

Community Health Development Team



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Request a paper copy from Administration/President's office. To provide comments or view electronic copies of current and previous community health needs assessments go to: [\[redacted\]](#)



Invitation to a Healthier Community

Fulfilling AH 's Mission

Where and how we live is vital to our health. We recognize that health status is a product of multiple factors. To comprehensively address the needs of our community, we must take into account health behaviors and risks, the physical environment, the health system, and social determinant of health. Each component influences the next and through strategic and collective action improved health can be achieved.

The Community Health Plan marks the second phase in a collaborative effort to systematically investigate and identify our community's most pressing needs. After a thorough review of health status in our community through the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA), we identified areas that we could address through the use of our resources, expertise, and community partners. Through these actions and relationships, we aim to empower our community and fulfill our mission, "Living God's love by inspiring health, wholeness and hope."

Identified Community Needs

The results of the CHNA guided the creation of this document and aided us in how we could best provide for our community and the most vulnerable among us. As a result, Adventist Health Howard Memorial has adopted the following priority areas for our community health investments for 2017-2019:

- Childhood Obesity and Family Wellness
- Mental Health
- Economic Development/Poverty
- Access to Care

Additionally, we engage in a process of continuous quality improvement, whereby we ask the following questions for each priority area:

- Are our interventions making a difference in improving health outcomes?
- Are we providing the appropriate resources in the appropriate locations?
- What changes or collaborations within our system need to be made?
- How are we using technology to track our health improvements and provide relevant feedback at the local level?
- Do we have the resources as a region to elevate the population's health status?

Building a healthy community requires multiple stakeholders working together with a common purpose. We invite you to explore how we intend to address health challenges in our community and partner to achieve change. More importantly though, we hope you imagine a healthier region and work with us to find solutions across a broad range of sectors to create communities we all want for ourselves and our families.

2017 Community Plan Update/Annual Report

In 2016, Adventist Health Howard Memorial conducted a community health needs assessment and was followed by a 2017 Community Health Plan (Implementation Plan) that identified the priority needs listed below. The prioritized needs were chosen based on community health data and the voices of our community. Working together with our community is key to achieving the necessary health improvements to create the communities that allow each member to have safe and healthy places to live, learn, work, play, and pray. Below you will find an inventory of additional interventions supporting the health of our communities.

Priority Need 1- Childhood Obesity & Family Wellness

Intervention: **Diabetes Self-Management Class** is a four-week class taught by certified diabetes educators intended for those diagnosed with diabetes and those who are prediabetics. This informative and interactive class teaches participants and their family members how to manage their diabetes with topics including controlling their blood sugar, label reading, healthy lifestyle behaviors such as diet and exercise, and preventing complications. Central to the success of the class is including the participants' family members to receive the same information so that they can furnish support and can practice what's learned in the class at home. The group setting also allows for supporting each other and sharing ideas and experiences.

Supplementing the classes is a monthly support group where speakers cover various topics, such as eye health, heart disease, etc. and are delivered by subject matter experts such as physicians and providers.

- Number of Community Members Served: 159

Program highlight – Taking Charge of Diabetes: Janice's Story

Janice Bickford knew what diabetes could do, she watched her older brother struggle with it throughout his life; eventually succumbing to have his leg amputated. But she never imagined she would get it too.

"I was due for my annual physical exam at the Redwood Medical Clinic," recalls Bickford, who continued, "My A1c was at 6.8 and my doctor told me I had diabetes." Her first reaction was denial and then anger, "I thought, they must be mistaken. They must have read someone else's, lab results, they have to be wrong!" shared Bickford.

Eventually, Bickford recalls coming to terms with the fact that she had diabetes and decided to take charge of her health. "Remembering my brother's experience helped me make a stand; I told myself, 'I will not let my diabetes get to that point. I want to keep my legs and live a better life.'

Bickford was referred to the Diabetes Education program at Adventist Health Howard Memorial. Bickford says that taking the first step to join the program was the best decision she's ever made for her health. "I like learning new things and the program gave me everything I needed to turn my health and my life around."

