INTRODUCTION

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 requires all nonprofit hospitals to conduct a needs assessment of their local communities and develop an implementation plan to meet the priority needs every three years. St. Luke’s University Health Network (SLUHN) has a long history of promoting community health and has actively partnered with the community to complete a comprehensive needs assessment and strategic plan for the Lehigh Valley area, including Warren County, New Jersey.

PROCESS

St. Luke’s Warren Hospital (SLW) commissioned AMK Healthcare Consulting, LLC (AMK), in association with New Solutions, Inc. AMK was established in 2010 by Valerie Sellers, President and CEO. Ms. Sellers holds a Bachelor’s degree in Industrial and Labor Relations and a Master’s degree in Health Administration—both from Cornell University. Before founding AMK, Ms. Sellers served as Senior Vice President for Health Planning and Research at the New Jersey Hospital Association for more than 17 years.

New Solutions, Inc. (NSI) is a management consulting company formed in 1984. The collective expertise of the NSI team includes health administrators, market researchers, business and financial analysts, strategic planners and marketing professionals, epidemiologists, database experts, and decision support technologists. Lead consultants have an average of 20+ years of health care experience.

On the St. Luke’s Warren Campus CHNA project, the lead participant from NSI was principal, Nancy Erickson, a key management advisor to many New Jersey hospitals’ senior administrators for more than 20 years. Ms. Erickson holds a Bachelor’s degree in Sociology from Drew University and a Master’s degree from
Rutgers University, where she specialized in health planning, policy and management.

The complete CHNA analysis and reports for SLW are available on the SLW website.

**Steering Committee**

A Steering Committee, comprised of members of the community representing public health, human services, behavioral health, education and government, as well as members of hospital administration, oversaw the project. Many of these members became key informant interviewees, providing valuable information based on their expertise about the community and the field of public health. Members of this group included:

Frank Dragotta  
County Superintendent of Schools  
Warren County Department of Education

Linda Frick, RN  
Nurse, Phillipsburg High School

Anne Grogan, MSW  
Network Director for Senior Care  
St. Luke’s University Health Network

Anna Hockenberry  
Chief Professional Officer  
United Way of Northern New Jersey

Paulette Hussey  
Marketing Manager  
Phillipsburg Community Health Center (FQHC)

Karen Kubert, MA, CPM  
Director  
Warren County Department of Human Services

Susan E. Lennon  
Executive Director  
Warren County Department of Aging & Disability Services

Judith Leone, RN, BSN  
Director,  
Warren County Health Department
Community representatives from Warren County and the SLW service area also were invited to participate in focus group discussions for the purpose of identifying priority health issues.

**RESULTS**

The results of the survey are based on four separate components:

1. A random telephone survey of 719 households in the hospital’s primary service area, which includes Warren County and its neighboring community of Easton, Pennsylvania.
2. An analysis of existing community health measures and secondary data.
3. Three focus groups conducted by AMK with key patient populations in the Warren Campus service area.
4. Structured interviews with identified key informants in the community.

Priority health needs identified were Lifestyle Behaviors, Elder Health, Mental Health, Access to Medical and Dental Care for the Un- and Under-Insured, and Women’s Health.
The implementation plan listed below incorporates ideas and recommendations suggested by the Steering Committee with existing community health initiatives and network-wide plans.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

In order to implement this plan at St. Luke’s Warren Hospital with no additional staffing resources, a committee process will be developed to oversee and implement identified strategies. Members of this committee will meet at least two times per year to identify, research and implement effective strategies and to evaluate progress in meeting established goals. At a minimum, the committee will consist of:

- SLUHN Director of Community Health
- President, SLW
- VP, Patient Care Services, SLW
- Director, Business Development, SLW
- Case Management Representative
- Social Worker
- ER representative
- Other specialists as needed

The possible allocation, on a part-time basis, of an employee who could be dedicated to heading up the implementation plan will also be considered.

COMMUNITY HEALTH INITIATIVES

GOAL: Promote healthy birth outcomes for expectant mothers in the Warren Campus service area

Objective 1: Provide pre- and post-natal health services including more family practice physicians, Ob/Gyns and/or relevant sub-specialists within the Warren Campus service area.

*Action steps:*
1. Assess resources available through SLUHN
2. Assess SLW medical staff via comprehensive medical staff plan
3. Establish and promote perinatology practice in Phillipsburg
**Objective 2:** Support low-income women and young families by connecting them with resources for pregnancy, childbirth, child care and ancillary services.

