



ADVENTIST HEALTH
HOWARD MEMORIAL

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY
Year Three Update, FY 2025
January 1, 2025-December 31, 2025

2025

Adventist Health
Howard Memorial

Table of Contents

I.	PURPOSE & SUMMARY.....	3
II.	GETTING TO KNOW US.....	4
	Who we Serve.....	5
	Adventist Health.....	6
III.	CHIS Update FY 2025.....	7
	a. High Priority: Access to Care.....	8
	b. High Priority: Financial Stability	12
	c. High Priority: Health Risk Behaviors.....	14
IV.	SIGNIFICANT IDENTIFIED HEALTH NEEDS.....	25
V.	COMMUNITY HEALTH FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR MEDICALLY NECESSARY CARE COMMITMENT.....	26
VI.	Closing.....	27
VII.	Financial Table.....	28

Purpose & Summary

Non-profit health systems, community-based organizations, and public health agencies across the country all share a similar calling: to provide public service to help improve the lives of their community. To live out this calling and responsibility, Adventist Health Howard Memorial, Mendocino Coast and Ukiah Valley conduct a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) every three years, with our most recent report completed in 2022. Part of that process is engaging our community through focus groups, key informant interviews and surveys. Represented and vulnerable populations included: Civic government & leadership, community-based organizations focusing on early education, low-income, medically underserved, minority populations, older adults, providers, substance use, students, workforce representatives, and unhoused populations. Now that our communities' voices, stories, and priority areas are reflected in the CHNA, our next step is to complete a Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), or as we refer to it, a Community Health Implementation Strategy (CHIS).

The CHIS consists of a long-term community health improvement plan that strategically implements solutions and programs to address our health needs identified in the CHNA. Together with the Adventist Health Well-Being team, local public health officials, community-based organizations, medical providers, students, parents, and members of selected underserved, low-income, and minority populations, Adventist Health Howard Memorial, Mendocino Coast and Ukiah Valley intentionally developed a strategic plan to address the needs of our community.

In this Implementation Strategy Year Three Update, FY 2025 also known as the Community Health Plan Update, FY 2025, you will find strategies, tactics, and partnerships that address the following health needs identified in the 2022 Adventist Health Howard Memorial, Mendocino Coast and Ukiah Valley CHNA:

Access to Care

Financial Stability

Health Risk Behaviors

Blue Zones Project Mendocino County

Across the globe lie blue zones areas – places where people are living vibrant, active lives well into their hundreds at an astonishing rate—and with higher rates of well-being. Attaining optimal well-being means that our physical, emotional, and social health is thriving. Blue Zones Project works with communities to make sustainable changes to their environment, policies, and social networks to support healthy behaviors. Instead of a focus on individual behavior change, it is an upstream solution focused on making healthy options easy in all the places people spend most of their time. Blue Zones Project is committed to measurably improving the well-being of community residents and through their proven programs, tools and resources, utilizes rigorous metrics to inform strategies and track progress throughout the life of the project. This includes well-being data, community-wide metrics, sector-level progress and outcome metrics, transforming community well-being by making changes to environment, policy, worksites and social networks that create healthy and equitable opportunities for all.

Adventist Health Howard Memorial, Mendocino Coast and Ukiah Valley proudly sponsors Blue Zones Project Mendocino County (BZPMC). The BZPMC team wakes up each morning focused on partnering and collaborating with community leaders and organizations active in the sectors of built environment, education, economic and workforce development, mental and physical well-being, policy and public health. Together the BZPMC team and sector leaders develop a community Blueprint that strategically aligns and leverages the actions and resources of the sectors where we live, learn, work and play to help advance the efforts around the community's biggest Social Determinant of Health challenges while connecting them to Health-Related Social Needs organizations.

Equity is a strategic priority woven throughout the Blueprint and programs. Policies and initiatives are developed in a way that honors the local culture that is focused on reaching out to all populations. Each year BZPMC sector leads come together to evaluate and update the Blueprint to ensure community alignment.

To learn more about Blue Zones Project Mendocino County and how to get involved visit: mendocinocounty.bluezonesproject.com

Getting to know Mendocino CHNA service area*

From spectacular ocean views, redwood forests, and picturesque towns, the CHNA service area is a breathtaking community with a total population of 116,095. Throughout the County people enjoy activities such as the Mendocino Art Center, Theatre Company, and music and film festivals.

The median household income is \$56,401. The largest segment of the population (37.2%) is made up of residents aged over age 55. The community is known as a location focused on the well-being of its residents with support in the built environment, grocery stores and access to care while also implementing a Blue Zones Project.

Among this population, 59.95% of an individual's income is spent on housing and transportation, while

20.66% of children live in poverty and 6.67% of students are unhoused, compared to the state average of 4.25% and national average of 2.77%.

For a more detailed look into community member comments, facts and numbers that are captured in the CHNA, please visit adventisthealth.org/about-us/community-benefit. The following pages provide a closer look into our community demographic as well as our approach to the CHIS.

"This service area represents Adventist Health Howard Memorial, Mendocino Coast and Ukiah Valley's primary service areas (PSA), accounting for 75% of hospital discharges. Additionally, we took a collaborative approach and expanded our PSA by inviting Steering Committee members to include the zip codes of those they serve, creating the Mendocino CHNA service area."



