

Menninger Community Health Needs Assessment

December 2024



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Executive summary

Established in 1925, The Menninger Clinic is a leading psychiatric hospital that provides a variety of inpatient and outpatient treatment programs for adults and adolescents with mood, personality, anxiety, and addictive disorders. The Clinic also conducts leading mental health research, trains tomorrow's expert mental health professionals and reaches the community with free programs and services. For more than 30 years, The Clinic has ranked among the top 10 psychiatric hospitals in U.S. News and World Report's annual list of "Best Hospitals."

Menninger is guided by values that help faculty and staff members provide high-quality care, research, and training while creating a culture that attracts and retains the best faculty and staff.

- **Excellence:** The best people doing their best work
- **Teamwork:** Accountable to each other to do our best
- **Hope:** Inspiring people to reach their potential
- **Integrity:** Doing the right thing
- **Caring:** Respect and compassion for self and others

Key goals of this report

The purpose of this needs assessment is to gauge the needs and strengths of the community served by The Menninger Clinic in compliance with the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 and federal tax-exemption requirements and to improve overall mental health and reduce the burden of mental illness. The key goals of this report are:

1. Gain a better understanding of mental health care needs for patients served by Menninger.
2. Ensure alignment of mission and charitable resources with its services and expertise to address identified needs in the two communities identified in the CHNA.
3. Support the development of plans to improve mental health for the communities served by Menninger as well as the broader community.

How the assessment was conducted

The 2024 CHNA uses primary and secondary data to describe the mental health landscape of the community served by Menninger.

Defining the community

The community served by Menninger is broken out between patients served through Menninger's *inpatient* services and patients served through Menninger's *outpatient* services. Defining two distinct communities for this CHNA allows Menninger to more effectively gather input and focus its resources to address identified significant health needs, targeting areas of greatest need.

Inpatient community

The 2024 CHNA defines the inpatient community by focusing on the complex and unique mental health needs of the patients treated at Menninger as opposed to a geographic area. Menninger's inpatient programs serve patients from across the United States and internationally, with patients originating from outside the nine-county Greater Houston area. For patients who seek inpatient treatment at Menninger, the severity of their mental illness, as well as the types of disorders most commonly treated, provide a better definition for "community served by the hospital."

Efforts have been made to include primary input for specific treatment programs and services provided at Menninger, including research and education activities, which impact services provided at many organizations nationwide and seek to improve mental health in the broader community.

Outpatient community

For the 2024 CHNA, the outpatient community will be defined as the Houston-The Woodlands-Sugarland Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), also known as Greater Houston, where more than 76 percent of the outpatient population served by Menninger resides. Greater Houston consists of nine counties: Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, Brazoria, Galveston, Liberty, Waller, Chambers and Austin. This reflects the 2022 CHNA defined Harris County as Menninger's primary community. However, defining a broader region more accurately reflects the expanding geographic boundaries of the Houston area and allows Menninger to target resources to areas of greatest need and mental health disparities.

Data collection

Menninger surveyed current and former patients to gather input regarding barriers obtaining care and needs specific to the patient populations served by Menninger. The CHNA team also solicited input regarding changes Menninger should make to improve health of the inpatients served by the organization. In addition, Menninger obtained input from key stakeholders representing organizations serving populations within the Greater Houston community. The 2024 CHNA includes an analysis of the following secondary data:

- Demographics of patients served by Menninger
- Socioeconomic indicators (household income, poverty, unemployment, educational attainment, housing)
- Community mental health statistics and indicators (rates for mental illness, severe mental disorders and substance abuse, access to mental health services, mental health expenditures, mental health workforce availability, etc.).
- Availability of health care facilities and resources

Based on the information gathered through this Community Health Needs Assessment, the Menninger CHNA team identified the health needs below as needs that impact persons with mental illnesses in the CHNA communities.

Identified needs

The 2024 CHNA identifies needs similar to those in previous reports, particularly regarding access to care and quality of care, as highlighted in community survey results and stakeholder interviews. The identified needs fall into two categories: individuals with acute, complex, and serious mental illness who require the safety and structure of inpatient services and those who would benefit from early screening, diagnosis, or community-based treatment and support.

Inpatient:

- High care costs and insurance gaps
- Shortage of pediatric inpatient beds
- Inconsistent service access due to socioeconomic and geographic factors
- Limited access to mental health screenings and early treatment
- Stigma hindering help-seeking
- Shortage of trained mental health professionals
- Lack of coordinated and integrated care
- Lack of education about mental health

Outpatient:

- Lack of affordable services where people live and work
- Insurance payment limitations
- Barriers to treatment include transportation, stigma, and knowledge gaps.
- Long waits for treatment
- Shortage of mental health professionals
- Limited assessments available to improve diagnosis

Menninger has reviewed existing community benefits and outreach programs, exploring opportunities for increased collaboration within the community. Opportunities for health improvement have been identified in each area. Menninger's leadership is committed to pinpointing where resources can be most effectively focused to drive significant impact and develop an Implementation Plan for 2025 through 2027.

Limitations and information gaps

Menninger's assessment reviews mental health in communities served by The Clinic. Some conditions are excluded due to inadequate information or community input, leaving groups like the homeless and non-English speakers underrepresented. The Menninger CHNA team gathered feedback through stakeholder interviews and community surveys. We also switched from a fiscal to a calendar year, reducing our data collection period. Consequently, we rely on some previously published data from our last CHNA, which is still relevant for understanding the mental health landscape in the Menninger community. More information will follow in the upcoming Implementation Plan.

General description of The Menninger Clinic

The Menninger Clinic is a freestanding 501(c)(3) nonprofit hospital governed by The Menninger Clinic Board of Directors. Day-to-day management is the responsibility of our executive team, while our clinical leaders have responsibility for ensuring high-quality patient care.

Areas of expertise

Our clinicians in mental health professions offer broad expertise in evidence-based treatments and experience with inpatient and outpatient delivery of mental health care. They are devoted to caring for individuals experiencing mental health issues and/or substance use and addictive behavior. They do so with professionalism, respect, and dignity.

