

# **FY 2020 - 2022 Community Health Implementation Strategy**

**Ascension Seton Medical Center Austin**



**Ascension  
Seton**

## Ascension Seton Medical Center Austin Implementation Strategy

### Implementation Strategy Narrative

#### Overview

Ascension Seton Medical Center Austin is a part of Ascension Seton, formerly known as Seton Family of Hospitals, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, and an affiliate of Ascension Texas and Ascension Health, with a long-standing history of serving Central Texas, not only as a health care provider, but as a leader and advocate for improving the health of the population as a whole.

#### *Ascension's Mission*

*Rooted in the loving ministry of Jesus as healer, we commit ourselves to serving all persons with special attention to those who are poor and vulnerable. Our Catholic health ministry is dedicated to spiritually-centered, holistic care which sustains and improves the health of individuals and communities. We are advocates for a compassionate and just society through our actions and our words.*

#### About Ascension Seton Medical Center Austin

Austin's largest medical/surgical acute care center, Ascension Seton Medical Center Austin offers comprehensive diagnostic and treatment services for both inpatients and outpatients and regional specialty programs including the Ascension Seton Heart Specialty Care and Transplant Center, Ascension Seton Infusion Center and the Marialice Shivers Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. Ascension Seton Medical Center Austin is the only hospital in Central Texas that performs heart transplants and was one of the first two hospitals in Texas to receive certification as a Primary Stroke Center.

Nearly 40 percent of patients at Ascension Seton Medical Center Austin are under or uninsured. In fiscal year 2019, Ascension Seton Medical Center Austin, one of four Ascension Seton campuses hosting residents, had 60 residents and fellows in training in partnership with Dell Medical School at The University of Texas. Ascension Seton Medical Center Austin is one of 12 hospitals in the 11-county Ascension Seton service area.

#### 2019 Community Health Needs Assessment

In December 2017, Austin/Travis County published the Community Health Assessment report (CHA) "Together we Thrive." Ascension Seton was an official partner for the development of the CHA, along with the Austin Transportation Department, the Capital Metropolitan Transit Authority, Central Health, Integral Care, St. David's Foundation, Travis County Health and Human Services, The University of Texas at Austin Dell Medical School and The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston School of Public Health in Austin.

Because Ascension Seton associates actively participated in the creation of the Austin/Travis County CHA, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) allows health care entities to work collaboratively, and the CHA meets the federal legal requirements set forth for the Community Health Needs Assessments, Ascension Seton opted to adopt the Travis County CHA report, as incorporated herein, as the official [Ascension Seton Central Region: Travis County Community Health Needs Assessment](#).

Given the gap in time between the 2017 Austin/Travis County Community Health Assessment (CHA) and the requirements for the 2019 Community Health Needs Assessment, Ascension Seton determined that it

would be valuable to solicit supplemental feedback from Travis County stakeholders and community members in 2018.

Findings from the focus group and community conversations carried out in 2018 are consistent with the top three health concerns identified by the CHA process, which identified the following:

- Access to Healthcare (includes affordability and physical access to care)
- Mental Health (includes access to providers, and treatment for conditions like depression)
- Diabetes and other Chronic Diseases

### **Community Health Implementation Strategy**

Ascension Texas has developed 17 Community Health Implementation Strategies, one for each of its hospitals and joint venture facilities. Each plan identifies the action the hospital, with the support of the Ascension Seton network, plans to take to address the prioritized needs identified in the CHNA of its region.

Since Ascension Seton has multiple sites throughout Travis County, both inpatient and outpatient, some actions described in the Implementation Strategies are not strictly operated by Ascension Seton Medical Center or any other one facility.

Notably, the unique partnership between Ascension Seton, Central Health and Dell Medical School at The University of Texas is the foundation of Ascension Seton's significant strategic investments to transform care delivery in Travis County, improve the health of individuals and address community health needs. The relationship has resulted in the creation of a new healthcare model based on an integrated delivery system with a focus on preventative care and chronic disease management. The three-way partnership, community organizations including Integral Care (the local mental health authority), community clinics and other providers offer care for over 100,000 patients each year.

The various actions included in the Implementation Strategy are not intended to be exhaustive or inclusive of every single Ascension Texas strategy, initiative or program. Instead, the plan highlights the most significant actions that each hospital has undertaken to address the health needs prioritized in the Community Health Needs Assessment, including those strategies that are expected to make the most significant impact on the delivery of health care in the region for the poor and vulnerable.

