



Community Health Implementation Strategy

2018-2021

Communities We Serve



**Ascension
Good Samaritan
Hospital**

601 South Center Avenue
Merrill, Wisconsin 54452



**Ascension
Sacred Heart
Hospital**

401 West Mohawk Drive
Tomahawk, Wisconsin 54487

Ascension Sacred Heart Hospital and Ascension Good Samaritan Hospital Community Health Improvement Implementation Strategy

Introduction

Ascension Good Samaritan Hospital and Ascension Sacred Heart Hospital are part of Ascension. In Wisconsin, Ascension (ascension.org/wisconsin) operates 23 hospitals and hundreds of related healthcare facilities that together employ more than 19,600 associates. Serving Wisconsin for 170 years, Ascension is a faith-based healthcare organization committed to delivering compassionate, personalized care to all, with special attention to persons living in poverty and those most vulnerable. Ascension is the largest non-profit health system in the U.S. and the world's largest Catholic health system, operating 2,600 sites of care – including 153 hospitals and more than 50 senior living facilities – in 22 states and the District of Columbia. Ascension is continuing the rich and long tradition of addressing the health of the community, following in the footsteps of legacy Ministry Health Care.

Ascension Good Samaritan and Ascension Sacred Heart conducted a community health needs assessment (CHNA) in Summer and Fall 2017. Data was gathered from multiple sources to assess the health needs of Lincoln County. This data was presented to a group of community stakeholders who recommended several health priorities to be addressed for the 2018-2021 Implementation Strategy.

Prioritized Significant Health Needs

Based on the data presented, the prioritization process of the community stakeholders and the Healthy People Lincoln County Partnership, the following priorities were selected:

- Nutrition
- Oral Health
- Mental Health
- Alcohol and Other Drug Use / Substance Abuse

Significant Health Needs Not Included in this Plan

In addition to the four health issues selected as top priorities, stakeholders identified several other significant health issues in Lincoln County. The following two health issues were not selected to be included in this plan for the reasons described below.

- **Social Determinants of Health** – The Healthy People Lincoln County Partnership determined that social determinants of health are cross-cutting and will be a component of all four prioritized health needs.
- **Chronic Disease Prevention and Management** – The Healthy People Lincoln County Partnership determined that chronic disease is a cross-cutting issue and will be a component of all four prioritized health needs.

Implementation Strategy

The Ascension Sacred Heart and Ascension Good Samaritan implementation strategy is part of a broad community effort to address the priority health needs in the community. Under the umbrella of the Healthy People Lincoln County Coalition, representatives from both hospitals actively participate on the three health priority coalitions: Nutrition Coalition, Oral Health Coalition and Mental Health Coalition (which is merging with the AODA Coalition).

This implementation strategy outlines the actions Ascension Sacred Heart and Ascension Good Samaritan will take to address the local health needs. (Note: A summary of implementation strategies for each hospital is included in the addendum.) As noted below, many of these strategies will be implemented collaboratively. 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.

NUTRITION

Goal: Increase access to and consumption of healthy foods.

Long-term Performance Indicators:

- By June 30, 2023, decrease the percent of Lincoln County high school students who did not eat vegetables in the past 7 days from 12.4 percent to 10.0 percent. (*Source: Youth Risk Behavior Survey*)
- By June 30, 2023, decrease the percent of Lincoln County high school students who did not eat fruit in the past 7 days from 8.3 percent to 6.0 percent. (*Source: Youth Risk Behavior Survey*)
- By June 30, 2023, decrease the percent of Lincoln County residents who have food insecurity from 11 percent (2015) to 10 percent. (*Source: Map the Meal Gap project; available on the County Health Rankings and Roadmaps website*)

The Lincoln County Nutrition Coalition formed in 2012 when nutrition and healthy foods were identified as a top health priority in the county. The coalition is facilitated by Ascension Good Samaritan, Ascension Sacred Heart, UW- Extension Lincoln County and the Lincoln County Health Department. Coalition partners include: Marshfield Clinic Merrill, Merrill Area Public Schools, Ascension Medical Group of Tomahawk, Dave's County Market, Nelson's County Market, Allied Health Chiropractic, Aging and Disability Resource Center, Bridge Community Dental Clinic, Russ Davis Wholesale, Church Mutual, Parkside Preschool Merrill, Heartland Cooperative Services Merrill and community members.

