

Northwest Hills Surgical Hospital

Implementation Strategy for the 2021 CHNA



Ascension



The purpose of this implementation strategy is to describe how the hospital plans to address prioritized health needs from its current Community Health Needs Assessment. The significant health needs that the hospital does not intend to address are identified and a rationale is provided. Special attention has been given to the needs of individuals and communities who are more vulnerable, unmet health needs or gaps in services, and input gathered from the community.

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The 2021 Implementation Strategy was approved by the Northwest Hills Surgical Hospital Board of Managers on August 24, 2022 (2021 tax year), and applies to the following three-year cycle: August 2022 to August 2025. This report can be found at our public website.

We value the community's voice and welcome feedback on this report. Please visit our public website (<https://healthcare.ascension.org/chna>) to submit your comments.

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	3
Executive Statement	4
Introduction	4
Northwest Hills Surgical Hospital	4
Overview of the Implementation Strategy	5
Purpose	5
IRS 501(r)(3) and Form 990, Schedule H Compliance	5
Process to Prioritize Needs	5
Needs That Will Be Addressed	7
Needs That Will Not Be Addressed	7
Acute Community Concern Acknowledgement	7
Written Comments	7
Approval and Adoption by Northwest Hills Surgical Hospital Board of Managers	8
Action Plans	9
Evaluation	10

Executive Statement

The 2021 Implementation Strategy represents a collaborative effort in order to determine meaningful approaches to meet prioritized needs identified in the 2021 Community Health Needs Assessment across Northwest Hills Surgical Hospital and Ascension Seton's service area. Ascension Texas, an affiliate of Ascension Seton, is a majority limited partner of Northwest Hills JV Partners, LLC which is an owner of Austin Center for Outpatient Surgery (DBA Northwest Hills Surgical Hospital) and so these organizations collaborated to prepare these Implementation Strategies.

Introduction

As one of the leading non-profit and Catholic health systems in the United States, Ascension is committed to delivering compassionate, personalized care to all, with special attention to persons living in poverty and those most vulnerable.

Northwest Hills Surgical Hospital

Northwest Hills Surgical Hospital opened its doors to the Austin community in May 1995 and became a part of Surgical Care Affiliates in July 2007. Northwest Hills Surgical Hospital was developed by hospital and clinical personnel to offer safe, high-quality surgical care. Experienced physicians, nurses, and technicians use the latest technology and equipment to provide high-quality care in a warm, personalized setting.

Our mission is to care for our patients, serve our physicians, and improve healthcare in America.

Our Values

- **Clinical Quality** – We are committed to outstanding patient care and clinical outcomes.
- **Integrity** – We do what is right, no matter how difficult, without exception. We say what we mean, and we do what we say.
- **Service Excellence** – We seek to exceed the expectations of patients, physicians, and each other in everything we do.
- **Teamwork** – We work together, helping and supporting one another to make our Centers, Departments, and all of SCA successful.
- **Accountability** – We take complete, personal responsibility for our actions and commitments.
- **Continuous Improvement** – We seek to improve our performance in every area – clinical, operational, and financial – constantly pushing ourselves to new heights.

Northwest Hills Surgical Hospital is located in Austin, Texas, which is in Travis County. For more information about Northwest Hills Surgical Hospital, visit <https://northwesthillssurgical.com>.

Overview of the Implementation Strategy

Purpose

This Implementation Strategy (IS) is the hospital's response to the health needs prioritized from its current Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). It describes the actions the hospital will take to address prioritized needs, allocate resources, and mobilize hospital programs and community partners to work together. This approach aligns with Ascension Texas's commitment to offer programs designed to address the health needs of a community, with special attention to persons who are underserved and vulnerable.

IRS 501(r)(3) and Form 990, Schedule H Compliance

The CHNA and IS satisfy certain requirements of tax reporting, pursuant to provisions of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010, more commonly known as the Affordable Care Act (ACA). As part of the ACA, all not-for-profit hospitals are required to conduct a CHNA and adopt an implementation strategy every three years. Requirements for 501(c)(3) Hospitals Under the Affordable Care Act are described in Code Section 501(r)(3), and include making the CHNA report (current and previous) widely available to the public. In accordance with this requirement, electronic reports of both the CHNA and the current implementation strategy can be found at <https://healthcare.ascension.org/CHNA> and paper versions can be requested at Northwest Hills Surgical Hospital Administrative Offices.

