



LACKAWANNA COUNTY

2025 Community Health Needs Assessment

2025 LVHN Community Health Needs Assessment – Lackawanna County



Look for this icon throughout the report, highlighting Community Conversation and Key Stakeholder Feedback.

Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN) is pleased to present its 2025 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). As part of the Affordable Care Act, starting in 2013, all nonprofit hospitals and health care systems are required to do a CHNA every three years.

A CHNA is an assessment of health needs that reviews published data about the population of a defined service area, in this case the county. Based on the health needs identified in that data, the hospital must validate and prioritize the health needs of the county, using input from those who live and work in the community. Hospitals are then asked to develop an Implementation Plan, which includes activities to address needs that were prioritized in the Health Profile.

The CHNA examines factors that impact the health and wellness of the community. This CHNA report includes data and information about Lackawanna County and defines “community” as all residents living within the county. Within the communities LVHN serves, the CHNA reports place a greater emphasis on individuals who are experiencing health disparities or who are at risk for negative health outcomes as a result of social and environmental factors influencing their health. Improving the health of the most vulnerable members of a community has been shown to improve health outcomes for all in the community.

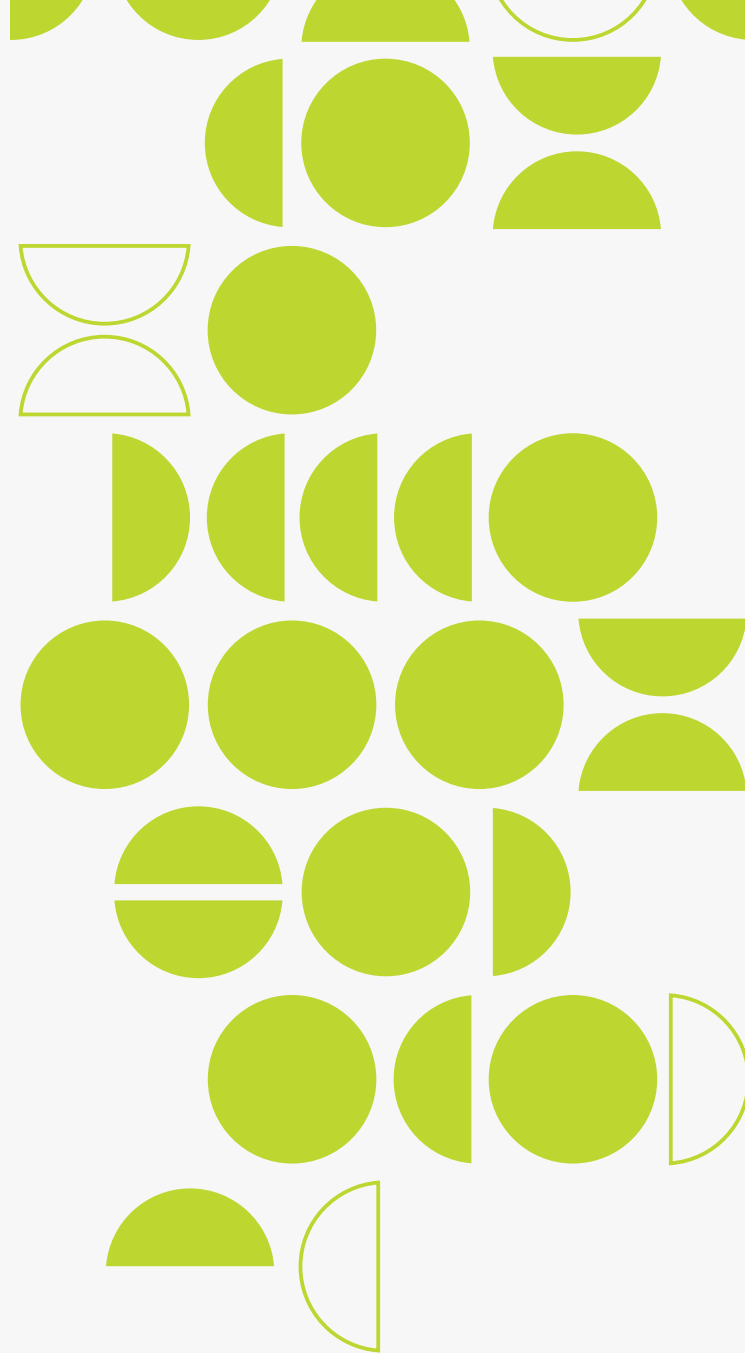
Access to quality health care is only one of the factors that contributes to the health of a population. Other factors such as health behaviors, the physical environment and socioeconomic factors are actually more powerful predictors of health, illness and health care utilization over time. For this reason, the social drivers of health are a focus on this needs assessment report. LVHN has adopted the Well-Being Portfolio as the framework for our community health strategy. This holistic framework incorporates both services that address urgent needs (such as acute care for illness or injury and assistance with meeting basic needs for food and shelter) and long-term investment in assuring that all people have what they need to thrive. Along these lines, the Well-Being Portfolio outlines seven vital conditions

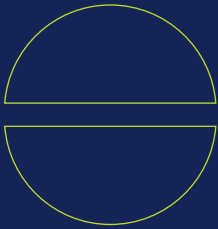
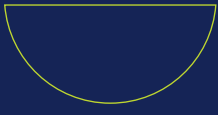
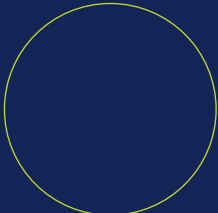
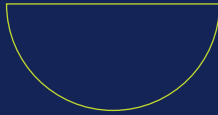
for health and well-being: basic needs for health and safety; lifelong learning; meaningful work and wealth; humane housing; a thriving natural world; reliable transportation; and belonging and civic muscle. As we have assessed the health needs of people in the county, we have been sure to consider the role of health care in addressing both urgent needs and the broader vital conditions that contribute to the health of individuals and families in the region.

