

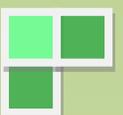
2016

Community Health Needs Assessment

Avera St. Luke's Hospital

The Community Health Needs Assessment is an essential aspect in maintaining Avera St. Luke's Hospital's mission while following the values of Compassion, Hospitality, and Stewardship in everyday life.

Avera 



Description of Hospital & Service Area

Avera/Hospital Information:

History:

It was a diphtheria epidemic at the turn of the century in Aberdeen, SD, that led to the beginning of what is now called Avera St. Luke's Hospital.

The Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary (more commonly referred to as the Presentation Sisters) were fulfilling their calling as teachers by operating a school for kindergarten through eighth-grade students when the epidemic struck. Local physicians asked the Sisters for help and they converted their classrooms to sick wards and served the community until the epidemic subsided.

As a result of their response, the doctors and citizens of Aberdeen asked the Sisters to establish a hospital. On October 18, 1901, St. Luke's Hospital, a 15-bed facility, was dedicated as the pioneer health care facility of the Presentation Sisters. They would go on to establish hospitals in Mitchell and Sioux Falls, SD, and Miles City, MT, within the next 10 years.

As soon as it opened, St. Luke's Hospital became very busy and expanded in 1903, 1907 and 1913. In 1926, when the South Dakota Department of Health called for a considerable amount of updating of the facilities, the Sisters decided that building a new, expanded facility was a better choice than renovating the existing facility. The result was a new, modern St. Luke's Hospital in 1928 with a capacity of 159 beds.

Avera Mission and Values:

Avera is a health ministry rooted in the Gospel. Our mission is to make a positive impact in the lives and health of persons and communities by providing quality services guided by Christian values.

At Avera St. Luke's our mission is imperative as a Catholic health care institution that is guided by Gospel values. We promote and defend human dignity, care for poor and otherwise vulnerable persons, promote the common good and are responsible stewards of our resources. We promote health care as a basic human good essential to human flourishing. Without good health, persons' abilities to thrive may be diminished, and they may suffer spiritual, temporal and material decline. Their ability to pursue meaningful relationships becomes diminished. Human dignity and life itself may be lost. By The Ethical and Religious Directive for Catholic Health Care #3, we are called to "provide service to and advocacy for those people whose social condition put them at the margins of society and make them particularly vulnerable to discrimination."

The core values of compassion, hospitality, and stewardship guide Avera employees in their daily work.

Compassion

The compassion of Jesus, especially for the poor and the sick of body and spirit, shapes the manner in which health care is delivered by Avera's employees, physicians, administrators, volunteers and sponsors. Compassionate caring is expressed through sensitive listening and responding, understanding, support, patience, and healing touch.

Hospitality

The encounters of Jesus with each person were typified by openness and mutuality. Welcoming presence, attentiveness to needs, a gracious manner seasoned with a sense of humor, are expressions of hospitality in and by the Avera Health community.

Stewardship

Threaded through the mission of Jesus was the restoration of all the world to right relationship with its Creator. In that same spirit and mission, the members of Avera Health treat persons, organizational power and earth's resources with justice and responsibility. Respect, truth and integrity are foundational to right relationships among those who serve, and those who are served.

Through these values, we work every day to fulfill our mission to its fullest and continue to serve the community in every way possible.

About Avera St. Luke's Hospital

Avera St. Luke's Hospital was established in 1901 in Aberdeen, SD, as a 15-bed hospital by the Presentation Sisters. We have grown into a regional medical center that offers the complete continuum of care from birth to death to the people living in and around the Aberdeen area.

Our Locations

- Avera St. Luke's Hospital – Aberdeen, SD
 - Inpatient Services – 119 acute care beds
 - Medical
 - Surgical
 - Obstetrics
 - Pediatrics
 - Inpatient Physical Rehabilitation
 - Behavioral Health Unit
 - Outpatient Services
 - Addiction Services
 - Emergency Department/CareFlight