Process to Prioritize Needs

Based on the data collected and presented in the previous sections, Northwest Hills Surgical Hospital with contracted assistance from Alpinista Consulting, applied a phased prioritization process, described below, to identify the priority needs in the Ascension Seton and Northwest Hills Surgical Hospital service areas.

The first step was to gather data from a variety of quantitative and qualitative sources to understand the raw data in terms of trends, gaps, perceptions and opinions. Quantitative needs were categorized into groups such as health behaviors, social determinants of health, length of life, quality of life, clinical care, and systemic issues in order to better develop measures and evidence-based interventions that respond to the determined condition.

From there, with guidance from Alpinista consulting, quantitative and qualitative data were reviewed and analyzed through a "validation" process, whereby themes that emerged from the qualitative data gathering process were matched against analysis of trends and stark gaps in key indicators of the County Health Rankings Data (the primary source of the quantitative data). Specifically, Ascension Seton compared themes that emerged from the qualitative data gathering activities to various data "filters" of quantitative data, including: 1) Quantitative indicators of health and social needs that were worse by greater than one standard deviation compared to Texas and/or national indicators, 2) Analysis of trends over time that revealed worsening conditions related to health and social needs, 3)

Analysis of significant gaps in health and social indicators among geographies within the service region as well as socio-economic and demographic (including racial and ethnic) indicators.

Next, “sensemaking” teams were convened with internal and external stakeholders to review the validated data and identify, through the lens of impact and alignment with Ascension Seton capacities and strategic priorities, which of the data points, or themes might be appropriate for prioritization. The sensemaking process, completed through a series of six sessions with three internal groups and three external groups, asked participants to consider the identified needs through various criteria, including the following:

- Alignment of problem with Northwest Hills Surgical Hospital’s strengths, capacities and priorities
- Impact on vulnerable populations
- Importance of problem to the community
- Organizational resources available to address problem

Based on the results of the sensemaking sessions, the CHNA Steering Committee¹ prioritized which of the identified needs were most significant.

Northwest Hills Surgical Hospital has selected those needs determined by the CHNA Steering Committee as the prioritized needs to develop a three-year implementation strategy. These prioritized needs are the same prioritized needs selected for each of the 12 hospitals in the Ascension Seton network as well as the other five joint ventures in the shared service area. Although each hospital may address many more needs, the prioritized needs will be at the center of a formal CHNA implementation strategy and corresponding tracking and reporting.

Through the prioritization process for the 2021 CHNA, the prioritized needs are as follows:

- **Mental and Behavioral Health** - This need was selected because a number of key indicators reveal the significant and growing concerns over mental and behavioral health needs in our region. Many of these concerns are long standing, including reported numbers of poor mental health days and upward trending suicide rates and substance use and abuse. Coupled with the effects of the pandemic, concerns around isolation, anxiety and depression heightened needs around mental and behavioral health.
- **Access to Care** - This need was selected because both qualitative and quantitative data revealed significant and increasing needs around issues of accessing care, particularly regarding affordability and insurance coverage for care, transportation- especially in the rural parts of Ascension’s service area, telemedicine and access to sufficient broadband infrastructures, and navigation of the complex medical system and services..

¹ The CHNA Steering Committee is comprised of internal leaders Ray Anderson (Chief Strategy Officer), Lauren Baker (VP of Academic Integration & Chief of Staff), Derek Covert (Chief Mission Integration Officer and VP Canonical Affairs), and Kate Henderson (President - Regional Hospitals and Strategic Community Partnerships), and community partners Dr. Jewel Mullen (Associate Dean for Health Equity and Associate Professor, Department of Population Health at The University of Texas), and Dr. Andrew Springer (Associate Professor, Health Promotion and Behavioral Sciences at The University of Texas School of Public Health).

- **Social Determinants of Health** - This need was selected because many of the counties in the Ascension Seton service area have multiple indicators related to social needs that are significantly worse than averages for Texas and the United States, including lower access to exercise opportunities, lower rates of home ownership, very high rates of childhood poverty and low median household incomes, among others. Focus groups also mentioned food security and housing as significant barriers to healthy living.
- **Health Equity** - This need was selected because significant gaps in health indicators and outcomes exist in the Ascension Seton service region according to County Health Rankings data and focus groups revealed narratives of cultural and language barriers to receiving care.

Northwest Hills Surgical Hospital understands the importance of all the health needs of the community and is committed to playing an active role in improving the health of the people in the communities it serves. For the purposes of this CHNA, Northwest Hills Surgical Hospital has chosen to focus its efforts on the priorities listed above.

