



# Ascension Wisconsin Community Health Improvement Plan

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2019-2022

## Ascension SE Wisconsin Hospital - Elmbrook Campus

### Community Health Improvement Plan – Implementation Strategy

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#### Introduction

Ascension Elmbrook is part of Ascension Wisconsin. Ascension Wisconsin ([ascension.org/wisconsin](https://ascension.org/wisconsin)) operates 24 hospital campuses, more than 100 related healthcare facilities and employs more than 1,300 primary and specialty care clinicians from Racine to Eagle River. Serving Wisconsin since 1848, 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. As one of the leading non-profit and Catholic health systems in the U.S., Ascension operates 2,600 sites of care – including 151 hospitals and more than 50 senior living facilities – in 21 states and the District of Columbia.

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#### Prioritized Significant Health Needs

Ascension Elmbrook conducted a community health needs assessment (CHNA) in 2017-2018. Based on the data reviewed, community input and the prioritization process, the following priorities were selected:

- Access to Care
  - Health Related Quality of Life for Chronic Disease
  - Mental Health
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#### Implementation Plan

This implementation plan is part of a broad community effort to address the priority health needs in the community and achieve long-term impact. As such, the hospital will collaborate with other key partners in the community. Recognizing that no one organization can affect substantial community change alone, the long-term outcomes identified in this plan can only be achieved as many community organizations work together for collective impact.

## Access to Care

**Goal:** Improve access to health care services for individuals in Waukesha County

**Long-Term Performance Indicator(s):**

- By 2024, decrease the percentage of respondents who report a household member did not take their prescription medication due to cost by 10 percent from 11 percent in 2017 to 9.9 percent.
- By 2024, decrease the percentage of respondents who report delaying/did not seek care due to cost by 10 percent from 17 percent in 2017 to 15.3 percent.
- By 2024, decrease the percentage of respondents who report unmet medical care in the past 12 months by 10 percent from 12 percent in 2017 to 10.8 percent.
- By 2024, decrease the percentage of respondents who report unmet mental health needs in the past 12 months by 10 percent from 3 percent in 2017 to 2.7 percent.

(Source for all indicators: Waukesha County Community Health Survey Report)

## Strategy 1: Financial Assistance

Ascension Elmbrook will assist patients with accessing financial assistance for healthcare costs by actively screening patients to determine if they qualify for Medicaid or other financial assistance programs, including Ascension's Financial Assistance program.

**Ascension Elmbrook will:**

- Assist patients who have financial concerns, especially those who are uninsured and are self-pay, and connect them to financial resources such as Medicaid or Financial Assistance Program
- Provide patients with information and resources about applying to the health insurance Marketplace

**Medium-Term Indicators:**

- By June 30, 2022, at least 90 percent of patients who are uninsured or are self-pay will be screened by a financial advocate to determine if they qualify for Medicaid and/or financial assistance. (Baseline: 90 percent in 2018)
- By June 30, 2022, at least 90 percent of the patients who are eligible for Medicaid will obtain Medicaid. (Baseline: 90 percent in 2018)

(Source for all indicators: R1 RCM, Inc.: Mede analytics)

**Collaborative Partners:**

- R1 RCM, Inc.
- Wisconsin Department of Health Services

**Resources Committed:**

- Staff time
- Ascension's Financial Assistance program funding

**Strategy 2: Transportation Assistance**

Ascension Elmbrook will assist patients with accessing transportation services by actively screening patients to determine if they have transportation barriers and connecting these individuals with local resources, including Ascension's Non-Emergent Transportation program.

**Ascension Elmbrook will:**

- Identify and explore possible methods to document and track transportation barriers
- Review and improve the transportation service referral process
- Provide associates with education and training on the Non-Emergent Transportation program

**Medium-Term Indicator:**

- By June 30, 2022, there will be a 25 percent increase in referrals to the Non-Emergent Transportation program.  
(Baseline: TBD)  
(Source: Ascension Wisconsin Care Management Department)

**Collaborative Partners:**

- Lyft

**Resources Committed:**

- Staff time
- Financial support

**Strategy 3: Prescription Assistance**

Ascension Elmbrook will assist patients who have financial barriers in accessing their prescribed medications through the Pharmacy Assistance Program.

