

Community Health Needs Assessment and Implementation Plan

Hardin County General Hospital, Rosiclare, IL

2026



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

- Executive Summary
- Purpose of a Community Health Needs Assessment
- Background – Hardin County General Hospital & Clinic
- Community Health Needs Assessment Population
- Hardin County General Hospital Service Community Profile

Process / Methodology

- Primary Data
 - Community Survey
 - Focus Group Interview/Survey

Secondary Data

Health Priority Issues

- Identified Needs and Priority Issues

Next Steps

Appendix A - Community Survey

Appendix B - Sources of Data

INTRODUCTION – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Hardin County General Hospital and Clinic conducted a comprehensive Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) during the winter of 2025–2026 to better understand the health needs and behaviors of the communities it serves. The purpose of the assessment was to identify key health challenges, including chronic conditions and high-risk health behaviors, to inform future planning and service delivery.

The CHNA utilized a mixed-methods approach, incorporating both quantitative data and qualitative input. Community surveys and focus group interviews provided valuable insight into local health concerns and service gaps.

Based on analysis of the data collected, the following priority community health needs were identified:

1. Emergency and trauma care
2. Adult primary care, alcohol and drug abuse treatment
3. Women’s Health services
4. Cancer treatment and services
5. Chronic health conditions, including diabetes, heart disease, obesity, and hypertension
6. Mental and behavioral health services
7. Orthopedic care
8. Pain Management

The results of this assessment will guide Hardin County General Hospital and Clinic in strategically allocating resources, strengthening community partnerships, and developing an implementation plan to effectively address these identified health priorities.

PURPOSE OF A COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Provisions of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) require charitable hospitals to conduct a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). A CHNA is a systematic, community-engaged process used to identify and analyze local health needs, as well as community assets and available resources, to plan and act on priority health concerns. An implementation strategy must also be developed to address the identified needs.

The assessment process results in a CHNA report that supports the hospital in planning, implementing, and evaluating strategies and community benefit initiatives.

Beyond ACA compliance, identifying the community’s health needs helps guide resource allocation and assess what services are currently available in the area. It also supports coordination with other organizations to address shared priorities. The CHNA process ensures that community needs are clearly identified, efforts are not duplicated, and the appropriate organizations are engaged to address specific health issues.

HARDIN COUNTY GENERAL HOSPITAL

Hardin County General Hospital is a 25-bed, non-profit Critical Access Hospital licensed by the Illinois Department of Public Health. The hospital is a member of the Illinois Critical Access Hospital Network and the Illinois Hospital and Health Systems Association. Patient care is provided exclusively by qualified professionals who are competent to assess patients and develop plans of care based on assessment findings.

Scope of Services Provided by Hardin County General Hospital includes:

- Hardin County General Hospital and Clinic are staffed by five board-certified physicians and four board-certified mid-level practitioners.
- A nursing staff of 34 nurses, including 13 nurses certified in Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) and 3 nurses certified in Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS) and 1 Trauma Certified.
- Respiratory Therapy
- Cardio-Pulmonary Services
- Radiology
- Ultrasound
- Physical Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Speech Therapy
- CAT Scan including CTA
- Mammography
- MRI
- Social Services
- Medicare Swing Bed
- Rural Health Clinic (Provider-based)
- Sleep Study
- Endoscopy
- Colonoscopy
- Laboratory
- Nuclear Medicine
- In-Patient and Observation Bed
- Emergency Department
- Ambulance

Hardin County General Hospital & Clinic accepts patients regardless of ability to pay. Charity care losses for the Fiscal Year 2025 were a total of \$838,302.17. Charity Inpatient losses were \$196,661.25 which represents 57 for inpatient visits and \$641,640.92 for 1,514 outpatient charity claim visits.

