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 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 a larger community-wide plan.

**OUR COMMUNITY AND KEY PARTNERS**

**Highlands-Cashiers Hospital Community**

Highlands-Cashiers Hospital (HCH) is a not-for-profit community hospital serving Highlands, Cashiers and the surrounding North Carolina mountain communities. Located on Highway 64 between two towns, HCH offers diagnostic and acute patient care through on-site professional services or provides a referral to other regional healthcare systems. Emergency care is physician-staffed 24/7. HCH has 24 beds for acute care services and 80 beds in the Eckerd Living Center, a skilled nursing facility. There are four hospital-owned physician clinics in Highlands and Cashiers.

HCH is a member hospital of Mission Health System, the state’s sixth-largest health system and the region’s only not-for-profit, independent community hospital system governed and managed exclusively in western North Carolina. HCH’s designated service area for the Community Health Needs Assessment encompasses Macon and Jackson Counties.
Community Health Needs Assessment

Process and Product
The Highlands-Cashiers Hospital community health needs assessment (CHNA) was conducted in partnership with the Macon County Public Health (MCPH), Jackson County Public Health (JCPH). 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
- Information gaps that limit the hospital facility’s ability to assess the community’s health needs

Sharing of Results
Detailed findings for our assessments are posted on the Mission Health website http://www.mission-health.org/community-health-needs-assessment.php as well as the Macon County Health Department website http://www.maconcountyhealth.org/ and Jackson County Health Department website http://health.jacksonnc.org. The CHNA was presented to the Highlands-Cashiers Hospital Board of Directors on September 22, 2016 for discussion and approval.

Regional Partnership
Our 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.WNCHealthyImpact.com.
PRIORITY HEALTH NEEDS & HOW THEY WERE ESTABLISHED

Prioritization Process

As part of the collaborative health assessment process in our community, specific health needs were prioritized based on the data that was collected, community input, and various factors related to feasibility of addressing the need. Details on this process are available in our CHNA, which is publicly available on Macon County 2015 Community Health Assessment, http://maconnc.org/images/healthy-carolinians/Macon%20County%202015%20Community%20Health%20Assessment.pdf, and on Jackson County 2015 Community Health Assessment, https://static1.squarespace.com/static/51826030e4b04f94760dc52d/t/56687334b204d55efa4065ea/1449685812274/NEW+2015+Jackson+County+CHA_NoAppendices.pdf.

Priority Health Needs for Our Community

Macon County
In Macon County, the following health issues were prioritized for collective community-wide action.

1. Heart Disease: Heart Disease presented as the leading cause of overall death in Macon County.
2. Domestic Violence: Domestic Violence report rates have significant escalated in recent years with Macon County’s domestic violence shelter averaging 96% capacity from July 2013-2014.
3. Economic Development: Data collected in the CHA showed increased concern and data related to community safety, education, employment, family & social support and income. Economic development activities which result in healthier lifestyle choices will improve the health of the community.

Jackson County
In Jackson County, the following health issues were prioritized for collective community-wide action.

1. Physical activity and healthy eating: In Jackson County only 52.2% of residents meet the recommended amount of exercise each week.
2. Injury and Substance Abuse Prevention: A general characteristic of WNC is high mortality rates due to unintentional poisoning, especially by medication and drug overdose. Jackson County is one of the WNC counties with higher than state average poisoning and drug overdose mortality rates. In the period 2009-2013, 34 Jackson County residents died as a result of unintentional poisoning. Of the 34 unintentional poisoning deaths in the county in that period, 76% were due to medication or drug overdoses—significantly higher than the NC average.
3. Chronic Disease: In Jackson County, the three leading causes of death are cancer, diseases of the heart, and chronic lower respiratory disease—in line with both WNC and
HOW THIS IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY WAS DEVELOPED

Engagement in a Community-Wide Plan

As a next step following the development of a community health needs assessment (CHNA), which includes prioritization of health needs, Highlands-Cashiers Hospital collaborated with local public health experts and other key community stakeholders to develop a written description of the activities that hospital facilities, public health agencies, and other local organizations plan to undertake collectively to address specific health needs in our community. This collaborative action planning process resulted in the development of an electronic community health improvement plan (e-CHIP) for each county in our hospital facility’s defined community, which includes Macon and Jackson Counties.

The Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) for Macon County can be found at: http://www.maconnc.org/healthy-carolinians.html
The Jackson County electronic CHIP (e-CHIP) is available at: https://app.resultsscorecard.com/Scorecard/Embed/17751

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY DETAILS

Priority Health Issue #1: Physical Activity, Healthy Eating, and Chronic Disease (Jackson County) with an emphasis on Heart Disease (Macon County)

Description of Community Need
Chronic Diseases are of significant impact in both Jackson and Macon County. Educating community members about chronic diseases, lifestyle changes they can make to help manage them and/or prevent ever acquiring them, and providing access to healthcare resources is a need in both counties. Healthy eating and physical activity are key components to preventing and managing these diseases, and are addressed together as such.

Macon County is one of the highest ranking counties in North Carolina with deaths due to heart disease. This, and the projected growth over the next two decades of the population over the age of 65, fit with the regional characteristic of a significantly large population of senior citizens and the issues that accompany that characteristic. Most cardiovascular disease affects older adults. In the United States 11% of people between 20 and 40 have cardiovascular disease, while
37% between 40 and 60, 71% of people between 60 and 80, and 85% of people over 80 have cardiovascular disease.

Among common chronic diseases, diabetes is a particular concern in Jackson County. According to the 2015 Jackson County Community Health Assessment, the prevalence of diabetes in Jackson County adults was 10.7% between 2005 and 2011. This is a higher prevalence than the WNC region as a whole, and the trend shows a gradual increase in prevalence of diabetes (likely correlated with adult obesity) in both Jackson County and the WNC region.

Physical Activity and Healthy Eating remain critical health issues because they have strong connections to obesity and diabetes, heart disease, and other health outcomes. From the 2015 Jackson County Community Health Assessment, “When asked about their consumption of fruits and vegetables within the past week, Jackson County residents indicated that they ate significantly less than the recommended 35 servings/week (or 5 servings per day). In fact, Jackson County residents ate only 6.8 servings of fruit and 8.2 servings of vegetables within the past week. (Professional Research Consultants, Inc., 2015).” (p. 41).

Additional data related to these priorities, and further description of the health issues can be found in the Macon County and Jackson County 2015 Community Health Assessments. The Community Health Assessment for Macon can be found at [http://maconncc.org/images/healthy-carolinians/Macon%20County%202015%20Community%20Health%20Assessment.pdf](http://maconncc.org/images/healthy-carolinians/Macon%20County%202015%20Community%20Health%20Assessment.pdf). The Jackson County Community Health Assessment is available at [https://static1.squarespace.com/static/51826030e4b04f94760dc52d/t/56687334b204d55efa4065ea/1449685812274/NEW+2015+Jackson+County+CHA_NoAppendices.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/51826030e4b04f94760dc52d/t/56687334b204d55efa4065ea/1449685812274/NEW+2015+Jackson+County+CHA_NoAppendices.pdf).

**Desired Community Result**

Macon County: The desired result would be the reduction of heart attacks by 10% each year of the next three years in Macon County thereby lowering the percentages of deaths due to heart disease. Anyone regardless of age can benefit from simple steps to keep their heart healthy.

Jackson County: All residents of Jackson County can benefit from strategies that focus on chronic disease prevention with the highlighted areas of diabetes, obesity, etc. Through partnership in the CHIP and collaboration with other community organizations, we hope to see:

- an increase in number of adults at a healthy weight
- A decrease in the number of adults diagnosed with diabetes through education and screening about the impact of healthy food choices, increased physical activity, weight reduction and medication compliance

In both counties, the desired results include increased availability of healthy food choices and exercise programs through education and awareness.

