Jackson County Community Health Needs Assessment Highlands Cashiers Hospital Implementation Plan 2013 – 2015

This is the facility specific implementation strategy for Highlands Cashiers Hospital, and addresses the community health needs identified through a collaborative community health needs assessment (CHNA) process conducted with our local and regional partners in western North Carolina. This document outlines plans for Highlands Cashiers Hospital to support specific community benefit efforts as part of the larger community-wide plan.

OUR COMMUNITY AND KEY PARTNERS

Highlands Cashiers Hospital Community
Highlands Cashiers Hospital is a not-for-profit community hospital serving all people in need. Located on a mountain plateau, with the nearest hospital facility being 25 miles away on winding mountain roads, the hospital provides the facilities, staff and support services to offer diagnostic, surgical and acute patient care through onsite professional services or as a referral to regional support providers. Our emergency care is physician staffed 24/7 and treats patients promptly, with personalized care and attention.

HCH has 39 Board Certified Physicians representing 16 medical specialties on its medical staff. Altogether, with its 24-bed acute care services, out-patient ancillary services, four hospital-owned physician clinics in Cashiers and Highlands, and 80-bed skilled nursing facility, HCH employs more than 200 employees. The HCH Foundation is known for a strong tradition of philanthropy to assure the Hospital is up-to-date with high quality services, facilities and equipment. You are
invited to learn about our scope of services on our website at www.highlandscashiershospital.org.

Community Health Needs Assessment

Process and Product
The community health needs assessment (CHNA) was conducted as a partnership between the Jackson County Health Department and Highlands Cashiers Hospital. This written report describes:

- The community served by the hospital
- Community demographics
- Existing health resources in the community available to respond to needs
- How data was collected in the assessment process
- The priority health needs of the community
- Health needs and issues of uninsured, low-income, and minority groups
- The process for identifying and prioritizing community needs and services to meet the needs
- The process for consulting with persons representing the community’s interests

Sharing of Results
Detailed findings for our assessment will be posted on the Highlands Cashiers Hospital website www.highlandscashiershospital.org in October 2013. The CHNA will be presented to the Highlands Cashiers Hospital Board of Directors on or about September 26, 2013 for discussion and approval. Documentation of this board approval will be available in the Highlands Cashiers Hospital Board of Directors minutes from the date approved by the Board.

Regional Partnership
Highlands Cashiers Hospital’s collaborative community health improvement effort is also supported by a larger partnership with other hospital facilities and health department partners across a sixteen county region in western North Carolina to improve community health: WNC Healthy Impact. More information about this
innovative regional collaboration, county-wide community health assessments, and overall regional findings, are made widely available to the public at www.WNDHealthyImpact.com.

PRIORITY HEALTH NEEDS & HOW THEY WERE ESTABLISHED

Prioritization Process

The Community Health Assessment Team and Healthy Carolinians of Jackson County were both involved in the selection and determination of the three health priorities. Both groups reviewed the information presented in this assessment including the opinions of the community, as well as all of the secondary data and selected the following priorities to focus on for the next several years.

Priority Health Needs for Our Community

Jackson County
In the Jackson County priority setting process described above, the following health issues were prioritized for collective community-wide action.

1. Healthier food options in the community.
2. Physical Activity in Adults (with a subcomponent of fall prevention with the senior population).
3. Substance Abuse in adolescents.

HOW THIS IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY WAS DEVELOPED

Engagement in a Community-Wide Plan
All three priority areas ranked high on the Community Health Opinion Survey where individuals were asked to rank the top three issues most affecting the quality of life in Jackson County. Therefore, the CHA team and the Healthy Carolinians Board chose these as the priorities to be addressed by local stakeholders. Further, in addressing each of these priority areas, we should focus on increasing the awareness of already available community resources, while working toward increasing services in these three topic areas.
IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY DETAILS

Priority Health Issue #1: Healthier Food Options in the Community

Description of Community Need
Adults in Jackson County feel they need better/more healthy food options in the community. The community offers the Jackson County Farmer’s Market for residents of Jackson County. The Community Table and the Community Gardens are services available in the Cashiers area.