Patient Data for the Fiscal Year 2025:

- 1,110 Inpatient Discharges
- 440 Observation Discharges
- 1,360 Swing bed Discharges
- 14,534 Outpatient Visits, including 4,537 Emergency Room Visits and 201 ER transfers.
- 6,242 Radiology Procedures
- 50,530 Total Lab Procedures
- 7,435 Physical Therapy Treatments
- 1,354 Occupational Therapy Treatments
- 37 Speech Therapy Treatments
- 6,179 Respiratory Procedures
- 1,006 Ultrasound Procedures
- 342 Echo Procedures
- 74 Sleep Studies
- 1,487 EKG Procedures
- 141 Holter Monitoring Procedures
- 38 Minor Surgical Procedures
- 2,061 Cardio-pulmonary Procedures
- 9,037 Clinic Visits
- 280 Nuclear Med Procedures



COMMUNITIES SERVED BY THE HOSPITAL

HARDIN COUNTY GENERAL HOSPITAL (HCGH) PRIMARY SERVICE AREA



Hardin County General Hospital & Clinic's primary service area includes Hardin and Pope Counties. Key facts about our communities from the U.S. Census data are:

- 7,253 reside in the two counties.
- The median age for Hardin County is 55 and for Pope is 50.8
- 26.5% of residents in Hardin County are over 65 with Pope having 32.2%
- Age distribution under 18 years of age is 18% for Hardin County and 10.6% for Pope with the State of Illinois being 21.2% under 18 years of age.
- Median income for Hardin is \$57,155 and \$62,500 for Pope with the State of Illinois Median income being \$81,702 and US having median income of \$83,730.
- On average 19.2% of our population is below the poverty level in Hardin Co. and 16.1% for Pope Co.
- Unemployment rate currently for our population is 5.8 for Hardin and 5.4 for Pope as compared to the state of Illinois at 4.6 and the U.S. at 4.3%.

COMMUNITY PROFILE

Statistics of Hardin and Pope Counties in Illinois:

	Hardin County	Pope County
Population, 2024 (most current data)	3,550	3,703
Persons under 5 years, percent, 2024	4.6%	2.5%
Persons under 18 years, percent, 2024	18.0%	10.6%
Persons 65 years and over, percent 2024	26.5%	32.2%
Female persons, percent, 2025	48.8%	48.5%
White alone, percent, 2024	94.6%	93.3%
Black or African American alone, percent, 2024	1.7%	3.2%
Hispanic or Latino, percent, 2024	2.3%	2.0%
High School graduate or higher, percent of persons age 25+, 2024	88.5%	91.7%
Bachelor's Degree or higher, percent of persons age 25+, 2024	12.2%	16.5%
Housing Units, 2024	2,194	2,357
Homeownership rate, 2024	80.7%	86.1%
Households, 2024	1,484	1,364
Persons per household, 2024	2.37	2.63
Median household income, 2024	\$57,155	\$62,500
Persons below poverty line, percent 2024	19.2%	16.1%

Health Statistics of Hardin and Pope Counties in Illinois:

Birth Characteristics, 2022 – Most current data	Hardin County	Pope County
Births 2022	34	18
Pre-term Births, 2022	5	5
Low Birth weight, 2022	2	3

Disease and Death	Hardin County	Pope County
Heart Disease Deaths	8	13
Cancer Deaths	18	10
Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease	4	6
COVID-19 (2022)	7	3
Stroke Deaths	1	9
Prevalence of Diabetes	3	1
Drug Overdose 2020-2021	0	1

- Heart Disease and Cancer are the leading deaths in both Hardin and Pope Counties.

PROCESS / METHODOLOGY

ASSESSMENT TOOLS & PROCESS

The Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) is both a comprehensive process and a formal document. The assessment process conducted by Hardin County General Hospital includes systematic collection and analysis of data from existing sources related to community demographics, socioeconomic factors, health outcomes, and health care resources. The process also incorporates community surveys, interviews with area service providers, staff and committee meetings held within Hardin County General Hospital, and a review of the existing community Implementation Plan (IPLAN) developed by the Southern Seven Health Department.

This document provides a summary of the information gathered during the initial required cycle of the Community Health Needs Assessment. It is intended to serve as a reference resource until the completion of the next assessment cycle. Collectively, the assessment process and this document support the identification and prioritization of community health needs and inform planning efforts to address those needs effectively.

PRIMARY DATA

Primary data was collected through community surveys, focus group surveys with key collaborative partners, and information obtained from staff and committee meetings conducted within the hospital and clinic.

COMMUNITY SURVEY

Primary data was collected through a survey of residents in Hardin and Pope Counties. Participants provided information on their gender, race, education, and income levels. All responses were kept anonymous. The survey was conducted between November 2025 and January 2026 using an online platform and paper versions. Respondents completed 27 questions in five to ten minutes, covering topics such as individual health and access to care, use of health services, health-related challenges and risk factors, and sources of health information (see Appendix A).

