

## **Stevens Community Medical Center Implementation Plan Addendum to 2016 Community Health Needs Assessment**

The 2016 Community Health Needs Assessment conducted by the Stevens Community Medical Center (SCMC) identified a wide range of current issues in the county, as well as the residents' and community leaders' concerns for the future. Included in those are the various needs of the aging population, adequate resources for addressing mental health issues, continuing access to healthcare providers in rural Minnesota, as well as obesity and lifestyle choices which negatively impact a person's health and wellbeing. Over the next three years, SCMC has developed the following plan to address a few of those challenges. Our goal is to work in conjunction with other organizations and individuals in the community to successfully address these concerns.

### **Implementation Plan for 2016 - 2018:**

1. **Mental Health – need for more services and resources** – SCMC recognizes the great community need in this area and will continue to do its best to meet this growing need. We will continue the recruitment process for licensed providers, with the number one need being an additional psychiatrist. Another possibility is a nurse practitioner with a psychiatric focus. Part of our approach in reaching the goal of adding mental health providers at SCMC will be to continue to host interns. In addition, our Community Relations Coordinator will expand her visits to college campuses to inform students about SCMC and promote employment in Morris. We will also be considering the addition of telemedicine services to partially address the high demand for mental health care.

SCMC will continue to progress its past efforts towards better integration of primary care physicians into the identification and monitoring of mental health problems through such methods as anxiety and depression screening tools. This would lead to more prompt referrals for behavioral medicine services as well as aid in monitoring the progress of existing clients. Other efforts we will continue and possibly expand involve the two therapists who provide CTSS (Children's Therapeutic Support and Services) outreach services within the community. These therapists have very specific training, which includes 6,000+ hours of experience. It has proven to be a very valuable and well received resource in serving the needs of children in the community.

The lack of inpatient hospital psychiatric beds continues in Minnesota. While searching for an available inpatient mental health bed for a patient brought into SCMC's acute care setting, we plan to offer additional educational resources for managing their illness as a tool until they can be admitted to a specialized care facility. SCMC's Director of Behavioral Medicine will use resources such as NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) to monitor progress on the legislative side and to support efforts within the mental health community to better care for this population. Our director will also continue to participate in Minnesota's Day at Home event to ensure that the House and Senate are fully aware of the need for more favorable legislation and funding to address the growing problem of mental health issues in the state.

Besides the specific provision of mental health care, SCMC also plans to offer Autism and Alzheimer's support groups to help address those growing needs within the community. These are conditions that require support for both the patient and their caregivers. SCMC plans to host events, provide educational resources, and collaborate with other community resources to better meet the needs of those patients and their families.

**2. Access to Healthcare Providers** – SCMC will continue its efforts to recruit a family practice physician as soon as possible, in addition to other specialties, such as internal medicine. We have one family practice physician already signed to join the team in August 2017 when he completes his residency. We will continue to utilize partnerships with the University of Minnesota-Morris and others to encourage pre-med/medical students who either grew up in the area or attended college here to strongly consider starting their careers in Morris once they have finished their medical training. Our CEO, as well as our Community Relations Coordinator, will be involved in these efforts. This approach of hiring newly practicing providers has proven successful in the past.

We will also consider adding more mid-level practitioners, such as physician assistants and/or nurse practitioners. The walk-in clinic and urgent care staffing will receive much focus in terms of trying to better meet the need for unplanned, same day care that continues to grow in the community.

**3. Transportation** – Access to transportation, particularly for the elderly or less mobile individuals within the community, was identified as a significant issue. Within the healthcare setting, many mental health appointments are canceled at the last minute due to a ride not showing up or being available. Morris Transit meets this need fairly well within the city of Morris, and SCMC will continue to cover the cost for patients who can benefit from that service. Rainbow Rider is available throughout the county, but apparently struggles to get enough drivers. Some insurance plans, including MN Medical Assistance and Prime West, will even cover this cost.

As part of this implementation plan, SCMC will collaborate with other organizations and individuals in the community to improve on this situation. West Central Community Action has received a grant for transportation of those age 65 and older. SCMC would like to be part of a team to help decide how best to utilize those funds as well as to help in promoting volunteer drivers, setting up a website for transportation needs and options, and coordinating resources with the school bus garage if that could help. Possible collaboration with the Chamber of Commerce not-for-profit committee to identify individuals looking for volunteer opportunities will be looked into, as well as the possibility of creating a website specifically to match riders with volunteer drivers. SCMC will even investigate the feasibility of providing its own handicapped accessible shuttle service for transporting patients to and from the facility.

**4. Health impact of poor lifestyle choices** – Obesity, poor food choices, and sedentary lifestyles all contribute to poor health. SCMC would like to be a part of improving each of these through participation in various community efforts as well as internally sponsoring specific programs to improve health through better lifestyle choices. Horizon Public Health has already expressed interest in working together on several initiatives with the common goal of improving the health of the population of Stevens County.

SCMC will continue to expand its own worksite wellness programs and its Bike Share program for employees to use on their breaks. We have hired a nurse specifically for diabetes care and will

expand our participation in providing educational resources through such programs as Renew Weight Loss and Stress Less. The dietician and Dietary department director at SCMC, will continue to promote healthy meal choices and provide examples at our annual community Fall into Health event. SCMC's Courage Cottage will sponsor a Walk-Run event, as well as possibly a bike event in the future.

The overall goal is for SCMC to spearhead a community group, possibly to be called "Healthy Living Stevens County" that would coordinate with other community businesses and stakeholders to make activities widely available and publicized, to further develop and promote winter activities, to encourage healthy and affordable food options in the community, to offer wellness programs and other goals the committee might identify. SCMC will also continue to sponsor the Power of Produce program as part of the Farmer's market, which has been growing over the past couple of years. Students will be brought in to learn more about healthy food choices.

Besides these four main areas of focus, SCMC will also monitor the other identified community needs over the next three years and contribute to positive outcomes for those issues whenever we see the opportunity.