

Sturdy Memorial Hospital

2013 Community Health Needs Assessment Report



Each year since the 1990s, Sturdy Memorial Hospital has voluntarily submitted a Community Benefits Report to the Massachusetts Office of the Attorney General. With guidance and oversight from the Hospital's Planning Committee, Sturdy's Community Benefits Report is constructed to reflect on activities from the prior year and provide recommendations for the Hospital's community benefits focus for the subsequent year. Community benefits planning is integrated into Sturdy's annual planning and budgeting processes to ensure we effectively support community benefits programming.

Sturdy Memorial Hospital is involved in ongoing assessment of health needs in our communities. Continually being engaged in and attuned to our communities provides us with opportunities to identify health issues of greatest concern to our care providers and community partners, and consider committing resources to those areas, if appropriate, to guide efforts to improve community health and wellness. At the core of Sturdy's community benefits activities and planning are the Hospital's Statement of Purpose, which is attached, and Community Benefits Mission, which is displayed below.

Sturdy Memorial Hospital is dedicated to providing safe, high quality, cost efficient health care and the broadest range of diagnostic, inpatient, outpatient, and emergency services appropriate for a community hospital.

The Hospital works to ensure that ample, high quality primary and specialty physician services are accessible to area residents. Additionally, we try to avoid costly duplication of health care services by coordinating with other area health care providers to the extent practicable.

The Hospital provides leadership while working in cooperation with public and private health organizations, as well as civic and business organizations, to meet the health care needs of our communities.

For Sturdy, needs assessment involves review and analysis of various data such as patient satisfaction surveys, Hospital service utilization statistics, clinical issues, health insurer data, and other local and State health data. We also take into account the results of feedback from and conversations and interactions with a multitude of other sources, actively soliciting information and ideas from area public health professionals, members of the Hospital's Patient and Family Advisory Council (PFAC), members of the Hospital's Medical Management Committee, social services agency personnel, school nurses, as well as participating in professional forums. Findings are reviewed for trends or needs in the community. Clinical trend data and patient education needs recognized by clinicians while providing medical or follow up care are also considered. Additionally, members of the community are encouraged to, and often do, relay programming suggestions directly to the Hospital or through program evaluation tools. The Hospital has drawn from this extensive bank of information to make recommendations for community benefits activities and programs.

2013

As part of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (“Affordable Care Act”) enacted in 2010, all 501(c)(3) hospital organizations are now required to complete a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) every three years and make the results public. There are six basic components of the compulsory Community Health Needs Assessment:

- Definition of the Community Served by Sturdy Memorial Hospital
- Solicitation of Community Feedback
- Assessment of the Findings/Other Data
- Prioritization of Community Need and Plan Implementation
- Publication of and Reporting on CHNA
- Monitoring

As described in the Hospital’s Statement of Purpose, Sturdy provides care to anyone who needs it, regardless of place of residence. However, our nine town primary service area consists of Attleboro, Foxboro, Mansfield, North Attleboro, Norton, Plainville, Seekonk, Rehoboth, and Wrentham, Massachusetts.

The CHNA process requires input from persons “representing the broad interests” of the community. In 2013, Sturdy Memorial Hospital conducted a needs assessment in collaboration with city/town health agents; city/town public health nurses; public schools; area councils on aging; area Ys; Community VNA; Women, Infants and Children (WIC); and our Patient Family Advisory Council. Surveys were mailed and/or emailed to 38 individuals/entities. Eighteen responses were received. The Hospital also utilized other data about its service area and participated in community advisory groups, boards, medical committees, and partnerships as part of the assessment.

No single theme or need was identified by all of the 18 people who completed the CHNA survey. However, **11 of 18, or 61.1%, listed obesity as the top health priority** in the Sturdy communities. The next most prevalent perceived health issue, which Sturdy’s involvement could impact, was diabetes management. **Ten of 18, or 55.6%, named diabetes as the second highest health priority.** Two issues which Sturdy can support but not fully impact, affordable medications and behavioral health disorders or related issues, were also listed by 10 of 18 respondents, or 55.6%, as being perceived health priorities. To summarize, when asked to rank order the top five health care issues, concerns and/or needs affecting the people they represented, the priorities identified by the respondents were:

- Obesity (11)
- Affordable Medications (10)
- Behavioral Health Disorders or Related Issues (10)
- Diabetes Management (10)
- Access to Healthy Food/Proper Nutrition (7)
- Lack of Exercise (7)
- Substance/Alcohol Abuse or Addiction (7)
- Unemployment (6)
- Understanding Health Care, Medical Terminology, How to Access Care, etc. (5)
- Hunger (3)
- Availability of Primary Care Physicians (2)
- Chronic Disease Management (1)
- Dementia/Alzheimer’s (1)

- Heart Disease/Hypertension (1)
- Illiteracy (1)
- Lack of Knowledge Regarding End of Life Resources (1)
- Mental Health Coverage Limitations for People Not on MassHealth (1)
- Preventive Health Education (1)
- Stress for School-Aged Youth (1)
- Teen Pregnancy (1)
- Unaccompanied Youth Ages 14-21 (1)
- Vector Borne Illnesses (1)