Through the survey we learned the following:

- Nearly 36% of respondents rated their overall health as excellent or very good, while 45% described their health as good.
- About 64% of respondents reported using services at Hardin County General Hospital or Clinic, whereas 31% utilized other physician offices.
- 87% of respondents rated the overall quality of care at Hardin County General Hospital and Clinic as very good or good.
- With more than 26.5% of Hardin County's population and 32.2% of Pope County's population over the age of 65, there is a growing need for services specifically geared toward senior citizens.

Regarding health services, challenges, and risk factors, the results were:

- 62.9% of respondents reported high blood pressure as a personal health challenge, while 51.6% identified high cholesterol as an issue.
- Diabetes or high blood sugar was noted as a challenge by 30.6% of respondents.
- The top five health issues that respondents felt had the most significant impact on the community's health were:
 1. Ability to pay for care
 2. Drug abuse, including both prescription and illegal substances
 3. Lack of health insurance
 4. Cancer
 5. Cost of healthcare
- Additionally, obesity and mental health were cited as major concerns by many respondents.

A key finding of the community health needs survey indicates that chronic conditions—including coronary heart disease, hypertension, diabetes, and obesity—represent some of the most reported diagnoses identified by respondents' primary care providers. Considering the prevalence of these conditions, it is essential for the hospital to implement comprehensive education, screening, and intervention strategies targeted toward both county patients and residents.



FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS:

Focus group surveys were administered to select community stakeholders as part of the Community Health Needs Assessment. Participants were chosen based on their expertise regarding the predominant health issues affecting residents of Hardin and Pope Counties, as well as their ability to identify existing community assets and available resources. The findings derived from these focus group discussions are summarized below.

Focus Group Stakeholders:

- Arrowleaf Human Services Agency
- Southern 7 Health Department
- Community Health & Emergency Services, Inc
- Hardin County Pharmacy

The focus group identified the following as the most significant health factors impacting residents of Hardin and Pope Counties, listed in order of priority:

1. Substance use and addiction
2. Mental health conditions
3. Limited access to transportation for healthcare appointments
4. Cancer, cardiovascular disease, and behavioral health conditions
5. Low levels of health literacy
6. Limited access to nutritious food
7. High prevalence of diabetes

The focus group identified a strong primary care provider and clinic as the most valuable health resources within the community. Participants unanimously agreed that increased investment in prevention, wellness initiatives, and mental health services would meaningfully improve community health outcomes and overall quality of life. The group also emphasized the need for expanded community education related to substance use, along with enhanced recovery and support services.

Additionally, participants highlighted the importance of partnerships with external agencies and cross-sector collaboration to address social determinants of health. Strengthening referral pathways and improving care coordination were identified as essential strategies to ensure individuals receive comprehensive support that extends beyond clinical medical services.

SECONDARY DATA

In the second phase, we analyzed readily available data from secondary sources to identify priority areas of concern when compared to survey data. We gathered health and demographic data from various sources. (Appendix B)

Health Indicators	Hardin	Pope
Adult Obesity	30.60%	29.5%
Physical Inactivity	30%	29%
Uninsured Adults	6%	5%
Primary Care Physicians	1200:1	Data unavailable
Mammography Screenings	35%	43%
Flu Vaccinations	20%	32%
Children in Poverty	29%	26%

HEALTH STATUS AND OUTCOMES: County Health Rankings

County Health Rankings provide a standardized approach to measuring and understanding the overall health of the communities served by Hardin County General Hospital. These rankings assess a broad range of indicators, including health behaviors, clinical care, social and economic conditions, and characteristics of the physical environment. Health outcomes, such as leading causes of death and measure of both quality and length of life, are compared across all counties in Illinois to allow for meaningful evaluation. Higher rankings (for example, 1 or 2) indicate healthier counties. Overall, lower rankings in health factors are generally associated with poorer health outcomes. The Hardin County General Hospital service area consistently ranks among the **lowest** of Illinois' 102 counties, underscoring significant health challenges in the region.

