

# Community Health Improvement Plan

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## CITRUS COUNTY



MARCH 2025 – MARCH 2030

Ron DeSantis

Governor

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“Combine resources to create a consortium to help guide and direct patients to services.”

FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT

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Everyone should be involved in the health and health activities of the community, not just health care providers.

FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT

### What is Health and Who Contributes to the Health of a Community?

As defined by County Health Rankings & Roadmaps, a program of University of Wisconsin’s Population Health Institute, “a wide range of factors influence how long and how well we live.” (CHRR website, 2024). Among those factors are access to healthy foods, economic stability, the ratio of healthcare providers to the population, housing, education, and how policies are shaped and implemented in a community.

While the Florida Department of Health in Citrus County (DOH-Citrus) bears statutory responsibility for safeguarding the public’s health, it shares this duty with other agencies and organizations, including hospitals, healthcare providers, schools, government entities, law enforcement, and social service agencies. All have a vested interest in the public’s health.

DOH-Citrus is mandated to conduct a community health needs assessment (CHNA) every three to five years, following guidance from the state, as well as the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB). The CHNA identifies community health needs for the community which become the foundation for the creation of the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), a long-term undertaking to develop transformative and sustainable actions to improve the overall health of county residents. A successful CHIP helps a broad set of community partners make meaningful improvements in community health through the setting of priorities, creating measurable and impactful objectives, and planning activities and initiatives to support those objectives.

Since 2015, the Community Health Improvement Partnership (Partnership) has met, under the guidance of DOH-Citrus, to create and implement the CHIP. For the last decade, this group of community leaders have guided the CHIP, which has served as the catalyst for moving traditional and non-traditional public health groups toward a common goal. The ongoing process of implementing the CHIP brings together these partners on a regular basis, tracking and monitoring objectives, discussing data trends and revising the CHIP as necessary. The CHIP is a living document, not an end point, and as such, strives to reflect the constantly changing landscape of Citrus County.

## Overview of Community Health Improvement Planning

With support and funding from the Citrus County Community Charitable Foundation (CCCCF), DOH-Citrus began planning for a new assessment in fall 2022. A steering committee, made up of community stakeholders representing governmental entities, social service agencies and other community organizations, was convened to help facilitate the process and provide guidance to WellFlorida, the agency selected to conduct Citrus County’s community assessment.

On October 18, 2022, WellFlorida held a kickoff meeting with the steering committee to review the project’s scope, timeline, and deliverables. Following this meeting, WellFlorida gathered community feedback about health issues in Citrus County through an online survey; three focus groups, which included area physicians, members of the faith-based community, and members of the Community Alliance; and one-on-one key informant interviews. They also compiled data gathered from various sources such as FLHealthCHARTS, County Health Rankings & Roadmaps, and U.S. Census data.

Preliminary data and survey responses were presented to the Steering Committee in January 2023. The committee met multiple times between January 2023 and April 2023. Facilitated by WellFlorida, these meetings allowed the committee to engage in structured discussions about the assessment findings, prioritize issues and develop goals and strategies for addressing those issues.

Under the guidance of WellFlorida, the committee chose to keep its previous vision statement as the focus for its work:

***Being one of the top 10 healthiest counties in the State of Florida.***

At the conclusion of its meeting cycle, the steering committee identified five priority areas. These included: Healthcare Providers, Mental Health Care, Substance Use, Affordable, Safe Housing, and Effective Health Communications.

## The Four MAPP Assessments

The CHNA and CHIP were developed following the Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP) strategic planning framework. The MAPP tool was developed by the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) in cooperation with the Public Health Practice Program Office, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

As its name suggests, MAPP is a community-driven process. Strategies to assure the assessment of various health statuses and outcomes were included in the Citrus County MAPP process. Use of the MAPP tools and process helped Citrus County assure that a collaborative and participatory process with a focus



Source: National Association of County and City Health Officials (N.A.C.C.H.O.). Community Assessment and Improvement Planning. Retrieved June 20, 2024, <https://www.naccho.org>.

on wellness, quality of life and health equity would lead to the identification of shared, actionable strategic health priorities for the community.

At the heart of the MAPP process are the following core MAPP assessments:

- Community Health Status Assessment (CHSA)
- Community Themes and Strengths Assessment (CTSA)
- Forces of Change Assessment (FOCA)
- Local Public Health System Assessment (LPHSA).

These four MAPP assessments work in concert to identify common themes and considerations, to focus on the key community health needs. These MAPP assessments are fully integrated into the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) and Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP).

## Forces of Change Assessment

During their January 26, 2023, meeting, the Steering Committee conducted a Forces of Change Assessment, facilitated by WellFlorida. The Forces of Change Assessment helps determine the characteristics of a community which can impact the overall health and quality of life of its citizens. The qualitative data collected during this undertaking helps to answer the questions, “What is occurring or might occur that affects the health of the community and/or health system?” and “What specific threats or opportunities are generated by these occurrences?”

As defined by WellFlorida, the three forces include:

Trends – patterns over time, such as migration in and out of a community or a growing disillusionment with government.

Factors – discrete elements, such as a community’s large ethnic population, an urban setting, or the jurisdiction’s proximity to a major waterway.

Events – one-time occurrences, such as a hospital closure, a natural disaster, or the passage of new legislation.

Prior to the discussion, the Steering Committee was presented with preliminary findings, which included demographic data, such as age, gender, race and ethnicity; data about health conditions and death rates; information about behaviors; resources for medical care; and the perceptions of survey respondents and focus group participants about the health priorities and concerns for Citrus County’s general health and well-being.

The Steering Committee participated in a brainstorming exercise to identify both opportunities and threats that exist in Citrus County’s health landscape.

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## Priority Health Issues

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As an OB-GYN, I look at maternal mortality and morbidity. If we bring those down, then the community is going to be healthy.

FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT

While the CHNA identified five priority areas, after discussion with DOH-Citrus leadership and the Performance Management (PM) Council, it was determined that Affordable, Safe Housing as a priority was not feasible. Citrus County has a committee, the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee, on which the DOH-Citrus Community Health Program Administrator serves; to convene a second committee to focus on this issue would be an unnecessary duplication of efforts.

As the previous CHIP Plan had a robust and successful group devoted to issues involving Mental Health and Substance Use, it was decided that these two issues continue to be addressed under the umbrella “Behavioral Health.”

### Priority #1: Healthcare Providers

Citrus County lacks a sufficient amount of healthcare providers, including specialty providers and dentists. According to County Health Rankings & Roadmaps 2024, the ratio of dentists to patients is 1 to 3,250. Emergency department visits from dental conditions are 870.5 per 100,000 (FLCharts 2023). DOH-Citrus has a strong school-based dental sealant program which provides sealants and preventative care for Citrus County Title I school children in Pre-K and grades kindergarten through third grade. However, unlike screening for vision and hearing health, there is no standard oral health screening for children prior to being admitted to school.

In addition to a shortage of dental providers, Citrus County lacks Obstetrician Gynecologists (OB-GYN). The rate per 100,000 of OB-GYN providers was 3.7 compared to the state rate of 8.6 (FLCharts FY 22-23). Less than 70% of pregnant women seek prenatal care in the first trimester which is one potential contributing factor to Citrus County’s high infant mortality rate of 7.5 resident infant deaths per 100,000 (FLCharts).

Exacerbating the provider shortage, more than 15% of Citrus County residents live below the poverty line, and more than one-third of all households are ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) households. Not all providers in Citrus County accept all forms of insurance. Traveling

outside of the county to providers who will accept a patient's insurance is often not feasible due to transportation issues or job constraints. Even for those with adequate insurance, accessing necessary medical care is difficult due to long wait times for appointments, or a lack of specialty providers.

There is only one hospital with an obstetrics department, no trauma center, no Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), no Baker-Act receiving facility and not enough mental health, and substance use treatment providers.

The overall concern of both the CHNA survey respondents and members of the Steering Committee was the need for more providers in Citrus County, across a variety of disciplines, to meet future growth and our aging community's health and wellness needs.

## Priority #2: Behavioral Health (Mental Health and Substance Use)

Survey respondents cited the community's mental health and substance use as a top concern, ranking them among the county's most pressing health issues.

There is no Baker-Act receiving facility in Citrus County, meaning that county residents who are Baker-Acted must be transported out of county to a facility in Leesburg, FL. This creates additional hardship for those already burdened, as those most critically impacted by the lack of care are also typically experiencing financial and transportation issues.

Citrus County's deaths by suicide rate is more than twice that of the state: 34.5 age-adjusted per 100,000 compared to the state's rate of 14.1 (FLCHARTS, 2022). For those aged 12-18, the rate is 10 times that of the state: 55.4 compared to 5.5 (FLCHARTS, 2021).

For many, poor mental health or lack of access to mental health resources contributes to substance use and abuse. In 2022, Citrus County recorded 59 drug overdose deaths, for an age-adjusted rate per 100,000 of 45.9, higher than the state rate of 29.0. Of those, 49 were opioid related overdose deaths (FLCHARTS, Substance Use Dashboard).

Lack of knowledge about available resources for both mental health and substance use is a contributing factor that keeps many from seeking help. Stigma is also a large impediment, as many see both mental health and substance use as a character flaw and not a health issue.

## Priority #: Effective Health Communications

County residents often have a difficult time accessing social services and navigating the healthcare system. While a multitude of charitable and community-based social service agencies exist to serve many of the community's needs, many do not know these organizations exist, leading to confusion, resources not being used by those who need them, and duplication of services.

County residents may have under-utilized insurance benefits. They may not have reliable internet, which leaves them unable to access patient portals, connect with needed resources, or make appointments for care. A lack of internet places telemedicine out of their reach.

Many lack reliable transportation to appointments, relying on family or friends for rides. Citrus County's transit system is robust, but does not accommodate early morning or evening hours, nor does it provide transportation on weekends. Both are critical for people who need mental health and substance use care.

There is also a general lack of knowledge about health conditions and healthy choices. Nearly one-third of Citrus County's adult population is obese (County Health Rankings & Roadmaps, 2023). Fast food and other unhealthy options are often chosen due to lack of time or knowledge about preparing healthy food. Lack of transportation and "food deserts" also contribute to residents' reliance on fast food or convenience store staples.

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## Community Assets and Resources

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I know there are resources out there...I just don't know that they get to where they need to be...

FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT

A large percentage of Citrus County residents use Medicaid and Medicare benefits. Medicaid is the most common payor for births while Medicare is the most common payor for emergency department visits and discharges. As of 2021, 23.6 percent of Citrus County residents were enrolled in Medicaid, a statistic which corresponds with the county's poverty level.

Approximately 71 percent of Citrus County students in grades K-12 qualify for free or reduced lunches. For the past three academic years (2022-2023, 2023-2024 and 2024-2025), the Citrus County School District has provided free breakfast and lunch for all its 15,000+ students.

Located on the "nature coast," Citrus County is home to many outdoor recreational areas where residents can enjoy activities such as hiking and swimming. Parks and Recreation also offer camps for children, dance classes, and, for a monthly fee, access to a gym, as well as a monthly farmers market. There are also numerous classes offered through the Citrus Memorial Health Foundation YMCA, privately owned gyms and community centers.

Citrus County boasts two hospitals. TGH Crystal River, located on the west side, was recently purchased by Tampa General Hospital. Tampa General Hospital is the second highest-ranked hospital in Florida according to *U.S. News and World Report's 2024-2025 Best Hospitals* report. TGH is also one of the Top 50 Hospitals in the nation.

