

South Peninsula Hospital, Inc.
**Community Health Needs Assessment
Implementation Strategy**
Adopted January 2024



Introduction

South Peninsula Hospital conducted a community health needs assessment (CHNA) for the southern Kenai Peninsula in 2023, in cooperation with MAPP of SKP Health Coalition. This CHNA was conducted in compliance with IRS Section 501(r), and identified health needs of the residents of the South Kenai Peninsula Hospital Service Area of the Kenai Peninsula Borough.

The final assessment was adopted by the SPH Board of Directors on June 28, 2023, and made available to the public on the organization's website www.sphosp.org free of charge. The complete CHNA report can be found in the separate document link titled CHNA on the South Peninsula Hospital website www.sphosp.org.

Numerous presentations were made of the report findings from June through October, including at meetings of the hospital's Board of Directors, Homer City Council, SPH general hospital staff, SPH general medical staff, Rotary and *MAPP of the Southern Kenai Peninsula* local community health coalition made up of twelve partnering local agencies representing the eight dimensions of wellness.

Health Needs Priorities

The findings were reviewed internally by management and input received during presentations was taken into account in order to prioritize the most significant health needs to address. Consideration was given to the magnitude of the issue, consequences if issue was not addressed, and feasibility to affect change. Impact of the pandemic was found to be wide spread. Complete assessment findings, details and breakdown of the data can be found in the complete assessment report. The key findings in no particular order were:

- 1) Mental Health**
- 2) Housing**
- 3) Substance Use**
- 4) Childcare**
- 5) Physical Health**
- 6) Aging Population**
- 7) Barriers to Care**
- 8) Social Isolation**
- 9) Staff Workforce Shortages**

MAPP of Southern Kenai Peninsula health coalition has identified as priorities for the Community Health Improvement Plan: 1) Lack of affordable housing concerns and 2) Developing a communications plan to help connect people of the service area to existing resources related to the findings above. Hospital representatives will be actively engaged in these community-wide strategies and solutions.

Listed below are the strategies South Peninsula Hospital will utilize to address the top nine concerns affecting the health and wellness of the community. Annual updates will be reported out in the Critical Access Hospital annual program report.

Implementation strategies for 2024-2026

Priority Finding #1: Mental Health

1. Increase capacity and awareness of internal and external available resources
 - a) Recruit a Behavioral Health Nurse Practitioner to increase capacity at the Serene Waters Mental Health Clinic
 - b) Provide a community resource guide pamphlet and ensure updated version remains in circulation, both on paper and electronically, internally and externally
 - c) Strengthen relations with other providers in the community for seamless transition of care
 - d) Recruit and retain ample outpatient and inpatient psychiatric providers
 - e) Support regular, free wellness programs in the community

2. Address youth mental health needs through trainings
 - a) Offer trainings and certifications for SPH staff in teen mental health first aid.
 - b) Offer teen mental health first aid trainings to the community on a yearly basis
 - c) Participate as a lead agency in the community Safe & Healthy Kids Fair.
 - d) Grow capacity at the SPH mental health clinic for youth services

3. Increase accessibility and availability of mental health supports internally for SPH staff
 - a) Offer no-cost targeted mental health programming for staff through employee health offerings (Wise at Work course, staff yoga, group activities, lunch and learns with a focus on mental health)
 - b) Continue to support spiritual care for patients and staff through use of the reflection room
 - c) Offer a robust employee engagement program focused on job satisfaction and positive work environment.

Priority Finding #2: Housing

1. Create SPH-owned housing for travelers, visiting physicians, new hires, and more, thus growing local capacity by returning up to 20 housing leases back into the community.
2. Continue to have SPH representation at community meetings oriented towards housing solutions
 - a) Continued involvement in Guiding Growth forum: an ongoing discussion to inform what is driving change in Homer
 - b) Involvement in MAPP taskforce on housing solutions as part of the community health improvement plan (CHIP)
 - c) Participate in city-wide discussions of the City of Homer Comprehensive Plan update

Priority Finding #3: Substance Use

1. Continued partnership with local addiction prevention and harm reduction agencies to co-design solutions to advance community health including but not limited to:
 - a) All Things Recovery Coalition – staff participation and support
 - b) Megan’s Place – facility hosting, advocacy assistance, and support

- c) Kachemak Bay Recovery Connection – provide SPH representation on the board and provide limited funding for administrative support for additional grant acquisition and management
2. Create awareness of Medication for Addiction Treatment (MAT) services at HMC by direct outreach efforts and continued representation with All Things Recovery Coalition and at community events (Rotary Health Fair, Community Resource Connect)
 3. Strengthen relations between inpatient, Emergency Department, outpatient clinics and local harm reduction organizations to ensure seamless transition of care and connection to resources
 - a) Provide training staff on the science of addiction to better reduce the stigma associated with addiction.
 - b) Ensure ER staff are trained and empowered with up to date information on available resources.
 4. Provide SART/SANE nursing services through the Emergency Department and continue partnership in the Child Advocacy Center to provide improved coordination and response to children in need.
 5. Resume SPH internal Substance Use, Misuse and Addiction Task Force.
 6. Sponsor trainings and resources for the community on responding to overdoses.
 - a) Offer overdose response kits, fentanyl testing strips, and drug-disposal bags in clinic, ER settings, and at outreach events
 - b) Offer free community trainings on overdose response