County Health Rankings 2025: Illinois (102 counties)		
County	Health Outcome Rank	Health Factor Rank
Hardin	102	98
Pope	78	80

Consistently Hardin and Pope Counties struggle with obesity and inactivity and are comparable to the state averages.

Once again, both Hardin and Pope Counties have more children living in poverty than the state average and have a higher of percentage of people without access to health foods.

HEALTH PRIORITY ISSUES

Identified Needs and Priorities Issues

Our goal was to identify health challenges and modifiable risk factors that, if addressed, could improve the overall health of our community. We assessed and prioritized the needs of residents in Hardin and Pope Counties. Hardin County General Hospital can make a meaningful impact on select community needs through targeted programs, educational initiatives, and preventive screenings.

Hardin County General Hospital recognizes that it cannot address all the community's identified needs on its own and will rely on other resources better suited to meet specific challenges. The hospital will focus on areas where it can have the greatest impact:

1. **Education and Support for Chronic Diseases:** With high blood pressure, diabetes, and obesity being the most prevalent conditions in the community, the hospital will develop or promote educational programs and activities that encourage healthy lifestyles for both staff and community members. This includes providing guidance on preparing nutritious meals and offering strategies to reduce the risk of chronic disease through education and preventive care.
2. **Mental and Behavioral Health:** The hospital aims to improve access to specialized providers for mental and behavioral health services. It will collaborate with community organizations, schools, and other stakeholders to address mental health concerns and support initiatives that promote well-being.
3. **Substance Abuse Prevention, Education, and Treatment:** Focusing primarily on opioid abuse, the hospital will work with collaborative teams to provide treatment options, educational materials, and referral resources for both inpatient and outpatient care. Efforts will aim to improve access to services and address underlying causes of substance use and abuse.
4. **Public Awareness:** Recognizing a community-wide lack of awareness about available services, the hospital will prioritize developing a clear marketing strategy. This strategy will highlight the hospital's services and mission while working with leadership to enhance the patient experience and engage families, visitors, and the broader community.
5. **Collaborative Partnerships:** The hospital will foster multisector collaborations that promote shared responsibility across all phases of community health improvement, including assessment, planning, investment, implementation, and evaluation.

POTENTIAL RESOURCES TO ADDRESS THE SIGNIFICANT HEALTH NEEDS

As part of the CHNA, we identified community assets and resources that currently support health or have the potential to enhance it. These resources will be considered in developing the implementation plan to address the community's prioritized health needs.

Hospitals Related Service:

- Hardin County General Hospital Clinic
- Case management/social services
- Dietary
- Education & Infection Control
- Emergency Room
- Imaging/Radiology
- Inpatient Services
- Laboratory
- Nursing
- Pharmacy
- Physical Therapy (Inpatient & Outpatient)
- Respiratory Therapy
- Cardio-pulmonary Services

Other Community Organizations, Health Partners, and Government Agencies

- Southern Seven Health Department and Head Start
- Community Health and Emergency Services, Inc.
- Shawnee Development Council
- Area Churches & Civic Organizations
- Hardin County Sheriff Department
- Illinois Area Agency on Aging
- Arrowleaf Human Services
- Hardin County Pharmacy
- Hardin County K-12 Schools
- Pope County K-12 Schools
- American Diabetes Association
- Southeastern Illinois Regional Planning & Development Commission
- Delta Regional Authority
- Rides Mass Transit District
- Rosiclare Rehab & Healthcare Center
- Illinois Department of Health and Family Services
- Southeastern Illinois College
- SIU School of Medicine
- American Cancer Society

NEXT STEPS

Following the completion of the CHNA process and the identification of priority health needs, the next steps include:

- Collaborating with community organizations and government agencies to develop or enhance implementation strategies.
- Creating a three-year implementation plan (FY2026–2028) to address the priority health needs identified in the FY2026 CHNA.
- Integrating the implementation plan into the hospital's strategic planning and budgeting to ensure proper alignment and allocation of human, material, and financial resources.
- Presenting the CHNA report and implementation plan for approval by the hospital's governing body.
- Publicizing the CHNA report and implementation plan widely on the hospital's website.



