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# 2019 Community Health Needs Assessment *Implementation Strategy*

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**Approved by the Board of Trustees in October 2019.**

## Introduction

Northwest Hospital & Medical Center (Northwest Hospital) is a full-service, acute care community hospital located in North Seattle, affiliated with the UW Medicine Health System. The hospital provides comprehensive medical, surgical, and therapeutic services operating in a facility licensed for 281 beds. The hospital's mission is to raise the long-term health status of the community by providing personalized, quality care with compassion, dignity, and respect.

On January 1, 2020, Northwest Hospital (NWH) and UW Medical Center (UWMC) will integrate and become one hospital under one license with two campuses. The campuses will be University of Washington Medical Center Northwest campus (UWMC Northwest) and University of Washington Medical Center Montlake (UWMC Montlake) campus.

## Community Health Needs Assessment

In 2019, Northwest Hospital conducted a community health needs assessment (CHNA) to comply with federal regulations guiding tax exempt hospitals. The CHNA is posted on the hospital website and can be accessed at <https://nwhospital.org/about-northwest-hospital/community-health-needs-assessment-chna/>. Public comment on the CHNA is encouraged and comments are used to inform and influence this work.

The community health needs assessment incorporated demographic and health data for the communities served by the hospital. Significant health needs were identified from primary and secondary data sources as well as informational interviews. Indicators associated with health were considered health needs when they compared unfavorably to benchmark data, specifically county or state rates or Healthy People 2020 objectives. The following health needs were identified:

- Access to health care
- Cancer
- Heart disease and stroke
- HIV/sexually transmitted infections
- Housing and homelessness
- Mental health
- Preventive practices
- Substance use and misuse

A complete description of these health needs can be found in the 2019 CHNA report.

### Priority Health Needs

Interviews with community stakeholders were conducted to both validate the findings

from the data review and to prioritize the identified health needs. The following criteria were used to prioritize the identified health needs:

- Severity – the perceived impact on the population of the community.
- Change over time – determination if the health need has improved, stayed the same or worsened.
- Resources – availability of resources within the community to address the health need.

Stakeholder interviewees were sent a link to an electronic survey in advance of the interview. They were asked to rank each identified health need. The percentage of responses that identified the need as having severe or very severe impact on the community, had worsened over time, or had a shortage of resources available in the community. The prioritized health needs can be found in the 2019 CHNA.

## Significant Health Needs the Hospital will Address

Northwest Hospital plans to address the selected significant health needs identified in the 2019 Community Health Needs Assessment. Applying the following criteria, the organization was able to assess its ability to impact the identified and prioritized health needs. These criteria included: organizational capacity, established relationships, ongoing investment, and acknowledged competencies and expertise. As a result, Northwest Hospital will address the following health needs through a commitment of community benefit programs and charitable resources.

- Access to health care
- Behavioral health (mental health/substance use and misuse)
- Cancer
- Heart disease

A strategy outlining actions the hospital intends to take, including programs and resources it plans to commit, anticipated impacts of these actions, and planned collaboration between the hospital and other organizations for each health need the hospital plans to address are included in this implementation plan.

### Access to Health Care

#### Goal

Increase access to health care for the medically underserved.

#### Strategies

Northwest Hospital will commit the following programs and resources to address access to health care:

- Provide financial assistance through both free and discounted care for health care services, consistent with the hospital's financial assistance policy.
- Provide financial counseling services to assist patients with enrollment in Medicaid or health exchange insurance products.
- Continued focus on a multi-year, enterprise-wide effort focused on eliminating or reducing the barriers that make it difficult for patients to get timely appointments for care within the UW Medicine health system.

#### Impact

The anticipated impact of these actions will be:

- Increased availability and access to health care.
- Provision of financial assistance to qualified patients.
- Aid access to health care services by connecting patients with transportation options available within the community.

## **Collaboration**

To address access to care, Northwest Hospital plans to collaborate with:

- Washington State Healthcare Authority
- King County Metro
- Hopelink
- Public Health – Seattle & King County
- S.H.E. Clinic at Aurora Commons

## **Behavioral Health**

### **Goal**

Increase access to behavioral health services.