"I attended classes regularly and learned about label reading, counting carbs, blood sugar monitoring, how to exercise, and meal planning. I thought I ate pretty healthy. But I learned that there's so many aspects to controlling your diabetes and that eating right and exercise go hand in hand," explains Bickford.



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The first big change Bickford made, was cutting ice cream and soda. “Those were my biggest temptations. It was hard but I knew I had to make the change.”

As a property manager for two mobile home parks in Willits, Bickford lives a pretty active life. But after going through the program and learning how important physical activity was to manage her diabetes, she was determined to exercise more. “I started walking five miles a day and I noticed how good it made me feel.” Soon she was joined by her cousin, who also had diabetes. “We were walking buddies and pushed each other through.”

Within two months, Bickford had lost weight and her blood sugar was down 5 points. Four months after that, her A1c was down from 6.8 to 5.6 and she credits the Diabetes Education team at AHHM for her success. “I would have never been able to do this on my own. Annie and Henrietta know what they are doing. It is such a great program and I think the community should take advantage of it since it's free!”

“The great thing about their program is that they don't tell you to cut everything. They teach you what to eat with what and just to pay attention to what you put in your body.”

Today, with her diabetes under control, Bickford is back to enjoying life; raising her granddaughter, spending time with her two poodles and gardening. She has kept the weight off and does not have to take medication for her diabetes and she is thankful to the diabetes program. “They changed my life. I will forever be grateful to them. And I have made it my mission to tell everyone about this wonderful program.”

Intervention: **Lunch & Learn Program** at the Senior Center is a health education program in partnership with the Willits Senior Center. Seniors are one of the most vulnerable populations. They have very limited and fixed income and are often are not able to eat healthy meals. The Lunch and Learn program collaboration educates seniors and the greater community about health topics; staying well; drug interactions and fall prevention. A healthy lunch is served for free and is prepared and provided by the hospital, made with produce from their organic garden.

- Number of Community Members Served: 165

Intervention: **Cash donation to provide year-round salad bar for the Senior Center.** Seniors are one of the most vulnerable populations. They often live on limited and fixed income and are not always able to eat healthy. AH Howard Memorial Hospital provided salads for members of the Senior Center and members of the community who eat at the senior center during lunch hour.

- Number of Meals Served: 100, 000

Intervention: **The Haehl Creek Fitness Course** was built to allow more opportunities for community members to be physically active. The course was built on the Haehl Creek walking trail next to the Commonwealth Garden. The Commonwealth Garden is located by AHHM, a nearby subdivision and within walking distance to the Senior Center, a skilled nursing facility and a nursing home. The 20-station fit trail outdoor exercise system and includes instructional signs and exercise equipment designed for the novice or conditioned athlete.

- Number of Community Members Served: 3,000



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Intervention: **Inspiring Wellness through the Commonwealth Garden and Roots Restaurant:** The Commonwealth Garden is a 5-acre garden with a 50+ tree orchard and a 3,000 sq. ft. greenhouse that grows produce for hospital patients and for use in Roots. Roots Restaurant is Howard Memorial's new farm to fork restaurant which is open to staff, patients and their family members and the community.

Roots serves fresh and healthy meals, which in turn inspires conversations about healthy eating and wellness and serves as an example to community members that eating healthy does not have to be bland or expensive. Food offered is always affordable and always includes a vegetarian option. The restaurant design also lends itself to the message of wellness, with its open concept and community members can see exactly how their food is prepared to allow them to replicate the healthy recipes at home.

Roots serves 150+ meals a day, including staff and community members and has earned a reputation as one of the "best places to eat" in Willits.

Extra produce is donated to the Willits Senior Center and the Food Bank. In 2017, we donated 2,000 lbs. of produce to these two organizations.

- Number of Meals Served (excluding inpatient): 200,000

Intervention: **Financial support to various community organizations focusing on health and wellness.** The hospital also supports many organizations in the community to further our efforts to address childhood obesity and family wellness. In 2017, we donated \$31,000 to community organizations that promote health and wellness; including but not limited to: refurbishing the Baechtel Grove Middle School Gym, Mendocino Soccer Academy, and purchase of helmets for the Willits High School football team. We also donated the Willits Food Bank and Community Services and the Daily Bread which provides meals and services to low-income and underserved population.

