

Milbank Area Hospital Avera Community Health Needs Assessment FY2013 Implementation Strategy

INTRODUCTION

Milbank Area Hospital Avera conducted a Community Health Needs Assessment in 2013. This assessment has identified the health care community's strengths, determined the health care needs not met in Milbank and its service area, and proposes an implementation strategy to address the unmet health care needs.

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act enacted March 23, 2010, contains new requirements for tax-exempt hospitals to complete a Community Health Needs Assessment at least once every three years. The objective is to identify the health needs of our community enabling the hospital to plan and deliver the most effective services and programs to address the needs that were identified in the assessment. It is required that the assessment include input from individuals who represent the broad interests of the community served, including those with special knowledge or expertise in public health. This process creates a collaborative partnership with other entities in the community and service area to address the needs of their mutual community members.

The Community Health Needs Assessment for the Milbank Area Hospital Avera service area, is based on information relevant to current services offered, geographic area, primary and secondary service areas, and data collected related to health findings, access to care, and community needs. This report summarizes the results of the analysis.

STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT

Milbank Area Hospital Avera began the process with the assistance of Avera Health. After attending a planning session, the administrator and social worker created a work plan. The plan consisted of collecting quantitative and qualitative data for the hospital's primary service area defined as Grant County.

The most recent statistics about public health from county, state, and national resources were collected. Data was from resources such as the US Department of Human Services, US Centers for Disease Control, Bureau of Labor Statistics, US Census Bureau, and SD Epidemiology profile, SD Association of Healthcare Organizations. In addition, the County Health Rankings website was utilized as it provides a vast array of information on counties in the United States. Published by the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, this resource helps counties and other organizations similar to Milbank

Area Hospital Avera understand the many variables that influence health. The South Dakota Department of Health statistics provides additional information on the counties' health status.

To collect relevant qualitative data, Milbank Area Hospital Avera held five focus groups to seek the input of community and health leaders. The focus groups were conducted involving the general public, all aspects of health care, a service organization, key community leaders, city and county government including law enforcement, school nursing and administration, and church officials in addition to individuals with special knowledge in public health including programs for the elderly and the local recreational facility. There were 75 individuals who attended the various sessions. To gather more specific information related to the underserved of the community, personal interviews were held with the county's public health nurses and the Grant County social worker.

TARGET AREAS AND POPULATIONS

Grant County is considered a rural area with a population of 7,356. Milbank is the county seat. The local economy is a mix between agriculture, dairy, and industry based. The annual median household income is \$42,625 with 6 percent of the population living below the poverty level (\$22,350/year for a family of four). The service area population is predominantly white and experienced a population decrease of 6.3 percent since that last census. The organization's secondary service area encompasses a portion of Day, Roberts County, and Big Stone County, Minnesota which are served by satellite clinics.

An understanding of the health of a community is very dependent on population trends and demographic characteristics. Population and demographic data are used to project disease incidence, determine present and future community needs for healthcare services, and estimate the number of physicians needed to adequately serve an area.

FINDINGS AND ACTION PLAN

Milbank Area Hospital Avera has served the community and surrounding area for the past 93 years. The mission of Milbank Area Hospital Avera is to make a positive impact in the lives and health of persons and communities by providing quality services guided by Christian values. It proves to offer a strong network of providers, totaling 25 local and outreach specialists, who provide care and access to quality healthcare in our rural community. Their services are valued by the community of Milbank and the surrounding area. It is felt this is essential to ensuring long-term success in caring for our community members. The facility and its 110 employees support and participate in community activities, volunteer their time, and serve on local committees and boards.

Milbank Area Hospital Avera was recently named one of the Top 100 Critical Access Hospitals in the United States. The organization believes this is a reflection of the success that comes

when making a commitment to those who it serves. This is an evaluation of market conditions, clinical and operational performance, and financial and qualitative outcomes. With the replacement building project underway, there continues to be a commitment for an up-to-date facility and state of the art technology in our rural community.

Various health outcomes for Grant County were higher than State and National averages such as the percent of adults who smoke, adult obesity, physical inactivity, poor or fair health, poor physical and mental health days, and the occurrence of stroke, Alzheimer's disease and diabetes. The community also raised the issues regarding obesity and mental health concerns. Grant County ranked favorably relating to screenings received for mammography, percent of low birth weight in infants, heart disease, malignant cancer, and accidents.

The following are the needs that were identified to be the most prevalent throughout the process and were determined to be the top priorities based on the prioritization process.

- Primary care physician access
- Promotion of general health and management of chronic diseases
- Mental health access

One additional need that arose was the lack of kidney dialysis being available in our community. It is currently offered at a facility 12 miles to the east. However, it was felt by the focus groups that there continues to be a need in our community. There will be additional information collected on the potential start up of this service. This information will be the basis for further determination.

