



2025-2028

Community Health Implementation Plan

Cleburne and Randolph Counties, AL



Tanner Medical Center / East Alabama

Perspective /Overview

About Tanner Health

Tanner Health is a nonprofit healthcare organization serving the west Georgia and east Alabama regions. As a community-focused healthcare provider, Tanner Health is committed to understanding and addressing the health needs of the communities it serves through comprehensive healthcare services and community wellness initiatives.

About this report

The Community Health Implementation Plan (CHIP) is developed every three years as a companion document to the Community Health Needs Assessment, as required by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act for nonprofit hospitals. This implementation plan serves as Tanner Health's strategic roadmap for addressing the health priorities identified through comprehensive community assessment and input.

This plan outlines specific, measurable actions that Tanner Medical Center/East Alabama will take over the next three years to improve health outcomes and address health disparities in Cleburne and Randolph counties in Alabama. The strategies detailed in this plan are based on evidence-based practices, community input, available resources and Tanner Health's core competencies as a healthcare organization.

By systematically implementing targeted interventions and community partnerships, this plan enables Tanner Health to make meaningful progress toward creating healthier communities and improving the overall well-being of residents in our east Alabama service area.

Tanner Medical Center/East Alabama Community Health Implementation Plan

This is a single hospital CHIP for:

- Tanner Medical Center/East Alabama in Randolph County, Alabama – 1032 South Main Street, Wedowee, AL 36278, 256-357-2111

Making the Implementation Plan Widely Available to the Public

This implementation plan is made widely available to the community via Tanner Health's website at Tanner.org. Paper copies are available free of charge by calling 770-812-9687.

Board Approval

Tanner's board of directors approved this implementation plan on September 8, 2025.

Executive Summary

The Community Health Implementation Plan for Tanner Medical Center/East Alabama serves as our roadmap for addressing the most pressing health needs in Cleburne and Randolph counties over the next three years. Based on our comprehensive 2025 Community Health Needs Assessment, this plan outlines specific strategies, activities and measurable outcomes to improve the health and well-being of our east Alabama communities.

Through systematic data collection, community input and careful prioritization, we've identified five key health priorities that will guide our community benefit investments from 2025 through 2028:

- **Mental Health Services**
- **Access to Affordable Healthcare**
- **Substance Use Disorder**
- **Healthy Eating and Active Living**
- **Chronic Disease Prevention and Management**

Additionally, we've carefully considered the sixth priority identified in our assessment — **Transportation** — and have made a strategic decision regarding our approach to this critical community need.

This implementation plan reflects our commitment to creating healthier communities through evidence-based interventions, community partnerships and sustainable programs that address the root causes of health disparities in our region.

Priority 1: Mental Health Services

Background and Need

Mental health emerged as the top priority in our 2025 Community Health Needs Assessment, with 29.6% of survey respondents identifying mental health and behavioral health services as a significant issue. Our assessment revealed that both Cleburne and Randolph counties have higher suicide rates than Alabama and the U.S., with rates of 19 and 25 per 100,000 population respectively, compared to Alabama's rate of 16 and the U.S. rate of 14.

Goal

Expand access to comprehensive mental health services for residents of Cleburne and Randolph counties, reducing barriers to care and improving mental health outcomes across all age groups.

Strategy 1: Expansion of Psychiatric Care to Emergency Department

As part of our ongoing commitment to meet the community's mental health needs, our Consult & Liaison Team began providing on-site psychiatric services in the emergency department at Tanner Medical Center/East Alabama earlier this year. Available Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., this added support helps connect patients in crisis with timely, compassionate care — right when and where they need it most.

Timeline: Launched January 2025

Strategy 2: Inpatient Psychiatric Care for Medically Admitted Patients

To better serve patients with complex medical and behavioral health needs, our Consult & Liaison Team began offering psychiatric services on the inpatient medical floors at Tanner Medical Center/East Alabama earlier this year. Available Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., this service helps ensure that patients receive whole-person care throughout their hospital stay.

Timeline: Launched January 2025

Strategy 3: Telehealth Psychiatric Services for Alabama Patients

For more than a year, we've delivered psychiatric care through telehealth to patients in their homes across our Alabama communities. Today, three physicians and one nurse practitioner on our team are licensed in Alabama, expanding access to care where and when it's needed most.

Timeline: Launched June 2024

Strategy 4: Facilitated Access to Voluntary Admissions at Willowbrooke

Since January, we've made it easier for individuals in crisis to get the help they need by streamlining the process for voluntary admission to Willowbrooke at Tanner. This new, expedited approach allows patients to access inpatient psychiatric care more quickly in a safe, supportive environment — reducing delays and easing the path to healing.