Strategy 1: Ascension Sacred Heart and Ascension Good Samaritan – Access to Healthy Foods

Ascension Sacred Heart and Ascension Good Samaritan will work with their partners to increase access to healthy foods.

Medium-Term Indicators

- By June 30, 2021, increase the number of people redeeming Ascension Good Samaritan coupons/vouchers at the farmer's market from 25 percent of coupon recipients (FY17) to 50 percent. (*Source: Merrill Farmer's Market*)
- By June 30, 2021, increase the dollars that Ascension Sacred Heart matches for electronic benefit transfer (EBT) users, from \$91 to \$400 (with Ascension Sacred Heart matching EBT expenditures of \$4 or more at a dollar-for-dollar-for dollar match). (*Source: Tomahawk Main Street*)

As part of the coalition, **Ascension Sacred Heart and Ascension Good Samaritan will:**

- Pursue funding to increase access to nutritious foods at school (e.g., farm-to-school)
- Promote access to affordable, healthy food options (e.g., coupons for farmer's market or grocery stores)
- Contribute to the development of a food access resource (e.g., brochure)

Ascension Sacred Heart will:

- Provide financial contributions to support healthy eating (e.g., for a community garden or electronic benefit transfer (EBT) availability at the farmer's market)

Ascension Good Samaritan will:

- Provide food pantries and low-income populations with fresh produce from community gardens
- Provide financial contributions for community garden
- Provide financial contributions for electronic benefit transfer (EBT) options at area farmers markets
- Provide financial contribution for hydroponic gardening at school
- Conduct and respond to nutrition assessments through its pilot Community Care Paramedic Program

Collaborative Partners:

- Lincoln County Nutrition Coalition
- Lincoln County Health Department
- Tomahawk area farmer's market
- Merrill area farmer's market
- Food pantries

Resources (Ascension Sacred Heart and Ascension Good Samaritan):

- Clinic and hospital associate time
- Printing of marketing materials
- Financial support

Strategy 2: Ascension Sacred Heart and Ascension Good Samaritan – Nutrition Education

Ascension Sacred Heart and Ascension Good Samaritan will work with their partners to promote healthy eating.

Medium-Term Indicators:

- By June 30, 2021, maintain at 90 percent, the percent of educational programming participants who report an increase in knowledge of preparing healthy nutritional food.

As part of the coalition, **Ascension Sacred Heart and Ascension Good Samaritan will:**

- Provide education to school administration regarding the benefits of healthy school snacks
- Conduct healthy cooking demonstrations
- Implement healthy nutrition education messages in patient visits (e.g., promoting breastfeeding, 5-2-1-0, fruit and vegetable prescriptions, displays)

Collaborative Partners:

- Lincoln County Nutrition Coalition
- Lincoln County Health Department
- UW-Extension Nutrition Education Department
- Facilities and programs that serve individuals with low income or who are vulnerable (e.g., Head Start, subsidized housing)

Resources (Ascension Sacred Heart and Ascension Good Samaritan):

- Clinic and hospital associate time
- Program materials (e.g., printing)
- Funding of appliances for demonstrations

Strategy 3: Ascension Sacred Heart and Ascension Good Samaritan – Policy/System/Environmental Change

Ascension Sacred Heart and Ascension Good Samaritan will participate in several community initiatives to promote the development and implementation of policies and environmental changes to increase nutrition awareness and promote nutritious choices.

Medium-Term Indicators:

- By June 30, 2021, at least two healthy meetings / snacks policies will be implemented (one in the Merrill area and one in the Tomahawk area).
- By June 30, 2021, at least one retailer / organization will have a process for transitioning unused but discarded food to individuals with low income (or the agencies that serve them). (Ascension Good Samaritan).