Menninger offers many areas of expertise here, including but not limited to:

- **Depressive Disorders** – Depression comes in many forms, and we treat it all: major depressive disorder, persistent depressive disorder, postpartum depression, depression with psychosis, bipolar disorder, and related self-harm and thoughts or plans of suicide.
- **Anxiety** – One of the top diagnoses among all age groups treated at Menninger, we have decades of experience helping patients with anxiety.
- **Trauma** – Menninger has a long history of treating patients with trauma, especially complex attachment trauma, as well as situational trauma that may be caused by a devastating disaster, witnessing violence, verbal or mental abuse, domestic violence, or other situations that threatened the physical or emotional safety of the person.
- **Substance Use Disorder or Addictive Behavior** – Our team at the Center for Addiction Medicine provides advanced medical and therapeutic treatments for substance use and addictive behavior, including safe detox, medically managed withdrawal, residential and outpatient support, and peer recovery programs. We help individuals find suitable recovery groups and offer case management for guidance during the most vulnerable times for relapse.
- **Personality disorders** – From borderline personality disorder and narcissistic personality disorder to avoidant personality disorders, obsessive-compulsive personality disorder, and more, Menninger clinicians have years of experience successfully treating these disorders that can interfere with daily living and healthy relationships.
- **LGBTQ+ mental health** – Menninger has long treated LGBTQ+ persons often on our Compass Program for Young Adults. Our teams understand and respect patients who experience behavioral health symptoms or struggles living in a world that can lack compassion for their unique circumstances.
- **Emerging mental health issues in adolescents** – We offer a full continuum of care for the mental health issues that are increasingly plaguing adolescents and having negative effects on their family, peers, academic work, and social life. Careful assessment is among the hallmarks for our clinical teams, as well as utilizing evidence-based therapies that build symptom management skills for returning to healthier living as young people ready to thrive as adults.

- **Sleep issues** – About nine of 10 inpatients have difficulties sleeping, which can contribute to the difficulties managing symptoms of mental illness. Our Sleep Medicine Service specializes in the assessment and treatment of a wide range of sleep issues. This service is among a few nationally at a psychiatric hospital.
- **Suicide attempts, suicidal thoughts, and self-harm** – Our mental health professionals have had extensive training in treating individuals with a history of suicide attempts, thoughts about suicide, and self-harming behaviors. They know how to connect with patients who struggle with these difficult issues

Support services

- **Exercise and rehabilitation** – These activities are important aspects of treatment and sustained recovery, as it's been proven to reduce stress, improve mood, improve sleep habits and influence self-esteem. To encourage patients to engage in exercise, Menninger offers trained recreational therapists and a Wellness Center with an array of features that offers something for everyone. The Wellness Program also offers lectures on healthy eating, stress management, cardiac care and other topics related to mental and physical health. Rehabilitation therapy support individuals in regaining interest in avocations they previously enjoyed and to discover new interests that enrich their health, creativity and satisfaction with a life worth living.
- **Spiritual Services** – Pastoral counseling for individual patients, groups for exploring spiritual values and meaning, services in the Menninger Interfaith Chapel and an outdoor labyrinth and garden for meditation are available to inpatients at Menninger.
- **Training and research** – Menninger is a training hospital of Baylor College of Medicine, teaching future mental health professionals in psychiatry and psychology. In addition, Menninger offers the Betty Ann Stedman Nurse Residency Program and social work internships and fellowships and an associate fellowship for licensed professional counselors. We also provide opportunities for individuals in training as occupational therapists, chaplains, and pharmacists. These programs help address the community's needs for mental health practitioners.
- For its clinical staff and trainees as well as licensed professionals in the community, Menninger provides continuing education programming.

Menninger is actively engaged in a variety of collaborative research projects and clinical trials designed to advance the effectiveness of patient care utilizing private and public grants. Our researchers collaborate with leading research scientists at Baylor College of Medicine and elsewhere in brain imaging, genetics, microbiology, and other disciplines to uncover new knowledge in mental health.

Menninger's response to 2022 CHNA

Since the 2022 CHNA, Menninger has implemented numerous strategic advancements to enhance mental health services for the defined community:

Improvements for access

- Contracted with insurance plans, including Aetna, Cigna, Magellan, and UnitedHealthcare, making care at Menninger more accessible. These four insurers joined ComPsych in network with Menninger.
- Opened a new Outpatient Services Center in September 2022 to meet the community's growing mental health needs. This on-campus facility complements the Outpatient Clinic in Bellaire (Greater Houston).

In February 2024, the second floor was completed as the home of the Center for Addiction Medicine and Recovery. The Center's services expanded in fall 2024, with more programming for residential clients in the Bridge Program.

- Launched a new Stabilization Program to assist adults in crisis in finding immediate support when they need it most. This program is insurance friendly.
- Reduced stigma by sharing the mental health stories of our patients, with their permission, to the public through our communications platforms, including the website.
- Waiting times at Menninger are typically shorter than some providers in the service area, aiding access at any level when clients are ready to engage in treatment.

Integrated services in the community

- Launched a Community Initiatives Program in 2022 that has:
 - Used grant funding to provide monthly mental training for the Harris County Sheriff's Office staff members to better meet their needs in the course of their duties. Through collaboration with the Harris County Sheriff's Office (HCSO), Menninger has served hundreds of new deputies and detention officers by providing free mental health crisis intervention training. The presentations are designed to help deputies respond to people with mental illness and to become more aware of the value of self-care.
- In 2023, launched regular training for public and private school counselors and parents' groups related to adolescent mental health.
- Added two roles to the staff to provide mental health and peer support training for vulnerable youth and the professionals at partnering schools and organizations. This team has also collaborated with local nonprofits on activities to benefit the community, including the National Alliance on Mental Illness, The Hope and Healing Center and Institute, Mental Health America, and The Council on Recovery.
- Boosted our educational programming to the mental health professionals and community members through free, regular webinars on current topics in mental health. The continuing education events reached a record number in 2023.