- Cancer Care
 - Cardiac Cath Lab/Cardiology Services
 - Diabetes Wellness Services
 - eConsult Services (inpatient and outpatient)
 - Endoscopy Center
 - Home Health/Palliative Care/Hospice
 - Kidney Dialysis
 - Laboratory/Pathology Services
 - Medical Nutrition Therapy
 - Pain Management Center
 - Pastoral Care
 - Pharmacy Services
 - Radiology Services
 - Therapies – Massage, OT/TR, PT, Respiratory, & Speech
 - Social Work Services
 - Surgery Center
- Avera Mother Joseph Manor Retirement Community – Aberdeen, SD
 - Skilled Nursing Facility – 81 beds
 - Semi-Independent Living Apartments
 - Assisted Living Apartments
 - Adult Day Care
 - Avera Eureka Health Care Center – Eureka, SD
 - Skilled Nursing Facility – 56 beds
 - Assisted Living Suites
 - Avera Medical Group – Clinic Division
 - 5 Primary Care Clinics in Aberdeen, Britton, Groton, Selby, and Ellendale, ND
 - 1 AveraQuick Clinic (retail clinic)
 - 1 Urgent Care Clinic
 - 15 Medical/Surgical Specialty Clinics
 - 4 Hospital-Based Physician Groups
 - radiologists
 - hospitalists
 - pathologists
 - anesthesiologists

Our Employees

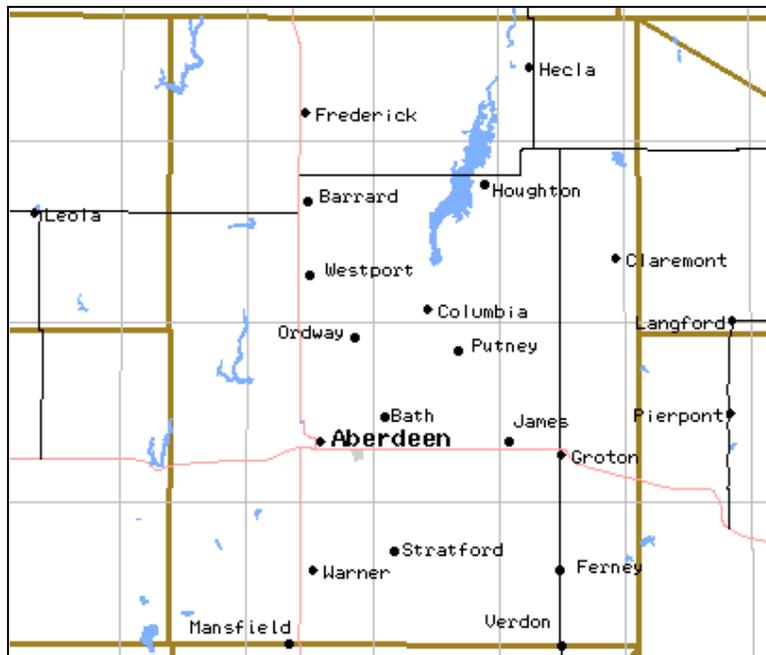
Avera St. Luke's employs more than 1,400 people in our hospital, long-term care and clinic divisions. A medical/dental staff of more than 94 employed local physicians, certified nurse practitioners, and physician assistants representing 25 different specialties provides care for the area's citizens. Nearly 190 volunteers, who help in many ways, are an integral part of the success of the medical center.

Section 1: Description of Community

Define Community

Hospital discharge data for 2014 revealed that 61 percent (2,592 of 4,281 discharges) of Avera St. Luke's hospital discharges originated from Brown County. The next largest percent of discharges came from Spink County at 7 percent. The remaining 32 percent of discharges are spread over some 23 counties in South Dakota and 15 different states in the United States. For this reason, Avera St. Luke's chose to focus on Brown County because it would provide the most representative data of which Avera St. Luke's serves and more accurately assess the health of the Avera St. Luke's community. Therefore, the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) was conducted by Avera St. Luke's for approximately 38,408 residents in Brown County, its primary service area. Avera St. Luke's serves as the county's largest integrated health care facility.

Brown County



Demographics of Service Area:

Brown County is the focus of the Avera St. Luke's Community Health Needs Assessment. The total population as of 2014 is 38,408 which places it as the fourth largest county in South Dakota. Brown County is also the most populated county in Avera St. Luke's service area. Approximately 92 percent of the population is of white ethnicity.

The table below shows the age breakdown of the county. It was also noted that a substantial portion of the patients served by Avera St. Luke's are of adult age.

