergency department visits for mental health reasons. From 2018-2021 and for the January through September 2021 reporting period, the Citrus County rates of ED visits per 1,000 population for mental health reasons have exceeded state rates.

According to the 2021 Citrus County Community Health Needs Assessment, the poverty rate for all individuals was higher in Citrus County than the State of Florida in 2021. Children living poverty was also higher (CHNA, 2021). Eighteen Percent of Citrus County families live below poverty (FL Department of Health, 2021). Poverty can increase the likelihood of domestic violence, child abuse, prenatal substance exposure, and losses due to incarceration or death. According to the Department of Children and Families Summary by Intake of Maltreatment and Findings, there were 2,659 Child Intakes in 2021. Child maltreatment is behavior towards a child that is outside the norms of conduct and entails substantial risk of causing physical or emotional harm. The top four Maltreatment intakes were (1.) Substance Misuse-alcohol, Illicit & Prescribed Drugs, Substance Exposed Newborn; (2.) Household Violence, Intimate Partner Violence, Family Violence Threatens the Child; (3.) Environmental Hazards; and (4.) Sexual Abuse-Sexual Battery, exploitation, Molestation. Below is a table detailing the maltreatment and total intakes for the above top four maltreatment categories.

Maltreatment Intakes – Citrus County

	Maltreatment Intakes	Total
1	Substance misuse – alcohol, illicit & prescription drugs, substance exposed newborns	599
2	Household violence, intimate partner violence, family violence threatens the child	402
3	Environmental hazards	333
4	Sexual abuse – sexual battery, exploitation, molestation	159
	Overall Total Intakes	2659

Twenty-three percent (23%) of the total intakes were for the category of Substance Misuse-alcohol, Illicit & Prescribed Drugs, Substance Exposed Newborn. The summary breaks the maltreatment intakes into findings categories that include No Indicator, Not Sustained, and No Findings Entered (for special condition Investigation). Of the 2,659 total intakes, 318 cases were verified. The top four maltreatments for verified intakes were: (1.) Substance Misuse-alcohol, Illicit & Prescribed Drugs, Substance Exposed Newborn-101; (2.) Household Violence, Intimate Partner Violence, Family Violence Threatens the Child -53; and (3.) Sexual Abuse-Sexual Battery, Exploitation, Molestation and Environmental Hazards were tied at 25. These challenging



behaviors have roots in families and communities that confront high crime rate, substance abuse, depression and domestic violence that threaten the child, and substance misuse, addressing mental health challenges among children and youth under the age of 25 and their families have become a challenge.

There is an acute need for mental health and substance use services in Citrus County. Regarding involuntary Baker Act cases, the county experiences a high rate per 100,000 persons with individuals experiencing a mental health crisis being transported out of county to either Brooksville or Ocala. There are two hospitals in Citrus County: HCA Florida Citrus Hospital and Bravera Seven Rivers Regional Medical Center. Neither hospital has beds to address substance use and mental illness. Individuals that are experiencing a mental health or substance use crisis are transported to Brooksville, Ocala or LifeStream. Seventy percent of Citrus County individuals that received Involuntary Examinations were sent to LifeStream in Leesburg, followed by facilities in Pasco County or Alachua County (Baker Act Report, 2020). The 2020 Citrus County CHIP identified that mental health and substance abuse are major issues for Citrus County and there is a need for expanded services. More importantly, behavioral health was identified as their second priority; child health and safety was the third priority. Goals for behavioral health include Behavioral Health Education for Health Care Professionals, Behavioral Health in Pediatrics, Behavioral Health Resources for Parents and Guardians and Behavioral Health Opioid Use Disorder Resources.

