



Executive Summary

The mission of the Jefferson Regional Foundation (JRF) is to improve the health and well-being of the 26 municipalities served by AHN Jefferson Hospital within Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. These communities comprise areas within the lower Mon Valley and parts of the South Hills. The Foundation is a convener of people and networks, a source for community-driven data, and a grant maker that works to help reduce community based social determinants of health. The Foundation's strategy on how to impact community health and wellness includes intentionally leveraging resources and broad partnerships to address social determinants while also centering community voice and the experiences of residents.

Following discussions between key community stakeholders and JRF leadership, and in recognition of the importance of collaboration, the Foundation seeks to engage with partners to explore potential areas of collective effort and share resources for the purpose of achieving long-term health improvements. In alignment with and in complement to the 2024-2028 JRF strategic plan, the Foundation is sharing a review of public health statistics and qualitative insights from community engagement efforts that could inform future action.

The community engagement strategies included active listening and thought partnership with the recognition that community voice is necessary to identify, prioritize and create solutions for community health needs. Consequently, the Foundation initiated a process to gather qualitative data by engaging in discussions/interviews with:

- A small sample of Mon Valley residents whose neighborhoods have a lower health index score
- Health care providers
- Nonprofit partners
- And grantee organizations

The Foundation team also gathered local health data of communities within the service area from public sources and compared them to available county, state, and national information. These combined efforts enabled the staff to identify health disparities in communities within the JRF footprint. As a result of both qualitative and quantitative information, the following conditions were elevated and identified as prevalent factors impacting community health within the service area of the Foundation:

- Cancer diagnosis rates
- Prevalence of asthma
- Prevalence of food insecurity

A closer examination of this data reveals that the aforementioned health factors are particularly present within the Mon Valley communities of the Foundation's footprint.

Key Findings:

The following sections present key findings and highlights from an exploration of statistical information on the state of health within the Mon Valley communities of the service area related to the prevalence of cancer diagnoses, asthma diagnoses, and the rate of families who meet

food insecurity standards within the Foundation's footprint. Additional details can be found in the full report.

Cancer:

The overall percentage of adults that have been diagnosedⁱ with cancer (excluding skin cancer) in Allegheny County was 9% in 2022 according to CDC PLACES data pulled from the Allegheny County Health Department.ⁱⁱ Fifteen municipalities in the Jefferson area have rates of adult cancer that are higher than the Allegheny County average.ⁱⁱⁱ Cancer death rates in certain areas of the footprint are also significantly higher than both the County and the State, particularly in the Mon Valley. According to 2022 data, Glassport, Munhall, Homestead, West Mifflin, Duquesne, Port Vue, McKeesport, South Park, Clairton, and Brentwood all have cancer death rates higher than the county and state, ranging from 157.9 to 352.9 per 100,000 residents, with Glassport the highest.^{iv} Additionally, cancer rates amongst White residents under 20 (20.8/100,000) and Black residents under 20 (16.6/100,000) in Allegheny County are higher than the state overall according to 2018-2022 data from the PA Department of Health.^v

Asthma:

Approximately 16% of adults have been diagnosed with asthma state-wide, according to 2022 data from PA Department of Health's BRFSS.^{vi} This matches Allegheny County where 16% of adults have asthma.^{vii} Data provided by the PA Department of Health and the PA Healthcare Cost Containment Council suggests that certain zip codes in the Foundation's footprint have disproportionately high rates of asthma hospitalization discharges. Specifically, zip codes 15025 (Clairton and Jefferson Hills), 15131 (McKeesport), 15133 (includes McKeesport, Liberty, Lincoln, and Port Vue), 15135 (McKeesport), and 15110 (Duquesne), have greater than 104 asthma hospitalization discharges per 100,000 residents in 2021-2022. These rates place in the highest quartile of rates in the state.^{viii}

Recent research also suggests that children in the Mon Valley, close to local industrial centers, have higher rates of asthma than their peers in the rest of the County and the State. A 2020 study found that childhood rates of asthma close to industrial centers were approximately 22.5% compared to about 14% statewide.^{ix} In a continuing effort to further assess the impact of asthma in our footprint, JRF recently signed an agreement with the PA Department of Health Bureau of Community Health Systems School Health Division to acquire school district-level asthma data to better understand childhood asthma in the Foundation's service area. Data on childhood asthma rates is not publicly available, and the Foundation is grateful for this partnership.

Food Insecurity:

Almost 15,000 (16%) households in the JRF portfolio service area receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits compared to 13% of households in Allegheny County and 14% statewide.^x Further, data suggests that households in certain communities within the footprint have disproportionately higher rates of SNAP participation than the County. For example, 25% or more households in Duquesne, McKeesport, Clairton, Homestead, West Elizabeth, and Elizabeth Borough utilize SNAP benefits, while 16 communities overall within the Foundation's footprint have higher rates of SNAP households than the County and State. Recent alterations to SNAP benefit distribution add to the threat of food insecurity in the footprint.

Statement of Position:

While the Foundation acknowledges the resilience of Mon Valley residents, they are faced with increased rates of cancer and asthma and higher rates of food insecurity. One of the primary goals highlighted within the Foundation's strategic plan underscores the importance of considering a collaborative approach in order to support the current and emerging needs of the Jefferson Regional service area. A long-term plan that incorporates cross-sector partnership and community voice is necessary to facilitate transformational change. Therefore, efforts to consider collaborative opportunities that will offer measurable strategies to improve community health are a necessity.

