

## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

### Our Mission:

Memorial Health Care Systems is a community, not-for-profit organization with the mission:

*We enhance the quality of life for the individuals in our communities by providing excellence in health care services in the most appropriate settings.*

### Our Action Plan:

Memorial Hospital has assessed the five health needs identified in the community and describes the strategies and goals for each need below:

### IDENTIFIED HEALTH NEED I: OBESITY

Community responses relate to concerns about obesity as a health need. Understanding that nationwide, more than one-third of U.S. adults and 18.5% of children ages 2-19 are obese (*JAMA*), MHCS recognizes the importance of providing clear, concise, professional patient education to the communities we serve in an effort to address health issues relating to obesity.

### Obesity Strategies/Goals

**A. Strategy:** *In 2011, in response to the increasing childhood obesity statistics, MHCS developed and implemented a program with the express purpose of educating children on healthy exercise, nutrition, and food choices. Four MHCS employees annually visit all of the 1st through 4th-grade public school classrooms in Seward, Milford, and Utica to give a vibrant, information-filled presentation entitled 'Blast Off for Healthy Kids.' In first grade, each child receives a "My Plate" portion plate to take home as a reminder of what they learned. The 2nd through 4th graders receive a memento after the program that reinforces the program's message. Parents are given supportive materials that include healthy recipes and information about what their child is learning. The logo is a carrot with the basic tenets of the program and a stand-up banner-carrot is placed at community events as a reminder to parents and children.*

**Goal:** The "Blast Off for Healthy Kids" MHCS team comprised of one physician assistant, one pharmacist, one certified dietician, and one nurse will continue to research nutrition/exercise information and assess the program in order to enhance the curriculum and keep current on best practices for growing healthy children.

**B. Strategy:** *Fridays for You, monthly community wellness talks hosted by MHCS, include topics such as healthy lifestyle choices, diet, and exercise.*

**Goal:** The challenges of weight management and the importance of understanding the health concerns associated with obesity are factored when determining programming for the free monthly community education called MHCS Fridays for You presentations.

**C. Strategy:** *MHCS has hosted a long-standing diabetic support group that meets on a regular basis during which food, nutrition, exercise and diabetes management are addressed.*

**Goal:** The MHCS diabetic support group leaders continue to bring in outside presenters for new information and also stay abreast of best practices to share to raise the health and wellness of its members.

In 2015/16, MHCS added a second diabetic program to enhance the community's understanding of pre-diabetes and ways to avoid onset. This program includes 16 one-hour weekly meetings followed by 8 one-hour monthly meetings in an effort to avoid diabetes onset through lifestyle changes. Introduced first in the fall of 2015 to MHCS employees and then opened to the public in January 2016, the "MHCS Diabetes Prevention Lifestyle Change Program" is a commitment that is led by a Memorial Hospital nurse and MHCS dietitian. Leaders will continue to monitor and share important information about ways to prevent the onset of diabetes. Leaders will continue to assess the benefit and community interest to assure the program is meeting goals for healthier attendees.

- D. Strategy:** *Diet and nutrition counseling along with medical nutrition therapy is available through Memorial Hospital/Memorial Family Medical Centers. This provides the MHCS physicians and physicians of the Memorial Hospital Specialty Clinic with a referral source to aid patients in weight management.*

**Goal:** Memorial Health Care Systems employs two registered dietitians for the purpose of assuring proper nutrition for patients, residents and staff, and also to respond to referrals from our System and specialty physicians. Awareness efforts will continue to assure referral sources are aware of the available nutrition counseling services.

- E. Strategy:** *MHCS is committed to supporting the health and wellness efforts of the communities we serve.*

**Goal:** MHCS partners with many community organizations in support of wellness efforts to enhance population health in our service area. MHCS provides support in the form of MHCS staff time, monetary donations, give-away items, and medical professional input to assure the success of various events. We will continue to support community organizations in their efforts to enhance the health and wellness of our population.

- F. Strategy:** *The MHCS annual Health Fair provides the community-at-large with health screenings and education.*

**Goal:** The annual MHCS Health Fair held each April with an attendance of approximately 1600, provides multiple health and wellness screenings which include effective methods to detect medical concerns associated with obesity. This event is free of charge. Screenings include blood chemistry to identify unhealthy lipids and cardiac risk ratio, BMI testing and blood glucose screening. Attendees also visit manned displays representing fitness centers, healthy eating options, and the MHCS childhood obesity program.

## IDENTIFIED HEALTH NEED II: MENTAL HEALTH

Community responses relate to concerns about mental health.

### Mental Health Strategies/Goals

A. **Strategy:** *A behavioral health practitioner regularly holds clinics at the Memorial Hospital Specialty Clinic giving patients ready access to mental health care close to home.*

**Goal:** Memorial Hospital will keep the behavioral health practitioner apprised of the services available to them as they diagnose and treat the patients of our community.

B. **Strategy:** *Memorial Hospital is not equipped to provide long term inpatient mental health treatment. It is in the best interest of the patient to accept referral as we do not have staff with the expertise in inpatient mental health treatment.*

**Goal:** Memorial Hospital staff has worked alongside other community agencies to develop a comprehensive web resource that provides contact information for area mental health resources. When an inquiry is made for mental health support, ten resources are identified and available to medical providers when caring for patients with suspected mental health issues.

### IDENTIFIED HEALTH NEED III: CANCER

Community responses relate to concerns about cancer incidences. Based on the 2015 Nebraska Cancer Registry data, 9,800 invasive cancers were diagnosed among Nebraska residents. Cancer was Nebraska's second leading cause of death, ranking behind of heart disease and accounting for over 3,490 deaths among Nebraska residents.