Age Range	Number	% of Total
0 – 17	8,930	23.4%
18-64	23,164	60.7%
65+	6,068	15.9%

The unemployment rate in South Dakota is at 3.7 percent while the rate in Brown County is at 3.8 percent - both of which are better than the national average of 5.4 percent. The income per capita for the county is \$27,138 and the median household income is \$51,398. However, the rate of persons below the poverty level in Brown County is 8.8 percent, which is still below State rate of 14.1 percent. Approximately 11 percent of the county's population is uninsured, while the State average is 15 percent. Although Brown County's numbers are slightly better than the state and national statistics in these categories, these numbers can still be improved upon.

The majority of Brown County is not within a Health Professional Shortage Area or Medically Underserved Area however, the city of Groton and South Aberdeen, have been designated as a medically underserved area.

Brown County and the surrounding area is also home to several Hutterite colonies. Although this population accesses health services slightly different than the mainstream population because of their traditional way of living, Avera St. Luke's works closely with them on preventive care and education.

Parts of the Britton Health Professional Shortage Area for primary medical care extend into Brown County in the Hecla area. Brown County is in a Health Professional Shortage Area for mental health.

- * most from US Census Bureau County Quick Facts
- * Unemployment from St. Louis Fed 2015
- * Uninsured rates via County Health Rankings and Roadmaps, A Robert Wood Johnson Foundation program

Section 2: Assessment Process

How the Assessment was Conducted

The steering committee reviewed the previous community health needs assessment conducted in 2013. Since the prior CHNA was completed, Avera St. Luke's Hospital has received requests for printed copies of the assessment. However, no written comments were received regarding the community health needs assessment.

Based on the Avera St. Luke's Board of Directors' recommendation, the 2013 community health needs assessment and implementation plan focused on the dental care for adults given a number of patients who come to the ER for care, some of which is basic. In our City, dental care for Medicaid and low income families is not readily available. We reached out to the Dental Association and tried other avenues to create access. We have not been completely successful. We do host the Delta Dental van when it comes to Aberdeen and the response in the past and currently, has been very high. Children of all ages receive care when the van comes to our campus. We did upgrade one of our buildings, so the Delta Dental Van could run off of our electrical infrastructure. Additionally our Social Work department has worked with individuals and families to gain access and in some cases, have asked their personal dentist to care for the person and have had success.

One scenario reported by the Social Workers is a single mom who presented with two small children in our ER who were in need of teeth extraction. The mom was a recipient of Medicaid and no dentist in our area would accept her. The social worker asked his personal dentist, who said that he would see them, would absolutely not accept Medicaid, and would write their care off to charity. This dentist continues to see this young family today. Another case is a gentleman who was under the care of our cardiologist who had cleared the patient for a heart valve replacement. For that procedure to be completed the cardiologist signed an order for the patients oral health to be reviewed. Social Worker again, requested her personal dentist to assist this middle age man, as he had no dental insurance or funds. After two dental visits and a thousand dollars of charity dental care the patient transferred and received his new heart valve.

Avera St. Luke's Hospital spent numerous hours visiting with members of the Dental Association growing in understanding of the concerns with dental care for Medicaid recipients and the poor and marginalized who seek dental access in our city. We remain committed in working with Avera Health Public Policy Officer in our efforts to create awareness and access where possible focusing on adult dental care, to include collaboration and partnerships with local dentists, and provide prevention, education on oral hygiene for adult care.

Why conduct the CHNA?

The Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) is a new IRS reporting requirement for nonprofit hospitals. Under the Affordable Care Act, tax-exempt hospitals must conduct a CHNA every three years. The assessment must take into account input from persons who represent the

broad interests of the community including those with special knowledge or expertise in public health.

At Avera St. Luke's, the CHNA is understood as more than an IRS requirement. Through the CHNA, the hospital can further its mission to improve the lives and health of people within the community. The CHNA process collects and evaluates public health data and also connects with the local people to learn more about the health need concerns of the community. This whole process provides direction for strategic planning and priority setting to assist the hospital in developing targeted programs to meet identified community health needs. The assessment is an essential aspect in maintaining Avera St. Luke's mission while following the values of Compassion, Hospitality, and Stewardship in our everyday work.

