

FirstHealth Moore Regional Hospital
FirstHealth Moore Regional Hospital – Richmond Campus
FirstHealth Moore Regional Hospital – Hoke Campus
FirstHealth Montgomery Memorial Hospital
Implementation Plan
For 2023 Community Health Needs Assessment

FirstHealth of the Carolinas and Service Region

FirstHealth of the Carolinas is a regional non-profit health care system that serves south, central North Carolina. The system has one hospital, FirstHealth Moore Regional Hospital, with three locations to include the Moore Regional campus, the Hoke campus, and the Richmond campus. FirstHealth also has a Critical Access Hospital (CAH), Montgomery Memorial Hospitals. These hospitals serve a five-county primary region that corresponds with the 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment, which includes Hoke, Lee, Montgomery, Moore, and Richmond counties.

Hospital Facility Descriptions

FirstHealth Moore Regional Hospital is a 402-bed, acute-care, non-profit hospital and will serve as a hub/end-user site and a hub-site. This hospital is the largest FirstHealth facility and often accepts transfers for specialty and critical care needs from the other hospitals. This facility includes an emergency department, ICU units, maternity services, medical units, and surgical services. Additionally, the FirstHealth Reid Heart Center and the newly constructed FirstHealth Outpatient Cancer Center are located on the campus grounds for this facility. This facility is in Moore County, N.C. in the Village of Pinehurst. It serves as a regional facility.

FirstHealth Moore Regional Hospital – Richmond Campus is a 99-bed community hospital that will serve as a hub/end-user and hub site. This hospital has an emergency department, ICU units, medical units, and surgical services. This hospital is in a rural, underserved county, Richmond County, N.C. The hospital is in the City of Rockingham and serves a population of 42,946 residents.

FirstHealth Montgomery Memorial Hospital is a Critical Access Hospital (CAH) which is in Montgomery County, N.C. in the Town of Troy. The average daily census ranges from six to 10 patients. The hospital includes outpatient surgery, cardiac rehabilitation, pulmonary rehabilitation, physical therapy, and emergency department. The medical unit does include swing-beds. This facility serves 25,751 residents.

Summary of Services for Past Three-Year Period

FirstHealth spent the past three years focused on a full-scale response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which prohibited moving some community-based initiatives forward. However, as a rural health care system, FirstHealth responded and took an active role in not only the treatment of patients but also mass vaccination clinics as well as testing sites.

In response to COVID-19, all hospitals focused on capacity challenges and providing the best care for COVID-19 patients. In response to nursing home breakouts, FirstHealth created a telemedicine program focused on FirstHealth providers using telehealth technology to provide care for nursing home patients, which assisted with decreasing the spread and handling capacity challenges. FirstHealth also developed the COVID-at-home telemedicine project which included providing patient's who did not require hospitalization but were at higher-risk for complications with "home-care" kits that included a pulse oximeter, thermometer, and other comfort items. Additionally, there was an agreement with a local pharmacy to deliver oxygen to homes for patient's who required oxygen and FirstHealth providers supported the patient via telehealth technology. COVID-19 was the catalyst for growing and creating a dedicated Telemedicine Department in FirstHealth, which continues to grow and expand today, and is part of future growth plans.

FirstHealth was the sole health care system and took the lead in organizing mass vaccination clinics for the region. When vaccine was released, FirstHealth worked with the state for county-level allocations with priority populations served first. As a result, FirstHealth hosted 218 vaccine clinics with over 235 employees involved in the effort. FirstHealth administered 74,561 vaccines in the mass vaccination clinics. Additionally, FirstHealth engaged in mass vaccination booster clinics in each county in late 2021. Currently, the primary care clinics continue to sustain vaccination efforts.

After the vaccine clinics, FirstHealth experienced the Omicron variant, which resulted in both a shortage of testing sites and capacity response in the system due to employees being out. FirstHealth took an "all hands-on deck" response and stood up drive-thru testing sites in Hoke and Moore counties. These resulted in testing 24,000 individuals. Additionally, FirstHealth called on all employees to divert from their normal jobs to assist with roles that included environmental services duties, concierge roles in the emergency departments due to high volumes, and nursing unit assistance. This effort was sustained for a six-month period until admission and spread rates were contained.