In order to assess the health needs of a population, we look at both quantitative (numbers and statistics) as well as qualitative (interviews, community conversation) information. This report includes secondary quantitative data from publicly available state and national sources, such as the Centers for Disease Control and the Census Bureau, and provides information about the social and environmental factors such as employment, education and air quality; individual behaviors like smoking or healthy eating; and the quality and availability of health care in the area. This data has all been compiled into a comprehensive data dashboard that includes a lot of in-depth information about each county in the region.

This data is used to identify the top health and social needs in the county and is then validated through community meetings and interviews with residents, where they are asked to select the three areas they feel are of greatest concern currently. They are also asked to add any health needs they see but that may not be easily identified in county-level, publicly available data. There are callout boxes incorporated throughout the report that highlight findings from the community meetings and interviews.

When taken together, this needs assessment serves as an important overview of the current state of health in our region and identifies potential areas of concern that LVHN can work to address in partnership with other sectors and organizations. This information will inform the development of the implementation plan that will guide LVHN's work over the next three years. The 2025 Community Health Implementation Plan will be shared soon after the CHNA report is released

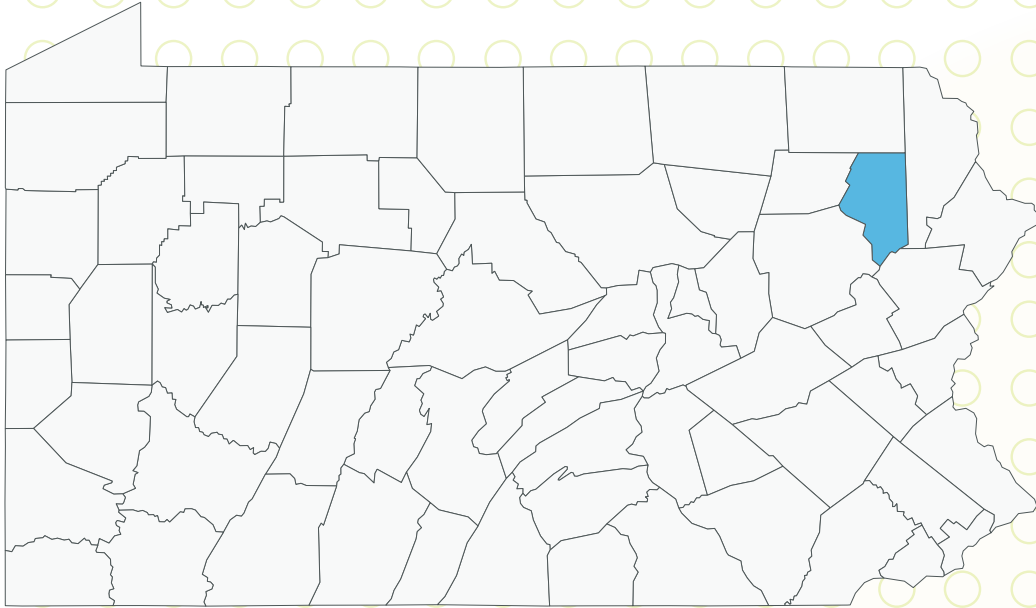




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Lackawanna County



***SparkMap through CARES at the University of Missouri (sparkmap.org/).*

Qualitative Data Collection Summary

As a part of our [Community Health Needs Assessment process](#), key stakeholder interviews and community conversations were conducted throughout Lackawanna County to ensure the health system obtained input from a variety of populations, including public health experts and residents of the county. Below are the locations of the community conversations as well as the roles of those involved in the key stakeholder interviews. See our CHNA Overview document for additional details.

Lackawanna County	
Community Meetings	Key Stakeholders
Amos Towers, Scranton (older adults)	Executive Director, Center for Health and Human Services Research and Action Board
Carbondale YMCA	CEO, The Clinics at Scranton Primary Healthcare Center Senior Program Officer, Moses Taylor Foundation
3 virtual meetings of general community members	President and CEO, United Way of Lackawanna, Wayne, and Pike President and CEO, The Wright Center
Demographic summary: N=31. Gender = 74% Female, 26% Male. Race = 81% White, 9% Black/African American. Ethnicity = 94% non-Hispanic. Age range = 27 to 74. Average age = 51.	

Note: Demographic summaries include all available information and do not reflect all individuals spoken with.

OVERVIEW OF THE COUNTY

Lackawanna County is a total area of 465 square miles in Pennsylvania. Nearly 20% of the county is rural.

Urban and Rural Population					
	Total Population	Urban Population	Urban Population %	Rural Population	Rural Population %
Lackawanna County	215,896	178,000	82.5%	37,896	17.6%
Pennsylvania	13,002,700	9,941,070	76.5%	3,061,630	23.6%
United States	331,449,281	265,149,027	80.0%	66,300,254	20.0%

COMMUNITY HEALTH RANKINGS

The **County Health Rankings** provide a health snapshot of how counties fare relative to other counties in the state. They also allow you to see how counties in a state fare on a national continuum of health. As can be seen in the graphic below, Lackawanna County is faring about the same as the average county in Pennsylvania in terms of health outcomes, i.e., quality of life and length of life (Figure 1), and health factors, e.g., social and economic factors, health behaviors (Figure 2).

