

Community Health Implementation Plan 2023-2026

STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS

Selection of the Community Health Priorities and Future Planning

The Greater Waterbury Health Partnership (GWHP) has collaborated with clinical and community partners on a comprehensive Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) to evaluate the health needs of individuals living in and around Waterbury, Connecticut beginning in 2021. The purpose of the assessment is to gather information about local health needs and health behaviors. The assessment examines a variety of indicators including risky health behaviors (alcohol use, tobacco use) and chronic health conditions (diabetes, heart disease).

The objectives of the session were to:

- Review compiled DataHaven Health and Wellbeing data and highlight key research findings.
- Gather feedback from community representatives about community health needs; and
- Prioritize the community health needs based on select criteria.

IDENTIFIED HEALTH PRIORITIES

The Greater Waterbury Health Partnership reviewed the findings and priority areas were established through a combination of community input and partner review of data and have been carefully examined to ensure inclusiveness of issues that contribute to health disparities in the community. Data in this report reflects a direct correlation to main priorities and focus area subsets. The following priority areas for Waterbury were adopted for the 2023-2026 implementation plan in order to touch on several health initiatives:

Access to Care

1. Readmissions
2. Language
3. Care Coordination

Outreach & Community Trust

1. Health Education
2. Culturally Competent Care
3. Maternal Health

Systems Change

1. Substance Abuse
2. Mental Health
3. Chronic Disease Prevention

WATERBURYHOSPITAL'S IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Waterbury Hospital's Implementation Strategy illustrates the hospital's specific programs and resources that will support ongoing efforts to address the identified community health priorities. This work will be supported by community-wide efforts and leadership from the executive team.

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The goal statements, related strategies, and inventory of new and existing initiatives and resources for each of the priority areas are listed below.

ACCESS TO CARE

Strategy: Improve access to comprehensive, culturally competent, quality health services focusing on plain and culturally appropriate language, increased care coordination and reduction in readmissions.

Objectives:

1. Enroll patients in insurance or DSS entitlement programs through the Waterbury Health Access Program (WHAP) and refer patient to a primary care provider and other social services if needed.
2. Identify high utilizers of the hospital's emergency department and care will be managed by the Community Care Team.
3. Use plain language materials for hospital patients including patient guide and discharge instructions.
4. Focus efforts on readmission reduction programs with strong focus on transition of care nurses

Action Steps:

Short-term	Long-term
Introduce an ED concierge to help patients follow up with appointments and educate them about follow up care	High utilizers of the hospital EDs will be managed by the Community Care Team. Connect ED and hospital patients to health and wellness resources including those available by the partnership.

Resources:

Community Care Team

With the Greater Waterbury Health Improvement Partnership, we are working on creating a Community Care Team to provide cross-organization case management for high utilization emergency department visitors between both hospital EDs and a comprehensive array of community organizations.

Waterbury Health Access Program

The Waterbury Health Access Program (WHAP) improves access to high-quality medical care by providing comprehensive case management, pharmacy assistance, and access to primary and sub-specialty medical care for the uninsured and underinsured residents of the Greater Waterbury region.

Be Well Bus

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In order to ensure that patients have access to medical appointments, at the hospital and at local physicians' offices, Waterbury Hospital's Be Well Bus provides transportation services to patients from Waterbury and eleven of its surrounding towns.

Wellness Series

The Wellness with a Pulse Series is an on-line and social media-based program that using knowledge of Waterbury HEALTH medical staff on different topics and offers advice and opportunity for the public to ask questions. The series is available to all and covers a variety of health topics including heart health, depression, muscles and joint pain, osteoporosis, healthy eating, asthma, bone health, and a range of other medical topics.

OUTREACH AND COMMUNITY TRUST

Strategy: Promote health and reduce chronic disease through culturally appropriate programs that target all populations including non-English speaking populations and women.

Objectives:

1. Incorporate regular information sessions and classes on diabetes, heart health, nutrition, birthing, mom and baby care classes, bariatric etc. that will be open to the public.
2. Continued Diversity, Equity and Inclusion training for all Waterbury HEALTH employees including on bias training and cultural sensitivities.
3. Will partner with community organizations to offer programs on maternal health including in African American and Hispanic organization. This includes community outreach programs in Spanish.

Action Steps:

Short-term	Long-term
Start patient and community e-newsletter with information about programs, classes, and events focusing on health and wellness.	Restart the Waterbury HEALTH Club focusing on health and wellness post COVID-19 including mental health, disease prevention classes and exercise programs.

Resources:

Wellness Series

The Wellness Series includes wellness community education presentations open to the public about a variety of health topics including heart health, depression, muscles and joint pain, osteoporosis, healthy eating, asthma, bone health, and a range of other medical topics.

Comprehensive Weight Management Program

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The Comprehensive Weight Management Program offers medical and surgical weight loss options for patients. Services include medical nutrition therapy, medical weight loss, and surgical weight loss. Medical Nutrition Therapy with a registered dietitian is available to patients with a variety of medical conditions such as diabetes, chronic kidney disease, hypertension, high cholesterol, as well as for those who are looking to lose weight.