Risk Factors – Citrus County

Risk Factors	FL	Citrus
Population below poverty level	32.9	36.8
Families under 100% of poverty with children under 18	9.4	10.1
Unemployment	2.8	4.2
Public cash assistance; food stamps	13.9	12.9
Rate (per 100,000) children 5-11 in foster care	447.4	1078.8
Rate (per 100,000) children 12-17 in foster care	393.8	872.6
Rate (per 100,000) children 5-11 child abuse	583.9	475.6
Rate (per 100,000) Child sexual violence	42.5	81.2
Rate (per 100,000) Domestic Violence offenses	492.2	556.1
Past 30-day use alcohol – middle school	8.2	12.2
Past 30-day use marijuana – middle school	3.8	8.6
Past 30-day use alcohol – high school	19.9	21
Past 30-day use marijuana – high school	15.9	21

Lake County

Lake County is home to over 403,857 individuals (UF BEBR). The race and ethnicity distribution are as follows:



Race and Ethnicity Table for Lake County

Race and Ethnicity	FL	Lake
Caucasian/White	71.6	80
Black/African-American	15.9	10.7
American Indian/Alaskan Native	03	.4
Asian	2.8	2.1
Hispanic/Latino	25.8	16.1
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander	.1	.1
Persons reporting two or more races	6	4.8

Lake County is 1157 square miles, of which 938 square miles is land. The median age is 47 years, and the median income is \$57,588. Approximately 11.1% of the population and 7.7% of families live below the poverty line. 32.1 of Lake County residents have a high school diploma with 24.4% having a bachelor’s degree or higher. Lake County enjoys a diverse and continually growing population base. It ranks among the top five fastest growing counties in Florida. As the Orlando urban core continues to approach build-out, Lake County is expecting to experience significant population growth over the coming decades.

Lake County residents are impacted by mental health, substance use and the intersections these issues have with the overall health and wellbeing of the community. Lake County has strong partnerships among agencies addressing mental illness and substance use; however, the resources are spread thin and continue to lessen as the challenges continue to increase. This has been even further exacerbated by the Pandemic.

Poverty can increase the likelihood of domestic violence, child abuse, prenatal substance exposure, and losses due to incarceration or death. Eleven-point-one percent (11.1%) of persons living in Lake County live below poverty level (census.gov). According to the Department of Children and Families Summary by Intake of Maltreatment and Findings, there were 4,947 Child Intakes in 2021. The top four Maltreatment intakes were (1.) Substance Misuse-alcohol, Illicit & Prescribed Drugs, Substance Exposed Newborn; (2.) Household Violence, Intimate Partner Violence, Family Violence Threatens the Child; (3.) Environmental Hazards; and (4.) Sexual Abuse-Sexual Battery, Exploitation, Molestation. Below is a table detailing the maltreatment and total intakes for the above top four maltreatment categories.

Maltreatment Intakes – Lake County

	Maltreatment Intakes	Total
1	Substance misuse – alcohol, illicit & prescription drugs, substance exposed newborns	1099
2	Household violence, intimate partner violence, family violence threatens the child	801

3	Environmental hazards	497
4	Sexual abuse – sexual battery, exploitation, molestation	242
	Overall Total Intakes	4947

Twenty-four percent (24%) of the total intakes were for the category of Substance Misuse-alcohol, Illicit & Prescribed Drugs, Substance Exposed Newborn. The summary breaks the maltreatment intakes into findings categories that include No Indicator, Not Sustained, and No Findings Entered (for special condition Investigation). Of the 4,947 total intakes, 377 cases were verified. The top three maltreatments for verified intakes were: (1.) Substance Misuse-alcohol, Illicit & Prescribed Drugs, Substance Exposed Newborn-161; (2.) Household Violence, Intimate Partner Violence, Family Violence Threatens the Child -58; and (3.) Sexual Abuse-Sexual Battery, Exploitation, Molestation-41. The summary of Intakes supports the 2021 data from the Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey, which identified that Lake County families continue to struggle with family management and at-risk behaviors within the family (FYSAS, 2020). There also appears to be cultural perceptions that favor drug use and a year-to-year decline in neighborhood attachment (FYSAS, 2020).