During this challenging, unprecedented period, FirstHealth also focused on implementing the following major milestones and initiatives:

- Building a Comprehensive Cancer Center with a targeted opening in April 2023
 - Construction began and capital campaign was conducted
- Beginning the journey to Zero Harm and becoming a High Reliable Organization (HRO)
 - All leaders and all FirstHealth employees attended HRO training to learn key high reliability skills to improve communication
 - Daily systemwide huddle for safety events was created
- Appointing the first Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Officer to begin an intentional diversity, equity, and inclusion journey, which included
 - Formed an internal Inclusion Council
 - Conducted an employee survey to inform future efforts
 - Approved a formal DEI plan that was informed by the employees
 - Hosted unconscious bias training for FirstHealth leaders
- FirstHealth increased access to services through telemedicine efforts as well as adding primary care and convenient care clinic locations and expanded telemedicine effort (as previously mentioned)
 - Implemented a joint-venture metabolic clinic focused on weight-loss services
 - Implemented tele-stroke program in all emergency departments
 - Implemented a tele-psychiatry program
 - Implemented a virtual COVID-at-home clinic
- Created the Care Suite to identify patient's who are struggling with social determinants of health barriers to managing their chronic condition and create a Whole Person Care strategy
 - Implemented the About Me card to screen for social determinants of health
 - Created an algorithm to identify high-risk patients for the Care Suite to contact
 - Hired social care specialists to engage patients with resolving social barriers and improving links to services, programs, and care
 - Decreased readmission rates and improved patient outcomes with 153 avoided readmissions from ambulatory and inpatient settings

Brief Summary of Community Health Needs Assessment Results

The Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) results for chronic disease trends included some positive as well as areas of opportunity. With regards to diabetes mortality, FirstHealth saw increases the mortality rates in Montgomery and Lee counties (which aligned with the state) and a decrease in Richmond County. Tobacco use rates remain high in the region compared to state averages. Cancer incidence rates were higher than state rates for prostate cancer and lung cancer (which corresponds with high tobacco usage rates). However, breast cancer was lower than the state average across the region. With regards to cardiovascular diseases, FirstHealth has higher rates of mortality than the state in Hoke, Montgomery, and

Richmond counties; with Richmond County being the highest at 232.2 versus 156.1 for the state. The stroke rates remained about the same as in the past, however, Richmond County has the highest stroke mortality rate. There was one chronic condition that the community clearly responded has great needs in this assessment, which is behavioral health services needs. Furthermore, with regards to health disparities, it was clear there are disparities in low-income, low-education, and minority individuals. Please reference the formal CHNA report on the hospital webpages for the actual data (www.firsthealth.org).

FirstHealth reviewed the CHNA data with the FirstHealth Board of Directors as well as with key FirstHealth leaders. FirstHealth used the CHNA results to inform future growth and service opportunity strategies that are reflected in the implementation plan. Additionally, FirstHealth shared the community health needs assessment data with community focused collaborative groups referred to as the First-In-Health Task Forces, which includes representation from public health, school systems, school nursing, school-based health centers, town and county government, social services, food bank, housing authority, community colleges, individuals at-large, and other key stakeholders. These groups actively engaged in an open feedback process to identify priority health areas for focusing population health program initiatives and leveraging needed resources to pilot innovative solutions to improving community health.

Based on the CHNA results and through this multifaceted approach of reviewing the CHNA data, the secondary data, and identifying health disparities, FirstHealth Moore Regional Hospital, FirstHealth Moore Regional Hospital – Hoke Campus, FirstHealth Moore Regional – Richmond Campus, and FirstHealth Montgomery Memorial Hospital have identified health focus areas for implementation plans. These focus areas include:

- Continuing the journey to become an HRO and achieve Zero Harm
- Becoming the place to work in health care to include a continued focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI)
- Expanding specialty care services
- Using technology to improve patient outcomes and expand services to include artificial intelligence as well as telemedicine program expansion
- Implementing population health (community-focused) programs to address prevention of chronic conditions such as heart disease and diabetes
- Integrating Whole Person Care transformation throughout the system and region

FirstHealth's vision is Working Together, First-In-Quality, First-in-Health with a core purpose "To Care for People." As such, the below initiatives and interventions will help FirstHealth achieve improved health outcomes both inside and outside the walls of the hospitals.

Continue the journey to become an HRO and achieve Zero Harm

FirstHealth is focused on being first in quality outcomes. The system is focused on creating a learning culture that integrates Universal Principles to increase communication and reduce medical errors. FirstHealth has set the bold goal of achieving Zero Harm. As such, FirstHealth will:

- Conduct daily systemwide safety huddles that contribute to creating a culture of learning and focus on achieving zero harm.
- Focus on practicing, promoting, and engaging all employees in HRO universal skills that results in increased communication and transparency to prevent errors.
- Encourage open reporting for all safety events or concerns.
- Reduce the serious safety event rate to Zero Harm by 2025.