Priority Finding #4: Child Care

1. Create an SPH childcare facility for staff, to be open by fall of 2024, which will free up more than thirty spots in the community currently occupied by children of SPH staff
2. Utilize thread grant to train local personnel, and increase number of certified childcare workers in the service area
3. Partner with local high school and college for entry level workforce development
4. Offer quarterly safe sitter babysitting course to youth in grades 6th-8th , expanding outreach to rural parts of the service area.
5. Participate in local childcare solutions workgroup

Priority Finding #5: Physical Health

1. Focus on marketing and outreach to increase the number of annual or wellness visits a year, returning to pre-pandemic routines and behaviors
2. Provide easy access to vaccines for preventable disease (flu, covid, STD, etc)
3. Increase access to community programming for health education:
 - a) Offer free weekly programming and education centered on health and wellness activities (annual community walking challenge, weekly yoga, health education offerings, etc.)
 - b) Support nutrition education, obesity, diabetes and other related chronic disease prevention and care

- c) Support and promote physical activity among staff and community residents

Priority Finding #6: Aging Population

1. Increase services for a rapidly growing senior population
 - a) Open a free standing wound care clinic to care for patients with referrals from any of the family practice providers in the service area
 - b) Generate community support for funding of an expanded Oncology/Infusion Clinic unit, and the addition of nuclear medicine; finalize plans and begin construction; open in 2026.
 - c) Focus on specialty provider retention and recruitment, adding audiology, dermatology and other much needed senior services
 - d) Strengthen senior based services, including but not limited to outpatient surgery, rehabilitation, swing bed, home health, etc.
 - e) Develop specific senior care offerings as subsets of services
 - f) Utilize the employee wellness program to address health concerns of an aging employee base.
 - g) Actively promote and utilize Home Health Services to decrease hospitalization due to chronic disease.
 - h) Relocate SPH Rehabilitation Department to city center, for easier access and parking.
2. Create ways to reach senior population with health messaging and offerings, such as sponsoring senior day at Kenai Peninsula State Fair, Health Fair and Wellness Wednesdays

Priority Finding #7: Barriers to Care

1. Acute care nurses will begin collecting limited data related to the social determinants of health (SDOH) at time of admission to ensure patients receive the appropriate support services when discharged. SPH will work with local, borough and statewide coalitions and resources to identify and help address significant gaps of services and resources in the hospital's service area. Starting 20205, SPH will fully implement SDOH screenings for food insecurity, housing instability, transportation needs, utility difficulties and interpersonal safety, work to connect patients to services upon discharge, and report measures and data to CMS.
2. Offer free financial navigators at SPH registration to strengthen awareness of financial assistance options Review and update policies and practices related to self-pay discounts, prompt pay discounts, financial assistance and charity care, utilizing a sliding scale based on income when possible; this information and application will be readily available to the community at time of registration, including posting on the hospital website.
3. Partner with existing agencies to boost accessibility of available resources community wide through community events and offerings (Community Resource Connect, Rotary Health Fair, Veterans StandDown, Brake for Breakfast, etc)
4. Create and promote a Patient Assistance fund for taxi vouchers and travel reimbursement for patients experiencing transportation or travel costs a barrier to seeking much needed care.

5. Increase trauma-informed care practices system wide, ensuring all residents feel welcomed seeking services at SPH
6. Continue to partner with the Kachemak Bay Rotary Club to offer deeply discounted blood draws on an annual basis.
7. Update campus and building signage and offer adequate parking for patients to connect to care.

Priority Finding #8: Social Isolation

1. Address the epidemic of loneliness through increased free community seasonal offerings
 - a) Continue to offer space for nurturing connections through shared meals and shared health education at weekly Wellness Wednesday events, offered fall through spring
 - b) Facilitate community-wide Steps Up walking challenge
 - c) Sponsor partner offerings to support a robust variety of free and engaging opportunities to connect in the community.
3. Hospital representatives will continue to work on collective improved community health through participation in MAPP of the Southern Kenai Peninsula local health coalition and MAPP workgroups.
4. Offer volunteer opportunities at the hospital
5. Embrace a healing arts program at SPH to create welcoming, friendly environments patients and the community desire to be in.

Priority Finding #9: Staff Workforce Shortages

1. Prioritize retaining current staff through increased job and employee satisfaction
 - a) Continue offering incentives and appreciation to current staff across all departments
 - b) Improve and monitor employee engagement through two-way communication, promotion of employee benefits and compensation and use of organizational values.
 - c) Offering trainings and advanced education opportunities
2. Increase recruitment efforts
 - a) HR to continue offer desirable recruitment and relocation incentives
3. Maximize SPH Foundation scholarship funds to ensure continuation of scholarships for allied health programs and C.N.A.
4. Support the Kachemak Bay Campus in their C.N.A., nursing and allied health curriculums and clinical rotations.
5. Promote and train entry-level positions on-site when possible.
 - a) Offer tours to high school students of all departments, with emphasis on career tracks
 - b) Offer a C.N.A. on the job earn to learn program
 - c) Partner with UAA and HHS to be the site for an annual AHEC career boot camp
 - d) Offer as many preceptor or intern programs as possible