According to the Social Services Needs Gap Analysis of Lake County (2020), children of single mothers account for the significant high poverty rates as nearly 50% of the children age 5 and over 36% of the children under the age of 18. Many Lake County families with children birth-12 have family incomes not exceeding 150% of the federal poverty index. The core mental health needs and challenges with Lake County are: (1.) comprehensive mental health services for children ages 0-7; (2.) early diagnosis and entry into treatment; (3.) training in early childhood mental health, specifically early childhood trauma, and creating Trauma-Informed Schools; and (4.) Family supportive services to improve family management. Lake County is experiencing a rising rate of mental health and behavioral issues among children, youth, and young adults. Mood and depressive disorders account for over half of the hospitalizations (Flhealthcharts.org, 2021). The School-Aged Child and Adolescent 2020 Profile from Florida Department of Health, shows that there has been a steady increase in the rate of suicides. Lake County experienced an overall increase from 223.7 per 100,000 population in 2016 to 440.7 in 2020, with a spike of 1,308 in 2018, for youth ages 12-18 and for young adults 19-21, the rate had a decrease from 572.4 in 2017 to 474.9 in 2020. The table below provides detailed information regarding the risk factors currently facing our children, youth, young adults and their families. It is important to note that research identified a correlation between attachment and bonding with family, friends, and the community as a protective factor and prevention measure for substance use and other at-risk behaviors.

Risk Factors – Lake County

Risk Factors	FL	Lake
Population below poverty level	32.9	30.5

Families under 100% of poverty with children under 18	9.4	7.7
Unemployment	2.8	2.9
Public cash assistance; food stamps	13.9	11.5
Rate (per 100,000) children 5-11 in foster care	447.4	277
Rate (per 100,000) children 12-17 in foster care	393.8	313.2
Rate (per 100,000) children 5-11 child abuse	583.9	328.1
Rate (per 100,000) Child sexual violence	42.5	58.3
Rate (per 100,000) Domestic Violence offenses	492.2	465.8
Past 30-day use alcohol – middle school	8.2	8.7
Past 30-day use marijuana – middle school	3.8	4.4
Past 30-day use alcohol – high school	19.9	19.7
Past 30-day use marijuana – high school	15.9	15.8

Sumter County

Sumter County is home to over 141,420 individuals (UF BEBR). The race and ethnicity distribution are as follows:

Race and Ethnicity Table for Sumter County

Race and Ethnicity	FL	Sumter
Caucasian/White	71.6	88.7
Black/African-American	15.9	7.1
American Indian/Alaskan Native	03	.3
Asian	2.8	1.0
Hispanic/Latino	25.8	5.8
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander	.1	.1
Persons reporting two or more races	6	1.8

Sumter County is 580 square miles, of which 547 square miles is land. The median age is 68.3 years, and the median income is \$59,618. Approximately 8.8% of the population and 5.6% of families live below the poverty line. Twenty-eight-point-two percent of Sumter County residents have a high school diploma with 32% having a bachelor’s degree or higher. The growth of Sumter County, due in part to the growth of The Villages, is a primary factor most industries are seeing a boom.

The Community Health Status Assessment was completed in May 2018 and revised in November 2020. This assessment takes a snapshot in time of the local public health system. Information for the assessment was gathered from a variety of data sources including the U.S. Census Bureau, the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS), the Florida Department of Health County

Performance Snapshot and others. Additionally, county-level results from the 2022 County Health Rankings published by the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation were considered. The resulting analysis indicated four overarching health related concerns. These are: 1) Low enrollment in higher education, 2) A high percentage of smoking in middle and high school students, 3) A high percentage of overweight residents, and 4) Poor cardiovascular health among Sumter County residents. Sumter County is unique to other areas in the nation in that over half (59.1% in 2022) of residents are 65 plus years of age. This is due to in large part to The Villages, the largest community in the County that the US Census ranked as the fastest-growing metropolitan area, with a 38.9% growth from 2010 to 2020. The unique make up of Sumter County poses challenges to identify and address the needs among Sumter County. The demographics of Sumter County are below.

