Key Factors in the CHNA:

Community Served

Van Buren County is a remote rural county located in southeast Iowa with a population of 7,131. The county poverty rate has consistently ranked on the higher end among Iowa counties, with a current rate of 16.8%.

A. How it was determined:
United States Census Bureau 2025

B. Demographic Information:
1. Population: 7,131 (2025)
2. Persons under 5 years of age 6.4%, Person under 18 years of age 23.7%,
3. Person 65 years and older 25.8%.
4. Median household income $61,161(2020-2024) compared to state median household income of $75,059
5. Uninsured individuals under 65 years old is 12% with a state rate of 6.6%.

CHNA Process & Methods

A Community Health Needs Assessment survey was developed and distributed throughout Van Buren County for residents to give their feedback. There were 106 individuals who responded to the survey. Multiple processes were used to gather input, hold conversations, and agree on priorities.

A. Community Health Needs Survey was created and distributed through
1. Survey Monkey Link (via QR code and Facebook)
2. Paper Surveys

Data was collected from the Community Health Needs Survey, and a committee of individuals developed goals for the Community Health Improvement Plan.

1. Van Buren County Public Health
2. Van Buren County Hospital
3. Van Buren County Community School District
4. Van Buren County Child Abuse Prevention Council/SAFE Coalition
5. Southern Iowa Mental Health
6. Elevate Mobile Crisis Response Team
7. Engage Keosauqua
8. Community Members

Implementation Strategy:

Needs Identified:

Mental Health (Southern Iowa Mental Health & Elevate Mobile Crisis Response Team)

I. Provide at least 3 outreach connections regarding mental health crisis and resources available in Van Buren County.

A. Provide school district with magnets and resources for mental health support
1. Provide Van Buren County Community School District with magnets containing mental health resource information
2. Attend local events (Kids Fair & Family Fun Night) each year to promote mental health

3. Provide school counselors with resources at the beginning of each school year
4. Facilitate mental health presentation (TBD where at)
5. Attend a lunch & learn or similar style meeting to provide mental health education

II. Increase suicide/crisis awareness and/or response

A. Increase resources available for mobile crisis services and SIMHC crisis unit.

1. Identify pathways
2. Network – establish connections
3. Distribute crisis resources

B. Build a trusting connection with community members and referral sources through resources and communication

1. HHS communication, networking with referral sources
2. Ongoing communication with hospital, sheriff office, and various community resources to help those in crisis
3. Collaborate with Thrive Iowa

Population Health-Cancer, Heart Disease, Diabetes, Obesity (Van Buren County Hospital & Van Buren County Public Health)

I. Cancer-Contractor will purchase, deploy, and operationalize at least one telehealth-enabled tablet in each of Iowa's 87 designated rural counties to improve availability and access to healthcare services.

A. Public Health consulting with the workgroup on locations for Van Buren County's tablet to be located to provide to Combat Cancer Project.

1. Will submit locations for telehealth tablet to combat cancer
2. Will provide updates at each meeting on status of telehealth tablet and how to market the availability in our county

II. Cancer-Increase awareness and understanding of lung, colorectal, and skin cancer risk reduction strategies to support informed prevention behaviors among rural Iowans by disseminating evidence-based cancer prevention messaging and available resources through Local Public Health Departments in all 87 identified rural Iowa counties by October 30, 2026

A. VBCPH to bring this messaging to Van Buren County

1. At CHIP meetings and workgroup meetings, will update the workgroup on updates from Combat Cancer and messaging we can get out and how to get out to our community.

III. Cancer-Distribute and track 30,000 NRPP/NRSB- approved in-home radon test kits to rural Iowa households through Local Public Health Departments by October 30th 2026, with complete county-level documentation of distribution and test results to identify elevated radon exposure and support mitigation actions

A. VBCPH will determine for our county how many kits and to whom the kits distribute to

IV. Cancer-Distribute and track 3,000 FIT kits to uninsured rural Iowans through participating provider sites by October 30th, 2026 with a greater than 90% follow-up for

positive results to impact both screening reach and effectiveness in improving early detection of colorectal cancer.

V. Heart Disease-Develop and implement a Remote Patient Monitoring Program in Van Buren County for weight tracking and blood pressure tracking

A. Implement and scale a county-wide RPM program for weight and blood pressure management, enrolling at least 50 qualified patients to improve chronic disease outcomes and reduce preventable hospitalizations.

