

**COLORADO COUNTY  
COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENTS  
IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY  
July 1, 2018**

In order to understand the health needs of Columbus County (Columbus), the Columbus Community Hospital (CCH) contacted Dr. Tina Fields and Dr. Jeff Hatala to perform a community health needs assessment in 2016. The consultants gathered existing data and information of the county from numerous secondary sources and worked with CCH to establish focus groups to learn the community's perception of the county's health status.

Based on the statistical data and feedback from the focus groups, the following accomplishments were achieved:

- 1. Recommendation:** Institute a Community Advisory Board that serves as a bridge between the hospital and the community.

*Plan:* A Steering Committee was organized consisting of City leaders, businesses and organization representatives. The committee is designed to bring leaders together and discuss ways of improving the community.

- 2. Recommendation:** Present a program for people as they approach 65 about how to pick a Medicare health plan.

*Plan:* The CCH Community Relations Coordinator offers Medicare Recipients education on Part D Plans.

*CCH also partnered with Houston Galveston Area Council and presented a one-day information session in the Education Room. The Benefit Counselors helped older and disabled Texans that are new or on Medicare compare and choose the best Medicare plans that are offered in the area. They also help choose between traditional Medicare and Medicare Advantage Plans (Part C)*

- 3. Recommendation:** Consider having "meal prep on a budget" demonstrations.

*Plan:* Texas Agriculture Agent presented meal prep classes on a budget at the Columbus WIC office and the Food Pantry.

- 4. Recommendation:** Building on the informal "social centers" that elderly have created on their own.

**Plan:** The following groups have been organized such as; Friends of CCH Exercise Group, Garwood Gadabouts; Older Texan Fair, Sheridan Go Getters.

Wharton County Jr. College sponsors the Senior Citizen Program for Colorado County. The program provides a meal and activity program to senior citizens 60 years and older. "Meals on wheels" are available for homebound qualified seniors. A medical referral is required. The Senior Citizen Center's activities are held daily, Monday through Friday along with the center meal program. A special afternoon activity program is provided at the Wharton Center from 2:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m. Reservations are not required to participate in the activities. However, please contact the office or a center to make application for meals at centers. To reserve a meal, call one day prior. All services, meals, and activities are provided at no cost. The WCJC Senior Citizen Center is funded by the Houston-Galveston Area Council, the Department of Aging & Disabilities Services (DADS), and donations from local resources

**5. Recommendation:** Market diabetes nutrition.

**Plan:** Columbus Community Hospital offers Diabetes Classes to the public once a month. The classes are 4 hours and cover the basics of diabetes including monitoring, meal selections, compliance with medications and complications will be covered. This program is being offered as a community service at no charge for the patients and physician referral is not needed.

**6. Recommendations:** Work with Texas Workforce Commission to identify ways to train local youth on skills that can lead to livable wages and local.

**Plan:** The Steering Committee, Columbus Chamber of Commerce and CCDIC are working together to gauge employment situations and identify problems.

CCH offers scholarships for Allied Health Professionals.

CCH Family Physicians partner with the Texas Statewide Preceptorship Program (TSPP), which is a unique educational partnership connecting volunteer members of the Texas Academy of Family Physicians to students from the eight

Texas medical schools. The medical students work, usually for a month at a time, in the offices of experienced Texas family physicians. This exposure allows students to observe firsthand the challenges and satisfactions of primary care physicians, and to examine Family Practice as a serious personal career option.

Columbus Community Hospital hosts the Zelda Allen School of Vocational Nursing Students for their clinical rotation. Students in the 12-month program learn how to provide basic bedside care to patients such as taking vital signs, applying dressings, helping patients with bathing and personal hygiene, administering prescribed medications, and participating in health care teaching. These graduates are then eligible to take the National Licensure Exam for Practical Nurses as approved by the Texas Board of Nursing.

Columbus Physical Therapy sponsors students through the PT Program from the following schools: St. Augustine College, San Antonio; UTMB, Galveston; Texas State University, San Marcos; University of Texas, San Antonio. The students from the PTA Program are from the following schools: PIMA Community College, Blinn Jr. College; Wharton Jr. College. They also have students in the Pre-PT Program that observe in their clinic.

- 7. Recommendations:** Identify underlying (root causes) of such issues as depression, child abuse, spouse abuse, and elder abuse.

**Plan:** A program called, "Take a Stand" which emphasizes bullying awareness was presented at the Columbus Junior High by the Texas Ag Extension Office.

- 8. Recommendations:** Obesity is a concern expressed by all the focus groups. Addressing this will require education and attitude change.

**Plan:** CCH, TX Ag Extension Agent, Wesley Nurse and the Dept. State Health Services sponsor The Circus of Health held in July of each year. The event emphasizes childhood health topics such as obesity, dental hygiene and safety information.

- 9. Recommendations:** Consider allowing medical and other students to participate in a rural rotation to CCH.

**Plan:** Columbus Medical Clinic has partnered with the Texas Statewide Preceptorship Program (TSPP) offering medical students the opportunity to work with Family Medicine Physicians. The medical students work, usually a month at a time, in the offices of experienced members of the Texas Academy of Family Physicians.

**10. Recommendation:** Interventions-General. Interventions targeted toward the African American and Hispanic communities need to be led by community members of that same race/ethnic background.

**Plan:** CCH's Director of Nursing has been holding Health Fairs in the African American Church's. Providing information on diabetes and educational material.

**11. Recommendation:** Repository of Community Information: Develop website or repository of community health events and resources.

**Plan:** CCH has a website with a current calendar for all events at the hospital. There is also a LED sign in front of the hospital for displaying information and events provided by the hospital.

#### **OTHER ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

CCH sponsors free prostate screenings during National Men's Health Week each year from Monday thru Friday in the Hospital Lab.

The Circus of Health is an annual event and is held the third week in July. The sponsors include: CCH, TX Ag Extension Agent, Wesley Nurse and the Dept. State Health Services. Columbus Medical Clinic gives **free** backpacks to the elementary students. The backpacks are filled with school supplies, which are donated by the community. CCH employees volunteer their time to the event.

During February, which is American Heart Month, CCH offers **free** Coronary Risk Panel and A1C testing to the community. This event is another opportunity for the employees to volunteer and give back to the community.

CCH offers free Thyroid Screening to the community. Approximately 600 people were screened.

The Physicians from CCH give **free** physical examinations in May to CISD and St. Anthony's athletic departments.

CCH participated in the Safe Riders Traffic Safety Program, along with the Texas Department of State Health Services and the Texas Department of Transportation. Car seats were checked and when needed the participants were given a new car seat.