Focus Groups

Avera St. Luke's Hospital collected both primary and secondary data for the CHNA. In late December 2015, Avera St. Luke's conducted three focus groups representing community leaders and members, health care providers, uninsured/underinsured persons and policy makers in order to discuss health care needs and concerns in Brown County. The hospital invited a vast array of individuals from all facets of the community to participate in an on-line survey and also held focus groups. The information was obtained from required sources including:

- Aberdeen Area Senior Center
- Aberdeen Federal Credit Union
- Aberdeen Health & Rehab
- Aberdeen Housing Authority
- Aberdeen Christian School
- Aberdeen Central High School
- Aberdeen Public Schools
- Aberdeen Roncalli Catholic Grade & High School
- Aberdeen Family YMCA, Executive Director
- Aberdeen Fire Department
- Aberdeen City Mayor
- Aberdeen American News Company*
- Aberdeen Police Department
- Avera St. Luke's Auxiliary*
- Aspire
- Bethesda
- Birth to Three Program
- Boy Scouts of American, Director
- Boys & Girls Club, Director
- Brown County Auditor
- Brown County Commissioners
- Brown County Emergency Management
- Brown County Health Department
- Brown County Sheriff Office
- Brown County Welfare Office
- CASSP

- Camp Dream Makers – YMCA
- Cathexis Partners*
- Century 21 Realtors*
- CO-OP Architecture*
- Cornerstone
- Dacotah Bank*
- Dakota Broadcasting*
- Early Intervention
- Fallout Creative Community
- Horizon Healthcare
- Independent Living Choices
- Indian Health Services
- Insurance Plus*
- Journey Home
- Kids Against Hunger
- Lutheran Social Services
- ManorCare
- Midstates/QQP
- Mother Joseph Manor
- New Beginnings
- Northern State University
- Northern State University Foundation
- Northeastern Mental Health Center
- Presentation College
- Primrose Retirement Community
- Red Cross
- Ride Line
- Salvation Army
- Senior Companions
- SERVE
- SD Department of Social Services
- SPURS
- Wells Fargo*
- WSI
- VA Center

(*Citizens Advisory Board Members)

Additionally, Avera St. Luke's held a focus group for approximately 20 individuals representing the uninsured and underinsured of our community. Those individuals came to us through invitations from various community programs. The hospital also held one of the focus group at the Salvation Army following their noon meal.

The groups were facilitated by a practicing attorney in the community. The following questions were asked of each focus group:

- What health care services are most important to you?
- What is the most pressing health care-related need facing your family?
- What is the most pressing health care-related need facing your community?
- If you don't go to the doctor or hospital, why?
- In what ways are the hospital and/or health care in Brown County serving the community well?
- In what ways could the hospital and/or health care in Brown County improve the way in which it serves the community?
- If you could add or change one aspect of health care in Brown County, what would it be and why?

The questions were asked and replies were recorded in a consistent and statistical structure throughout the study. The facilitator assisted each group with prioritizing the needs they defined from highest to lowest. After all of the groups concluded their meetings, these prioritization lists were compiled and analyzed by Avera St. Luke's to develop a master prioritization list. The following key themes presented themselves:

- Dental Care – adults
- Behavioral Health
- Health Care Affordability
- Access to Health Care Specialists
- Preventive Care and Education
- Chronic Disease Care
- Travel and Accessibility to Care

A survey was also sent to 41 agencies with 21 responding to the questions.

The hospital made available a Cancer Community Needs Assessment Survey by paper and online to individuals from all facets of the community to participate in, with 52 responding to the questions. The following questions were asked in the survey:

- Gender
- Age Group
- Have you ever been told you have cancer? If yes, what type/s of cancer do/did you have?
- If you have had cancer and undergone treatment, did you receive adequate education about your diagnosis and treatment along the way?
- Select any of the following cancer screening you had had in the last year.
- If you have not had any cancer screenings in the last year, identify why not.
- If you are a man, do you practice testicular self examinations?
- If you are a woman, do you practice breast self awareness activities, such as self-breast exams?
- You apply sunscreen before outdoor activities:
- You exercise 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week:
- You eat 5 to 9 servings of fruits and/or vegetables a day?
- You protect yourself from the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) by getting the vaccine and using other methods:

- You have your mouth checked/teeth cleaned: (Check one.)
- Do you come in contact with any of the following chemicals (asbestos, pesticides, solvents, benzene and/or formaldehyde)?
- Do you smoke cigarettes or use tobacco products?
- You are exposed to tobacco smoke in your home or work?
- How many times during the past 30 days did you have 3 or more drinks in a day/evening?
- What sources do you use to obtain cancer-related information?
- What kind of place do you go when you are sick or need advice about your health?
- When was your last physical exam?
- Are you able to visit a doctor when needed?
- What is the biggest obstacle you face in getting health care?