Opportunities for Community Partnership and Intervention:

The Foundation welcomes the opportunity to engage in strategic discussions and leverage combined resources that will lead to actionable results in the improvement of health and well-being.

Recognizing the need to think broadly and creatively to impact health issues presented through this data, we are inviting you as a partner to co-create strategies and share resources that could address both the conditions present in communities as well as the root causes that lead to these disparities. The following are early ideas from community conversations that invite collaborative action:

Cancer:

- 1) Explore the provision of increased low/no-cost cancer screenings with transportation assistance and opportunities for follow-up care.
- 2) Discuss strategies to expand access to community-based cancer diagnostics and treatment by lowering patient out-of-pocket costs.
- 3) Explore expanded nutrition education, food distribution for residents with specific medical dietary needs, and tobacco cessation programming as cancer preventative measures.

Asthma:

- 1) Examine ways to expand access to free or low-cost asthma screenings and treatments, including inhalers, for underserved communities.
- 2) Expand community-based respiratory care to include school-based asthma clinics through collaboration of public, private and educational partners.
- 3) Provide community education and resources to minimize asthma triggers.

Food Insecurity:

- 1) Explore investments in resources that offer fresh, affordable produce.
- 2) Examine educational opportunities, including community and individual gardens that offer supplies and resources, especially in areas where raised beds are necessary due to environmental hazards.
- 3) Co-invest in food pantry networks.
- 4) Support community meal programs.
- 5) Expand investments in home delivered meals to include partnerships with healthcare providers and other community-based systems.
- 6) Explore opportunities to continue SNAP-Ed programming in the Mon Valley due to the ending of SNAP-Ed benefits as of September 2026.

References

- ⁱ The indicator referenced here is “Ever told by a healthcare provider that they have cancer”. For simplification purposes, we have shortened this to “diagnosed”.
- ⁱⁱ 2022 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention PLACES data, accessed through <https://www.alleghenycounty.us/Services/Health-Department/Community-Indicators-and-Health-Data>
- ⁱⁱⁱ Data from the source referenced in endnote i was not available for Elizabeth Township, Forward Township, South Park, and South Versailles
- ^{iv} Allegheny County Health Department, Bureau of Data, Reporting, and Disease Control, accessed at [Community Indicators and Health Data - Allegheny County, PA](#)
- ^v PA Department of Health Enterprise Data Dissemination Informatics Exchange (EDDIE) system, <https://www.phaim.health.pa.gov/EDD/WebForms/ChildhoodCancerCntySt.aspx>, accessed 1/13/2026.
- ^{vi} Pennsylvania Department of Health Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), 2022, [BRFSSState](#)
- ^{vii} PA Department of Health BRFSS data, 2022, accessed through Allegheny County Health Department Community Indicators and Health Data dashboard. [Community Indicators and Health Data - Allegheny County, PA](#)
- ^{viii} PA Department of Health Bureau of Health Promotion and Risk, January 2024, shared during Allegheny County Asthma Task Force September 2025 meeting, 9/11/2025
- ^{ix} [Study: Pittsburgh kids near polluting sites have higher asthma rates | StateImpact Pennsylvania](#)
- ^x US Census Bureau American Community Survey 2023 5-Year Estimates, data analysis performed by JRF staff

Executive Summary Addendum (Abridged Tables—Expanded Tables Available in Full Report)

Executive Summary Table 1: 2022 Adult Cancer Rates of Selected JRF Communities

Community (22)	Adults with Cancer (%)	2022 Population 18+ ^{xi}	% of JRF 18+ Population	Potential Adults w/Cancer ^{xii}
Port Vue	10.1%	2,968	1.7%	300
West Mifflin	9.9%	15,475	9.1%	1,532
Munhall	9.3%	8,840	5.2%	822
Glassport	9.2%	3,487	2.0%	321
Allegheny County	9.0%	1,013,922	n/a	91,253
Clairton	8.5%	4,892	2.9%	416
McKeesport	8.5%	13,878	8.1%	1,180
Brentwood	8.0%	7,699	4.5%	616
Homestead	7.4%	2,207	1.3%	163
Duquesne	7.0%	3,825	2.2%	268

Note: Cancer rate data was not available for South Park, which is mentioned in the key findings section & table 2.

Executive Summary Table 2: 2022 JRF Communities with Cancer Death Rates > Allegheny Co. & PA

Community	Cancer Death Rate 2022 (per 100,000 Residents)
Glassport	352.9
Munhall	254.8
Homestead	249.1
West Mifflin	237.5
Duquesne	227.7
Port Vue	204.4
McKeesport	179.4
South Park	178.3
Clairton	169.6
Brentwood	157.9
Allegheny County	152
State of Pennsylvania	147.6

Executive Summary Table 3: 2023 JRF Municipalities with ≥ 25% Households Receiving SNAP Benefits

Municipality	SNAP Recipient Households	Total Households	% of Households receiving SNAP
Duquesne	1,024	2,101	49%
McKeesport	3,125	7,908	40%
Clairton	881	2,635	33%
Homestead	395	1,437	27%
West Elizabeth	45	164	27%
Elizabeth Boro.	144	584	25%
Allegheny Co.	68,986	546,507	13%
Pennsylvania	734,855	5,235,339	14%

^{xi} US Census Bureau American Community Survey, Population and Housing Unit Estimates, 2022

^{xii} This data was calculated by Jefferson Regional Foundation Staff by multiplying the percentage of adults with cancer by the population of adults in each municipality.