

Via Christi Hospital – Saint Teresa (VCH-ST) 2017 – 2019 Implementation Strategy Plan Attachment C

Implementation Strategy Narrative

Hospital Mission

Mission: Inspired by the Gospel and our Catholic tradition, we serve as a healing presence with special concern for our neighbors who are vulnerable.

Via Christi Hospital – Saint Teresa enriches the broader community, by providing access to hospital care for those living in northwest Wichita and surrounding communities. In addition, VCH-ST takes part in educating health care students, providing emergency care, rehabilitation services and support to people in need. VCH-ST further supports our Catholic mission with a community board, open medical staff, and an emergency room available to patients regardless of ability to pay.

Overview

Via Christi Hospital – Saint Teresa is accredited by the [Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations](#) and holds memberships in the [American Hospital Association](#), the [Kansas Hospital Association](#) and the [Catholic Health Association](#). Our hospital is currently training associates to become a High Reliability Organization to increase safety for patients, visitors and employees.

Via Christi Hospital – Saint Teresa includes:

- Emergency Room
- Orthopedics
- Rehabilitation

Service to the poor is a primary value at Via Christi Hospital – Saint Teresa. In 2016, VCH-ST contributed over \$2.34 million in community benefit. In addition to providing charity care, here are some examples of ways VCH-ST associates contributed time, talent and treasure to Wichita and surrounding communities by:

- Serving on the United Way of the Plains West Wichita Promise Neighborhood Committee whose initiative “Be There” promotes the importance to students and their families to attend school and whose outcomes measures are showing positive improvements in school attendance and class grades. This UWP project focuses on feeder schools to the West High School population whereby the long-term goal is to improve high school graduation rates.
- Planning and coordinating a hospital-wide collection drive of food, clothing and household items for Gerard House, a not-for-profit home for teenage moms and their infants.
- Serving on the American Heart Association’s Heart Walk planning committee to raise funds for their research and patient assistance programs.
- Providing an associate to participate as a solicitor for the One Community Campaign which helps to fund the United Way of the Plains’ annual fund drive.
- Hosting monthly Stroke Support group meetings for community members who have suffered from strokes as well as their primary caregivers.

Community Needs Assessment Overview

In 2016, Via Christi Hospital – Saint Teresa, along with Via Christi Hospital – Wichita and Via Christi Rehabilitation Hospital participated with United Way of the Plains and the Sedgwick County Health

Department in a six-county community needs assessment. Surveys were mailed to 695 community leaders, 262 not-for-profit and government agency executives and 7,600 randomly selected households. Subtracting the surveys that were undeliverable, the total number of surveys distributed was 7,712 and 841 returned for an overall response rate of 10.9 percent. Looking at the individual surveys, the response rate for each is as follows: 18.7 percent for community leaders, 46.6 percent for agency executives and 8.9 percent for randomly selected households.

Respondents were asked to prioritize three community issues education, income and self-sufficiency, and health. Community respondents ranked the education community issue area as the highest priority for their local community. Among the educational issues, they ranked school readiness and reading at grade level by 3rd grade as the most critical elements.

Community respondents ranked the income/self-sufficiency community issue area as the second highest priority for their local community. Among income/self-sufficiency issues, they ranked employment/job training and housing.

Health issue areas ranked third highest by community respondents. Their areas of concern revolved around access to health care which ran the gamut including health insurance, affordability, availability, medical practitioners accepting specific types of health insurance coverage; having a sufficient number of medical professionals to serve various geographic areas and medical transportation.

The random sample of community households were asked to review and rate 63 education, health and income concerns and asked to rate whether any of these were a major, moderate, minor or a non-issue for their household or neighborhood. Following are the top ten major health issues that respondents identified as a problem for their household and/or neighborhood.

- 1) Health insurance
- 2) Basic medical care for low-income
- 3) Prescription medicine financial assistance
- 4) Child abuse prevention/education
- 5) Immunization of adults/children
- 6) Human trafficking prevention/education
- 7) Family violence prevention
- 8) Food assistance
- 9) Sexual assault prevention/education
- 10) Counseling/mental health services

Major Identified Needs Being Addressed by VCH-ST

Health Insurance

Goal: To support the expansion of Medicaid in the State of Kansas and encouraging patients to participate in the Accountable Care Act insurance exchange programs

In concert with Via Christi Health leadership team and board of directors, VCH-ST continues to be a strong proponent in the need to expand Medicaid across Kansas. Affordable health care, in our Catholic tradition, should be a right given to all but especially for those who are poor and vulnerable. VCH-ST continues to offer charity care to the poor, takes care of those who are recipients of Medicaid and Medicare knowing that the government will not be paying the full cost of that care, and aggressively assisting those who come into its hospital to register for programs to which they are entitled.