Additionally, Avera St. Luke's invited 104 individuals to attend one of two focus groups for discussion to help us identify where we are and are not meeting the cancer healthcare needs of our community. There were 5 individuals who attended one of the sessions and 2 individuals another. These groups were facilitated by a practicing attorney in the community. The following questions were asked as it relates to their perception of cancer healthcare needs in our community.

- What do you think are the challenges or barriers to addressing cancer needs in the community?
- What sources do you use to obtain cancer-related information?
- What cancer-related services are you aware of in the community?
- What is the number one thing Avera St. Luke's could do to improve cancer care in our area?
- Why cancer care here?

Perception from the data is that the cancer priority goals would be:

- Ongoing cancer prevention and early detection awareness and education (healthy lifestyles, importance of screenings, etc.)
- Once patients are diagnosed with cancer, it would be ongoing navigation assistance through the treatment process and beyond.

Review of Key Themes:

Based on the identified key themes, the hospital began reviewing and assessing its current involvement to determine future steps to address the identified community health needs. Each area of concern was equally studied in depth in order to assess the hospital's current involvement or lack thereof.

Dental Care:

Avera St. Luke's Hospital provides the coordination and space necessary for the Delta Dental van to provide services to area children. Delta Dental is a nonprofit organization that offers national dental coverage. For two weeks about 3-4 times a year, the Delta Dental van coordinates with Avera St. Luke's and provides dental services for children

out of their fully-equipped dental van. Unfortunately, there is currently no such program for adults and most local dentists neither accept Medicaid patients nor provide emergency services on weekends or evenings.

Outpatient Worthmore Chemical Dependency:

- Detoxification from drugs and/or alcohol is provided as an inpatient service at Avera St. Luke's Hospital. With medical supervision, patients are safely withdrawn from drugs and/or alcohol. Care is provided twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.
- The Residential Day Treatment (Level II.5) Program is designed for individuals who do not require medical monitoring during the treatment process. The program includes individual, group and family sessions, lectures, films and peer support. Programming is provided seven days a week, a minimum of 20 hours of counseling/education weekly is provided for approximately four weeks.
- The Day Treatment Program is the same as listed above with the exception of lodging and only includes one meal. The program is from 8:30am to 4:30pm, Monday-Friday for approximately four weeks.
- The Adult Intensive Outpatient Program includes sessions for three hours, three days a week for six consecutive weeks. Adolescent Intensive Outpatient Treatment is offered on an as needed basis. Program content is similar to other outpatient programs.
- The Continued Care Program, (traditionally called aftercare) is designed to offer individuals and families the opportunity to continue recovery after discharge. The meetings are held weekly for approximately in hour in length.
- The Relapse Program is designed for individuals who have recently participated in one of the Worthmore programs, but find that they are having difficulty maintaining sobriety or abstinence. This program is approximately two weeks in length and is part of the Day Treatment Program. The client prepares a detailed relapse prevention plan prior to discharge.
- Assessment/Evaluation services are available by appointment, Monday through Friday. An evaluation is where all diagnostics are utilized to formulate or rule out a diagnosis of an alcohol/drug or gambling problem. Individual counseling is available by appointment after an assessment has been completed and the counselor refers the individual for this service. This service is usually and hour in length. DUI Classes are held one evening per week for three hours each evening for four consecutive weeks. Other programs/services that are offered on an as needed basis include UA drug screening, Alcohol and Drug Education classes, and assistance with emergency committals to the court system and families
- The School-Based Prevention Program is a yearly contract with the Aberdeen School District to provide education to the students and parents. The counseling staff provides coverage at both Central and Roncalli high schools, as well as the two middle schools.
- The Prevention programs and services include classroom presentations, participation in community groups, speaking engagements, participation in health fairs, assisting with and planning drug free youth activities, etc.

Inpatient Behavioral Health:

Number of beds: 10

Types of Patients Served:

The Behavioral Health Unit provides 24 hour inpatient care to acutely and chronically mentally ill adult clients (age 18 and up) regardless of his/her ability to pay. An Evaluation/Crisis intervention Program is also available for children (ages 6 – 12) and adolescents (ages 13 – 17). Major diagnostic areas include: psychosis, depression, and neuroses.

