St. Aloisius Medical Center
Community Needs Assessment Implementation Strategy
Year Four Updates 9-30-16

Tier I Needs

I. Physician Retention and Recruitment

One of the main concerns arising from the community needs assessment is maintaining an adequate medical staff to serve the community. At the time the survey was conducted, Harvey had three physicians, one physician assistant and three nurse practitioners. Since the survey, one physician has resigned.

Prior to this resignation, the medical staff were already progressive with regard to emergency room coverage and were approached about e-Emergency services, available through Avera McKennen Healthcare System in Sioux Falls, SD. St. Aloisius would be connected continuously via telemedicine to an emergency room physician in Sioux Falls. St. Aloisius has signed the contract to install the technology which may be funded in part by a grant. This will enable our medical staff to have instant contact with another specialist when the need arises. This will also give our providers an added comfort level in the emergency room. It is a definite asset in recruiting providers as well as a backup for the nurse practitioners and physician assistants should they begin to take emergency room call more frequently. The use of Mid-levels in the emergency room should contribute to the success of recruitment and retention by requiring less on call coverage for each of the providers.

St. Aloisius Medical Center may look in the future at employing mid-level providers to take emergency room call if the clinic does not hire another physician and the mid-levels at either clinic do not begin taking call. Physician recruitment is always an ongoing process in rural areas and takes place here as well.

Year Two Updates: Dr. Cynthia Martine was hired by CDFP clinic and Kim Thorson, NP was hired by St. Aloisius Medical Center. We also utilized a grant from the Center for Rural Health to produce a video about St. Aloisius Medical Center and the services we offer to recruit physicians/other professional staff to our community. The video is posted on our website. We installed the Avera E-emergency system in our emergency department in 2013 and continued to use in 2014 so that our medical staff has 24/7 access to expert medical staff in Sioux Falls, SD to assist during evaluation and treatment of our emergency department patients.

Year Three Updates: Physician recruitment was still at the forefront of our needs, but not as essential as we did have Dr. Martine and Kim Thorson. Our video was posted on our website communicating the services we offer in Harvey. We also continued to utilize the eEmergency system in the emergency department.
**Year Four Updates:** Dr. Martine passed away in the fall of 2015 and thus we had open days to cover the emergency room which was provided by either Kim Thorson, NP or Homestead Recruiters locums’ physicians. We continued to recruit this year and contracted with two national recruiting firms to search for candidates. We were unsuccessful in attracting any candidates.

**II. Obesity**

The second largest concern relates to obesity. While this is a national issue, there are a few strategies that are being implemented locally. First of all, there is one aspect of the electronic medical record that keeps track of a patient’s BMI (body mass index). Federal reimbursement is available for a BMI of greater than 39. As a result, the nursing staff will begin making a referral to the dietician if the BMI is greater than that amount. In addition, the Wellness Clinic staff will begin to look at additional education/training for the public possibly providing classes on how to properly use the fitness equipment. Instructions and assistance with an exercise regimen will also be provided. Finally, a few other techniques will be provided as listed below:

- Promotion to the coaches/staff at the local high schools
- Self referrals to physical therapy as permitted by law
- Discounts to new members joining wellness center

**Year Two Updates:** For St. Aloisius employees, we have an active employee wellness committee which offers several diet and exercise programs such as our Biggest Loser contest and our Walk to Medora. Our wellness center is also free for employee use.

**Year Three Updates:** We continued to work with our own wellness program for employees with diet and exercise during year three. We began discussions with CHI- St. Alexius in Bismarck for bariatric support group meetings over the polycom system (tele-medicine), which are planned, beginning mid- year 2016.

**Year Four Updates:** We now run a monthly bariatric support group via telemedicine with CHI-St. Alexius. St Aloisius also started a fitness challenge with the local school system.