- Supported The Gathering Place, a clubhouse for those with serious mental illness, fostering a welcoming environment for learning and connection, expanded programs to include peer support training, and advocated for a new bus stop adjacent to the facility to improve access. Membership is free of charge.
- Created Mind Dive, a podcast for mental health professionals, with twice-monthly podcasts during the first two years to build the audience. In 2024, new releases have been monthly. All episodes continue to build listenership and most rank among the top 25% of podcasts.
- Launched The Recovery Playbook in 2023 on YouTube for anyone in the recovery community, especially those who are seeking practical information that they can use for their own recovery or by those who are supporting them. The videos feature medical director for the Center for Addiction Medicine and Recovery and the recovery ambassador for Menninger who is a recovering addict.
- Sponsored and participated in annual NAMI Walks Houston events to raise awareness to overcome stigma about mental illness. Other mental health awareness walks in the community were also sponsored.
- Continued community education at the annual Menninger Signature luncheon, each featuring a keynote speaker who shared their mental health journey.
- Added the following training programs:
 - A semester-long chaplaincy internship to equip ministry students to support individuals with mental illness in hospitals and the community.
- Menninger's medical education and training, community education and research activities also have elevated the skills of mental health and related professionals as well as advanced the effectiveness of patient care.
- Launched an adolescent outreach program. In 2024, Menninger professionals trained over 600 staff members for summer day and overnight camps in partnership with the Greater Houston YMCA, impacting more than 5,000 campers. More partnerships are planned.

Advanced diagnostic and treatment services

- Introduced a short-term stabilization service for adolescents in 2022, partnering with Texas Children's Hospital to support an increasing population of adolescents facing behavioral or mental health crises. The inpatient service has since been expanded to include adolescents with Menninger's in-network insurance.
- Added two step-down Day Hospital Programs for specific needs of adults and for adolescents, ensuring support and care at every stage of their recovery, which helps people and families make the most use of insurance, personal financial resources, and time in treatment. The Adolescent Day Program engages teens in therapy, fostering their growth and life skills. The program for adults addresses both substance use/addiction and mental health treatment.

- Launched the Center for Addiction Medicine and Recovery in 2024 to address the need for quality substance use and behavioral addiction care from crisis stabilization/medication management, residential, intensive outpatient, outpatient support, and case management to reduce the high risk of relapse in the first 90 days after treatment. It also serves as a professional training site, a research hub, and a collaboration point for addiction organizations.
- Created the Bridge Program, a residential treatment option for adults who are transitioning from inpatient treatment or who need more structure than outpatient care. The program offers evidenced based treatments for mood and anxiety disorders, trauma-related disorders, substance use/addictions, emotional regulation, and over-controlled personalities. The program allows the clients more freedoms to work and practice symptom management in the community.
- Redesigned Sleep Medicine to better support and educate patients across the services and from the community who suffer from the effects of sleep disturbance. Nine of every 10 inpatients at Menninger experience a sleep disturbance, such as insomnia, that can elevate suicidality.
- Expanded the Menninger 360 wrap-around care community integration program to serve two additional counties – Fort Bend and Montgomery – in addition to Harris County.
- Introduced Rapid Targeted TMS among the Center for Brain Stimulation’s treatment options for those whose prior treatment has not provided the needed relief from their mental health symptoms. This new safe and effective treatment uses functional MRI to guide targeted, non-invasive, yet intensive transcranial magnetic stimulation
- Added specialized comprehensive psychiatric assessments for addictions, fitness for duty, autism spectrum disorder, and ADHD.

Grew numbers served

- The number of outpatient encounters (sessions) has steadily increased from 11,996 in fiscal year 2019 to 20,095 through fiscal year 2023 (67% increase), improving access to meet some of the demand in the Greater Houston area.
- Through its community benefit dollars, Menninger invested almost \$5 million in programs that directly and indirectly benefit the community. These investments include charity services for individuals for which no payment is anticipated.

Communities served by The Menninger Clinic

Menninger defines its “CHNA community” as consisting of inpatient and outpatient services. The inpatient group serves mental health needs for patients—43% from Greater Houston—while the outpatient community accounts for over 70% of patients, mainly from the Greater Houston area. This focus allows Menninger to optimize resources for addressing significant health needs.

Inpatient community

Menninger’s inpatient programs serve patients from the U.S. and abroad, with Texas being the primary source. In 2024, 37% of patients were from outside Texas. The main markets include adolescents aged 12-17 and adults 18 and older facing serious mental illnesses and addictions needing intensive care. Less than 5% of psychiatric beds nationwide accommodate stays longer than the usual three to seven days. Menninger serves those with treatment-resistant conditions who have not responded to prior treatments and require extended inpatient care.

Menninger's inpatient program treats severely ill patients, with about 80% having three or more psychiatric disorders and over 50% dealing with substance use issues. Outcomes from 1,823 adults (2019–2021) show significant mental health improvements during and after treatment. Patients typically have three prior psychiatric hospitalizations and treatment from three psychiatrists. Common adult diagnoses include Major Depression Disorder, Alcohol Use Disorder, and Generalized Anxiety Disorder, while adolescents are mainly diagnosed with ADHD, Parent/Child Relational Problems, and PTSD.

Summary of Inpatient Programs (FY 2023)					
Program	International	Outside Texas	In Texas (excluding 9-county Greater Houston MSA)	In 9-county Greater Houston area	Total Patients
ATP (12-17)	2	46	30	144	222
Compass (18-30)	11	107	41	49	208
CPAS (18+)	2	89	46	108	245
Hope (18+)	6	13	12	14	45
Professionals (30+)	0	12	9	34	55
Total	21	267	138	349	775
%	2.71%	34.45%	17.81%	45.03%	100%

Admissions coordinators assess potential patients to ensure they meet the criteria for voluntary admission. Individuals under involuntary commitment or those unwilling to engage in treatment are not eligible. Additionally, patients must have a minimum IQ of 80 and no history of physical aggression; those with pending felony charges may also be excluded.

While the Menninger staff handles various medical issues, patients must be medically stable and not need acute interventions. The clinic can facilitate detox for stable individuals, with the exception of cases requiring IV fluids. However, patients exhibiting active suicidal or homicidal ideation may require stabilization in a secure setting or monitored admission to reduce risks of harm. Unstable eating disorders also necessitate treatment in specialized facilities.

Outpatient community

Nearly 70% of the outpatient population served by Menninger lives in the Greater Houston area, as reflected in the chart below. Other counties in Texas comprise an additional 11% of outpatient visits.