Special Services Particular to this Unit:

- * Individual therapy
- * Education/Healthy Living Activities
- * Occupational therapy
- * Psychiatry Care
- * Therapeutic recreation
- * Electroconvulsive therapy
- * Diagnosis related education
- * Social Services
- * Spiritual support

Healthcare Affordability:

Avera St. Luke's does many things in order to help with health care affordability. The Social Services Department provides assistance to those unable to pay for services and the Business Office assists patients as needed in setting up payment plans. In addition, through our Financial Assistance policy, which includes charity care, Avera St. Luke's forgave over \$6.9 million in patient bills in fiscal year 2015.

Access to Health Care Specialists:

Avera St. Luke's currently offers the following physician specialists locally:

- Anesthesiology
- Asthma/Allergy
- Cardiology
- Dermatology
- Ear, Nose, & Throat
- Emergency Medicine
- Family Practice
- Internal Medicine
- Nephrology
- Neurology
- Neurosurgery
- Obstetrics & Gynecology
- Oncology & Hematology

- Ophthalmology
- Orthopedics
- Pain Management
- Pathology
- Pediatrics
- Physical Medicine
- Plastic Surgery
- Podiatry
- Psychiatry
- Pulmonology
- Radiology
- Radiation Oncology
- Surgery
- Urology

The Avera St. Luke's physician recruiter works on an ongoing basis to recruit additional specialists as needed. This includes working with other recruiters across the Avera system to collaborate where possible.

Avera St. Luke's also has access to *eConsult* services. *eConsult* is a program facilitated by the Avera Health system that uses cutting edge technology to provide access to specialty services in rural facilities through two-way video technology. Over 70 different providers in a vast array of sub-specialties provide *eConsult* services to rural areas that otherwise would not have access to that specialized level of care. Over 2,600 *eConsults* were performed at Avera St. Luke's by several specialists that are available via *eConsult*:

Preventive Care and Education:

Avera St. Luke's currently has numerous programs that provide preventive care and health education opportunities to the community.

- Comprehensive heart screenings are available on an ongoing basis at minimal cost through our cardiology clinic.
- Through the Business Health Department, Avera St. Luke's participates in several business health fairs, providing health screenings, presentations, posters, etc.
- Freedom Fitness, a program offered to patients who have completed physical therapy and want to continue to exercise on their own, is available at a minimal charge.
- Physicians and clinical staff present educational talks at the monthly "Walk for Wellness" program at the local mall.
- Several different childbirth classes are offered on an ongoing basis. There is a minimum charge for the classes, but no one is turned away because of inability to pay.
- Every year our health care professionals present topics such as poison prevention, and alcohol and drug prevention to area school students.
- Avera St. Luke's participates in our local Relay for Life event.

Chronic Disease Care:

Avera St. Luke's currently provides both support and care facilities for the chronically ill in the following ways:

- Our Kidney Dialysis Unit serves many area patients with chronic kidney failure. In fiscal year 2015, 85 patients received over 7,600 dialysis treatments.
- Behavioral Health Services provides care and treatment to many chronically mentally ill patients. This inpatient service was able to care for 1034 patients in fiscal year 2015.
- Worthmore Addiction Services provided outpatient care and treatment to 1828 clients in fiscal year 2015.
- Home Health, Palliative Care, and Hospice services are available to patients as appropriate. In fiscal year 2015 over 900 patients throughout the region took advantage of these services.
- The following support groups are offered through Avera St. Luke's free of charge:
 - Parkinson's Support Group – average 20 attendees per month
 - Stroke Support Group – average 10 attendees per month

Travel and Accessibility to Health Care:

Since Brown County is a rural area, Avera St. Luke's needs to be able to provide accessible health care to many people outside of the city as well as be available to accept patients at any time of day because of travel complications. Following are ways in which we currently address the travel and accessibility to health care problem:

- Avera St. Luke's monetarily supports the Aberdeen Ride Line service as well as the Groton Community Transit service for patients who have no transportation to doctor appointments, etc.
- One AveraQuick clinic and One Urgent Care clinic are located in Aberdeen to provide after hours and weekend care to help meet basic healthcare needs of individuals. In fiscal year 2015, over 11,000 patients were seen in the FastCare clinic.
- Our Emergency Room, which is open and staffed with a physician 24-hours a day, saw over 11,400 patients in fiscal year 2015.
- Avera St. Luke's helicopter service is available 24 hours a day and logged 181 flights in fiscal year 2015.
- Avera St. Luke's manages two critical access hospitals in the area—Eureka Community Health Services and Marshall County Healthcare Center in Britton.
- Avera St. Luke's operates primary clinics in Britton, Groton, and Selby, SD, as well as Ellendale, ND. In fiscal year 2015, combined clinic visits exceeded 12,000 for these 5 clinics.
- Avera Medical Group physicians representing six different specialties travel to eight communities within our region on a monthly basis to provide clinic services locally.