#### Cancer Strategies/Goals

**A. Strategy:** *In 2018, Memorial Hospital Specialty Clinic enhanced the cancer care with three nurses completing chemotherapy administration certification. This gives patients chemotherapy administration access close to home.*

**Goal:** Memorial Hospital will work with area oncologists to keep them apprised of the services available in Seward as they diagnose and treat the patients of our community. As a critical access hospital, Memorial Hospital is not a full-cancer care facility, however, we will continue to monitor the needs of cancer patients and enhance the services we provide as appropriate.

**B. Strategy:** *Memorial Hospital provides cancer services to area patients appropriate for a critical access hospital. Memorial Hospital staff is trained to administer infusion therapy onsite and the facility is equipped to provide care to patients receiving certain chemotherapy and related cancer treatments close to home.*

**Goal:** For patient comfort, privacy and safety, MHCS includes three therapy suites, increasing the number of patients who can receive the service simultaneously. Staff will continue to remind referring providers of the availability of this service to those we serve.

**C. Strategy:** *Memorial Hospital offers specific screenings in support of physician diagnostics.*

**Goal:** Memorial Hospital provides excellent screening resources to our physicians through onsite 3D mammography and colonoscopies. Added in 2019, Memorial Hospital offers bronchoscopies to aid in the detection of lung diseases including cancer. Staff will continually undergo training as necessary to assure patient safety and improved patient outcomes.

Mammography services area provides enhanced patient comfort and privacy. We will continue to assure that this service is available to our community and that it is staffed with excellent physicians within a comfortable, private environment.

## IDENTIFIED HEALTH NEED IV: ALCOHOL ABUSE

Community responses relate to concerns about alcohol abuse. Nebraska statistics show of the drunk driving fatalities in 2017, 30% involved drivers with a .8 blood alcohol content or higher (MADD-Nebraska). Nationally, 10,497 people died in alcohol-impaired driving crashes in 2016.

### Alcohol Abuse Strategies/Goals

A. **Strategy:** *Memorial Hospital is not equipped to provide long term inpatient substance abuse treatment. It is in the best interest of the patient to accept referral as we do not have staff with the expertise in substance abuse treatment.*

**Goal:** Memorial Hospital staff has worked alongside other community agencies to develop a comprehensive web resource that provides contact information for area health and wellness resources. When an inquiry is made for alcohol abuse support, nine resources are identified and available to medical providers when caring for patients with suspected alcohol abuse issues.

## IDENTIFIED HEALTH NEED V: AGING ISSUES

Community responses were received relating to aging issues as a health need. Memorial Health Care Systems recognizes that Seward County is comprised of 16.7% who are 65 years of age or older, higher than 15.4% in the State of Nebraska. Access to care is important for aging citizens.

### Aging Issues Strategies/Goals

- A. **Strategy:** *Senior citizens of Seward County have access to dependable, skilled medical providers which is vital in supporting the community's residents as they age.*

**Goal:** Memorial Health Care Systems is a regional provider for the citizens of Seward County and its surrounding counties, and employs ten readily-accessible, highly qualified physicians who specialize in Family Practice. Aiding the MHCS physicians are three physician assistants. These physicians and PAs have practices throughout Seward County, in three free-standing clinics located in Milford, Utica, and Seward.

- B. **Strategy:** *The community's aging population has access to specialty care within nineteen specialties located in the Memorial Hospital Specialty Physicians Clinic, attached directly to Seward Memorial Hospital. Specialists from various cities, especially Lincoln, Nebraska travel to Seward to hold clinic hours and perform procedures specific to their specialty.*

**Goal:** MHCS will continue to monitor and recruit physician specialists based on need and specialist availability.

- C. **Strategy:** *Memorial Hospital is comprised of 24 swing beds providing inpatient acute care/rehabilitation services to patients of all ages with accessibility to cardiopulmonary, physical, occupational and speech therapy. MHCS Therapy Services provides full outpatient therapy services as well.*

**Goal:** The therapy department will continue to evaluate its services, including aquatic therapy, for best practices in geriatric patient rehabilitation.

- D. **Strategy:** *The MHCS Social Services department guides aging patients to obtain appropriate resources, services and living arrangements following hospitalization and/or rehabilitation.*

**Goal:** The Social Services Department has created a comprehensive list of aging services available to the community. The department will continue to monitor and update the listing as necessary.

- E. **Strategy:** *Seward County nursing homes are required to have medical directors.*

**Goal:** As a longstanding commitment to the aging population of Seward County, Memorial Health Care Systems physicians serve as medical directors to one area nursing home.

- F. **Strategy:** *Cataract surgeries are offered onsite at Memorial Hospital.*

**Goal:** A common problem for the aging population is the development of cataracts. A physician specializing in ophthalmology performs cataract removal surgery at Memorial Hospital on a regular basis. To assure that this service is available on an ongoing basis, the surgical staff will stay vigilant to assure that the surgeon has access to all needed equipment, trained staff, and facilities to perform his duties in the safest manner with optimal outcomes.



**Memorial Health Care Systems Board Directors**  
**Approval/Signature**

The Community Assessment was reviewed and approved by the Memorial Health Care Systems Board of Directors on August 28, 2019. The five (5) health issues identified in the Assessment are currently being met through services in Seward County or through referral.



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Mike Hecker, Chairman  
MHCS Board of Directors

Form 990 available for review upon request.