

# CarePartners Community Health Needs Assessment Strategy 2013-2015

This is the facility specific implementation strategy for CarePartners Health Services 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 CarePartners to support specific community benefit efforts as part of a larger community-wide plan.

## **OUR COMMUNITY AND KEY PARTNERS**

### **CarePartners' Community**

CarePartners Health Services, which recently received the Governor's Award of Performance Excellence in Healthcare, is a local, not-for-profit healthcare organization serving Western North Carolina. CarePartners provides quality health services across the full continuum of post-acute care in the following service areas: Rehabilitation Hospital, Home Health, Outpatient Rehabilitation, Hospice, Palliative Care, Adult Day, Private Duty and Orthotics & Prosthetics. With approximately 1,100 employees and 400 volunteers, CarePartners Health Services is dedicated to helping people of Western North Carolina live full and productive lives, despite illness, injury, disability or issues related to aging. CarePartners is a Mission Health affiliate. For more information, please visit [carepartners.org](http://carepartners.org)

**CarePartners**

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# COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT

## Process and Product

The CarePartners community health needs assessment (CHNA) was conducted in partnership with the Buncombe County Department of Health and Western North Carolina Healthy Impact Project. This written report describes:

- The community served by the hospital
- Community demographics
- Existing health resources in the community available to respond to needs
- The data collection process for the assessment
- Health needs and issues of uninsured, low-income, and minority groups
- The process for identifying and prioritizing community needs, and the available services to address those 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 assessment[s] are available on the CarePartners website ([www.carepartners.org](http://www.carepartners.org)) and the Buncombe County ([www.buncombecounty.org](http://www.buncombecounty.org)) websites. The CHNA was presented to the CarePartners Board of Directors on September 23, 2013 for approval and discussion. Documentation of this board approval is available in the CarePartners Board of Directors meeting minutes from September 23, 2013.

## Regional Partnership

CarePartners collaborative community health improvement effort is also supported by a comprehensive partnership with Mission Hospital, regional hospitals, and local health departments. This initiative, known as WNC Healthy Impact, represents 16 counties across the Western North Carolina region working collaboratively to improve community health. 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](http://www.WNCHealthyImpact.com).

**WNCHEALTHYIMPACT**

## **PRIORITY HEALTH NEEDS & HOW THEY WERE ESTABLISHED**

### Prioritization Process

Community Health Assessment (CHA) is the foundation for improving and promoting the health of our communities. CarePartners partnered closely with the Buncombe County Department of Health to conduct a comprehensive CHA. In addition, CarePartners and the Buncombe County Department of Health were partners in the WNC Healthy Impact efforts.

The role of the CHA is to identify factors that affect the health of the residents of Buncombe County; CarePartners defined services area, and determine the availability of resources within the county to adequately address those factors. The process involves the collection and analysis of a large range of secondary data as well as primary data. The evaluation and prioritization of identified health needs involved teams of representatives from a broad range of health and human service agencies, local non-profit organizations as well as community partners and residents

The Local Health Departments in North Carolina are required to conduct a comprehensive community health assessment at least every four years. In Buncombe County the last assessment was conducted in 2010. As a part of the Affordable Care Act, non-profit hospitals are also required to conduct a community health needs assessment at least every three years. In order to achieve the requirements for health department and hospital needs, Buncombe County, along with other hospitals and health departments in our 16 county regions, a new CHA was completed in 2012. For this reason, the 2012 CHA has involved the examination of the 2010 priority areas for Buncombe County and the engagement of a smaller number of community leaders rather than re-creating the extensive process that was conducted in 2010.

As part of WNC Healthy Impact, a regional data workgroup of public health and hospital representatives and regional partners, with support of a consulting team, made recommendations to the steering committee on the data approach and content used to help inform regional data collection. From data collected as part of this core dataset, the consulting team compiled secondary data for each county in the region. This data was then compared to the data collected in the 2010 Buncombe County CHA to identify similarities and differences.

As part of the collaborative health assessment process in our communities, CarePartners representatives were involved in the prioritization process in Buncombe County and will be involved in the subsequent Community Health Improvement Plans. In North Carolina, community-level prioritization is a required part of the community health (needs) assessment process.

## **PRIORITY HEALTH NEEDS FOR OUR COMMUNITY**

### **Buncombe County**

In the Buncombe County local priority setting process described above, the following health issues were prioritized for collective community-wide action:

1. Women's Preconception Health
2. Healthy Weight and Healthy Living
3. Children's Health and Early Child Development
4. Access to Primary and Mental Health Care

## **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, CarePartners 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 a community health improvement plan (CHIP) for Buncombe County.

