

NORTHERN MONTANA HOSPITAL COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT & IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY



STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2018-2020

A description of the efforts of Northern Montana Hospital to identify the community health needs of Hill County, Montana, including the implementation strategy.

Executive Summary

The Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) is a requirement of the IRS for hospitals to maintain their non-profit status. It is also a requirement that hospitals implement a plan to address the health needs identified. This CHNA is for the period of January 1, 2018 through December 31, 2020. It was presented to the NMH Board of Trustees on June 25, 2018 for official approval.

Through the Hill County Health Consortium, Northern Montana Hospital partnered with the Hill County Health Department, Bullhook Community Health Center, Montana State University – Northern, District 4 Human Resources Development Council, and the Boys & Girls Club of the Hi-Line. These partnerships brought multiple sections of the community together for a collaborative assessment of Hill County's health needs. To further grasp the health status of our community and to facilitate good prioritization, multiple assessments were utilized to create the survey tool. The survey tool along with county and facility statistical data directed the selection of the health priorities.

The Community Assessment for Public Health Emergency Response (CASPER) is an epidemiologic technique designed to provide quickly and at a low-cost household-based information about a community. The CASPER toolkit was used to collect primary data as part of a collaborative Community Health Needs Assessment. CASPER involves conducting door-to-door surveys using a random sample of households. Community partners recruited 37 volunteers from 7 different agencies. Volunteers had just-in-time training led by the State of Montana one week prior to the data collection. This training covered an overview of the CASPER method, the survey tool, safety guidelines and volunteer roles and responsibilities. Volunteers were deployed to 18 different clusters located throughout Hill County to conduct surveys. A return rate of 80% was needed for the sample to be valid, and a return rate of 86% (121 surveys out of 140) was achieved.

In the current planning cycle, a group of health leaders chose new focus areas after a review of the assessments, secondary statistical data and an assessment of the Hospital's ability to make improvements in those areas. For the period of 2018 through 2020 the NMH health leaders have identified the following priorities:

- Opioids
- Illegal Drug Use/ Alcohol
- Tobacco Use

This report does not include all the indicators analyzed in the countywide CHNA; rather, it offers a condensed and consolidated picture of the areas of greatest concern. This data was used by a group of health leaders to determine feasible and impactful priorities for the community that Northern Montana Hospital serves.

ABOUT NORTHERN MONTANA HOSPITAL

Northern Montana Hospital (NMH) is the center of a comprehensive system of medical and healthcare services, staffed with a team of caring professionals who are dedicated to meeting the growing needs of our Hi-Line communities. The not-for-profit, 49-bed community hospital and acute care facility features a 24-hour physician-staffed emergency department, with state-of-the-art diagnostic imaging and electronic medical record services. Our large, quiet labor/birthing rooms are private and located away from other patient care areas. The private patient rooms on the 5th floor Medical/Surgical Department boast views from every window.

The hospital campus includes a six chair Dialysis Unit; Northern Montana Care Center, a 136 bed Skilled and Intermediate Care facility; Northern Montana Assisted Living, a 10 bed facility; Northern Montana Family Medical Center, a Rural Health Clinic; Northern Montana Specialty Medical Center, a Rural Health Clinic; Northern Montana Vision Center; Northern Montana Sletten Cancer Center; Bear Paw Hospice; and the Hi-Line Sleep Center.

Specialties of our active staff of doctors include; Anesthesiology, Emergency Medicine, Family Medicine, General Surgery, Hematology, Internal Medicine, OB/GYN, Oncology, Ophthalmology, Optometry, Orthopedic Surgery and Sports Medicine, Pain Management, Pathology, Podiatry, Psychiatry, Psychology, Radiology, Urogynecology and Women's Health.

For the convenience of our patients, we also host visiting physicians at our clinics in the areas of Cardiology, Neurology, Pediatric Pulmonology, Urology, Radiation Oncology, Nephrology and Endocrinology.

Mission: *to deliver high-quality, comprehensive healthcare services to the Hi-Line communities.*

Vision: *to be the healthcare provider and employer of choice for our Hi-Line communities.*

Core Values: *Quality, Caring, Service*

THE COMMUNITY SERVED

The community served is defined by highway infrastructure, geographical boundaries, and other healthcare providers. While our service area includes Hill, Blaine, Liberty, Phillips and Choteau counties our largest patient population centers around Hill County. The demographic profile of Hill County is quite consistent with the service area population.