As stated above, over half of Sumter County residents are 65 plus years of age. This is due to a retirement area called “The Villages”. The Villages has more than doubled in size since 2010 and stretches into two neighboring counties. In April 2019, the total population of The Villages had reached 122,460 people between the 3 counties. In Sumter County, in 2005 there was roughly 63,000 residents living within its borders, by 2010 there was around 93,000 residents, and in 2020 there was roughly 134,593 residents. Over a fifteen-year span, the population has more than doubled with most the growth being retirees from colder climates who are not vested in the areas surrounding The Villages. Even youth in the area that have been brought into to the County through parents who work at the retirement centers typically attend the Charter School inside The Villages. Sumter County families, particularly in Wildwood, face a high percentage of transition and mobility between Leesburg and Wildwood. Given the long history of being neighbors linked by the railroad system and both central hubs to business and trade, this trend lives on with crime, substance use, drug sales and human trafficking. Also following the families that transition between the two communities are poverty, unemployment, high drop-out rate in high schools, and family conflict that includes substance use and domestic violence. According to DCF, among Circuit 5 (Citrus, Hernando, Lake, Marion, and Sumter Counties), Lake and Sumter Counties have the highest numbers, per capita, in removing children from their homes. The top three reasons for being called and child removal are: (1) Domestic Violence; (2) Substance use; and (3) Neglect.

Poverty can increase the likelihood of domestic violence, child abuse, prenatal substance exposure, and losses due to incarceration or death. In 2020-2021 more than 60% of the youth enrolled in Sumter County Schools qualify for free or reduced-price breakfast and lunch. Most families reside in Wildwood; 29.9% of the families are below poverty level. According to the Department of Children and Families Summary by Intake of Maltreatment and Findings, there were 981 Child Intakes in 2021. The top four Maltreatment intakes were (1.) Substance Misuse-alcohol, Illicit & Prescribed Drugs, Substance Exposed Newborn; (2.) Household Violence, Intimate Partner Violence, Family Violence Threatens the Child; (3.) Environmental Hazards; and (4.) Sexual Abuse-Sexual Battery, Exploitation, Molestation. Below is a table detailing the maltreatment and total intakes for the above top four maltreatment categories.



Maltreatment Intakes – Sumter County

	Maltreatment Intakes	Total
1	Substance misuse – alcohol, illicit & prescription drugs, substance exposed newborns	239
2	Household violence, intimate partner violence, family violence threatens the child	171
3	Environmental hazards	112
4	Sexual abuse – sexual battery, exploitation, molestation	52
	Overall Total Intakes	981

Twenty-four percent (24%) of the total intakes were for the category of Substance Misuse-alcohol, Illicit & Prescribed Drugs, Substance Exposed Newborn. The summary breaks the maltreatment intakes into findings categories that include No Indicator, Not Sustained, and No Findings Entered (for special condition investigation). Of the 981 total intakes, 88 cases were verified. The top three maltreatments for verified intakes were: (1.) Substance Misuse-Alcohol, Illicit & Prescribed Drugs, Substance Exposed Newborn-33; (2.) Household Violence, Intimate Partner Violence, Family Violence Threatens the Child -21; and (3.) Sexual Abuse-Sexual Battery, Exploitation, Molestation-9.

The percentage of individuals 25 years and over with no High School Diploma or equivalent for Sumter County residents was 7.8% compared to 11.5% for Florida in 2020. The Youth Risk Behavior Survey reported that 1.8% of middle school students in Sumter County reported smoking cigarettes in the past 30 days. The percentage for the state was 2%. The percent of high school students in Sumter County that reported smoking cigarettes in the past 30 days in 2020 was 2.9%. This is higher than the state percentage of 1.7%. The use of e-cigarettes is becoming increasingly popular among youth. Mainly, families live in traditionally rural areas of the County where longtime residents reside. These areas are more racially diverse and experience high levels of economic hardships. 58.9% of youth are economically disadvantaged, yet Sumter County is below the state for persons living in poverty because of The Villages.

