

Gundersen St. Elizabeth's Hospital and Clinics, Wabasha, Minnesota Community Health Improvement Plan – Implementation Strategy

Introduction

Gundersen St. Elizabeth's Hospital and Clinics is a progressive, multidisciplinary rural healthcare organization offering a wide range of services. We are a licensed 25-bed Critical Access Hospital (CAH), with an attached primary care clinic, 46 assisted living apartments, 100 skilled nursing home beds on two campuses, and a continuum of ancillary and outpatient care.

Our mission: To distinguish our organization through excellence in patient care, education, and improved health in the communities we serve. **Our vision:** We will enhance the health and well-being of our communities while enriching every life we touch, including patients, families and staff. **Our strategic plan:** Improve the health of our communities; Offer an outstanding experience of care; Ease the financial burden of healthcare.

Gundersen St Elizabeth's service lines include: primary care, inpatient and outpatient care, emergency services, ancillary services, surgery services, rehab, wellness and prevention, chronic disease management, assisted living, home health, and long-term care services.

Gundersen St. Elizabeth's is the only hospital in Wabasha County. The closest CAH is Mayo Clinic Health System (MCHS) - Lake City, 18 miles north of Wabasha. Tertiary and specialty care referrals are directed to Gundersen Health System in La Crosse, WI; Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota; and other area and regional care centers.

Prioritized Significant Health Needs

Gundersen St. Elizabeth's and Wabasha County Public Health (WCPH) partnered to conduct a community health needs assessment in the summer of 2022. Community feedback identified the following CHNA priorities that will be addressed during the upcoming CHNA three-year cycle (2023-2025):

- Mental Health
- Senior Health

Implementation Plan

The Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) is part of a broad community effort to address priority health needs across Wabasha County. Community health improvement activities are coordinated by two designated action teams with representation from many local and regional organizations.

The Wabasha County Mental Health Action Team oversees the planning and implementation of strategies and objectives that focus on improving the mental health of Wabasha County residents.

The Wabasha County Senior Health Action Team oversees the planning and implementation of strategies and objectives that focus on improving the health and quality of life of our aging population.

Representatives from Gundersen St. Elizabeth's and WCPH actively participate on both teams and work collaboratively with our partners to address needs through the implementation of mental health and senior health improvement activities. As noted, many of these strategies will be implemented collaboratively during the next three years. Recognizing that no one organization can affect substantial community change alone, the long-term outcomes identified in this plan will be achieved as many community organizations work together for collective impact.

Mental Health

Goal: Improve access to services and management of substance use and mental health disorders for residents in need within Wabasha County.

Impact Performance Indicator: The 2026 Wabasha County Health Rankings will report a decline (to 10%) of adults in Wabasha County that report experiencing poor mental health for 14 or more of the last 30 days. *Baseline: County Health Rankings 2022 - 13%*

Strategy 1: Identify substance use and mental health service and provider gaps in Wabasha County.

Analyze prevalence, utilization, out-referral, and needs assessment data from across Wabasha County to better understand what substance use and mental health services and providers are needed to improve local access to care.

As part of the Wabasha County Mental Health Action Team, Gundersen St. Elizabeth's will:

Collaborative Partners:

- Wabasha County Public Health
- Wabasha County Social Services
- Hiawatha Valley Mental Health
- Zumbro Valley Mental Health

Gundersen St. Elizabeth's Resources

Committed:

- Staff time

Outcome Medium-Term Indicator:

By June 30, 2024, a county-wide plan has been developed and implemented that outlines the provision of new or expanded programs and services to fill identified gaps and meets priority needs.

Strategy 2: Improve the integration and coordination of care among providers of patients experiencing physical and mental health disorders.

Develop an understanding of local care pathways and structures that promote enhanced communication and collaboration among all healthcare providers in Wabasha County. Establish a single point of contact for all mental health/substance use resources and referral options in Wabasha County.

As part of the Wabasha County Mental Health Action Team, Gundersen St. Elizabeth's will:

Collaborative Partners:

- Wabasha County Public Health
- Wabasha County Social Services
- Hiawatha Valley Mental Health
- Zumbro Valley Mental Health

Gundersen St. Elizabeth's Resources

Committed:

- Staff time

Outcome Medium-Term Indicators:

By June 30, 2024, a widespread provider network has been established that is developing shared integrated care pathways. Funding and host organization have been secured and a job description created in preparation for the hiring and training of a substance use/mental health resource coordinator.

Strategy 3: Offer training to providers and education to referral sources and community members about co-occurring disorders and how they can be identified, treated, and managed.

Establish a plan and timeline for training communities about co-occurring disorders, followed by the development of a community campaign that raises awareness and access to services.