Lackawanna County Health Outcomes 2024

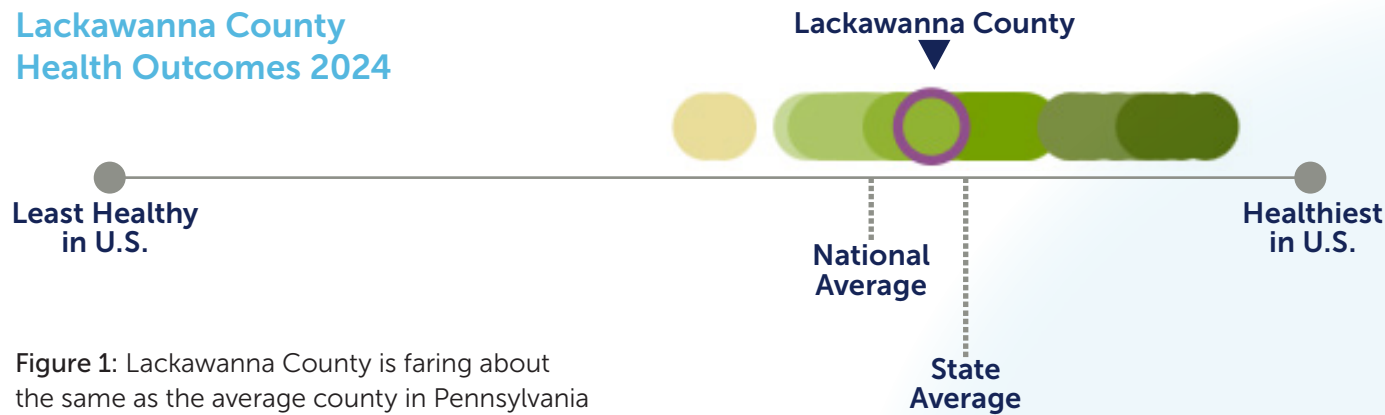


Figure 1: Lackawanna County is faring about the same as the average county in Pennsylvania Health Outcomes, and slightly better than the average county in the nation.

Lackawanna County Health Factors 2024

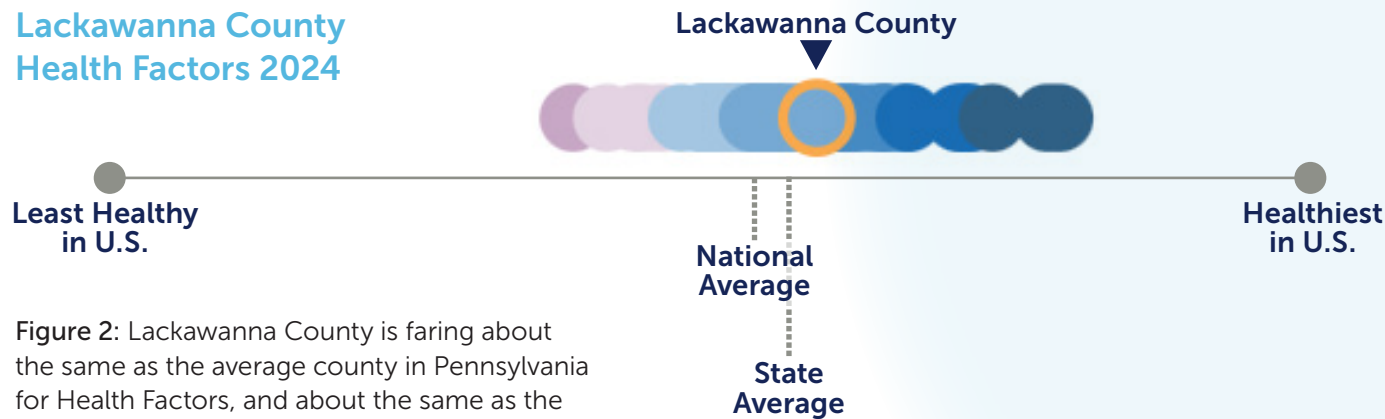
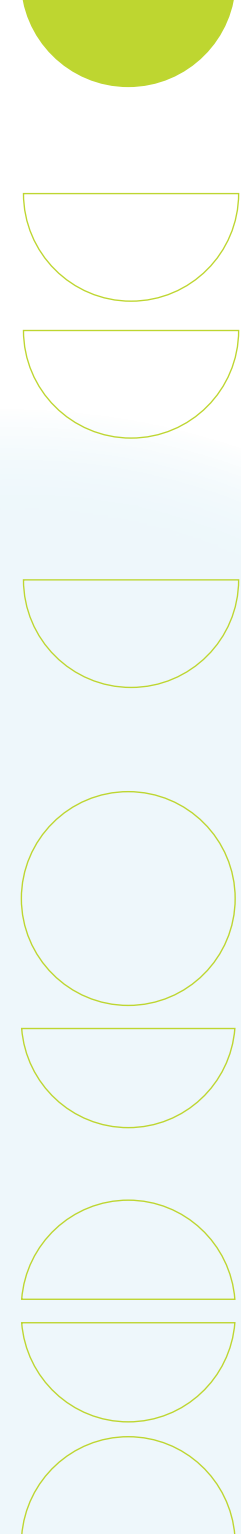


Figure 2: Lackawanna County is faring about the same as the average county in Pennsylvania for Health Factors, and about the same as the average county in the nation.