This Implementation Strategy will address needs identified in the 2019 Ascension Seton Central Region: Travis County Community Health Needs Assessment. Ascension Seton Medical Center Austin is in Travis County.

### **Needs That Will Be Addressed**

Ascension Seton Medical Center Austin will address each of the above needs with at least two measurable goals to show improvement in the noted areas of focus

### **Needs That Will Not Be Addressed**

Ascension Seton Medical Center Austin will address all of the priority needs listed.

## Summary of Implementation Strategy

### Need: Access to Healthcare

**Strategy:** Improve prenatal course of care for women in Ascension Seton Medical Center Austin's service area and beyond, with a focus on mental and behavioral health.

- Care is fragmented for women seeking care (e.g., mental and behavioral health, prenatal care, social needs), especially for those at-risk or economically vulnerable.
- The target population is women of child-bearing age, particularly those who are at-risk for complex deliveries (e.g. patients with addictions and other mental and behavioral health needs).
- Disparities in timely prenatal care access exist between different race and ethnic groups, and generally, timely access to prenatal care has plateaued since 2011. Late entry into prenatal care is a statewide problem (2018 Healthy Texas Mothers & Babies Data Book).

### Resources and Collaboration:

- The hospital will collaborate with network providers of mental and behavioral health care to connect at-risk patients to social and health services.
- The hospital will collaborate with Dell Medical School at The University of Texas on case management and links to community-based services.
- The hospital will collaborate with Dell Children's Medical Center, which is opening a new program to support mothers (and families) giving birth to babies with congenital heart conditions, allowing for integrated and coordinated care for high-risk deliveries.
- Dell Children's Medical Center - Physicians, staff and program development, particularly regarding pediatric congenital heart conditions.
- Dell Medical School at The University of Texas – Affiliation allows for coordination of medical service delivery, and collaboration on research and medical residency programs.
- Ascension Seton Shoal Creek and other providers of mental and behavioral health care – Physicians and programs to be coordinated to allow for earlier diagnosis and treatment of conditions that affect healthy deliveries (e.g., opioid addiction).
- Methodone clinics, nonprofit organizations and community clinics – Care providers from Ascension Seton Medical Center and clinics referring patients to and from each other's services.

### Anticipated Impact:

- Increase number of pregnant women receiving treatment for diagnosed mental and behavioral health needs using FY20 to establish baseline and FY21-22 to increase number of women served.
- Reduce number of high-risk deliveries at Ascension Seton Medical Center Austin due to mental and behavioral health conditions, targeting addiction, using FY20 to establish baseline and FY21-22 to increase impact.

**Strategy:** Provide continuum of care for diagnosis through treatment for breast care, including those who are least likely to receive services.

- The target population is women, particularly those from low-income areas with limited access to education and services around breast health.
- 90 percent of women served at the breast surgery clinic are low-income or under or uninsured.
- Leaders from across the continuum of care for breast care – from education to screenings to navigation to treatments – recognized the need to offer services and provide solutions with a patient-centered focus.

**Resources and Collaboration:**

- Ascension Seton Medical Center Austin dedicates the time of clinicians, educators, social workers, navigators and administrative leaders, and provides financial resources and supplies.
- The Ascension Texas network, including revenue cycle management (R1), the Seton Fund for financial resources and physicians from Ascension Medical Group. Dell Medical School at The University of Texas – Affiliation allows for coordination of medical service delivery, and collaboration on research and medical residency programs.
- Private and community-based organizations including Kendra Scott and the Finn Foundation.
- Ascension Seton and Dell Medical School at The University of Texas affiliation allows for coordination of service delivery and collaboration.

**Anticipated Impact:**

- Engage with at least 100 new community members each year with education, outreach and screening around breast care health.
- Maintain or improve retention of 540 women in the continuum of care receiving navigation services who make and attend medical appointments and complete appointments associated with their diagnosis or treatment plan.
- Expand from 576 to 720 the number of women receiving mammogram screenings per month through these outreach and education efforts.

**Need: Mental Health**

**Strategy:** Create a behavioral health consortium, comprised of hospital leaders and mental and behavioral health clinicians, to provide a forum to identify site-specific needs around access to mental and behavioral health services, and consider and implement best practices that improve delivery of care to a wider variety of patients both in and outside hospitals.

