

Minutes

**Valleywise Community Health Centers Governing Council's
Connecting with the Community Committee
Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust Pavilion
2609 East Roosevelt Street, Phoenix, AZ 85008
2nd Floor, Auditorium 1
September 9, 2025, 3:00 p.m.**

Members Present: Chris Hooper, Chairman
Jason Vail Cruz, Vice Chairman
Earl Arbuckle, Member
Shelbi Bahena, Member
Rebecca Birr, Member
Piedad Blake, Member – *participated remotely*
Dr. Nelly Clotter-Woods, Member – *participated remotely*
Claudia Inabinet, Member
Scott Jacobson, Member
Jee Moon, Member
Irene Noriega, Member – *participated remotely*
Alma Ramirez, Member
Dr. Michelle Barker, Ex-Officio Member

Members Absent: Helen Kennedy, Member
Jose Luis Madera, Member

Others/Guest Presenters: Annie Daymude, Maricopa County Dept. of Public Health
Jessica Francis, Maricopa County Dept. of Public Health
Hamza Rafique, Maricopa County Dept. of Public Health
Tiffany Tu, Maricopa County Dept. of Public Health
Pearl Gore, Maricopa County Dept. of Public Health

Recorded by: Denise Tapia, Deputy Clerk of the Board

Call to Order:

Chairman Hooper called the meeting to order at 3:12 p.m.

Roll Call

Ms. Tapia called roll. Following roll call, she noted that twelve of the fifteen voting members of the Valleywise Community Health Centers Governing Council's Connecting with the Community Ad Hoc Committee members were present, which represented a quorum. Ms. Noriega joined after roll call.

For the benefit of all participants, Ms. Tapia announced the Committee members who participated remotely.

Call to the Public

Chairman Hooper called for public comment. There were no comments.

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General Session, Presentation, Discussion and Action:

1. Approval of Consent Agenda:

a. Minutes:

i. Approve Valleywise Community Health Centers Governing Council's Connecting with the Community Committee meeting minutes dated August 12, 2025

MOTION: Mr. Jacobson moved to approve the consent agenda. Mr. Arbuckle seconded.

VOTE: 12 Ayes: Chairman Hooper, Vice Chairman Vail Cruz, Mr. Arbuckle, Ms. Bahena, Ms. Birr, Ms. Blake, Dr. Clotter-Woods, Ms. Inabinet, Mr. Jacobson, Ms. Moon, Ms. Ramirez, Dr. Barker

0 Nays

3 Absent: Ms. Kennedy, Mr. Madera, Ms. Noriega

Motion passed.

2. Presentation from Maricopa County Department of Public Health on Community Health Needs Assessment Process and Results

NOTE: Ms. Noriega joined at 3:18 p.m.

Ms. Tu provided an overview of Synapse, describing it as a coalition of non-profit and federally qualified health care providers who collaborate to collect data, guiding investments in community health needs assessments (CHNAs). The coalition was comprised of seven partners, engaged in a three-year contractual process that encompassed the development of CHNA primary data collection tools, developing a data workbook, prioritizing health needs, compiling a CHNA report, and creating a strategic plan for Valleywise Health. The initiative would aim to produce a CHNA that would cover years 2027 through 2029 for Valleywise Health.

She explained the community data collection methodology started with community surveys, focus groups, and key informant interviews with all participants residing within Maricopa County.

Ms. Tu stated that 20 health indicators would be organized into seven categories such as access to health care, birth outcomes, and cancer mortality and that a prioritization activity would be conducted to narrow the indicators to a final set of 10 that Valleywise Health would adopt for the CHNA.

She noted that during the 2023 CHNA process, over 18,000 individuals participated in the survey, which was offered in both paper and electronic formats with respondents represented speakers of English, Spanish, and other languages to accommodate diverse preferences.

In 2023, anxiety was the leading health concern in Maricopa County, with evening and weekend appointments identified as the most effective solution for improving access to care; while access to parks and green spaces was rated as a strong community asset, access to affordable housing was rated poorly.

Ms. Tu reviewed the CHNA priorities for Valleywise Health's 2023–2025 cycle, which included diabetes, substance use and abuse, hypertension, heart disease, obesity/overweight, and mental health.

Mr. Arbuckle inquired whether any survey support services were available, such as assistance with completing the survey or translation for individuals who might not understand the questions.

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General Session, Presentation, Discussion and Action, cont.:

2. Presentation from Maricopa County Department of Public Health on Community Health Needs Assessment Process and Results, cont.

Vice Chairman Vail Cruz stated that staff at Valleywise Health's Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) planned to provide support and access for individuals to complete surveys either physically or electronically, utilizing the resources available within the centers.

Mr. Rafique noted that Valleywise Health served 13 individual service areas across Maricopa County. He reviewed the 2023 population demographics, highlighting the majority of residents identified as white, the predominant age group was 25 to 44, the gender distribution was evenly split between male and female, the highest level of education attained was a high school diploma, the median household income was \$87,622, and the unemployment rate was five percent.