Risk Factors – Sumter County

Risk Factors	FL	Sumter
Population below poverty level	32.9	23.8
Families under 100% of poverty with children under 18	9.4	5.6
Unemployment	2.8	4.0
Public cash assistance; food stamps	13.9	5.3
Rate (per 100,000) children 5-11 in foster care	447.4	323.4
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Rate (per 100,000) Domestic Violence offenses	492.2	363.1
Past 30-day use alcohol – middle school	8.2	8.7
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Past 30-day use alcohol – high school	19.9	19.7
Past 30-day use marijuana – high school	15.9	15.8

There is a correlation between transition and mobility, lack of commitment to school, and family conflict. Sumter County families are faced with limited access to care, positive attitudes toward substance use, stigma toward mental illness, and family conflict. Poverty, high drop-out rates, unemployment, and family violence correlate to transition and mobility, and lack of commitment to community and are indicators impacting substance use and at-risk behaviors.

Research indicates that a student loses one year of school every time the student moves between schools within the formative years of education. This is significant in that if the youth is behind academically, there is a lack of motivation to continue in school. It is also important to note that most youth reported being taunted, teased, or verbally bullied. This factor may also lead to a lack of commitment to school. The significance of the data indicated that Sumter County students are more likely to have changed homes or schools on one or more occasions.

The Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey data identified that among Florida high school youth, Community Disorganization and Transition and Mobility are among the highest risk factors within the Community Domain. Poor Family Management was among the highest in the Family Domain. Poor Academic Performance and Lack of Commitment to School continue to stay the highest in the school Domain. Lastly, Favorable Attitudes toward at-risk behaviors and alcohol, tobacco and other drugs (ATOD) use are the highest among high school and adults.

The median income of residents of Sumter County is also largely divided between residents of The Villages and traditional communities. In 2020, the median household income in Sumter County was \$59,618, yet the City of Wildwood was \$40,033 and cities such as Coleman and Webster had a median household income of under \$35,000. The youth substance abuse issues in Sumter County, much like the adult substance use issues, lie in the still small town, agricultural communities spread throughout the County with economic struggles and decreased access to resources. The 2018 CHIP identified substance use and access to care as a community health priority. The overall challenge is linking people to needed personal health services and assuring the provision of health care when otherwise unavailable. The Community Themes and Strengths Assessment (2018) identified key focus areas, perceived quality of life, and available assets that could contribute to community health. Access to counseling and treatment are critical in addressing the issue of drug and alcohol abuse.

The comprehensive review of the aforementioned data along with the data extrapolated by various assessments, internal queries, and community meetings indicate that the core mental



health needs and challenges within Sumter County: (1) Access to mental health care in rural areas; (2.) Services for children, youth, and their families. There is a gap in services for children ages 0-5 and young adults 18-25 experiencing a mental health crisis; and (3.) Family management (poverty, unemployment, education, moving across counties, substance use, and family violence).

Data Collection Highlights – Citrus, Lake, and Sumter County

Long-term or intermittent mental illness and substance use disorders are prevalent and costly to our communities. There is an increase in the number of hospitalizations. Citrus County is among the highest in hospitalizations. Sumter and Citrus Counties also experienced a steady admission rate in the number of hospitalizations. This despite the COVID-19 pandemic causing communities to experience a decline. Citrus (641.0 per 100,000 population), significantly above the state average of 465.6, with Lake (468.5), and Sumter Counties (467.6) slightly above state average in 2020. This correlates with the events experienced by our communities, specifically in the rise in youth suicides for Lake and Sumter Counties. The rise in mood and depressive disorders and the increase rates of suicide can be connected to the increase in poverty, unemployment, family violence, and mental health and substance use among our communities. The patterns between drugs, alcohol, violence, and crime can inform communities and service providers on programs and services to better assist individuals reentering into the community. Substance abuse— involving drugs, alcohol, or both—is associated with a range of destructive social conditions, including family disruptions, financial problems, lost productivity, failure in school, domestic violence, child abuse, and crime. An overarching theme among Citrus, Lake and Sumter Counties is ACCESS. Intersecting themes among Citrus, Lake and Sumter Counties: 1.) coordinated care; 2.) transportation; 3.) screening and early diagnosis; 4.) access to substance use and mental health treatment; 5.) resources; 6.) and expansion of wellness promotion services within LifeStream.

