

OWENSBORO HEALTH MUHLENBERG COMMUNITY HOSPITAL  
COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT  
IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY  
TAX YEAR 2021

**INTRODUCTION:**

The Owensboro Health Muhlenberg Community Hospital (OHMCH) Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) was conducted in collaboration with the Muhlenberg County Health Department and the Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky (CEDIK). The OHMCH Board of Directors approved this CHNA on May 17, 2021. In addition to the CHNA, and in accordance with requirements of Sec. 501(r) of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, all nonprofit hospitals must also adopt an implementation strategy which describes how the hospital plans to address the identified health need(s) contained within the CHNA. According to the final guidelines issues by the IRS, hospital facilities have an additional four and a half months to adopt the implementation strategy, specifically requiring an authorized body of the hospital facility to adopt an implementation strategy to meet the health needs identified through a CHNA on or before the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the fifth month after the end of the taxable year in which the hospital facility finishes conducting the CHNA.

**BACKGROUND:**

OHMCH conducted its CHNA in conjunction with multiple community partners and CEDIK for tax year 2021. For purposes of the CHNA and this document, the defined community is Muhlenberg County, Kentucky. The process by which the CHNA was conducted is thoroughly described in the CHNA and the Executive Summary posted on the Owensboro Health website at: <https://www.owensborohealth.org/health-resources/health-needs-assessment/>. Utilizing the findings of the CHNA, the hospital's current strategic priorities and efforts and activities in progress, we offer the implementation strategy as a component of OHMCH's efforts to address priority community health needs.

**AREAS OF NEED IDENTIFIED BY COMMUNITY:**

The Muhlenberg County CHNA Steering Committee reviewed survey, focus group and key informant interview results as well as significant 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. The 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

**OHMCH STRATEGIES TO IMPACT PRIORITY HEALTH NEEDS AS IDENTIFIED IN THE CHNA:**

- Provide in-kind staff to lead and serve on the Muhlenberg County Health Coalition.
- Provide financial support through grants and sponsorships to organizations who seek to impact priority health areas through their projects and programming.

**1. Mental Health (including Suicide)**

- a. Increase mental health treatment services available in Muhlenberg County through a recently hired Behavioral Health physician who is available for both telehealth and in-person appointments at the Owensboro Health Muhlenberg Healthplex.