### **Strategies**

Northwest Hospital has actively engaged with UW School of Medicine and WA State representatives to expand behavioral health to treat unmet community needs. Efforts have resulted in a funding commitment from Washington State to build a behavioral health teaching facility that includes 150 inpatient beds to support innovative and comprehensive care to help patients with behavioral health recovery, offer an alternative to existing long-term (90/180-day) civil commitment beds at Western State, provide a training site for the next generation of health and behavioral health care providers, and support the first of its kind 24/7, 365 day a year tele-psych consultation program. It is anticipated that this expansion of behavioral health services will be offered on the Northwest Hospital campus.

### **Impact**

The anticipated impact of these actions will be:

- Increased availability of behavioral health services to the community.
- Improved screening and identification of behavioral health needs.
- Improved coordination among health care providers and community resources and programs.
- Increased opportunities for professional training.

## **Collaboration**

To address behavioral health needs, Northwest Hospital plans to collaborate with:

- Community clinics
- King County Mental Health
- Public Health – Seattle & King County
- UW School of Medicine
- Washington State

## **Cancer**

### **Goal**

Reduce the impact of cancer on members of the community through strategies that improve prevention and early detection.

### **Strategies**

Northwest Hospital will commit the following programs and resources to address cancer:

- Provide financial, educational, and emotional support resources and services through the collaborative Seattle Cancer Care Alliance Resource Center at Northwest Hospital.
- Continued partnership with the Seattle Cancer Care Alliance to provide services directly to members of the community.
- Provide support groups, fitness and dietary classes, and educational opportunities in partnership with Cancer Lifeline to optimize the quality of life for those with cancer, cancer survivors, families, and friends.
- Connect patients with cancer to palliative care and hospice resources when appropriate.

### **Impact**

The anticipated impact of these actions will be to:

- Increase public awareness and adherence to cancer prevention and early detection recommendations.
- Improve early detection of cancer and decrease the number of those presenting with cancer.
- Increase availability of supportive resources for persons with cancer and their families.
- Decrease risk of mortality associated with late stage cancer detection.
- Reduce the economic impact of cancer to families.

### **Collaboration**

To address cancer, Northwest Hospital plans to collaborate with:

- Cancer Lifeline
- Seattle Cancer Care Alliance
- UWMC Montlake
- Home based hospice and palliative care agencies that provide care in the North Seattle Community

## **Heart Disease**

### **Goal**

Reduce the impact of heart disease on members of the community through strategies focused on prevention and treatment.

### **Strategies**

Northwest Hospital will continue to partner with the UW Division of Cardiology to expand general cardiology, structural heart, and electrophysiology services on the Northwest Hospital campus.

Northwest Hospital will commit the following programs and resources to address heart disease:

- Management of overall heart health through primary care services.
- Focused and measured efforts to improve blood pressure within the population.
- Focused and measured efforts to improve diabetes management within the population.
- Host CPR training on the Northwest campus.

### **Impact**

The anticipated impact of these actions will be to:

- Increase the identification and early treatment of heart disease.
- Increase public awareness of heart disease prevention.
- Decrease mortality and improve quality of life for those who are diagnosed with heart disease.

### **Collaboration**

To address heart disease, Northwest Hospital plans to collaborate with:

- American Heart Association
- King County and Snohomish County medic systems

### **Evaluation of Impact**

Northwest Hospital will monitor and evaluate the programs and activities outlined above. The hospital has a system that tracks the implementation of the strategies and documents the anticipated impact. The reporting process includes the collection and documentation of tracking measures, such as the number of people reached/served and collaborative efforts to address health needs. An evaluation of the impact of the hospital's actions to address these significant health needs will be reported in the next scheduled Community Health Needs Assessment.

## **Needs the Hospital will Not Address**

Northwest Hospital will not directly address the following needs identified in the CHNA beyond what it currently offers today: HIV/sexually transmitted infections, housing and homelessness, and preventive practices. Northwest Hospital has selected to concentrate on those health needs that can most effectively be addressed given the organization's capabilities. Northwest Hospital has insufficient resources to effectively address all the identified needs and, in some cases, the needs are currently addressed by others in the community.