Needs That Will Be Addressed

Northwest Hills Surgical Hospital will address access to care in this implementation plan. Northwest Hills Surgical Hospital understands the importance of all the health needs of the community and is committed to playing an active role in improving the health of the people in the communities it serves.

Needs That Will Not Be Addressed

This IS will not address mental health, social determinants of health nor health equity. Ascension Texas partners will be addressing each of these needs in their IS. This report does not encompass a complete inventory of everything Northwest Hills Surgical Hospital does to support health within the community.

Acute Community Concern Acknowledgement

A CHNA and IS offer a construct for identifying and addressing needs within the community(s) it serves. However, unforeseen events or situations, which may be severe and sudden, may affect a community. At Ascension, this is referred to as an acute community concern. This could describe anything from a health crisis (e.g., COVID-19), water poisoning, environmental events (e.g., hurricane, flood) or other event that suddenly impacts a community. If adjustments to an IS are necessary, the hospital will develop documentation to inform key internal and external stakeholders.

Written Comments

This IS has been made available to the public and is open for public comment. Questions or comments about this IS can be submitted via the website: <https://healthcare.ascension.org/chna>.

Approval and Adoption by Northwest Hills Surgical Hospital Board of Managers

To ensure the Northwest Hills Surgical Hospital efforts meet the needs of the community and have a lasting and meaningful impact, the 2021 implementation strategy was presented and adopted by the Northwest Hills Surgical Hospital Board of Managers on August 24, 2022. Although an authorized body of the hospital must adopt the IS to be compliant with the provisions in the Affordable Care Act, adoption of the IS also demonstrates that the board is aware of the IS, endorses the priorities identified, and supports the action plans that have been developed to address prioritized needs.

Action Plans

The IS below is based on prioritized needs from the hospital's most recent CHNA. These strategies and action plans represent where the hospital will focus its community efforts over the next three years. While these remain a priority, the hospital will continue to offer additional programs and services to meet the needs of the community, with special attention to those who are poor and vulnerable.

The IS lists actions that this hospital is taking to address the needs, recognizing that needs are complex and multi-layered. More specific information about how the "Actions" and "Measurement" under each IS are carried out and tracked are in an Evaluation Plan. The information gathered for evaluation will be used to report on each activity listed along with others that may align with the strategies adopted.

STRATEGY #1
Hospital Name: Northwest Hills Surgical Hospital
Prioritized Health Need: Access to Care
Strategy Offer hospital resources and time to provide health screening services and educational materials for community members to be aware of their health and resources available to them.
Collaborators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ascension Seton and Northwest Hills Surgical Hospital clinical care team
Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northwest Hills Surgical Hospital will provide the space, staff, and educational materials to the public via an educational booth on site.
ACTION STEPS
Provide public opportunity for patients to receive basic health screenings.
Guide patients to appropriate, high-quality care via educational materials.
MEASUREMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of times the education booth is offered on a quarterly basis Number of community members served Number of teammate hours dedicated to the initiative
ANTICIPATED IMPACT
<i>Short Term:</i> Provide community members with a free resource to test blood pressure, and other general health screenings
<i>Long Term:</i> Establish a consistent resource for the community to obtain routine health tests and gain information on the care providers in the area

STRATEGY #2
Hospital Name: Northwest Hills Surgical Hospital
Prioritized Health Need: Access to Care
Strategy Provide consistent, safe meeting spaces for support groups and care organizations
Collaborators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ascension Seton and Northwest Hills Surgical Hospital clinical care team ● Community partners using space ● Support groups using space
Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Northwest Hills Surgical Hospital will provide the space, staff, and educational materials to community support groups and organizations
ACTION STEPS
Provide safe and sufficient meeting space for local organizations to conduct meetings or support groups
Provide educational materials where relevant to the organization's mission and needs
MEASUREMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Number of organizations collaborated with ● Number of community members served ● Number of meetings held at the facility per quarter
ANTICIPATED IMPACT
<i>Short Term:</i> Provide local organizations with a consistent meeting spot.
<i>Long Term:</i> Establish a consistent resource for the community via the organizations we serve to contribute to the distribution of mental health resources.

Evaluation

Northwest Hills Surgical Hospital, in partnership with Ascension Seton, will develop a comprehensive measurement and evaluation process for the implementation strategy. The Ministry will monitor and evaluate the action plans outlined in this plan for the purpose of reporting and documenting the impact these action plans have on the community. Northwest Hills Surgical Hospital, in partnership with Ascension Seton, uses a tracking system to capture community benefit activities and implementation. To ensure accountability, data will be aggregated into an annual Community Benefit report that will be made available to the community.