Hill County is located in North Central Montana, USA, closely bordering Canada. It is composed of 10 unique population centers: Havre, Gilford, Hingham, Kremlin, Rudyard, Inverness, Rocky Boy's Reservation, East End Hutterite Colony, Hilldale Hutterite Colony, Gilford Hutterite Colony, and a multitude of farms and ranches. Hill County encompasses an area of 2,897 square miles, measuring 62 miles by 60 miles at its farthest points. Considered a "frontier" county by the Public Health Service, Hill County boasts 5.75 residents per square mile with a total population of 16,463 people.

Native Americans represent 24.3% of this population, and the majority live on the Rocky Boy’s Reservation. Havre (population 9,310), the county seat, is located in the eastern part of the county. Approximately 59% of Hill County residents live in Havre.

Blaine County is also located in North Central Montana, USA, and bordering Canada. It borders Hill County on the East. It is composed of eight discernible population centers: Chinook, Harlem, Hogeland, Turner, Fort Belknap Reservation, Turner Hutterite Colony, North Harlem Hutterite Colony, and Heartland Hutterite Colony. Blaine County encompasses an area of 4,226 square miles. There are 1.6 residents per square mile and a total population of 6,491. The Public Health Service also considers Blaine County “frontier”. Native Americans represent 49.5% of the total population, with the biggest concentration on the Fort Belknap Reservation. Chinook (pop. 1,203), the county seat, is located in the western part of Blaine County and contains 18% of the population.

Portions of Liberty and Phillips Counties, as well as the Big Sandy Census District of Chouteau County are also included in the catchment area of Northern Montana Hospital. This total area encompasses 11,400 square miles, an area about the size of the states of Maryland and Delaware combined. All of the above data on estimated populations was retrieved from the United States Census Bureau from 2016.

Socioeconomic characteristics have repeatedly been shown to have a significant impact on health. Those with lower socioeconomic status are more likely to engage in high-risk behaviors, such as opioid, illegal drug, alcohol, and tobacco use. These individuals are less likely to have adequate healthcare coverage and less likely to get preventative healthcare. Lower socioeconomic status groups are often targeted for public health interventions. Socioeconomic characteristics for Hill County as compared to Montana overall are noted below.

Table 1.

<i>Socioeconomic Measures</i>	<i>Hill County</i>	<i>Montana</i>
Unemployment Rate	3.4%	3.9%
Median Household Income	\$42,979	\$48,380
Percent High School Graduates or GED attainment of the population 25 years or older	90.5%	92.9%
Percent of population below Federal Poverty Level	19.5%	13.3%
Food Stamp Recipients	11.5%	37%
Marital Status		
<i>Never Married</i>	30.1%	24%
<i>Married</i>	52.3%	54.7%
<i>Widowed</i>	6.58%	8.5%
<i>Divorced</i>	10.95%	10.9%

Data was collected from the U.S. Census Bureau & Statistical Atlas of 2018.

THE PROCESS

The 2018-2020 Community Health Needs Assessment includes a large collaborative effort between the hospital and the Hill County Health Consortium. Northern Montana Hospital partnered with the Hill County Health Consortium to engage multiple segments of the community to provide an assessment and plan for the health needs of Hill County. Community Assessment for Public Health Emergency Response (CASPER) was the technique used to quickly, accurately and reliably provide household-based information about our community's needs. Volunteers from Northern Montana Hospital and other community agencies hit the ground running, canvassing the community to help the Hill County Health Consortium collect data. To further gain insight on the health status of our community, the CASPER results along with county and facility statistical data were utilized in identifying the priority issues for Northern Montana Hospital.

THE PARTNERS

The Hill County Health Consortium consists of many important stakeholders in our community who put in a great deal of time, effort, and resources. Those who participated included the following:

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| 1. Boys and Girls club of the Hi-Line | 11. Montana State University - Northern |
| 2. Bullhook Community Health Center | 12. New Media Broadcasters, Inc. |
| 3. Havre Daily News | 13. Northern Montana Hospital |
| 4. Havre Public Schools | 14. Office of Public Assistance |
| 5. Hill County Board of Health | 15. Opportunity Link |
| 6. Hill County Commissioner | 16. Rocky Boy Health Department |
| 7. Hill County Extension Office | 17. Salvation Army |
| 8. Hill County Health Department | 18. Sanitarian/Planner |
| 9. Human Resource Development Council (HRDC) | 19. United Way |
| 10. Local Emergency Preparedness Committee | 20. Youth Dynamics |

LEADERSHIP

Hill County Health Consortium: The Hill County Health Consortium effort is spearheaded by Cindy Smith RN, CEO, Bull Hook Community Health Center; Christen Obresley, VP, Regulatory & Community Services, Northern Montana Health Care; and Kim Larson RN, Director, Hill County Health Department. This coalition includes more than 40 community partners who have banded together in a cooperative effort to address the health needs of the community. The overall goal of the consortium is to promote a healthy community where people live, work and play.