- b. Increase the use of telehealth psychiatric consultations available through Owensboro Health Regional Hospital (OHRH) for patients at OHMCH (Emergency Department and Intensive Care Unit).
  - c. Explore potential new partnerships to increase mental health services available in Muhlenberg County.
  - d. Promote the availability of a new mental health virtual resource, CredibleMind, through traditional/social media channels and local community organizations. Owensboro Health partnered with RiverValley Behavioral Health to offer the CredibleMind resource to anyone in our region who has internet access via computer, tablet, phone or any other device. A person can visit [HealthyMind.CredibleMind.com](https://HealthyMind.CredibleMind.com) to access local resources, articles and assessments on mental health topics.
  - e. Increase access for aging community in Muhlenberg County (and potentially residents of our Long-Term Care unit at OHMCH) with the addition of Geriatric Psychiatry in-patient care at Owensboro Health Twin Lakes Medical Center (OHTLMC).
  - f. Continue to assist and refer patients to appropriate Behavioral Health services including the intensive outpatient program at OHRH.
2. Substance Use (alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs, prescription drug misuse)
- a. Medical staff at OHMCH have an opioid stewardship committee whose charge is to ensure safe opioid prescribing and assist in the decrease of opioid abuse and misuse by patients in our care.
    - I. Criteria for screening and assessing/reassessing pain
    - II. Algorithms for the appropriate prescribing
    - III. Pharmacological therapies
    - IV. Patient education provided to reduce the risks of opioid use
  - b. OHMCH will participate in a focus team on Substance Use for the Owensboro Health system.
  - c. Team members actively participate on the Champions for a Drug Free Muhlenberg County committee.
    - I. OHMCH EMS provides the number of overdoses responded to in order to raise awareness and educate (advertised on social media and billboard in the community).
  - d. Evaluate the use of Narcan kit distribution for Emergency Department patient discharges.
  - e. EMS coordinates distribution of Narcan to local Fire and Police Departments.
  - f. Share information about harm reduction program at Muhlenberg County Health Department and provide information about Owensboro Health service options available.
  - g. Assist in marketing National Drug Takeback Days (in coordination with Champions for a Drug Free Muhlenberg County and the Muhlenberg County Sheriff's Office).
  - h. Continue to assist and refer patients to appropriate Mental Health and Substance Use services (OHRH intensive outpatient program and/or OHTLMC medicated assisted therapy for pregnant mothers).
  - i. Train four Certified Tobacco Treatment Specialists (TTS) to provide effective, evidence-based treatments and education about dependence treatments. OHMCH may also consider using these TTS for inpatient referrals to have intervention prior to a patient's discharge.
3. Culture of Wellness/Personal responsibility
- a. OHMCH Director of EMS participates in all preparedness and disaster preparation meetings in Muhlenberg County (school system, industry and city/county). Our teams also train and exercise our emergent responses with these groups to make sure we are prepared in case of real-life events.
  - b. OHMCH EMS provides Stop the Bleed training for all Muhlenberg County school personnel.
  - c. Each school in Muhlenberg County has a school nurse or health technician whose salary is funded by OHMCH. We intend to offer resources to these school nurses and health technicians to provide education related to identified health needs to students and school personnel. Consider expansion of this program in the future as particular needs arise.
  - d. As one of the largest employers in the community, wellness initiatives of OHMCH team members end up having an effect on the broader community. Our organization has a wellness platform and wellness

champions throughout each hospital department. In addition, the Owensboro Health Foundation is writing a grant to support work related to health and wellness of our team members. These investments in the health and wellbeing of our team ensures continued access to care for our community.

- e. Expand outreach of Coal Miners' Respiratory Clinic (CMRC) to enhance pulmonary services in the community by broadening the scope of services to address additional respiratory diseases. A dedicated CMRC Director is being hired in September 2021. Utilize the Certified Tobacco Treatment Specialists (CTTS) in expansion of this CMRC outreach for tobacco cessation programs.

#### 4. Housing and homelessness

- a. OHMCH will devote team members' time to the local health coalition to explore existing needs for those who are homeless or "precariously housed" and resources/services that are available to them.
- b. Coordinate with local food bank, school system (and specifically school nurses who may have students identified with housing challenges), and hospital discharge summaries for individuals without a permanent home and consider how our hospital may assist with this need in the future.
- c. Ensure that the health needs of the homeless are addressed through widely available preventative care like COVID-19 and flu vaccines, and access to emergency and primary care services.
- d. Continue to budget annually for OHMCH Case Management team to offer services to patients with challenges upon discharge (housing/hotel, clothing, food, bus tickets).
- e. Ongoing work with local food pantry (some of their population is likely homeless) to offer health services onsite (vaccines/health education). Consider using CTTS to host smoking cessation classes that coordinate with food distribution times.
- f. Explore the option to provide an area in our parking lot to offer free wireless internet for those who are unable to access the internet from their home.
- g. Providers in our Rural Health Clinic at Owensboro Health Muhlenberg Healthplex ask population health questions (including housing) during office visits and direct patients to appropriate resources.

#### 5. Obesity/Overweight

- a. OHMCH will participate in a focus team with OHRH regarding obesity.
- b. Sponsorship of community walking trails (Lu-Ray Park & Amphitheater, Greater Muhlenberg Parks and Recreation System outdoor walking track), indoor recreation facility, and Big Twigs at Lake Malone (hiking destination attraction) to encourage youth and adults to get outside and get moving.
- c. Owensboro Health Community Health Investment grant awarded to Muhlenberg County Libraries for Story Walks along five local walking trails with new stories displayed bi-monthly so children have a reason to visit (and get active) frequently with their families.