Become the best place to work in health care with a continued focus on DEI

There is a national shortage of health care professionals. FirstHealth is seeking to become the best place to work in the health care in the nation. FirstHealth is seeking to address staffing shortages and build pipeline capacity by creating an inclusive environment and working to employ innovative means for staffing shortages. As such, FirstHealth will:

- Engage community partners such as the school systems and community colleges to implement evidence-based strategies for exposing youth to health care career opportunities and developing a diverse, robust pipeline.
- Commit resources to developing programs that remove barriers for diverse youth to select health care careers such as loan repayment programs.
- Integrate artificial intelligence models into care team approaches to improve patient outcomes, employee satisfaction and system capacity.
- Train all FirstHealth employees (approximately 5,000 individuals) in unconscious bias training and integrate training for new employees.
- Implement the approved systemwide DEI plan to create an inclusive culture
- Create an employee wellness program, Wellness First, that offers dietician counseling, health coaching, and medical services to improve health outcomes and create a healthier workforce, improve morale, and ultimately improve employee retention.
- Create an employee hardship program to help and support employees in personal crisis situations.

Expanding specialty care services

Currently the majority of specialty care services are in Moore County near the larger hospital facility. However, with the high rates of chronic disease and individuals struggling to access specialty care services due to transportation barriers. FirstHealth is seeking to engage in specialty care expansion over the next three-year period. Areas for expansion include:

- Constructing a new Women’s and Children’s tower on the FirstHealth Moore Regional Hospital campus.
- Creating access to cardiac care services beyond the FirstHealth primary region to Scotland and Cumberland counties.
- Opening additional behavioral health beds with a goal of reaching 24 dedicated behavioral health beds.
- Expanding access to outpatient neurology for the region.
- Expanding primary care practices throughout the region.
- Completing the “Re-Imagining FirstHealth Montgomery Memorial Hospital” project with community involvement to determine the future redesign of the facility as well as services for this Critical Access Hospital facility, which will result in either existing building modifications or a new facility.
- Expanding the Metabolic Center, a joint venture, to continue to address chronic disease outcomes related to obesity.
- Develop a robust lung cancer screening program to include a mobile screening unit for community and worksite screenings.

Using technology to improve patient outcomes and expand services to include artificial intelligence as well as telemedicine program expansion

COVID-19 provided the catalyst for FirstHealth to expand telemedicine efforts. The implementation of telemedicine results in increased access to primary, specialty and behavioral health care, improves patient outcomes, addresses transportation barriers for patients, and improves efficiencies for medical providers. As such, FirstHealth is committed to expanding telemedicine to address community service needs. FirstHealth will:

- Leverage resources to purchase additional telemedicine carts and replace end-of-life telemedicine carts to create cart capacity to create robust tele-ICU programs and tele-Infectious Disease program in each hospital facility.
- Provide Wi-Fi/cellular iPads to patients who lack connectivity and/or smart device to provide an opportunity for patients to engage in a virtual Congestive Heart Failure Clinic to ensure daily checks and medication adjustments are timely, and virtual Care Suite clinic to address patient social and economic barriers to managing their chronic health condition.
- Implement an Observation at Home program that involves both telemedicine provider visits via EPIC video visits and a paramedic in-person visit in the patient’s home environment to improve patient outcomes with a focus on flu, pneumonia, and congestive heart failure.
- Work with community partners to secure locations for bringing telemedicine technology to the community, such as placing self-contained telemedicine kiosks in locally owned

pharmacies and community libraries with a focus on reaching rural, marginalized communities and increasing access to both virtual primary and behavioral health services.

- Integrate telepsychiatry in all FirstHealth primary care clinics and school-based health centers to improve access to behavioral health care.
- Offer patients who are experiencing anxiety, depression, grieving, and/or lacking coping and resiliency skills the opportunity to engage in an asynchronous behavioral health application that is supported by certified behavioral health coaches by providing one-year licenses to underserved, uninsured patients to improve behavioral health outcomes.
- Integrate artificial intelligence that focuses on engaging patients chronic care follow-up and management to prevent hospital admissions and disease complications.
- Address the nursing shortage through the intentional and methodical integration of virtual-nursing technology that will include patient and family member feedback loops to ensure quality of care during program expansion.