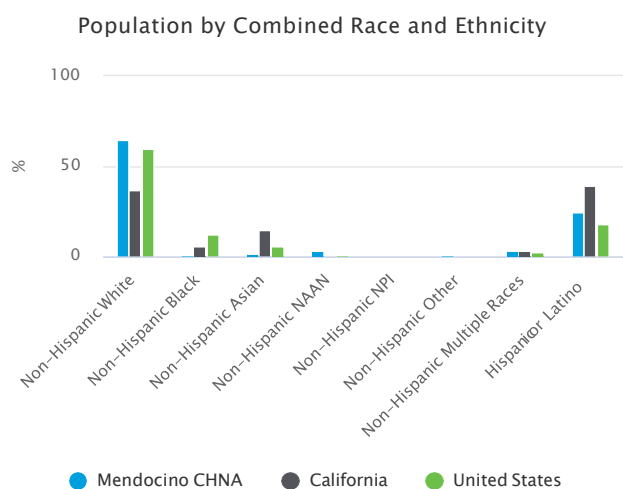
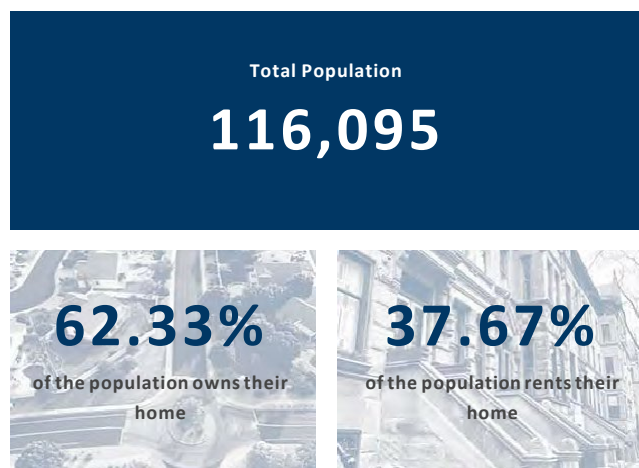
What if our community worked together and made life all-around better? What if we offered various pathways to meet our diverse needs, so every member of our community experienced better health, prosperity and longevity?

Who We Serve

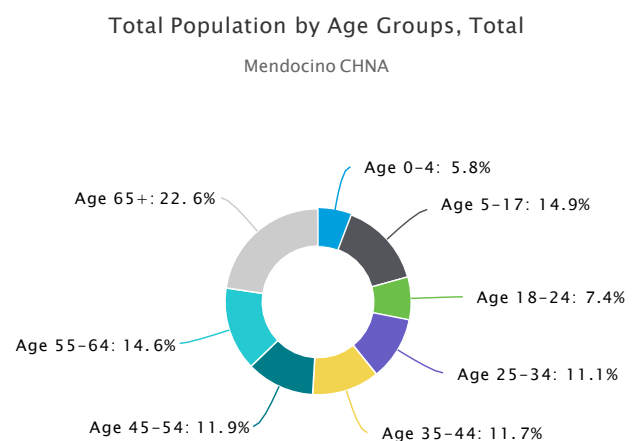
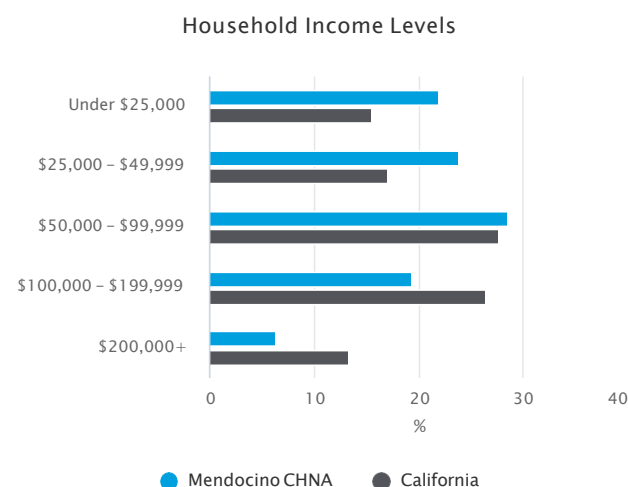
DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

The following zip codes represent Adventist Health Howard Memorial, Mendocino Coast and Ukiah Valley's primary service area (PSA), accounting for 75% of hospital discharges. Additionally, we took a collaborative approach and expanded our PSA by inviting Steering Committee members to include the zip codes of those they serve.

The Adventist Health Howard Memorial, Mendocino Coast and Ukiah Valley CHNA market has a total population of 116,095 (based on the 2020 Decennial Census). The largest city in the service area is Ukiah, with a population of 16,075. The service area is comprised of the following zip codes: 95415, 95463, 95410, 95445, 95460, 95428, 95488, 95449, 95437, 95425, 95453, 95589, 95427, 95456, 95469, 95459, 95468, 95432, 95490, 95429, 95417, 95482, 95587, 95466, 95470, 95494, 95420, 95454, 95585.



Note: NAAN = Native American or Alaska Native, NPI = Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander.



About Us

Adventist Health Howard Memorial

Adventist Health Howard Memorial has been a staple of the Willits community since 1928 when the first patient was admitted. The 25-bed critical access hospital in Willits, California, is committed to serving Mendocino County with key service areas, including a 24-hour emergency department, intensive care, laboratory, imaging, orthopedics, rehabilitation, surgery and retail pharmacy. The hospital has been caring for community needs for nearly 100 years.



Adventist Health

Adventist Health is a faith-inspired, nonprofit integrated health system serving more than 80 communities on the West Coast and Hawaii. Founded on Adventist heritage and values, Adventist Health provides care in hospitals, clinics, home care agencies, hospice agencies and joint-venture retirement centers in both rural and urban communities. Our compassionate and talented team of 34,000 includes associates, medical staff physicians, allied health professionals and volunteers driven in pursuit of one mission: living God's love by inspiring health, wholeness and hope. Together, we are transforming the American healthcare experience with an innovative, yet timeless, whole-person focus on physical, mental, spiritual and social healing to support community well-being.

Adventist Health's Approach to CHNA & CHIS

Adventist Health prioritizes well-being in the communities we serve across our system. We use an intentional, community centered approach when creating our hospital CHNA's to understand the health needs of each community. After the completion of the community assessment process, we address health needs such as mental health, access to care, health risk behaviors, and others through the creation and execution of a Community Health Implementation Strategy (CHIS) for each of our hospitals and their communities.

