UMass Memorial Medical Center, Community Benefits

Target Populations FY2014

Community Benefits Mission
UMass Memorial Health Care is committed to improving the health status of all those it serves and to addressing the health issues of the poor and other medically-underserved populations. In addition, non-medical conditions that negatively impact the health and wellness of the community are addressed. The Mission incorporates the World Health Organization’s broad definition of health defined as “a state of complete physical, mental and social well being and not merely the absence of disease.” The UMass Memorial Medical Center Community Benefits Mission was developed and recommended by the Community Benefits Advisory Committee and approved by the Trustees.

Target Populations
Target populations for UMass Memorial’s Community Benefits initiatives are identified through a community input and planning process, collaborative efforts and a health needs assessment which is conducted every three years. In 2012, UMass Memorial conducted its Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) and developed a Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) in collaboration with the Worcester Health Department, community health centers and other stakeholders.

Our target populations focus on medically underserved populations of all ages. Our most vulnerable populations include children, elders living in public housing sites, racial and ethnic minorities. These populations often become isolated and disenfranchised due to negligence, misperceptions and even fear. Community members and providers identified the need to have access to care programs, medical/dental and mental health services, job training and substance abuse interventions to reengage and reconnect these populations to care and other support services.

Target Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Target Population</th>
<th>Basis for Selection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Underinsured/Uninsured and Medically Underserved | Access to affordable health care is vital to the health of individuals and the community. Massachusetts has made great strides in making health insurance attainable for nearly all residents. However, while health insurance is mandatory in the state, nearly 4% remain uninsured.  
  - Insurance Enrollment: According to 2010 U.S. Census data, 95.6% of residents in the City of Worcester have health insurance coverage. Of those, 64.4% have private health insurance coverage and 41.4% are enrolled in public health insurance (Medicaid, Medicare). Nevertheless, there remains a significant need to provide insurance enrollment assistance. To address this need, a dedicated department at UMass Memorial provides insurance enrollment assistance to |
patients and members of the community. It also helps patients and the general public with SNAP (Food Stamp) enrollment, WIC applications and other support services.

- **Access to Medical & Dental Services:** Worcester has been designated by the federal government as having a shortage of health care professionals in the region. UMass Memorial's support of two federally-qualified health centers, in conjunction with its Ronald McDonald Care Mobile, improve access to medical and dental care and address the shortage of primary care professionals.

### Youth At Risk (Ages 12-22)

According to Census 2010 data, nearly 30% of children under the age of 18 in the city of Worcester are living below the poverty level. This is almost double the state average. Poverty and low educational attainment are among the top social determinants leading to lower utilization of health care services and poor health outcomes. In addition, youth living in poverty are exposed to and at greater risk of becoming involved in gangs, or affected by gang-related violence.

As a result of its high population of low income families and children, Worcester youth are at high-risk for obesity, violence, poor oral health and need for mental health services. UMass Memorial supports programs that provide positive youth development and recreational activities among youth to both promote healthy weight and reduce violence. Our system does this by providing funding for both after school programs and summer employment opportunities for youth.

We fund three key areas that address the most basic health needs for low-income youth:

- Medical and preventive dental services and access to care
- Mental health and alcohol, tobacco and other drugs programs
- Violence prevention, education, safety, healthy lifestyles and workforce and leadership development

Developing valuable work skills and experience can encourage self-sufficiency and interest in higher learning. For school-aged youth, supervised programs keep school-aged youth safe while providing fun, healthy outlets for their energy and creativity.

### Ethnic and Linguistic Minorities

The City of Worcester is very ethnically-diverse and that diversity continues to increase. According to the 2010 Census, the Hispanic population and other non-Hispanic, non-White ethnic groups have notably increased while the White, non-Hispanic population has decreased. The number of Hispanics living in the city has grown by 35% followed by Vietnamese and
The city’s foreign born population is also significantly higher compared to the nation and state overall. Diversity among new immigrants and refugees also continues to expand. Refugees from Iraq currently account for the greatest percentage of new immigrants followed by refugees from Bhutan, Burma, Liberia and other African nations. Programs focus on:

- Infant Mortality efforts to address prenatal care issues among at risk women
- Substance abuse medical and counseling services for Latino men in a residential program
- Health literacy programs that promote prevention and wellness
- Outreach to increase access to care for populations at risk (i.e. Blacks, Southeast Asian)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Public Health of the Worcester Community</th>
<th>UMass Memorial Health Care’s Community Benefits Program aims to improve the health status of our community by addressing social, economic and political obstacles that prevent people from attaining optimal health. We do this by supporting community health initiatives that address unmet health needs in a proactive manner and through a variety of collaborative initiatives and partnerships with the Worcester Health Department, local coalitions and organizations and Common Pathways (Community Health Network Area (CHNA) 8). The hospital supports the Commissioner of Public Health position and has taken a leadership role in the implementation of the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outreach to Neighborhoods</td>
<td>To promote healthy living in low income neighborhoods, UMass Memorial brings a number of programs directly to where people live and conducts focused outreach in Worcester’s Bell Hill and Plumley Village neighborhoods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Onsite medical and dental services are offered through our Ronald McDonald Care Mobile at ten low-income neighborhoods serving as an entry-point into the healthcare system for medically-underserved families and individuals. The Care Mobile additionally offers dental services to school age children grades K-6 who have a high incidence of tooth decay due to lack of fluoridation in the city water supply.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- A satellite health clinic is located in the vicinity of Plumley Village, which is home to 1,400 families.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Outreach efforts to the Bell Hill neighborhood that target school attendance issues and social needs of families, revitalization efforts, safety, and activities to promote active and healthy living.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Access to healthy food in Bell Hill/Plumley is a challenge for residents. By partnering with residents, three highly successful Community Garden projects have been</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The gardens are maintained by teens and families in the neighborhood fostering community engagement and ownership while providing access to healthy produce.

| **Elders in Public Housing** | Seniors account for the fastest growing sector of the population as baby boomers reach the age of 65. According to Census 2010 figures, residents over the age of 65 account for 11.6% of Worcester’s population.  

This rapidly growing older citizen and senior population requires consideration when planning current and future health care services. Seniors experience barriers to accessing medical services, dental care, physical activities, and a lack of transportation and mobility problems. We offer on-site wellness services at residential sites. |
|---|---|

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>School age children with asthma in Bell Hill/Plumley</strong></th>
<th>To address the high prevalence of asthma among school age children, UMass Memorial will develop a pilot home visiting asthma program that will improve health outcomes.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| **Overweight children and adults** | Obesity/overweight has reached epidemic levels across the country and locally. Disparities in overweight and obesity rates exist by race, education, income, gender, disability status and geography. Lower-income residents are significantly more likely to suffer from obesity and other diet-related health problems. According to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, people who are overweight are more likely to have type 2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke, gall bladder disease, cancer and musculoskeletal disorders.  

Recent data from the Massachusetts Department of Education and the Worcester Public School system shows that children living in the City of Worcester are overweight at higher rates than the state as a whole. Overall, the average for obese youth entering first grade in the City of Worcester is 20.25% compared to the nationwide average of 10%. Particularly alarming is a dramatic increase in the past decade of obesity among 1st graders in the Asian community. Children who are obese at age 8 are 90% more likely to be overweight or obese as adults, according to MDPH. Among adults in Worcester County, nearly 70% of Hispanics were overweight or obese, but within ethnic groups, Blacks were more likely to be obese.  

While overweight and obesity has worsened, UMass Memorial and multiple groups are focused on this as a public health priority and supports programs that promote healthy eating and access to physical exercise. |
|---|---|