

Community Health Needs Assessment 2015 - 2017 Implementation Plan



Introduction

Norton County Hospital is a 25-bed critical access hospital and Level IV trauma center, and along with the Norton Medical Clinic, provides medical services for residents in Norton County and surrounding northwest Kansas and southwest Nebraska communities. We have 130 dedicated and skilled employees to assist our medical providers in all levels of inpatient care, a full range of outpatient ancillary services and several visiting physician specialty clinics. We appreciate the support we receive from our patients and the communities we serve.

Identifying Health Needs

A community health needs assessment was conducted and community input was provided through two key stakeholder meetings and a community health survey, including representatives from:

- ✓ Norton County Hospital
- ✓ Social service agencies and nonprofit organizations
- ✓ Local school systems
- ✓ Faith based organizations
- ✓ Local residents – including low income residents
- ✓ People living with chronic conditions
- ✓ Uninsured residents
- ✓ Other healthcare-related partners
- ✓ Local elected officials and governmental agencies
- ✓ Local residents
- ✓ Norton County Health Department

Population demographics and socioeconomic characteristics of the community were gathered and reported utilizing various third parties. The health status of the community was then reviewed. Information on the leading causes of death and morbidity information was analyzed in conjunction with health outcomes and factors reported for the community by VVV Research and Development, LLC and other third parties.

This data was analyzed and reviewed to identify health issues of uninsured persons, low-income persons and minority groups, and the community as a whole. As a result of the analysis described above, the following health needs were identified as the most significant health needs for the community:

- Obesity
- Underage Drinking
- Reduce drug use (legal and illegal)
- Cancer
- Smoking
- Mental Health
- Exercise/Fitness
- Heart Disease
- Substance Abuse Education
- Dialysis Unit
- Low Birth Weight of Infants

The identified health needs were reviewed by hospital management and priority areas, included in the table below, were determined based on their assessment of the qualitative and quantitative data. Identified needs were prioritized based on the following criteria:

- 1) How many people are affected by the issue?
- 2) What are the consequences of not addressing this problem?
- 3) The impact of the problem on vulnerable populations.
- 4) How important the problem is to the community (public perception)?
- 5) Are there common themes?

Norton County Hospital Priority	Corresponding Identified Health Need
Promote healthier lifestyle choices	Obesity Exercise/fitness Heart Disease Smoking Reduce Drug use (legal and illegal) Low birth weight of infants (increased occurrence seen with moms that use tobacco during pregnancy) Cancer
Collaborate with local and regional partners to improve timely access to mental health resources	Mental health Substance abuse education** Underage drinking** Smoking** Reduce drug use (legal and illegal)** (**these needs were listed due to the frequency of behavioral health needs seen with substance abuse)
Improve access to cancer treatment services	Cancer

PRIORITY 1: Promote healthier lifestyles

Goal 1: Offer reduced cost lab tests in conjunction with the Norton County Health Department

Strategy	Provide these bi-annual blood screenings (complete blood count, lipid profile, TSH, HGB A1C and/or PSA) at a significant reduced cash rate in February and August every year. These screenings require no doctor order. [Goal: average 120 participants per screening event].
Strategy	Provide free blood pressure check with the blood draws offered twice a year. [Goal: average 30 participants get their BP checked per screening event.]
Strategy	Norton County Hospital providers will review the results from these screenings at no cost and follow up with the patients if further follow up is needed. Follow up is defined as at a minimum contacting the patient to schedule a clinic visit to review any abnormal labs and/or blood pressure readings discovered during the screening event.

Goal 2: Support development of LiveWellNorton (LWN) to improve community health across the county

Strategy	Support the LWN coalition's efforts by allowing them to be housed within the Norton Regional Health Foundation (NRHF). This allows LWN the use of the NRHF's 501©3 status for grant applications. Any secured funds would support their efforts to reduce tobacco use, promote physical activity, promote mental wellness and improve nutrition at the community level using policies, system and environmental changes. Intervention at these levels have been proven to be the most influential and sustainable on improving community health.
Strategy	Allow the use of the NRHF Executive Director for in-kind support to LWN, such as assist with grant writing, marketing, public relations as well as other administrative supports at no cost.
Strategy	Utilize Norton County Hospital communications director to heighten community awareness and understanding of LWN and the impact of community health on the success or barriers the community environment can have on health. The optimal community health environment is one that makes the healthy choice the easy choice.