Intervention: **Participation in the Healthy Mendocino Project and the Childhood Obesity and Wellness (CHOW) Action Team which is a collaborative effort to bring together community agencies, schools and other organizations to deploy strategies to address the priorities set out in the 2016 CHNA.** As part of this effort, the CHOW action team was formed, consisting of 15 representatives from community organizations which meet monthly to strategize ways to reduce the childhood obesity rates in the county.

- Number of Community Members Served: 87,000

Intervention: **Smoking Cessation program is a four-week program that uses a behavior modification approach that helps smokers develop a personal plan of action to assist in breaking the cycle of addiction and provides strategies to prevent relapse.** The small group setting encourages participants to work on the process of quitting both individually and as part of a group.

- Number of Community Members Served: 70



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Partners

- North Coast Opportunities
- Adventist Health Ukiah Valley
- First5 Mendocino
- Mendocino County Health and Human Services
- City of Ukiah
- Round Valley Health Center
- Walk and Bike Mendocino
- Ukiah Unified School District
- Willits Senior Center

Priority Need - Mental Health

Intervention: **Prayer Breakfast and Community Talk** is held annually in February, coinciding with the National Prayer Day in Washington. The goal of the prayer breakfast is to bring the community together, regardless of faith, in fellowship to pray for our local leaders, law enforcement, hospital workers and business community. This year, the speaker was Dr. David Levy, who spoke about managing stress. Dr. Levy offered tips on how to manage stress for the attendees during the prayer breakfast and for the community talk later that day.

- Number of Community Members Served: 380

Intervention: **Grief and Crisis Counseling for Fire Victims, Survivors and First Responders.** Spiritual care director, Chaplain Dennis Long provided several counseling sessions in response to a crisis need during the Mendolake Complex Fire in October, which affected Redwood Valley, Willits, Potter Valley and Lake County. He was available to help victims process the disaster and offer them tips on how to manage the stress and how to deal with the emotions associated with the sense of loss. He also offered crisis debriefings to law enforcement and firefighters who were involved in the fires to assist them in processing the emotions associated with the disaster.

- Number of Community Members Served: 110

Partners

- Mendocino County Sheriff's Office
- Willits Police Department
- Cal-Fire



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Partners *Continued*

- Ukiah Valley Fire Authority
- Mendocino County OES
- Little Lake Fire Department

Priority Need - Economic Development/Poverty

Intervention: **Health Professions Education through Hospital career exploration tours and school career days.** As the biggest employer in Willits, this program encourages and inspires youth to work in healthcare and start considering their career paths early on. Students are taken on hospital tours and introduced to different careers available whether healthcare related or not. They are able to see work areas, meet staff and ask questions to determine their interest in the same career path. Native American youth is of special concern since many deal with depression and other social issues which can lead to drug and alcohol use and lack of career motivation. In partnership with the Pinoleville Youth Enrichment Program, staff spent time talking about their careers and highlighting the many options available for youth to work at the hospital from nurses to dietary workers to pharmacists. Hospital professionals also visited Baechtel Grove Middle School and spoke about their job duties and answered questions during Career Day.

- Number of Community Members Served: 85

Intervention: The **SCRUBS** program allows Willits High School students to shadow various hospital staff in their fields of interest. It gives them a hands-on experience and helps them decide whether they are on the right career path

Number of Community Members Served: 5

Partners

- Mendocino County Sheriff's Office
- Willits Police Department
- Cal-Fire
- Ukiah Valley Fire Authority
- Mendocino County OES
- Little Lake Fire Department
- Willits High School
- Pinoleville Youth Enrichment



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Priority Need – Access to Care

Intervention: **Free Health Screenings at community events for early disease diagnosis and to improve access.** Every year, AHHM participates in various community events and performs free health screenings to give access to healthcare services. We offered free blood pressure, diabetes and BMI screenings throughout the year.

- Number of Community Members Served: 2,000

Intervention: **Free Sports Physical to Children and Youth** to encourage physical activity and participation in sports and prevent injuries. Often parents face a challenge in scheduling a timely appointment for their child's sports physical due to a lack of providers and the costs involved. Physicians perform exams to verify the health of the child to play sports as well as the detection any underlying health issues which would preclude participation in sports.

