

**Community Health Needs Assessment
Implementation Strategy for
Lindsborg Community Hospital**

April 2018

Background and Process

In 2016, the leadership of McPherson Hospital in McPherson, Lindsborg Community Hospital in Lindsborg, Mercy Hospital in Moundridge, and the McPherson County Health Department chose to collaborate in creating a community health needs assessment (CHNA). Provisions of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) require charitable hospitals to conduct community health needs assessments every three years, and adopt implementation strategies to meet identified needs.

Further, the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) defines public health accreditation as the development of a set of standards, a process to measure health department performance against those standards, and reward or recognition for those health departments who meet the standards. This accreditation process also requires a periodic community health assessment.

The service area assessed was McPherson County, Kansas. The assessment combines existing secondary data with information gleaned from a survey made available to county residents and workgroup feedback representing a broad cross section of organizations from throughout the target area. After reviewing this data and compiling and reviewing existing resources, a list of prioritized needs has been developed.

Needs Identified and Prioritized

Results of the survey indicated perceived health issues in the county. The identified weaknesses were reviewed and prioritized by a workgroup comprised of a cross section of survey respondents from throughout the county. This group met to discuss survey results and explore relevant county secondary data from various sources indicated in this report. The workgroup examined the top health issues gleaned from the survey to arrive at a prioritized list.

The survey and prioritization process looked at 3 main areas: 1) Barriers to Access 2) Risky Behaviors and 3) Health Problems. The two top Barriers to Access are availability to medical specialists and hours of operation. The top three Risky Behaviors are drug abuse, texting/cell phone use while driving and alcohol abuse. The three top Health Problems from the survey are obesity, cancer and mental health issues.

During the workgroup prioritization discussion, the group as a whole concurred with the survey results regarding the most prominent health problems in the county as obesity, cancer and mental health issues. Comments made indicated that some of these issues require a long-term, slow solution and that results will not be seen in the short-term. Others may require immediate attention that could see results. Through discussion, the issue of mental health challenges could be more of a priority in strategy development, especially considering its relative weight in comparison to the cancer concerns from a percentage of respondents. The difference in percentage is very close.

A common theme through discussion was that strengthening families should be a key component to any strategy in addressing these issues. The development of health lifestyles should begin at home and the encouragement of healthy family values is critical, teaching children at a young age the importance of overall good health, nutrition and well-being.

The Community Health Needs Assessment was approved in June of 2016 by the board of trustees of each of the three hospitals mentioned above.

Action Plan for Availability to Medical Specialists

Access to specialists at a Critical Access Hospital like LCH is typically through referral relationships to larger hospitals or through outreach clinics. LCH has outreach clinics including general surgery, cardiology, podiatry and behavioral health. The specialty providers provide consultation and even procedures on varying amounts of days per month. Patients are also referred either through the clinic or out of the Emergency Department to those specialty services needed.

The 2017 Action Plan included the plan to have Orthopedic consultation and procedures available at LCH. That goal was achieved in 2017. Unfortunately, the surgeon performing this service discontinued services with Salina Regional Health Center and LCH. We are back in search of further Orthopedic services, as a part of SRHC. The Salina Regional Orthopedic Clinic in Salina continues to have the services of Dr. Hawkes along with multiple physician assistants and athletic trainers (ATC). One of the ATC's began providing services to USD 400 in Lindsborg at the beginning of the 2016-17 school year and has continued.

In the 2017 Action Plan, telemedicine was discussed as a means of gaining access to specialists. Diabetic Education continues to be available through telemedicine. In 2017, we also implemented an Emergency Department telemedicine application from Avera Health in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. The service enables our Emergency Department providers and nurses to push a button and an Emergency Department physician in Sioux Falls South Dakota is able to see and talk to the patient and staff in the ER to assist in managing the patient. Approximately \$90,000 has been budgeted to support this application. It is a service that isn't billed to the patient.

Action Plan for Hours of Operation

With regards to hours of operation, we have been able to offer 8am-10am walk-in care for patients of the Family Health Care Clinic, along with scheduling until 6 pm with Kelsey Swisher PA four days per week.. Both of these changes started in 2016 and will continue through 2018. They have enabled much greater ease of access for established clinic patients in the morning and after hour's availability.

In May of 2016, LCH began the process of developing a remodel plan to better utilize newly available pharmacy space and to improve overall flow and access for our patients. A part of the plans that have been developed includes turning the vacated pharmacy space into an urgent care clinic. Upon completion of the approximate \$3 million remodel project, 7 day per week urgent care services will be offered. This will greatly expand access to these services to our service area and beyond. The construction is expected to begin in May of 2018 and finish in the fall of 2019. It is anticipated that the urgent care clinic will begin operations in April of 2019.

Action Plan for Risky Behaviors

Drug and alcohol abuse typically go hand in hand. Part of the action plan will be to continue to perform alcohol and drug screening in the clinic and Emergency Department with referral to the Central Kansas Foundation or other facilities as needed. Standardized evaluation tools in the hospital and clinic EMRs improve the consistency of screening for these behaviors.