As part of the Wabasha County Mental Health Action Team, Gundersen St. Elizabeth's will:

Collaborative Partners:

- Wabasha County Public Health
- Wabasha County Social Services
- Hiawatha Valley Mental Health
- Zumbro Valley Mental Health

Gundersen St. Elizabeth's Resources

Committed:

- Staff time

Outcome Medium-Term Indicators:

By June 24, 2024, a select group of providers has received co-occurring training. These providers are incorporating evidence-based treatments into their practices. The team is in the early stages of developing a county-wide education campaign targeting community members that will be implemented by end of 2024.

Senior Health

Goal: Provide age-friendly resources accessible to older Wabasha County residents, enabling them to have rewarding, productive, and safe lives.

Impact Performance Indicator(s):

By 2026, the proportion of older people in Wabasha County who self-rate their overall Quality of Life as 'very good (5)' or 'good (4)' on a scale ranging from 'very poor (1)' to 'very good (5)' increases by 10% from baseline that is collected through an age-friendly assessment conducted in 2023.

Strategy 1: Become a member of AARP's Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities and complete all requirements of the Age-Friendly membership cycle.

The AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities serves as a catalyst to educate local leaders (elected officials, engaged residents, senior service providers) and encourage them to implement the types of changes that make communities more livable for people of all ages, especially older adults. The network provides interested entities with the resources to become more age-friendly by tapping into national and global research, planning models and best practices. Membership means that leaders have made a commitment to actively work with residents and local advocates to make their community an age-friendly place to live.

The following objectives will be completed over the three-year CHNA cycle:

1. Determine scope of membership (county or city)
2. Complete application form
3. Submit letter of commitment
4. Select scope of work (Communication and Information for year one)
5. Conduct a modified age-friendly community needs assessment
6. Develop action and evaluation plan based on assessment results
7. Implement objectives for improvement
8. Share progress, solutions and successes

As part of the Wabasha County Senior Health Action Team, Gundersen St. Elizabeth's will:

Participate in all Senior Health Action Team meetings and assist in the implementation of activities outlined above to successfully achieve all age-friendly objectives.

Collaborative Partners:

- Wabasha County Public Health
- Wabasha County SHIP
- Wabasha Public Library
- Elder Network

Gundersen St. Elizabeth's Resources

Committed:

- Staff time

- Ace Brain Fitness
- Southeastern Minnesota Area Agency on Aging
- Active Aging Programs- Catholic Charities
- Senior Citizens

Outcome Medium-Term Indicators:

By June 30, 2024, successful completion of objectives one through five lead team to the development of an age-friendly action plan based on assessment results.

Strategy 2: Strengthen and grow Wabasha County representation on Senior Health Action Team to include active participation from Lake City, Plainview, and other smaller communities within Wabasha County.

To ensure engagement across Wabasha County, team members will outline a plan to recruit senior health providers, advocates and other key stakeholders from communities currently not represented on the Senior Health Action Team. Objectives will include:

- Gathering recommendations of potential recruits from current members.
- Developing a method for informing and educating recruits of the mission and work plan of the team.
- Successfully onboarding at least two new members.

As part of the Wabasha County Senior Health Action Team, Gundersen St. Elizabeth's will:

Participate in all Senior Health Action Team meetings and assist in the implementation of activities outlined above to successfully achieve all objectives.

Collaborative Partners:

- Wabasha County Public Health
- Wabasha County SHIP
- Wabasha Public Library
- Elder Network
- Ace Brain Fitness
- Southeastern Minnesota Area Agency on Aging
- Active Aging Programs- Catholic Charities
- Senior Citizens

Gundersen St. Elizabeth's Resources

Committed:

- Staff time

Outcome Medium-Term Indicator:

By June 30, 2024 the Wabasha County Senior Action Team has successfully recruited one new member from Lake City or Plainview.

Strategy 3: Continue to grow and expand access and participation in Connections Cafe and caregiver support across Wabasha County.

The following objectives will be implemented by the Senior Action Team:

- Expand marketing of existing Wabasha Connections Cafe and caregiver support to senior providers and other target audiences.
- Develop a schedule of monthly activities/meetings that can be promoted to increase attendance.
- Explore opportunities to establish a Connections Cafe in another Wabasha County community.

Collaborative Partners:

- Wabasha County Public Health
- Wabasha County SHIP
- Wabasha Public Library
- Elder Network
- Ace Brain Fitness
- Southeastern Minnesota Area Agency on Aging
- Active Aging Programs- Catholic Charities
- Senior Citizens

Gundersen St. Elizabeth's Resources

Committed:

- Staff time

Outcome Medium-Term Indicator(s):

- By June 30, 2024, monthly attendance of Wabasha's Connections Café and Caregiver Support Groups average 8 participants. Plans are well underway to launch a second Connections Café and/or support group in another Wabasha County community.

Strategy 4: Continue to expand utilization of Memory Kits as a way of effectively interacting with people in all stages of dementia.

The following objectives will be implemented by the Senior Action Team:

- Develop video promotions to educate the public on the contents of kits and how to use them.
- Set up meetings with Wabasha County congregate living, senior communities, and assisted living facilities to introduce kits to staff.
- Develop a "share" program with other Wabasha County libraries to broaden the reach of kits.
- Set up educational presentations with key community groups.