Senior Leadership and Medical Staff Engagement: Senior leadership received updates regarding the CHNA through regularly scheduled meetings. Northern Montana Hospital Senior leadership team members participated in the CASPER survey process and volunteered time to canvas the community. Medical Staff was engaged and updated through the Provider Office Practice Team and Operations Committee. Members from these groups of health leaders reviewed data, evaluated resources and identified priority initiatives for health improvement.

Approval of the Board of Trustees: The Northern Montana Hospital Board of Trustees was apprised of the results of the CASPER survey and of the priority areas chosen by group leaders. The Board endorsed participation with the process and implementation of the strategies selected by the health leaders in addressing the identified needs.

DATA

Employees of the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services analyzed the data collected from Hill County residents during the survey process that occurred in September 2017.

The following top six health issues were drawn from a written survey, asking the community, "Using the following list, for each potential problem, please tell us if this is not a problem, a problem, a big problem, or don't know." "The community sees the following as the top five health concerns in Hill County based on the perception of "a problem" and "a big problem":

- Obesity (79.8%)
- Illegal Drug Abuse (78.8%)
- Alcohol Abuse (78.8%)
- Tobacco Use (78.5%)
- Cancer (73.1%)
- Depression/Anxiety (72.8%)

Obesity

- Adult obesity rate (County Health Rankings 2017) – 33% (Hill) and 25% (MT).
- 29% of the 131 children assessed at the Hill County ECIT Child Find (2017) were overweight/obese.
- 27% of Hill County residents have no physical activity other than their job (County Health Rankings 2017).
- Heart Disease Death Rates per 100,000: 397.8 for Hill County/297.1 for MT (Montana DPHHS 2015).

Substance Abuse (Alcohol, Drug, and Tobacco Use)

- Excessive drinking rate (County Health Rankings 2017) – 22% (Hill) and 22% (MT).
- Drug overdose death rate (CDC) – 18% (Hill) and 12% (MT).

- 17% of all Bullhook Community Health Center patients were diagnosed with a substance use disorder in 2017.
- Alcohol-impaired driving deaths: 58% Hill County/46% MT (County Health Rankings 2017).

Cancer

- Cancer All Sites per 100,000 people: 408.9 for Hill County/441 for MT (Montana DPHHS)
- Cancer Prevention Services (Montana DPHHS 2015):
 - Ever had a colonoscopy: 52% Hill County/54% MT.
 - Mammogram in past two years: 58% Hill County/62% MT.

Depression/Anxiety

- 28% of those surveyed report a “fair” or “poor” overall mental health.
- Depression and anxiety were the 4th and 5th highest diagnoses at Northern Montana Hospital’s Specialty Medical Center in 2017.
- 9% of all Bullhook Community Health Center patients were diagnosed with depression in 2017, while 28% were diagnosed with a mental health diagnosis.
- 24% of Hill County residents report a lack of social or emotional support all or most of the time (CDC).
- Suicide rate per 100,000 people: 16.9 for Hill County/25.5 for MT (Montana DPHHS).

THE PRIORITIES

Northern Montana Hospital acknowledges the wide range of significant health issues that emerged from the CHNA process and determined that it could effectively focus on only those health needs which it deemed to be most urgent and essential to the community as well as within its ability to influence. These health priorities are being addressed within the organization through other methods and programs throughout the community. Northern Montana Hospital will not take new or specific, additional actions on the following health needs:

Obesity: Obesity continues to be addressed indirectly through assessment, education and awareness. BMI is evaluated during the patients’ visits to their primary care providers. Additionally, focusing on health indicators such as blood pressure, glucose and cholesterol levels gives primary care providers another avenue to discuss and motivate their patients to lose weight.

Northern Montana Hospital built and maintains the Community Fitness Park. Area residents enjoy the outdoor destination for walking, soccer, softball/baseball, kite flying, pet walking and family picnics. The Community Fitness Park is featured on the community walking map. Three laps equal one mile.

Cancer: The Northern Montana Sletten Cancer Center provides compassionate care for cancer patients and their families. Upon diagnosis patients are supported by a team of medical professionals working together to determine the best course of treatment for them. The Northern Montana Sletten Cancer

Center is celebrating a “Decade of Caring” in August of 2018. Both chemotherapy and radiation therapy services are provided at the center. Cancer is not being addressed as a priority issue in this assessment as the hospital already provides treatment services to the community.