The following pages highlight the key findings the Adventist Health Howard Memorial, Mendocino Coast and Ukiah Valley CHNA Steering

Committee identified as their top priority health needs, or as we refer to them in this report, their 'High Priority Needs'. The High Priority Needs are addressed in the Community Health Implementation Strategy and are reported on a yearly basis through the Annual Community Health Plan Update. This is year three, of a three-year strategy to improve the health of our community. We invite you to learn about the actions, activities and programs that have been implemented in 2025.

Action Plan for Addressing High Priority Needs

The following pages reflect the goals, strategies, actions, and resources that Adventist Health Howard Memorial provided in 2025 to address each selected High Priority Need.

ADDRESSING HIGH PRIORITY: ACCESS TO CARE - BARRIERS

GOAL	Provide medical services to community members with no transportation.
Strategy:	Provide medical services to the homeless population through street medicine.
FY 2025 YEAR THREE Program/Activity	

COMMUNITY IMPACT SUMMARY/ALL STRATEGIES

COMMUNITY IMPACT SUMMARY / ALL STRATEGIES (Including Metrics where available)

The Adventist Health Street Medicine Program—delivered in collaboration with the COMPASS Street Medicine Team—continued its vital work throughout **2025**, providing essential services to people experiencing homelessness (PEH) across Mendocino County. Building upon the addition of a dual-boarded Family and Addiction Medicine physician in late 2024, the program experienced significant growth and strengthened its capacity to meet the needs of this vulnerable population.

Key Achievements and Highlights (2025)

Continued Outreach and Care

- The program upheld its commitment to accessible, community-based healthcare by conducting **over 100 Street Medicine clinics** during 2025.
- **More than 400 individuals** received care, generating **over 1,000 encounters**, reflecting broad and sustained community reach.

Multidisciplinary Team

- The COMPASS Street Medicine team includes a registered nurse, care coordinator, social worker, physicians, a nurse practitioner, community health workers, and a licensed therapist, ensuring high-quality, integrated care delivery.
- All **six first-year residents** participated in Street Medicine as part of their community medicine rotation, further embedding the program in medical education and workforce development.

Enhanced Collaboration

- The program strengthened its partnership with Mendocino Community Health Clinics (MCHC), integrating MCHC care management staff into Street Medicine clinics to support care continuity.
- The team continued to coordinate and sponsor quarterly **Mendocino County Street Medicine Collaborative** meetings, which grew to include **10 county organizations** providing services to PEH.
- In **October 2025**, Adventist Health partnered with the USC Keck School of Medicine Street Medicine team to host a **free three-day Street Medicine Foundations course** for healthcare workers from Mendocino and Lake Counties—the first time this training had been tailored specifically for rural Northern California street medicine providers.

Expanded Outreach

- In response to needs identified in 2024, encampment outreach increased to **weekly visits beginning in Q1 2025**, continuing consistently through the year.
- Additionally, **weekly nurse-led outreach** launched in the Willits region to expand access for more remote encampments.

Enhanced Service Delivery

- A new “**medication backpack**” initiative, developed in partnership with the AHUV pharmacy team and implemented in **Q1 2025**, enabled providers to treat a wider range of medical conditions directly at the point of care.
- Medications were dispensed during **over 100 encounters**, benefiting **more than 60 unique individuals**.
- Individuals who received medication at **two or more encounters** experienced a **48% reduction in emergency room visits**, demonstrating the program’s effectiveness in reducing acute care utilization.

Looking Ahead

The Adventist Health Street Medicine Program is positioned for continued growth in **2026**. The anticipated addition of a mobile clinic—with capabilities such as point-of-care lab testing—will further elevate the program’s ability to meet the complex healthcare needs of Mendocino County’s PEH population. With ongoing commitment to collaboration, innovation, and compassionate service, the program will continue to play a vital role in improving community health and well-being.

STRATEGY THAT CHANGED DURING THE YEAR:

Implementation of the **medication backpack program** to expand outreach treatment capabilities.

ADVENTIST HEALTH COMMUNITY IMPACT IN THE NEWS:

[Blanket & Rain Gear Donation Drive for our Street Medicine team](#)

[Stories from the Streets: Belinda's Story](#)

[Stories from the Streets: Ed's Story](#)

[Made for more compassion, empathy and diversity: Jimmy Pineda's story](#)

ADDRESSING HIGH PRIORITY: ACCESS TO CARE - INSURANCE

GOAL	Verify/Re-verify MediCal eligibility for vulnerable populations.
Strategy:	Provide education and outreach to medical providers (Registrars, Community Health Workers, Substance Use Navigators) to identify those medically eligible patients and help enroll or re-enroll them in available benefits and direct them to ongoing services.
FY 2025 YEAR THREE Program/Activity	

COMMUNITY IMPACT SUMMARY/ALL STRATEGIES

In **2025**, Adventist Health Mendocino continued its proactive efforts to safeguard healthcare access for Medi-Cal members throughout Mendocino County, building on the strategic foundation established in 2023 during the unwinding of the Pandemic Era Medicaid Continuous Coverage Requirement. The organization focused on preventing disruptions in care for individuals facing Medi-Cal renewal, supporting those needing alternative coverage options, and preparing the community for substantial eligibility and renewal process changes anticipated in 2026 and 2027.

Throughout the year, Adventist Health strengthened its multi-layered outreach and support strategy. This included continued collaboration with community agencies, targeted marketing and communication campaigns, and ongoing staff training designed to ensure that associates remained well-informed and equipped to help patients navigate complex insurance landscapes. Early in 2025, updated data analysis identified households most at risk for losing coverage, enabling the team to refine outreach approaches. Medi-Cal navigation resources provided by the California Department of Health Care Services were refreshed and redistributed throughout Adventist Health facilities, and multilingual materials were expanded to reflect the diverse needs of the communities served.