Citrus County's additional hospital, HCA Florida Citrus, is located on the east side of the county, in Inverness. Noted for its Heart and Vascular Center, HCA Florida Citrus Hospital is among the Top 10% in the nation for prostate surgery and is a five-star recipient for pacemaker procedures. It has also received awards for hip fracture treatment and diabetic hospitalizations. It is the only county hospital offering labor and delivery services.

Additional resources in the County are provided by numerous social service and nonprofit organizations.

- Anti-Drug Coalition of Citrus County
- BASICS United
- Citrus County Abuse Shelter Association (CASA)
- Citrus County Community Charitable Foundation (CCCF)
- Community Alliance of Citrus County
- Community Food Bank
- Florida Wellcare Alliance
- Groups Recover Together
- Habitat for Humanity
- Humana Healthy Horizons
- Jessie's Place
- Langley Health Services (FQHC)
- LifeStream Behavioral Center
- Mid-Florida Homeless Coalition
- NAMI Citrus
- WellFlorida Council
- United Way of Citrus County

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## Tracking the Community Health Improvement Plan

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Access to affordable care for all is vital.

FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT

The Community Health Improvement Partnership (Partnership) meets quarterly. The CHIP workgroups meet as needed throughout the year.

During the quarterly CHIP meetings, workgroup Chairs and/or Co-Chairs report to the Partnership on the status of pending objectives, as well as activities and/or strategies that have been implemented since the previous meeting.

Using the provided updates, as well as data in FLHealthCHARTS, the PMQI Champion completes quarterly reports for the Performance Improvement and Management System (PIMS) data reporting. The quarterly PIMS reports are reviewed by the DOH-Citrus PM Council, who reviews the objective status and makes suggestions that the PMQI Champion relays to the individual CHIP workgroup chairs.

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## Priorities, Goals, Strategies, and Objectives

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### Priority 1:

#### Healthcare Providers

- Goal 1.1 Increase the number of healthcare providers in Citrus County
- Strategy 1.1.1 Engage medical schools and residency programs
- Objective 1.1.1.1 **By December 31, 2027, reduce the rate per 100,000 of Emergency Department visits from dental conditions (aged 5 years and older) from 870.5 (2023) to 865.**
- Strategy 1.1.2 Create and implement approaches to engage physician significant others and/or spouses during the recruitment process
- Objective 1.1.2.2 **By December 31, 2029, increase the number of obstetricians who practice in Citrus County from 6 (2022-2023) to 7.**
- Goal 1.2 Include oral health screenings as part of school health program
- Strategy 1.2.1 Educate commissioners and school board members on importance of oral health
- Objective 1.2.1.1 **By December 31, 2029, increase the number of mandatory dental screenings for Citrus County school students entering kindergarten from zero (2025) to one.**

### Priority 2:

#### Behavioral Health (Mental Health Care and Substance Use)

- Goal 2.1 Improve access to resources for behavioral health
- Strategy 2.1.1 Promote services that focus on behavioral health
- Objective 2.1.1.1 **By December 31, 2026, increase the number of resources cards with all Citrus County Behavioral Health Resources from zero (2024) to one.**
- Strategy 2.1.2 Seek transportation solutions to assure access
- Objective 2.1.2.1 **By December 31, 2026, increase the number of transportation task forces from zero (2024) to one.**
- Goal 2.2 To improve stigma through education and outreach
- Strategy 2.2.1 Conduct public awareness campaigns on substance use
- Objective 2.2.1.1 **By December 1, 2025, increase the number of anti-stigma campaigns on substance abuse from zero (2024) to one.**
- Goal 2.3 Prevent and reduce opioid overdoses
- Strategy 2.3.1 Expand and improve collaboration and coordination with providers
- Objective 2.3.1.1 **By December 1, 2027, increase the distribution of Naloxone in Citrus County by 20%, From 2,601 units (2024) to 3,120 units.**
- Objective 2.3.1.2 **By December 31, 2026, reduce Emergency Department visits due to opioid overdoses in Citrus County by 1% from 494 per year (2024) to 489 per year.**

**Priority 3: Effective Health Communication**

- Goal 3.1 Gather and distribute information on existing Citrus County health and social service resources.
- Strategy 3.1.1 Consolidate existing resource guides to create a singular, user-friendly guide available in print and digital formats.
- Objective 3.1.1.1 **By December 1, 2028, increase the number of comprehensive community resource guides from zero (2025) to one.**
- Objective 3.1.1.2 **By December 1, 2026, increase the number of human trafficking resources listed in local service guides from one (2024) to two.**
  
- Goal 3.2 Deliver resource information in language-appropriate formats and through multiple channels.
- Strategy 3.2.1 Employ print and electronic media to reach Citrus County residents in easily accessible ways.
- Objective 3.2.1.1 **By December 1, 2029, increase the number of monthly or bi-monthly health education information pieces, delivered in both print and electronic formats, that promote health plan benefits and align with monthly health observances, from zero (2025) to one.**
  
- Goal 3.3 Increase community health education on mental health/substance use across the population spectrum.
- Strategy 3.3.1 Conduct public awareness campaigns on mental health/substance use.
- Objective 3.3.1.1 **By January 1, 2030, increase the number of campaigns aimed at social service agencies to promote consistent language to destigmatize mental health/brain health services from zero (2025) to one.**

## Action Plan

<b>Priority #1: Healthcare Providers</b>			
Goal 1.1. Increase the number of healthcare providers who practice in Citrus County			
Strategy 1.1.1 Engage medical schools and residency programs			
<b>Objective 1.1.1.1 By December 31, 2027, reduce the rate per 100,000 of Emergency Department visits from dental conditions (aged 5 years and older) from 870.5 (2023) to 865.</b>			
Data Source: FLCharts			
	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Responsible Organization (s)</b>	<b>Timeframe for Completion</b>
1	Create mobile dental program	Citrus County Oral Health Alliance	12/31/2026
2	Recruit students to work in program	Citrus County Oral Health Alliance	12/31/2026

