

# AdventHealth Lake Wales

2026 – 2028 Community Health Plan



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## Acknowledgements

This community health plan was prepared by Alison Grooms with contributions from members of AdventHealth Lake Wales's Collaborative both representing health leaders in the community and Lake Wales leaders.

We are especially grateful for the internal and external partners who helped guide the development of the community health plan which will enable our teams to continue fulfilling our mission of Extending the Healing Ministry of Christ.

# Executive Summary



# Executive Summary

AdventHealth Polk South, Inc. d/b/a AdventHealth Lake Wales will be referred to in this document as AdventHealth Lake Wales or the “Hospital”.

## Community Health Needs Assessment Process

AdventHealth Lake Wales in Lake Wales, Florida, conducted a community health needs assessment from October 2024 to March 2025. The assessment identified the health-related needs of the community, including low-income, minority and other underserved populations. The priorities were defined in alignment with Healthy People 2030, the national initiative aimed at improving the health and well-being of people in the United States.

In order to ensure broad community input, AdventHealth Lake Wales participated in a Collaborative, All4HealthFL, to help guide the Hospital through the assessment process. The Collaborative included representation from the Hospital, public health experts and the broad community. This included intentional representation from low-income, minority and other underserved populations.

The Collaborative met seven times in 2024-2025. The members reviewed the primary and secondary data, helped define the priorities to be addressed and helped develop the Community Health Plan (CHP) to address those priorities. Learn more about Healthy People 2030 at [health.gov/healthypeople](https://health.gov/healthypeople).

## Community Health Plan Process

The Community Health Plan (CHP), or implementation strategy, is the Hospital’s action plan to address the priorities identified from the CHNA. The plan was developed by the Collaborative, and input was received from stakeholders across sectors, including public health, faith-based, businesses and those individuals directly impacted.

The CHP outlines targeted interventions and measurable outcomes for each priority noted below. It includes resources the Hospital will commit and notes any planned collaborations between the Hospital and other community organizations and hospitals.

The defined goals and activities were carefully crafted, considering evidence-based resources and sought to align with AdventHealth’s organizational and strategic plans. AdventHealth Lake Wales is committed to addressing the needs of the community, especially the most vulnerable populations, to bring wholeness to our communities.



# Executive Summary

## Priorities Addressed

The priorities addressed include:

1. Mental Health
2. Nutrition and Healthy Eating
3. Health Care Access and Quality

See page 10 for the defined strategies and next steps for each priority selected to be addressed.

## Priorities Not Addressed

The priorities not addressed include:

1. Cancer
2. Heart Disease and Stroke
3. Oral Conditions
4. Economic Stability
5. Neighborhood and Built Environment

See page 20 for an explanation of why the Hospital is not addressing these issues.



**The Community Health Plan is a three-year strategic plan and may be updated during implementation based on changing community needs and priorities. AdventHealth recognizes community health is not static and high-priority needs can arise or existing needs can become less pressing. The Hospital may pivot and refocus efforts and resources to best serve the community.**



# Executive Summary

## Board Approval

On February 11, 2026, the AdventHealth Lake Wales Board approved the Community Health Plan goals, activities and next steps. A link to the 2026-2028 Community Health Plan was posted on the Hospital's website on May 15, 2026.

## Ongoing Evaluation

AdventHealth Lake Wales's fiscal year is January 1 – December 31. For 2026, the Community Health Plan will be deployed beginning February 11, 2026, and evaluated at the end of the calendar year. In 2027 and beyond, the CHP will be evaluated annually for the 12-month period beginning January 1 and ending December 31. Evaluation results will be attached to the Hospital's IRS Form 990, Schedule H. The collective monitoring and reporting will ensure the plan remains relevant and effective.

## For More Information

Learn more about the Community Health Needs Assessment and Community Health Plan for AdventHealth Lake Wales.

[adventhealth.com/community-health-needs-assessments](https://adventhealth.com/community-health-needs-assessments).