In addition to print and digital outreach, front-line associates received continuous training to support patients through Medi-Cal renewals and Covered California options. Collaboration with revenue cycle partners broadened the scope of navigation assistance, and Adventist Health staff deepened partnerships with community agencies to help high-risk individuals facing procedural, linguistic, or technological barriers.

A key component of Adventist Health's 2025 community engagement included **supporting and helping coordinate a countywide collaborative meeting** focused on preparing Mendocino County organizations for the upcoming healthcare coverage changes. The gathering, held on **October 23, 2025**, brought together approximately 20 representatives from local healthcare, social service, and community-based organizations. Participants included members from the County of Mendocino, Long Valley Health Center, Redwood Community Services, U.S. Representative Jared Huffman's office, the Family Medicine Residency Program, Anderson Valley Health Center, Ford Street Project, Adventist Health, Alliance for Rural Community Health/Community Health Resource Network, Mendocino Community Health Centers, First 5, Partnership HealthPlan of California, and Healthy Mendocino. The convening created a forum for shared learning and early planning, helping organizations work collectively to address anticipated challenges related to insurance eligibility shifts, renewal cycle changes, and broader economic impacts on residents. Breakout sessions allowed participants to begin identifying priority areas for action, including community messaging, workforce resilience, and innovative approaches to supporting individuals most likely to

experience coverage instability. The group committed to ongoing collaboration as additional stakeholders are brought into future meetings.

Overall, Adventist Health Mendocino’s efforts in 2025—combining targeted outreach, expanded navigation support, staff training, and cross-sector collaboration—played a critical role in minimizing coverage disruptions for Medi-Cal members and preparing the community for upcoming shifts in Medi-Cal eligibility and renewal processes. The organization’s continued commitment to clarity, accessibility, and community partnership ensured that residents across Mendocino County were better equipped to navigate the evolving healthcare landscape.

STRATEGY THAT CHANGED DURING THE YEAR:

In **2025**, Adventist Health began strategically shifting its health insurance outreach approach to prepare patients and partner organizations for the major Medi-Cal eligibility changes anticipated in 2026 and the HR1-related requirements expected in 2027. This included refining data analysis to identify individuals most likely to be affected by the upcoming pause in Medi-Cal enrollment for certain adults with unsatisfactory immigration status, expanding multilingual communication materials to ensure clear guidance for impacted families, and enhancing navigator training to address sensitive and complex eligibility scenarios. At the same time, Adventist Health initiated early planning for the 2027 transition to six-month renewal cycles and new reporting expectations by redesigning workflows, strengthening community partnerships, and developing messaging to help patients understand the importance of timely documentation. Together, these efforts positioned the organization and the broader community to respond more effectively to the evolving Medi-Cal landscape.

ADVENTIST HEALTH COMMUNITY IMPACT IN THE NEWS:

[Health care leaders gather to address impending insurance crisis – The Mendocino Beacon](#)

ADDRESSING HIGH PRIORITY: FINANCIAL STABILITY

GOAL	Identify vulnerable, unstably housed community members and connect with Community Health Workers for Support services through CalAIM funding.
Strategy:	Through COMPASS Street Medicine team identify unstably housed clients and connect them with services within the county that afford financial assistance.
FY 2025 YEAR THREE Program/Activity	

COMMUNITY IMPACT SUMMARY/ALL STRATEGIES

In **2025**, Adventist Health Mendocino continued its commitment to improving healthcare access and outcomes for vulnerable populations in Mendocino County through active participation in California's CalAIM initiative, with a particular focus on the COMPASS team's work supporting people experiencing homelessness (PEH). The organization deepened its integration of medical care and social services, strengthening its ability to address the social determinants of health that significantly impact the well-being of high-need individuals.

Key Initiatives and Achievements

• Advancing CalAIM's Holistic Care Goals

Adventist Health remained committed to CalAIM's vision of providing whole-person, coordinated care for those with the most complex needs. The organization continued to recognize the essential role of Enhanced Care Management (ECM) and Community Supports (CS) in improving health outcomes by linking individuals not only to medical care but also to housing resources, behavioral health services, basic needs programs, and other critical supports. The COMPASS team continues to navigate patients to both Adventist Health's internal ECM and Community Supports programs as well as the many external ECM and CS providers serving Medi-Cal members throughout Mendocino County.

• COMPASS Team's Core Navigation and Care Coordination Functions

The COMPASS team continued serving as a central navigation resource for PEH, connecting individuals with services across Adventist Health facilities, Mendocino Community Health Clinics (MCHC), Anchor Health Management, Redwood Community Services, and additional countywide partners. The team remained actively engaged in collaborative meetings with community agencies, including the Mendocino County Homeless Services Continuum of Care, the Mendocino County CalAIM Collaborative, and Adult Protective Services, ensuring consistent coordination for medically and socially complex individuals.

• Strengthened Partnerships and Integrated Service Delivery

Collaboration with the MCHC Connections to Care team deepened further, especially through clinics held at the Redwood Gospel Mission's Center for Hope and Redwood Community Services Building Bridges Homeless Resource Center—expanding navigation capacity and improving continuity of care. In 2025, the COMPASS team also increased staffing support for weekly clinics at Building Bridges, helping clients secure housing placements, obtain Social Security and CalFresh benefits, access transportation, and connect to mental health and treatment services.

• Impact for People Experiencing Homelessness

In 2025, the COMPASS team provided care management and navigation support to approximately 500 people experiencing homelessness, many of whom presented with co-occurring medical, behavioral health, and substance

use challenges. The team’s sustained presence in shelters, encampments, and community-based service hubs helped reduce barriers to care and improved linkage to essential services.

