

Community Health Needs Assessment and Implementation Plan 2014–2016

New Ulm Medical Center, a part of Allina Health, cares about improving the health of the communities it serves. To do so, New Ulm Medical Center worked with community partners to conduct a community health needs assessment and develop a specific, local implementation plan to respond to the identified community needs.

Executive Summary

HOSPITAL SUMMARY

New Ulm Medical Center (NUMC) is a part of Allina Health, a not-for-profit health system dedicated to the prevention and treatment of illness through its family of clinics, hospitals, care services and community health improvement efforts in Minnesota and western Wisconsin. New Ulm Medical Center serves Brown County and sections of Sibley and Nicollet counties in south central Minnesota. The Medical Center offers an extensive range of care options with more than 30 affiliated physicians and a full complement of visiting specialists and is accredited by the Joint Commission. NUMC is an integrated health care organization, the result of a merger between Sioux Valley Hospital and the New Ulm Medical Clinic in 1996. This integration culminated many years of close cooperation between the two facilities, which had been operating on the same campus since 1991, when physicians built a new clinic adjacent to the hospital. New Ulm Medical Center also has a long history of working to improve health in the community it serves through both charitable giving by the New Ulm Medical Center Foundation and direct programming efforts which address health needs in the community.

New Ulm Medical Center's community health needs assessment (CHNA) was conducted in collaboration and partnership with community members, community organizations, stakeholders from local public health and internal stakeholders. These partners assisted in the development of the hospital's priorities as well as in building the implementation plan.

TARGET AREAS AND POPULATIONS

For the purposes of community benefit and engagement, Allina Health divides its service area into nine regions. The region associated with the New Ulm Medical Center is known as the Southwest Region and primarily covers Brown County and sections of Sibley and Nicollet counties in Minnesota. For the Southwest Region Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA), the focus of inquiry was Brown County, which is the primary service area for New Ulm Medical Center.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The needs assessment plan was based on a set of best practices for community health assessments developed by the Catholic Health Association with the purpose of identifying two to three regional priority areas to focus on for FY 2014–2016. The process was designed to rely on existing public data, directly engage community stakeholders and collaborate with local public health and other health providers. The Southwest Region Community Engagement Lead guided the effort for New Ulm Medical Center.

The New Ulm Medical Center assessment was conducted in three stages: data review and setting priorities, community health dialogues and community assets inventory, and action planning. The process began in April 2012 with the development of the CHNA plan and was completed in August 2013 with the final presentation of the assessment and action plan to the New Ulm Medical Center Community Benefit Advisory Council and the New Ulm Medical Center Board of Trustees. The following is a description of the assessment steps and timeline created by the CHNA Team.

DATA REVIEW AND PRIORITIZATION

The data review and priority-setting phase began with the compilation of existing health-related data. Stakeholders reviewed three datasets, including Stratis Health Minnesota County Profiles, Minnesota County-Level Indicators for Community Health Assessment, and County Health Rankings. They then developed an initial list of priorities. Assessment stakeholders used the Hanlon Method, a systematic prioritization process, to rank the health-related issues based on three criteria: size of the problem, seriousness of the problem, and estimated effectiveness of the solution. Stakeholders were then asked to consider the numerical rankings given to each issue along with a set of discussion questions to choose the final priority issues.

The prioritization process identified the following three priority issues for the community:

1. **Obesity**
2. **Substance abuse**
3. **Mental health**

COMMUNITY DIALOGUES

In spring 2013, New Ulm Medical Center held meetings designed to solicit feedback from the community on how the hospital could most effectively address the selected priority issues. These community dialogues were an opportunity for New Ulm Medical Center to hear from a broader group of community members, identify ideas and strategies to respond to the priority issues and inform the action-planning phase of the needs assessment. A dialogue report summarizes the findings and will guide the development of the implementation plan.

COMMUNITY ASSETS INVENTORY

Between the community health dialogues and the action-planning phase, the Community Engagement Council for New Ulm Medical Center developed an inventory of existing programs and services within the region related to the priority areas identified in the needs assessment. The inventory included the location of the program (hospital, clinic or community) as well as the target population and community partners. The purpose of the inventory was to identify:

- Gaps in services and opportunities for new work
- Where and with whom there is a lot of work already being done
- Opportunities for partnership and/or collaboration.

ACTION PLANNING

The final phase of the CHNA process was to develop the implementation plan for New Ulm Medical Center. The implementation plan is a set of actions that the hospital will take to respond to the needs identified through the community health needs assessment process. New Ulm Medical Center used its Community Benefit Advisory Council to engage with internal and external stakeholders including representatives from Brown County Public Health, New Ulm Park and Recreation, United Way of Brown County, New Ulm Medical Center employees and physicians whose work relates to these priorities, and the New Ulm Medical Center Board of Trustees to develop the implementation plan for FY 2014–2016.