<b>Alignment</b>	Healthy People 2030 – OH-08 (Increase use of the oral health care system) SHIP – Priority Area #2 (Chronic Diseases and Conditions)
<b>Policy Component (Y/N)</b>	No

<b>Priority #1: Healthcare Providers</b>			
Goal 1.1. Increase the number of healthcare providers who practice in Citrus County			
Strategy 1.1.2 Create and implement approaches to engage physician significant others and/or spouses during recruitment process			
<b>Objective 1.1.1.2 By December 31, 2029, increase the number of obstetricians who practice in Citrus County from 6 (2023-2023) to 7.</b>			
Data Source: FLCharts			
	Activity	Responsible Organization (s)	Timeframe for Completion
1	Promote the FRAME program	Workgroup, DOH-Citrus	12/1/2026
2	Create “welcome group” for prospective physicians	Workgroup, local hospitals and providers	12/1/2026
3	Connect with providers in surrounding counties who may be interested in practicing in Citrus County	Workgroup	12/1/2026

Alignment	SHIP – Priority Area #4 (Maternal and Child Health)
Policy Component (Y/N)	No

<b>Priority #1: Healthcare Providers/Access to Healthcare</b>			
Goal 1.2 Include oral health screenings as part of school health program			
Strategy 1.2.1 Educate commissioners and school board members on importance of oral health			
<b>Objective 1.2.1.1 By December 31, 2029, increase the number of mandatory dental screenings for Citrus County school students entering kindergarten from zero (2025) to one.</b>			
Data Source: Citrus County Schools, DOH-Citrus			
	Activity	Responsible Organization (s)	Timeframe for Completion
1	Create presentation for Citrus County school board on importance of oral and dental health	Citrus County Oral Health Alliance	12/31/2027
2	Present to Citrus County school board for consideration and possible implementation of policy	Citrus County Oral Health Alliance	6/1/2027

Alignment	Healthy People 2030 – OH-02 (Reduce proportion of children and adolescents with active and untreated tooth decay) SHIP – Priority Area #2 (Chronic Diseases and Conditions) SHIP – Priority Area #4 (Maternal and Child Health) SHIP Priority Area #6 (Social and Economic Conditions Impacting Health)
Policy Component (Y/N)	Yes

<b>Priority #2: Behavioral Health (Mental Health Care and Substance Use)</b>			
Goal 2.1 Improve access to resources for behavioral health			
Strategy 2.1.1 Promote services that focus on behavioral health			
<b>Objective 2.1.1.1 By December 31, 2026, increase the number of resource cards with all Citrus County behavioral health resources from zero (2024) to one.</b>			
Data Source: Behavioral Health workgroup			
	<b>Activity/Strategy</b>	<b>Responsible Organization (s)</b>	<b>Timeframe for Completion</b>
1	Compile and verify list of county Behavioral Health resources to be added to the card	Behavioral Health workgroup, Anti-Drug Citrus	6/30/2025

<b>Alignment</b>	Healthy People 2023 – HC/HIT-RO1 (Health Literacy) SHIP – Priority Area #5 (Mental Well-being and Substance Use Prevention)
<b>Policy Component (Y/N)</b>	No

<b>Priority #2: Behavioral Health (Mental Health Care and Substance Use)</b>			
Goal 2.1 Improve access to resources for behavioral health			
Strategy 2.1.2 Seek transportation solutions to assure access			
<b>Objective 2.2.2.1 By December 31, 2026, increase the number of transportation task forces from zero (2024) to one.</b>			
Data Source: Behavioral Health Workgroup, Citrus County transit			
	Activity	Responsible Organization (s)	Timeframe for Completion
1	Citrus County Transportation Department to present to Alliance	Anti-Drug Coalition of Citrus	Completed at meeting on 9/3/2024
2	Pool list of current transportation options to work on creating appropriate list for task force	BH workgroup	10/31/2025
3	Create a post-disaster transportation plan to ensure continuity of care for at-risk individuals	BH workgroup	10/1/2027

Alignment	SHIP – Priority Area #5 (Mental Well-being and Substance Use Prevention) SHIP – Priority Area #6 (Social and Economic Conditions Impacting Health)
Policy Component (Y/N)	Yes

<b>Priority #2: Behavioral Health (Mental Health Care and Substance Use)</b>			
Goal 2.2 To improve stigma through education and outreach			
Strategy 2.2.1 Conduct public awareness campaigns on substance abuse			
<b>Objective 2.2.2.1 By December 1, 2026, increase the number of anti-stigma campaigns on substance abuse from zero (2024) to one.</b>			
Data Source: Behavioral Health Workgroup			
	Activity	Responsible Organization (s)	Timeframe for Completion
1	Create unified messaging to be used across Citrus County	Jessie’s Place, DOH-Citrus, workgroup members	9/30/2025
2	Develop outreach event for community leaders	Citrus County Anti-Drug Alliance, Langley Health, workgroup members	12/31/2025
3	Collaborate to launch PR campaign for DOH-Citrus anti-stigma post placement	LifeStream, workgroup members	9/30/2025

Alignment	Healthy People 2023 – HC/HIT-RO1 (Health Literacy) SHIP – Priority Area #5 (Mental Well-being and Substance Use Prevention) SHIP – Priority Area #6 (Social and Economic Conditions Impacting Health)
Policy Component (Y/N)	No

<b>Priority #2: Behavioral Health (Mental Health Care and Substance Use)</b>			
Goal 2.3 Prevent and reduce opioid overdoses			
Strategy 2.3.1 Expand and improve collaboration and coordination with providers			
<b>Objective 2.3.1.1 By December 31, 2027, increase the distribution of Naloxone in Citrus County by 20%, from 2,601 units (2024) to 3,120 units.</b>			
Data Source: Citrus County Opioid Task Force			
	Activity	Responsible Organization (s)	Timeframe for Completion
1	Saturate the community with no-cost naloxone	Anti-Drug Citrus, Citrus County Fire CORE, DOH-Citrus, Citrus County Sheriff's Office Behavioral Health Unit	12/31/2026
2	Distribute naloxone to businesses in high use areas of the county	Anti-Drug Citrus, Citrus County Fire CORE, DOH-Citrus, Citrus County Sheriff's Office Behavioral Health Unit	12/31/2025
3	Education to businesses and agencies on naloxone use and Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) resources available for employees	Anti-Drug Citrus, Citrus County Fire CORE, DOH-Citrus	12/31/2025