# About AdventHealth

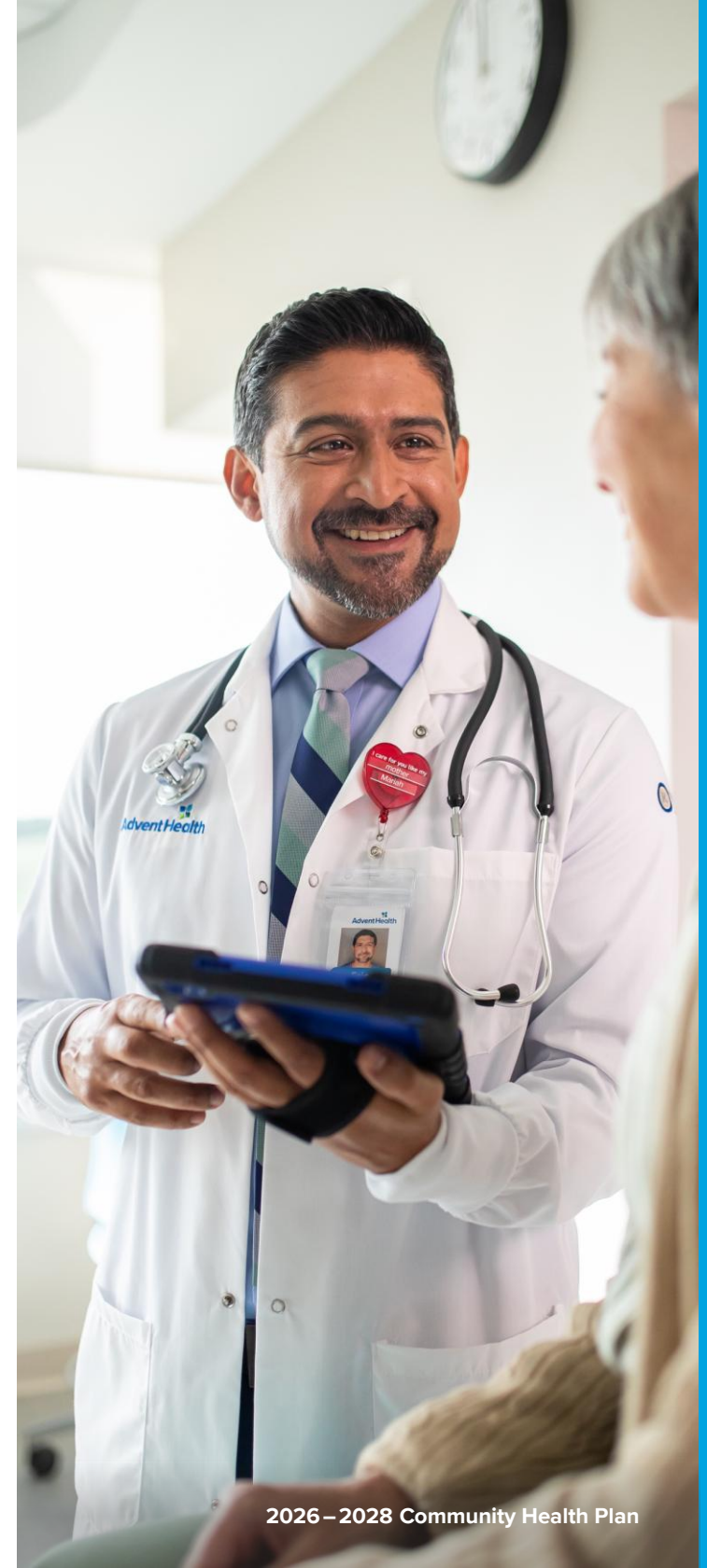


# About AdventHealth

**AdventHealth Lake Wales is part of AdventHealth. With a sacred mission of Extending the Healing Ministry of Christ, AdventHealth strives to heal and restore the body, mind and spirit through our connected system of care. More than 100,000 talented and compassionate team members serve over 8 million patients annually. From physician practices, hospitals and outpatient clinics to skilled nursing facilities, home health agencies and hospice centers, AdventHealth provides individualized, whole-person care at more than 50 hospital campuses and hundreds of care sites throughout nine states. Committed to your care today and tomorrow, AdventHealth is investing in new technologies, research and the brightest minds to redefine wellness, advance medicine and create healthier communities.**