APPENDIX A – CHNA Survey

Hardin County General Hospital - Community Health Needs Assessment Survey 2025/2026

1. What County do you live in?

Answer Choices	Responses
Hardin	75%
Pope	22%
Other	3%

2. What is your gender?

Answer Choices	Responses
Male	22%
Female	78%

3. What is your age?

Answer Choices	Responses
18-24	2%
25-34	13%
35-44	8%
45-54	14%
55-64	16%
65 and over	47%

4. What is your race?

Answer Choices	Responses
Black or African America	0%
Caucasian / White	95%
Asian	3%
American Indian / Alaska Native	1%
Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	0%
Skipped	1%

5. What is your current employment status?

Answer Choices	Responses
Employed Full Time	41.86%
Employed Part Time	4.65%
Student	0%
Disabled	2.32%
Unemployed	5.81%
Retired	40.69%
Homemaker	4.65%

6. What is your household income?

Answer Choices	Responses
Under \$15,000	7.95%
\$15,000 and 29,999	10.22%
\$30,000 and 49,999	11.36%
\$50,000 and 74,999	13.63%
\$75,000 and 99,999	17.04%
\$100,000 and \$150,000	7.95%
Over \$150,000	4.54%
Prefer not to answer	27.27%

7. What is the highest level of education that you have completed?

Answer Choices	Responses
High School Graduate	18.6%
Some College	39.5%
College Graduate	41.9%

8. What type of healthcare coverage do you have?

Answer Choices	Responses
Medicare A	25.88%
Medicare Advantage	3.52%
Medicare B	1.17%
Medicaid	8.23%
Through Retirement Insurance	9.41%
Through Employer Health Plan	34.11%
Private Insurance	10.58%
Veterans Administration	3.52%
No Healthcare coverage	3.52%

9. How would you describe your overall health?

Answer Choices	Responses
Excellent	13.95%
Very Good	22.09%
Good	45.34%
Fair	17.44%
Poor	1.16%

10. Choose all the statements that apply to you.

Answer Choices	Responses
I exercise at least 3 times per week	32.9%
I eat at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables each day	27.2%
I eat fast food more than once per week	23.8%
I smoke cigarettes	13.6%
I chew tobacco	2.2%
I use illegal drugs	0%
I abuse or overuse prescription drugs	1.1%
I consume more than four alcoholic drinks per day	0%
I receive a COVID shot or booster	34%
I receive a flu shot each year	55%
I have access to a wellness program through my employer	17%
I am not comfortable with my current weight	42%
None of these apply to me	2.2%

11. Have you ever been told by a doctor that you have one of the following conditions?

Answer Choices	Responses
Adult Asthma	14.5%
Angina or coronary heart disease	9.67%
Bacterial Pneumonia	8.06%
Heart Attack	4.83%
Cancer	22.58%
COPD (Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)	6.45%
Diabetes or high blood sugar	30.64%
High Cholesterol	51.61%
Hypertension (high blood pressure)	62.90%
Stroke	1.61%

12. Where do you normally go for routine healthcare?

Answer Choices	Responses
Hardin County General Hospital	17.44%
Harding County General Hospital Physicians Clinic	45.51%
Other Physicians Clinic	31.39%
Health Department	0%
Emergency Room	2.32%
Urgent Care Clinic	0%
Clinic in grocery or pharmacy	0%
I do not receive routine healthcare	5.81%
Other (VA Clinic)	6.97%

13. Is your Primary Care Provider at Hardin County General Hospital?

Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	57.64%
No	42.36%

14. Do you use any outpatient services at Hardin County General Hospital?

Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	64.36%
No	26.43%
If you don't use any outpatient services at HCGH, why?	9.19%
- Have not had great experience with Dr.	
-Got to VA	
-Go closer to home	

15. Which of the following services have you received at the Hardin County General Hospital in Past 12 months?

Answer Choices	Responses
Cardiac Services	11.94%
Flu/Shingles/Pneumonia Shot	32.83%
COVID-19 Shot or Booster	8.95%
Blood Sugar Check	16.41%
Physical Therapy / Occupational Therapy	22.38%
X-rays / Imaging	50.74%
Woman's Health	7.46%
Blood Pressure Check	25.37%
Lab Services	65.37%
Behavioral Health/Mental Health Therapy	0%
Other (ER)	13.43%