1. Establish RPM program infrastructure, vendor partnership, and clinical protocol
2. Train healthcare providers and care teams in RPM workflows and patient engagement

VI. Diabetes- Design and implement a comprehensive, patient-centered diabetes care model that includes standardized assessment protocols, individualized care plans, patient education resources, and a multidisciplinary approach

1. Conduct a needs assessment (review current diabetes outcomes, identify care gaps)
2. Use evidence-based guidelines- build framework using ADA standards incorporate best practices such as: HgbA1c monitoring protocols, foot, eye, and kidney screening schedules, medication management algorithms.
3. Define Core Components of the Care Model: Standardized Intake/Assessment Template, Risk Stratification, Care Pathways, Patient Education Modules

VII. Obesity- Conduct targeted promotional activities and 1 in person outreach activity to increase awareness of local health resources that support obesity prevention

1. Collect local data and identify our target audience.

Access to Healthcare (Van Buren County Hospital)

I. Identify and implement two high impact-My Chart functionality improvements and deliver community education resulting in a 10% increase in My Chart usage from patients

A. Implement ticket scheduling for wellness appointments

1. Engage with the departments involved to create new process, then educate both staff and patients

B. Implement process for on-line check in

1. Engage with departments involved to create process, then educate both staff and patients

C. Implement lab scheduling functionality to coordinate with wellness appointments.

1. Coordinate with patient access, lab, and business development departments at VBCH to work with EPIC for lab scheduling to be enabled within the EMR.
2. Engage with community to promote new availability

II. Develop and implement a standardized pre-visit testing process and provide education to staff and patients on its importance and workflow to achieve a 50% completion rate of required tests before schedule appointments to ensure high-quality patient visits.

A. Develop clinic process and implement for patients to have pre-visit testing to improve the quality of their visit

1. Begin to have patients schedule future annual wellness and labs at clinic check out
2. Implement provider led, face to face, care model for more proactive approach

III. Increase utilization of hospital-wide services by 10% through implementation and community awareness effort on newly added or existing service lines such as OB/GYN, Wound Care, Pediatrics, and other services that ensure care "close to home" for our community.

A. Implement additional services to include OB/GYN, pediatrics, and expand wound clinic availability

1. Create templates and coordinate with new service providers to ensure that appropriate supplies, staff, and equipment are available

B. Promote new service offerings to the community

1. Market to the community by utilizing television, radio, newspaper, social media and in person speaking engagements

Development (Van Buren County Hospital, Van Buren County Community School District, & Engage Keosauqua)

I. Increase the average daily census in the daycare program by 15% compared to the FY26 baseline average daily census through strategic expansion and optimization of childcare contracts, improved staffing recruitment and retention efforts, and enhanced scheduling capacity management. Progress will be monitored monthly through census reports, staffing metrics, and contract utilization data to ensure the program maintains safe staffing ratios and operational sustainability.

A. Optimize capacity utilization

1. Strategically optimize childcare contracts to maximize utilization of available days. Require deposit for new families to increase probability of slot utilization – minimize cancellations. Expand contract options to include 1- and 2-day contracts. Explore same-day options.
2. Partner with First Children's Finance to conduct operational analysis with grant funding – additional tactics likely following final optimization report.
3. Ensure staffing levels are appropriate for the number of children being cared for to minimize unused capacity due to staffing

II. Raise $200,000 to support the purchase and installation of new playground equipment and safety flooring for the daycare program through coordinated fundraising efforts led by the BABBLE Parent Council and Van Buren County Hospital. Funding sources will include grant applications, local business sponsorships, community fundraising events, and individual donations. Progress toward the fundraising target will be tracked quarterly through donation reports, grant submission outcomes, and campaign participation metrics to ensure timely achievement of the project goal.

A. Community fundraising

1. Coordinate fundraising efforts led by the BABBLE Parent Council and Van Buren County Hospital. Request quotes for playground equipment safety flooring. Identify appropriate project phasing based on anticipated cost. Funding sources: grant applications, local business sponsorships, community fundraising events, individual donations

Substance Use (Van Buren County Child Abuse Prevention Council/SAFE Coalition)

I. The coalition will continue to collect community substance use data from community stakeholders for 2026, 2027, and 2028, and report it to community stakeholders by May of each year

A. Collect data from the VBC Sheriff's Office

1. Email VBCSO for their annual data

B. Collect data from VBCH

1. Email VBCH for their 2024 data.

C. Collect data from Juvenile Justice

1. Contact Juvenile Probation Officer for annual data

D. Collect Data from VBC Middle/High School

1. Contact VBCCSD for MS/HS for the annual data

II. Provide media campaigns addressing substance use, including billboards in Keosauqua, articles in the VBC Register, and postings on Social Media beginning July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2029.