- **Expanded Assistance with Basic Needs and Benefit Enrollment**

In alignment with CalAIM’s whole-person approach, the COMPASS team expanded its assistance with applications not only for Medi-Cal but also for CalFresh, cash aid programs, and other benefits accessible through the state’s integrated enrollment portal. This helped reduce administrative barriers and increased access to essential resources for clients with limited digital literacy or significant functional challenges.

Overall Impact

Adventist Health’s COMPASS team played a crucial role in improving the lives of people experiencing homelessness in Mendocino County. Through strengthened partnerships, targeted care coordination, direct outreach, and an unwavering focus on holistic support, the organization made significant progress in addressing the complex needs of this vulnerable population. These efforts advanced the core goals of CalAIM while enhancing community resilience and improving access to care for individuals who historically face the greatest barriers to achieving health and stability.

STRATEGY THAT CHANGED DURING THE YEAR:

No significant strategy change in 2025.

ADVENTIST HEALTH COMMUNITY IMPACT IN THE NEWS:

[Blanket & Rain Gear Donation Drive for our Street Medicine team](#)

[Stories from the Streets: Belinda's Story](#)

[Stories from the Streets: Ed's Story](#)

[Made for more compassion, empathy and diversity: Jimmy Pineda's story](#)

[Made for More Humanity: COMPASS – Restoring Trust, Renewing Strength](#)

[Made for More Access: The COMPASS Team — Meeting People Where They Are](#)

ADDRESSING HIGH PRIORITY: HEALTH RISK FACTORS – DIET

GOAL	Reduce the obesity rate among teens and adults through targeted food and diet education.
Strategy:	Improve Healthy food and beverage access.
FY 2025 YEAR THREE Program/Activity	

COMMUNITY IMPACT SUMMARY/ALL STRATEGIES

A Food for Life Online Cooking Class was held Tuesday, October 28, 2025 to discuss foods that boost your immunity. Led by our Nutrition Education Team, we will have a discussion on nutrition and lifestyle tips to help us stay healthy and prevent sickness though the flu season

During our class, we will focus on nutrients beneficial for immunity and food sources of these necessary nutrients. Our class features three plant-based cooking demonstrations along with handouts of easy and affordable recipes participants can prepare at home to help increase their immunity and prevent sickness.

On June 10, 2025, Adventist Health Howard Memorial hosted a Food for Life class focused on the connection between diet and hormone balance. The session explored the role of nutrition in supporting thyroid function and overall hormonal health. Participants learned how targeted dietary changes can help balance hormones, support thyroid health naturally, and prevent or manage hormone-related conditions.

The class also featured three live cooking demonstrations, giving attendees practical examples of how to incorporate these principles into everyday meals. Participants received handouts with easy, affordable recipes to try at home, reinforcing the strategies discussed during the session.

ADDRESSING HIGH PRIORITY: HEALTH RISK FACTORS – ILLICIT DRUGS

GOAL	Increase access to treatment in a community with high substance use and overdose rates.
Strategy:	Create policies and spaces for the treatment of substance use disorders and reduce harm to people who use substances.
FY 2025 YEAR THREE Program/Activity	
COMMUNITY IMPACT SUMMARY/ALL STRATEGIES:	
In 2025, Adventist Health Mendocino continued its strong commitment to addressing the opioid epidemic and expanding access to comprehensive addiction treatment through the CA Bridge model, the Substance Use Navigator (SUN) program, and ongoing participation in the SafeRx Mendocino initiative. These integrated efforts allowed the organization to deepen its impact across emergency, inpatient, and community settings while enhancing continuity of care for individuals experiencing substance use disorders. Key Initiatives and Achievements • CA Bridge Model and SUN Team The SUN team continued to provide critical screening, brief intervention, and navigation services for individuals with substance use and behavioral health needs across the emergency department, inpatient units, and community-based settings. The team sustained strong engagement in 2025, connecting patients with medication-assisted treatment (MAT), behavioral health services, and residential treatment programs. SUN navigators also maintained their role in Mendocino County Jail discharge planning by supporting re-entry into MAT and treatment programs. The integration of the SUN team with the COMPASS team in early 2025 enhanced coordination and strengthened connections between addiction treatment and broader care management services. • SafeRx Mendocino and Naloxone Distribution All three Adventist Health hospitals in Mendocino County continued their active participation in the SafeRx Mendocino program and the Naloxone Distribution Project. SafeRx's dual focus on prescriber education and harm reduction remained a cornerstone of the county's opioid response. Efforts to promote safe opioid prescribing practices, encourage use of the CURES 2.0 prescription monitoring database, expand access to naloxone (Narcan), and increase patient education continued throughout 2025. • Expansion of Addiction Medicine Expertise In 2025, Adventist Health further expanded its addiction medicine capacity through the ongoing leadership of Dr. Cara Eberhardt, a former AHUV Family Medicine SMART Track resident specializing in Addiction Medicine. Dr. Eberhardt's advanced training through the UC Davis Addiction Medicine Fellowship significantly strengthened access to high-quality addiction care across the region. Her work included close collaboration with the SUN team, provision of inpatient addiction medicine consultation at Adventist Health Ukiah Valley, and active participation on the COMPASS Street Medicine Team, where she delivered low-barrier outpatient addiction services directly in community settings, including to people experiencing homelessness. • Positive Impact on Overdose Trends Provisional data available through Q2 2025, showed a 31% decrease in drug overdose deaths, continuing the downward trend in drug overdose deaths in Mendocino County seen since 2022. This sustained downward trend aligns with the countywide emphasis on improving access to evidence-based treatment, expanding harm-reduction services, and strengthening cross-sector coordination. All three Adventist Health hospitals in Mendocino County—Adventist Health Ukiah Valley, Adventist Health Howard Memorial, and Adventist Health Mendocino Coast—were recognized in 2025 by California Health and Human Services Agency (CalHHS) Secretary Kim Johnson, in partnership with Cal Hospital Compare, for achieving the <i>highest level of performance</i> in caring for patients with substance use disorders for two consecutive years. This honor places the Adventist Health Mendocino hospitals among only 33 hospitals statewide to meet this distinction, highlighting their leadership in evidence-based substance use care, harm-reduction practices, and navigation services as part of the statewide Healthcare Organizations Leading SUD Care Honor Roll Overall Impact	