- Number of Community Members Served: 220

Intervention: **Same day appointments to the community in the primary care clinic** This allows those who are unable to see their primary care physician access to medical care and improved patient experience. This allows for a less crowded Emergency Department.

- Number of Community Members Served: 1,500

Program highlight – Howard Hospital Makes Sure Kids are Ready to Play with Free Sports Physicals

The hospital held its first event this weekend, July 29 at the Redwood Medical Clinic on Marcela Drive. Community members from Willits, Ukiah and some from Fort Bragg came to take advantage of the free service. After four hours, AHHM physicians performed almost 120 sports physicals. Those who were cleared were given a clean bill of health to play while those who were found with underlying issues were referred for further screening with their primary care physician.

AHHM has been offering free sports physicals for years. Jason Wells, president and CEO recognizes the importance of keeping children active and healthy and give them the opportunity to excel in sports. He explains, "I know the costs associated with participating in sports can add up. We certainly don't want the cost of a sports physical to be a barrier to anyone that wants to participate in athletics."

"We're here not just take care of our community when they are sick. We also want to keep them healthy. And we support every effort to encourage physical activity and starting with our children makes perfect sense," he adds.

Mike Colvig, Willits High School's new principal who came in with his son, says it's a huge benefit for parents and students. "As a previous coach and as a parent, I know it can get challenging to get in with your doctor to get a sports physical. It's so great to have the hospital make this possible. It's a huge help to our parents the



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cost of having to pay for equipment and uniforms can add up. This helps with the financial burden. Not to mention to have a special day to do this for the community means parents won’t have to wait months to get an appointment with their doctor and kids will be ready to play by the time school starts. This is truly a great service.”

Michael Medvin, MD, one of many AHHM physicians who conducts the exams every year agrees, "We started offering free sports physicals five years ago because we know how important physical activity is for our kids. By providing free sports physicals we are helping reduce the barriers to kids staying active and healthy in our community.”

Intervention: **Provide uninsured patients with assistance** for obtaining health insurance information and/or coverage and access to financial assistance as needed, through clinic care coordinators and financial counselors.

- Number of Community Members Served: 120 assisted in obtaining health insurance and/or financial assistance

Other Community Benefits

Intervention: **Free CPR/AED Classes.** The three-hour course is offered monthly, accredited by the American Heart Association and is open to anyone who would like to learn how to save a life or require certification.

- Number of Community Members Served: 77

Intervention: **Donation to MendocinoStrong** Fundraiser and Mendocino County SAR. The Mendolake Complex Fire affected many in Lake and Mendocino Counties with 245 homes lost and over 36 acres burned. As a response to the need, AHHM donated \$25,000 to the MendocinoStrong fundraiser which will go directly to community organizations providing services to those affected. To make certain our first responders are equipped and prepared for disaster, a donation of \$14,500 for the purchase of a new Utility Terrain Vehicle for the Mendocino County Sheriff’s Search and Rescue (SAR) team was also provided.

- Number of Community Members Served: 25,000

Partners

- **Mendocino County Sheriff’s Office Search & Rescue Team**
- **North Coast Opportunities**

Program highlight – Howard Memorial Donates Equipment for Search and Rescue Team

Adventist Health Howard Memorial recognizes the important role that our county’s first responders play in keeping the community safe and healthy. The recent wildfires underscored even more the benefits that well trained and equipped first responders can make when disasters occur. That’s why when the Mendocino County Sheriff’s Search and Rescue (SAR) team asked for the hospital’s help, the decision was easy.

The hospital donated \$14,500 to Search and Rescue towards the purchase of a new Utility Terrain Vehicle (UTV), an item that has been on their wish list for quite some time. Search and Rescue is a non-profit



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organization and receives no annual funding from the Sheriff's Office. The 50 members of SAR are all volunteers who donate their time and energy to help the community. Many members spend a good deal of their own money for their personal equipment and costs to travel to and from trainings. SAR's budget for training and supplies is about \$15,000 per year and is met through fundraising efforts and community donations. SAR had previously used a UTV on a "loan program" sponsored by Kawasaki and administered by Ukiah Motosports.