**Ascension Elmbrook will:**

- Screen and identify patients who are eligible for prescription financial assistance programs, including Ascension's Foundation Pharmacy Assistance Program and Ascension's National Pharmaceutical Patient Assistance Program

**Medium-Term Indicator:**

- By June 30, 2022, there will be a 25 percent increase in referrals to Ascension Pharmacy Assistance Programs. (Baseline: TBD)  
(Source: Ascension Wisconsin Care Management Department)

**Resources Committed:**

- Staff time
- Financial support

**Strategy 4: Community Paramedic Program**

Ascension Elmbrook will pilot a Community Paramedic program in collaboration with the Brookfield Fire Department. The program will train paramedics to provide follow-up health care to patients at risk of poor health outcomes.

**Ascension Elmbrook will:**

- Develop policies and protocols for the Community Paramedic Program in partnership with the Brookfield Fire Department
- Provide financial support for Brookfield EMS to attend the UWM Community Paramedic Program

**Medium-Term Indicator:**

- By June 30, 2022, patients who are a part of the Community Paramedic Program will have improved health outcomes as measured by a less than a 10 percent 30-day readmission rate.  
(Baseline: TBD)  
(Source: EPIC)

**Collaborative Partners:**

- Brookfield Fire Department

**Resources Committed:**

- Staff time
- Financial support

## Health-Related Quality of Life for Chronic Disease

**Goal:** Improve health-related quality of life and well-being for all individuals in Waukesha County through chronic disease prevention

### Long-Term Performance Indicator(s):

- By 2024, decrease the percentage of respondents who report having diabetes in the past three years by 10 percent from 12 percent in 2017 to 10.8 percent.
- By 2024, increase the percentage of respondents who report “excellent” for their overall health by 10 percent from 24 percent in 2017 to 26 percent.
- By 2024, increase the percentage of respondents who report “very good” for their overall health by 10 percent from 36 percent in 2017 to 39 percent.
- By 2024, increase the percentage of respondents who report 3+ servings/day vegetable intake by 10 percent from 39 percent in 2017 to 42.9 percent.
- By 2024, decrease the percentage of respondents who reported they did not do any moderate physical activity by 10 percent from 10 percent in 2017 to 9 percent.

(Source for all indicators: Waukesha County Community Health Survey Report)

### Strategy 1: Healthy Eating-Diabetes Management

Offer self-management programs to patients living with type 1 or type 2 diabetes, gestational diabetes, and those diagnosed with pre-diabetes. Sessions led by our certified diabetes instructors cover a host of topics such as preventing complications, monitoring blood glucose at home and guidelines for healthy eating, including tips for dining out.

#### Ascension Elmbrook will:

- Maintain referral pathways for 1:1 and group self-management programs
- Educate the community on healthy eating habits by offering 1:1 and group self-management programs for individuals with diabetes
- Offer support group for patients and community members who are diagnosed with diabetes

#### Medium-Term Indicators:

- By June 30, 2022, 75 percent of self-management group or 1:1 participants will report they have improved their knowledge of nutrition, weight loss, physical activity or lifestyle management as demonstrated by their response on the post-program evaluation survey.
- By June 30, 2022, 50 percent of self-management group or 1:1 participants will report a 0.5 reduction in baseline A1C.

(Source for all indicators: EPIC)

**Resources Committed:**

- Staff time
- Purchase patient education materials

**Strategy 2: Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP)**

Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) is a small-group program that helps people with pre-diabetes eat healthier, increase their physical activity and lose weight, which can delay or even prevent the onset of type 2 diabetes. This program plays a vital role in the national effort to prevent or delay type 2 diabetes and improve the overall health and well-being of participants. Diabetes Prevention Program is a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention-recognized lifestyle change program. Ascension Elmbrook will deliver the program for at least one year, including at least 16 sessions during the first six months and at least six sessions during the last six months.

**Medium-Term Indicators:**

- By June 30, 2022, each year-long cohort in the Diabetes Prevention Program will have achieved an average minimum weight loss of 5 percent of starting body weight.
  - By June 30, 2022, 65 percent of participants in the program will self-report at least 150 minutes of moderate physical activity weekly.
- (Source for all indicators: DAPS)

**Resources Committed:**

- Staff time
- Funding for educational materials
- Printing of educational materials
- Meeting space

**Strategy 3: Community Garden**

In collaboration with community partners, Ascension Elmbrook will establish a community garden. The produce from the community garden will be donated to local community agencies or food pantries.

**Ascension Elmbrook will:**

- Establish a committee to plan for the creation of a community garden on the Ascension Elmbrook campus
- Identify potential community partners to help cultivate the community garden
- Create and promote the community garden

**Resources Committed:**

- Staff time
- Travel
- Equipment/supplies
- Land
- Volunteer time
- Marketing
- Printing

**Medium-Term Indicators:**

- By June 30, 2022, Ascension Elmbrook will have established and maintained a community garden.

