

Upson Regional Medical Center Implementation Strategy

For FY2015-2018 Summary

Upson Regional Medical Center (URMC) is a 115-bed not-for-profit community hospital located in Thomaston, Georgia. In 2015, the hospital conducted a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) to identify the health needs of Upson County. The Implementation Strategy for URMC was developed based on findings and priorities established in the CHNA and a review of the hospital's existing community benefit activities.

This report summarizes the plans for Upson Regional Medical Center to sustain and develop community benefit programs that 1) address prioritized needs from the 2015 URMC CHNA and 2) respond to other identified community health needs.

The following prioritized needs were identified by the community and the CHNA steering committee. Particular focus was placed upon these needs in developing the implementation strategy.

1. Access to Care
2. Obesity
3. Heart Disease and Stroke
4. Diabetes
5. Teen Pregnancy
6. Mental Health
7. Drug Abuse

Upson Regional Medical Center has addressed each of the health needs identified in the CHNA. URMC developed implementation strategies to address each of the health issues identified over the next three years, with the exception of mental health, teen pregnancy, alcohol and drug abuse, transportation and sexually transmitted diseases.

Specific implementation strategies for each of the CHNA identified health needs are addressed in the following appendices to this report.

1. Access to care (Appendix 1)
 - a. Recruit primary care physicians, targeted specialists and mid-level practitioners
 - b. Provide charity care
 - c. Allocate financial contribution to the public health department for the provision of primary care services
 - d. Leverage 340b program to provide prescribed medication upon discharge to under and uninsured persons.

2. Obesity (Appendix 5)
 - a. Provide healthy eating/active living community education
 - b. Conduct Body Mass Index screenings at community health fairs
 - c. Partner with Children's Healthcare of Atlanta to offer Strong4Life training and continuing education opportunities for healthcare providers and early childcare educators (www.strong4life.com).

3. Heart disease and stroke(Appendix 2)
 - a. Implement smoke-free campus and tobacco-free hiring policy
 - b. Provide heart disease awareness community education at local churches, representative of the underserved community, and civic clubs
 - c. Conduct blood pressure checks at community events
 - d. Implement telestroke in the Emergency Department to improve timely diagnosis/treatment

4. Diabetes (Appendix 4)
 - a. Provide monthly diabetes education on disease management and nutrition
 - b. Provide blood glucose screenings at community health fairs
 - c. Provide insulin to uninsured/underserved patients
 - d. Provide, upon MD referral, one-on-one consults about diabetes disease management
 - e. Provide links to online health education resources via www.urmc.org

HEALTH NEEDS WITHOUT SPECIFIC IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

1. Teen pregnancy

There is a lack of community consensus on the recommended curriculum for sex education. This lack of consensus creates a barrier to the hospital directly addressing the need. A partnership between the school system and public health would better serve this identified need. The hospital will work to ensure our physicians are a part of the partnership.

2. Mental health

The community prevalence of mental health issues is relatively small in number of persons affected. URMC is an acute care hospital that provides emergency care for mental health conditions, often on a charity care basis. URMC does not have the specialized staff and physician resources needed to address mental health issues. McIntosh Trail and Pathways (Barnesville) currently provide focused mental health services to the community. The hospital will develop a resource directory for the community to help individuals navigate the healthcare system as it relates to mental health. The hospital will continue to meet the acute care and emergency care needs of mentally ill patients in the community, with referrals to specialized mental health providers when appropriate.

3. Alcohol and drug abuse

Substance abuse treatment and prevention is beyond the scope of the hospital. UPMC is an acute care hospital that provides emergency care for mental health conditions, often on a charity care basis. However, UPMC does not have the staff and physician resources available to address alcohol and drug abuse health issues on a specialized basis. McIntosh Trail and Pathways (Barnesville) currently provide addictive disease-related health services to the community. The community would be better served by an organization that directly addresses this health concern. The hospital will provide a resource directory for the community to help individuals navigate the healthcare system as it relates to alcohol and drug abuse.

Approval:

The Upson Regional Hospital Board of Directors approved this Implementation Strategy through a board vote on January 20, 2016.