#### 6. Access to care/making services available

- a. Consider expansion of Long-Term Care unit at OHMCH due to projected demand for Long-Term Care services in this community (current occupancy is nearly 90%).
- b. OHMCH Chief Operating Officer is involved in the master plan for Owensboro Health's Muhlenberg County facilities.
- c. Potential use of Emergency Management mobile trailer for future use for outreach across community (for preventative rather than emergency care: hygiene kits, vaccinations, and health screenings).
- d. Separately seeking grant approval for a large OHMCH multipurpose trailer to bring healthcare access where it is most needed in the community for a variety of health offerings. This trailer would be 28 feet long, with an integrated power generator, three separate exam rooms and a nurse's station that can all be negative pressure, full-length covered porch that could serve as a waiting room with a built-in 70 inch TV to use for educational purposes while patients wait. Potential uses include mobile access unit for Primary Care/Rural Health Clinic, CMRC black lung screenings at offsite locations, COVID-19 and/or flu vaccines, and a first aid station at large community events.

- e. Participation in priority health teams across the Owensboro Health system to address identified health needs.
- f. School nurses/health technicians and therapy services available on-site at each Muhlenberg County school.
- g. OHMCH ambulance services provided at many school/community events when there is a large number in attendance or the risk is high for injury or illness (football games, events with high temperatures, etc.).
- h. Owensboro Health Muhlenberg Healthplex offers access to Primary Care and specialists (Women's Health, Orthopedics, and Behavioral Health).
- i. Muhlenberg County athletes have access to a Certified Athletic Trainer whose services are provided by OHMCH as well as sponsorship of athletic teams to encourage exercise and extracurricular involvement to benefit mental and physical health.

#### 7. Transportation

- a. Consider options to support Uber-style transportation with a potential focus for those age 65+ to use for provider appointments, pharmacy, grocery, etc. Explore the possibility to offer transportation service just for hospital patients who have difficulty getting a ride home/nursing home.
- b. Muhlenberg County Health Coalition supports a voucher system through Pennyrile Allied Community Services (PACS) that allows those in Muhlenberg County to access a lower fixed rate (\$4 round trip) for those needing a ride to a medical appointment, work or school. OHMCH has supported this program in the past with grant funding.
- c. OHMCH ambulance service available county-wide for all medical transport including 24/7 911 coverage and also non-emergent transport of patients who cannot safely be transported by wheelchair. Ambulance service also transfers all patients from OHMCH that require a higher level of care.

#### 8. Children being raised by people other than parents

- a. OHMCH will participate in a focus team with OHRH regarding children's health needs.
- b. OHMCH is involved in school outreach programs including school health assessments (where information is later sent home to families about healthy diet/exercise) and school nurses who can provide health information to not only the student but entire household.
- c. Involvement in community and school events providing education to this population.

#### 9. Poverty

- a. Patient Financial Advocates assist OHMCH patients who may qualify in applying for Kentucky Medicaid and also utilize an eligibility grid to offer financial assistance to patients based on income and household size.
- b. Case Management team utilizes donated funds to assist patients struggling with issues related to poverty (housing, transportation, utilities, etc.).
- c. See sections 4, 6, and 7 above as many things affect those in poverty.

While there is some overlap in many of the identified health issues, Owensboro Health Muhlenberg Community Hospital recognizes its leadership role in being a catalyst for innovative thinking in addressing these community priority areas. We will continue to partner with other individuals and organizations in the community on their efforts to address each of the named community priority areas. As we continue to refine the health system's strategic initiatives, we will remain focused and determined in addressing the health needs of our population.

*Reviewed and approved by the Owensboro Health Muhlenberg Community Hospital Board of Directors on September 20, 2021.*