## **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY DETAILS**

The **Community Health Improvement Process (CHIP)** brings together community partners to understand the work happening around specific health priorities. Utilization of the CHIP leverages a collective impact framework to create the following keys to success:

- Common Agenda
- Shared measurement system
- Mutually reinforcing activities
- Continuous communication
- Backbone infrastructure support

The partners share their strategies to align efforts across the community for greater impact. This facilitates a more effective process to address the priorities identified through our Community Health Assessment. This process has been shown nationally to increase effectiveness, reduce unnecessary duplication, increase community engagement and awareness, and improve targeted outcomes. CarePartners has adopted the following CHIP priorities for Buncombe County:

### **Buncombe County Community Health Improvement Plan Priorities for 2012 – 2015:**

- Healthy Weight and Healthy Living
- Women's Preconception Health
- Children's Health and Early Child Development
- Access to Primary and Mental Health Care

CarePartners has representation with the Buncombe County infrastructure to address their CHIP strategies. Efforts were made to align the right clinical and operational resources within CarePartners to best support the county efforts. In addition, the Vice President of Marketing convenes those representatives on a regular basis to assure cohesive communication and planning.

In Buncombe County, the Community Health Improvement Process is driven by two primary groups:

1. The Public Health Advisory Council

The Council provides leadership, support, and coordination to assist the Workgroups established around each priority. Members are responsible for being advocates for systems, policy and environmental change in the community. The Council members will also serve in an advisory capacity to submit recommendations to the Buncombe County Health and Human Services Board.

2. Workgroups

Workgroups will be composed of representatives from organizations that are currently working on the priority areas, community members, and interested Advisory Council members. Department of Health staff will provide support in convening and facilitating the process for the Workgroups. Representatives from the Workgroups report regularly to the Advisory Council to share actions, emerging issues and recommend policies for consideration.

## **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY**

### **Priority Health Issue #1: Healthy Weight and Healthy Living**

#### **Description of Community Need**

The impact of overweight and obese individual is a challenging public health issue. While the “obesity epidemic” is a term frequently seen in the press, the health concern is not the weight in and of itself, but rather the long list of chronic disease and disabilities associated with unhealthy weight. Research has shown the impact of a person being overweight and obese contributing to their increased likelihood of developing diabetes, hypertension, hyperlipidemia, asthma and some cancers. In Western North Carolina, 65% of the adult population is considered overweight. This is defined by having a Body Mass Index (BMI) of > 25.

#### **Vision of Community-Wide Impact**

As a community, we must commit to creating an environment where healthy choices are the everyday choice and are supported by improving access, availability, education and community support of physical activity and healthy food options that help residents take responsibility for decisions that support good health in our homes, neighborhoods, schools and workplaces.

#### **Partner Agencies and Roles**

CarePartners, through its work in Buncombe County, is a partner in the work to address Healthy Weight and Healthy Living. The full list of partners and programs working collaboratively in both communities on this health issue is as follows:

Asheville Buncombe Food Policy Council, Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project (ASAP), Bountiful Cities Project, Your Empowered Solutions, YWCA of Asheville, the regional Community Transformation Grant Project, Buncombe County Department of Health, Mission Hospital Weight Management Program, Mission Hospital Heart Outreach Services, Mission Hospital Diabetes & Health Education Center, Mission Children's Hospital, Asheville Buncombe Institute of Parity Achievement (ABIPA), NC Cooperative Extension Agency, MANNA Food Bank, YMCA of Western NC, WNC Gardens That Give, Healthy Buncombe, Women's Wellness Development Foundation, WNC Healthy Kids, School Health Advisory Councils for both counties, WNC Health Network, UNC Asheville, Buncombe county Schools, Asheville City Schools, Smart Start of Buncombe, Buncombe County Parks, Greenways and Recreation, Blue Ridge Bicycle Club, City of Asheville Transportation Department, Asheville Buncombe Youth Soccer Association (ABYSA), Community Care of WNC, FEAST/Slow Food Asheville, Land of Sky Regional Council, Mountain Area Health Education Center (MAHEC), NC Center for Health and Wellness, Rainbow in my Tummy, Town of Black Mountain, WNC Alliance, WNC Pediatric Care Collaborative, WNC Trips for Kids, Hot Springs Health Program.