Cardiac Rehab

Waterbury Hospital's cardiopulmonary rehabilitation is a medically supervised program to optimize the physical, psychological and social functioning of patients with cardiac and/or respiratory issues. Cardiopulmonary Rehabilitation can stabilize, slow and even reverse the progression of underlying cardiac issues.

Waterbury Hospital's program is staffed with Registered Nurses, Respiratory Therapists and Exercise Specialists and is accredited by AACVPR (American Association of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation). This program is accredited by AACVPR (American Association of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation).

Transition of Care Team

Our Transition of Care team, visits patients at home by referral. For these patients she does education, medication review and nutrition coaching.

- A *Transition of Care Nurse* is positioned at Waterbury Hospital to facilitate a safe discharge into the community for high-risk patients.
- An additional *Transition of Care Nurse* is out in the community at Skilled Nursing Facilities to ensure that quality safe continuum of care is maintained.

Heart Failure Center

The Heart Failure Center at Waterbury Hospital provides comprehensive outpatient care to patients who have received a heart failure diagnosis. Our goal is to help patients manage their disease so they can achieve the best quality of life possible.

Our team includes a cardiologist with expertise in heart failure management, nurse practitioners and a nutritionist. The team monitors each patient to ensure they are getting the best care and are following proper medication guidelines and a proper diet.

Our Services include heart failure disease management, symptom and weight tracking, medication review and tracking, intravenous diuretic (water tablets) administration, dietary consults, activity/exercise recommendations

Palliative Care

There were more than 700 geriatrics/palliative care consultations are done a year focusing on of inpatient and outpatient Consultations on End-of-life care, goals of care discussions, addressing polypharmacy, dementia assessments, help with management of chronic behavioral disturbances in dementia and an acute agitated delirium in medical/surgical/orthopedic units.

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Waterbury Hospital provides a robust education for nursing staff regarding care for frail geriatric patients on the floors, teaching rising professionals of Internal Medicine residency program and PA Yale School of medicine about complexity and vulnerability of elderly patients.

We have a multidisciplinary team building with case managers, social workers, physical and occupational therapists, speech and language pathologists, pharmacists, volunteers, pall care/hospice agencies and rehabilitation centers in the community to provide the best care for geriatric patients.

Waterbury HEALTH Club

The Club will offer fitness classes including weight training and yoga, wellness classes, and health education presentations on a variety of topics are presented by healthcare professionals. The Club will resume activities in 2024, to include a newsletter to patients and the community.

Food for Life Program

The Food for Life Program is an innovative program that provides access to fresh fruits and vegetables and enrollment in exercise programs to qualified HIV patients at no cost. The program offers a fitness and yoga class monthly and Nutrition, Health, and Wellness Support Group biweekly to engage patients in positive activities.

Diversity Equity and Inclusion Committee

The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee was created in 2021 with the following Mission and Vision.

Mission

Waterbury HEALTH is committed to providing an environment that is welcoming, inclusive, diverse and respectful. We value inclusion and diversity so all patients, families, colleagues and physicians will be empowered to share their unique difference and similarities with each other. By fostering an inclusive workplace environment, we seek to support innovative solutions to meet the needs of our patients and colleagues.

Vision:

Our WH Diversity, Equity and Inclusion committee is designed to serve our colleagues, patients, visitors and communities. The committee is made up of employees and leaders at WH that promote and embrace inclusion and diversity.

The committee's work includes educating staff on topics such as bias, micro aggression, LBGTQ community, religious diversity and more. This important work is expected to continue with education of staff on diversity, equity and inclusion and efforts to change hiring practices that will make the organization more diverse.

Waterbury HEALTH Website

Multilanguage Function

The Waterbury HEALTH website is a source of information for the community promoting services in the network, classes, support groups for diverse patient populations.

In addition, since 2021, the Waterbury HEALTH website is multilingual offering the user options to have the entire content of the website in a language of their choosing, helping users receive information in their prefer language, eliminating language barrier to this information.

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Calendar of Events

Designed with the community in mind, the calendar of events offers both in person and on-line classes, information and support for different patient populations, including expecting and new parents, orthopedic and bariatric patients and more.

SYSTEMS CHANGE

Strategy: To promote real systems change for patients with substance abuse and mental health disorders and chronic disease prevention.

Objectives:

1. Expand on programs for vulnerable populations including Homeless Outreach.
2. Expand on peer recovery coaches and specialists to help substance misuse patients.
3. Create and strengthen programs for patient populations with substance abuse and dual diagnosis.

Action Steps:

Short-term	Long-term
Expand Peer recovery specialist for patients with Mental Health Needs.	Implementing Partial Hospitalization Program for clients with substance abuse and psychiatric issues requiring higher level of case Implement treatment for patients with major depression disorders

Resources:

Behavioral Health

The Center for Behavioral Health offers psychiatric evaluations, OT/AT evaluations, family and group therapy, didactic educational groups, individual counseling, recreational services, and mental health services. The center also provides support groups such as parent and sibling support group, which offers emotional assistance to families who have children in treatment, and Alcoholics Anonymous.