Ascension Sacred Heart will:

- Advocate for healthy meetings / snacks policies
- Support day care sites and pre-schools in improved nutrition (e.g., 5-2-1-0 program)

Ascension Good Samaritan will:

- Advocate for healthy meetings / snacks policies
- Develop a system to redistribute unused but discarded food to individuals with low income

Collaborative Partners:

- Lincoln County Nutrition Coalition
- Local agencies/organizations/businesses
- Facilities and programs that serve individuals with low income or who are vulnerable (e.g., Head Start, subsidized housing)

Resources (Ascension Sacred Heart and Ascension Good Samaritan):

- Clinic and hospital associate time
- Program materials (e.g., printing)

ORAL HEALTH

Goal: Increase good oral healthcare practices and access to oral health services.

Long-Term Performance Indicators:

- By June 30, 2023, decrease the percent of Lincoln County residents who did not have a dental visit in the past year from 49 percent (2012, 2014, 2015) to 47 percent. (*Source: Wisconsin Family Health Survey, available on the County Health Rankings and Roadmaps website*)
- By June 30, 2023, increase the number of Lincoln County 2nd and 6th graders who participate in the Seal-a-Smile program from 99 (2017-18) to 120. (*Source: Lincoln County Health Department Seal-a-Smile program*)
- By June 30, 2023, decrease the annual number of oral health-related Emergency Department/Urgent Care visits.
 - Decrease Ascension Good Samaritan rates by 10 percent, from 120 (FY18) to 108.
 - Decrease Ascension Sacred Heart rates by 10 percent, from 60 (FY18) to 54.

The efforts below are conducted in collaboration with multiple community partners through the Lincoln County Oral Health Coalition, which formed in 2012 after oral health was identified as a priority health issue. In addition to the hospitals, coalition members include: Oak Park Dental, First Impression Dental, Bridge Community Dental Clinic, Pine River School for Young Learners, and the Lincoln County Health Department. The coalition continually works to expand its membership to include the for-profit dental clinic sector.

Strategy 1: Ascension Sacred Heart and Ascension Good Samaritan – Increase Access to Oral Health Services

Ascension Sacred Heart and Ascension Good Samaritan will participate in several community initiatives and campaigns to increase adults' awareness of good oral hygiene practices.

As part of the coalition, **Ascension Sacred Heart and Ascension Good Samaritan will:**

- Increase the accessibility of dental care in Merrill and Tomahawk (e.g., address barriers of time and fear, consider expanded service hours)
- Update and distribute a guide for oral/dental health resources that are available in Lincoln County
- Continue/expand dental Seal-a-Smile program to Lincoln County Elementary and Middle Schools through financial contributions

Ascension Good Samaritan will:

- Provide a Tooth Fairy Fund for oral health emergency room visits
- Assess the feasibility of an oral health 'Medical Mission at Home' event and, if feasible, plan for implementation
- Provide financial support for printed materials and educational opportunities where needed

Medium-Term Indicator:

- By June 30, 2021, increase the number of for-profit dental clinics actively participating in the Oral Health Coalition from two to four. (*Source: Lincoln County Oral Health Coalition*)
- By June 30, 2021, increase the percent of 2nd and 6th graders who have returned the sealant permission form who participate in the sealant program:
 - Increase Merrill rates from 32 percent (2017-18) to 40 percent (2021)
 - Increase Tomahawk rates from 13 percent (2017-2018) to 50 percent (2021).
(*Source: Lincoln County Health Department*)
- By June 30, 2021, increase the percent of Lincoln County 2nd and 6th graders who have returned the sealant permission form who already have their teeth sealed. (Baseline to be established in 2018-19). (*Source: Lincoln County Health Department*)

Collaborative Partners:

- Lincoln County Oral Health Coalition
- Health Department
- Merrill Area Public Schools
- Tomahawk School District
- Bridge Community Dental Clinic (non-profit, private)
- Oak Park Dental Clinic (for-profit, private)
- First Impressions Kid Dental Clinic (for-profit, private)

Resources (Ascension Sacred Heart and Ascension Good Samaritan):

- Associate time
- Funding for Tooth Fairy Fund and the sealant program (Ascension Good Samaritan only)

Strategy 2: Ascension Sacred Heart and Ascension Good Samaritan – Increase Oral Health Awareness and Education

Ascension Sacred Heart and Ascension Good Samaritan will engage in several initiatives to promote oral health education and provide dental supplies to children and adults within Lincoln County.

