

**2019**

**Rutherford Regional Health System**

**Implementation Strategy**

**To Address Significant Community Health Needs**

**Rutherford County, North Carolina**

Paper copies of this document may be obtained at Rutherford Regional Health System 288 S. Ridgecrest Street, Rutherfordton, NC 28139 or by phone (828) 286-5000. This document is also available electronically via the hospital website: [www.myutherfordregional.com](http://www.myutherfordregional.com).

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## **Overview**

The Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) defines priorities for health improvement, creates a collaborative community environment to engage stakeholders, and an open and transparent process to listen and truly understand the health needs of the community served by Rutherford Regional Health System (RRH) in Rutherford County, North Carolina. This document is the RRHS Implementation Plan outlining how RRHS plans on addressing significant health needs in the community.

The CHNA is contained in a separate document.

RRHS's Board of Directors will formally approve and adopt this Implementation Strategy at the June 2020 Board Meeting.

Starting in summer 2020, this report will be made widely available to the community via RRHS's website, [www.myutherfordregional.com](http://www.myutherfordregional.com), and paper copies are available free of charge at the RRHS hospital at 288 S. Ridgecrest Street, Rutherfordton, NC 28139 or by phone (828) 286-5000.

## **Community Health Improvement/ Implementation Plan**

To successfully make our community healthier, it is necessary to have a collaborative venture which brings together all of the care providers, citizens, government, schools, churches, not-for-profit organizations and business and industry around an effective plan of action. The community health improvement and implementation plan will be completed in and will be added to this document at this time.

Based on the results of this CHNA, Rutherford Regional Health System (RRHS) has selected three (3) of the identified significant health needs to address.

- 1. Active Living**
- 2. Substance Abuse Treatment & Recovery**
- 3. Healthy Eating**

RRHS plans to meet the significant health needs by:

### **1. Active Living**

- **Strategy:** Hospital to sponsor annual 5k race and local Race Series with Rutherford Outdoor Coalition. Will distribute handouts and information to promote active living.

- **Strategy:** hold regular Business Engagement Group (BEG) meetings to coordinate and schedule active living offerings to local employers on the worksites; employer driven health fairs and employer wellness programs.
- **Strategy:** Host RRHS employee and community Vitality walks and step challenges to encourage and reward active living to the 600 employees and their families. This will create excitement and increase exposure in the community overall.
- **Strategy:** creation of a new “active living” tab on the RRHS website that connects local active programs and other community resources including gyms, trails, parks and exercise classes.
- **Strategy:** Partner with RHI Legacy’s Walk with a Doc program, Hike with a Doc and Trails with a Provider events to encourage active living in the community. Provide handouts and face to face interactions with medical team thus supporting the many health benefits.
- **Strategy:** Partner with local Library to offer free bookmarks encouraging active living during summer reading programs.

## 2. Substance Abuse Treatment & Recovery

- **Strategy:** increase the visibility of “Call 211” materials within our facilities that connect RRHS patients to resources such as programs helping them to address substance abuse (including a link from the RRHS website)
- **Strategy:** Provide educational support to the Emergency Department providers/staff on how to educate patients about the addictive qualities of prescription medications and provide a list of community resources available to the community.
- **Strategy:** provide greater education to RRHS staff about how to connect people to the Mobile Crisis Hotline and Regional Walk-In Centers.
- **Strategy:** Continue to utilize and partner with Partners Behavioral Health on placement, therapy resources and collaborate on new ways to educate and support our community.
- **Strategy:** host an annual roundtable forum – led by the RRHS Behavioral Health Team & Psychiatrist – that includes local law enforcement leaders and community activists to gain a greater understanding of the depth of Rutherford County’s substance abuse problem and to develop collaborative partnerships among the participants to:
  - (1) share relevant updates, information, and resources

- (2) apprise one another of resources available for those requesting assistance and share effective strategies including success stories
- (3) determine the most effective ways to educate the community – particularly youth and children – of the dangers and consequences of substance abuse, and
- (4) Identify potential creation of additional resources for those seeking assistance.

### 3. Healthy Eating

- **Strategy:** hold regular Business Engagement Group (BEG) meetings to coordinate and schedule nutritional classes/offerings to local employers on the worksites; offer assistance in evaluating cafeteria offerings if applicable and vending machines.
  - **Strategy:** increase the presence of Dr. Ted E Bear – an educational mascot used by RRHS – in the school systems, kid’s museums, and community events to educate children on the dangers of poor food choices and to encourage healthy eating.
  - **Strategy:** Partner with Rutherford County Farmers Market to assist with educational nutritional demonstrations including samples, recipes and nutritional facts.
  - **Strategy:** creation of a new “healthy eating” landing page on the RRHS website that connects local healthy eating resources such as farms, farmers markets, community gardens and other community resources.
1. The anticipated impact of these actions is to raise awareness of available resources and increase participation in classes, educational programs, events that promote active living, and to identify opportunities to provide greater resources to the community.
  2. The programs and resources the hospital plans to commit to address the health needs include allocating RRHS clinical professionals at local events that promote healthy living; marketing support for collateral materials to be posted throughout RRHS facilities that connect community members with resources available to them; community relations and PRI support for increased communication with employers and job sites that could benefit from RRHS programs and professionals; and executive level support of initiatives identified by the Rutherford County Community Health Council.

3. RRHS anticipates working closely on these prioritized health needs with the Rutherford County Community Health Council; the Rutherford-Polk-McDowell Health Department; RHI Legacy Foundation; Rutherford County municipalities; and local organizers and activists seeking to assist with the creation, maintenance and/or promotion of events and resources that promote healthy living.

Community input was received into the 2019 implementation plan during monthly meetings from the Community Health Council as well as brainstorming sessions throughout the community. Additionally, there will be a link on the RRHS's website to the CHNA and implementation plan.