Alignment	SHIP – Priority Area #5 (Mental Well-being and Substance Use Prevention)
Policy Component (Y/N)	No

<b>Priority #2: Behavioral Health (Mental Health Care and Substance Use)</b>			
Goal 2.3 Prevent and reduce opioid overdoses			
Strategy 2.3.1. Expand and improve collaboration and coordination with providers			
<b>Objective 2.3.1.2 By December 31, 2026, reduce Emergency Department visits due to opioid overdoses in Citrus County by 1%, from 494 (2024) to 489.</b>			
Data Source: FLCharts, ER visits			
	Activity	Responsible Organization (s)	Timeframe for Completion
1	Increase hospital/ER collaboration with CORE	Citrus County Fire Rescue, LifeStream Peer Support, Tampa General Hospital Crystal River	12/31/2025
2	Partner with community organizations, i.e. Citrus County Sheriff's Office, Citrus County Fire Rescue to do outreach in high utilization areas	Citrus County Sheriff's Office Behavioral Health Unit, Citrus County Fire Rescue	12/31/2026

Alignment	SHIP – Priority Area #5 (Mental Well-being and Substance Use Prevention)
Policy Component (Y/N)	No

<b>Priority #3: Effective Health Communications</b>			
Goal 3.1 Gather and distribute information on existing Citrus County health and social service agencies			
Strategy 3.1.1 Consolidate existing resource guides to create a singular, user-friendly guide available in print and digital formats			
<b>Objective 3.1.1.1 By December 1, 2028, increase the number of comprehensive community resource guides from zero (2025) to one.</b>			
Data Source: Effective Health Communications workgroup			
	Activity	Responsible Organization (s)	Timeframe for Completion
1	Review resource guides currently available, determine what service gaps exist	Workgroup	12/1/2025
2	Research grants available for publication of resource guide in both electronic and print formats	Workgroup	12/1/2025
3	Determine hosting platform and management for online resource guide	Workgroup	12/1/2026
4	Creation/design/distribution of resource guide	Workgroup	12/1/2028

Alignment	Healthy People 2023 – HC/HIT-RO1 (Health Literacy) SHIP – Priority Area #6 (Social and Economic Conditions Impacting Health)
Policy Component (Y/N)	No

<b>Priority #3: Effective Health Communications</b>			
Goal 3.1 Gather and distribute information on existing Citrus County health and social service agencies			
Strategy 3.1.1 Consolidate existing resource guides to create a singular, user-friendly guide available in print and digital formats			
<b>Objective 3.1.1.2 By December 1, 2026, increase the number of human trafficking resources listed in local service guide from one (2024) to two.</b>			
Data Source: Effective Health Communications workgroup			
	Activity	Responsible Organization (s)	Timeframe for Completion
1	Review resource guides currently available, determine what service gaps exist	Workgroup	12/1/2025
2	Research grants available for publication of resource guide in both electronic and print formats	Workgroup	12/1/2026
3	Determine hosting platform and management for online resource guide	Workgroup	12/1/2026
4	Creation/design/distribution of resource guide	Workgroup	12/1/2028

Alignment	Healthy People 2023 – HC/HIT-RO1 (Health Literacy) SHIP – Priority Area #6 (Social and Economic Conditions Impacting Health) DOH-Citrus Strategic Plan – 5.3.2
Policy Component (Y/N)	No

<b>Priority #3: Effective Health Communications</b>			
Goal 3.2 Deliver resource information in language-appropriate formats and through multiple channels			
Strategy 3.2.1 Employ print and electronic media to reach Citrus County residents in easily accessible ways			
<b>Objective 3.2.1.1. By December 31, 2029, increase the number of monthly or bi-monthly health education information pieces, delivered in both print and electronic formats, that promote health plan benefits and align with monthly health observances, from zero (2025) to one.</b>			
Data Source: Effective Health Communications workgroup			
	Activity	Responsible Organization (s)	Timeframe for Completion
1	Create a publication timeline to include topics covered during which months	Workgroup	6/1/2026
2	Research grants available for publication of materials	Workgroup	12/1/2026
3	Determine organizations/health offices for distribution of electronic materials	Workgroup	12/1/2027
4	Creation/design/distribution of materials	Workgroup	12/1/2028

Alignment	Healthy People 2023 – HC/HIT-RO1 (Health Literacy) SHIP – Priority Area #6 (Social and Economic Conditions Impacting Health)
Policy Component (Y/N)	No

<b>Priority #3: Effective Health Communications</b>			
Goal 3.3 Increase community health education on mental health/substance use across the population spectrum			
Strategy 3.3.1 Conduct public awareness campaign on mental health/substance use			
<b>Objective 3.3.1.1 By January 1, 2030, increase the number of campaigns aimed at social service agencies to promote consistent language to destigmatize mental health/brain health services from zero (2025) to one.</b>			
Data Source:			
	Activity	Responsible Organization (s)	Timeframe for Completion
1	Create a subcommittee workgroup composed of members of the Behavioral Health committee and the Effective Health communications committee to create campaign	Workgroup	12/1/2025
2	Explore SAMHSA campaign materials currently available for potential utilization	Workgroup	12/1/2025

Alignment	Healthy People 2023 – HC/HIT-RO1 (Health Literacy) SHIP – Priority Area #5 (Mental Well-being and Substance Use Prevention) SHIP – Priority Area #6 (Social and Economic Conditions Impacting Health)
Policy Component (Y/N)	No

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## Appendix A: DOH-Citrus Performance Management Council

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We got a lot of things right, but there's still a lot of needs that don't get covered, and maybe we could do better. We have the facilities, the structure necessary to provide a lot of assistance.

FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT

The following includes a list of DOH-Citrus staff who served on the Performance Management Council during the span of the CHIP.

### 2025

Gayle Guidash  
Administrator

Christie Jones  
Advanced Practice Registered Nurse

Juliann Cruz  
Administrative Services Director

Joleny Leon  
Health Support Specialist

Thomas Daugherty  
Environmental Specialist II

Dawn Tichenor  
Emergency Preparedness Planner

Amy Douglas  
PIO/PMQI Champion

Janora Wade  
Senior Community Health Nursing Director

Ian Felts  
Personnel Liaison

Whitney Perkins  
Senior Clerk

Carmen Hernandez  
Community Health Program Administrator

# 2024

Gayle Guidash  
Interim Administrator  
*Beginning August 2024*

Wesley Asbell  
Interim Administrator  
*Through July 2024*

Juliann Cruz  
Administrative Services Director

Kathryn DeFranco  
Health Education Consultant

Amy Douglas  
PIO/PMQI Champion

Ian Felts  
Personnel Liaison

Carmen Hernandez  
Community Health Program Administrator

Christina Jones  
Advanced Practice Registered Nurse

Joleny Leon  
Environmental Health Clerk

Roberto Molina Martinez  
Medical Director

Dawn Tichenor  
Emergency Preparedness Planner

Janora Wade  
Senior Community Health Nursing Director

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## Appendix B: Community Health Improvement Partnership Members

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Joelle Aboytes  
Department of Children and Families

Sunshine Arnold  
Citrus County Fire Rescue

Melissa Bowermaster  
Jessie's Place

Robinann Chisman  
Department of Health in Citrus County

Blaire Cope  
WellFlorida Council

M. Bridget Cotto  
Department of Health in Citrus County

Tracy Cousineau  
LifeStream Behavioral Center, Inc.

Kathryn DeFranco  
Department of Health in Citrus County

Felicia DeLuca  
Department of Health in Citrus County

Frank DiPiazza  
Florida Wellcare Alliance

Amy Douglas  
Department of Health in Citrus County

Cindi Fein  
NAMI Citrus

Jessica Fortune  
Department of Health in Citrus County

Coreen Garrity  
Mid-Florida Homeless Coalition

Raquel Gonzalez  
Department of Health in Citrus County

Dr. John Grace  
Veterans Administration, Lecanto

Gayle Guidash  
Department of Health in Citrus County

Holly Hartley  
Citrus County Schools

Carmen Hernandez  
Department of Health in Citrus County

Todd Hockert  
Department of Health in Citrus County

Whitney Hughson  
Groups Recover Together

Kimberly Jackson  
Department of Health in Citrus County

Thomasina Jacobs  
Oral Care Solutions

Kristy Jocelyn  
BASICS United

Gene Josey  
LifeStream Behavior Center, Inc.

Amy Knight  
Langley Health Services

Meghan Lutes, DMD  
Langley Health Services

Rebecca Martin  
WellFlorida Council

Sonja McCaughey  
Nature Coast Ministries

Gene McGee  
Sunrise Consulting

Brenda McNabb  
Department of Health in Citrus County

Cara Meeks  
Humana Healthy Horizons

Terri Merker  
Department of Health in Citrus County

Nichelle Mohre-Cassidy  
Citrus County Schools

Tariq Muhammad  
Citrus County Rural Health

Taylor Murphy  
Department of Health in Citrus County

Kelly Niblett  
Citrus County Schools

Jonathan Noyes  
TGH Crystal River

Dr. Bradley Ruben  
WellFlorida Council

George Schmalstig  
United Way of Citrus County

Michelle Shank  
Citrus County Schools

Renea Teaster  
Anti-Drug Coalition of Citrus County/  
Community Alliance of Citrus County

Janora Wade  
Department of Health in Citrus County

Leah Wells  
Langley Health Services

Jennifer Wheeler  
Department of Health in Citrus County

Kimberly Williams  
Department of Health in Citrus County

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## Appendix C: Community Health Needs Assessment Steering Committee

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Sunshine Arnold  
Citrus County Abuse Shelter Association (CASA)

April Barton  
Community Member

Crystal Barton  
Citrus County Community Charitable Foundation

Rebecca Bays  
Citrus County Board of County Commissioners

Jeff Bryan  
Habitat for Humanity

Jenette Collins  
City of Crystal River

Amanda Cypret  
LifeStream Behavioral Center

Kathryn DeFranco  
Department of Health in Citrus County

Amy Douglas  
Department of Health in Citrus County

Carmen Hernandez  
Department of Health in Citrus County

Brian Hermann  
City of Crystal River

Todd Hockert  
Department of Health in Citrus County

Rebecca Martin  
WellFlorida Council Board Member and Community Member

Cara Meeks  
Humana Healthy Horizons

Mark Pagan  
Department of Health in Citrus County

Amanda Purnell  
Citrus County Parks and Recreation

Lynsie Roddenberry  
Citrus County Support Services

Mariselle Rodriguez  
Citrus County Board of County Commissioners

Brad Ruben, DO  
WellFlorida Council Board Member, NCFTC

Ernesto "Tito" Rubio  
Department of Health in Citrus County

Madelyn Russell  
United Way of Citrus County

George Schmalstig  
United Way of Citrus County

Izabela Simmons  
Citrus County Parks and Recreation

Barbara Sprague  
Community Food Bank

Renea Teaster  
Anti-Drug Coalition of Citrus County/  
Community Alliance of Citrus County

Mary "Maret" Wachira  
Department of Health in Citrus County

Janora Wade  
Department of Health in Citrus County

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## Appendix D: Planning Summary