Summary of Outpatient Visits (FY2023)		
9- County Greater Houston Area	Outpatient Visits	% of Visits
Austin	94	0.47%
Brazoria	273	1.36%
Chambers	124	0.62%
Fort Bend	1,416	7.05%
Galveston	206	1.03%
Harris	11,396	56.71%
Liberty	-	0.00%
Montgomery	517	2.57%
Walker	4	0.02%
Total	14,030	69.82%
Other TX Counties	2,100	10.45%
Other States	3,650	18.16%
Unknown	57	0.28%
Other Countries	258	1.28%
Total	20,095	100.00%

Menninger's inpatient programs serve individuals nationwide with severe psychiatric disorders, while outpatient programs focus on the 9-county Greater Houston area. As of 2023, the Houston Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) expanded to include San Jacinto County, totaling 10 counties, and renamed the area the "Houston-Pasadena-The Woodlands" MSA, highlighting Pasadena's economic role. For this report, we will concentrate on the original 9-county area for which we have data. This assessment utilizes secondary data from "Houston Facts 2024" by the Greater Houston Partnership, the 2023 American Community Survey (ACS), and the 2022 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) to illuminate the U.S. mental health landscape, incorporating insights from the previous CHNA on mental health trends. Despite our tight timeline and shift from a fiscal to a calendar year, we believe this research establishes a solid foundation for assessing community mental health needs, with additional updates to follow.

Demographics and socioeconomic overview of the Greater Houston Area

The Greater Houston area, defined by the Houston-Pasadena-The Woodlands Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), encompasses 10 counties and is the fifth most populous metropolitan area in the U.S., with a population of 7,510,253 as of late 2023 (Houston Facts, 2024). This region has seen significant growth, contributing to Texas' overall increase of over 4 million residents since 2020. Harris County is the most populated area, with 4,835,125 residents, and the City of Houston ranks fourth nationally with 2,314,157 residents. The area's demographic composition is diverse, with 50.3% female and 49.7% male residents, a median age of 35.3 years, and 26.1% of the population being under 18 years of age (ACS, 2023).

In terms of education, 85.1% of individuals aged 25 and older graduated high school, with 35.4% holding a bachelor's degree or higher. The employment rate stands at 65.5%, with a median household income of \$80,458. However, 13.6% of residents live below the poverty line, while healthcare access remains a challenge, with 81.3% of the civilian noninstitutionalized population insured (ACS, 2023). This highlights both the strengths and ongoing challenges within the region, particularly around education and access to healthcare.

Mental Health Challenges and Access to Care

Mental health issues are prevalent in the U.S., affecting 1 in 5 adults, with serious mental illness impacting 1 in 20. Among youth aged 6 to 17, 17% experience a mental health disorder. Common mental illnesses include depression and co-occurring substance use disorders, both at 8%, while other conditions such as bipolar disorder and PTSD are also significant, affecting 3% and 4%, respectively. Notably, the prevalence of mental illness varies across demographic groups, with 35% of individuals from mixed/multiracial backgrounds reporting mental health issues. There are greater disparities across various races, as seen in the higher rates among American Indian or Alaska Native and LGBTQ+ populations (National Institute of Mental Health, 2024).

Diving deeper into the severity of mental health issues, Any Mental Illness (AMI), as defined in the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, refers to a wide range of mental health issues that can vary in severity. Understanding AMI is essential, as in 2022, about 59.3 million adults, or 23.1% of the population, dealt with some form of AMI. Women were more affected than men, with young adults experiencing the highest rates. However, only a fraction of those affected sought help, and it is noteworthy that women were more likely to seek treatment than men (NIMH, 2024).

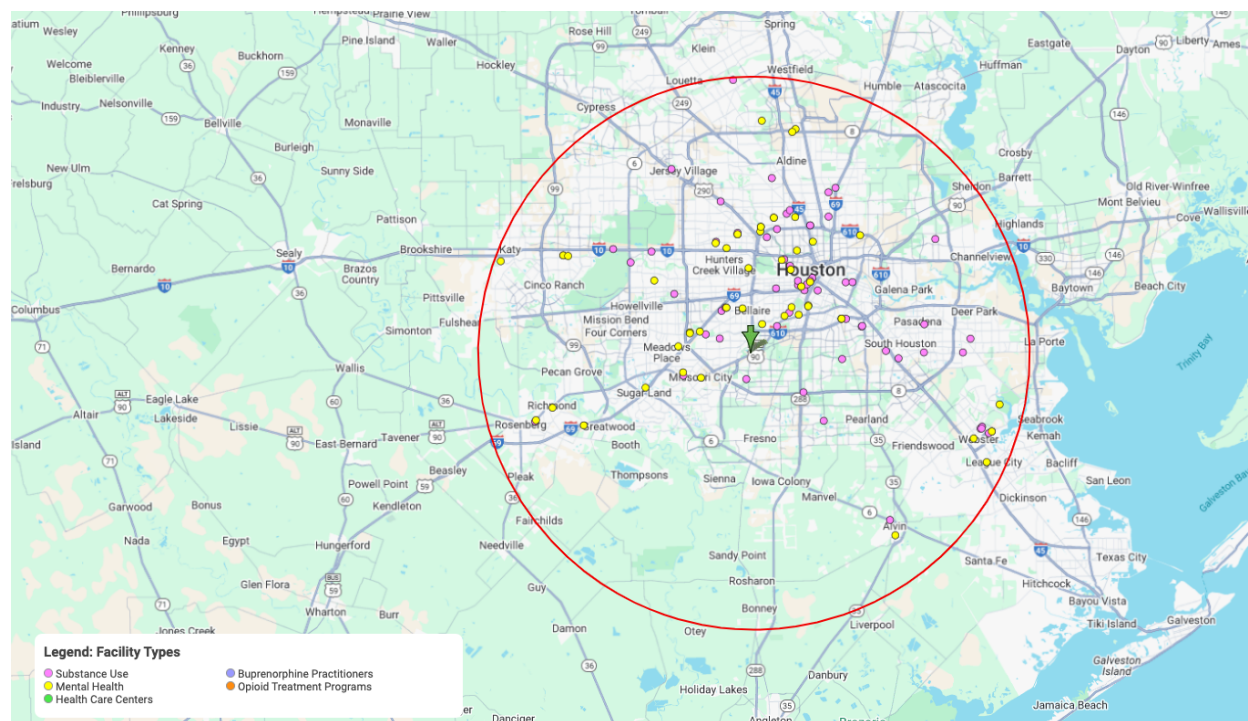
Serious Mental Illness (SMI) represents a more severe category that significantly impacts daily life. In 2022, 15.4 million adults, or 6.0%, were reported to have SMI. Young adults and people identifying with multiple races were particularly affected. Fortunately, a majority of those with SMI received treatment, with women more likely to access care (NIMH, 2024). In some states, people with SMI have easier access to state-funded psychiatric services.

