

## **Community Health Improvement Plan – 2018-2020**

In 2017, LRGHealthcare, comprised of Lakes Region General Hospital (LRGH), Franklin Regional Hospital (FRH) and over 20 affiliated practices, conducted a Community Health Needs Assessment. Community health needs were identified through community surveys, focus groups, key informant interviews and objective data gathered from state and federal registries and local public resources. The results of the assessment, along with demographic data and health status indicators from state and federal resources, identified priority community health concerns and guided the development of the following LRGHealthcare Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP).

During fiscal year 2020, LRGHealthcare will again assess community needs using the same resources as outlined above. This reassessment will provide the opportunity to evaluate the progress we have made toward the goals set in the LRGHealthcare CHIP and guide the adjustment of priorities if appropriate. This ongoing assessment process assures our community that we are listening and directing our expertise, programs, and funding to the most pressing areas of concern as defined by the citizens of the Lakes and Three Rivers Regions.

The LRGHealthcare service area includes 26 cities and towns in central New Hampshire with a resident population of more than 98,000 people. According to the Winnepesaukee Public Health Region's (WPHR) 2015-2020 Community Health Improvement Plan, 11.4 % of residents living in the WPHR have incomes at or below the federal poverty level, which is notably higher than the rate for New Hampshire overall (8.7%). Poverty levels within the service areas vary greatly, for example: an estimated 1.5% of residents in Sanbornton live in poverty compared to 21.0% in Franklin. It is also important to note that the percentage of children (ages 0-17) living in poverty across the Lakes Region (17.4%) is significantly higher than in New Hampshire overall (11.1%).

Additionally, residents within the WPHR are slightly older on average with 15.5% of the population age 65 years or older compared to the State of New Hampshire with 14.2%. The aging population plays a major role in shaping the cost and delivery of healthcare services today and into the future.

## **AREAS OF CONCERN**

The following priorities were identified as top health concerns in the 2017 Community Health Needs Assessment:

1. Alcohol and Drug Use Prevention, Treatment and Recovery
2. Access to Mental Health Services
3. Access to Affordable Healthcare Services and Insurance
4. Home Healthcare Services
5. Assistance with Care Coordination and Health System Navigation
6. Nutrition, Physical Activity and Weight Related Issues
7. Housing, Transportation and Needs of Low Income Wage Earners
8. Availability and Affordability of Dental Care
9. Tobacco Use Prevention / Cessation

### **1. ALCOHOL & DRUG USE PREVENTION, TREATMENT & RECOVERY**

- Recovery Clinic: Approximately four years ago, LRGHealthcare opened the LRGHealthcare Recovery Clinic, which uses medication assisted treatment, along with counseling to help addicts recover from their addiction. We will continue to provide services at both Clinic locations in Franklin and Gilford. We were also the first in the state to begin prescribing Suboxone® in the Emergency Department.
- The Doorway at LRGHealthcare: LRGHealthcare was chosen as one of nine recipients of a two year grant through the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), known as, "The Doorway - NH."

The Doorway at LRGHealthcare offers a recovery coach on site at LRGH Monday thru Friday 8am - 5pm, who will do the initial screening and aid anyone requesting help in finding treatment alternatives.

- Community Education: LRGHealthcare's Director of Substance Use Services provides education throughout the community about the prevention and treatment of substance use.
- Community Partnerships: LRGHealthcare continues to work with many community partners on substance misuse prevention and treatment including Navigating Recovery of the Lakes Region, the Franklin Mayor's Task Force, Gilford Together and Stand Up for Drug Free Laconia.

## 2. ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

- We continue to partner with Lakes Region Mental Health Center to support urgent care psychiatric services.
- We continue to offer the Psychiatric Designated Receiving Facility (DRF) at FRH as well as the Annex located in the LRGH Emergency Department to support the critical shortage of mental health services within the state.
- LRGHealthcare continues to provide office space in-kind to Lakes Region Mental Health at LRGH.
- To improve care to Alzheimer's and dementia patients, in 2019, LRGH will be transitioning its Senior Psychiatric Services Unit to provide care to a broader range of patients, accepting patients as young as 55.

## 3. ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HEALTHCARE SERVICES AND INSURANCE

- We continue to provide leadership for a region-wide Healthcare Access Committee dedicated to addressing barriers and strategizing solutions for access to primary, specialty medical, mental health, substance misuse and dental services.
- Our Clinical Financial Counselors and Customer Service Representatives continue to provide assistance to anyone seeking help with healthcare coverage. They help patients with insurance enrollment applications and navigate the process of finding appropriate coverage for their particular situation. They will also work with patients who need financial assistance with paying medical bills.

## 4. HOME HEALTHCARE SERVICES

- Every inpatient at LRGH or FRH has a care manager who helps guide the patient through the admission and discharge process. These care managers also work closely with local agencies to connect patients to the services they may need upon discharge.

## 5. ASSISTANCE WITH CARE COORDINATION & HEALTH SYSTEM NAVIGATION

- Embedded Care Coordinators (ECC) are available for every LRGHealthcare provider practice. ECCs continue to assist patients with high care needs in getting them the right care, in the right place, at the right time through:
  - Assistance in establishing a primary care medical home.
  - Guidance and education for managing chronic conditions.
  - Coordination of services including mental health counseling, dental health services, social services and substance misuse treatment and recovery services.
  - Oversight by pharmacist to provide for medication management.
  - Assist with access to needed medication.
  - Assistance with coordination of services after hospital discharge, including home care and palliative care and referral and admission to

- appropriate substance misuse treatment programs.
  - Community care/social services coordination.
  - Ambulatory care coordination in the Emergency Department.
- LRGHealthcare has a population health manager who also helps to close preventive health care gaps by helping patients establish a relationship with a primary care provider.
- We continue to provide prescription assistance through our Medication Connection Program, which provides free and discounted prescriptions to those who are eligible.

## **6. NUTRITION, PHYSICAL ACTIVITY & WEIGHT RELATED ISSUES**

- LRGHealthcare's Weight Institute of NH (WINH) continues to provide both surgical and non-surgical weight loss programs to those who have issues with weight management. WINH also provides both group and one on one education on topics related to exercise and all facets of nutrition.
- Caring for Kids, a pediatrics practice of LRGHealthcare, promotes the importance of breastfeeding as a foundation of good nutrition for infants:
  - Breastfeeding support group
  - One on one breastfeeding support
  - Through partnership with Mothers' Milk Bank Northeast, Caring for Kids is now home of the LRGHealthcare Mothers' Milk Center, a full service mothers' milk dispensary and drop off (depot) facility.

## **7. HOUSING, TRANSPORTATION & NEEDS OF LOW INCOME WAGE EARNERS**

- Taxi vouchers continue to be distributed to those who need help with transportation to and from medical services. Vouchers are given generally by LRGHealthcare Care Managers, as well as staff in our Anderson Ganong Cancer Center.
- Through the LRGHealthcare Philanthropy Department, there is also funding available through the Anderson Ganong Cancer Center to help patients with expenses outside their treatment such as rent, utility bills, gas, etc.

## **8. AVAILABILITY & AFFORDABILITY OF DENTAL CARE**

- The LRGHealthcare Dental Resource Center continues to provide quality dental care that is affordable to ALL income levels with fees based on ability to pay.

## **9. TOBACCO USE PREVENTION / CESSATION**

- The LRGHealthcare Community Education Department offers group education as well as one on one counseling for those who want to stop smoking. Community Education also provides programs on:
  - Chronic disease self – management
  - Diabetes self – management

- Matter of balance / falls prevention
- Better breathers support group