16. How long has it been since your most recent visit with your healthcare provider?

Answer Choices	Responses
Less than 1 month	27.90%
At least 1 month but less than 3 months	34.80%
At least 3 months but less than 6 months	15.11%
At least 6 months but less than 12 months	15.11%
12 months or more	6.97%

17. If your last visit was more than a year ago, is it because you--

Answer Choices	Responses
Do not have a medical condition that requires any care and receive health screening from other provider service	50.00%
Do not routinely receive any health screenings	28.57%
Could not schedule due to work or personal conflicts within normal business hours	14.28%
Could not afford visit	7.15%
No transportation	0%
No appointment available	0%

18. Have you or anyone in your household had any difficulty finding a doctor within the past two years?

Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	7.06%
No	92.94%

19. Have you or anyone in your household had any difficulty finding a doctor that treats specific illnesses or conditions in your area within the past two years?

Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	31.71%
No	68.29%

20. How would you rate the quality of care at Hardin County General Hospital and Clinic?

Answer Choices	Responses
Very Good	51.28%
Good	35.89%
Okay	10.25%
Poor	1.28%
Very Poor	1.28%

21. What do you think are the most pressing health problems in your community?

Answer Choices	Responses
Ability to pay for care	70.88%
Alcohol – dependency or abuse	21.51%
Alcohol – underage binge or abuse	10.12%
Drug Abuse – prescription medication	54.43%
Drug Abuse – illegal substances	54.43%
Cancer	46.83%
Child Abuse	10.12%
Cost of healthcare	43.03%
Lack of health insurance	48.10%
Lack of transportation to health care services	32.91%
Lack of dental care	30.37%
Lack of prenatal care	15.18%
Mental health	41.77%
Obesity	40.50%
Teen pregnancy	10.12%
Tobacco use / smoking among adults	34.17%
Tobacco use / smoking among teenagers	25.31%

22. What medical services are most needed in your community?

Answer Choices	Responses
Adult Primary care services	42.46%
Alcohol and drug abuse treatment	42.46%
Cancer treatment	41.09%
Counseling / mental health services	36.98%
Diabetes care	28.76%
Emergency /Trauma Center	45.20%
Heart care services	28.76%
Orthopedic care (bone & joint)	39.72%
Pediatric services	32.87%
Women’s services, such as obstetrics / gynecological services	42.46%
Other	6.84%

23. Where do you get most of your health information?

Answer Choices	Responses
Internet (Facebook / Twitter)	31.64%
Newspaper/Magazine	10.12%
Doctor / Health Professional	77.20%
Television	8.86%
Hospital	26.58%
Radio	2.53%
School	2.53%
Other social media	0%
Health Department	12.65%
Religious Organizations	2.53%
Other	12.65%

24. Please check the type of health screenings and/or services that are most needed in your Community.

Answer Choices	Responses
Blood Pressure	56.00%
Cancer	64.00%
Cholesterol	37.30%
Dental	45.33%
Diabetes	54.66%
Disease outbreak prevention	14.66%
COVID-19 Testing	16.00%
Drug & Alcohol abuse	45.30%
Eating disorders	16.00%
Emergency Preparedness	26.66%
Exercise/physical activity	30.66%
Falls prevention for the elderly	34.66%
Hearing screenings	26.66%
Heart disease	40.00%
HIV/AIDS & STD's	17.33%
Routine well checkups	33.33%
Memory Loss (Dementia /Alzheimer)	36.00%
Nutrition	29.33%
Prenatal care	29.33%
Quitting Smoking / Vaping	33.33%
Suicide Prevention	37.30%
Vaccination/Immunizations	14.66%
Vision Screenings	22.66%
Weight-Loss help	29.33%
Pain Management	42.66%
Other	6.66%

APPENDIX B

SOURCES OF DATA

- CAH Annual Meeting
- Community Needs Assessment Survey
- Southern Severn Health Department – IPLAN 2025-2030
- <https://dph.illinois.gov/data-statistics/vital-statistics/birth-statistics.html>
- <http://www.census.gov/>
- <https://ides.illinois.gov/resources/labor-market-information/laus/current-monthly-unemployment-rates.html>
- <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/health-data/illinois/hardin?year=2025>
- <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/health-data/illinois/pope?year=2025>
- <https://dph.illinois.gov/data-statistics/vital-statistics/birth-statistics.html>
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