In Texas, the situation is equally concerning as over 1.2 million children under 18 report mental, emotional, developmental, or behavioral problems, translating to about 17.2% of the youth

population. Additionally, the state faces alarming suicide statistics, with 45,979 individuals dying by suicide in 2020, highlighting a 30% increase from 2000. While Montgomery County has the highest suicide rate in the Houston area, Texas overall shows lower rates of people reporting serious suicidal thoughts compared to the national average (Understanding Houston, 2022).

Significant barriers exist in accessing mental health care in Texas, with 15 million residents in areas lacking sufficient mental health professionals and only 32.9% receiving adequate care. The shortage particularly affects Hispanics and other minorities due to language and cultural barriers. In Texas, where 39.4% of the population is Hispanic and 12.1% African American, the psychiatric workforce is predominantly White (55.1%), with only 7.2% African-American and 9.4% Hispanic providers. This lack of diversity leads to poorer outcomes for non-English speakers and racial/ethnic minorities. These statistics highlight the urgent need for improved mental health services and accessibility in the state (Understanding Houston, 2022).

In light of these disparities, it is important to consider the geographical distribution of mental health providers. Providers are primarily located within the west-central, south-central, and northern parts of the nine-county Houston Metro area. However, while other Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs) seem to have many behavioral health providers, the Aldine and Pasadena HPSAs are notably lacking, being situated in the north-central and east-central parts of the county. This uneven distribution further exacerbates the challenges underserved populations face in accessing care (Findtreatment.gov, 2024).



Note: Green arrow on map is location of The Menninger Clinic

Source: <https://findtreatment.gov/locator#mapView>

Mental health status of communities served by Menninger

Mental health refers to emotional and psychological well-being that enables individuals to contribute to their communities and cope with life's stresses. In contrast, mental illnesses involve changes in thinking, mood, or behavior that result in distress or impaired functioning, severely impacting daily life, physical health, work, and relationships. Conditions like depression and eating disorders can even lead to death. The Centers for Disease Control ranks mental and emotional illnesses among the top 10 causes of disability in the U.S. Below are indicators and statistics relevant to the mental health of the communities served by Menninger, reported at the national, state, and county levels to assess inpatient and outpatient community needs.

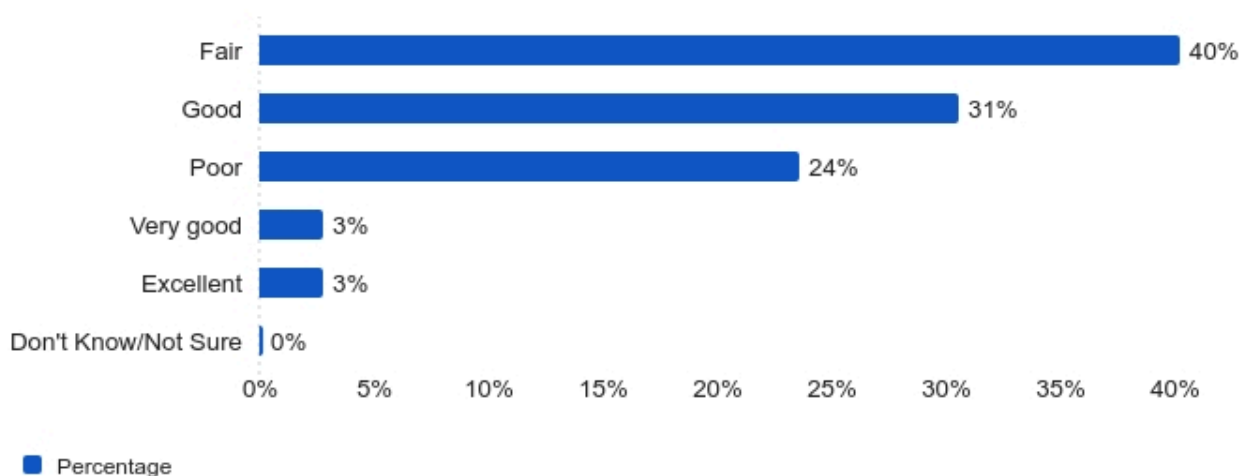
Primary data assessment-community survey

Menninger conducted a survey in the Greater Houston area to identify barriers to quality health care. The 9-question survey was created using Qualtrics and distributed via postcards in Menninger Clinic lobbies and through a social media campaign, including Instagram, LinkedIn, and X (formerly Twitter). A total of 74 responses were collected, revealing that patients faced significant obstacles, primarily high treatment costs, insurance issues, and long wait times.

State of Community Mental Health - Out of 72 respondents, 40% indicated they consider the mental health of their community to be good, while 31% rated it as fair, 24% as poor, and only 3% rated it very good or excellent.

Q1 - Would you say that in general the mental health of your community is...