As part of the coalition, Ascension Sacred Heart and Ascension Good Samaritan will:

- Continue oral health education campaigns for Lincoln County school-age children (example: Sugar Out Day)
- Continue an oral health education campaign for adults in the community
- Utilize oral health displays to promote good oral hygiene at community events/organizations/worksites (example: at cooking demonstrations)
- Provide oral health information (e.g., displays) in clinical settings

Medium-Term Indicators:

- By June 30, 2021, 100 percent of elementary schools in Lincoln County who want to hold a Sugar Out Day have received Sugar Out Day education in the past two years (at least once every two years / every other year / two-year rotation). (*Source: Ascension Sacred Heart and Ascension Good Samaritan*)

- By June 30, 2021, 95 percent of Sugar Out Day participants will increase their oral health knowledge (based on pre- and post-test). (*Source: Ascension Sacred Heart and Ascension Good Samaritan*)

Collaborative Partners:

- Lincoln County Oral Health Coalition
- Health Department
- Ascension Good Samaritan Hospital
- Ascension Sacred Heart Hospital
- Bridge Community Dental Clinic
- Oak Park Dental
- Aspirus Medical Clinic
- Ascension Medical Group
- Marshfield Medical Clinic
- Merrill Area Public Schools
- Tomahawk Elementary School

Resources (Ascension Sacred Heart and Ascension Good Samaritan):

- Associate time
- Funding for displays, educational materials, billboards, etc.

MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Given the intersection between mental health and substance abuse, Lincoln County's efforts around those two health priorities will be coordinated by one coalition. Ascension Wisconsin associates are active participants in the coalition.

GOAL: Increase mental health (wellness) and substance abuse prevention, awareness and services.

Long-Term Performance Indicators:

- By June 30, 2023, decrease the average number of mentally unhealthy days reported in the past 30 days from 3.5 (2016) to 3.3. (*Source: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, available on County Health Rankings and Roadmaps website.*)
- By June 30, 2023, decrease the percent of Lincoln County high school students who report feeling so sad or hopeless almost every day for two or more weeks in a row that they stopped doing some of their usual activities in the last year, from 34.1 percent (2017) to 27 percent. (*Source: Lincoln County Youth Risk Behavior Survey*)
- By June 30, 2023, decrease the rate of deaths related to alcohol and other substances (per 100,000 population) from 269.8 (2017) to 250.0 (2023). (*Source: Wisconsin Public Health Profile*)

The Lincoln County Mental Health Coalition began in 2012 after mental health was identified as a top health priority in the county. Coalition members include: Ascension Good Samaritan Hospital, Ascension Sacred Heart Hospital, UW-Extension Lincoln County, Marshfield Medical Clinic Merrill, Merrill Area Public Schools, North Central Health Care, Medical College of Wisconsin, HAVEN (domestic abuse shelter), Lincoln County Health Department, and Lincoln County Department of Social Services. Coalition partners include: Ascension Medical Group of Merrill, Tomahawk School District, Merrill Police Department, Lincoln County Housing Authority, and Northwoods Veteran Post.

The Lincoln County Drug-Free Coalition began in 2003 to bring multiple community sectors and resources together to reduce the use/abuse of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. The coalition's membership includes: Merrill Area Public Schools, Tomahawk School District, Lincoln County Sheriff's Office, Lincoln County District Attorney, Children's Hospital Community Services, non-profit youth servicing agencies, faith-based organizations, healthcare organizations and many others.

Starting in mid-2018, these two coalitions will merge into one coalition to more effectively use local resources and address the intertwined issues of mental health and substance abuse.

Strategy 1: Ascension Sacred Heart and Ascension Good Samaritan – Increase Preventative Education and Outreach that Strengthens Families, Builds Coping Skills and Increases Resiliency

Ascension Sacred Heart and Ascension Good Samaritan will increase mental health awareness, knowledge and skills of families, community members and community professionals.

