



Shore Medical Center Community Needs Assessment Implementation Strategy

Adopted by the Shore Medical Center’s Board of Trustees on December 5, 2022.

Introduction

Shore Medical Center completes a Community Needs Assessment every three years. This is to ensure that Shore Medical Center’s outreach efforts and initiatives truly reflect the changing health needs of the community it serves and to fulfill the annual Affordable Care Act requirement. A new CNA, along with this implementation strategy was most recently completed in 2022 and was adopted by the board of trustees.

This Implementation Strategy identifies the means by which Shore Medical Center plans to address community health needs during 2023 through 2025 as part of its Community Benefit Program. Beyond the services and programs detailed in this strategy, Shore has and continues to provide a full-range of services and programs to our community. Shore Medical Center’s commitment to our community, patients and their family members runs parallel to our not-for-profit mission. We care for and respect all patients, their families and each other.

Shore Medical Center anticipates that the needs of the community may change during this period; therefore there may be a need to revise and/or add to these strategies during implementation. Certain community health needs may become more pronounced and require changes to the initiatives identified in these strategies. Other community organizations may address certain needs, resulting in a different focus on the needs identified in the CNA. In addition, revisions may be warranted by changes in or clarifications of the requirements of Section 501(r) of the Internal Revenue Code.

The Community Needs Assessment Implementation Strategy was developed from the Community Needs Assessment results. The CNA features information and data collection on topics such as demographics, disease burden, health risk factors and community input. More information on the CNA may be accessed at www.shoremedicalcenter.org.

Implementation Strategies

Poor health status and chronic disease can result when members of the community are impacted by risk factors. Some risk factors can be prevented and can serve to improve quality of life and reduce mortality and morbidity. The leading preventable causes of chronic disease is obesity and tobacco use (specifically smoking).

- **Strategy 1: Obesity** – Develop and integrate nutritional services into the Shore Physicians Group adult primary care offices. Provide a high focus on Pediatrics, coordinating a working relationship between our Onsite Neonatal Partners as well as Unidine in both an ambulatory and inpatient environment.
- **Strategy 2: Tobacco** - Educate providers and staff about the benefits of quitting tobacco through offering ASK, ADVISE, REFER training; obtaining easy to handout materials for patients on smoking cessation services available; and develop an easy referral process to services.

Cancer is a complex disease in which prevention, screening and treatment is an aspect of focus. Detecting cancer early and offering quality treatment locally for the community in especially high incidence cancers is a priority.

- **Strategy 3:** Increase capacity and access of quality medical and radiation oncology, targeting both high incidence and mortality.
- **Strategy 4:** Expand access to cancer screening including underserved populations to find cancer early when most treatable.
- **Strategy 5:** Educate primary care providers about cancer screening, specifically lung cancer screening. Develop easy referral processes to connect patients to cancer screening.

Mental Health and opioids. Mental health issues have become more acknowledged during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Opioid epidemic has gained momentum both locally and nationally and has become a growing concern. Shore supports healthcare providers and patients in the battle against opioid addiction and referrals to mental health services.

- **Strategy 6: Mental Health** - Develop strategies for integrating more mental health resources and referrals into the primary care provider practices leveraging our Mental Health Partner Legacy.
- **Strategy 7: Opioids** - Leveraging a four year, \$1Mil/year, federal grant received by our Mental Health partners Legacy, increase access to opioid addiction support services by partnering with addiction/mental health service agencies. Continue the support to our Bayfront Emergency Partners in their Opioid monitoring/reduction program in the Emergency Department.

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted all aspects of life. Remaining prepared for shifts of services and patients' needs through heightened periods of contagious outbreaks remains important.

- **Strategy 8:** Continue to monitor community COVID-19 infection rates, maintain safety precautions to prevent spread of contagious disease; and maintain appropriate levels of negative pressure rooms and convert rooms as necessary.

- **Strategy 9:** Partner with primary care and public health organizations to promote COVID-19 vaccine compliance and access.

Many health providers rely on virtual communication with patients to provide services. For example providers closed their offices to prevent the transmission of the virus during the COVID-19 pandemic. Populations with poor access to virtual healthcare tend to have higher rates of chronic conditions and worse health outcomes, suggesting that they may be particularly vulnerable to the consequences from lapses in care.

- **Strategy 10:** Provide initial financial resources as secured by a federal FCC grant to acquire and deploy free internet tablets preloaded with patient portals and a wide range of healthcare resources.

Chronic disease, aging populations, and unhealthy lifestyle habits all connect to the need of routine healthcare. Patient's first point of contact for non-urgent health concerns should be their primary care physician. A shortfall in the number of healthcare providers has major consequences for patients.

- **Strategy 11:** Provide robust medical services in our community through maintaining, recruiting and training physicians as well as supporting delivery of care through Advance Nurse Practitioners. Leverage Telehealth for services where appropriate. Deliver services in a way that provides the most convenient access for the general community while also offering exceptional patient experience.