The program has since been discontinued by Kawasaki. So, the hospital donation was a welcome gesture.

Adventist Health Howard Memorial President, Jason Wells, explains, "During the recent fires, we worked very closely with the Search and Rescue team, and saw first-hand the great work that they do. Besides helping the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) with doing welfare checks and locating missing persons, they also provided a sense of security; both for the hospital and for the community. Knowing that we had great partners ready to help was invaluable during those times."

As a part of the Mendo-Lake Complex Fire operations, SAR volunteers assisted in accounting for missing persons, helping people evacuate from their homes, and caring for and rescuing animals who were displaced, injured, or other otherwise could not be taken by their families when they evacuated.

In addition to helping during disasters; SAR is called upon, on average twice a month to help locate missing persons or help the Sheriff's office with evidence search for certain cases. The new UTV has already been used on several missions including to help locate a missing person in the woods off Hwy 20 and James Creek recently.

"Mendocino County has some very rugged terrain, and typically it is in that type of terrain in which people become lost. This UTV will allow us to quickly deploy SAR resources to search areas which would otherwise not be easily accessible," explains Jared Chaney, SAR commander.

Sheriff Tom Allman shares, "The Sheriff's Office and SAR is grateful to have community partners, such as Adventist Health Howard Memorial, that donate generously to provide a much-needed piece of equipment for search and rescue operations. It's these types of relationships, between the private sector and the public, that allow our SAR Team to provide the professional services to the community that they do."

Dave Kobetz with MotoSports of Ukiah helped to provide the UTV at a highly discounted cost and coordinated with aftermarket vendors to donate thousands of dollars in add-ons, including a winch, windshield and a hard-shell roof. Motosports also donated the labor needed to prepare the UTV for action.

Judson Howe, Adventist Health Howard Memorial CFO concludes, "We like partnering with organizations that help us accomplish our mission. This donation benefits not just the residents of Willits but also all of Mendocino County. To be able to help an organization that puts their lives on the line, all on their own time, makes this so worthwhile." To join SAR or to learn more, visit their website at www.mendocinosar.org.

Changes in 2017

The new AHHM Mission Committee was formed this year, which is tasked with managing the strategy and implementation of the community health plan as it aligns with Adventist Health's Mission and the Mendocino County CHNA. The committee is composed of 11 members from various community organizations and hospital administration.

Connecting Strategy and Community Health

As hospitals move toward population health management, community health interventions are a key element in achieving the overall goals of reducing the overall cost of health care, improving the health of the population, and improving access to affordable health services for the community both in outpatient and community settings. The key factor in improving quality and efficiency of the care hospitals provide is to include the larger community they serve as a part of their overall strategy.

Health systems must now step outside of the traditional roles of hospitals to begin to address the social, economic, and environmental conditions that contribute to poor health in the communities we serve. Bold leadership is required from our administrators, healthcare providers, and governing boards to meet the pressing health challenges we face as a nation. These challenges include a paradigm shift in how hospitals and health systems are positioning themselves and their strategies for success in a new payment environment. This will impact everyone in a community and will require shared responsibility among all stakeholders.

Population health is not just the overall health of a population but also includes the distribution of health. Overall health could be quite high if the majority of the population is relatively healthy—even though a minority of the population is much less healthy. Ideally such differences would be eliminated or at least substantially reduced.

Community health can serve as a strategic platform to improve the health outcomes of a defined group of people, concentrating on three correlated stages:

- 1) The distribution of specific health statuses and outcomes within a population;
- 2) Factors that cause the present outcomes distribution; and
- 3) Interventions that may modify the factors to improve health outcomes.

Improving population health requires effective initiatives to:

- 1) Increase the prevalence of evidence-based preventive health services and preventive health behaviors,
- 2) Improve care quality and patient safety and
- 3) Advance care coordination across the health care continuum.

Our mission as a health system is Living God's love by inspiring health, wholeness and hope, we believe the best way to re-imagine our future business model with a major emphasis of community health is by working together with our community.