Collaborative Partners:

- Wabasha County Public Health
- Wabasha County SHIP
- Wabasha Public Library

Gundersen St. Elizabeth's Resources

Committed:

- Staff time

- Elder Network
- Ace Brain Fitness
- Southeastern Minnesota Area Agency on Aging
- Active Aging Programs- Catholic Charities
- Senior Citizens

Medium-Term Indicator(s):

By June 30, 2024, broad and frequent utilization of Memory Kits increases to an average check-out rate of 4-6 per month.

Strategy 5: Explore and evaluate state and regional resources (dementia tool kits, virtual educational options) that better equip Wabasha County communities to be dementia friendly. If evaluation of these resources shows potential for success, implement identified resources to improve access and awareness of these resources to county residents.

The following objectives will be implemented by the Senior Action Team:

- Attend training and educational programs to learn more about available tool kits and resources for targeting Wabasha County school district students and staff.
- Explore creative ways to offer virtual programming (available through Juniper and other agencies) in a group setting.

Collaborative Partners:

- Wabasha County Public Health
- Wabasha County SHIP
- Wabasha Public Library
- Elder Network
- Ace Brain Fitness
- Southeastern Minnesota Area Agency on Aging
- Active Aging Programs- Catholic Charities
- Senior Citizens

Gundersen St. Elizabeth's Resources

Committed:

- Staff time

Medium-Term Indicator(s):

By June 30, 2024, team members will have attended available trainings/educational programs to learn about the application and availability of resources that promote age-friendly, dementia-friendly communities. An implementation plan is under development that outlines the launch of new community resources in 2025.

Plan to Evaluate the Strategies

Gundersen St. Elizabeth's and Wabasha County Public Health are committed to making a positive, measurable impact on the health of the people in the communities we serve. To that end, we evaluate the strategies we implement to address the health needs of the community.

We use a logic model, an approach that is nationally recognized for program evaluation. Logic models provide methods for documenting the following:

- **Inputs:** Resources needed to implement the strategies
- **Outputs:** Actions taken, the number of programs/tactics implemented and the number of people reached
- **Outcomes:** Measures of the impact of the programs/strategies (such as changes in learning, actions or conditions)

To be specific about the outcomes for which we will be accountable, we set SMART metrics – metrics that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-related.

Evaluation Schedule/Process

At the beginning of the three-year cycle:

- Establish SMART metrics for medium-term (three-year) indicators for each strategy
- Establish SMART metrics for long-term (beyond three years) indicators for each priority area

At the beginning of each fiscal year in the three-year cycle:

- Establish SMART metrics for short-term (fiscal year) indicators for each strategy
- Establish action steps and output indicators for each strategy

Quarterly each fiscal year:

- Report actions completed
- Report the status of each strategy/priority

At the end of each fiscal year:

- Report on results for short-term and output indicators
- Describe accomplishments and analyze results

At the end of the three-year cycle:

- Report on results for medium-term indicators for each strategy
- Describe and analyze results
- Incorporate results into next Community Health Needs Assessment

Health Needs Not Selected for this Plan

The CHNA Leadership Team understands the importance of the health needs and is committed to playing an active role in improving the health of the people in the communities we serve. For the purposes of this CHNA, Gundersen St. Elizabeth's and Wabasha County Public Health chose to focus its efforts on the two priorities listed above based on available capacity, resources, committed partners, and progress underway in both categories.

The following health issues and social determinants were identified by survey respondents. The CHNA Leadership Team is dedicated to sharing survey findings with providers, community leaders, and key stakeholders in an effort to ensure issues are shared and addressed with organizations/agencies whose mission and purpose are more closely aligned with the needs:

- Childcare: There exists a working group of community leaders and concerned citizens that are addressing access issues related to childcare services.
- Transportation: Three Rivers Community Action is the main provider of mass transit in Wabasha County. This agency conducted its own transportation assessment and action plan and continues to explore improvement opportunities.
- Other needs that were identified more often than others are listed below. The Leadership Team did not identify these as priorities so it could focus efforts on the top issues selected.
 - Housing (affordable and rental access)
 - Healthful food access
 - Chemical dependency/substance abuse
 - OB/Prenatal care/Women's health

Next Steps

This implementation plan outlines a three-year community health improvement process. Each year within this timeframe, we will:

- Participate actively in the Wabasha County Mental Health Action Team and the Wabasha County Senior Health Action Team
- Create an annual action plan with specific objectives to be accomplished for that year
- Set and track annual performance indicators for each strategy
- Track progress toward medium-term performance indicators
- Report progress toward the performance indicators to the board
- Share actions taken to address the needs with the community at large

Approval

This Community Health Improvement Plan was adopted by the Board of Directors of Saint Elizabeth's Hospital of Wabasha, Inc., on December 21, 2022. A copy of this plan is available at <https://www.gundersenhealth.org/community-assessment>.