Adventist Health Mendocino County’s multifaceted approach to addressing substance use disorder—combining SUN navigation, the CA Bridge model, naloxone distribution, harm-reduction strategies, and specialized addiction medicine expertise—continued to make a measurable positive impact on community health in **2025**. Strengthened partnerships, expanded treatment pathways, and improved care coordination contributed to safer, more accessible, and more effective support for individuals experiencing substance use challenges

ADVENTIST HEALTH COMMUNITY IMPACT IN THE NEWS:

[Staff Spotlight: Austin Peterson, lead substance use navigator](#)

[Cal Hospital Compare Announces the 2025 Hospitals Leading Substance Use Disorder \(SUD\) Care - California Health & Human Services](#)

[Thanks for joining us in honor of Overdose Awareness Day](#)

ADDRESSING HIGH PRIORITY: HEALTH RISK FACTORS – TOBACCO PREVENTION YOUTH

GOAL	Create an environment that discourages commercial tobacco and nicotine use, reduces youth access, provides tobacco-free spaces and supports prevention, cessation and enforcement efforts.
Strategy:	Decrease youth tobacco use and availability of cigarettes, e-cigarettes and all flavored tobacco products.
FY 2025 YEAR THREE Program Activity	

COMMUNITY IMPACT SUMMARY/ALL STRATEGIES:

See the Blue Zones Project Mendocino County 2025 Annual Report at the end of this document for full details.

ADDRESSING HIGH PRIORITY: HEALTH RISK FACTORS – TOBACCO SECONDHAND SMOKE

GOAL	Create an environment that discourages commercial tobacco and nicotine use, reduces access, provides tobacco-free spaces, and supports the prevention, cessation and enforcement efforts.
Strategy:	Create systems and supports that target tobacco use prevention and cessation.
FY 2025 YEAR THREE Program/Activity	

COMMUNITY IMPACT SUMMARY/ALL STRATEGIES:
See the Blue Zones Project Mendocino County 2025 Annual Report at the end of this document for full details

ADDRESSING HIGH PRIORITY: HEALTH RISK FACTORS – TOBACCO USE EDUCATION

GOAL	Create an environment that discourages commercial tobacco and nicotine use, reduces access, provides tobacco-free spaces, and supports the prevention, cessation and enforcement efforts.
Strategy:	Create systems and supports that target tobacco use prevention and cessation.
FY 2025 YEAR THREE Program/Activity	

Adventist Health Howard Memorial Additional Narrative:

Other programs/activities not included in the 2023 CHIS Strategic Plan that support community impact

In 2025, AHHM hosted our annual Free Sports Physicals and Back-to-School Fair, creating a fun and supportive space for families as they prepared for the new school year. The event brought the community together and provided valuable services to local youth and their families for those unable to receive a timely sports physical.

A total of **188 sports physicals** were completed, helping students get ready for both the classroom and the sports they love. We also distributed **hundreds of backpacks filled with school supplies**, ensuring students had what they needed to start the year with confidence. Our mascot, Pip, made a special appearance in plushie form, which was a big hit with kids—and plenty of adults as well.

We were proud to partner with **MCHC Health Centers–Hillside and Dora Street**, who provided dental care items, and **Mendocino County Public Health**, who offered vaccinations and wellness information. Additional activities—including balloon art, face painting, stickers, and a coloring station—added to the festive atmosphere.

Our registered dietitian team was also on-site, offering nutrition tips, answering questions, and providing free blood glucose checks, further supporting the health and well-being of our community.



Blue Zones Project Mendocino County: 2025 Annual Report

Executive Summary:

Mendocino County became a certified Blue Zones Community in 2025.

Blue Zones Project® helps communities implement the longevity and happiness lessons learned from the world's extraordinary people and cultures to measurably improve well-being and create enhanced community vitality.

The method of work is to drive community-led semi-permanent and permanent change in man-made surroundings. This approach is designed to make healthier choices easier, more ubiquitous, and sustainable. The effect: people moving more naturally, taking more time to downshift daily, discovering the power of purpose, eating wisely, and deepening their connections with friends, family, and their faith. Over time, these collective choices compound to sustainably improve well-being. In 2021, with a focus on Fort Bragg, Ukiah, and Willits, a broad base of Mendocino County's leadership set an initial four-year course to do just that.

The value of Blue Zones Project is measured by the engagement of its citizens; the number, type, and scope of semi-permanent and permanent changes implemented; the prevalence and incidence rates of lifestyle risks and disease; and measurable improvements in well-being; all of which ultimately led to lower medical costs, better workforce productivity, and a strengthened regional economy. Since 2021, Mendocino County has undergone its own community transformation, exceeding targets set to engage individuals and organizations and to implement policy changes. Well-being has reached new highs according to the most recent Sharecare Community Well-Being Index (CWBI) and other community indicators.

Our community improved in all five key well-being areas measured by the CWBI—community, social, purpose, physical, and financial—in addition to improvements across nine community selected measures. A broad coalition has supported Mendocino County's efforts to adopt over 70 policies, plans and tools—like the Mendocino County Tobacco Policy Platform and updated smoking control ordinances—which will guide future decision-making toward an even more vibrant and active future. This work was bolstered by more than \$5.3 million in grant funding secured with the support of Blue Zones Project. The return on investment has and will continue to manifest. The semi-permanent and permanent changes already made compound over time, producing greater future returns for Mendocino County. Return on investment can be measured in a myriad of ways, as the value captured is unique to each citizen, family, and organization. In this way, Mendocino County has been enriched as a “choice community”—a place where more people and businesses decide to be. With sustained momentum, continued

implementation of policies and plans, and project advancement in key areas, Mendocino County stands to further improve community well-being in its next phase of work. More than four years ago, when Blue Zones Project first engaged Mendocino County leadership, we collectively established an ambitious plan for the entire county to become a certified Blue Zones Community.