LVHN SERVICES IN THE COUNTY

Lehigh Valley Hospital–Dickson City, which opened in 2022, is a comprehensive health care facility offering a wide range of medical services to the Lackawanna County community. The hospital features a 19-bay emergency department providing 24/7 care, seven operating rooms, and 40 private inpatient rooms, including seven ICU beds. Surgical and procedural programs include spine, joint replacement, general orthopedic surgery, hand surgery, general surgery, ENT, urology, bariatric surgery and GI surgery. Advanced imaging services such as CT scans, MRIs, X-rays, ultrasounds and fluoroscopy are available on-site. The hospital also offers laboratory services, pharmacy services, and a palliative medicine inpatient consult service. Additionally, the facility provides amenities like room service-style meals, free Wi-Fi and a meditation room for patient comfort. Lehigh Valley Hospital–Dickson City is committed to delivering high-quality care with a patient-centered approach.

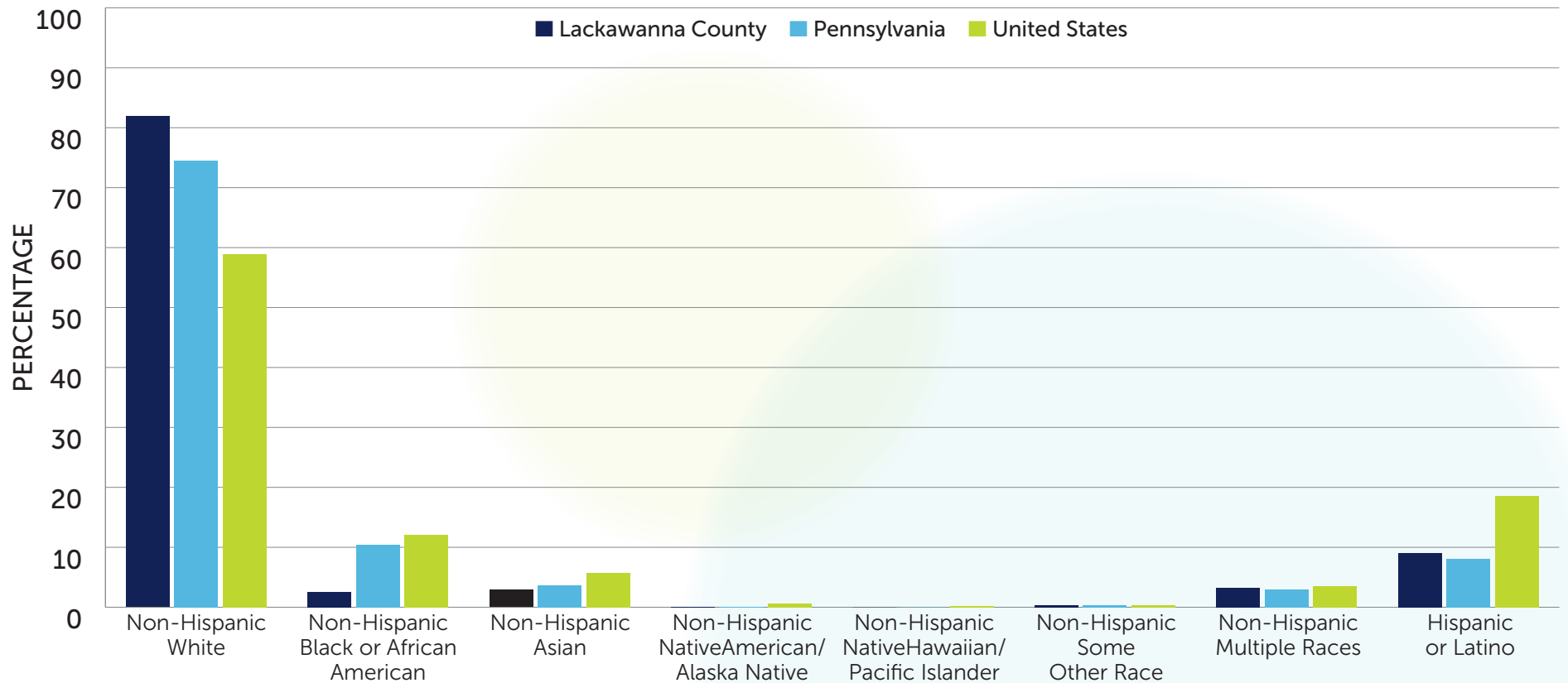


LVH–Dickson City

DEMOGRAPHICS

215,672 people live in Lackawanna County. The population increased by 0.7% (1,459) people between the 2010 and 2020 Census. In Lackawanna County, 82% of the residents are white, 9% are Hispanic and 3% are Black.