An integrated behavioral health (mental health/substance use disorder) service array that is coordinated with a range of supportive and social services is necessary to meet the community's needs. A comprehensive approach to address individuals needing evaluation or stabilization of their behavioral health needs was identified as a critical need. More significantly was the theme of addressing the effectiveness and efficiency of the service delivery systems that are provided to the community. The data collected from the survey, focus groups, and the secondary data analysis from community health assessments indicated that for persons experiencing psychiatric and/or substance use, a competent, continuum of services provided in the community should provide services that are timely, accessible, and have access to a wide range of supportive services.

The health and wellbeing of the community intersect with the health and wellbeing of individuals, families, schools, and neighborhoods. The data collected details demographic and socioeconomic factors that often underlie or enhance the issues of mental illness, substance use, and community safety. As stated above, each community is unique and ways to address the needs within the community will be specific to each community. As a result, an on-line survey through Survey



Monkey was constructed and widely distributed through direct email and social media platforms to individuals in Citrus, Lake, and Sumter Counties. The majority of the representation of the respondents were community leaders. There was also representation from educators, behavioral health providers and community members. A significant number of respondents included medical, volunteers, substance abuse prevention coalition, public health service providers and law enforcement. Survey questions covered various topics that included unmet needs, barriers, and service continuum needs. Questions were identified through the responses of the focus groups and secondary data sources. The goal of the survey was to gain a deeper understanding of the behavioral and community health needs, service gaps, and barriers to access services among Citrus, Lake, and Sumter County residents. Focus group questions were identified by secondary data and to identify inter-agency service gaps, service need gaps among the community, and a deeper understanding of access to services and service utilization. Each theme will be reflected to provide a rich and fuller understanding of the mental health needs and challenges within the respective counties.

The overarching theme of access to mental health and substance use services were highlighted among the following sub-themes:

- Coordinated care
- Transportation
- Access to mental health care, specifically screening, early diagnosis and entering into treatment
- Access to substance use treatment
- Resources that are centralized and coordinated
- Expansion of wellness promotion services within LifeStream.

Coordinated care

Coordinated care was an underlying theme among the focus groups and the survey. The most noted included:

- Knowledge of LifeStream Services
- Inter-agency communication:

Follow-up

Trained front-line staff

The community focus groups, and the consumer focus groups had stakeholder representation from Citrus, Lake and Sumter Counties. The survey had representation from Citrus, Lake and



Sumter Counties. All three counties identified the need for coordinated care. The two main factors were: 1.) knowledge of LifeStream services and 2.) Inter-agency communication.

LifeStream provides behavioral health and social services continuum of care. There are over 29 site locations and 54 treatment programs. The focus groups identified that “unless you are directly working with someone from LifeStream, we are not aware of your services”. “You have so many buildings that are spread out, we are not sure what all of your services are and where to go to locate your services.” LifeStream has presence in the community meetings and often presents within the community; however, the overall assumption of the focus groups was the knowledge of all the services that are provided.

The second theme among coordinated care was inter-agency communication. The overall assumption of the focus groups and in the survey was that there was a lack of communication between programs. Most noted follow-up and trained front-line staff. Participants and respondents noted that there was a lack of follow-up communication between doctors and consumers outside of the scheduled appointment time; communication between case management and the psychiatric hospital staff, specific to medication management and mental health treatment; and follow-up with referring agencies. Participants and respondents noted that front-line staff are not aware of all the programs and services provided and there was a lack of training in appropriately triaging the calls to the right programs and services. Survey respondents from Citrus County noted that the front-line staff are not aware of the Citrus County Services.

Transportation

Transportation was noted among focus groups and the survey as the most unmet need. Participants noted that this has been an unmet need for many years. The consumer focus groups shared that the county service “does not pick me up”. Sumter County respondents stated that “transportation is needed to help get to appointment.” Survey results indicated transportation as the top three of unmet needs. Citrus County respondents also noted transportation as an unmet need.