Today, Mendocino is a new benchmark for what bold leaders across the state and country can achieve when they invest in the health and well-being of their citizens. Congratulations on creating an even better Mendocino County.

POLICY:

BUILT ENVIRONMENT POLICY

Highlights:

POLICIES

- March 2025 (Mendocino County) Support Planning and Infrastructure Projects that aim to increase access to, and ridership of, public transportation
- November 2025 (Fort Bragg) Advance placemaking efforts to improve public spaces on the Noyo Headlands Trail

CAPACITY BUILDING INITIATIVES

- March 2025 (Mendocino County) Serve on Mendocino Council of Governments Technical Advisory Committee (MCOG TAC)

DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS

- April 2025 (Fort Bragg) Facilitate trail network design and development - Binoculars on the Coast Trail
- June 2025 (Willits) Facilitate trail network design and development - Story Walk at Blosser Lane Elementary School Trail
- June 2025 (Fort Bragg) Facilitate trail network design and development - Fitness Equipment on the Coast Trail
- September 2025 (Ukiah) Facilitate Complete Streets policy, design, and implementation - Perkins and Gobbi gateway project
- October 2025 (Ukiah) Advance placemaking efforts to improve public spaces - Norgard Park

MARQUEE PROJECT

- Finalized Fort Bragg Binocular Installation on the Coast Trail
- Finalized Willits Wayfinding Maps Installation

FOOD POLICY:

Highlights:

POLICIES, PLANS, OR SUSTAINABLE PROGRAMS

- January 2025 (Mendocino Co) Support the development of a business plan for MendoLake Food Hub
- June 2025 (Mendocino Co) Guide system-wide strategic Good Farm Fund grant investments to support a thriving small farm network

CAPACITY-BUILDING INITIATIVES

- February 2025 (Mendocino County) Support the development of a business plan for MendoLake Food Hub

MARQUEE PROJECT

- November 2025 (Willits) Enhance infrastructure that supports community gardens, to allow for increased capacity to expand and sustain gardens across the county - Sanhedrin High School Garden

- December 2025 (Willits) Enhance infrastructure that supports community gardens, to allow for increased capacity to expand and sustain gardens across the county - Blosser Lane Elementary School Hoop House

TOBACCO POLICY:

Highlights:

POLICIES, PLANS, OR SUSTAINABLE PROGRAMS

- February 2025 (Fort Bragg) Update Tobacco Retail Licenses (TRL) based on the county TRL

PLACES

SCHOOLS:

Five new schools became Blue Zones approved.

Highlights:

Schools approved in 2025:

- May 2025 (W) Baechtel Grove Middle (dual approved school and worksite)
- May 2025 (W) Sherwood Elementary
- May 2025 (FB) Fort Bragg High
- June 2025 (FB) Fort Bragg Middle
- July 2025 (W) Willits High

RESTAURANTS:

The Blue Zones team approved seven restaurants in 2025. These restaurants now offer healthy Blue Zones dishes, helping make the healthier choice the easiest choice for residents of Mendocino County.

Highlights:

Restaurants approved in 2025:

- January 2025 (Ukiah) Jyun Kang Vegetarian Restaurant
- January 2025 (Ukiah) Patrona
- January 2025 (Ukiah) Oco Time
- January 2025 (Ukiah) Ukiah Natural Foods Cafe (dual approved restaurant and grocery)
- May 2025 (Fort Bragg) Rhody's Garden Cafe
- May 2025 (Ukiah, Willits) Ramen Cubed
- November 2025 (Willits) The Whistle Stop

GROCERY STORES:

Two restaurants became Blue Zones Approved in Mendocino County in August 2025.

Highlights:

Grocery stores approved in 2025

- August 2025 (Ukiah) | Ukiah Natural Foods Co-op (dual approved restaurant and grocery)
- October 2025 (Willits) | Mariposa Market

WORKSITES:

Blue Zones Approved Worksites in Mendocino County increased by five in 2025.

Highlights:

Worksites approved in 2025:

- January 2025 (Ukiah) Mendocino College (also a major employer in Willits and FB with campuses in Lake County)
- January 2025 (Willits) Blosser Lane Elementary (dual approved school and worksite)
- January 2025 (Willits) Baechtel Grove Middle School (dual approved school and worksite)
- January 2025 (Willits) Brookside Elementary School (dual approved school and worksite)
- April 2025 (Ukiah) Mendocino Community Health Clinics (also a major employer in Willits and FB as well as Lake County)

PEOPLE

ENGAGEMENT

Blue Zones Project Mendocino County engaged 1,600 unique individuals in 2025, achieving 1,951% of their final-year engagement goal of 82.

Highlights:

- Blue Zones Project Mendocino County spent countless hours in the community, helping residents live better, longer. The project hosted more than 18 cooking demonstrations, 12 Walking Moais, 5 Purpose Workshops, 6 volunteer events, one Walking School Bus and at least 20 other events in the community.
- 11th Annual Día de los Muertos - Mendocino College hosted its 11th Annual Día de los Muertos celebration on October 29, 2025, bringing together community members, students, staff and local organizations to honor and remember loved ones who have passed. This century-old tradition was celebrated with a vibrant day full of activities. The event featured lively performances by groups such as Las Muertas de Hambre, SPACE Dancers, Baile Folklorico, Aztec Dancers, and Grupo Del Valle. Attendees set up beautiful altares, or ofrendas, in the Lowery Student Center. These were adorned with colorful paper picado, catrinas, flowers, and food, alongside pictures of family, friends, and even beloved pets. Many shared stories and memories, fostering a sense of connection and love, further enhanced by the blessing offered by members of the Aztec Dancers. The success of

the Día de los Muertos celebration was made possible by the dedicated Mendocino College Staff, who served on the committee and devoted their time and hard work to creating such a memorable event.