TOTAL POPULATION BY COMBINED RACE AND ETHNICITY, PERCENT



16%

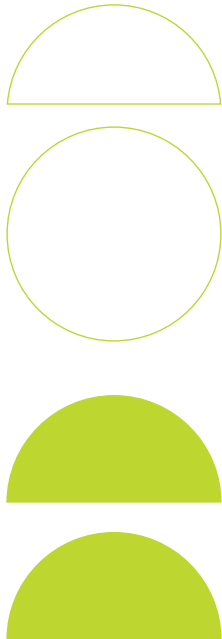
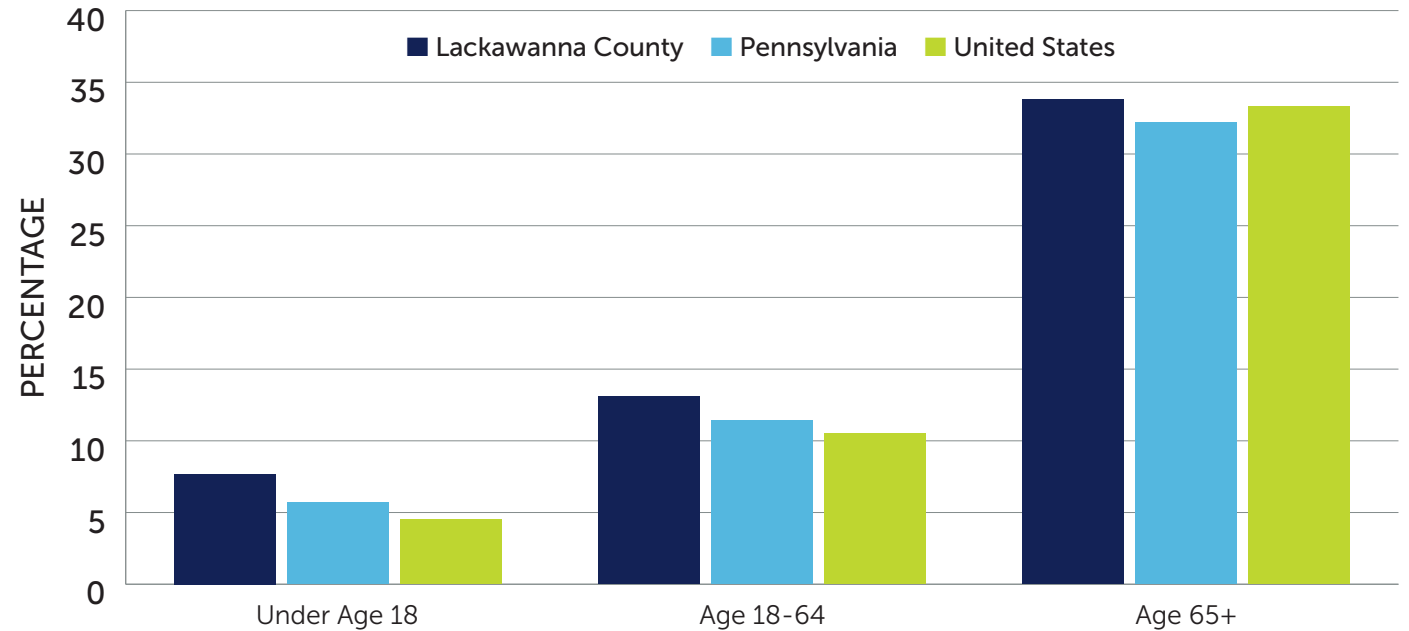
of the population in Lackawanna County have a disability

About 20% of the total population are under age 18, and 20% are age 65 or older.

	Under 18		18-64		65+	
Lackawanna	44,078	20%	128,433	60%	43,161	20%
Pennsylvania	2,664,562	21%	7,890,241	61%	2,434,405	19%
United States	73,213,705	22%	203,146,240	61%	54,737,648	17%