Medium-Term Performance Indicators:

- By June 30, 2021, 80 percent of training participants will report increased knowledge of mental health prevention and/or intervention strategies.
- By June 30, 2021, increase the percent of Lincoln County students who believe there is moderate to great risk in using alcohol from 44 percent (2016) to 48 percent. (*Source: Social Norms Survey*)
- By June 30, 2021, decrease the percent of students who used an electronic vapor product at least one day in the past 30 days from 23 percent (2016) to 21 percent (*Source: Social Norms Survey*)

As part of the coalition, **Ascension Sacred Heart and Ascension Good Samaritan will:**

- Implement public awareness campaigns (e.g., Hopeline, parent tips, kNOw Meth, adverse childhood experiences [ACEs])
- Provide community presentations, town hall events and summits about mental health and substance abuse, as well as distribute posters, cards, and related visual materials
- Provide evidence-based trainings to increase skills of residents, coalition members and professionals (e.g., QPR, Mental Health First Aid, Memphis Crisis Intervention Team [CIT] training)
- Provide school administrators and counselors with evidence-based strategies and resources to support preventative education related to mental health and substance abuse
- Explore opportunities to educate school boards on the community needs and efforts of the coalition

Ascension Good Samaritan will:

- Conduct depression screenings through its pilot Community Care Paramedic Program and provide appropriate referrals and resources

Collaborative Partners:

- Lincoln County Mental Health/AODA Coalition
- Health Department
- UW-Extension
- Merrill Area Public Schools
- Tomahawk Public Schools
- Northwoods Veterans Auxiliary
- T.B. Scott Free Library
- AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin
- HAVEN
- Merrill Fire Department, EMS Division
- Other healthcare partners (for referrals to primary care)

Resources (Ascension Sacred Heart and Ascension Good Samaritan):

- Clinic and hospital associate time
- Training materials
- Financial and in-kind support

Strategy 2: Ascension Sacred Heart and Ascension Good Samaritan – Become a Community that Supports Recovery

Ascension Sacred Heart and Ascension Good Samaritan will work with their community partners to strengthen recovery opportunities in the community.

Medium-Term Performance Indicators:

- By June 30, 2021, the recovery coach infrastructure is in place (e.g., referral sources, identify several coaches, etc.).

As part of the coalition, **Ascension Sacred Heart and Ascension Good Samaritan** will:

- Assist in recruiting and training at least two recovery coaches
- Provide education/information on the role of recovery coaches in the community
- Collaborate with partners to develop a system for accessing recovery coach services
- Work to expand the number and type of substance abuse and mental health support groups available (and then promote those groups)
- Meet with elected officials and legislators and/or involve them in local events to discuss emerging mental health and substance abuse issues and needed policy changes

Collaborative Partners:

- Lincoln County Mental Health/AODA Coalition
- HAVEN
- North Central Health Care
- Lincoln County Jail
- Social Services
- Health Department
- National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)

Resources (Ascension Sacred Heart and Ascension Good Samaritan):

- Associate time
- Facility/room usage for support groups

In addition to the two formal strategies above, Ascension Sacred Heart and Ascension Good Samaritan will work to address substance abuse and mental health issues in two additional ways:

- Collaborating with community partners to increase access to mental health and substance abuse prevention and treatment services.
- Regularly scanning for opportunities for routine mental health and substance abuse preventive screenings in primary and tertiary care settings. As opportunities are identified, the hospitals will work with internal partners to make system changes to increase routine screening and referrals.

Next Steps

This implementation strategy outlines a three-year community health improvement process. Each year within this timeframe, Ascension Good Samaritan and Ascension Sacred Heart will:

- Participate actively in the Healthy People Lincoln County Coalition
- Create an annual implementation plan with specific action steps 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 hospital boards
- Share actions taken to address the needs with the community at large

Approval

This implementation strategy report was adopted by:

- The Ascension Good Samaritan Hospital Board on July 31, 2018.
- The Ascension Sacred Heart Hospital Board on August 7, 2018.
- The Ascension Wisconsin Board on August 16, 2018.

ADDENDUM
Summary of Strategies by Hospital

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