**III. Service Promotion**

The assessment determined that St. Aloisius offers quite a variety of services that many in the public are unaware of. In response to this, St. Aloisius has now developed a method of informing the public of our services through a weekly ad in the buyer’s guide of the local newspaper. It is a “Did You Know” article which has a brief message about a service/statistic concerning St. Aloisius. For example “Did you know that St. Aloisius recently installed a 16 slice CT machine?” Other methods will be utilized including the Ministry’s Foreword newsletter which is printed semi-annually. It has recently been
determined that this newsletter is not being sent to the rural community of Maddock – which is part of our service area. This will be corrected prior to the release of the next issue resulting in the newsletter reaching over four thousand constituents.

Another visual type of awareness program being developed will be to place banners in local community businesses. For example the medical, dentist, chiropractic and optometrist’s offices will be solicited to provide our banner listing St. Aloisius services such as cataract surgeries, colonoscopies, PADNET, etc.

In addition, refrigerator magnets or some other type of take home promotion item will be developed to reach multiple households.

Weekly radio spots on KHND radio will continue with emphasis on services delivered at St. Aloisius Medical Center.

As part of St. Aloisius Medical Centers three year strategic plan, a Lunch and Learn type of educational atmosphere was determined to be beneficial to our patrons. It is scheduled to begin sometime during 2013.

**Year Two Updates:** We have continued to print our “Did You Know” in the local newspaper promoting services at the medical center. Our semi-annual newsletter the Foreword is distributed to Harvey and the surrounding communities, including the service area of Maddock which had been missed in the past. We printed a hard copy of the Foreword in May 2014; it had just been posted on our website the previous year.

Promotional banners were purchased and placed in local businesses in Fessenden and in Harvey and will be rotated to various businesses as time permits. We have also advertised our services on promotional magnets distributed to area households. A monthly radio time slot is also utilized by our staff to promote services – changed from a weekly time slot. The recruitment video that was produced is also a method of service promotion.

The item not met under service promotion was implementing a lunch and learn type educational atmosphere. It was determined that the interest was not present and this topic was not actively pursued.

**Year Three Updates:** St. Aloisius held its’ annual Health Fair in May 2015 (did not hold one in May of 2014). Promotion of St. Aloisius services as well as other services offered in Wells County and the State of North Dakota. Examples of vendors present were: Wells Co. Sheriff’s office, Wells County District Health, local optometrist, local ambulance, etc. It is a wellness fair involving the whole community and was well attended.
We did not start a “Lunch and Learn”. It was determined we would not get the attendance for such a meeting at this time. May be explored at a future date.

Promotional banners continue to move to various community businesses. Promotional magnets and telephone book covers were also distributed this past year to households.

A county wide disaster drill was held on September 10th with state and county emergency management staff, ambulance, police, and fire department, clinic and hospital participants. The drill went well; several areas to improve on were noted with communications being in the forefront.

Year 4 Updates: We held our annual health fair in May 2016. We also participated in the Color Dash walk/run July 4, 2016 held to raise money for mental health/suicide prevention.

We held community forums to outline services and the appropriate way to access services. This was done in conjunction with the current Community Needs Assessment.

We continued the “Did You Know” but it was changed to twice a month in the local paper, promoting our services. The Foreword newsletter was also distributed twice this year.

Tier II Needs

I. Diabetes

Diabetes is another medical issue the community has concerns with.

Our wellness lab screenings are utilized to detect many health issues including diabetes, thus we will continue offering these to our patients every spring and fall.

Working with diabetes issues will also be linked with the obesity education program.

The Wells Co. District Health office already conducts area foot care clinics and a diabetic support group which are very beneficial for diabetic patients.

The consulting podiatrist will be solicited to provide some education with regard to diabetes.

Year Three Updates: St. Aloisius was approached by a recruiting company to hire a part time podiatrist who would provide services one day per month at the hospital. After a financial analysis was conducted, it was mutually agreed between the two parties that it was not a fit for St. Aloisius at this time. It may be researched again in the future as we are able to recruit more primary care providers in a clinic setting.
Wells County District Health continues to offer foot care services.