- Clinicians and hospital leaders have a growing desire to deliver appropriate levels of mental and behavioral health care when and where they are needed.
- Partnership between Ascension Texas and Dell Medical School and the role clinicians play in developing the entire continuum of care for brain health as part of the Austin State Hospital redesign provides context for creation of the consortium.
- Concerns about patient, associate and clinician safety have been increasing.

**Resources and Collaboration:**

- Ascension Seton Shoal Creek and DePaul will provide time of clinicians, resource navigators and administrative leaders in partnership with Ascension Medical Group.
- As a partner with Ascension Texas, Dell Medical School will also provide staff and faculty time and resources to this initiative.
- Hospitals in the Ascension Texas network will provide time of clinicians and administrative leaders.
- Ascension Texas and Dell Medical School at The University of Texas, including the Network Clinical Care Councils (NC3) and Behavioral Health Strategy Group.
- Community organizations providing mental and health care services, including the local mental health authority.

**Anticipated Impact:**

- Expansion of coordinated continuum of care for mental and behavioral health services as measured by implementation of consortium-developed site-specific strategies.
- Metrics of the impact of specific strategies agreed upon by the consortium to be developed by July 1, 2020.

**Strategy:** Provide treatment, care coordination and support groups for adults with one or more chronic conditions (including diabetes, heart disease, HIV-AIDS, brain health/stroke, cancer).

- The target population for these programs are primarily low-income uninsured and under-insured individuals who have one or more chronic health conditions.
- Recognizing the need for ongoing support for persons with chronic disease, a number of support groups are hosted and led by leaders from multiple disciplines, including clinicians, educators, navigators and chaplains.

**Resources and Collaboration:**

- Ascension Seton Medical Center Austin provides time of clinicians, residents, chaplains and administrative leaders.
- As a partner with Ascension Seton, Dell Medical School also provides staff and faculty time and resources to this initiative.
- Ascension Seton Medical Center Austin will collaborate with community and other clinics that refer patients to care and support groups.

**Anticipated Impact:**

- Improved self-care practices for patients and community members with chronic conditions as reported to care providers, with baselines to be established in FY20.
- Improved outreach with community partners to increase awareness of and participation in support groups, with baselines to be established in FY20.

## Prioritized Need #1: Access to Healthcare

**GOAL:** Improve access to care for vulnerable populations

### Action Plan

**STRATEGY 1:** Improve prenatal course of care for women in Ascension Seton Medical Center Austin's service area and beyond, with a focus on mental and behavioral health.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

- Care is fragmented for women seeking care (e.g., mental and behavioral health, prenatal care, social needs), especially for those at-risk or economically vulnerable.
- The target population is women of child-bearing age, particularly those who are at-risk for complex deliveries (e.g. patients with addictions and other mental and behavioral health needs).
- Disparities in timely prenatal care access exist between different race and ethnic groups, and generally, timely access to prenatal care has plateaued since 2011. Late entry into prenatal care is a statewide problem (2018 Healthy Texas Mothers & Babies Data Book).

#### RESOURCES:

- Ascension Seton Medical Center Austin will collaborate with network providers of mental and behavioral health care to connect at-risk patients to social and health services.
- Ascension Seton Medical Center Austin will collaborate with Dell Medical School at The University of Texas on case management and links to community-based services.
- Ascension Seton Medical Center Austin will collaborate with Dell Children's Medical Center, which is opening a new program to support mothers (and families) giving birth to babies with congenital heart conditions, allowing for integrated and coordinated care for high-risk deliveries.

#### COLLABORATION:

- Dell Children's Medical Center - Physicians, staff and program development, particularly regarding pediatric congenital heart conditions.
- Dell Medical School at The University of Texas – Affiliation allows for coordination of medical service delivery, and collaboration on research and medical residency programs among many benefits.
- Ascension Seton Shoal Creek and other providers of mental and behavioral health care – Physicians and programs to be coordinated to allow for earlier diagnosis and treatment of conditions that affect healthy deliveries (e.g., opioid addiction).
- Methadone clinics, nonprofit organizations and community clinics – Care providers from Ascension Seton Medical Center Austin and clinics referring patients to and from each other's services.