In a 2020 study by Stanford University, physicians and researchers from AdventHealth were featured in the ranking of the world's top 2% of scientists. These critical thinkers are shaping the future of health care. Amwell, a national telehealth leader, named AdventHealth the winner of its Innovation Integration Award. This telemedicine accreditation recognizes organizations that have identified connection points within digital health care to improve clinical outcomes and user experiences. AdventHealth was recognized for its innovative digital front door strategy, which is making it possible for patients to seamlessly navigate their health care journey. From checking health documentation and paying bills, to conducting a virtual urgent care visit with a provider, we're making health care easier — creating pathways to holistic care no matter where your health journey starts.

AdventHealth is also an award-winning workplace aiming to promote personal, professional and spiritual growth with its team culture. Recognized by Becker's Hospital Review on its "150 Top Places to Work in Healthcare" several years in a row, this recognition is given annually to health care organizations that promote workplace diversity, employee engagement and professional growth. In 2024, the organization was named by Newsweek as one of the Greatest Workplaces for Diversity and a Most Trustworthy Company in America.



# About AdventHealth Lake Wales

AdventHealth Lake Wales is a 118-bed hospital located in Southeast Polk County. The hospital has 14 emergency room beds, endoscopy suites, a heart catheterization lab, an offsite outpatient sports med and rehab, an offsite wound care center with hyperbaric oxygen therapy, and imaging services including 3D mammography and outpatient MRI. The hospital offers nationally recognized and award-winning care, including accreditations from the DNV, the American Heart Association and more. The hospital provides a wide variety of services including heart care, neurological care, orthopedics, wound care, general surgery, robotic technology and much more. With a focus on whole-person care, skilled and compassionate caregivers provide individualized care for body, mind and spirit. To learn more about the hospital's services, visit [AdventHealthLakeWales.com](https://www.adventhealthlakewales.com).



# Priorities Addressed



# Health Care Access and Quality

Access to quality health care was ranked number one in the prioritization session amongst the other identified health needs affecting Polk County. An important factor in access to care involves having an adequate number of providers in a community. The rate of primary care providers in Polk County is 75 (per 100,000 population) which is lower than that of the state at 262.9 (per 100,000 population). Polk County has a rate of dental providers at 27.0 compared to Florida at 61.5. Similarly, the rate for mental health providers in Polk County is 81.7 compared to the Florida rate of 133.2. Inadequate health insurance coverage is one of the largest barriers to health care access and the unequal distribution of coverage contributes to disparities in health. The percentage of adults ages 19–64 that do not have health insurance coverage in Polk County is 19.6%, slightly higher than the state of Florida at 17.5%. By focusing on access to care, the Hospital will align local efforts and resources to create targeted strategies to improve access for Polk County residents.

## Goal

**Increase access to high-quality health care services in Polk County.**

## Activity

**Support the Community Paramedicine Program in Polk County.**

## Output

- Number of referrals from AdventHealth
- Number of patients enrolled in the program
- Number of health care visits per patient
- Amount of funding

## Outcome

By December 31, 2028, there will be a 10% increase in health care visits for patients with congestive heart failure participating in the Community Paramedicine Program.

## Hospital Contributions

- Cash donation
- Care Management and CARE 360 team members will provide referrals into the program
- EMS Specialist acts as hospital liaison for operations and communications with Polk Fire Rescue

## Community Partnership

- Polk Fire Rescue

# Health Care Access and Quality

## Goal

Increase access to high-quality health care services in Polk County.

## Activity

Increase providers in specialty care provider network seeing uninsured and underinsured patients.

## Output

- Number of providers
- Number of patients seen by providers
- Number of provider visits per patient

## Outcome

By December 31, 2028, there will be a 5% increase in specialty care providers offering services to uninsured and underinsured patients.

