

Prioritization of Identified Health Needs

During 2013, a community health needs assessment (CHNA) was conducted by North Arkansas Regional Medical Center (NARMC) for the 80,000 residents of its community. NARMC is located in Harrison, the seat of Boone County, a city of 13,000 residents situated in the heart of the Ozark Mountains. NARMC serves this city and essentially all the surrounding rural areas of Boone, Newton, Marion, Carroll and Searcy counties.

The CHNA analysis brought together information from various sources. Community health information from public sources, key interviewee discussions, focus groups and community health input questionnaires were all used to assess the health needs of the community. As a result, there were 19 community health needs identified. The 19 health needs were ranked based on four factors:

1. The ability of North Arkansas Regional Medical Center (NARMC) to evaluate and measure outcomes
2. How many people are affected by the issue or size of the issue
3. What are the consequences of not addressing the problem
4. Prevalence of common themes

Based on these factors, seven (7) health needs were considered to be significant:

- Mental health
- Lack of health education
- Shortage of physicians
- Adult obesity/diabetes
- Heart disease
- Uninsured residents
- Affordable healthcare

Next Steps

NARMC's 2012-2015 Strategic plan has several strategies to address the health needs identified in the Community Needs Assessment. The following list details these strategies, as well as offering additional strategies NARMC could consider in meeting the identified health needs.

- **Mental Health**
 - An inpatient geriatric behavioral health service was implemented April 1, 2013 and an inpatient adult service was implemented in November 2013. A full-time psychiatrist has been employed. Plans are to open an outpatient service during 2014.

- **Lack of Health Education**

- NARMC will continue hosting community health screenings and educational events, including the following:
 - Business Expo & Health Fair – Blood pressure, glucose, cholesterol, height, weight, body composition, grip strength
 - Cancer screening: breast, colon, cervical, prostate
 - Red Cross blood drives
 - “Look Good, Feel Better” cancer support group
 - Grief support groups
 - Community flu clinic w/Boone County Health Unit
 - Partnership with North Arkansas Partnership for Health Education

- **Shortage of Physicians**

- NARMC has enhanced physician recruitment with the employment of a physician recruiter.
 - Psychiatrist recruited September, 2013
 - Pediatrician recruited October, 2013
 - Family Practice/Obstetric recruited May, 2014
 - Family Practice recruited July, 2014
 - Currently recruiting/interviewing for Orthopedic Surgeon and Gynecologist
- NARMC is seeking to recruit an additional Cardiologist to the community.

- **Adult Obesity/Diabetes**

- Strategies to Consider:
 - A community-wide fitness initiative led by the Medical Center focusing on fitness, nutrition and physical activity.
 - Enhance partnership with North Arkansas Partnership for Health Education
 - Enhance partnership with Area Agency on Aging of Northwest Arkansas for diabetic education

- **Heart Disease**

- Strategies to Consider
 - Incorporate heart disease screening in community health events.

- Educate community members on the links between nutrition, exercise and heart disease.

- **Uninsured Residents**

- NARMC has been designated by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) as a Certified Application Counselor Organization. Seven Certified Application Counselors have been identified and passed the CMS application process and the Arkansas Insurance Department approval to assist the uninsured and underinsured in the application for coverage under the Affordable Care Act (ACA). In cooperation with the Arkansas Department of Health, two formal meetings will be held with the public in an effort to enroll as many as possible.
- Additional Strategies to Consider:
 - Educational sessions for the newly unemployed and underemployed regarding how to access health services including clear information as to what agencies provide which services.

- **Affordable Healthcare**

- NARMC offers discounted healthcare services to the public and where documented, a structured charity allowance.
- Additional Strategies to Consider:
 - Publicize existing programs that help people obtain affordable healthcare.
 - The publication of a health resource directory providing the listing of available health resources in the community with primary contact information for each resource.