

CHNA Implementation Strategy - 2022

Clay County Medical Center and Clay County Health Department

Overview

Three topics were designated as “Prioritized Health Needs” through the survey distributed as part of the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). When Clay County citizens were asked to rank the subjects that were important to address in order to make Clay County a healthier place to live, they prioritized:

- Healthy Lifestyles and Behaviors
- Parks and Recreation Availability
- Affordable Housing

Of those three priorities, local healthcare establishments can have a strong and direct impact on the first subject “Healthy Lifestyles and Behaviors.” The other two subjects could be affected indirectly by healthcare facilities, but a plan will not be addressed in this document for those two subjects. This will be discussed below.

Strategy

Clay County Medical Center (CCMC) and the Clay County Health Department (CCHD), in coordination with healthcare providers in Clay County, can play a leading role in addressing the need for Healthy Lifestyles and Behaviors in the county. As part of the CHNA survey, underlying health concerns that occur when Healthy Lifestyles and Behaviors are not addressed include Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug use (for both underage and adult individuals), Nutrition and Exercise, and Dropping out of School.

To promote an improvement in Healthy Lifestyles and Behaviors, CCMC and CCHD will endeavor to continue to support and improve on their healthcare offerings, which are focused on this issue.

Since the last CHNA, CCMC has continued to grow the availability of specialty medical services and has intentionally added capacity for surgical services. Outreach to individuals of all age groups has also grown. The number of births in the CCMC birthing suite is up significantly, free sports physicals are offered to youth who then benefit from annual contact with a medical provider who can identify concerns early, and more recently, a brand-new outreach program has been established for chronic care management, which works with patients of all ages to see their provider for needed checkups and care.

CCHD provides support for Clay Counts Coalition. Clay Counts Coalition exists to promote social, physical, and mental well-being for residents of Clay County, emphasizing reduction of youth substance use and to foster a thriving environment in which to live, learn, work, and play. The coalition's focus currently is mainly in the schools. We provide curriculum for health classes, and district counseling services. We've also brought Mental Health First Aid and Trauma Informed Care education to the community and will continue to do so. We support Drug Take Back biannually in cooperation with local law enforcement and we also support the Parent Project and Drug Court in Clay County.

COVID-19 was disruptive to traditional healthcare routines, so these outreach programs are crucial to maintaining a healthy lifestyle. When routine care is established, providers can work with patients on nutrition and exercise options to improve their condition. Ongoing educational programs that were put on hiatus during the pandemic are also coming back, including Stroke and Parkinson's Support Groups. CCMC is also considering establishing Alzheimer's and Cancer Support Groups. These educational offerings can empower individuals to maintain their health personally, rather than being solely dependent on medical care and healthcare providers.

CCMC has supported the growth of medical services within the hospital and clinics, but has been a strong proponent of new healthcare options outside the hospital, both directly and indirectly. For example, when a new and independent family therapist came to town to provide mental health services, CCMC worked to support this practice. CCMC has also directly grown healthcare services in the region with two brand new clinic locations in the last couple years in Riley and Glasco, where there was previously no healthcare presence at all.

CCHD collaborates with the Grow Clay County as the local Care Resource Coordination for the purpose of providing support for basic needs of residents who are in isolation or quarantine to increase the chances for successful completion.

CCMC leadership will continue this focus as a way to address CHNA priorities. Being continually ranked as one of the Top 20 Critical Access Hospitals in the nation, we are confident of continued success in improving the health of the Clay County region.

The results of the CHNA survey showed the main barriers to improved healthcare were: Openness to Change, Funding for Health Initiatives, and Community Awareness. CCMC continues to invest heavily in marketing the available healthcare services through a wide variety of media across a large region. This effort will continue to ensure the entire population knows what services are available and why these services are important. A consistent and ongoing education campaign can overcome the barriers addressed in the CHNA.

Evaluation plan

As the priorities of the CHNA are addressed, we will document our activities and then review the work to make sure our focus on Healthy Lifestyles and Behaviors is consistent. Through a review of our marketing and media outreach, and of our growth and maintenance of services, we will be able to gauge whether we are meeting our goals. The CCMC Board of Trustees will do an annual review of the Implementation Strategy and an update will be created annually during the three-year cycle of the CHNA process.

Several organizations within the hospital, including the executive committee, Patient-Family Advisory Council, and other entities will also review the Implementation Strategy to identify any role they could play in the effort. The Clay County Health Department will also continue to be involved in the creation and maintenance of the CHNA and Implementation Strategy.

Omitted from the Implementation Strategy

Two subjects were identified in the survey as health concerns, but we decided our Implementation Strategy would not directly address them. They are:

- Parks and Recreation Availability
- Affordable Housing

While these are important topics in the community, the hospital and health department are not natural venues to take on these topics directly. That does not mean we would not be indirectly involved. As significant employers in the county, many in our team are very involved in efforts for community betterment, including membership in civic organizations and business organizations that are directly involved in both topics. Our team members also have major involvement in our schools, churches, youth sports and activities, charitable organizations and many other efforts that positively impact the community. So when there are projects that could improve the availability of parks and recreation, or even help with the promotion of affordable housing, it is almost a certainty that someone from the local healthcare industry will be involved.

There are current efforts underway in Clay County for new and improved park and recreation availability, including a trails project in Clay Center, a proposed multi-purpose stadium at the high school, and new soccer fields near the fairgrounds, to name a few. Housing is also under constant discussion. The lack of available homes in the area became very evident during the COVID housing crunch that continues to this day. Historically, members of our healthcare team have built homes and been involved in development projects, but as private citizens rather than as representatives of the hospital.

For these two topics, we decided it was best to exclude them from being directly addressed in an Implementation Strategy.