- eConsult services are available to patients here and in our outreach areas to reduce time and travel for patients. In fiscal year 2015, over 2,500 patient visits were seen at Avera St. Luke's via eConsult.
- Home Health, Palliative Care, and Hospice services are available to patients as appropriate. In fiscal year 2015 over 900 patients throughout the region took advantage of these services.
- The Auxiliary Guest House is available at a low price for those patients and families who need overnight stays and can't afford to stay in a hotel. In Fiscal Year 2015, the House hosted 110 guests for a total of 473 nights.

Conclusion:

Avera St. Luke's has a considerable amount of programming already in place to help meet many of the key themes presented by our focus groups. This assessment process was extremely enlightening and beneficial for Avera St. Luke's to get a better understanding of the perceptions of the community. This will allow Avera St. Luke's to target our efforts on specific issues and feel confident that we are meeting a void in the community.

Section 3: Health Needs Prioritization

Health Needs Determined Through Data Collection:

After consultation with various health professionals concerning the above mentioned themes, the three major areas initially highlighted for further research and comparison were dental care, health care affordability and travel and accessibility to health care. This decision was based on the severity of the issue, our current involvement in these areas and our professional outlook. The questions were asked and replies were recorded in a consistent and statistical structure throughout the study. The facilitator assisted each group with prioritizing the needs they defined from highest to lowest. After all of the groups concluded their meetings, these prioritization lists were compiled and analyzed by Avera St. Luke's to develop a master prioritization list.

When further research and discussion occurred regarding the key themes of affordability and travel and accessibility to health care, it was determined that Avera St. Luke's already provides assistance as able to the community. The hospital will continue to support and promote the programs already in place and review new opportunities as they arise.

Therefore, it was determined that the focus of our efforts will center on the key theme of dental care and, more specifically, dental care for adults that are either uninsured or underinsured.

Section 4: Priority Recommendation

Dental Care:

The largest problem concerning dental care in our service area has to do with the lack of availability of dental providers for adults who do not carry dental insurance. Additionally, there are not enough dentists in our area that provide care for those patients on Medicaid or other government-run health care programs. This is shown by the number of patients who have to access an emergency department for dental care instead of going to a dentist where they would have been turned away because of lack of insurance. Nationally, over 800,000 emergency department visits in the United States were related to a primary diagnosis of a preventable dental condition. At Avera St. Luke', our reports indicate that approximately 120 patients came into the emergency department with dental concerns in the last year – an average of 10 patients per month. Of those, roughly 90% were aged 21 or older. Adult patients are being focused on for our report because there are already programs in place that offer dental care for people without dental insurance up to age 20.

Dental care is usually not a major focus of a hospital, but we feel that the lack of access to dental care by adults who do not have dental insurance has become an issue in our service area that cannot be overlooked. Dental issues, if not resolved, can lead to other, more serious, health concerns. There are approximately 120 known physical illnesses that can be detected through an oral exam. The American Diabetes Association indicates that “not only are people with diabetes more susceptible to serious gum disease, but serious gum disease may have the potential to affect blood glucose control and contribute to the progression of diabetes.” Poor dental health can also prohibit patients from getting other important medical care they may need. For example, a patient that needed a heart procedure could not have it done safely until he had received dental work to treat his infected gums and teeth. Because he didn't have insurance, he was unable to find dental assistance until it became a crisis and Avera St. Luke's Social Services was able to intervene and find the appropriate help. Along with that, our orthopedic physician reporting cancellation of total joints due to patient's inability to access dental care funding.

Only 25% of people in South Dakota carry dental insurance, and most are offered this choice through employer insurance plans. In an effort to understand the problem of uninsured patients needing more dental care available in our area, it is helpful to look at state and national data, such as the amount of Medicaid being utilized and how many emergency room visits concerning dental occur.