Timeline: Launched January 2025

Expected Outcomes

- Reduced wait times for mental health services
- Decreased mental health-related emergency department visits
- Improved access to inpatient psychiatric care
- Enhanced coordination between medical and behavioral health services
- Increased patient satisfaction with mental health services

Priority 2: Access to Affordable Health Care

Background and Need

Access to affordable health care was identified as the second priority, with 33.7% of survey respondents citing affordable health care as a significant issue and 31.6% identifying affordable health insurance as a concern. Our assessment revealed that both counties have higher uninsured rates than Alabama and the U.S., with 12% and 13% respectively compared to Alabama's 12% and the U.S. rate of 10%.

Goal

Improve access to affordable, high-quality health care services for residents of Cleburne and Randolph counties, particularly for uninsured and underinsured populations.

Strategy: Implementation of Centivo Health Plan

Beginning Jan. 1, 2026, Tanner Health will implement a new third-party administrator for employer benefit plans, Centivo, designed around improving quality and reducing cost of care. Starting with the Tanner employee health plan, this innovative approach will be offered to employees of Tanner Medical Center/East Alabama.

Centivo is designed to deliver affordable, high-quality healthcare by centering care around a primary care provider and prioritizing the use of Tanner's own high-value, coordinated network of physicians and facilities. Through this innovative partnership, we will offer Tanner employees and their families:

- Lower premiums and predictable out-of-pocket costs
- Streamlined care coordination with an emphasis on prevention and chronic condition management
- Expanded access to primary care, behavioral health and specialty services within the Tanner network
- Incentives for staying in-network, helping employees save money while improving health outcomes

This approach not only helps reduce unnecessary spending across the health system — it also empowers our workforce to receive the right care, at the right time, in the right setting. By aligning our health benefits strategy with our mission to improve community health, Centivo positions Tanner Health as both a provider and employer of choice for affordable health care.

Timeline: Launch date Jan. 1, 2026

Expected Outcomes

- Reduced healthcare costs for employees and their families
- Improved care coordination and health outcomes
- Enhanced employee satisfaction with health benefits
- Demonstration of sustainable health care delivery model
- Potential expansion to other employer groups in the community

Priority 3: Substance Use Disorder

Background and Need

Substance use disorder was identified as the third priority, with 14.3% of survey respondents citing substance use disorder treatment services as a significant issue. Focus group participants consistently identified substance misuse as one of the most significant health needs, noting the strong connection between drug use and crime in the community.

Goal

Address substance use disorders through expanded access to treatment services and community education initiatives.

Strategy: Leveraging Existing Resources

While specific Alabama-focused substance use disorder programs are under development, we continue to address this priority through our established partnership with Willowbrooke at Tanner, which provides substance use disorder treatment services to Alabama residents. Our approach includes:

- Continued access to Willowbrooke's addiction services for Alabama residents
- Integration of substance use disorder screening and referral in our primary care and emergency department settings
- Collaboration with community partners to address the social determinants contributing to substance use
- Support for community education initiatives about substance use prevention

Timeline: on-going

Expected Outcomes

- Increased identification and treatment of substance use disorders
- Improved coordination between medical and addiction treatment services
- Enhanced community awareness of substance use prevention and treatment resources
- Reduced substance use-related emergency department visits and hospitalizations

Priority 4: Healthy Eating and Active Living

Background and Need

Healthy eating and active living was identified as the fourth priority, with our assessment revealing that both counties have higher rates of adult obesity (36% and 41% respectively) compared to the U.S. average of 34%, and higher rates of physical inactivity (32% and 35%) compared to the U.S. average of 23%.

Goal

Promote healthy eating habits and increase physical activity opportunities for residents of all ages in Cleburne and Randolph counties.

Strategy 1: Community Resource Guide Development

Get Healthy, Live Well, in partnership with the Alabama Cooperative Extension System – Randolph County, will create, produce and distribute a comprehensive Community Resource Guide for east Alabama residents.

The guide will provide comprehensive information on healthcare services, healthy living programs, food assistance, housing, transportation and other vital community resources. It will be distributed in an easy-to-use printed brochure format throughout the community and made accessible digitally on Tanner Health's website to ensure broad reach and ongoing access.

This initiative reflects our ongoing commitment to addressing social determinants of health by connecting residents to the support and services they need to thrive.

Timeline: Launch October 2025

Strategy 2: Expanded Evidence-Based Programs

Through our Get Healthy, Live Well initiative, we will expand and enhance evidence-based programs and community partnerships that encourage healthy eating and active living. This strategy aims to create sustainable changes in individual behavior and the community environment to improve health outcomes and quality of life for residents of all ages.

Key components include:

- **Nutrition Education & Healthy Food Access:** Provide free or low-cost healthy cooking classes through our Food As Medicine program, nutrition education workshops in schools, workplaces, faith-based organizations and community centers. Partner with local farmers markets and food pantries to improve access to fresh, affordable produce, including initiatives such as mobile markets and community gardens.
- **School and Youth Programs:** Support healthy eating and physical activity in schools through our programs like Kids-in-the Kitchen, evidence-based classes that increase fruit and vegetable consumption, reduce sugary drinks and incorporate daily physical activity.