## Hospital Contributions

- AdventHealth Medical Group providers

## Community Partnership

- We Care of Central Florida

# Health Care Access and Quality

## Goal

Increase access to high-quality health care services in Polk County.

## Activity

Support local community organizations working to improve and expand access to health services.

## Output

- Tracking outcomes related to activities of community organizations
- Amount of funding

## Outcome

By December 31, 2028, AdventHealth Lake Wales will increase financial support to local non-profit organizations working to improve access to health services by 10%.

## Hospital Contributions

- Cash donation

## Community Partnership

- Non-profits providing health care services to Polk County residents

# Mental Health

Mental health and mental disorders, including behavioral health and substance misuse, were identified as top health needs from the secondary data, community survey, and focus groups. About 29.4% of survey respondents have been diagnosed with depression or anxiety. Additionally, focus group participants cited a need for increased affordable mental health programming and services. Secondary data showed the percentage of middle school and high school students who reported using any alcohol or illicit drugs in their lifetime to be 13.6% and 27.5%, respectively. Over sixty percent (61.1%) of community survey respondents ranked mental health as a problem in the community. Awareness and the need to address mental and behavioral health has been growing in the country and locally. By including mental health and mental disorders as a priority, the Hospital can align to local, state, and national efforts for resource collaboration and to create better outcome opportunities over the next three years.

## Goal

**Reduce the impact of mental health and substance use disorders in Polk County.**

## Activity

**Provide support for Mental Health First Aid classes in Polk County through a partnership with Peace River Center.**

## Output

- Number of people certified in Mental Health First Aid
- Number of Mental Health First Aid classes
- Amount of funding

## Outcome

By December 31, 2028, through a partnership with Peace River Center, 540 Polk County residents will become certified in Mental Health First Aid.

## Hospital Contributions

- Cash donation
- Community Relations Manager will refer organizations inquiring about classes to Peace River Center

## Community Partnership

- Peace River Center

# Mental Health

## Goal

**Reduce the impact of mental health and substance use disorders in Polk County.**

## Activity

**Support Peace River Center, Polk County’s crisis and mental health services specialist, in opening a satellite location in eastern Polk County.**

## Output

- Number of residents in eastern Polk County serviced by Peace River Center’s new location
- Amount of funding

## Outcome

By December 31, 2028, there will be a 10% increase in access to mental health services in eastern Polk County.

## Hospital Contributions

- Cash donation

## Community Partnership

- Peace River Center

# Mental Health

## Goal

**Reduce the impact of mental health and substance use disorders in Polk County.**

## Activity

**Support local organizations providing mental and behavioral health services in Polk County.**

## Output

- Tracking outcomes related to activities of community organizations
- Amount of funding

## Outcome

By December 31, 2028, AdventHealth Lake Wales will increase financial support to local non-profit organizations working to combat mental and behavioral health issues by 10%.

## Hospital Contributions

- Cash donation

## Community Partnership

- Non-profits serving Polk County residents suffering with mental or behavioral health issues

# Nutrition and Healthy Eating

In Polk County, 40.9% of adults are obese. This is higher than the state values, although not significantly. Additionally, the food insecurity rate in Polk County is 13.7% according to Feeding America’s 2022 data<sup>1</sup>. According to Feeding America, food insecurity is when people cannot access the food they need to live healthy and good, quality lives. Over thirty-three percent (33.4%) of Polk County residents surveyed reported themselves as food insecure and 78.9% stated that they do not eat at least three servings of fruits and vegetables every day. An unhealthy diet can lead to lifelong chronic and costly illnesses, thereby choosing this as a priority, the Hospital can work alongside other community organizations to address this issue.

## Goal

**Improve health by promoting healthy eating and making nutritious foods available to community members.**

## Activity

**Provide meals for the Lake Wales Care Center’s Meals on Wheels program.**

## Output

- Number of meals prepared and donated
- Number of meals served
- Number of team member hours donated

## Outcome

By December 31, 2028, AdventHealth Lake Wales will donate 32,400 prepared meals to the Lake Wales Care Center to help feed those in need.