We treat all individuals, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual preference or socio-economic status. Our goals are to optimize the individual's highest level of functioning, to promote recovery from mental illness and substance use disorders, and to lessen suffering through the delivery of high quality, compassionate and cost-effective treatment.

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We employ a multidisciplinary approach and encourage the patient to be an active participant in his or her own treatment. Through a blending of biologic and psychosocial modalities we endeavor to reduce distress, to educate, and to heal. We utilize state-of-the-art therapies that assist our clients in achieving their goals in a manner that preserves privacy and promotes personal dignity and hope. Acknowledging the importance of family, friends, faith communities and other support systems, we strive toward the creation of meaningful and collaborative relationships.

PEER Recovery Specialist - Certified Peer Recovery Specialists provides support to patients with substance misuse disorder, with mental illness, or co- occurring disorder and help them achieve their personal recovery goals by promoting self-determination, personal responsibility, and the empowerment inherent in self-directed recovery. This successful program helps patients in the Emergency Department and their families find resources and support they need.

PEER Recovery Coach

Peer Recovery Coach provides recovery support to clients diagnosed with Substance Abuse Disorders engaging clients in the ER, outpatient setting, and the hospital to ensure clients are connected to services in the community and to support follow through of treatment recommendations.

Homeless Outreach Coordinator

For nearly 30 years the Waterbury Hospital Homeless Outreach Program has helped thousands of city residents. Through this program homeless men, women and children get connected to basic services including mental health, addictions and other health services, food, housing and jobs.

Each year, an average 120 people are helped by this program thanks to Waterbury Hospital Mental Health Clinicians. Through this work some of the most vulnerable are linked into a safety network led by United Way of Greater Waterbury that includes other social, non-for profit and health organization and entities in the city.

Partial Hospitalization Program

In the aftermath of COVID-19 with increased demand for services, Waterbury Hospital plans to implement PHP (Partial Hospital Program) for clients with substance abuse and/or psychiatric issues who need a higher level of care in outpatient setting.

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CHNA Implementation Work Plan Summary

Access to Care	Outreach and Community Trust	Systems Change
<p>Strategy: Improve access to comprehensive, culturally competent, quality health services focusing on plain and culturally appropriate language, increased care coordination and reduction in readmissions.</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Enroll patients in insurance or DSS entitlement programs through the Waterbury Health Access Program (WHAP) and refer patient to a primary care provider and other social services if needed. Identify high utilizers of the hospital's emergency department and care will be managed by the Community Care Team. Use plain language materials for hospital patients including patient guide and discharge instructions. Focus efforts on readmission reduction programs with strong focus on transition of care nurses <p>Action Steps:</p> <p><u>Short-term</u></p> <p>Introduce an ED concierge to help</p>	<p>Strategy: Promote health and reduce chronic disease through culturally appropriate programs that target all populations including non-English speaking populations and women.</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate regular information sessions and classes on diabetes, heart health, nutrition, birthing, mom and baby care classes, bariatric etc. that will be open to the public. Continued Diversity, Equity and Inclusion training for all Waterbury HEALTH employees including on bias training and cultural sensitivities. Will partner with community organizations to offer programs on maternal health including in African American and Hispanic organization. This includes community outreach programs in Spanish. <p>Action Steps:</p> <p><u>Short-term</u></p> <p>Start patient and community e-newsletter with</p>	<p>Strategy: To promote real systems change for patients with substance abuse and mental health disorders and chronic disease prevention.</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Expand on programs for vulnerable populations including Homeless Outreach. Expand on peer recovery coaches and specialists to help substance misuse patients. Create and strengthen programs for patient populations with substance abuse and dual diagnosis. <p>Action Steps:</p> <p><u>Short-term</u></p> <p>Expand Peer recovery specialist for</p>

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CHNA Implementation Work Plan Summary

<p>patients follow up with appointments and educate them about follow up care.</p> <p><u>Long-term</u></p> <p>High utilizers of the hospital EDs will be managed by the Community Care Team.</p> <p>Connect ED and hospital patients to health and wellness resources including those available by the partnership.</p>	<p>information about programs, classes, and events focusing on health and wellness.</p> <p><u>Long-term</u></p> <p>Restart the Waterbury HEALTH Club focusing on health and wellness post COVID-19 including mental health, disease prevention classes and exercise programs.</p>	<p>patients with Mental Health Needs.</p> <p><u>Long-term</u></p> <p>Implementing Partial Hospitalization Program for clients with substance abuse and psychiatric issues requiring higher level of care</p> <p>Implement treatment for patients with major depression disorders</p>
<p>Partners:</p> <p>Saint Mary's Hospital, Staywell Health Center, and Waterbury Department of Public Health</p>	<p>Partners:</p> <p>Waterbury Hispanic Coalition, Madre Latina, Churches serving African American and Latino populations, CT Department of Public Health, Waterbury Hospital Parent Leadership Alumni</p>	<p>Partners:</p> <p>Department of Mental and Addictions, Connecticut Community for Addictions, Homeless shelters and organizations serving the Homeless.</p>