- **Worksite Wellness & Community Campaigns:** Collaborate with local employers and civic organizations to implement wellness challenges, walking clubs, and campaigns that promote healthier choices in everyday life.
- **Physical Activity Opportunities:** Increase access to free or low-cost fitness opportunities, including group exercise classes, walking trails, bike-friendly environments and community fitness challenges designed for all skill levels.
- **Policy and Environmental Change:** Advocate for and support policies that make healthy choices easier, such as improved walkability, healthy vending options and safe, accessible recreational spaces.
- **Measurement & Evaluation:** Track program participation, self-reported behavior changes, and biometric indicators (weight, BMI, blood pressure) to evaluate impact and guide ongoing improvements.

Timeline: on-going

Expected Outcomes

- Increased community awareness of healthy eating and physical activity resources
- Improved access to healthy food options
- Enhanced physical activity opportunities in the community
- Measurable improvements in participant health indicators
- Stronger community partnerships supporting healthy lifestyle initiatives

Priority 5: Chronic Disease Prevention and Management

Background and Need

Chronic disease prevention and management was identified as the fifth priority, with our assessment revealing that both counties have higher rates of poor or fair health (19.8% and 20.8% respectively) compared to the U.S. average of 14%. The leading causes of death in both counties are heart disease and cancer, highlighting the critical need for comprehensive chronic disease management.

Goal

Reduce the burden of chronic diseases through enhanced prevention, early detection and comprehensive management programs.

Strategy: Chronic Care Management Program Expansion

In 2025, Tanner Medical Group expanded its Get Healthy, Live Well population health initiatives through the strategic growth of the Chronic Care Management (CCM) program. This expansion was supported by a dedicated team of nurse case managers who provide individualized, ongoing support to patients with multiple chronic conditions. Their role is critical in improving care coordination, enhancing access to resources, and reducing unnecessary emergency department visits and hospital readmissions.

To date, over 1,000 patients have been enrolled in the CCM program in FY25, demonstrating strong community engagement and provider alignment. The program continues to drive measurable improvements in clinical outcomes for high-impact conditions such as diabetes, hypertension and heart failure. By increasing patient adherence to care plans and ensuring consistent follow-up, the program supports core Community Health Improvement Plan goals around chronic disease prevention and management.

Timeline: on-going

Expected Outcomes

- Improved clinical outcomes for patients with chronic conditions
- Reduced emergency department visits and hospital readmissions
- Enhanced patient self-management skills and medication adherence
- Improved care coordination between primary care and specialty services
- Increased patient satisfaction with chronic disease management

Priority 6: Transportation

Background and Need

Transportation was identified as the sixth priority health need in our 2025 Community Health Needs Assessment, with 15.3% of survey respondents citing it as a significant health issue and focus group participants consistently identifying it as a barrier to accessing healthcare, medications and healthy food options. Our assessment data revealed that residents face longer commutes than state and national averages, with 57.0% of Cleburne County and 46.1% of Randolph County residents commuting more than 30 minutes to work—both higher than Alabama (36.0%) and U.S. (36.0%) averages.

Strategic Decision

While acknowledging this critical need, Tanner Health has made the strategic decision not to directly address transportation through our community benefit activities for the 2025-2028 implementation period. Transportation infrastructure solutions require specialized expertise in urban planning and government coordination that falls outside our core healthcare competencies, and our resources can achieve greater impact by focusing on health priorities where we have direct expertise, such as mental health services, chronic disease management and healthcare access.

Indirect Support Strategies

Instead, we will continue supporting transportation solutions indirectly through:

- Expanding telemedicine services to reduce transportation barriers
- Advocating with community partners for improved transportation infrastructure
- Providing information about existing transportation resources through our community education programs and resource guides
- Collaborating with appropriate partners like the East Alabama Regional Development & Planning Commission, which currently operates rural public transit in Cleburne County

Conclusion

This Community Health Implementation Plan represents Tanner Health's commitment to improving the health and well-being of residents in Cleburne and Randolph counties. Through focused strategies addressing mental health, healthcare access, substance use, healthy living and chronic disease management, we aim to create lasting positive change in our east Alabama communities.

We recognize that creating healthier communities requires sustained effort, community collaboration and adaptation based on ongoing assessment and feedback. This plan will be regularly reviewed and updated to ensure we're meeting the evolving needs of our communities and maximizing our impact on population health.

For more information about Tanner Health's community benefit activities or to get involved in our community health initiatives, visit tanner.org or call 770-812-9687.

This Community Health Implementation Plan was developed based on the 2025 Community Health Needs Assessment and approved by the Tanner Health Board of Directors. The plan will be reviewed annually and updated as needed to reflect changing community needs and priorities.