He reviewed the top ten health indicators in Valleywise Health's primary service area. The top health indicators for both inpatient hospitalizations (IP) and emergency department (ED) visits included, but were not limited to, all mental health disorders, all injuries, cardiovascular disease, fall-related injuries, and alcohol. The top reasons for deaths included cardiovascular disease, all cancers, all injuries, all drug-related, and hypertension.

He stated that, compared to the average rates from 2019 through 2022, Valleywise Health observed the following percentage changes in 2023: a 29% increase in IP anxiety cases, a 12% increase in ED visits for flu and pneumonia, a 17% increase in alcohol-related ED visits, a 47.1% decrease in ED visits for depression, and a 12% increase in deaths attributed to hypertension.

Mr. Rafique presented the findings from Valleywise Health's discharge and death databases, focusing on IP, ED, and death indicators. The top ten IP diagnoses were depressive disorders, heart failure, diabetes, and pneumonia. For ED visits, other specified upper respiratory infections held the third position, followed by nonspecific chest pain, with respiratory signs and symptoms ranking tenth. In reviewing the death data, heart disease emerged as the leading cause of death, followed by malignant neoplasms, drug overdose, and chronic lower respiratory diseases.

He reviewed race and gender disparity statistics for various health indicators using data from the 2023.

Mr. Rafique mentioned that members of the Connecting with the Community Committee (CCC) would be asked to assign priority scores to each health indicator on a scale from one to five, with one representing the lowest priority and five the highest priority.

The health indicators were chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, hypertension, flu and pneumonia.

Mental health conditions were anxiety, stress, and depression.

Cancer mortality were, breast cancer (female only), cervical cancer (female only), lung cancer, and prostate cancer (male only).

Behavioral health risk factors included opioid overdose, alcohol-related issues, and youth obesity among high school students.

Birth-related indicators focused on infant mortality and low birth weight. Access to health care was assessed through health insurance coverage.

Social determinants of health were also considered, including transportation challenges in households without vehicles, access to food, and access to cool places during the hotter months.

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General Session, Presentation, Discussion and Action, cont.:

2. Presentation from Maricopa County Department of Public Health on Community Health Needs Assessment Process and Results, cont.

Ms. Tu presented the prioritization results based on the ranking the CCC members chose from the presentation data, with health insurance coverage ranking as the highest priority, followed by cardiovascular disease and diabetes. Alcohol-related issues and anxiety were tied in priority, followed by opioid overdose, heat-related illness, depression, breast cancer, and hypertension as the top ten health indicators.

Ms. Tu asked the CCC members whether any of the identified indicators personally resonated with them or if they were surprised by the indicators that ranked among the top ten priorities.

Vice Chairman Vail Cruz stated he was pleased to see behavioral health indicators prioritized higher and warranted attention because he felt they were a hidden epidemic.

Chairman Hooper explained that his perspective was shaped by both the data presented and his own personal experiences. He was glad to see hypertension and cardiovascular disease as top priorities.

Dr. Barker highlighted that welcoming a certain level of bias was appropriate, as it not only followed a thorough review of the data but also ensured that the perspectives of Valleywise Health patients were represented.

Ms. Tu outlined the upcoming steps in the CHNA process, noting that the next meeting would focus on refining the top 10 indicators down to six or fewer, after which the final selection would be submitted to the Governing Council for approval.

Ms. Blake inquired whether related priorities, such as hypertension and cardiovascular disease, could be bundled together to reflect their connection and streamline the focus indicators.

Ms. Tu mentioned there will be an opportunity to combine indicators into specific categories.

Chairman Hooper sought clarification on how the survey questions had been developed and whether factors influenced the adjustments.

Ms. Tu explained that while the survey included standardized questions, it also incorporated input by community partners and stakeholders.

Mr. Arbuckle noted that data on IP, ED, and death indicators were readily available for Valleywise Health but questioned whether comparable information was available for the FQHCs.

Ms. Tu explained that while Valleywise Health discharge data helped highlight disparities, the Uniform Data System (UDS) was additionally used.

Vice Chairman Vail Cruz indicated that all Valleywise Health FQHCs would be tasked with collecting 50 patient surveys, which would be administered onsite within the centers.

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Adjourn

MOTION: Mr. Arbuckle moved to adjourn the September 9, 2025, Valleywise Community Health Centers Governing Council's Connecting with the Community Committee Meeting. Mr. Jacobson seconded.

VOTE: 13 Ayes: Chairman Hooper, Vice Chairman Vail Cruz, Mr. Arbuckle, Ms. Bahena, Ms. Birr, Ms. Blake, Dr. Clotter-Woods, Ms. Inabinet, Mr. Jacobson, Ms. Moon, Ms. Noriega, Ms. Ramirez, Dr. Barker
0 Nays
2 Absent: Ms. Kennedy, Mr. Madera
Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 4:59 p.m.



Denise Tapia
Deputy Clerk of the Board