### **Related Strategy**

1. Support community efforts to increase the number of people who have access to screenings, education and follow up related to being overweight and/or obese and their related chronic conditions.
  - a. Through community collaboration, planning and partnerships with Mission Hospital, co-offer screenings for chronic conditions such as diabetes, hypertension and hyperlipidemia utilizing their services of Heart Outreach, Stroke Outreach and Employer Outreach Events teams.
  - b. Through CarePartners Asheville Mall Walkers program, offer a safe and available year-round walking location with support through a healthy monthly breakfast, monthly health education, access to doctors and clinicians, and blood pressure checks.
  - c. Provide year-round opportunities for the general public to access medical professionals, programs, and healthy living information through our Mindful Living health education series and other outreach events.
  - d. With our Balance for Life program, offer information, resources and practical tools regarding falls prevention and medication management as it relates to falls. Also included are one-on-one balance screenings and evaluations by physical therapists with individualized recommendations for improvement.
  - e. Numerous educational classes are also offered on Advance Directives education, SMART goals and chronic conditions counseling.
2. Promote increased physical activity for the public in our community.
  - a. CarePartners offers low-cost exercise classes accessible to the public to improve strength, balance, and flexibility in a positive environment. Examples include: adaptations to Tai Chi for Arthritis classes, taught by a certified instructor/physical therapist; exercises classes taught in a low-impact therapy pool; yoga.

- b. Sponsor numerous local physical fitness events that include access to physical therapist and medical staff to answer health related questions. Examples include: Chamber Challenge, The Amazing Race, and CarePartners for United Way 5K.

## **Priority Health Issue #2: Women's Preconception Health**

### **Description of Community Need**

Preconception health refers to the health of women and men during their reproductive years. Preconception health helps men and women think about how their behaviors, lifestyles and medical conditions affect their ability to live healthy lives and have healthy children.

Preconception health can have a direct outcome on the birth outcomes of a community. In Buncombe County, there are too many babies dying. While the rate of infant deaths has been declining (reaching 5.2 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2011), many of these deaths are still preventable. Buncombe County's infant mortality rate is largely attributable to premature births and low birth weights. Prematurity and low birth weight are often connected to the health of the parents before they become pregnant, so we must focus on assuring parents have adequate knowledge about healthy choices and practices before pregnancy.

Infant mortality is an issue that affects the county across racial and socio-economic lines but some of our communities are impacted more than others. African- American infants in Buncombe County are 2.4 times more likely to die before the age of one than white infants, mirroring a pattern across the state. Working to help all women and all men be healthy before, during and after pregnancy is the best way to save babies' lives and improve the health of our community.

### **Vision of Community-wide Impact**

All men and women of reproductive age, regardless of pregnancy status or desire, have the knowledge, empowerment and ability to choose healthy behaviors within a community which supports those behaviors. This will lead to improved health outcomes for women, newborns and families.

### **Partner Agencies and Roles**

Numerous agencies work within Buncombe County to address Preconception Health. The full list of partners and programs working collaboratively on this health issue is as follows:

Asheville City Schools, Buncombe County Schools, Buncombe County Health & Human Services (BCHHS)–Economic Services, BCHHS - Family Planning Clinic, BCHHS – Nurse Family Partnership, BCHHS – Outreach & Wellbeing, BCHHS – School Health, BCHHS – Youth Educators and Advocates for Health, Community Care of WNC, MAHEC, Mt. Zion Community Development, Inc. – Project EMPOWER and Project NAF, NC Preconception Health Campaign – Mission Health, Planned Parenthood, WNC Aids Project, WNC Community Health Services, YWCA – Motherlove program

### **Related Strategy**

1. This area of care is not a clinical core-competency of this organization; however, CarePartners sponsors events and has Board membership on various partnering agencies to include the Buncombe County Schools, MAHEC, and YMCA.
2. CarePartners affiliate, Mission Hospital, has specific strategy and resources to sufficiently address this community need (see [www.mission-health.org](http://www.mission-health.org)).

## **Priority Health Issue # 3: Children’s Health and Early Childhood Development**

### **Description of Community Need**

Early Childhood Development is complex and will require collaborative planning, action and coordination of multiple partners in our community. The five years between when a baby is born and when that child shows up for the first day of kindergarten can have a lasting impact on that child’s later learning, health and success. The brain is the only organ not fully developed at birth. Therefore, as the First 2000 Days campaign explains, “children’s earliest experiences literally determine how their brains are wired; lay the groundwork for future health; and form the foundation of the social and emotional skills needed for academic and workplace success.” (First 2000 Days).