**Partner Agencies and Roles**

- Macon County Public Health and HCH HealthTracks partner to provide programs geared to educating the community in health activity to improve heart health.
- Provide lunch and learn program for community providing heart health information.
- HealthTracks to provide cardiac rehabilitation and other heart related programs.
- Jackson County Department on Aging – Education on Healthy Eating at Cashiers Center
- Jackson County Department on Aging – Education on Proper Exercise at Cashiers Center
- Jackson County Recreation Center (Cashiers) – Provide venue for educational lunch and learns.
- Jackson County Public Health Department – Provide county-wide education and interaction, including diabetes prevention and management programs, Get Fit Challenge, and worksite health promotion, and partnership on other health improvement programs in the community.
- Partner with Blue Ridge School, Summit Charter School and HCH HealthTracks to provide programs geared to educating the community in nutritional and health activity to promote healthy living.
- HealthTracks to provide cardiac rehabilitation and other heart related programs.

**Related Hospital Strategy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRIORITY HEALTH ISSUE #1: CHRONIC DISEASE, HEART DISEASE, PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND HEALTHY LIVING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Hospital Strategy -1: Partner with the Heart Disease Task Force to provide opportunities for community education and promotion of events to increase awareness about heart health.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of Activities</th>
<th>Anticipated Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Annual Health Screening provided for the Highlands Community residents with Nutrition Counseling provided.</td>
<td>25 people will attend the screening and receive nutrition counseling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. February will be designated at “Heart Month” with special educational activities (HealthTracks tours, open house at Cardiac Rehab, promote in media, information in cafeteria).</td>
<td>Two activities and promotions will be planned to promote heart health awareness in February.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Staff booths at community events</td>
<td>HCH Dietician and HealthTracks staff will be available to participate in at least one community events.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Hold Lunch/Learns and Dinner/Learns</td>
<td>Will schedule one Lunch or Dinner/Learn with Dr. LaPlace or an HCH Primary Care Provider to provide education on heart disease and prevention.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Hospital Strategy – 2: Partner with community agencies to provide opportunities for community education and promotion of health events for the general public.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of Activities</th>
<th>Anticipated Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Work with local schools, including Blue Ridge School, Summit Charter School, and Highlands School to provide education and exercise programs.</td>
<td>• Reach out to three schools to offer a discount for HealthTracks membership for students to encourage more participation in exercise programs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. HealthTracks will offer cardiac rehab and fitness programs which will target special populations and the general public.</td>
<td>• Offer family discount package at HealthTracks to increase number of community memberships and participation by 5%.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Annual Health Screenings provided for residents of Highlands, Cashiers and Glenville with nutrition counseling, balance tests, and medication assessment</td>
<td>• Add balance testing and medication assessment at the community health screenings with a goal of reaching 25 participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Partner with <em>Whiteside Grill</em> to sponsor a ‘healthy food week’ (Info table on BMI, healthy activities etc.)</td>
<td>• Increase awareness of the importance of healthy eating, how to calculate BMI and the impact of daily healthy activities by engaging at least 30 people during identified week.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Partner with Morrison’s to provide daily health food choices and education in the cafeteria.</td>
<td>• Fryer will be removed from HCH kitchen in 2017 with healthier alternatives being offered. • Track sales of healthy choices and track measurable increases.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Hospital Strategy – 3: Partner with the community agencies to provide opportunities for community education and promotion of events to increase awareness about Diabetes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of Activities</th>
<th>Anticipated Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Work in collaboration with HCH Dietician and Physical Therapy for education on healthy eating habits and exercise at Senior Center(s).</td>
<td>• Partner with Community Resource Connections/Jackson County Department on Aging to provide education at the Cashiers Senior Center for at least one event.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Work in collaboration with the Jackson County Recreation Center (Cashiers) to provide educational lunch and learns.</td>
<td>• Increase awareness for residents of southern Jackson County by providing one nutrition and exercise information event in their community with the goal of improving overall health.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Seek involvement in Jackson County Public Health Department Chronic Disease Action Team.</td>
<td>• A member of HCH or Morrison Staff to seek Certified Dietician Educator certification.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Priority Health Issue #2: Domestic Violence (Macon County)

Description of Community Need
From the 2015 Macon County Community Health Assessment: "Domestic Violence report rates have escalated significantly in recent years which prompted the MountainWise of Macon County group to select it as a priority area of interest...The number of calls in Macon County dealing with domestic violence increased from a low of 95 in 2007-2008 to a high of 2,209 in 2012-2013. The number of clients who were victims of domestic violence peaked at 1,052 in 2009-2010. The domestic violence shelter serving Macon County was full 349 days in the FY 2013-2014." (pp. 35-36).