## Hospital Contributions

- In-kind donation of staff time
- In-kind donation of meals

## Community Partnership

- Lake Wales Care Center

<sup>1</sup> Map the Meal Gap 2022 | Feeding America

# Nutrition and Healthy Eating

## Goal

Improve health by promoting healthy eating and making nutritious foods available to community members.

## Activity

Support Polk County residents with nutritious produce through partnerships with UF IFAS Extension and The Freedom Tour.

## Output

- Number of health and nutrition classes
- Number of people receiving health and nutrition lessons
- Number of people receiving \$10 worth of free produce at each class
- Pounds of produce distributed
- Amount of funding

## Outcome

By December 31, 2028, AdventHealth Lake Wales will increase access to produce for Polk County residents participating in health and nutrition classes by 10% through a partnership with UF/IFAS Extension and The Freedom Tour.

### Hospital Contributions

- Cash donation

### Community Partnership

- UF/IFAS Extension
- The Freedom Tour



# Nutrition and Healthy Eating

## Goal

Improve health by promoting healthy eating and making nutritious foods available to community members.

## Activity

Support local organizations addressing food insecurity.

## Output

- Tracking outcomes related to activities of community organizations
- Amount of funding

## Outcome

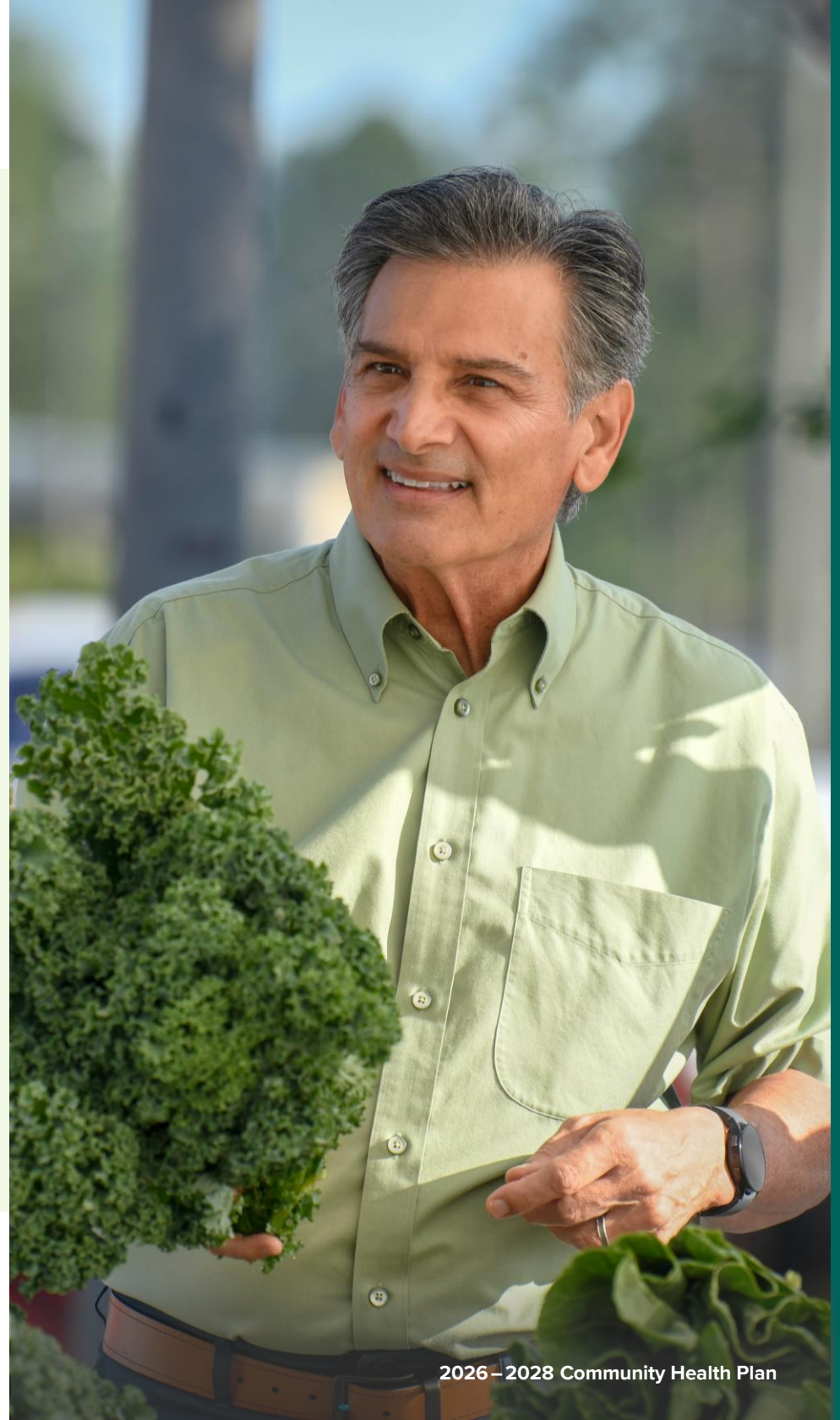
By December 31, 2028, AdventHealth Lake Wales will increase support to local non-profit organizations working to combat food insecurity by 10%.