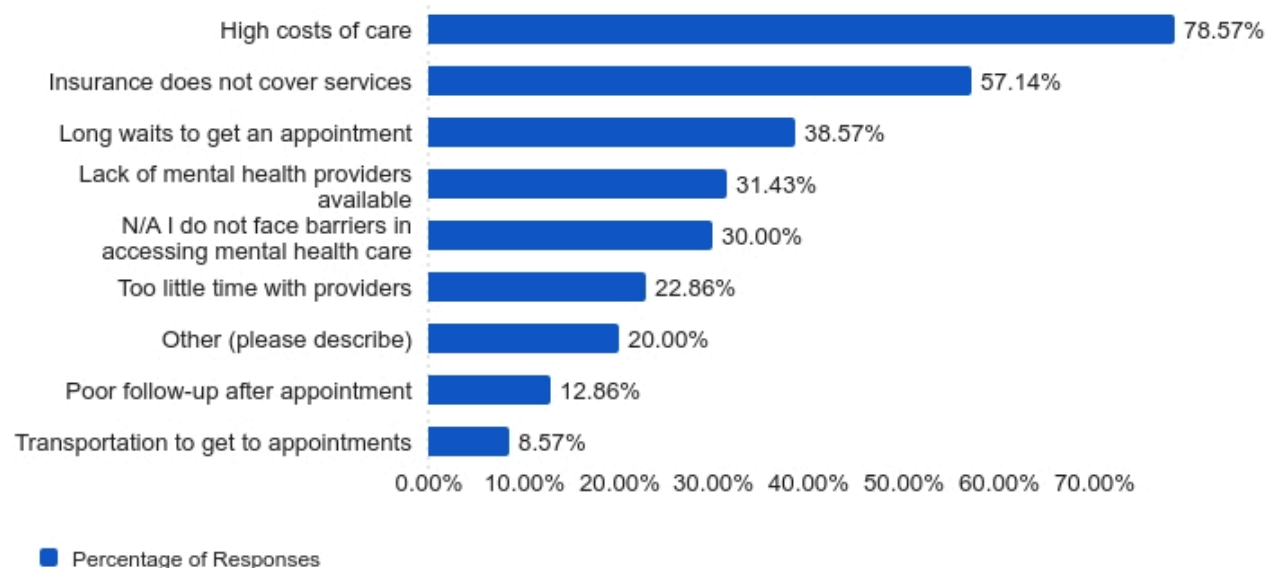
72 Responses



Survey participants identified key barriers to mental health care: 78% cited high costs, 57% mentioned lack of insurance, and nearly 39% expressed concerns about long wait times. These issues and more are illustrated in the following chart.

Q6 - What are the main barriers you face in accessing mental health care in your community (select top three)? - Selected Choice

70 Responses



Proposed improvements for mental health – Survey respondents had the opportunity to express their opinions on enhancing mental health services within the community. This open-ended inquiry resulted in a diverse range of feedback, with key recommendations including better insurance coverage, more affordable care options, and a greater number of available providers. Comments also emphasized the need for increased awareness of mental health services and the importance of building community connections. The subsequent word cloud illustrates these points.

Q8 - What specific resources or services do you think could help improve mental health in your community (open answer)?

64 Responses



The ongoing mental health impacts of the pandemic —The COVID-19 pandemic has had lasting effects on people in the communities that The Menninger Clinic serves. Survey respondents noted that mental health worsened during the pandemic, mainly because of feelings of being alone and increased anxiety and uncertainty about health and social issues. This is reflected in the following responses to the question, "In your experience, how has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted mental health in your community?"

"I think it has significantly impacted people's mental health in a negative way. They struggled with finding the right amount of needed integration with people versus balancing the flexibility of being able to work remotely."

"Although there is no question people suffered mentally and otherwise during the pandemic, I have experienced people being more open to asking for and receiving care now. There seems to be less of a stigma attached to mental health than there was before the pandemic."

"I think everyone was affected in various ways. I have three teenage daughters, and each of them has struggles that they are dealing with the help of therapists. There were important developmental milestones that were missed, and it has been hard on all of them."

Primary data assessment-key stakeholder interviews

Interviews were performed with six (6) key stakeholders (See Appendix for a list of organizations and interview questions). All interviews were conducted by Anissa Anderson Orr, the manager of communications for philanthropy and community initiatives at The Menninger Clinic. The stakeholders provided insight into the mental and behavioral health needs of the CHNA communities through a seven-question interview.

Key mental health issues and barriers to care

Stakeholders reported mental health issues among adults, adolescents, young adults, and children, including high anxiety—especially social anxiety and fear of failure—and depression. Factors include increased isolation due to COVID-19, challenges accessing therapy, and the negative effects of social media, such as cyberbullying and body image issues. Co-occurring disorders are common among specific populations, such as individuals in the justice system, many of whom resorted to self-medication due to insufficient access to therapy. There is also a rise in personal conflicts among young people, underscoring the need for effective coping strategies and conflict resolution skills. Key obstacles to maintaining good mental health are limited access to providers, affordability, and a lack of awareness about mental health as well as how to navigate the mental health system.

"We see a lot of stress. Worry about money, worry about future. We see that, you know, certainly within our Lamar (high school) community." – Lori Gobillot, President, A Lighted Path

"There is a lot of just (feeling) driven and motivation to perform, which... lends itself to a lot of childhood anxiety." – Thora Ansell Kingsley, LMSW, Counselor, River Oaks Elementary School

“I consider it almost like a triad...you have digital wellness, vaping, and then mental health issues such as anxiety and depression, all those feed into one another.” – Dawn Dubose, Chief of Schools, Stafford MSD

Stakeholder recommendations

Stakeholders were invited to share their thoughts on how Menninger could enhance mental health within the community. Their suggestions included offering parenting support to caregivers, improving access to mental healthcare in schools, improving accessible mental health assessments to enhance diagnostic accuracy, providing navigators for the mental health system, raising awareness about mental health, and reducing stigma.

“It’s crucial that we teach young people how to end relationships without resorting to violence.” – Betty Stewart, Congregational Care Coordinator, Windsor Village United Methodist Church Family

Enduring effects of the COVID-19 pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has had lasting impacts on communities in the Greater Houston area. Stakeholders have observed persistent issues like anxiety and depression among those they assist, as well as ongoing effects on children’s mental health and academic success. On a brighter note, the transition to telehealth has facilitated easier access for some individuals and families to therapy sessions, leading to fewer missed appointments for providers. Currently, the majority are choosing a hybrid model that blends both in-person and virtual therapy sessions.

Existing health care facilities and other resources

The availability of health care resources is a critical component to the health of a county’s residents and a measure of the soundness of the area’s health care delivery system. An adequate number of health care facilities and health care providers are vital for sustaining a community’s health status. Fewer health care facilities and health care providers not only impact the access to services but also the timely delivery of services.

Hospitals nationally

The following exhibit summarizes hospitals nationally which provide specialty programs similar to Menninger.