Screening and early diagnosis

All three counties identified “access to mental health care” as an unmet need, specifically screening, early diagnosis and entering treatment. In a community focus group, there was an emphasis on early detection for depression, suicide, and substance use among children and adolescents. The underlying tone was the ability to detect for early diagnosis through screening. The emphasis was on identification and use of screening tools in early diagnosis and screening promotion.

Access to substance use and mental health treatment

The Citrus County respondents had a wide scale of unmet needs. Citrus County survey respondents listed behavioral health, maternal child mental health, and support services for students. Citrus County respondents also listed substance use detox facility, local Baker Act



facility, and a crisis stabilization unit. Other common needs were outpatient therapy for mental health and substance use, support services for children, and resources for adolescents with behavioral health issues. Lake County respondents listed mental health care for underserved adults and children, other options for mental health care; and the majority identified help for those individuals living with addiction and substance abuse challenges.

Resources

The community focus groups emphasized the need to know where to locate community resources. The focus groups wanted a better understanding of all the resources that are provided within Lake and Sumter County. Citrus County respondents identified a need for a “well maintained centralized coordination of resources”. Also identified by Citrus County respondents were “resources for parents of teens with behavioral issues.”

Expansion of wellness promotion services within LifeStream

The majority of the responses fall under this theme. The sub-themes in this category include:

- Education
- Support Services

Question 28 of the survey asked the question: “Please identify the three most important unhealthy behaviors in our community.” The respondents indicated Drug Use (56.51%), Untreated Mental Health Concerns (45.27%), and Angry Behavior/Violence (43.20%) as the top three. Question 29 of the survey asked the question: “Please identify the three most factors that impact your well-being in our community.” The respondents indicated Untreated Mental Health Concerns (38.83%), Drug Use (37.22%), and Angry Behavior/Violence (36.89%) as the top three. The options to select ranged from prevention and education to specific classes such as medication management, stress reduction, and support groups. The questions that followed were prompts to provide more detailed and specific responses. Education and support services were the common themes within this category.

Education and Prevention

Education and prevention were the top two choices from survey respondents. This was consistent with the focus groups. The emphasis was on community classes to educate on:

- Understanding and managing mental illness (76%).
- Mental health awareness (65%)
- Stress reduction (61%)
- Medication Management (57%)

The chart below provides detailed depiction of the respondents’ answers.



Community Stakeholder Survey Results		
Survey Question:	No Availability:	Adequate/Outstanding Availability:
Q1) A wide range of both inpatient and outpatient treatment services	14.49%	75.28%
Q2) Safe, affordable housing options	29.21%	42.70%
Q3) Case management services and referral support	15.52%	71.35%
Q4) Transportation services	21.49%	48.71%
Q5) Employment services	15.54%	40.11%
Q6) Mobile crisis services (immediate response emergency services)	14.29%	55.43%
Q7) Substance abuse/addiction services (outpatient, and/or residential)	8.71%	53.09%
Q8) Alternatives to hospitalization	18.68%	52.01%
Q9) Jail diversion programs	14.04%	25.79%
Q10) Trauma informed services	16.43%	47.55%
Q11) Psychiatrist services	19.31%	70.03%
Q12) Primary care services	15.14%	66.28%
Q13) Mental health services (outpatient and/or residential)	20.29%	72.58%
Q14) Prevention and screening services	16.71%	63.98%
Q15) Crisis intervention services	19.83%	59.19%
	Not a Barrier:	Sometimes or Often a Barrier:
Q16) Long wait times for appointments	35.21%	58.03%
Q17) No outreach to people in rural communities	22.73%	41.76%
Q18) Language/Cultural/Racial/Sexual Orientation barriers	46.46%	24.36%
Q19) Barriers related to cost of care	39.83%	45.20%
Q20) Limited hours of operation	40.85%	47.60%
Q21) Lack of transportation	34.18%	44.07%
Q22) Lack of appropriately trained staff	44.51%	45.64%
Q23) Stigma, discrimination and prejudice	50.99%	33.14%
Q24) Lack of childcare services	27.12%	22.03%
Q25) Difficulty in finding provider that accepts my insurance	38.07%	41.48%

