

Executive Summary

OH Muhlenberg, LLC (“OHM”), a Kentucky limited liability company, is wholly-owned by Owensboro Health Inc. (OHI) and operates Owensboro Health Muhlenberg Community Hospital, a 90 bed acute care hospital in Greenville, Muhlenberg County, Kentucky (“OH Muhlenberg Community Hospital”). Effective July 1, 2015, in connection with the OHM’s purchase of substantially all of the assets of Muhlenberg Community Hospital, OHM began leasing and operating the hospital facility under a lease agreement with Muhlenberg Community Hospital that extends through June 30, 2035.

Owensboro Health Muhlenberg Community Hospital (OHMCH) is pleased to present its 2021-2024 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). This CHNA report includes health assessment data collected in a collaborative process with the Muhlenberg County Health Department. OHMCH contracted with the Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky (CEDIK) to conduct a CHNA in accordance with the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and section 501(r) of the internal revenue code for nonprofit tax-exempt hospitals. This CHNA is the second report prepared by CEDIK for OHMCH, the first was in 2018. This report will be used to create an implementation plan with wide community input to address the identified health needs for the community served by OHMCH over the next three years. OHMCH Board of Directors approved this CHNA on May 17th, 2021.

Summary of Findings

Methodology

CEDIK facilitated the process of primary data collection through community surveys, focus groups and key informant interviews to create an implementation plan to address identified health needs. In addition, county specific secondary data was gathered to help examine the social determinants of health. Throughout the process, CEDIK and the community steering committee made it a priority to get input from populations that are often not engaged in conversations about their health needs or gaps in service. CEDIK conducted eleven key informant interviews to probe more deeply into health and quality of life themes within the county. Current community resources and potential barriers to accessing resources were also identified in these interviews.

This CHNA report synthesizes community health needs survey data, focus groups with vulnerable populations, and key informant interview data with social and economic data as well as health outcomes data collected from secondary sources to help provide context for the community. Below are identified themes collected from the primary data collection:

Focus Group Visioning

Muhlenberg County residents have an aspirational vision for a healthy and vibrant community that encompasses all who live, work and play here. This vision includes great schools, access to health care, affordable healthy foods and an active living mindset for all residents. In addition, a strong economy with employment that provides livable wages with benefits for employees and safe, affordable housing. This well-resourced county envisions youth who feel safe and protected, tobacco and drug free and enjoy the benefits of hiking trails, activity centers and recreation areas.

Focus Groups – Unmet Needs

CEDIK conducted focus groups with representatives of organizations in Muhlenberg County that provide services to populations that are under resourced or experience unmet health needs. The participants provided a view of health challenges and gaps in healthcare or essential services. The discussions revealed needs among children/youth, low-income and senior populations. The needs most often mentioned include: lack of affordable housing/homelessness, mental health concerns for adults and youth, substance use disorder, tobacco use and vaping and lack of physical activity in all ages. Common health issues discussed include: COPD, Cancer, High Blood Pressure and Diabetes as well as increased child abuse and domestic violence. While the county has multiple clinics for primary care some residents have difficulty scheduling appointments or navigating the health care system in general.

Key Informant - Community Themes and Strengths

OHMCH, Muhlenberg County Health Department and CEDIK obtained additional primary data through eleven supplemental interviews with individuals knowledgeable about health and quality of life needs in Muhlenberg County. CEDIK organized the data into strengths, barriers and opportunities for change in Muhlenberg County. Strengths include both healthcare assets (hospital, health department, FQHC, access to specialty care and behavioral health services) and community assets (good school system, parks and recreation, trails, fitness centers and strong commitment to collaboration among community organizations). Barriers to health care include: lack of transportation, low health literacy, stigma related to mental health conditions, challenges with missing work to seek medical care for some and a lack of motivation to prioritize health and wellness. The interviews identified a number of opportunities that could improve the health and well-being of Muhlenberg County residents including increased substance use disorder treatment, promotion of available health services, increase services for those experiencing homelessness and additional affordable housing, and adopting a county wide “culture of wellness.”

Prioritized Areas

The Muhlenberg County CHNA Steering Committee reviewed survey results, focus group and key informant interview results as well as key secondary health data. The committee considered existing local, state and national priorities, conducted an open discussion and voted on specific strategic initiatives for the county. Members identified current resources and possible barriers to resources that residents may experience. This information can assist both the hospital and the health department, as implementation plans are developed to address the prioritized health needs.

Muhlenberg County CHNA Steering Committee selected the following priority areas for action:

- **Mental Health (including Suicide)**
- **Substance Use (alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs, prescription drug misuse)**
- **Culture of Wellness/Personal responsibility**
- **Housing and homelessness**
- **Obesity/Overweight**
- **Access to care/making services available**
- **Transportation**
- **Children being raised by people other than parents**
- **Poverty**

A plan for addressing these priority areas will be described in OHMCH 2021 Implementation Strategy.