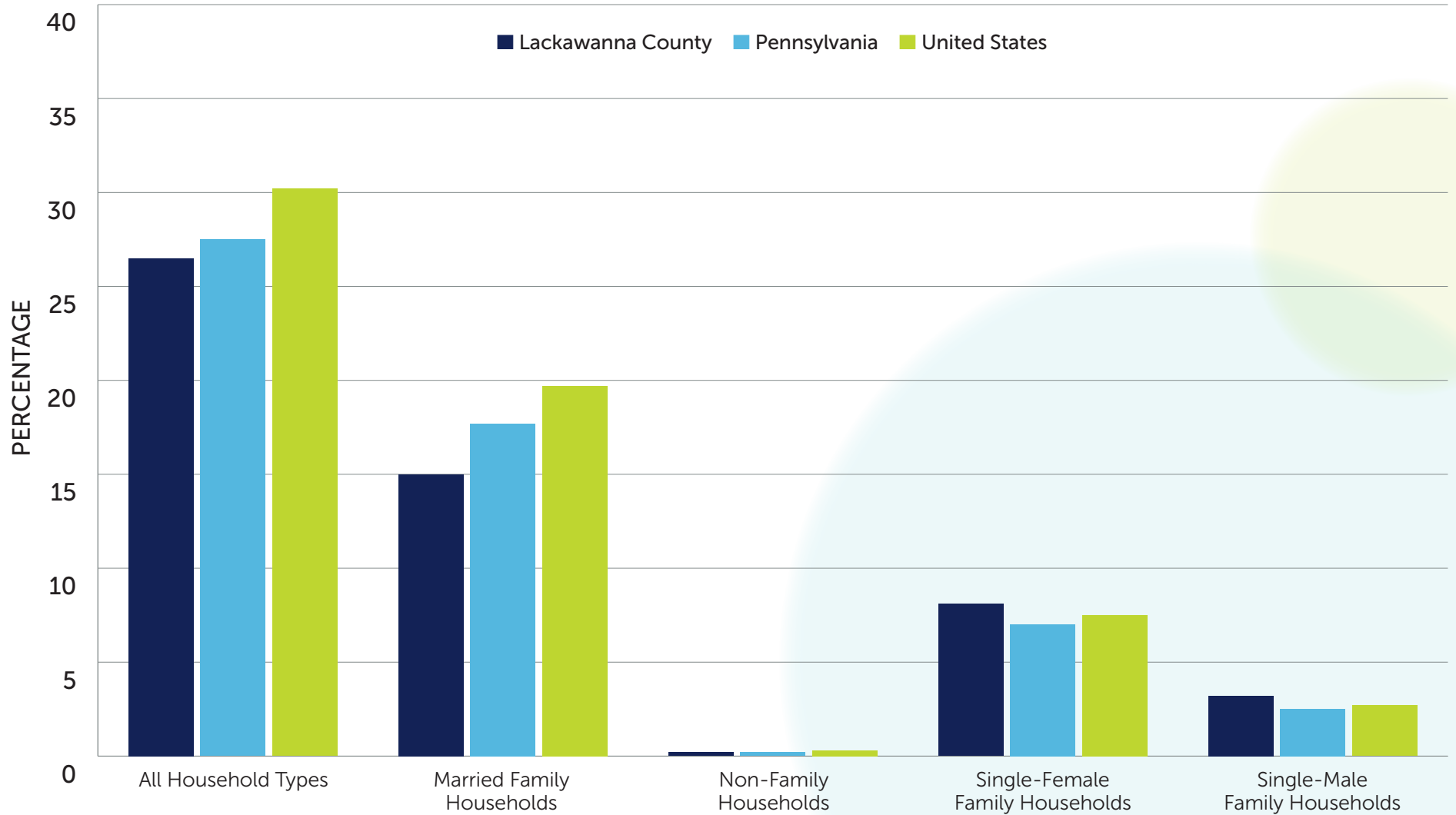
In Lackawanna County, 16% of the population have a disability, which is higher than the state percentage of 14%. 7% of the population in Lackawanna County are veterans, and they are primarily male and age 65 and older.

POPULATION WITH ANY DISABILITY BY AGE GROUP



There are a total of 87,896 households in Lackawanna County. 28% of children in Lackawanna County live in single parent households.

HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN BY COMPOSITION



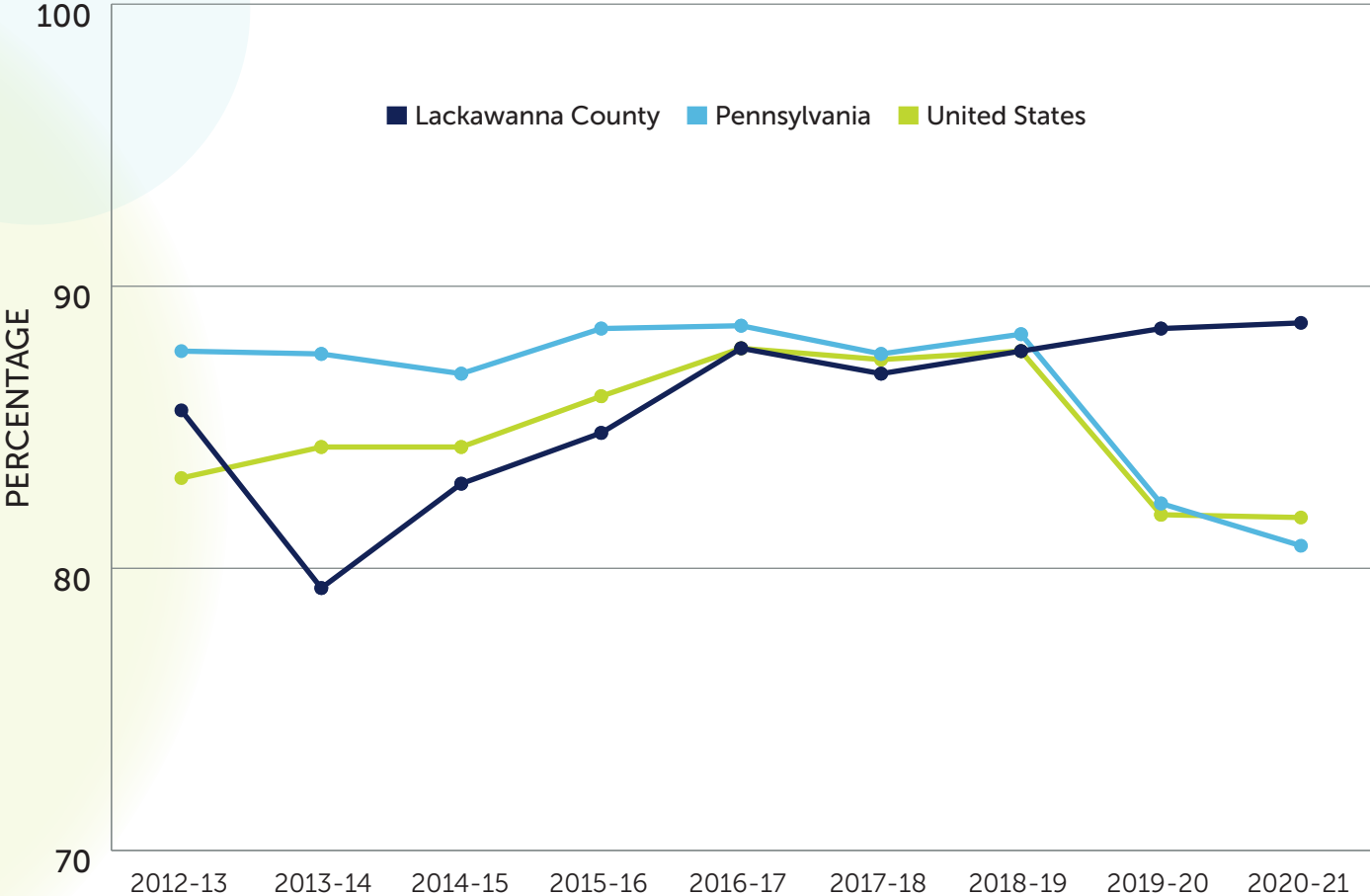
SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS

ECONOMIC STRESS

The median household income (MHI) in Lackawanna County is \$63,739, which is less than the state MHI of \$73,170. In Lackawanna County, 18% of children are living in poverty, which is slightly above the state average of 16%. 41% of Hispanic children are living in poverty, compared to 13% of non-Hispanic children. 13% of the total population in Lackawanna County are living in poverty.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

The high-school graduation rate in Lackawanna County is 89%. There are differences in graduation rates among race and ethnicity groups. The graduation rate is 91% of adolescents who are white but decreases to 81% among both Black and Hispanic adolescents.





Food security was raised as a major concern expressed by those who participated in our community conversations and interviews. It is difficult to afford healthy food on a fixed income, leading some residents to have to choose between food and medication. Additionally, access to food may be difficult for those who lack transportation. Lack of transportation also impacts the ability to seek medical treatment. Generational poverty, language barriers and housing insecurity add to the disadvantages. In the wider context, inflation and a decrease of pandemic-era funding and programs also negatively impact residents of Lackawanna County.

30% of the population in Lackawanna County have a bachelor’s degree or higher, which is just below the state percentage (33%).

Overall Education Attainment

	Associate’s Degree	Bachelor’s Degree	Graduate or Professional Degree	High School Only	No High School Diploma	Some College
Lackawanna County	10.1%	18.2%	11.7%	35.5%	8.4%	16.0%
Pennsylvania	8.8%	20.2%	13.6%	33.5%	8.3%	15.6%
United States	8.7%	20.9%	13.4%	26.4%	10.9%	19.7%

17%

of the population receive SNAP benefits.



UTILIZATION OF PUBLIC BENEFITS

17% percent of the population receive SNAP benefits (i.e., food stamps), which is greater than the state percentage (14%).

PRESCHOOL ENROLLMENT

46% of the population age 3-4 are enrolled in preschool.

Preschool Enrollment (Age 3-4)			
	Population Age 3-4	Population Age 3-4 Enrolled in School	Population Age 3-4 Enrolled in School %
Lackawanna County	4,357	1,994	45.8%
Pennsylvania	287,622	127,154	44.2%
United States	7,958,841	3,631,021	45.6%



POTENTIAL BARRIERS TO HEALTH DUE TO HOUSING INSTABILITY

27% percent of the population in Lackawanna County live in cost-burdened households, meaning they are spending more than 30% of their household income on housing. Furthermore, those who are renting are more likely to be cost-burdened than those who are owners.



Several concerns were raised related to housing in the community conversations and interviews in Lackawanna County. The safety and appropriateness of available housing are questionable, with aging housing stock and rental properties experiencing code violations and the presence of lead and pests. Housing costs have increased, and people are being priced out, even with vouchers. Seniors on fixed incomes are especially vulnerable to housing barriers.

Cost-Burdened Households						
	Households			Renter-Occupied Households		
	Total	Cost-Burdened	Cost-Burdened%	Total	Cost-Burdened	Cost-Burdened%
Lackawanna County	87,896	23,765	27.0%	30,420	12,571	41.3%
Pennsylvania	5,193,727	1,405,567	27.1%	1,600,237	701,129	43.8%
United States	125,736,353	38,363,931	30.5%	44,238,593	20,547,938	46.5%





Community members expressed significant concern about seniors in the community. The population of older adults in the county is growing, and they face many barriers to having their basic needs for health and safety met, particularly access to health care. Among these barriers are lack of transportation, lack of medical providers, long wait times for appointments, limited knowledge regarding how to leverage Medicare coverage, and lack of capacity in nursing homes. People are also concerned about the mental health of older adults, some of whom are also veterans. In terms of mental health, community members noted that social isolation and stigma are barriers to seniors' mental health.

HEALTH BEHAVIORS

NEGATIVE HEALTH OUTCOMES FOR MOMS AND BABIES

The teen birth rate in Lackawanna County is 14 per 1,000 females age 15-19 compared to a state rate of 13 per 1,000. Differences in this rate can be seen when it is broken down by race and ethnicity. The teen birth rate is 10 per 1,000 among white teens, 27 per 1,000 for teens who are Black, and 31 per 1,000 for teens who are Hispanic. The percentage of infants born at a low birth weight is 8.5% for Lackawanna County and also varies by race and ethnicity. 8% of white and Hispanic infants are born at low birth weight, and 13% of Black infants are born with low birth weight.