Research shows that high quality early education is a very effective way to improve childhood development. However, 69% of young children are not enrolled in formalized quality care, including a large portion of children whose families are struggling to make ends meet. In Buncombe County, the number of children living in poverty have continued to rise in recent years. Though child poverty is increasing, the number of children served each month by child care subsidies has continued to decrease.

### **Vision of Community-Wide Impact**

From birth to age five, all children in our community will have safe, nurturing and stimulating relationships and environments to support and guide them to achieve their full potential.

### **Partner Agencies and Roles**

CarePartners, through its work with Buncombe County, is a partner in the work to address Early Childhood Development. The full list of partners and programs working collaboratively in the community on this health issue is as follows:

Asheville City Schools – Asheville City Preschool, Addiction Recovery Prevention (ARP), ABCCM – Our Circle, Asheville City Preschool – Early Head Start, Buncombe County Schools, BCHHS, BCHHS – Innovative Approaches, BCHHS – Nurse Family Partnership, BCHHS – School Health, BCHHS – Triple P-Positive Parenting Program, BCHHS – Under Six, CCWNC, CCWNC – Coordinated Care for Children, Buncombe County Department of Health, Children First / Communities in Schools – Success Equation, Child Care Health Consultation, Child Abuse Prevention Services, Children’s Developmental Services Agency of WNC, Community Action Opportunities, FIRST, Mission Children’s Family Support Network, Mountain Area Child & Family Center, Mt. Zion Community Development, Inc. – Project NAF, NC Cooperative Extension Agency, Pisgah Legal



Services, Smart Start, Women's Wellbeing and Development Foundation, YWCA of Asheville

### **Related Strategy**

1. This area of care is not a clinical core-competency of this organization, however, CarePartners sponsors a fundraising event and has Board membership on the partnering agency Mountain Area Child & Family Center
2. CarePartners affiliate, Mission Hospital, has specific strategy and resources to sufficiently address this community need (see [www.mission-health.org](http://www.mission-health.org)).

## **Priority Health Issue #4: Access to Primary and Mental Health Care**

### **Description of Community Need**

Access to both primary and mental health care services are complex issues with numerous approaches. Buncombe County residents were more likely than WNC residents on average to agree that "considering cost, quality, number of options and availability, there is good health care in my county" when asked on the survey. (72% in Buncombe County and 67% across WNC). However, Buncombe County residents on average were also slightly more likely to report that there was a time in the past year that they were unable to get needed medical care (12% in Buncombe County and 11% across WNC).

### **Vision of Community-wide Impact**

Engage in collaborative partnerships to increase the number of community residents with a primary care medical home and access to mental health services.

### **Partner Agencies and Roles**

CarePartners, through its work with Buncombe County, is a partner in the work to address Access to Care. The full list of partners and programs working collaboratively on this health issue with Buncombe and Madison County is as follows:

Community Transformation Grant, Community Care of WNC, MAHEC, BCHHS, WNC Healthy Impact, Mission Health System (which includes our network of specialty care and primary care providers), Innovative Approaches, Buncombe County Department of Health, ABCCM Medical Clinic, WNC Community Health Services, YMCA of WNC, YWCA of Asheville, WNC Health Network - Mental Health Committee.

### **Related Strategy**

1. CarePartners endeavors to serve anyone benefiting from our services without regard to economic condition. Discounts of 15-100% are available based upon a sliding scale of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.
2. CarePartners Bereavement Services are available to all who are experiencing grief as related to the death of a loved one. Ability to pay is not a consideration to receive counseling.
3. Hospice Services are available to all without regard of the ability to pay.

4. Partner with MAHEC, CCWNC, and WNC Health Network to provide information on Advance Directives education.
5. Through our affiliate relationship with Mission Hospital, support continued partnerships and collaborations to expand the availability of primary care medical homes and access to mental health services in Western NC.

## NEXT STEPS


As part of the community health improvement process, CarePartners will continue to work with community partners in the implementation of our community health improvement plan (CHIP) based on the strategies outlined in this document. The CHIP will be reviewed annually by Community Benefit team members and will assess progress on key community indicators. Updates will be made publically available in the county-wide State of the County Health Reports (SOTCH Report). The next community health needs assessment (CHNA) will be conducted in 2015.

## APPROVAL

This report was prepared for the February 24, 2014 CarePartners Governing Board meeting, and is approved as signed below by the Board Chairperson and Hospital CEO.

  
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Charles C. Campbell, Chairman

*2/24/2014*  
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Date

  
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Tracy Buchanan, President & CEO

*2/24/14*  
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Date