#### ACTIONS:

1. Train leaders at Ascension Seton Medical Center Austin and partner organizations on opioid addiction and work with partners to create awareness about addition and treatment.
2. Review existing outreach efforts in FY20 and consider addition of clinical navigation services for women seeking prenatal care services from multiple providers.
3. Create formal agreements with methadone and other clinics for medication management and behavioral health for pregnant women or those considering pregnancy.



**STRATEGY 1:** Improve prenatal course of care for women in Ascension Seton Medical Center Austin’s service area and beyond, with a focus on mental and behavioral health.

4. As care for pediatric heart conditions expands into delivery services at Dell Children’s Medical Center, create awareness and training of continuum of services available for high-risk deliveries.
5. Host events like community baby showers to offer networking opportunities and strengthen support networks.

**ANTICIPATED IMPACT:**

- I. Increase number of pregnant women receiving treatment for diagnosed mental and behavioral health needs using FY20 to establish baseline and FY21-22 to increase number of women served.
- II. Reduce number of high-risk deliveries at Ascension Seton Medical Center Austin due to mental and behavioral health conditions, targeting addiction, using FY20 to establish baseline and FY21-22 to increase impact.

**STRATEGY 2:** Provide continuum of care for diagnosis through treatment for breast care, including those who are least likely to receive services.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

- The target population is women, particularly those from low-income areas with limited access to education and services around breast health.
- 90 percent of women served at the breast surgery clinic are low-income or under or uninsured.
- Leaders from across the continuum of care for breast care – from education to screenings to navigation to treatments – recognized the need to offer services and provide solutions with a patient-centered focus.

**RESOURCES:**

- Ascension Seton Medical Center Austin dedicates the time of clinicians, educators, social workers, navigators and administrative leaders, and also provides financial resources and supplies.
- The Ascension Texas network, including revenue cycle management (R1), the Seton Fund for financial resources and physicians from Ascension Medical Group.

**COLLABORATION:**

- Private and community-based organizations including Kendra Scott and the Finn Foundation.
- Seton and Dell Medical School at The University of Texas affiliation allows for coordination of service delivery and collaboration.

**ACTIONS:**

1. Host “Squeeze the Day” event(s) with Kendra Scott, offering education on breast self-checks and breast cancer by nurses.
2. Host “Oncology in Action” Breast Health Symposium regularly to facilitate awareness of breast care and cancer, and connect community members to resources for diagnosis, care, treatment.



**STRATEGY 2:** Provide continuum of care for diagnosis through treatment for breast care, including those who are least likely to receive services.

3. Identify low-income and uninsured community members who need breast screenings and connect them to financial resources (e.g., grants from Finn).
4. Navigate women who have received an abnormal result from breast screening through the process of further testing, imaging, treatment and surgical services.

**ANTICIPATED IMPACT:**

- I. Engage with at least 100 new community members each year with education, outreach and screening around breast care health.
- II. Maintain or improve retention 540 women in the continuum of care receiving navigation services who make and attend medical appointments and complete appointments associated with their diagnosis or treatment plan.
- III. Expand from 576 to 720 the number of women receiving mammogram screenings per month through these outreach and education efforts.

**Alignment with Local, State & National Priorities**

OBJECTIVE:	LOCAL / COMMUNITY PLAN:	STATE PLAN:	HEALTHY PEOPLE 2020:
Strategy 1: I and II, Strategy 2: I - III	Austin/Travis County 2018 Community Health Improvement Plan Goal 1: Every Travis County resident has access to culturally sensitive, affordable, equitable, and comprehensive healthcare.	Department of State Health Services Strategic Plan: Goal 1: Improve health through prevention and population-health strategies.	Healthy People 2020 AHS-6 Reduce the proportion of persons who are unable to obtain or delay in obtaining necessary medical care.

## Prioritized Need #2: Mental and Behavioral Care

**GOAL:** Improve coordination and provision of mental and behavioral care and safety of patients, community and clinicians

### Action Plan

**STRATEGY 1:** Create a behavioral health consortium, comprised of hospital leaders and mental and behavioral health clinicians, to provide a forum to identify site-specific needs around access to mental and behavioral health services, and consider and implement best practices that improve delivery of care to a wider variety of patients both in and outside hospitals.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

- Clinicians and hospital leaders have a growing desire to deliver appropriate levels of mental and behavioral health care when and where they are needed.
- Partnership between Ascension Texas and Dell Medical School and the role clinicians play in developing the entire continuum of care for brain health as part of the Austin State Hospital redesign provides context for creation of the consortium.
- Concerns about patient, associate and clinician safety have been increasing.