Basic Medical Care for Low-Income

Goal: To improve the patients' understanding on the need for a medical care home

Basic medical care for all people is a right and responsibility of every community. People who are ill and denied medical care not only jeopardize their own health but may impact others who share their

environment. Waiting until one is in crisis to seek medical care is not only dangerous but may have serious economic impact for families, health care providers and hospitals.

Having a medical home, a place where one can call and make an appointment to see a physician and/or a nurse practitioner prior to having an emergency is in the best interest of all, especially the patient who can receive quality preventive care or treatment at the time of illness.

Patients accessing the Emergency Room each time they are in need of care are denying themselves the benefits that come with having a medical home. Having a doctor, nurse or other practitioner who knows your personal medical history will provide patients with the best long-term care. VCH-ST case managers work with patients to find medical homes prior to discharge from our hospital.

Assistance with Prescriptions for Low-Income

Goal: To improve the patients' ability to afford their required medications

Hospital inpatients, as well as clinic outpatients may be eligible to receive financial assistance in procuring their required medications. Via Christi Hospital – Saint Teresa works closely with VCH-W which currently operates a 340B drug pricing program on medication and pays an annual fee to be a Dispensary of Hope Pharmacy as well. Involvement in both of these programs is to better serve vulnerable patients and to decrease the burden of cost for uninsured patients who are in need of prescription assistance. In addition, both VCH-ST and VCH-W continue to look for new ways to procure medication discounts for all patients whether they are being discharged from its hospital or is getting outpatient treatment in one of its clinics.

Child Abuse Prevention/Education

Goal: To reduce the number of child fatalities as a result of abuse or neglect.

Educating parents on how to properly care for children has shown that these prevention efforts can strengthen families and produce resilient children and in the long run save real, long-term physical, psychological and emotional costs that is inflicted upon children at the hands of their abusers. Children who are victimized may require immediate medical treatment, but their ordeal also has an impact on law enforcement officers, the judicial and correction systems when their abuse is investigated, prosecuted and accused are sentenced for their crime. New parents are not always ready to embrace changes that accompany a new baby. Many young parents have limited first-hand experience with dealing with babies and as a result may inadvertently hurt their child even though they love that child. That is why patients who may access the Emergency Room at VCH-ST are referred to VCH-W which offers traditional parenting classes in addition to non-traditional training like Boot Camp for New Dads.

Immunization of Adults/Children

Goal: To reduce morbidity and mortality from vaccine-preventable diseases.

In 1991, when the U.S. Public Health Service introduced national goals for vaccines of adults to reduce the morbidity and mortality rates from preventable diseases, only 21 percent of 50 to 64 year olds were receiving the flu vaccine. In the USA, an average of five to 20 percent of the population gets influenza; more than 200,000 are hospitalized and nearly 36,000 die from it annually. From September 1, 2013 to January 14, 2014, the Kansas Department of Health and Environment reported 510 deaths in Kansas due to complications from influenza or pneumonia. Influenza and pneumonia was the eighth leading cause of death in 2012 in Kansas. To protect employees from contracting the disease, all Via Christi Hospitals, give free flu shots to those who wished to get one. In 2015, VCH, required employees to get one in order to further protect patients and their workforce as a condition of employment. Those who chose not to participate for religious purposes were required to wear protective face masks to prevent spreading any possible germs they may be carrying and/or to keep them from getting more exposed to the disease through their work schedules.

Human Trafficking Prevention/Education

Goal: To partner with community organizations to further reach at-risk human trafficking populations by providing consultation, education and support for the organization's identification and response programs.

Human trafficking is the fastest-growing criminal industry in the world today, often operated by organized crime syndicates. Traffickers use force, fraud or coercion to enslave their victims into situations involving sexual exploitation or forced labor. Human trafficking is a devastating human rights violation, is seen as a form of modern day slavery, and takes place not only internationally, but also here in the United States.

Via Christi Hospital - Wichita has become a national model for Ascension Health in dealing with this vulnerable population. Since VCH-W first initiated this program, over 40 victims have been identified and assisted. The Human Trafficking program staff is working closely with local and state law enforcement agencies and VCH-W's Forensic Nursing Program to address the needs of those identified as human trafficking victims in our clinics or emergency rooms. VCH-ST staff has worked closely with VCH-W to ensure their nurses and other front-line workers are prepared to recognize and refer human trafficking victims for additional help if they present themselves in the Emergency Department or are admitted as inpatients for other injuries or illnesses.

Other agencies, in Sedgwick County are also focusing attention and resources on this issue in hopes of educating more businesses on how to recognize possible victims. VCH-W staff, working with a national leader on the subject, has developed tools which are in the process of being distributed throughout the Ascension Health ministries for national awareness of human trafficking victims.