**Strategy 4: Walking Path**

Ascension Elmbrook will encourage increased physical activity by promoting and encouraging patients, families and associates to utilize the walking path on campus.

**Ascension Elmbrook will:**

- Develop promotional materials for the Ascension Elmbrook walking path for patients, family and associates
- Promote “walking meetings” for Ascension Elmbrook associates

**Medium-Term Indicators:**

- By June 30, 2022, 30 percent of Ascension Elmbrook associates will indicate via associate survey that they have utilized the walking path. (Baseline: TBD)
  - By June 30, 2022, 20 percent of Ascension Elmbrook associates will indicate via associate survey that they have utilized the walking path for a “walking meeting.” (Baseline: TBD)
- (Source for all indicators: Associate survey results)

**Resources Committed:**

- Staff time
- Printing
- Marketing materials
- Maintenance
- Benches for walking path



### Strategy 5: Education

Ascension Elmbrook will have a booth at the Brookfield Farmer's Market May through October. The booth will be staffed by Ascension Elmbrook healthcare providers and associates, who will provide educational materials on chronic disease prevention and other health topics.

#### Medium-Term Indicator:

- By June 30, 2022, 80 percent of farmer's market booth attendees will indicate they have increased knowledge regarding health topics presented at the booth.  
(Source: Farmer's market booth attendee survey)

#### Resources Committed:

- Staff time
- Financial support for booth
- Printing of educational materials

### Strategy 6: Harvest of the Month

Ascension Elmbrook will partner with Live Well Waukesha County to establish and promote Harvest of the Month. Harvest of the Month highlights a locally available crop each month of the year in school cafeterias, restaurants, workplaces and grocery stores. The program aims to help children, caregivers and the broader community learn more about healthy, seasonal, whole-foods eating.

#### Ascension Elmbrook will:

- Participate on the Waukesha County Nutrition Coalition
- Print and distribute Harvest of Month promotional materials
- Feature the Harvest of the Month crop in hospital campus cafeteria

#### Medium-Term Indicator:

- By June 30, 2022, 75 percent of Live Well Waukesha County Newsletter survey respondents will indicate that they have increased their fruit and vegetable consumption.  
(Source: Live Well Waukesha County survey)

#### Collaborative Partners:

- Live Well Waukesha County
- Waukesha County Nutrition Coalition

#### Resources Committed:

- Staff time
- Printing of Harvest of the Month promotional materials

## Mental Health

**Goal:** To decrease the incidence of depression, suicide and other mental health concerns in Waukesha County adults

**Long-Term Performance Indicators:**

- By 2024, decrease the percentage of individuals in Waukesha County who report mental health concerns or depression by 10 percent from 10 percent in 2017 to nine percent.
- By 2024, decrease the percentage of individuals in Waukesha County who report considering suicide in the past year by 10 percent from four percent in 2017 to 3.6 percent.
- By 2024, decrease the percentage of individuals in Waukesha County who report “did not receive care needed in the past 12 months for mental healthcare” by 10 percent from three percent in 2017 to 2.7 percent.

(Source for all indicators: Waukesha County Community Health Survey)

### Strategy 1: Screening and Referral

Ascension Medical Group Wisconsin will implement standardized processes statewide according to the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force Guidelines for depression. This will include: routine screening, referral mechanism and sources for treatment, electronic medical record (EMR) reminders and creation of tools.

**Ascension Elmbrook will:**

- Build automatic reminders/alerts into the EMR
- Identify sources for referral for management or treatment
- Create referral pathways
- Develop provider and patient tools to guide the process
- Implement the routine screening statewide

**Medium-Term Indicator:**

- By June 30, 2022, depression screening and remission systems/protocols are in place in 90 percent of Ascension Wisconsin primary care clinics.

(Source: Ascension Wisconsin Quality, Patient Safety and Regulatory Department)

**Resources Committed:**

- Staff and provider time

**Strategy 2: Referral for Mental Health and Social Services**

Ascension Elmbrook will increase the capacity of its associates to appropriately identify, screen and refer patients impacted by mental health concerns to appropriate mental health providers and community resources.