Looking at Figure 1, we can see that the amount of Medicaid claims being paid out has increased rather steadily over the years for South Dakota. Figure 2 shows that the amount of Medicaid patient dental visits has also increased over the years. Both graphs include information for adults.

Figure 1
Total Medicaid Claims Paid
FY 2002- FY2010

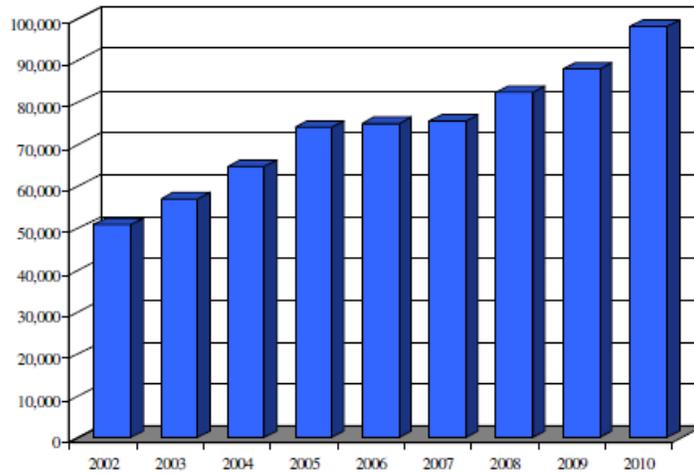
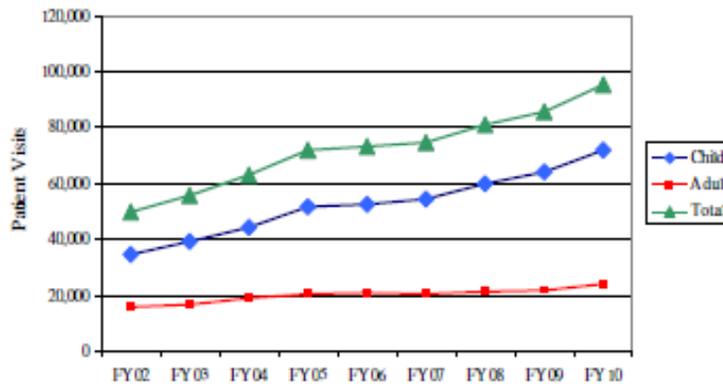


Figure 2
SD Medicaid Dental Program Patient Visits



These two graphs show that Medicaid is growing in South Dakota and providers are realizing that. The number of Medicaid visits has been on the incline along with the number of claims being paid. Both of these graphical representations together result in the statement that as Medicaid increases in popularity, so does the importance of paying off Medicaid claims.

However, our hospital reports have shown no decline in the number of patients coming through our emergency room with dental concerns that could have been taken care of at a dental office. We would expect the number of visits to decline based on Figure 1 and 2 showing that more Medicaid claims are being paid and more people are taking advantage of Medicaid dental programs. This is not the case for our service area. The Medicaid dental programs appear to be gaining support around South Dakota, but Brown County doesn't seem to have caught on just yet. Brown County needs more dentists who accept Medicaid or more programs with a focus on adult patients without dental insurance whether through education, actual care, or both.

Avera Health believes opportunity exists in educating the dentists on the need of oral hygiene for adults over the age of twenty-one who seek dental care from our emergency room physicians who are not dentists. Hope lies in collaboration with both local dentists and Avera physicians to bring about systemic change for those seeking access to dental care. Lack of availability of dental care for adults has been brought to the attention of the South Dakota legislature and the South Dakota Dental Association whom we also will partner with to bring about change.

When further research and discussion occurred regarding the key themes of affordability and travel and accessibility to health care, it was determined that Avera St. Luke's already provides assistance as able to the community. The hospital will continue to support and promote the programs already in place and review new opportunities as they arise.

Therefore, it was determined that the focus of our efforts will center on the key theme of dental care and, more specifically, dental care for adults that are either uninsured or underinsured. We will also focus efforts on health care affordability and transportation as outlined in our Implementation Strategy.

The Avera St. Luke's Hospital Fiscal Year 2016 Community Health Needs Assessment and Implementation Strategy Reports were presented to the Avera St. Luke's Hospital Board of Directors on June 2, 2016 for discussion and consideration. The Board of Directors accepted the Avera St. Luke's Hospital Fiscal Year 2016 Community Health Needs Assessment and Implementation Strategy Reports at that meeting.