Additional data related to these priorities, and further description of the health issues can be found in the Macon County 2015 Community Health Assessment, which can be found at: http://maconncc.org/images/healthy-carolinians/Macon%20County%202015%20Community%20Health%20Assessment.pdf.

Desired Community Result
- Decrease domestic violence rates and sexual assault rates in Macon County.
- Improve the service response system to victims in the community.

Partner Agencies and Roles
- Macon County Public Health to partner with the task force on domestic violence.
- Local Law Enforcement to increase the knowledge on the understanding of victims and families as the Law Enforcement is normally the first on the scene.
Related Hospital Strategy

**PRIORITY HEALTH ISSUE #2: DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (MACON COUNTY)**

**Hospital Strategy - 1: Provide Caregiver education on domestic violence, improving response time and advocating for victims.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of Activities</th>
<th>Anticipated Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Establish an approach to support women with addiction in domestic violence situations.</td>
<td>• Target 30% of patients of the Cashiers Clinic's Suboxone Program to increase awareness and provide education on domestic violence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Partnership with local newspapers to increase awareness.</td>
<td>• Provide articles, ads or editorials to increase awareness of domestic violence at least two times per year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Increase access to domestic violence prevention while making reporting easy/accessible for abuse victims.</td>
<td>• Partner with Reach of Macon County to increase awareness of the ease of reporting domestic violence. Also to explore the possibility of displaying REACH contact information on back of doors in ED, Acute and exam rooms in physician clinics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Increase screening for domestic violence, elder abuse, school/workplace violence for all patients seen in ED, admitted to the hospital, and patients of the primary care clinics.</td>
<td>• The HCH new Emergency Department will provide a room designated for SANE which will include a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**2. Hospital Strategy – 2: Partner with community agencies to improve and enhance existing programs for domestic violence and sexual assault victims.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of Activities</th>
<th>Anticipated Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Establish relationship with REACH of Macon County.</td>
<td>• Utilize this partnership to identify ways to increase access and awareness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Increase education on &quot;what is&quot; domestic violence.</td>
<td>• Provide in-service to at least 75% of clinical staff regarding ways to identify and report domestic violence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Promote awareness of types/modes of abuse utilizing various media outlets and strategies.</td>
<td>• Promote awareness to the employee population of 125 by distribution of appropriately constructed flyer.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Priority Health Issue #3: Injury and Substance Abuse (Jackson County)

Description of Community Need
Jackson County prioritized unintentional injuries, particularly those from falls and overdoses, as a critical health issue in 2015. These types of injuries (including motor vehicle injuries) are a leading cause of death in the county.

Among seniors age 65 and older, more than one-third have fallen in the past year—an increase from 2012 and greater than the rate of falls in the WNC region overall. According to the Jackson County 2015 Community Health Assessment, 13 Jackson County residents died from falls between 2011 and 2013. Of those 13 deaths, 54% were adults 65 years and older, demonstrating that older adults are a greater risk of falling and ultimately dying as a result of injuries from falling. (pp 47-48).

The WNC region overall has high mortality rates due to unintentional poisonings, and many of these are related to medication and drug overdose. Jackson County is among several counties in WNC with higher-than-average mortality rates for poisoning and drug overdose. The 2015 Community Health Assessment states 34 Jackson County residents died from unintentional poisoning between 2009 and 2013, and 76% of those deaths were due to medication or drug overdoses. (p. 48).

In addition to medication and drug overdose, misuse and abuse of tobacco and alcohol are also significant issues in Jackson County. The 2015 Community Health Assessment notes that 22% of Jackson County residents are current smokers, which is nearly twice the number targeted in Healthy People 2020. Additional forms of tobacco used by residents include smokeless tobacco and e-cigarettes, and second-hand smoke exposures is also a concern.