A. Have three rotating billboards addressing alcohol use, nicotine use, and marijuana use from July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2029

1. Complete contract with billboard company

B. Submit at least 3 articles to VBC Register monthly

1. Email articles to the newspaper

C. Post Information on the coalition's social media at least weekly

1. Schedule articles and information monthly

III. The coalition staff will host Youth Leadership Council Meetings at least monthly during the school years (2026-27, 2027-28, and 2028-29).

A. Host Monthly 7th Grade YLC Meetings

1. Meet with 7th grade students at the VBCCSD Middle School

B. Host Monthly 8th Grade YLC Meetings

1. Meet with 8th grade students at the VBCCSD Middle School

C. Host Bi-Monthly High School YLC Meetings

1. Meet with High School students at the VBCCSD High School

D. Implement activities with the YLC Members at school

1. Hold activities that the youth and staff choose at the VBCCSD Middle/High School

E. Take YLC members on educational prevention trips

1. Take YLC Members to the ISTEP Summit, AC4C Prevention Conference, CADCA Forum, AC4C Day on the Hill, and AC4C Summer Youth Retreat

IV. The Van Buren County Child Abuse Prevention Council/ SAFE Coalition will host activities throughout the year to provide substance-free, family-friendly activities for the community.

A. Host the Safe & Healthy Kids Fair(July 2026, July 2027, and July 2028)
    1. Plan the Safe & Health Kids Fair, purchase supplies, host event, and purchase/distribute school supplies
B. Host Community Baby Shower
    1. Plan, host, and distribute incentives for baby shower
C. Host Family Fun Night (April 2027, April 2028, and April 2029)
    1. Plan, purchase supplies, and host event

V. The coalition will work to implement policies/ordinances in the community to limit youth access to substances and decrease overuse by adults

A. Implement ordinances with city councils and local businesses to increase their smoke-free ordinances to nicotine-free ordinances
    1. Meet with City Councils and present education on why this ordinance is important
    2. Have 2 City Councils implement this ordinance
B. Implement zoning ordinances with city councils for marijuana businesses if marijuana becomes legal nationally or in the state of Iowa.
    1. Meet with city councils and educate them on marijuana dangers and the ordinance
    2. Have to 2 city councils implement this ordinance

Awareness of Healthcare Services (Van Buren County Hospital)

I. Increase medical staff visibility (marketing promotions) from <25 in FY26 to 265 in FY26. This will be a one year project unless it is determined to continue into year 2 & 3.

A. Reels with providers on social media
    1. Set up video shoots with all medical staff- primary and specialty as needed
    2. Create 10-12 reels per medical staff member
    3. Begin posting reels in July- at least one per week on social media.)52 total by the end of FY27)
B. Magazine highlights of medical staff and services
    1. Schedule months for medical staff and determine topics
    2. Work with medical staff on their content each quarter
    3. Work with vendors to publish & distribute magazines quarterly
C. Commercials that medical staff are featured in
    1. Schedule 4 medical staff for commercials this year
    2. Work with medical staff to prepare for their commercial
    3. Work with vendors to create, edit and air commercials
D. Community Events-Schedule medical staff present
    1. Schedule medical staff at community events 1x per month
E. Still graphics

1. Photos on Patient Point, Social and Newspaper Corner. These photos will align with the reels created. “Did you know” series that are still images- created monthly

II. Increase the number of community speaking engagements outside of Keosauqua from 70/year to 100/year by June 30, 2029 as measured by the Community Meeting Reports

A. Seek additional speaking opportunities for staff and continue to plan/schedule and organize speaking opportunities

1. Continually look for places where VBCH staff can speak and present to the public about our services
2. Continue to sign up staff for speaking engagements each month. At least one medical staff member and 6-9 other staff members

III. Distribute Service Guide and Community Resource Directory. Distribute at least 100 guides each year. Update the directory as needed and market at least 12 times each year.

A. Update Service Guide

1. Update Service Guide annually
2. Distribute Service Guide quarterly

B. Update Resource Directory

1. Review and update monthly

C. Market Resource Directory

1. Market on a regular basis, more so in July and August