NEED #1: Primary Care Physician Access - Health care needs, population age and demographics, and physician demographics contribute to the development of a physician recruitment model. There are a number of factors that influence the final population-to-physician ratio in a particular market. Primary care physicians in a rural market have an expanded scope of practice to compensate for the lack of specialty physicians. It was reflected through personal interviews and focus groups that the local medical staff is quality driven and dedicated. However, there are great concerns with the continuance of the existing model. It was identified that lack of general surgery in the community due to a future retirement is of great concern.

To meet patients' needs, physician recruitment will be top priority. Milbank Area Hospital Avera will expand its recruitment efforts. Currently, the hospital and clinic have engaged two physician recruitment firms to assist in the recruitment of two family practice physicians, an OB/GYN, and a general surgeon. Additionally, conversations will occur with local individuals who are pursuing medical degrees and continue to work with local high school students who

have medical career interests with the intent of recruiting them to Milbank. Our participation with the state's medical school and residency program continues. We have recently been selected as a site for the state's medical school's Frontier and Rural Medicine Program. We also have been approved by the residency program as a rural rotation site. Participation with these programs offers medical students and residents rural rotations that are needed to fulfill their obligations, but it is also seen as a way to provide exposure to our community's offerings. To ensure an adequate provider-to-patient ratio and meet community health needs, Milbank Area Hospital Avera will determine if recruitment efforts should be expanded to include hiring additional mid-levels. South Dakota Department of Health's Office of Rural Health has recently notified Milbank Area Hospital Avera of its eligibility to participate in the Recruitment Assistance Program. By utilizing this financial incentive, a competitive financial package can be offered to interested candidates.

NEED #2: Promotion of General Health and Management of Chronic Diseases - In the face of reform, there will be a heightened sense of urgency for chronic disease management. Patient reimbursement will be based on outcomes and the ability to coordinate episodes of care. Concerns arose in the focus groups relating to these same issues but in regard to personal needs. Conversations occurred regarding the need to have opportunities to gain additional knowledge on relevant medical topics such as obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure and wellness. There was an interest expressed for appropriate preventative screenings.

It is the intent of Milbank Area Hospital Avera to provide to the community preventative care activities that support health and wellness. Expanded efforts will occur to sponsor and participate in annual health events, farm shows, and other events that promote healthy living. At each of these events, educational material and presentations will be provided to the public in addition to conducting seminars on improving active lifestyles and healthy living. Many avenues may be utilized including collaborating with additional businesses in the community, creating additional publications, and sponsoring events such a women's event held earlier this spring. As healthcare legislation evolves, Milbank Area Hospital Avera efforts will be evaluated and adjusted accordingly.

NEED #3: Mental Health Access - According to the National Alliance of Mental Illness, close to 30,000 adults in South Dakota live with serious mental illness and about 9,000 children live with serious mental health conditions. Information from the County Health Rankings also revealed a higher number of physically and mentally unhealthy days per month being reported in Grant County than at the state and national levels. In the Milbank Area Hospital Avera service area behavior health services is an ongoing need. Issues raised by medical staff, behavioral health professionals, and focus group attendees include: need for better continuum of care and coordination of care for mental health patients, lack of infrastructure in Milbank area to handle

mental health patients including holding patients waiting to be transferred to a psychiatric hospital, resources for teens and parents who need assistance with teen behavioral issues.

Milbank Area Hospital Avera will work with the local Human Service Agency and other mental health professionals to evaluate how the community can best serve the needs of behavioral health patients. Milbank Area Hospital Avera will seek collaboration with other organizations to discuss the possibility of expanding additional services to Milbank.

The entity of Avera Medical Group is studying care coordination. Primary care clinics will explore the utilization of a master's prepared social worker as part of the clinic care coordination team. Avera Medical Group Milbank will become part of these care coordination efforts.

Avera eServices is discussing the possibility of developing an eBehavioral Health service line. The discussion is that Avera Behavioral Health Hospital in Sioux Falls, S.D. could serve as a hub for eConsult or eCounseling, whereby electronic access would be given to a patient's medical record in Milbank, S.D. and a social worker, counselor, psychologist, or psychiatrist, specializing in pediatric or adult care, could be available on an emergent basis or scheduled for routine appointments. Milbank Area Hospital Avera will work with the Avera eServices team on the development of this service line.

HOW PRIORITIES WERE CHOSEN

During the focus groups there was a process presented that allowed the participants to evaluate the priority of each need that arose. This process helped determine the four needs mentioned above. Criteria were based on the prevalence, economic feasibility, potential for impact, availability of community assets, and value of the presented themes.


NEEDS NOT BEING ADDRESSED AND WHY

One particular need that arose throughout the community health needs assessment was the affordability and cost of health care. The focus group determined that this is a national issue and chose to focus on items that affect the community's health outcomes.


BOARD APPROVAL

This report was prepared for the June 26, 2013 meeting of the Milbank Area Hospital Avera Advisory Board.

Milbank Area Hospital Avera Advisory Board Approval:



Jim Gesswein, Board Chair



Date