#### RESOURCES:

- Ascension Seton Shoal Creek and DePaul will provide time of clinicians, resource navigators and administrative leaders in partnership with Ascension Medical Group.
- As a partner with Ascension Texas, Dell Medical School will also provide staff and faculty time and resources to this initiative.
- Hospitals in the Ascension Texas network will provide time of clinicians and administrative leaders.

#### COLLABORATION:

- Ascension Texas and Dell Medical School at The University of Texas, including the Network Clinical Care Councils (NC3) and Behavioral Health Strategy Group.
- Community organizations providing mental and health care services, including the local mental health authority.

#### ACTIONS:

1. Leaders at Ascension Seton Shoal Creek and DePaul, in partnership with Dell Medical School faculty, identify leaders and convene the consortium by March 2020.
2. By July 1, 2020, consortium creates charter and goals and establishes timeline for implementation.
3. By January 2021, consortium has implemented strategies in at least three Ascension Texas sites to improve coordination, provision of care and/or safety of patients, community and/or clinicians.
4. By July 2021, consortium evaluates experience of strategies of at least three sites to assess effectiveness and makes recommendations for improvement based on findings.

#### ANTICIPATED IMPACT:

- I. Expansion of coordinated continuum of care for mental and behavioral health services as measured by implementation of consortium-developed site-specific strategies.
- II. Metrics of the impact of specific strategies agreed upon by the consortium to be developed by July 1, 2020.

### Alignment with Local, State & National Priorities

OBJECTIVE:	LOCAL / COMMUNITY PLAN:	STATE PLAN:	HEALTHY PEOPLE 2020:
I and II	Austin/Travis County 2018 Community Health Improvement Plan Goal 4: Advance mental wellness, recovery and resilience through equitable access to responsive, holistic, and integrated community healthcare systems.	Department of State Health Services Strategic Plan: Goal 1: Improve health through prevention and population-health strategies.	Healthy People 2020 MHMD-9 Increase the proportion of adults with mental health disorders who receive treatment.

## Prioritized Need #3: Chronic Disease

**GOAL:** Improve coordination of care for adults with one or more chronic conditions.

### Action Plan

**STRATEGY 1:** Provide treatment, care coordination and support for adults with one or more chronic conditions (including diabetes, heart disease, asthma, HIV-AIDS, cancer).

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

- The target population for these programs are primarily low-income uninsured and under-insured individuals who have one or more chronic health conditions.
- Recognizing the need for ongoing support for persons with chronic disease, a number of support groups are hosted and led by leaders from multiple disciplines, including clinicians, educators, navigators and chaplains.

#### RESOURCES:

- Ascension Seton Medical Center Austin provides time of clinicians, residents, chaplains and administrative leaders.
- As a partner with Ascension Seton, Dell Medical School also provides staff and faculty time and resources to this initiative.

#### COLLABORATION:

- Ascension Seton Medical Center Austin will collaborate with the community and other clinics that refer patients to care and support groups.
- Ascension Seton Medical Center Austin will collaborate with Dell Medical School faculty and staff.

#### ACTIONS:

1. Develop chronic care management plans for patients.
2. Provide education, coaching, navigation (for certain conditions) and support groups regarding optimal self-care and referrals, if available, to community resources.

#### ANTICIPATED IMPACT:

- I. Improved self-care practices for patients and community members with chronic conditions as reported to care providers, with baselines to be established in FY20.
- II. Improved outreach with community partners to increase awareness of and participation in support groups, with baselines to be established in FY20.

### Alignment with Local, State & National Priorities

OBJECTIVE:	LOCAL / COMMUNITY PLAN:	STATE PLAN:	HEALTHY PEOPLE 2020:
I and II	Austin/Travis County 2018 Community Health Improvement Plan Goal 2: Prevent and reduce the occurrence and severity of chronic disease through collaborative approaches to health that create environments that support, protect, and improve the well-being of all communities.	Department of State Health Services Strategic Plan: Goal 1: Improve health through prevention and population-health strategies.	Healthy People 2020 HRQOL/WB-1 Increase the proportion of adults who self-report good or better health.

#### Approval

Prepared by Ascension Seton. Formally recommended and approved by the Ascension Seton Board of Directors on October 23, 2019 and thereafter approved and adopted by the Ascension Texas Board of Directors on October 23, 2019.