

# Milbank Area Hospital

Avera 

---

Community Health Needs Assessment

FY 2022

Implementation Plan

301 Flynn Drive  
Milbank, SD 57252  
605.432.4538  
[www.averamilbank.org](http://www.averamilbank.org)

## **Summary**

Milbank Area Hospital Avera has been serving the communities that make up Grant County since the 1920's. Since its inception, it has kept up with the needs of the community at large. Over time, the hospital has nurtured partnerships with local community organizations and has grown into a 25-bed critical access hospital. During fiscal year 2022, there were 20,588 outpatient visits, 372 hospital discharges, 414 surgical procedures and 1,660 emergency room visits. Milbank Area Hospital Avera has ranked within the top 100 of over 1300 critical access hospitals in the country for the seventh time in 2021 (only in existence since 2011). Additionally, the hospital made the Top 20 ranking. This honor is based upon market share, quality, and patient satisfaction ratings.

The hospital is owned by the community-based organization, the Northeast South Dakota Healthcare Foundation (NESDHCF). The hospital has a management lease agreement with Avera McKennan Hospital & University Center, located in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Avera Health System is a rural-based health system located in Sioux Falls. It serves healthcare facilities in South Dakota, Minnesota, Nebraska, and Iowa. NESDHCF is a nine-member board, which also serves as the advisory board to Milbank Area Hospital Avera.

## **Community Served**

The Milbank Area Hospital Avera's service catchment area includes Grant, Roberts, Day, Marshall, Big Stone, and Deuel counties. The Community Health Needs Assessment indicates that the majority of the hospital's patients live in Grant County, which consists of 7,556 individuals. According to the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Big Stone City and Reville are designated as medically underserved. Through satellite clinic locations in these two communities patients surveyed were partially from medically underserved areas.

## **Implementation Strategy Process**

Primary data collection included personal interviews with community members with special knowledge of some needs of the community, and distribution of a needs assessment survey. Community members were asked the following questions:

- \*What healthcare services are most important to you?
- \*What is the most pressing healthcare related need you, your family, or community is/are facing?
- \*Do you think there are certain populations of people in our community that are in need of services they cannot get?
- \*If a person, or a person you know, doesn't go to the doctor or the hospital, why not?
- \*In what way(s) is the hospital and/or healthcare in Milbank serving the community well?
- \*In what ways could the hospital and/or healthcare in Milbank improve the way it serves the community and surrounding areas?
- \*Name a health service you would like to see in our community.

Secondary data collection included research of current Grant County demographics and local health statistics cited in the document.

### **Prioritized Identified Needs**

Data analysis revealed the following as prioritized community needs:

- \* Addition of mental health services
- \* Greater outreach to ethnic minority patients
- \* Health education and health screenings

### **Action Plans**

#### Addition of mental health services:

In the Milbank Area Hospital Avera service area behavior health services is an ongoing need. Focus will be placed on the addition of mental health professionals to respond to the issues raised by community health needs assessment participants for more mental health services. Once additional resources are added there will be education on the availability of these services. Education and promotion of the 211 suicide prevention hot line via social media will also be made.

Teaching children about mental health in school can help them see mental health as a normal occurrence and not something that should be ignored. Collaboration with the local school and community will continue and education provided to school-aged children via a group who provides this message in a relatable way. Additionally, the continuance of a grief support group for community members will occur. Patient mental health screenings to assess risk for self-harm will be performed with patient clinic and hospital registrations. Collaboration with other community resources will continue as well.

#### Greater outreach to ethnic minority patients:

National statistics indicate that routine visits to healthcare providers prevent costly preventable illnesses. Unfortunately, many lack awareness of the services and benefits for which they qualify. This is especially the case for ethnic minority populations. Grant County's minority population is primarily being served at the Grant County Health Department. The County Health Nurse has noticed that over time, as individuals who happen to be Hispanic, utilize services and benefits for which they qualify, patients tend to share their experiences with others and promote utilization of services by word-of-mouth to friends and family members. Such services include immunizations, prenatal care, medication vouchers to prevent health crises resulting from missed essential medications, and distribution of free car seats for motor vehicle safety. Based upon this local example, customers' positive experiences conveyed to others through the use of personal referrals are helpful promotional tools for increased service utilization and ultimately, positive health outcomes for Grant County at large. Those who have utilized services have been helpful in sharing with other individuals who happen to be Hispanic that they are welcome to the variety of services and benefits offered to Grant County at large. It's important to recognize that methods of information dissemination such as the local newspaper and the county website, are

not necessarily the most effective modes of promoting our services to this group. A goal for the 2022-2024 period is to reach minority populations who rarely use our services through the development and strengthening of relationships with organizations currently serving their communities. Milbank Area Hospital Avera has reached out to a local corporation that employs the greatest number of individuals with Hispanic backgrounds. As a result we successfully received completed surveys from this population and conveyed the importance of their opinions. The hospital will distribute an information packet to this corporation and others in order to create an awareness of what resources are available on our medical campus. To enhance what we currently offer, activities that are already offered will provide activities inclusive of local cultural groups.

Due to such efforts to connect with the community, the hospital has repeatedly experienced success in forming community partnerships. This will be a matter of replicating the process used to develop our current rural rotation for medical students, essential partnerships for fund raising for cancer, and our recent alliance with the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). Underserved groups will be informed of services that address various needs. The goal will be fulfillment of needs of the underserved, where feasible. As we recruit for various positions in the clinic and hospital, we will include the need for bilingual employees. Bilingual/translation services by phone are currently used. We find these services helpful.

In addition, a community health worker program will be developed. The program will focus on health disparities and advance health equities within underserved populations. The program worker will facilitate access to services and improve the quality and cultural competence of service delivery.

#### Health education and health screenings

Health education covers the continuum from disease prevention and promotion of optimal health to the detection of illness. Planned learning experiences based on theories that provide individuals, groups, and communities the opportunity to acquire information and the skills needed to make quality health decisions can make for a healthier community. In response to survey respondents Milbank Area Hospital Avera will expand community health education and screenings. The expansion of educational events offered will increase the number of community members reached. Screenings to be added include lung screening and a heart screening. We will continue to provide bi-monthly radio interviews to educate on services available and promote health screenings such as mammograms and colon cancer screening.

#### **Board Approval**

This report was presented to the Northeast South Dakota Healthcare Foundation Board on November 1, 2022 for approval. The board approved the Implementation Strategy for addressing findings and recommendations identified in the most recent Community Health Needs Assessment.