Vision of Community-Wide Impact
Partnering agencies needs to increase awareness of currently available services in the community to provide healthier food options to community members. This increased utilization will ensure that present services remain viable and continue in their mission to improve community nutrition.

Partner Agencies and Roles
Partnering agencies include Jackson County Health Department, the Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project, Highlands Cashiers Hospital, and schools in the Cashiers area.

Related Hospital Strategy
1. Highlands Cashiers Hospital will promote awareness of these community-wide services through our annual community health screenings. Awareness of these available services will provide a venue for healthier food options for community members in need.
2. Highlands Cashiers Hospital offers nutrition counseling at our annual community health screenings. Attendees receive free nutrition handouts on healthy food choices, heart healthy nutrition, and handouts on Diabetes education and care. Individual in-depth nutrition and diabetes counseling is available with our Registered Dietitian/Certified Diabetes Educator by appointment.
3. Our HealthTracks Cardiac Rehabilitation and Fitness Center offers seasonal grocery tours at Ingles Market in Cashiers. Tours are available for patients...
in our Cardiac Rehabilitation and members in our fitness/wellness programs. Tours are also available for patients with Diabetes. Tours are designed to educate attendees on making healthy choices in the grocery store through label reading and comparison of available foods.

4. Highlands Cashiers Hospital has partnered with the Macon Public Health Department to offer a satellite Diabetes Self-Management Training program twice during our summer season. This critical training program for community residents with either newly diagnosed or long standing Diabetes is offered to residents of both the Cashiers area and Highlands. The program includes an assessment by a Registered Dietitian followed by a full day of classes held on the Highlands Cashiers Hospital campus. A follow-up session with the Registered Dietitian is offered as well. Classes focus on healthy food choices, setting up a meal plan, and learning exchanges for carbohydrate containing foods.

5. During the 2013-2014 school year, the Registered Dietitian/Certified Diabetes Educator at Highlands Cashiers Hospital will offer nutrition lectures at the Blue Ridge and Summit Charter schools. These group lectures are available for students and teachers, as well as any interested parents. Educating our children on healthy food choices has been found to spread into the home environment and impact all members of that student’s family. Increasing awareness of good nutritional choices early in life may help prevent the incidence of childhood obesity and the potential for early childhood and adolescent diagnosis of Diabetes.

6. Highlands Cashiers Hospital sponsors the Highlands Community Care Clinic which meets one evening each week to provide free clinic care to residents in the Cashiers area and Highlands who are uninsured. The hospital provides a healthy evening meal to all volunteers who work at the clinic at no cost.

7. Highlands Cashiers Hospital offers a series of Health Forums throughout the summer season at no charge to residents of the Cashiers area and Highlands. Nutrition related topics include: Heart Healthy Diet and The Anti-Inflammatory Diet. Of the ten health forums offered, most topics offer recommendations on nutrition changes pertinent to that specific condition or disease.
Priority Health Issue #2: Physical Activity in Adults (with a subcomponent of fall prevention with the senior population)

**Description of Community Need**
Adults in the community are not getting the recommended 30 minutes of physical activity, five or more days a week. Majority of individuals who responded to the survey report engaging in only 30 minutes of physical activity 2 days per week.

**Vision of Community-Wide Impact**
Increase awareness of physical fitness activities offered by Highlands Cashiers Hospital. Provide affordable fitness activity options at our HealthTracks facility on a year-round basis.

**Partner Agencies and Roles**
Partnering agencies include Jackson County Health Department and Highlands Cashiers Hospital.

**Related Hospital Strategy**
8. Highlands Cashiers Hospital targets HealthTracks, Cardiac Rehabilitation and Fitness Center as a full service fitness and wellness facility for residents in both Cashiers and Highlands, NC. Programs include cardiovascular conditioning programs, strength training designed to meet individual needs, certified personal training programs, toning and strengthening classes. Counseling is also available with our Registered Dietitian/Certified Diabetes Educator for general nutrition needs, diabetes self-management training, weight management.

