

ACA Reference Guide¹

April 2015

Community Health Needs Assessments: Mapping Tool from the Community of Commons

- The Affordable Care Act creates an opportunity for hospital organizations, numerous governmental public health agencies, and other stakeholders to accelerate community health improvement by conducting **community health needs assessments (CHNA)**, which gives organizations comprehensive information about the community's current health status, needs, and issues. These assessments can help develop **community health improvement plans** by justifying how and where resources should be allocated to best meet community needs.
- The [CHNA developed by the Community of Commons](#) is a free web-based platform to help organizations conduct community health needs assessments. Through interactive maps and community-level indicators it allows you to identify and target specific populations for community health improvement purposes. Additionally, *this tool can be helpful to identify and recruit hard-to-reach populations into your program, learn more about the characteristics of those you serve, and help with your insurance enrollment efforts during this time of significant change.*
 - Its [Vulnerable Population Footprint](#) tool allows you to locate the most vulnerable populations in a particular county or state based on spatial visualization of poverty rate and educational attainment. [Find out how.](#)
 - After locating specific populations in a selected area, you can run [a Core Health Indicators Report](#) that can then be downloaded as a PDF.
 - The [Health Indicators Map Gallery](#) shows maps created by previous users to identify and describe specific populations using demographic and epidemiological data, including information on [cervical](#) and [colorectal](#) cancer incidence.
 - After setting up an account, you can develop your own maps. For example, you may use this tool [to locate the uninsured in specific counties](#) or determine [where immigrant populations reside](#).
 - Watch these [19-minute webinars on how to use the CHNA Tool Kit](#) to get started!

¹ Compiled by Analía Romina Stormo