Summary of Psychiatric Facilities in U.S. with Inpatient Programs Similar to Menninger		
Facility	City, State	Bed Size
McLean Hospital	Belmont, MA	219
Sheppard Pratt Health System	Baltimore, MD	337
Silver Hill Hospital	New Canaan, CT	39
Lindner Center of Hope	Mason, OH	32
Austen Riggs Center	Stockbridge, MA	74

Source: American Hospital Directory, www.adh.com

Hospitals in the Greater Houston area

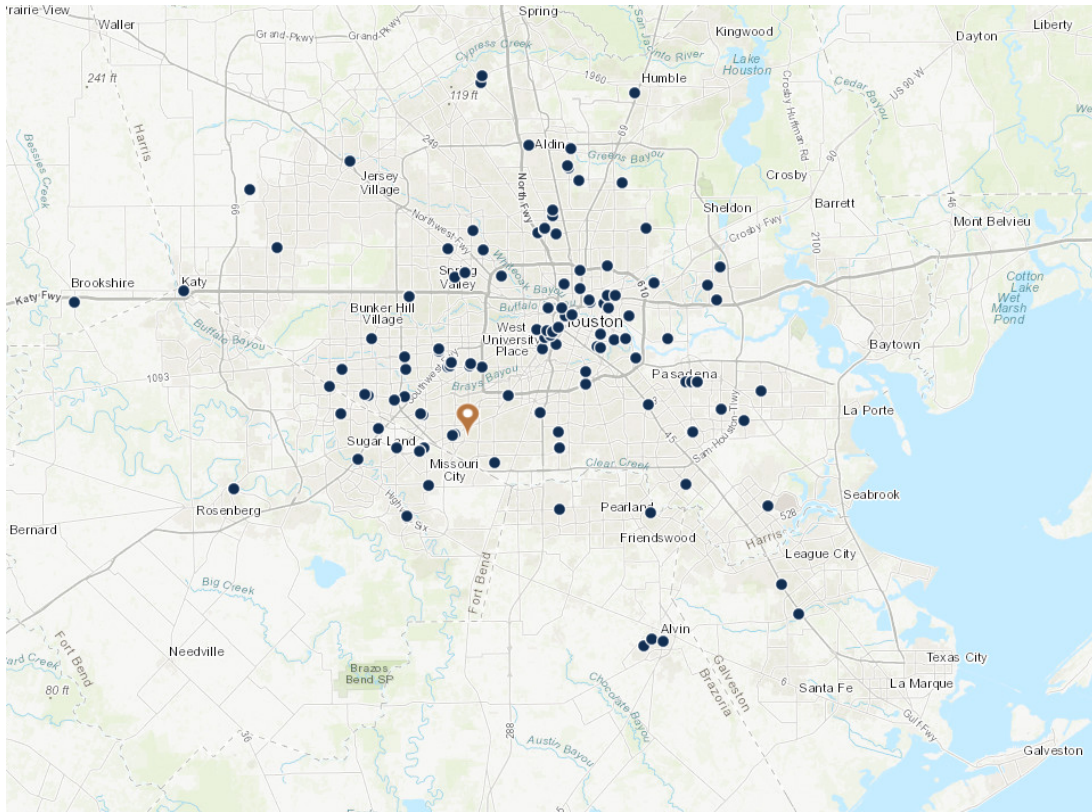
The primary service area has 1,226 licensed inpatient beds as seen in the exhibit below.

Freestanding Private Inpatient Psychiatric Facilities in Harris County			
Facility	Address	City	Beds
Lone Star Behavioral Health Cypress	16303 Grant Rd.	Cypress	24
Behavioral Hospital of Bellaire	5314 Dashwood	Houston	124
Cypress Creek Hospital	17750 Cali Drive	Houston	96
Harris County Psychiatric Center	2800 South MacGregor Way	Houston	208
Houston Behavioral Healthcare Hospital	2801 Gessner Road	Houston	88
IntraCare North Hospital	1120 Cypress Station	Houston	90
Sacred Oak Medical Center	11500 Space Center Blvd	Houston	20
Sun Behavioral Houston	7601 Fannin	Houston	148
The Menninger Clinic	12301 Main St.	Houston	120
West Oaks Hospital	6500 Hornwood Dr.	Houston	144
Oceans Behavioral Hospital of Katy	455 Park Grove Ln.	Katy	48
Kingwood Pines Hospital	2001 Ladbrook Dr.	Kingwood	116
John S. Dunn Behavioral Sciences Center	5615 H. Mark Crosswell Jr St.	Houston	264

Source: Cooperative DSHS/AHA/THA Annual Survey of Hospitals and Hospitals Tracking Database Prepared by: Hospital Survey Unit, Center for Health Statistics, DSHS, 07/2019

Federally Qualified Health Centers

Federally Qualified Health Centers provide comprehensive health care to underserved communities. There are more than 137 community Health Centers within 30 miles of Menninger that provide integrated medical and behavioral services, as seen in the figure that follows.



Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2024, December 12). HRSA Data Center. Find A Health Center.

<https://findahealthcenter.hrsa.gov/?zip=77035&radius=30&incrementalsearch=false>

Health departments

Texas Health and Human Services (HHS) offers mental health and substance use services for families and people of all ages, including:

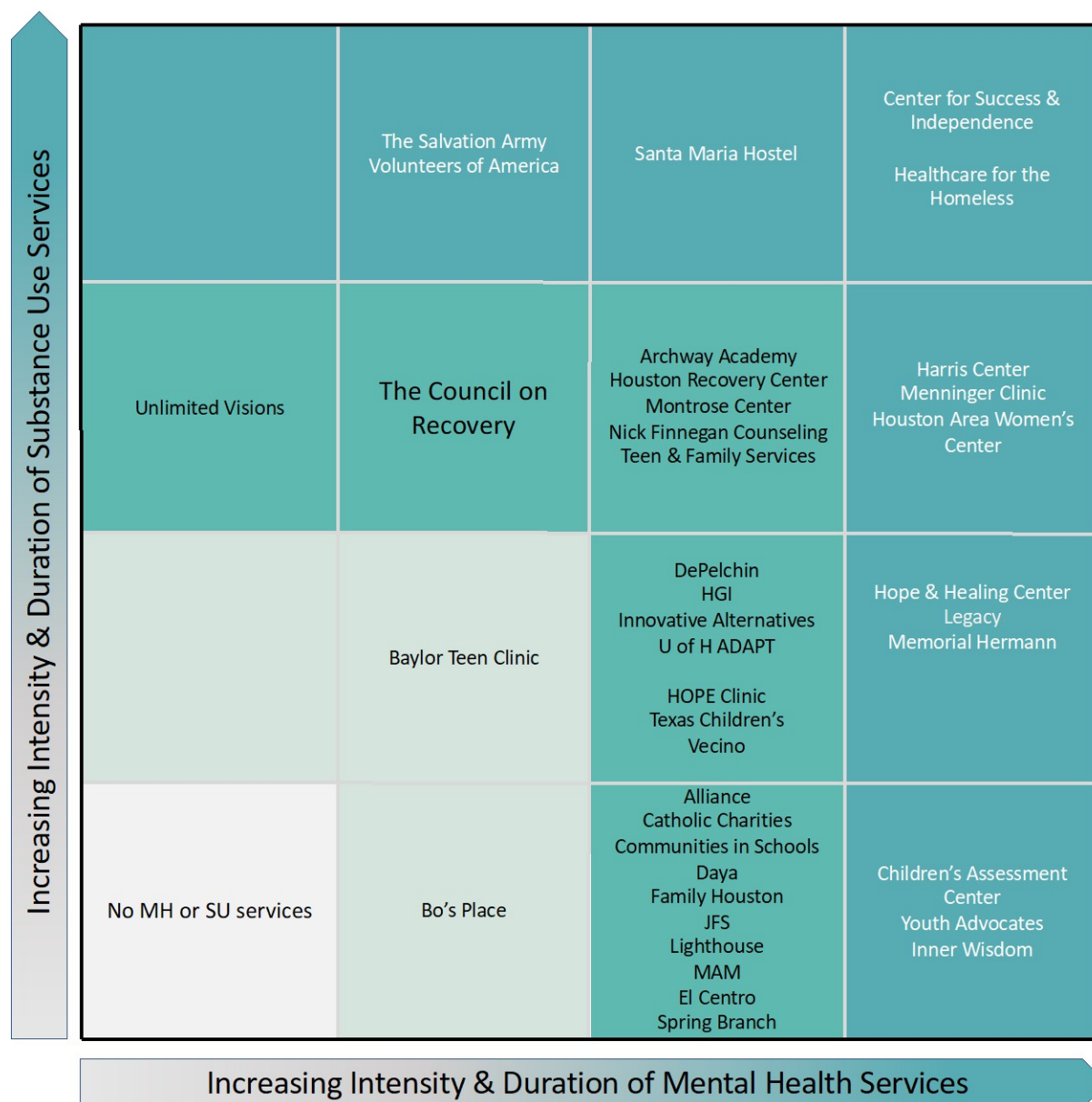
- 10 state psychiatric hospitals (one with three campuses)
- HHSC also contracts with 37 Community Mental Health Centers (also known as Local Mental Health Authorities - LMHAs) to provide mental health services to adults with serious mental illness and children with severe emotional disturbance.

The Harris Center for Mental Health and IDD provides the following mental health services for adults residing in Harris County:

- Medication-related services
- Counseling and psychotherapy
- Medication training and support
- Employment-related skills services
- Housing-related skills services
- Coordination of services
- Other independent living skills services

Other behavioral health resources

The following chart illustrates the array of organizations serving Harris County's substance use and mental health needs and the focus of their services.



Pugil J, Bray P, McArthur K, Sinclair B. *Behavioral Health in Harris County: Who is Who and What They Do*. Houston: Houston Health Funders Collaborative 2019.

Identified health needs

Through the assessment of compiled data, the following behavioral health needs were identified.

Inpatient:

- High care costs and insurance gaps
- Shortage of pediatric inpatient beds
- Inconsistent service access due to socioeconomic and geographic factors
- Limited access to mental health screenings and early treatment
- Stigma hindering help-seeking
- Shortage of trained mental health professionals
- Lack of coordinated and integrated care
- Lack of education about mental health

Outpatient:

- Lack of affordable services where people live and work
- Insurance payment limitations
- Barriers to treatment include transportation, stigma, and knowledge gaps.
- Long waits for treatment
- Shortage of mental health professionals
- Limited assessments available to improve diagnosis

Menninger's next steps include developing an Implementation Plan to address these needs. Priorities will be based on the information gathered through this CHNA. Opportunities for health improvement exist in each area; however, Menninger Leadership will work to identify areas where Menninger can most effectively focus its resources to have a significant impact and develop an Implementation plan for 2025 through 2027.

Appendices

Acknowledgements

Thank you to the following organizations that participated in our key informant interview process: Baylor College of Medicine & Texas Children's Hospital, Communities in Schools, Cornerstone of Houston Team Counseling, The Harris Center, Harris County Public Health, Jewish Family Services, National Alliance for Mental Illness Greater Houston, Network of Behavioral Health Providers, University of Houston College of Medicine – Community Health, and Pasadena Independent School District.

Key stakeholder interview questions

1. In your opinion what are some of the significant mental health issues you are seeing in the community you serve?
2. What are the barriers to accessing or improving mental health care?
3. What needs to be done to address the issues identified in questions #1 and #2 above?
4. How could The Menninger Clinic better meet the mental health needs of the community?
5. How has COVID-19 affected mental health in your community?
6. If Menninger had to choose one issue that you have identified above to focus on, which one would it be?
7. What else should we know about the mental health challenges facing your community, that we haven't asked?

Patient Survey Questions

1. Would you say that, in general, the mental health of your community is...
 - Excellent
 - Very good
 - Fair
 - Poor
 - Don't Know/Not sure
2. Was there a time in the past 12 months when you or someone in your immediate family needed to see a mental health professional but could not because you could not afford it?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Don't Know
3. Do you have insurance, through employment, direct purchase, or government programs that cover medical costs?
 - Yes

- No
 - Don't know
4. What is your US Zip Code?
5. During the past 12 months, did you or someone in your immediate family receive counseling or therapy from a mental health professional, such as a psychiatrist, psychiatric nurse, or a clinical social worker?
- Yes
 - No
 - Don't know
6. What are the main barriers you face in accessing mental health care in your community (select top 3)
- Insurance does not cover services
 - High costs of care
 - Too little time with providers
 - Long waits to get an appointment
 - Poor follow-up after appointment
 - Lack of mental health providers available
 - Transportation to get to appointments
 - N/A I do not face barriers in accessing mental health care
 - Other (please describe)
7. From your experience, how do you think the COVID-19 pandemic has affected mental health in your community (open answer)?
8. What specific resources or services do you think could help improve mental health in your community (open answer)?
- Would you like to enter the raffle to win a mental health self-care basket? Your response will still remain anonymous.

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