*Action steps:*
1. Partner with NORWESCAP Family Success Center to help them with its “Healthy Parents, Healthy Babies” event.
   - The event began in 2013, but did not attract many participants.
2. Add physician talks on topics of interest to young women to community education programming.
3. Partner with the county Center for Domestic Abuse and Sexual Assault Crisis Center to reach more women who are underserved and/or in crisis.
4. Explore the availability of “best practice” models (i.e., Nurse Family Partnership and others) in Warren County to connect pregnant and new mothers with education, health information and training.

**GOAL:** Improve behavioral health status for families and individuals in the Warren Campus service area through prevention services and access to appropriate behavioral health services

**Objective 1:** Perform a comprehensive assessment of current resources vs. outpatient needs working in partnership with the Warren County Community Health Improvement Coalition (CHIC).
- Currently the hospital provides 20 hours of outpatient behavioral health services focused on medication management.
- Analysis should determine whether hours and services should be expanded to provide different kinds of therapy or specific therapy for alcohol and drug abuse.

**Objective 2:** Investigate the feasibility of partnering with a local agency to provide outpatient behavioral health services.

*Action Steps:*
1. Identify and meet with all mental health services providers in Warren County, to thoroughly understand their missions, programs and operations and identify partnership opportunities.
2. Explore the delivery of partnering with a community-based agency to provide outpatient mental health services in our family medicine practices—especially the three that have been approved as patient-centered medical homes.
Objective 3: Work with community agencies to develop a comprehensive plan to manage and improve the hand-off process for psychiatric patients who arrive at our Emergency Room.

Action Steps:
1. Formation of a task force that includes the Medical Director of Emergency Medicine, Director of Quality and Network Service Line Director. The group will:
   - Review standing orders for handling and supervision of these patients in the ER
   - Investigate how patients might be transported to behavioral health facilities at SLUHN Bethlehem
   - Explore partnerships for patient hand-offs with other hospitals within our primary and secondary service area,

GOAL: Promote healthy lifestyles and reduce chronic disease burden in the Warren Campus service area

Objective 1: Continue to build on our strong and successful community education programming with increased focus on behaviors and diseases identified as prevalent in our market:
   - Pediatric nutrition and obesity
   - Heart healthy eating and exercise
   - Anti-tobacco programs
   - Diabetes education

Action Steps:
1. Develop improved methods of tracking results for existing and new programs.
2. Research grant opportunities that could provide funding to enable the development of more sophisticated tracking tools for classes and programs
3. Supplement current roster of free physician talks and free disease screenings with programs designed for children, in partnership with area schools and child-based service agencies
4. Use the Warren Campus quarterly newsletter to disseminate wellness information and promote programs aimed at high-risk behaviors to a broad constituency
5. Continue to promote healthy activities through the SLW Concussion Center outreach to student athletes and SLUHN-wide programs like Get Your Tail on the Trail and other programs involving physical activity.

GOAL: Promote access to oral health services for needy families in the Warren Campus service area

**Objective 1:** Obtain NJ licensing for current HealthStar van staff or recruit a New Jersey-based staff for the van.
- The SLUHN HealthStar Van provides dental services to low income families throughout the Lehigh Valley. Currently, the van and its staff are not licensed to practice in New Jersey.

**Objective 2:** Explore dental insurance issues and the transferability of Medical Assistance insurance across state lines.

*Action Steps:*
1. Determine whether or not Medical Assistance patients in New Jersey could be eligible for dental services at the SLUHN dental clinic in Pennsylvania.
2. Research other free or low-cost dental services that might be available in New Jersey to determine if a partnership opportunity exists.

GOAL: Improve the health and well-being of elder residents in the Warren Campus service area

**Objective 1:** Implement home health service option for specific diagnoses
- Currently, New Jersey State licensing limitations prevent SLW from offering the service to its patients.

*Action Steps:*
1. Explore the idea of partnering with the Warren County Department of Health (which holds a NJ home health license) to develop and provide specific protocols and visitations for seniors with specific diseases, which have a high re-admission incidence.
2. Develop a case management strategy using the “super utilizer” or “hot spotting” models to wrap services around patients who are discharged with these diagnoses.

3. Continue to refine the hospital discharge process, including clinical follow-up calls from nursing staff after discharge and ongoing training for clinical staff in patient education.