**Ascension Elmbrook will:**

- Provide training for Ascension Elmbrook associates to identify, screen and refer patients who are experiencing mental health or social/interpersonal concerns
- Identify/develop a Mental Health Resource Guide for associates and community members
- Actively participate in the Waukesha County Mental Health Coalition meetings

**Medium-Term Indicator:**

- By June 30, 2022, associates who are likely to refer a patient rate that they are highly confident that they can identify a patient with a mental health concern and know how to refer to appropriate resources. (Baseline: TBD)  
(Source: Internal Associate Survey)

**Resources Committed:**

- Staff time
- Travel

**Strategy 3: Suicide Prevention**

Ascension Elmbrook will partner with local agencies to be a provider of Question, Persuade and Refer (QPR) training, a suicide prevention program that helps to identify someone at risk or in need of intervention. QPR training is an evidence-based program that provides education for lay persons about recognizing and appropriately responding to someone who could benefit from referral to community agencies for mental health assistance.

**Ascension Elmbrook will:**

- Identify an associate to become a QPR certified trainer
- Invest in the associate obtaining QPR certification training
- Partner with local mental health advocacy groups to provide QPR trainings in the community

**Medium-Term Indicator:**

- By June 30, 2022, 90 percent of participants who complete QPR training report they are confident that they have the ability to engage in active listening, ask clarifying questions and make an appropriate referral for a person who is suicidal. (Source: Training evaluation form)

**Resources Committed:**

- Staff time
- Funding for associate QRP certification
- Associate time for QPR trainings in the community

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## Plan to Evaluate the Strategies

Ascension Elmbrook is committed to making a positive, measurable impact on the health of the people in the communities we serve. To that end, we evaluate the strategies we implement to address the health needs of the community.

We use a logic model, an approach that is nationally recognized for program evaluation. Logic models provide methods for documenting the following:

- **Inputs:** Resources needed to implement the strategies
- **Outputs:** Actions taken, the number of programs/tactics implemented and the number of people reached
- **Outcomes:** Measures of the impact of the programs/strategies, such as changes in learning, actions or conditions

To be specific about the outcomes for which we will be accountable, we set SMART metrics – metrics that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-related.

### Evaluation Schedule/Process

At the beginning of the three-year cycle:

- Establish SMART metrics for medium-term (three-year) indicators for each strategy
- Establish SMART metric for long-term (beyond three years) indicators for each priority area

At the beginning of each fiscal year in the three-year cycle:

- Establish SMART metrics for short-term (fiscal year) indicators for each strategy
- Establish action steps and output indicators for each strategy

Quarterly each fiscal year:

- Report actions completed
- Report the status of each strategy/priority

At the end of each fiscal year:

- Report on results for short-term and output indicators
- Describe accomplishments and analyze results

At the end of the three-year cycle:

- Report on results for medium-term indicators for each strategy
- Describe and analyze results
- Incorporate results into next Community Health Needs Assessment

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## Health Needs Not Selected for this Plan

Ascension Elmbrook understands the importance of all the health needs of the community and is committed to being an active participant in improving the health of the people in the communities we serve. For the purposes of this CHNA, we have chosen to focus our efforts on the priorities listed above. The following health needs were not selected to be included in this plan for the reasons described below.

- **Alcohol and Drug Use:** While alcohol and drug use continue to be an issue in the communities we serve, Ascension Elmbrook has made significant progress in recent years implementing effective policies and practices to identify and address these needs. Examples include implementing prescription drug monitoring programs, providing education to providers, utilizing alternative pain management methods and decreasing the number of opioids prescribed. We will continue to provide screening, counseling and follow-up care as needed to address alcohol and drug use. We are committed to maintaining these services while remaining open to any emerging needs or opportunities in these areas.
- **Income:** While recognizing that income constraints can be a key driver of poor health outcomes, other organizations in the community that have greater expertise in this area are addressing the root cause more directly. We are committed to our Mission of serving all persons with special attention to those who are poor and vulnerable. To assist in addressing income barriers for patients seeking healthcare, Ascension Elmbrook accepts any patient who utilizes Medicaid and has a Financial Assistance Policy to reduce costs for eligible patients.

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## Next Steps

This implementation plan outlines a three-year community health improvement process. Each year within this timeframe, we will:

- Create an annual action plan with specific 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 board
- Share actions taken to address the needs with the community at large

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## Approval

This implementation plan report was adopted by the Board of Directors of Ascension SE Wisconsin Hospital, Inc. on April 24, 2019, and by the Ascension Wisconsin Board on May 16, 2019.

To learn more about Ascension Wisconsin, visit [ascension.org/wisconsin](https://ascension.org/wisconsin)



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