### Hospital Contributions

- Cash donation

### Community Partnership

- Non-profit organizations serving Polk County's food insecure population



# Priorities Not Addressed



# Priorities Not Addressed

AdventHealth Lake Wales also identified the following health needs during the CHNA process. In reviewing the CHNA data, available resources and ability to impact, the Hospital determined these needs will not be addressed.

## Cancer

Though cancer is the second leading cause of death, and the death rate in Polk County due to cancer is slightly higher than that of the state, (150.8 versus 138.3 per 100,000 population respectively), the Collaborative did not select it as a top issue to address. Other priorities were voted as more important and feasible for the Hospital to make impact through collaborations and partnership programming.

## Heart Disease and Stroke

Heart disease and stroke as a topic on its own did not come through as one of the top three issues to be addressed. Though, it is the leading cause of death, and 33.2% of survey respondents were told by a medical provider that they have hypertension and/or heart disease, the Collaborative did not perceive this a top issue to be addressed. The Hospital did not select this as a priority as there are already several other community organizations actively addressing this need in the community who are better positioned to make an impact.

## Oral Conditions

Throughout the assessment, access to care was identified as a major issue, but specifically access to dental care was noted as a common concern among participants. Over twenty-five percent (25.8%) of survey respondents reported that they needed dental care and did not receive it within the past 12 months. Secondary data showed that the rate of dentists per 100,000 population in Polk County is 27, which is significantly lower than that of the state at 61.5. While the Hospital agreed that dental care is an important issue to address, they felt that prioritizing access to care, and including oral conditions

into this category, was the best method instead of selecting as its own priority area.

## Economic Stability

In the Hospital's community, 28.9% of residents are housing cost-burdened, or paying over 30% of their income to housing costs. Over fourteen percent (14.7%) of Polk County residents are living below the federal poverty level and 33% fall into the ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) Household category. ALICE households are those earning above the federal poverty level but still struggling to afford necessities for optimal quality of life. The exceeding cost of living in the community is significant; however, the Hospital did not perceive the ability to have a measurable impact on the issue within the three years allotted for the Community Health Plan with the current resources available to the community and the Hospital at this time.

## Neighborhood and Built Environment

Polk County is the fourth largest county by land in the state. There are many rural areas throughout the area, making neighborhood and built environment an issue for many residents. During the assessment transportation was often cited as a barrier to receiving care. In Polk County 5.3% of households do not own a vehicle. Access to transportation significantly limits access to health and health care, and while this is an issue, the Hospital felt addressing other needs were more feasible.



**AdventHealth Polk South, Inc. d/b/a  
AdventHealth Lake Wales**

CHP Approved by the Hospital Board on: February 11, 2026

For questions or comments please contact:  
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