Before making any recommendations about our health-related priorities for the next three years, secondary data from State and Federal sources was also reviewed. Only one CHNA survey respondent listed heart disease as a health priority. Heart disease is #1 killer of both men and women, with approximately 600,000 deaths annually and equivalent to one in four deaths according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Interestingly, there was no mention from any respondents about cancer, the second leading cause of death behind heart disease. Therefore, it was determined that heart disease and cancer prevention needed to be included among the health priorities in the Sturdy communities. The assessment process concluded with the identified needs being evaluated and prioritized, and the creation of an action plan.

Prioritization of Community Need

In addition to the list of issues identified by the 2013 CHNA, another criterion used to prioritize the important needs in the communities served by Sturdy included our ability to effectively impact and improve the identified health issue, e.g. represents an issue we can address. The decision was also made to focus on the eight towns in our primary service area in closest geographic proximity to the Hospital, which is supported by Hospital utilization by town data. Wrentham will be considered as a secondary geographic priority. Please note that public health officials from the Wrentham community did not respond to our CHNA and that Wrentham is also represented by hospitals to its north and west.

The issues listed below were chosen as Sturdy's priorities. In some instances, two issues were paired together to maximize potential success.

- Obesity/Nutrition
- Diabetes Management
- Wellness and Physical Activity
- Heart Disease Prevention Education
- Cancer Prevention Education and Screening
- Access to Primary Care Physicians

Some high priority issues identified as important to improving the health of the community could not be addressed in Sturdy's implementation plan, largely because Sturdy lacks the necessary expertise or the needs are better addressed by another community or State organization. We will continue to facilitate care and referral to the necessary resources. These included:

- Behavioral Health Disorders or Related Issues
- Cost of/Affordable Medications
- Substance/Alcohol Abuse or Addiction

Other findings of the 2013 CHNA:

The respondents unanimously agreed that many health issues exist due to lack of knowledge and lack of government funding for health education.

The elderly and poor are the most disadvantaged/vulnerable populations.

When asked if the survey respondents thought the populations they served were interested in improving their health, all indicated yes but named different obstacles, including trouble understanding and navigating the health care system, not enough easy tools to help people fix their issues, lack of transportation, financial constraints, inability to self-motivate or advocated for themselves, etc.

In responding to a question about what they thought Sturdy could do to improve the health care services we provide to their communities, the most popular answer or comment was positive acknowledgement of our strong presence in the community. Some suggested that continued and increased interaction with social service and community agencies, more outreach and education, continuing to partner with area non-profits, and holding more educational programs and screenings at the senior centers and senior housing communities would be beneficial to our constituents.

When asked to estimate the percentage of the population they served that was non-English speaking, the responses were:

< 1% to 5%:	9 or 50%
> 5% to 10%:	4 or 22,2%
> 10% - 30%:	2 or 11.1%
Not sure:	3 or 16.7%

Other than English, the top other languages in our communities, albeit spoken by small or isolated populations of people and corroborated by 2010 U.S. Census data, are Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Hindi, and Cambodian.

Those polled were asked to project what they thought the single most difficult health issue in their communities will be in five years (2018) and we were told:

- Diabetes
- Obesity and Related Diseases
- Heart Disease/Hypertension/Overall Chronic Disease Management
- Affordable Health Insurance

Plan Implementation

Sturdy has a basic plan to address each health priority identified on Page 3 to create greater awareness and affect change, and has begun implementation on all of them. The plans will likely evolve as implementation strategies are fully developed. The plans will be implemented over the next three years. Tactics for each health priority will include a plan outline and related implementation timeline; definition of target populations; plan goals; continued use and promotion of existing programs and services; continued collaboration with appropriate clinical professionals; strengthening existing collaborations and building new relationships with

community and State resources who can aid us in achieving our goals; exploring the viability of offering new outreach programs and venues; development of additional support and/or promotional materials; and more. While Sturdy cannot address the entirety of the needs identified in the CHNA, we may be able to support other appropriate organizations and are committed being involved.

Obesity/Nutrition

Objective: Increase the availability of nutrition information and education to help reduce the growing rate obesity (up 11.5% in Massachusetts from 1990 – 2010 according to MassCHIP).

Target Populations: All Adults, Youth

Strategies:

- Support wellness programming and education for area youth which promotes good nutritional habits and physical activity, and ultimately, reduces obesity.
- Provide healthy cooking demonstrations at the Hospital and possibly in the community.
- Pitch and/or write a health column for the local daily newspaper on proper nutrition.
- Continue to participate at HealthyChoices school-based health fairs to emphasize the importance of proper diet and nutrition.
- Continue operating an outpatient nutrition counseling program and develop referral materials for the physicians' offices.
- Consider working with the Y and senior centers to identify opportunities to educate children, parents, and seniors about the benefits of healthy eating.
- Continue the Hospital's senior meals program, which offers nutritious, affordable meals to the elderly three days a week.
- Partner with area experts to promote the importance of doing 30 minutes of physical activity, any kind, daily.
- Include information about proper nutrition and healthy eating tips on the Hospital's website.
- Support the Attleboro Y's annual youth step challenge.