Additional data and full discussion of this health priority can be found on pages 47-53 of the 2015 Jackson County Community Health Assessment, here: https://static1.squarespace.com/static/51826030e4b04f94760dc52d/t/56687334b204d55efa4065ea/1449685812274/NEW+2015+Jackson+County+CHA_NoAppendices.pdf

Desired Community Result
- Build public awareness of the relationship between injury and substance abuse.
- Decrease the number of tobacco users in Jackson County
- Decrease the number of injury by falls

Partner Agencies and Roles
- Jackson County Public Health Department – Services
- Cashiers Clinic – Suboxone Clinic and Education
- HCH Physical Therapy (Cashiers Office) - Involvement and participation in SAAT
- Substance Abuse Active Team (SAAT) – Forum for planning and participation
- Law Enforcement – Education and participation in SAAT
- Schools – Education and participation in SAAT
- Social Services – Education and participation in SAAT
## Related Hospital Strategy

### PRIORITY HEALTH ISSUE #4: INJURY AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE (JACKSON COUNTY)

#### Hospital Strategy - 1: Increase the number of certified Tobacco Treatment Specialists in Jackson County.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of Activities</th>
<th>Anticipated Impact</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In 2015 over 64,000 patients at Mission Hospital (Mission Health Systems’ and Highland Cashiers Hospital’s regional referral center for tertiary and quaternary care) were identified as tobacco users. Current staffing for Nicotine Dependence consultants only provided for 2.4% (1,500) to have follow-up dependence consultations. Community Investment funding is providing for a 4-day Tobacco Treatment Specialist (TTS) Certification program for 50 participants from across the region in July of 2017. This training is typically provided in the central region of the state and is cost-prohibitive to community agencies. Jackson County as a primary service county for Highlands Cashiers Hospital (a member of Mission Health System), will have spaces in this training reserved for HCH and Jackson County community representatives.</td>
<td>Following the training, Tobacco Treatment Specialists (TTS) will stay engaged as a cohort managed by a person on the Mission Wellness Team. Metrics for measuring impact and tracking effectiveness of inserting these trained specialists in the community are being developed and will be reported in annual Implementation Strategy updates.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Hospital Strategy – 2: Utilize hospital facility and caregivers to elevate conversation about substance abuse and injury.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of Activities</th>
<th>Anticipated Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Participation in Substance Abuse Action Team (SAAT)</td>
<td>• Host one SAAT agency meeting and remain actively involved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Suboxone Clinic</td>
<td>• Continue to house suboxone clinic and will increase available appointments 50%.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Speakers to create awareness by providing Lunch and Learns in Cashiers with education on impact and relationship of falls, alcohol and medications.</td>
<td>• Schedule one Lunch and Learn in Cashiers regarding increased awareness of the relationship between medications and falls.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Medication assessment and balance test as part of community screenings.</td>
<td>• Adding medication assessment and balance testing for approximately 25 participants at the community health screening.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Seek Silver Sneakers and other certifications at HCH HealthTracks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Needs Not Addressed in this Plan

Though Economic Development was identified as a health priority area in Macon County, we did not recognize it with separate strategies. From the Macon County Community Health Assessment and the discussion in the community, the Economic Development priority focused on the need for a healthy workforce as key to the economic vitality of the community.

Increasing availability to health education services and access to awareness initiatives are woven throughout our response to each of the other priority needs identified by both Macon and Jackson Counties and essential to our role as a community hospital in a rural region. We take that responsibility seriously and seek to partner to improve community health (and thereby our workforce's health) in all that we do.

NEXT STEPS

As part of the community health improvement process, Highlands-Cashiers Hospital will continue to work with community partners in the development, implementation, and monitoring of our collaborative electronic community health improvement plan (e-CHIP) that includes some of the hospital strategies outlined in this document. The e-CHIP will be reviewed annually in a collaborative manner with our community partners to assess progress on key community indicators and updates will be made publically available in a county-wide State of the County Health Report (SOTCH Report). The next community health needs assessment (CHNA) will be conducted in 2018. In addition, we will be creating an electronic scorecard to monitor the performance of key strategies included in this document.

APPROVAL

This report was prepared for the Highlands-Cashiers Hospital Governing Board meeting on January 26, 2017, and is approved as signed below by the Board Chairperson and Hospital President.

[Signature]
John McCoy, Chairman

[Signature]
Bob Bednarek, Interim President

Date
January 17, 2017

Date
January 17, 2017

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