Goal 3: Join Kansas Heart and Stroke Collaborative (KHSC) to improve patient outcomes for those living with chronic condition(s) (ex. heart disease)

Strategy	Join the Kansas Heart and Stroke Collaborative (KHSC) and implement the recommended best practices for clinical care – specifically for heart attack and stroke patients. These clinical practices are focused in the emergency room per the KHSC guidelines to improve patient outcomes from either of this emergent health events. These emergency events often have contributing factors related to the patient’s lifestyle choices.
Strategy	Select and train one of the hospital nurses to become a Health Coach – focusing efforts on patients living with two or more chronic health conditions by providing home visits and monthly phone calls to help them navigate the challenges of living with chronic health conditions. Provide these patients resources and support to live healthier lives and reduce further negative impacts to their health.
Strategy	Train two nurses to be certified SPARCC (Supporting Personal Accountability and Resiliency for Chronic Conditions) instructors and offer classes for free at NCH for patients living with heart failure. Classes are open to patient’s family and other support people in their lives. These classes create long term peer-to-peer support amongst the participants.
Strategy	Utilize KHSC patient and community education materials to increase the public’s awareness of the early signs of heart attack and stroke. To address the side of prevention, utilize the provided patient/community education pieces that address lifestyle choices to reduce risk for heart attack or stroke.

PRIORITY 2: Increase Access to Behavioral Health Services

Goal 1: Elevate the rural impact of insufficient behavioral health care to the state and national level – political advocacy

Strategy	Have representation by Norton County Hospital administration on the Kansas Hospital Association Behavioral Health Task Force. This task force provides a unified voice to the state law makers regarding the impacts behavioral health needs are having in rural Kansas.
Strategy	Support the development of a National Association of Mental Illness (NAMI) chapter in Norton County in conjunction with the Norton County Health Department. NAMI membership dues paid by member’s supports advocacy at the state and national level.

Goal 2: Research and incorporate alternate ways to integrate behavioral health services into primary care

Strategy	Utilize the telehealth service e-Avera used in the emergency room for mental health evaluations. This system was provided by a grant focusing on improving heart attack and stroke outcomes, but also has capability to be used for behavioral health assessments within 30 minutes or less.
Strategy	Work with surrounding critical access hospitals to explore the feasibility of sharing behavioral health staff - specifically, focusing on critical access hospitals within a 60 mile radius of Norton, Kansas.
Strategy	Connect with local resources and partners to explore new collaborative ways to address the growing needs of behavioral health. Look at how to best utilize law enforcement, Valley Hope and other private counselors, the local health department, school counselors, faith leaders and High Plains Mental Health. A Mental Health Workgroup established by the Norton County Health Department will provide the opportunity for such discussions.
Strategy	Grant funding secured to pay for Dr. Maurer and the COO to travel to the Cherokee Clinic in TN to see their model of integrated behavioral health into the traditional medical clinic setting. Their model has been in effect for 30+ years. Staff from Citizens Medical Clinic in Colby attending as well.

PRIORITY 3: Improve access to local cancer treatment services

Goal 1: Recruit an oncologist to provide a specialty clinic here at NCH

Strategy	Contact any oncologist in the 90 mile radius from Norton to inquire of their interest to provide oncology services once a month at NCH.
Strategy	Contact surrounding Critical Access Hospitals currently offering oncology as a specialty clinic to find out what provider and/or clinic group is serving their hospital/community.

Goal 2: Continue providing and advertising onsite chemotherapy services at NCH

Strategy	Stay in contact with Jeff Goss at Healthcare Solutions to assure compliance of NCH chemotherapy vent hood with upcoming regulations (USP 797 and 800). Healthcare Solutions is the current vendor providing maintenance and onsite inspection of the chemotherapy ventilation hood every 6 months.
-----------------	--

Strategy	For any identified things to be changed with the building structure and/or mechanical operations to achieve compliance – contact a healthcare architectural firm to begin plans for compliance. Budget accordingly for the capital expenditure as well as build the foundation’s donor development for this specific project.
-----------------	---

Needs Not Addressed

Some issues identified through the Community Health Needs Assessment have not been addressed in this plan. In initial discussion and subsequent prioritization, Norton County Hospital considered the levels to which some needs were already being addressed in the service area. Additionally, some community needs fall out of the scope of expertise and resources of Norton County Hospital. The following chart outlines how some of the needs identified in the assessment are addressed by others or in different ways:

Community Need	How Need is Addressed
Dialysis Unit	Dialysis service is currently available at larger hospitals (Hays, KS and McCook, NE) in the region. The distance is an understandable challenge to affected patients and families, but do to the low volume of the population this pertains to and the high costs to provide the service, it is not something the hospital can pursue at this time.

Next Steps

This Implementation Plan will be rolled out over the next three years. Norton County Hospital will work with community partners and health issue experts on the following for each of the approaches to addressing the identified health needs:

- Develop work plans to support effective implementation
- Create mechanisms to monitor and measure outcomes
- Provide on-going status and results of these efforts to improve community health

Norton County Hospital is committed to conducting another health needs assessment within three years.

Adoption/Approval

Norton County Hospital's Board of Directors approves the Implementation Strategy that has been developed to address the priorities of the Community Health Needs Assessment conducted in FY 2015.

The Hospital will utilize this Implementation Strategy as a roadmap to collaborate with their community to address the priorities, particularly for the most vulnerable until the next Community Needs Health Assessment in FY 2018.

Executed this 17th day of January 2018.



Chairman of the Board of Trustees

Norton County Hospital