Diabetes Management

Objective: Bolster efforts related to diabetes management by educating patients to enable them to better manage their diabetes.

Target Populations: Adults with or at risk for diabetes

Strategies:

- Continue inpatient glycemic control protocol with nursing, internal medicine, hospitalist, and pharmacy staff to improve outcomes related to glycemic control by ensuring appropriate dosing and monitoring.
- Continue primary care physicians at area medical practices strict monitoring of patients' HbA1c levels and referrals to an endocrinologist on the Hospital's medical staff to facilitate compliance. Make appropriate diabetes written materials available in area physicians' offices.
- Continue to offer free diabetes support group.
- Pitch and/or write a health column for the local daily newspaper on diabetes.

Wellness and Physical Activity

Objective: Promote wellness and the importance of staying physically active, at any age, through collaboration with area Ys.

Target Populations: All Adults

Strategies:

- Work in collaboration with Cardiac Rehabilitation Department to offer and enroll patients in post-heart attack exercise classes and promote the benefits of exercise. Transition patients to area fitness clubs to continue regular exercise upon completion of Cardiac Rehabilitation.
- Continue to partner with area Ys to support people re: increased physical activity, improved nutrition, and management of chronic diseases.
- Provide educational reference materials on the Hospital's website, and through affiliated medical practices and throughout our communities.

Heart Disease Prevention Education

Objective: Enhance consumer education of heart disease and how to prevent it.

Target Populations: Adults at risk for heart disease and stroke, All Adults

Strategies:

- Develop and implement a two year plan to educate women that the symptoms and signs of heart disease can differ between women and men, how to recognize and respond, and how to live healthier. Consider partnering with the Y.
- Continue to promote and hold a public heart health fair in February in conjunction with Go Red Day.
- Promote heart health on the Hospital's website.
- Continue to offer cardiac disease prevention, screening, education, and support programs, and promote access to cardiac care.
- Continue to promote stroke education and awareness – know the signs and how to respond – and offer support programs.
- Pitch and/or write a health column for the local daily newspaper on heart health.

Cancer Prevention Education and Screening

Objective: Enhance access to cancer prevention education and screenings offered by the Hospital.

Target Populations: All Adults

Strategies:

- Promote the importance of screening mammograms and services available at the Hospital.
- Continue annual public education regarding breast health awareness.
- Continue to offer early cancer detection and prevention through screening, education, and support programs.
- Conduct skin and cervical cancer screenings, and hold an educational program on prostate cancer awareness/prevention.

- Continue to assess smoking habits of inpatients and offer smoking cessation class and/or educational materials to smokers.
- Ensure efficient and expeditious care following diagnosis via our cancer care coordinator.
- Work with primary care physicians' offices to educate adults 50+ and those with family histories of colorectal disease to follow colonoscopy screening guidelines.
- Work with local media to publish a story on the importance of colorectal screening and colorectal health, i.e.: proper nutrition, risk factors, problems to look for, etc.
- Hold an educational program on colon cancer prevention.
- Continue to partner with CVNA Hospice to provide community palliative care education.

Access to Primary Care Physicians

Continuity is a vital component of good health care so we strive to make sure our patients are connected to a primary care physician. Physician recruitment is an organizational priority with Sturdy dedicating human and financial resources to ensure people in our communities have access to care.

Objective: Continue to ensure members of the Sturdy communities have access to primary care and specialty physicians in the service area, as area needs suggest.

Target Populations: Adults, family health care decision makers

Strategies:

- Continue to offer a free, live person physician referral service through the Hospital.
- Continue to maintain updated physician referral/physicians accepting new patients listings on the Hospital's website.
- Continue to give printed information to patients in the emergency department (ED) to facilitate their follow up care.
- Continue to have members of the Hospital staff make follow up physician appointments for inpatients before they are being discharged.

Monitoring and Reporting

Sturdy will regularly monitor program effectiveness and results, and report to its Planning Committee each year in July. Subsequent year plans will be modified accordingly. Sturdy will conduct another community health needs assessment in 2016 to further identify major health concerns and potential barriers people are faced with so that Sturdy can continue to focus its health programming resources and services to most effectively meet the needs of the communities we serve.

In accordance with IRS regulations, Sturdy will provide annually a description of the actions taken during the taxable year to address the significant health issues identified through its most recent CHNA on the form 990. If no action was taken on one or more of the priorities identified, the reason or reasons for no action will be explained.

This report is available on Sturdy Memorial Hospital's website, www.sturdymemorial.org, and anyone wishing to obtain a hard copy of the report may do so by contacting Sturdy's Public Relations Department at 508-236-8020.