Family Violence Prevention

Goal: To prevent unintentional injuries and violence within families

Family violence prevention is a serious public health problem, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. From infants to the elderly, it can affect people in all stages of life regardless of race, religion or economic status. Many victims survive the violence but suffer physical, mental and or emotional health problems through the rest of their lives. VCH-ST treats these victims in their Emergency Department and goes to great lengths to separate the victims from their abusers to encourage the victims that help is available. Research has shown that over 40 percent of Kansas City, Missouri domestic violence related homicides over a five year period presented themselves to an emergency room two years before their deaths. So, Emergency Department clinical staff are very much aware of the important role they play when it comes to family violence prevention and actively collaborates with their social work and security departments to keep the victims safe and offer them immediate referrals to organizations in the community whose sole goal is to help these women and their children escape this environment.

Food Assistance

Goal: To ensure that families in need of proper nutrition are able to receive it and encouraged to work with related organizations who can provide assistance on a more long-term basis.

Via Christi Hospital – Saint Teresa provides nutrition to those who are poor and vulnerable in several ways. Associates participate in food drives throughout the year, primary caregivers whose family member is an inpatient and are identified as low-income and in need of proper nutrition are given free meal tickets to ensure they are able to maintain their strength while assisting with the care of their loved one. Case managers, who are aware of the patient (and many times their family) needs, will assist in getting the patient signed up for Medicaid and/or Food Stamps if they determine the patient meet the criteria. The patient is also given information about community resources to assist with food needs until government assistance is available. VCH-ST hospital also reviews the menu choices available to their employees to ensure proper nutrition is a standard throughout their ministries.

Sexual Assault Prevention/Education

Goal: To educate and work with other community organizations, schools, law enforcement agencies and others to reduce the number of sexual assaults, making Sedgwick County a safer community.

Sexual assault occurs when consent is not obtained or given freely by one individual to another prior to sexual contact. Nearly 20 percent of the U.S. population has experienced some form of violence. Sexual violence is a major cause of injury and trauma. According to the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS), Nearly 1 in 5 women and 1 in 71 men in the United States have experienced an attempted or completed rape in some time in their lives. Most victims of sexual assault know their attacker. Nationally, 73 percent of victims knew the attacker, in Kansas 90 percent knew the attacker (NSVRC and KBI data).

VCH-ST supports the work of the many agencies in the community, funded by United Way, that address this problem through their One Community Campaign and they certainly work closely when victims are identified and are brought to the Emergency Department for medical treatment. VCH-ST clinical staff works closely with VCH-W's Forensic Nursing program which is located on the St. Joseph campus. This program works collaboratively with all victims of sexual assault by providing immediate medical care, forensic examinations, advocacy, patient follow-up and assistance with criminal justice services in an ethical and compassionate manner. These forensic nurses provide care to approximately 350 patients per year. While the majority are victims of sexual assault, they also work with victims of child abuse, domestic violence, elder abuse, human trafficking and any other violence-related injuries.

Treatment for Life-Threatening Diseases

Goal: To improve the patients' understanding on how best to manage their diseases in order to avoid re-hospitalization.

Patients who are admitted through the Emergency Department because of a life-threatening disease which is not being treated by a physician are counseled about the importance of having a medical home so that their chronic and life-threatening diseases can be monitored and treated on a consistent basis. The patient and/or their caregiver is strongly encouraged to work with VCH-ST's case management department to find a physician willing to provide long-term care for the patient prior to dismissal to avoid costly ED visits and/or re-hospitalizations.

Counseling/Mental Health Services

Goal: To work with the community in finding better ways to identify, treat and keep safe people diagnosed with mental health illness or are in crisis

According to the Kansas Health Institute, budget cuts to the state's mental health system have been devastating. The Association of Community Mental Health Centers of Kansas, which is comprised of 26 community mental health centers issued a statement about the \$30 million in funding cuts that it says its members have suffered in the past 12 months. VCH-ST has also been impacted as the waiting time to get people admitted into the state hospitals for treatment has turned into days.

VCH-ST has a specially equipped Emergency Department unit designed to protect patients who are brought in by law enforcement, families or friends who are having a behavioral health crisis. Once the patient is stabilized, VCH-ST staff work with COMCARE to get the person evaluated and processed for appropriate care. In addition, VCH-ST is working in tandem with other VCH-W and behavioral health center to develop a long-term strategic plan in dealing with this population.

Needs That Will Not Be Addressed

Preparing Young People for the Workforce – VCH-ST does offer some volunteer opportunities for youth but has limited resources to work with youth in preparing them to join the workforce. VCH-W does sponsor

the St. Gianni Academy which is a competitive high school program for junior and senior students attending Bishop Carroll and Kapaun/Mt Carmel High Schools who intend to be pre-med majors in college. These students do receive credit for their work in the Academy as they learn about the various health care professions that are available to them after completing college and start looking for a health care career.

Tutoring for Children/Youth at Risk of Failure – VCH-ST does participate on a community committee that deals with this issue but isn't directly involved in tutoring children.

To see complete Community Health Needs Assessment go to:

https://www.viachristi.org/sites/default/files/pdf/about_us/2013_Community_Needs%20Assessment_Vol.%2002.pdf