Depression/Anxiety: Northern Montana Hospital provides local services in the community to address Depression/Anxiety; therefore, it is not being identified as a priority issue in this report. During the patient’s annual examination, the PHQ-2 is utilized to screen for depression. Patients who screen positive on the PHQ-2 may require further testing and may be evaluated with the PHQ-9. The PHQ-9 is a more detailed test with a scoring system based on duration/severity of symptoms.

Northern Montana Hospital employs three Psychologists and one Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner who provide mental health services to the community. Additionally, we stabilize vulnerable patients with mental health issues on our Medical Surgical floor.

Priority Issue One: Opioid Abuse

NMH Health leaders identified opioid abuse as their most serious health concern. While not specifically identified during the data collection process, there is a National focus on combatting the opioid epidemic. The opioid addiction crisis is now declared as a public health emergency. Behavioral Risk Factors also support this concern as an area on which the hospital needs to focus. Prescription drug use (including opioids) is 6% higher in Hill County than in Montana State. Prescription opioid related drug overdose deaths make-up 43.7% of Montana Residents; based on death certificates from 2000-2015 (Office of Epidemiology and Scientific Support, Montana DPHHS).

During an 11 month period 36 patients presented to NMH with opioid dependency or opioid overdose as their primary diagnosis. Another 18 patients participated in the NMCDTS program for treatment of their opioid addiction.

Initiative – Create a specific multi-disciplinary opioid abuse prevention team to develop a unified approach for policy review, education, intervention and treatment.

Actions:

1. *Create an inventory of current opioid related programs, policies and procedures.*
2. *Create a public awareness campaign about prescription opioid misuse and opioid use disorder and treatment.*
3. *Develop a strategic plan to reduce opioid abuse using Northern Montana Hospital’s current Chemical Dependency Treatment Services Program and Pain Management program.*

Northern Montana Hospital does have the existing infrastructure, organizational competencies and established protocols to deal with implementing most of the actions identified in Initiative 1.

Priority Issue 2: Substance Abuse

Substance Abuse statistics for Hill County led group health leaders to choose substance abuse, specifically; illegal drug and alcohol abuse as an area of concern will also be addressed in the current planning cycle. Hill County residents who responded to the community health survey also indicated that addressing illegal drug abuse and alcohol abuse was of high importance. Based on the County Health Rankings of 2017, alcohol-impaired driving deaths in Hill County ranked 12% higher than the state of Montana.

Initiative – Partner with community stakeholders to secure a regional hub for prevention.

Actions:

1. *Create a public awareness campaign about substance abuse, specifically illegal drug abuse and alcohol abuse.*
2. *Utilize current pain management program to reduce addiction and self-medication.*
3. *Conduct screening assessments at annual wellness exams and provide educational materials.*

Northern Montana Hospital has a great foundation of chemical dependency programs that can be further built upon to include the surrounding community and implement prevention courses and treatments offered at the hospital.

Priority Issue 3: Tobacco Use

Tobacco abuse is also considered a top priority issue amongst the hospitals group health leaders. The CDC reported in 2013 a Hill County tobacco use rate of 30%; the state-wide rate at that time was 18%. 78.5% of the Hill County community health survey respondents ranked tobacco use as an issue within our community.

Initiative – Identify and implement strategies to reduce tobacco use among NMH patients.

Actions:

1. *Conduct screening assessments at annual wellness exams.*
2. *Create communication strategies about detecting early warning signs of tobacco use.*
3. *Collaborate with Hill & Blaine County Tobacco Coalition to develop a strategic plan to reduce tobacco use.*
4. *Collaborate with other stakeholders to promote smoking cessation.*

THE PLAN

Northern Montana Hospital Board of Trustees, Physicians and Administrative Team support that these initiatives and actions can be achieved through existing programs and providers. NMH is confident that current programs and providers can be used to create specialty education to target patients that are specifically affected by any of the priority issues; opioid abuse, illegal drug and alcohol abuse, and tobacco abuse. The guiding principle behind the Implementation Strategy is the Northern Montana Hospital's mission, vision and values.

Northern Montana Hospital is dedicated to keeping the population healthy through chronic disease management and health promotion.

CONCLUSION

Over the long run, these efforts are expected to positively impact the overall health status, lifestyle, risk behavior and mental health of the residents of the catchment area. Northern Montana Hospital will address the unmet needs within the context of our overall approach as those needs align with our Mission, Vision and Core Values. This is a living document, which will be modified and changed according to the needs of the population and the strategic direction of Northern Montana Hospital.