The process included four steps:

1. Identifying key goals, objectives and indicators related to the priority issues
2. Reviewing Community Health Dialogues report and Community Assets Inventory

3. Selecting evidence-based strategies and programs to address the issues
4. Assigning roles and partners for implementing each strategy.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The implementation plan is a three-year plan depicting the overall work that New Ulm Medical Center plans to do to address its priority issues in the community. Annual work plans will be developed to provide detailed actions, accountabilities, evaluation measures and timelines.

Obesity

Goal: Reduce obesity and increase physical activity

INDICATOR

- Reduce proportion of adolescents and adults who are overweight or obese

New Ulm Medical Center's strategy to address obesity and encourage physical activity in its community will focus on two key areas: education around the risks of obesity, and providing programs that reduce obesity and increase physical activity in the community by encouraging and motivating people to take actions to improve their overall health. Planned programs include:

- Continuing partnerships through the Heart of New Ulm on programs designed to reduce obesity, such as expanding access to healthy foods, health screenings, healthy cooking classes and policy improvements that support healthy living. *Partners: public health, local restaurants, farmers markets, community co-ops, local community groups, employers, Minneapolis Heart Institute Foundation*
- Continuing partnership with the University of Minnesota for developing and implementing programs that support family-based and design approaches to addressing obesity in the community. *Partners: University of Minnesota, community groups*
- Creating and supporting programming that combines educational, environmental and behavioral activities at worksites and community centers. *Partners: senior centers, community fitness centers, clinics, employers*
- Enhancing and expanding options for physical activity and nutrition education using the Health Powered Kids developed by Allina Health.

Partners: clinics, local school districts, community programs targeting children.

- Facilitating and promoting nutritional coaching and groups targeting families and children. *Partners: schools, community centers, community programs*
- Providing motivational talks in the community encouraging healthy changes in behavior. *Partners: providers, clinics, public health, local health and wellness groups and organizations.*

Substance abuse

Goal: Support programs and provide education in the community addressing substance abuse

INDICATORS

- Increase the proportion of adolescents who perceive great risk associated with substance abuse
- Reduce the proportion of persons engaging in binge drinking of alcoholic beverages
- Reduce the past-year nonmedical use of prescription drugs.

New Ulm Medical Center's strategy to address substance abuse in its community will focus on two key areas: supporting programs in the community which focus on the prevention and treatment related to substance abuse and providing community education designed to help prevent substance abuse. Planned programs include:

- Support and promote resources for prescription drugs drop-off and disposal site. *Partners: Law enforcement, physicians, community organization, public health*
- Providing education to providers and community members around substance abuse identifying the signs of substance abuse in individuals. *Partners: Law enforcement, physicians, community organization, public health, employers*
- Offering integrative workshops for parents and educators on how to discuss issues related to substance abuse with children and adolescents. *Partners: public health, employers, schools*
- Adding substance abuse and recovery resources to the Heart of New Ulm's after-screening resource guide. *Partners: Heart of New Ulm partnership*

Mental health

Goal: Improve access to mental health-related resources in the community and address stigma related to mental health

INDICATORS

- Increase the proportion of adults and children with mental health disorders who receive treatment
- Reduce stigma around mental health issues.

New Ulm Medical Center's strategy to address mental health in its community will focus on two key areas, reducing the stigma around mental health conditions and treatment and providing and facilitating education and programming around mental health both to members of the community and to health care providers. Planned programs include:

- Partnering with community partners to host depression screenings at community events, workplaces and schools. *Partners: Public health, employers, schools*
- Supporting and developing programs that provide individuals with the tools to improve mental wellness and life-balance. *Partners: Public health, employers, schools*
- Developing and offering classes to the community focused on recognizing the symptoms related to mental illness, and providing people with the resources and knowledge to help individuals in

crisis connect with appropriate professional, peer, social and self-help care. *Partners: Public health, mental health advocacy organizations*

- Actively engaging providers in public discussions around mental health and mental illness with the goal of decreasing stigma. *Partners: Public health, employers, schools*

CONCLUSION

As a not-for-profit hospital, New Ulm Medical Center is dedicated to improving the health of the communities it serves. This implementation plan is intended to show that the medical center will partner with and support community and clinical programs that positively impact the identified health needs in 2014–2016. In addition, the hospital will participate in system-wide efforts, as part of Allina Health, that support and impact community health. There are other ways in which New Ulm Medical Center will indirectly address these priority issues along with other needs, through the provision of charity care, support of Medicare and Medicaid programs, discounts to the uninsured, among others. New Ulm Medical Center will continue to engage with the community to ensure that the work in the plan is relevant, effective and to modify its efforts accordingly.

The full report for the New Ulm Medical Center's community health needs assessment can be found at allinahealth.org.



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