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The following is the schedule of meetings:

Meeting Date	Meeting Topic
September 15, 2022	Discussion of Steering Committee selection and timeline for assessment
October 18, 2022	Steering Committee Kick-off Meeting
January 16, 2023	Preliminary data highlights presented to Steering Committee
March 21, 2023	Steering Committee Meeting
April 12, 2023	Steering Committee Meeting to finalize priority areas and develop goals
September 6, 2023	Discussion regarding formation of workgroups
September 19, 2023	Behavioral Health Subcommittee meeting, brief CHNA overview
October 5, 2023	CHIP meeting – review of CHNA, discussion of next steps
October 19, 2023	Workgroup brainstorming meeting
January 11, 2024	New CHIP Kick-off meeting
April 4, 2024	CHIP meeting
November 7, 2024	CHIP meeting
January 16, 2025	CHIP meeting: Review of objectives



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In August of 2022, WellFlorida Council in cooperation with the Citrus County Department of Health and Citrus County Community Charitable Foundation, Inc. began to assemble a team from public health, social services, education, and more to develop and initiate this 2022-2023 Citrus County Community Health Assessment. In collaboration with the ensuing core team, the strategic planning process was carried out according to Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP), an evidence-based, community-driven framework for improving community health. Through data collection, analysis, and discussions, the following 2022-2023 Citrus County Community Health Assessment document and accompanying Technical Appendix was developed.

ASSESSMENT	DESCRIPTION	KEY FINDINGS
<b>Community Health Status Assessment</b>	Secondary data covering Demographics, Socioeconomics, Mortality, Mental Health, Maternal and Infant Health, Health Behaviors, Infectious Diseases, and Health Care Access and Utilization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consistently elevated high school dropout rates and low rates of college-educated adults</li> <li>Rising rates of food insecurity, especially among children</li> <li>High mortality rates, especially due to heart disease, cancer, CLRD, stroke, unintentional injury, and hypertension</li> <li>High rates of mental health hospitalizations and ED Visits, liver disease deaths, drug use, obesity, and tobacco use and exposure</li> <li>Limited number of healthcare providers, especially pediatricians</li> </ul>
<b>Community Themes and Strengths Assessment</b>	Feedback was collected from community members and health care providers through a survey, focus groups, and key informant interviews on factors of a healthy community, health issues, unhealthy behaviors, and barriers to care.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Affordable healthcare was the most important factor to a healthy community; substance abuse, the most important health issue, preceding mental health, then homelessness</li> <li>26.0% lacked needed primary care, 40.6% dental care, and 22.9% mental health care, with cost, appointment/provider availability, and insurance all acting as prevalent barriers</li> <li>Focus groups and key informant interviews common challenges included access to care, health behaviors, and mental health</li> </ul>
<b>Forces of Change Assessment</b>	Discussion on current or potential trends, factors, and events within Citrus County.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social and Behavioral issues including the aging healthcare workforce, generational trauma, communication gaps, and behavioral/academic challenges among children in school</li> <li>Opening of a new mental health facility and VA clinic</li> <li>Economic challenges, such as the rising cost of living, residents working outside of the county, and limited public transport</li> </ul>
<b>Strategic Priorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to Healthcare Providers</li> <li>Mental Health Care</li> <li>Substance Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Affordable, Safe Housing</li> <li>Effective Health Communications</li> </ul>

## Appendix G: Forces of Change Assessments

<b>Forces Of Change for Citrus County - TRENDS</b> <i>(Prepared by WellFlorida Council – 2023)</i>			
	<b>TRENDS</b>	<b>THREATS POSED</b>	<b>OPPORTUNITIES CREATED</b>
<b>Social/ Behavioral</b>	Rising Behavioral Problems in Schools	<p>Teacher shortage: Teachers quitting because of behavioral issues from the students; students with trauma are not getting the help needed and act out in school; lowered standards of teaching</p> <p>Academic: Reading level among elementary children declining</p> <p>Poverty: Poverty affecting adverse childhood experiences (ACEs); generational trauma; lack of mental health support</p>	Reevaluate current mental health and psychiatric care available to children in Citrus County
<b>Social/ Economic</b>	Population Growth Exceeding Planned Growth Projections	<p>Housing: Lack of housing and affordable housing</p> <p>Services: Internet and broadband structure is limited; older population is increasing and using limited services and resources</p>	<p>Careers: Skilled workforce moving in, which means hopefully more physicians moving in</p> <p>Economics: Economic base has the potential to increase with higher paying salaries in the county</p>
	Rising Cost of Living	Health: People are purchasing food that is affordable, which may be unhealthy options and can affect health outcomes in the county	Communication: Present data in a bigger platform so everyone sees it; share information with stakeholders who make decisions in the community
	Aging and Retiring Healthcare Workforce	Workforce: Not enough healthcare professionals to make up for the retiring population, especially for specialty and mental health care, lack of pediatric psychiatrists	Volunteerism: Aging population can serve as a future volunteer base that can support a Health in All Policies approach
	Citrus County Becoming a "Bedroom Community"	<p>Infrastructure: Opening of a parkway nearby</p> <p>Employment: Citrus County becoming more service based rather than the main employer; people move to Citrus County</p>	<p>Housing: Reevaluate housing costs and affordable housing opportunities in the county</p> <p>Employment: Evaluate ways to promote employ retention and</p>

## Forces Of Change for Citrus County - TRENDS

*(Prepared by WellFlorida Council – 2023)*

	TRENDS	THREATS POSED	OPPORTUNITIES CREATED
		and end up working in surrounding counties outside of Citrus County.	market Citrus County natural resources to professionals
	More Barriers to Healthcare Access	<p>Lack of pediatric psychiatrists, parents need to find resources in Tampa and Gainesville</p> <p>Healthcare workers: Difficult to qualify a nurse or physician for loan repayment; struggling with recruiting and retaining physicians within the county</p>	Retention: HCA residency program in Citrus, hoping that most of the students will remain in Citrus; rural counties pay for student fees/debt in return for care services; identify funding source