- Living to 100 Screening at Willits Senior Center - 4-week screening during senior center lunch. We had the privilege of meeting Jack, the center's centenarian who does weekly chair exercise class! (pic below)
- Willits Senior Center Chili Cook-off - Cooking Demo at WSC Chili Cook-Off. Chili cook-off attendees are surprised to learn that this delicious Blue Zones Chili has no meat!
- Over 60 guests from across the county gathered to celebrate Rhody's Garden Cafe as a newly designated BZP Approved Restaurant. The event featured beautiful food served in a truly magical setting—an unforgettable evening honoring excellence in sustainable dining.
- Attendance at the annual Fort Bragg National Night Out and Fort Bragg Unified School District's Family Wellness Fair helped the BZP Mendocino County team achieve their overall goal of engaging 1,900 unique individuals age 15 and over across the project geography.

Significant Identified Health Needs

The Adventist Health Community Well-Being team and community partners collectively reviewed all relevant significant health needs identified through the CHNA process. Using a community health framework developed for this purpose, 12 significant health needs were initially considered. The list of significant needs are as follows:

- Access to Care
- Community Safety
- Community Vitality
- Education
- Environment & Infrastructure
- Financial Stability
- Food Security
- Health Conditions
- Health Risk Behaviors
- Housing
- Inclusion & Equity
- Mental Health

From this group of 12, several high priority health needs were established for Adventist Health Howard Memorial, Mendocino Coast and Ukiah Valley. High priority health needs were chosen as they had demonstrated the greatest need based on severity and prevalence, intentional alignment around common goals, feasibility of potential interventions, and opportunities to maximize available resources over a three-year period.

Using the criteria mentioned above, we were able to determine which needs were high priority, as compared to those that were significant needs. The High Priority Needs are the focus of the implantation strategy and this accompanying Community Health Plan Update, FY 2025. The remaining significant health needs are not addressed directly but will likely benefit from the collective efforts defined in this report.

TABLE OF SIGNIFICANT IDENTIFIED HEALTH NEEDS

Access to Care
Financial Stability
Health Risk Behaviors
Lower Priority Needs that will not be addressed directly by Adventist Health Howard Memorial due to limited resources, expertise and feasibility of viable interventions
Housing
Mental Health
Health Condition
Food Security
Environment & Infrastructure
Inclusion and Equity
COVID
Education
Community Vitality
Community Safety



Scan the QR code for the full Secondary Data Report



Community Health Financial Assistance for Medically Necessary Care Commitment

Adventist Health understands that community members may experience barriers in paying for the care they need. That is why we are committed to providing financial assistance to those who may need support in paying their medical expense(s).

Community members can find out if they qualify for financial aid in paying medical bills by completing a financial assistance application. Applications can be filled out at the time care is received or after the bill has been administered. To access the financial assistance policy for more information or contact a financial assistant counselor, please visit us at <https://www.adventisthealth.org/patients-and-visitors/bill-pay/>



Adventist Health Howard Memorial
1 Marcela Drive, Willits, CA 95490
(707) 459-6801
HCAI #: 106234038
<https://www.adventisthealth.org/howard-memorial/>

Susan Passalacqua | Community Benefit
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Thank you for reviewing our Implementation Strategy, Year Three Update, FY 2025.
We are proud to serve our local community and are committed to making it a healthier place for all.
To provide feedback on this community benefit report or other reports referenced, please
email community.benefit@ah.org. You may also request a copy free of charge.

This report, the most recent Community Health Needs Assessment and Community Health
Implementation Strategy are also available at:
<https://www.adventisthealth.org/howard-memorial/about-us/community-benefit/>
<https://www.adventisthealth.org/about-us/community-benefit/>

At Adventist Health, community benefit is an essential extension of our mission and the care continuum. Our investments are guided by our Community Health Needs Assessments and reflect a proactive, strategic approach to improving the health and well being of the communities we serve. All community benefit activities are reported at cost. Patient financial assistance (charity care) included in this report is submitted to the California Department of Health Care Access and Information (HCAI) through the Hospital Annual Financial Disclosure Reports, as required by Assembly Bill (AB) 204. Community benefit expenses related to charity care, Medi-Cal, and other means tested programs are calculated using a cost to charge ratio to reflect the cost of services net of any associated revenue. Other community benefit activities are valued using standard cost accounting methodologies, and restricted offsetting revenue is deducted where applicable to determine the net community benefit.

In accordance with AB 204, Section 95103, net community benefit expenses are reported separately for services provided to vulnerable populations and for services that benefit the broader community. These totals represent the economic value of Adventist Health’s commitment to meeting community needs and advancing equitable health outcomes.

Adventist Health Howard Memorial Year 2025	Net Vulnerable Population	Net Broader Community	Total Community Benefit
Traditional charity care	\$629,650	\$0	\$629,650
Public programs - Medicaid	\$6,184,101	\$0	\$6,184,101
Medicare	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other means-tested government programs (Indigent care)	\$0	\$0	\$0
Community health improvement services	\$154,859	\$250,588	\$405,447
Health professions education	\$0	\$0	\$0
Non-billed and subsidized health services	\$0	\$3,975,718	\$3,975,718
Generalizable Research	\$0	\$0	\$0
Cash and in-kind contributions for community benefit	\$0	\$0	\$0
Community building activities	\$0	\$387,650	\$387,650
TOTAL COMMUNITY BENEFITS	\$6,968,611	\$4,613,956	\$11,582,567