The results of the survey further supported the themes from the focus groups, including long wait times for appointments/access to care, limited hours of operation, barriers related to cost of care, and no outreach to people in rural communities. The focus groups also identified a need for mental health awareness, awareness of LifeStream programs and services, educating parents and caregivers on mental health signs and symptoms in early childhood, and mental health training on signs and symptoms. “I think training the communities, training teachers, and training other people in the community...there are so many different services that are out there, there are a lot, but if we were educating them into early childhood challenges that come up or children’s behavioral issues have a lot to do with how the people are reacting to them.” “...we can train teachers in our community or train parents in our community, and we can start identifying those issues...”

Support Services

The specific themes include:

- Mental health and substance abuse support groups (84%)
- Mindfulness groups (69%)
- Community structured activities for individuals with a mental illness (61%)

Survey respondents identified a need for recovery-oriented support groups that focus on mental health management (80%) and Stress reduction groups (53%). The question asked was “select the community services that you would like LifeStream to provide to enhance support for persons having mental health and/or substance use disorders. The second most selected was transportation. The focus groups, specifically the consumer focus group emphasized a drop-in center. Other activities listed in the consumer focus groups were more services in Sumter County, specifically, psychiatric, mental health, primary behavioral healthcare, and a drop-in center.

Summary

As noted above, Survey questions covered various topics that included unmet needs, barriers, and service continuum needs. Questions were identified through the responses of the focus groups and secondary data sources. The goal of the survey was to gain a deeper understanding of the behavioral, mental, and community health needs, service gaps, and barriers to access services among Citrus, Lake, and Sumter County residents. Focus group questions were identified by secondary data and to identify inter-agency service gaps, service need gaps among the community, and a deeper understanding of access to services and service utilization. The focus groups and the survey provided insight into service gaps, needs, and utilization. While the main barriers to utilization of services was access, such as transportation, insurance, or limited services, there were other most noted barriers such as communication, coordination of care, and knowledge of resources. Service gaps emphasized early detection through screening, support groups, education, and training. Depression, suicide, and substance use were the most named in addressing need. The data analysis provides a snapshot. Extra time in community meetings and



more respondents from the survey would provide a stronger analysis on the themes that were provided; however, there is evidence of a shift to health promotion and wellness promotion activities. Also evident was the urgency for additional services to enhance continuums of care.

Action Items to be Addressed (refer to Implementation Strategy)

By having services in place to address crisis stabilization and providing a comprehensive continuum of care for individuals living with mental health and substance use challenges, additional access to a Crisis Stabilization Unit and increased mental health services in Citrus County can increase the quality and availability of mental health services and improve overall access to mental health and substance use services.

Item	Description	Action Plan
Crisis Stabilization Unit – Citrus County	The only psychiatric units are in Lake County causing longer wait times, visits in the ED for mental health crisis, and overcrowding.	Build a Crisis Stabilization Unit in Citrus County.
Citrus County Service Expansion	Limited access to services, affordability of services, use of ED for mental health crisis.	Increase mental health and substance use services array.
Access to Care	The timely use of personal health services to achieve the best health outcomes.	Ensure the system of care consists of these four components: Coverage; Services; Timeliness; Workforce

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Bonnie L Saylor	Friends of Citrus
BE Thompson, Moderator	LifeStream Behavioral Center

LAKE

Tracey Cousineau	LifeStream Behavioral Center
Alicia Harrison	Salvation Army of Lake & Sumter Counties
Robert Cooper	Zero Hour Life Center



Gloria Boone	Lake Community Action Agency
Tim Bridges	Lake Community Action Agency
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Barbara Crewell	Lake County Citizens Commission for Children
BE Thompson, Moderator	LifeStream Behavioral Center

SUMTER

Rozanne Grady	Sumter CAP
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Valerie James	CivCom / Tobacco Free Florida
Ruthy Watson	Salvation Army of Lake & Sumter Counties
Kristen Hopper	LifeStream Behavioral Center
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