Implementation Strategy to Address Needs Identified in Community Health Needs Assessment for Sparrow Hospital

Fiscal years 2016-2018

Covered facilities

Sparrow Carson Hospital: located in Carson City, Michigan, this hospital is a subsidiary of Sparrow Health System. It has a Level Four Emergency Department, 61 acute care beds and multiple inpatient and outpatient services. It serves primarily Montcalm and Gratiot counties.

Community Health Needs Assessment

A Community Health Needs Assessment was conducted in coordination with the Healthy Capital Counties collaborative. It consisted of three public health departments and four area hospitals to identify the most pressing community health needs. This process included gathering input from the community regarding health indicators and reviewing results from the previous CHNA for 2013-2015.

Identification of health needs to be addressed

A large community gathering of a wide variety of stakeholders was held to review the findings of the CHNA and prioritize health needs. The following were selected:

- Access to primary healthcare providers
- Access to quality healthcare
- Chronic disease (including cardiovascular, diabetes, multiple chronic illnesses)
- Financial stability
- Mental health (including stress, depression, access to services)

Sparrow Carson conducted additional studies about the needs specific to their service area to ensure feedback from all communities served. It was agreed that “Access to primary care providers” and “Access to quality healthcare” could be merged into a single category, labeled “Access to Healthcare.” Based upon results of all information gathered, Sparrow Carson Hospital selected this community priority as the focus of the 2016-2018 cycle.
Arriving at strategies and outcomes

A workgroup, consisting of physician and staff leadership, was established to identify appropriate strategies and outcomes to address Access to Healthcare. Using an outcomes-based evaluation consultant, the workgroup completed the following:

1. Described the patient, organizational, and community conditions that had potential to impact the identified health need. Examples include: availability of providers, long waits to get an appointment, some physician practices not accepting persons covered by Medicaid or Medicare, and so forth.

2. Articulated the specific outcomes to be addressed. Examples include: increased the number of new patients accepted by primary care physicians, decrease the number of low acuity patients seen in Emergency Room (ER), etc.

3. Identified existing, newly adopted, and future strategies to achieve identified outcomes. Examples include: increase the hours that primary care physicians are available, increase the use of telemedicine, and others.

The result of the logic model from the workgroup is described in the next section.

Access to Healthcare

Specific Needs Identified in CHNA:

- Access to Quality Health Care selected as health need during Healthy Capital Counties Community Prioritization key stakeholders meeting

- Access to healthcare ranked the most important factor that defines a healthy community in both community and provider survey (Sparrow CHNA, p. 118 and 123)

- Blue Cross Blue Shield ER utilization reports show that between 23-53% of Sparrow Carson clinics’ ER visits were Primary Care Sensitive
Strategies to address Access to Healthcare:

1. Increase the hours that primary care physicians are available, either by recruiting more physicians, or asking current physicians to increase their hours of service.

2. Increase the utilization of telemedicine to access specialty care beyond adult psychiatry which is currently available.

3. Expand how clinic schedules are managed to provide more options for patients needing care.

Measurable Outcomes:

1. Increase the number of telemedicine calls as measured by the Sparrow Medical Group (SMG) telemedicine encounters from the practice management system.

2. Increase the number of telemedicine calls by specialty as measured by the SMG telemedicine encounters from the practice management system.

3. Increase in patient visits as measured by SMG visits seen in primary care physician offices.

4. Increase in the number of new patients accepted by primary care physicians as measured by SMG new patient report from the practice management system.

5. Decrease in the number of low acuity patients seen in the ER, indicating care is occurring at less intensive and expensive paths as measured by ambulatory sensitive visits seen in the ER.

Other needs identified in CHNA but not addressed in this strategy

Sparrow Carson will address one of the five health needs identified in the CHNA and all necessary resources will be allocated to implement the above mentioned strategies. Sparrow Carson will not address Chronic Disease as that is not a priority need in the counties served.
The hospital will not address Financial Stability as it does not fall within the scope of its core competencies. Sparrow Carson is currently addressing the Mental Health need by providing access to psychiatric telemedicine for adults with mental health issues. As telemedicine is expanded, the hospital anticipates more adults will be served.

**Monitoring of Implementation Strategy and attainment of outcomes**

Sparrow Carson has a quality improvement specialist who will be charged with the responsibility of tracking strategies and outcomes on a quarterly basis. Pending results, adjustments or changes will be made to the strategies and measurable outcomes as deemed appropriate. All resulted will be submitted to the Board Quality and Patient Safety Committee on an annual basis.