**Year Four Updates:** We met with Trinity Health to attempt to establish diabetic education via telemedicine.

Quality Healthcare Associates (NDHCRI) offers training for a Diabetic Educator and we will look into the training course. Evony Hansen, RN, would like to take the course when staffing allows. We also need to further explore the revenue arena for this service.

**II. Mental Health**

St. Aloisius Medical Center participates in the Rural Mental Health Consortium with onsite services provided by a clinical nurse specialist in psychiatry.

St. Aloisius is also a partner of the Character Counts program with the Harvey public school system and Wells Co. District Health to promote resiliency, self respect, professionalism character. In addition, we are an active member of the ND Suicide coalition.

St. Aloisius Medical Center now has better access to psychiatric care and admissions to the State Hospital through an improved process developed by the ND State Hospital Administration.

We have the capability to utilize telemedicine when necessary and when the clinical nurse specialist is unavailable.

St. Aloisius continues to offer an employee assistance program for its own employees which can be accessed by telephone or onsite services.

**Year Two Updates:** The ability to access psychiatric help through the Avera E-emergency connection now addresses our Tier II Mental Health needs of improving access to psychiatric care. There is also a possibility of being able to offer telemedicine consults with a psychologist down the road which will be addressed this next year.

St. Aloisius continues to participate in the Rural Mental Health Consortium. We have added a backup Nurse Practitioner from Jamestown to work with adults. St. Aloisius also continues to partner with the Community Cares about Suicide Prevention. There is a Color Dash (run/walk marathon) planned for July 2015. A state grant was also received for alcohol abuse treatment.

**Year Three Updates:** Community relations director continues to work with the Community Cares group for suicide prevention. The “Lighting the Darkness” Christmas light project took place in December 2014 in the West Side Park.
COLOR DASH: July 4, 2015 - We had 248 walkers/runners for suicide prevention walk/run. $3,800 raised. Community committee meets monthly and is led by St Aloisius Medical Center.

2000 Suicide prevention magnets have been distributed throughout the county with a hotline and text line. We also extended assistance to New Rockford community.

A motorcycle run for Suicide prevention was held at the Wells County Fair, raising $1600 for the Community Cares Program.

The backup Nurse Practitioner from Jamestown did not renew her practice credentials with St. Aloisius, thus we continue to only use Zane Zuleger.

Year Four Updates: We participated in the Color Dash on July 4, 2016 and raised $3,400 for the Community Cares program.

Erin Hagemeister, local nurse practitioner, is currently attending college courses to become a clinical nurse specialist to work with our Rural Mental Health Consortium in 2017.

There were 3000 refrigerator magnets with suicide hotline phone # distributed to community members.

We have reached out to CHI to determine if it would be feasible to offer tele-psych services in our area.

III. Oncology

It was noted in the community needs assessment that the respondents would like to have oncology services available in the community. Previously, an oncologist from Minot, ND came to St. Aloisius Medical Center and administered chemotherapy onsite. When he retired, we tried to recruit another oncologist to provide onsite services but to no avail. This is a very expensive service and it is difficult for a large tertiary hospital to send an oncologist out to a rural area without financial repercussions. While St. Aloisius is still able to give IV hydration and anti-nausea medications to oncology patients, it is not feasible to have the other oncology services provided in Harvey. Unfortunately, this is not a need St. Aloisius can meet; therefore patients will continue to travel to other tertiary hospitals in Bismarck or Minot for oncology services.

Year Two Updates: It was noted in the community needs assessment that the respondents would like to have oncology services available in the community. Previously, an oncologist from Minot, ND came to St. Aloisius Medical Center and administered chemotherapy onsite. When he retired, we tried to recruit another oncologist to provide
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There is no update for this topic in Year Three being it was not a need we could meet.