## Forces Of Change for Citrus County - FACTORS

*(Prepared by WellFlorida Council – 2023)*

	FACTORS	THREATS POSED	OPPORTUNITIES CREATED
<b>Social/ Behavioral</b>	Higher Prevalence of Generational Trauma, Lack of Mental Health Support for Youth	Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs): Health as an aging adult can be connected back to ACEs	Address ACEs through better understanding and making the effort to address them; improve health outcomes for future generations
	Grandparents/Older Adults Acting as Parents	<p>Cost: Affordability; financially taxing for those on a fixed income; physically taxing</p> <p>Behavioral: Generational gaps between grandparents and child; grandparents having behavioral issues with the child, getting to the point where grandparents are frustrated because of lack of resources for the child</p> <p>Systems: Grandparents rights are limited by what the parents decide; difficulty navigating health care/court/juvenile justice systems</p>	Build and promote resources for families and children including stable housing
	Belief that Personal Responsibility is Related to Health Issues	Resistance to change by people who live here for many generations	<p>New county board could focus on and address health issues</p> <p>Communication: Reach out to others to make a change and/or broaden health messages</p>
	Communication Gaps	<p>Information Access: Community based agencies are unsure of what each agency is doing; people do not know what each agency does; some information may not be shared between agencies.</p> <p>Generational Gap: Missing some segments of the population because of different communication media</p>	Focus on topics that affect the health of the community; many nonprofits go to the Alliance, can develop improved communication about what services are offered by each non-profit; develop an informational system to ease communication and reduce redundant information; need to find ways to reach multiple generations through different forms of communication

## Forces Of Change for Citrus County - FACTORS

*(Prepared by WellFlorida Council – 2023)*

	FACTORS	THREATS POSED	OPPORTUNITIES CREATED
		preferences and issues with access	
<b>Social/ Economic</b>	Limited Public Transportation	Some segments of the population do not have reliable transportation to conduct routine activities such as getting to work, school, shopping, medical appointments; Medicaid transportation very limited and not feasible for many because of physical barriers and limitations, need for assistance, and length of time it takes for a roundtrip	Services: Expand current system and routes; consider wider use of ride services such as Uber/Lyft; expand community paramedicine program since they can go to the patients  Employment: hire people like veterans, who many already have CDL licenses from previous careers; address high costs for hiring drivers for public and school buses
	County Services Availability	Limits on or loss of basic services for residents, higher costs to residents to maintain services, threats to service quality; affordable or obtainable housing is continuing need	Population Growth: Manage growth and have control over development; study and manage impact of turnpike extension  Economic: Wise use of higher revenues and/or taxes collected for supporting county services  County: Advocate for support from BOCC
	Rural-like Problems in Certain Areas of Citrus County	Lack of transportation and services resulting in social isolation; poorer physical and mental health among some segments of the population, particularly isolated seniors	Employ smart growth strategies; Citrus' natural areas are a draw for people who want to avoid developed/cities in Florida and must be encroachment must be managed
	Limited Affordable Housing	Cost: Rising rents force people out of their homes; no requirements in some housing communities to hold 20 percent affordable housing, resulting many people being priced out of their homes after a year  Stigma/Understanding: Stigma attached to "affordable housing"	County: Start with BOCC to more thoroughly understand the need and impact of addressing housing  Income: Support minimum wage increases to improve affordability

## Forces Of Change for Citrus County - FACTORS

*(Prepared by WellFlorida Council – 2023)*

	FACTORS	THREATS POSED	OPPORTUNITIES CREATED
		label; stakeholders not understanding the importance of why affordable housing is needed	Housing: opportunity to communicate need for affordable housing county commissioners; ensure there are safeguards in place to ensure affordable housing is available long term; rent control opportunities
	Limited Recovery Housing	Homelessness, relapse, continued worsening of poor physical and mental health; challenges and barriers to recovery	Rehabilitate people to promote community success; dedicate resources to this type of housing and services
	Nature Appeal for Physician Recruitment	Investments in recruiting may not pan out; continued shortages in healthcare professionals	Capitalize on Citrus County's natural resources and environment as positives for attracting healthcare professionals and their spouses/families to the area

## Forces Of Change for Citrus County - EVENTS

*(Prepared by WellFlorida Council – 2023)*

	EVENTS	THREATS POSED	OPPORTUNITIES CREATED
<b>Social/ Behavioral</b>	New Mental Health Facility Opening in Citrus County	Sustainability: Need for continuing and increased funding to run facility, shortage of mental health professionals to staff facility	Expanded access to mental health care In-county in an in-patient facility
	Loss of Filter Family Solutions (A Program for At-Risk Teens with Behavioral Issues and Their Parents)	Delayed or no services or care for at-risk teens, declining or poorer mental and physical health outcomes; loss of family and parental support	Collaboration with United Way of Citrus County, connections with former Filter Family Solutions program leaders; consider gap created in new community health assessment and health improvement plan
	New Veteran’s Affairs Clinic Opening	Need for healthcare professionals and staff to support new/expanded services; continued transportation barriers for Veterans to access services	Consider using as another mental healthcare service space in the community while other organizations look for facilities
	Hiring of Two Community Paramedicine Program Employees	Sustainable funding, staffing, appropriate use, protecting from overuse or abuse of services	Expansion of care in the community; improved access for those in rural and isolated parts of the county; keep funding from the CORE program while exploring additional funding sources
<b>Political</b>	BOCC Creates New County Strategic Plan	Must communicate better with residents, hold the county responsible for commitments	New initiative by a new county board to set a vision for the county; county administrator has strengths in strategic planning; new leadership; accountability on new commission
	Public Health Emergency Declaration for Pandemic Ending	Further limits to healthcare service access; residents losing Medicaid eligibility extended during pandemic	Reevaluate current access to healthcare