



2022 Community Health Needs Assessment Implementation Strategy

I. Introduction:

Community Health Needs Assessments (CHNA) are a tool used to help communities determine their capacity and use of resources by residents. It is also the foundation for improving and promoting the health of county residents. The community health assessment is a key step in the continuous community health improvement process. The role of the process is to identify factors that affect the health of a population and determine the availability of resources within the county to adequately address these factors.

Avera Hand County Memorial Hospital is a community hospital located in Miller, SD, county seat for Hand County. Hand County is the hospital's primary service area. The hospital is designated by Medicare as a critical access hospital and is a member of the Avera Health System based out of Sioux Falls, SD. Avera is a health ministry rooted in the Gospel. Avera's Mission is to make a positive impact in the health of persons and communities by providing quality services guided by Christian values.

Avera Hand County Memorial Hospital will conduct a community health needs assessment every three years to evaluate the health of the community, identify high priority health needs, and develop strategies to address the needs of the community. The 2022 community health needs assessment represents a combination of quantitative and qualitative information based on census data, patient data, and interview feedback from several community organizations and leaders. Data for Hand County was compared to statewide data as well as national data. This report summarizes the results of the analysis.

II. Action Plans/Next Steps:

The Board of Directors for Avera Hand County Memorial Hospital reviewed the Community Health Needs Assessment and has determined the following community health needs should be addressed through the implementation strategy noted for each identified need.

a. Mental Health Access and Resources

The survey process and interviews identified a community need for access to mental health care and resources. In the open ended questions on the survey, mental health was mentioned 18 percent of the time, which is more than any other single topic. In the interview portion of data collection, mental health was discussed as being a serious issue for our community.

211 is a national resource to help people find resources and services they are in need of. During the data collection phase of our CHNA process, it was determined that the 211 Information Resource Center did not have up-to-date information for our community. The hospital will commit staff time to collaborate with the 211 center to review and update resource availability for our area so that it is easily accessible to the public. When the public has up to date information, they can more readily find resources they are in need of, seeking help and assistance sooner, preventing further delays and worsening outcomes.

Avera Hand County Memorial Hospital currently has a service agreement with eBehavioral Health through Avel eCare for Emergency Department patients. The primary care clinic has an agreement with Avel for telemedicine outpatient mental health services. The hospital also partners with Community Counseling from Huron, SD to provide services to the community. Historically, the hospital's medical staff team has evaluated the idea of contracting a Psychologist or Psychiatrist to aid in mental health care for our patient population. This idea has never been implemented, so the CHNA committee will present the perceived need by the community and re-visit the idea of adding these resources. Also, the CHNA committee will make it a priority to see if there are expansion ideas within the current resources to assist with the mental health needs of the community. The hospital will commit staff time to research if expansion is available. If the hospital deems it feasible to expand local mental health provider services, the hospital will commit financial resources and staff time for development, implementation, and sustainability. Increasing outpatient mental health care availability may decrease emergency visits due to mental health diagnoses.

b. Health & Weight Management and Maintenance

Ten percent of survey respondents said they are not satisfied with weight management and nutrition counseling services in the community. An additional 50 percent were neutral on the topic. In the open-ended question section, 20 percent wrote about the lack of exercise availability, lack of access to physical activities, and the need for more support of movement for healthier lifestyles. In the interview portion of data collection, one of the challenges noted for the community was healthy lifestyle and diet. Health care has a focus on prevention of disease, and regularly maintaining health status and maintaining a healthy weight can aid in disease prevention.

Avera Health offers health, fitness, and lifestyle education through their Balance blog. These education postings are available online. Our CHNA committee will plan to use the hospital and clinic's Facebook platform to make these educations readily available to the public. The Hospital and Clinic's Facebook page frequently has hundreds of visitors to each post, so it will be an adequate method to reach a plethora of community members. The hospital will commit staff time to posting these resources for the public. This education will reach many ages of community members, increasing their knowledge regarding healthy lifestyles.

Our local primary care clinic, Avera Medical Group Miller, offers preventative services as well as disease management care plans. The hospital has a contracted dietician who offers nutrition and weight counseling services. These services are available on an outpatient basis. Our CHNA committee will work with our primary clinic and contracted dietician to increase referrals through primary care to the dietician service. The hospital and clinic will commit staff time to review the referral process, identify opportunity areas for increased referrals, collaborate with the dietician, and implement the plan. Increasing referrals to the dietitian service will increase patient knowledge regarding proper nutrition habits, helping improve overall health outcomes.

IV. Board Approval:

This report was prepared for and approved at the September 23, 2022 Avera Hand County Memorial Hospital Board of Directors regular meeting.