Implementing population health (community-focused) programs to address prevention of chronic conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, and behavioral health

FirstHealth understands the importance of engaging community individuals outside of the hospital walls. FirstHealth has a division dedicated to offering community preventive health programs that teach individuals how to adopt healthy lifestyle habits that can prevent the onset of chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, and cancer. FirstHealth will implement the following programs to encourage healthy eating and active lifestyles:

- Continue to coordinate the North Carolina Minority Diabetes Prevention Program (MDPP) in partnership with Local Health Departments in the region. The program includes screening of 250 individuals for blood glucose levels, completing at least five Prevent T2 classes and enrolling 60 participants in the program annually. This program is funded through the NC Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities.
- Implement the Million Heart's Initiative program in Richmond and Montgomery counties. This initiative prioritizes reducing the effects of heart disease by aiming to contributing to preventing one million heart attacks and strokes nationwide over a five-year period. As part of this work, FirstHealth is establishing blood pressure monitoring stations in community settings and training lay health advisors to encourage hypertension management. Additionally, FirstHealth is seeking to increase referrals to and remove barriers to participation in cardiac rehabilitation and ensuring individuals have access to tobacco cessation counseling and resources.
- Create a Fruit and Veggie Prescription Program offered that reaches patients who are food insecure and/or are not managing their chronic conditions by providing education

and improving access to healthy foods through the distribution of a food box each week of the four-week program. FirstHealth aims to enroll at least 200 individuals per year.

- Integrate health coaching as a multidisciplinary approach to care to offering one-on-one counseling and coaching to improve patient health outcomes with a focus on weight management, blood pressure control, diabetes prevention, and cholesterol improvement. FirstHealth conduct at least 350 participant coaching encounters per year.
- Continue to offer FirstQuit (tobacco cessation program) that offers one-on-one tobacco cessation counseling by certified Tobacco Treatment Specialists and provide up to six-weeks of nicotine replacement therapy for participants. FirstHealth will enroll 250 individuals in the outpatient program each year utilizing a variety of delivery methods such as telehealth technology, telephone, and face-to-face sessions.
- Engage marginalized communities in healthy lifestyle programs and health screening events by offering Healthier You, Know It Control It, and community education sessions in micro community settings in partnership with community leaders and stake holders. FirstHealth aims to offer at least 20 community programs per year.
- Continue to serve as the backbone organization for the Sandhills Opioid Response Consortium.
- Coordinate the peer support specialist program for the region to ensure individuals with opioid and substance use disorder are linked to harm reduction, treatment, and recovery resources.
- Increase community awareness through stigma training and community education sessions.
- Ensure opioid settlement funds help to sustain current efforts and assist with address gaps in programs and services for prevention, treatment, recovery, and harm reduction resources.

Integrating Whole Person Care transformation throughout the system and region

FirstHealth understands achieving optimal health requires more than a visit to the doctor's office. Years of research have shown factors called "social determinants of health" (or "social influencers"), which include social, economic, and physical environment circumstances, and individual behavior and genetics account for 70% to 80% of an individual's overall health and well-being. The Center for Health and Social Care (CHSC) is a purposefully designed organizational unit embedded in the care delivery system and is focused on using a whole-person, data-driven strategy to transform FirstHealth to a well-coordinated, high-value health and social care system - that is world-class in both medical care and health and social care. FirstHealth has created a mission for the Care Suite: To serve as the primary entity guiding FirstHealth's care teams and all community stakeholders to the health and social care system

required to help each resident served by FHC achieve a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being. FirstHealth is committed to a Whole Person Care transformation that integrates feedback from providers, patients, leadership, and community partners. As such, the following will be areas of focus for Whole Person Care expansion:

- Continue to support primary care providers with a multidisciplinary approach to care that addresses individual patient's unmanaged chronic conditions by linking them to services, resources, and programs focused on engaging the patient in managing their health condition, improving patient outcomes, and preventing avoidable hospital admissions, averaging 125 referrals per month.
- Continue to provide Care Suite services to patient's identified at high-risk for readmissions and further the reach of patients beyond the most complex.
- Track individual patient level data to intently track improved patient outcomes.
- Expand Care Suite services to non-FirstHealth providers to strengthen collaboration and patient management.
- Provide Care Suite services beyond the health care setting by establishing partnerships and implementing referral processes for businesses, industries, and schools to assist with resolving social barriers and improving employee and student health outcomes.
- Continue to cultivate and expand partners such as social services, health department, homeless shelters, Salvation Army, Habitat for Humanity, to establish referral patterns to address food insecurity, housing, and transportation needs.

Note: Reference the Community Health Needs Assessment for additional details on health focus areas identified as needs that other agencies and community partners are currently addressing through programs and interventions.