9. Exercise options are offered to promote a safe environment in which community members can exercise with supervision. Risk factors are evaluated when member enters the program. A personalized exercise program is recommended for each member to meet their physician needs and/or limitations, as well as personal or physician-prescribed goals.

10. Increased exercise options for community members also provide the potential for improved weight maintenance or obesity prevention, improved glycemic control, prevention of/or decreased risk factors for most chronic diseases, decreased depression, and overall increase in well-being.
11. Programs for older adults are offered to improve strength, balance, and cardiovascular conditioning. Sessions are offered both for individuals and small groups. Focus is on improving strength of large muscle groups which may improve mobility and reduce potential for falls. An added bonus is the socialization provided to those attending in a small group format; both socializing with other group members and with HealthTracks trained clinical staff. This provides much needed stimulation for community members in their senior years.

12. In an effort to improve access to exercise for residents in the Cashiers area, the Cashiers Village Council designed and developed a public pedestrian and bike pathway system with the Cashiers area. In order to provide the public with a walking connection between US 64 West and Hwy. 107 North, the Village Conservancy notified the hospital of their desire to place a portion of the pathway over the existing road bed along the eastern property edge and along the existing gravel area on the northern property edge of the hospital property located in downtown Cashiers. The hospital agreed to this request and a License Agreement was signed by both Highlands Cashiers Hospital Foundation, Inc. and the Village Conservancy, Inc. to allow the Village Conservancy to add this pathway on the hospital property at no cost.

Priority Health Issue #3: Substance Abuse in Adolescents

Description of Community Need
Improvement is needed in the community to provide positive activities in which teens can engage. A lack of positive activities to engage in can directly relate to substance abuse amongst our teenagers.

Partner Agencies and Roles
Partner agencies include Jackson County Health Department, Highlands Cashiers Hospital and Mountain Projects, Inc.

In 2011, Mountain Projects, Inc. was awarded a grant from the Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust which was used to implement the Teen Institute Model in Jackson County. Each of the schools in Jackson County has an established Students Against Negative Decisions (SAND) group. The SAND groups in the
Cashiers Area schools (Blue Ridge School and Summit Charter School) will continue to focus on addressing substance abuse in teens in this community.

**Related Hospital Strategy**

13. Highlands Cashiers Hospital will develop a referral system for teen residents with substance abuse issues through the Teen Institute Model spearheaded by Mountain Projects, Inc. in Sylva, North Carolina. Information and referral forms will be stocked in the Emergency Department and all physician offices on the hospital campus for distribution to patients as need arises.

**NEXT STEPS**

As part of the community health improvement process, Highlands Cashiers Hospital will continue to work with community partners in the implementation of our Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) based on the hospital strategies outlined in this document. The CHIP will be review annually in a collaborative manner with our community partners and, specifically, for input and approval by the HCH Board of Directors to assess progress on key community indicators. Updates will be made publically available in a county-wide State of the County Health Report (SOTCH Report). The Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) will be conducted in 2015.

**APPROVAL**

Review and approval of the Highlands Cashiers Hospital Implementation Plan will be conducted by the appropriate Board of Directors committee(s) and forwarded for formal approval by the full Board of Directors. This approval will occur as updates are provided and modifications to the plan occur, no less than once per year during the Board’s annual planning cycle. Typically this planning process is concluded just prior to the end of the HCH fiscal year on September 30, 2013.
The report was prepared for the September 26, 2013 Highlands Cashiers Hospital Board of Directors meeting and is approved as signed below by the Board Chairperson and Hospital CEO.

Charles Sheehan, Chairman
Highlands Cashiers Hospital
Board of Directors

Craig James, President/CEO
Highlands Cashiers Hospital

9/26/13
Date