Teen Birth Rate (Females Age 15-19)		
	Population	Teen Births, Rate per 1,000
Lackawanna County	46,686	14.2
Pennsylvania	2,796,351	13.2
United States	76,648,322	16.6

HEALTH-RELATED ISSUES IN THE OLDER POPULATION IN THE COUNTY (20% OF THE POPULATION).

In Lackawanna County, 34% of those over age 65 have a disability. Among the 32,869 Medicare beneficiaries in Lackawanna County, 26% have diabetes, 28% have heart disease, and 60% have high blood pressure.

EXCESSIVE DRINKING

In Lackawanna County, 17% of adults self-report excessive drinking in the last 30 days.

PHYSICAL INACTIVITY

22% of adults self-reported no active leisure time in Lackawanna County.

SMOKING

17% of adults in Lackawanna County are current or previous long-term smokers.

HEALTH OUTCOMES

CANCER INCIDENCE

Within Lackawanna County, there is a cancer incidence rate of 495 for every 100,000 people in the population, which is more than the state rate of 467 per 100,000.



Within the health care system, community conversations and interviews found that long wait times to get appointments, a lack of specialists and language barriers are all contributors to poor health outcomes in Lackawanna County. Health behaviors of residents, such as smoking or vaping, alcohol use and poor food choices, also contribute to poor health outcomes in the county.

Incidence Rates of Top Five Most Commonly Diagnosed Cancers			
	Type of Cancer	New Cases (Annual Average)	Incidence Rate (Per 100,000 Population)
Lackawanna County	Breast	201	136
	Lung	212	67.5
	Prostate	128	86.7
	Colon and Rectum	125	42.3
	Cervical	11	10.9
Pennsylvania	Breast	11,241	130.6
	Lung	10,742	59.5
	Prostate	9,412	108.9
	Colon and Rectum	6,463	38.2
	Cervical	496	7.2
United States	Breast	249,750	127
	Lung	215,307	54
	Prostate	212,734	110.5
	Colon and Rectum	138,021	36.5
	Cervical	12,553	7.5



Interviewees and community conversation participants raised obesity as a concern in Lackawanna County. School nurses do not have time to address general health because of urgent needs. There are no longer initiatives focused on this in the county. Doctors could do more to educate patients about healthy food choices. Some chronic conditions, like hypertension, are linked to obesity and more likely to impact older residents.

DIABETES

Within Lackawanna County, 9% of adults age 20 and older have diabetes.

SUICIDES

Within Lackawanna County, there are a total of 184 deaths due to suicide between 2018 and 2022. This represents an age-adjusted death rate of 17 per every 100,000 total population compared to a state rate of 15. More men die from suicide (27 per 100,000) than females (8 per 100,000).

Suicide Mortality			
	Total Population 2018-2022 Average	Five Year Deaths 2018-2022 Total	Crude Death Rate (Per 100,000 Population)
Lackawanna County	212,147	184	17.4
Pennsylvania	12,865,673	9,444	14.7
United States	330,014,476	239,493	14.5

HEALTH OUTCOMES FOR MEN

Men have higher mortality rates than females due to heart disease (179 per 100,000 vs. 131 per 100,000), cancer (262 per 100,000 vs. 235 per 100,000), unintentional injuries (109 per 100,000 vs. 53 per 100,000), and motor vehicles deaths (16 per 100,000 vs. 5 per 100,000) in Lackawanna County.

OBESITY

In Lackawanna County, 27% of the adult population are obese.

	Male	Male, %	Female	Female, %
Lackawanna County	21,571	26.8%	22,391	26.4%
Pennsylvania	1,462,280	29.8%	1,520,780	30.1%
United States	34,208,595	29.8%	35,960,164	30.5%

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Lehigh Valley Health Network's 2025 CHNA for Lackawanna County used both quantitative data (from sources like the CDC and Census) and qualitative data from community meetings and stakeholder interviews to identify and prioritize health concerns. Community members helped validate the findings and provided context on challenges not captured in statistical data, with an emphasis on vulnerable and underserved populations.

Key concerns in Lackawanna County include high poverty rates, particularly among Hispanic children (41% in poverty compared to 13% of non-Hispanic children), as well as racial disparities in educational attainment, birth outcomes and chronic disease. Residents highlighted the difficulty of accessing quality, affordable housing, with 27% of households classified as cost burdened. Mental and physical health issues are prominent across all age groups: 26% of Medicare recipients have diabetes, 28% have heart disease, and 60% have high blood pressure. Community members also noted a high rate of excessive drinking, physical inactivity and smoking. Cancer incidence and lung disease mortality are above state averages, and suicide rates—especially among men—remain concerning. Early childhood education access is limited, with only 46% of 3- and 4-year-olds enrolled in preschool. The county's teen birth rate and percentage of low-birth weight infants are significantly higher among Black and Hispanic populations. The findings emphasize the need for improved housing, health care access, behavioral health services and culturally competent care.

Overall, the report underscores the urgency of improving social drivers of health, particularly among those with limited resources, including the older population and those with disabilities. The most pressing health concerns of the county highlight both more immediate, urgent needs (including negative health conditions), as well as the need for longer-term investments in the vital conditions. Such long-term investments would provide greater opportunity for health for more people in the county. LVHN and Jefferson commit to continue to address the unique health needs of each community they serve and will work with community partners to address the health needs highlighted here through the Community Health Implementation Plan.





part of  Jefferson Health