Another current nationwide challenge is the abuse of opioid medications. The Family Health Care Clinic has adopted policies to monitor and reduce the amount of opioids, as per Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines. Improved standardization and policies have been developed in the Emergency Department as well. These actions will be ongoing in development, education and enforcement.

Action Plan for Obesity Health Problem

In October of 2016, Greg Lindholm PA began offering Medically Supervised Weight Management services through the Family Health Care Clinic. Through this service, he provides special lab testing, dietary recommendations and chronic weight management. A fitness assessment is also available through the LCH physical therapy department to coincide with the program. He also travels to Larned, Great Bend and Abilene multiple times per month to provide this specialty service.

Late in 2017, Jade Banning PA, joined the Family Health Care Clinic to assist Greg Lindholm PA in providing the Medically Supervised Weight Management services. She currently sees patients one afternoon per week and may expand as able. The amount of referrals to this specialty service continues to increase, both from area physicians and through word of mouth. Marketing also continues throughout the areas served.

Renee Riedel, RDLD, CDE also joined the LCH healthcare team in 2017. She provides part-time dietary consultation for inpatient care but also outpatient consultation. She is available at least weekly for outpatient visits.

As a part of the managing the health of our clinic population, each patient's BMI will be recorded in the electronic medical record. For those patients whose BMI falls outside desired ranges, providers will be expected to address this health concern. Addressing it may take the form of education, consultation to a dietician like Ms. Riedel or referral to the Medically Supervised Weight Management program.

Action Plan for Cancer Health Problem

Cancer is a difficult issue to address in the short term. Our focus at this point is to utilize our electronic medical record (EMR) to identify those who use tobacco and provide tobacco cessation assistance. We are also using our EMR to provide management of cancer screening exams like colonoscopy and mammography. These screening tests may not prevent cancer but can assist in early detection and treatment. The percentage of patients receiving appropriate screening exams are being measured and compared against national benchmarks. Screening colonoscopies, mammograms and labs are also performed at LCH. Following the dreadful diagnosis of cancer, patients often seek follow-up outpatient services like labs, radiology exams and outpatient nursing treatments provided at LCH. Local services allow them to stay close to home.

Lindsborg Community Hospital manages the Smoky Valley Cares Fund. This fund is available to pay for cancer screening exams for those without insurance. The fund also provides grants of up to \$500 for those from the Smoky Valley who have a cancer diagnosis and have a need for financial assistance in their battle of this dreaded disease. Fund raisers will be performed to continue to raise money for this charitable fund.

Action Plan for Mental Health Treatment

Mental Health treatment is a challenge throughout the state and country. Lindsborg Chief of Police Tim Berggren and LCH Administrator Larry Van Der Wege participate in monthly quarterly county-wide meeting with law enforcement and health care professionals to try and develop better options to care for those in our community suffering from a mental health crisis. Through discussion and collaboration with local mental health partners as well as the State facility in Larned, more timely access has improved.

Also as a part of this, Prairie View Mental Health and LCH have partnered to provide emergency screening through telemedicine. By using an iPad on a secure application, the mental health screening can be performed from a distance, thus saving the time of a screener to drive to Lindsborg. LCH will continue to utilize their relationships with Prairie View Mental Health and Veridian Behavioral Health to provide mental health care to its patients. Central Kansas Foundation is also utilized to assist those benefitting from a referral for alcohol or drug treatment.

Action Plan for Strengthening Families

In October of 2016, LCH provided a grant of \$15,000 to a non-profit organization to start The Sprout House child care facility. LCH believes having stable infant through grade school child care is important for working parents. Further action items for strengthening families have not been identified at this time.

Circles of McPherson County is part of a national program to assist families. Taken from its website, *"Circles connects people in relationships across income lines and helps develop clear goals for education and stable income. Circles also focuses on supporting families to help themselves completely out of poverty."* LCH Administrator Larry Van Der Wege began serving on the board of the local chapter, Circles of Smoky Valley, in the fall of 2017. He will continue to serve in this capacity through 2018. The LCH Employee Committee has also designated three months' worth of employee donations to this entity. The amount donated is typically around \$500.

Although not specific for just "strengthening families", LCH took part in training local lay people and two non-clinical employees in teaching management of chronic conditions. The program – developed by Stanford University – is designed to teach people from the community on how to manage their chronic condition, through research, goal setting and partnership with their medical provider(s). LCH has already begun providing the session course at no cost to members of their service area. They will continue to have classes throughout 2018 and beyond. The initial training for the local teachers was provided through a partnership with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment and the Kansas Foundation for Medical Care.

In Closing

A number of areas are being addressed to improve the health of McPherson County and specifically, the LCH service area. We will continue to develop, measure and assess the success of these actions over the next two years.