



March 2019

Implementation Strategy Plan Report
East Jefferson General Hospital



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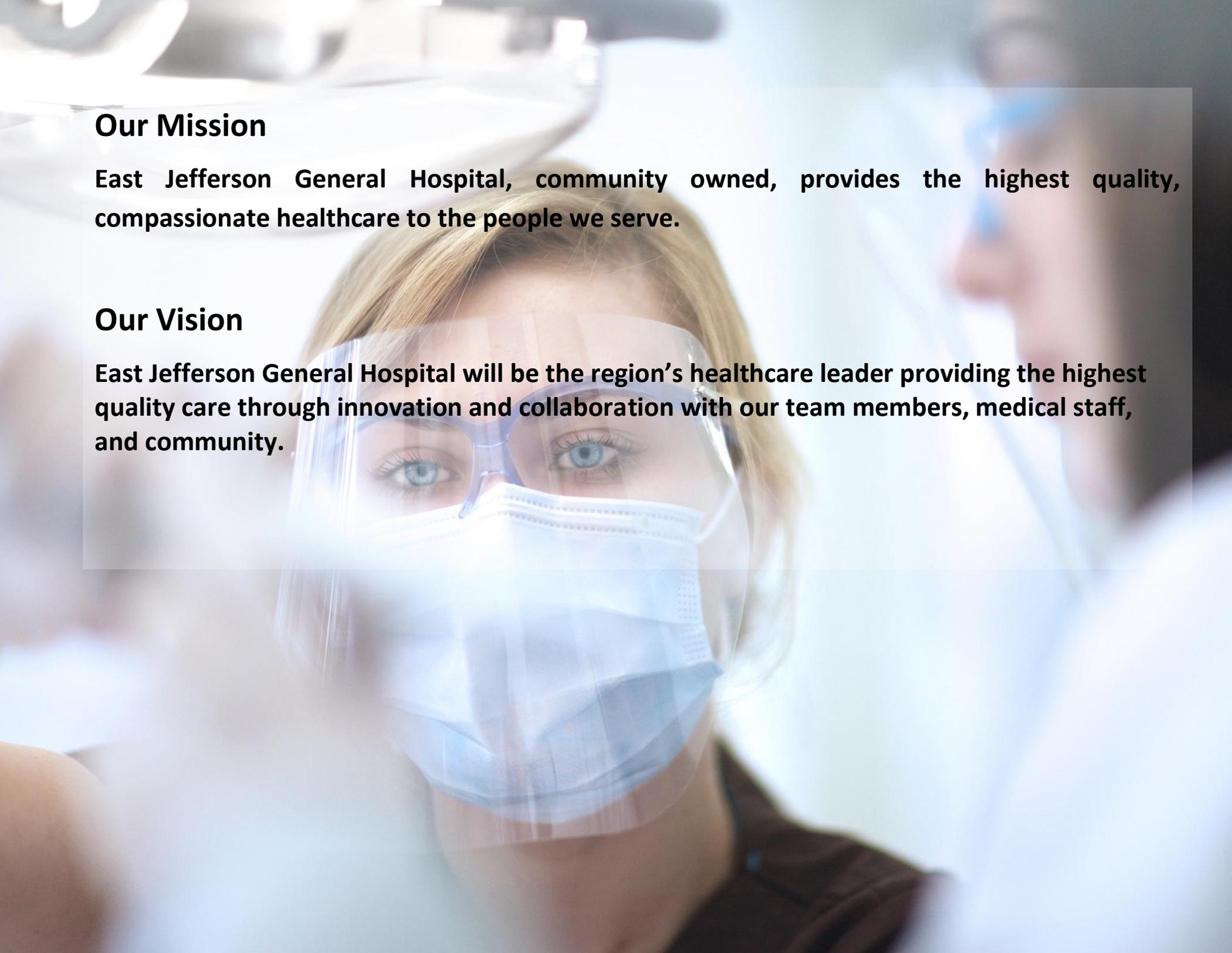
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A close-up photograph of a healthcare worker in a surgical setting. The worker is wearing a blue surgical mask and a clear face shield. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people in white coats and blue masks, suggesting an operating room or a sterile clinical environment. The lighting is bright and clinical.

Our Mission

East Jefferson General Hospital, community owned, provides the highest quality, compassionate healthcare to the people we serve.

Our Vision

East Jefferson General Hospital will be the region's healthcare leader providing the highest quality care through innovation and collaboration with our team members, medical staff, and community.

Introduction

Opening on Valentine's Day, 1971, East Jefferson General Hospital (EJGH) started as a 250-bed facility with almost 250 physicians serving the newly burgeoning suburbs of Jefferson Parish. Today, EJGH stands as a state-of-the-art hospital with more than 420 beds. Still a community hospital with a board comprised of representatives throughout the community, EJGH's patients are served by a staff of more than 3,000 team members and more than 650 physicians.

East Jefferson General Hospital, through the generosity of the EJGH Foundation and its supporters, has grown over the past three decades to become a medical landmark with the addition of medical office buildings, the Yenni Treatment Center for outpatient cancer treatment, and the Domino Pavilion, which houses same day surgery, outpatient laboratory, and outpatient radiology services. Most recently, the Wellness Center, a 38,000 square foot, state-of-the-art fitness facility and the East Jefferson Imaging Center, were added to the hospital's outreach. East Jefferson General Hospital has grown with the East Bank community, offering the clinical expertise and cutting-edge technology our community expects and deserves.

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), which went into effect on March 23, 2010, requires tax-exempt hospitals to conduct community health needs assessments (CHNA) and implementation strategies in order to improve the health and well-being being of residents within the communities served by the hospital(s). These strategies created by hospitals and institutions consist of programs, activities, and plans that are specifically targeted towards populations within the community. The execution of the implementation strategy plan is designed to increase and track the impact of each hospitals' efforts.

Tripp Umbach was contracted by Metropolitan Hospital Council of New Orleans (MHCNO) to conduct a CHNA for East Jefferson General Hospital, LCMC Health, Ochsner Health System, Tulane Health System, Slidell Memorial Hospital, and St. Tammany Parish Hospital. The overall CHNA involved multiple steps that are depicted in Chart 1.

The CHNA process undertaken by East Jefferson General Hospital, along with LCMC Health, Tulane Health System, Ochsner Health System, Slidell Memorial Hospital, and St. Tammany Parish Hospital, with project management and consultation by Tripp Umbach, included input from representatives who represent the broad interests of the community served by the hospital facilities, including those with special knowledge of public health issues, data related to underserved, hard-to-reach, vulnerable populations, and representatives of vulnerable populations served by each hospital. Tripp Umbach worked closely with Working Group members to oversee and accomplish the assessment and its goals. This report fulfills the requirements of the Internal Revenue Code 501(r)(3), established within the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), requiring that nonprofit hospitals conduct CHNAs every three years.

Data from government and social agencies provides a strong framework and a comprehensive piece to the overall CHNA. The information collected is a snapshot of the health of residents in Southern Louisiana, which encompassed socioeconomic information, health statistics, demographics, and mental health issues, etc. The CHNA report is a summary of primary and secondary data collected for East Jefferson General Hospital while the implementation strategy planning report is a plan for how EJGH will address the identified needs from the CHNA over the next 3 years.

The requirements imposed by the IRS for tax-exempt hospitals and health systems must include the following:

- Conduct a CHNA every three years.
- Adopt an implementation strategy to meet the community health needs identified through the assessment.
- Report how it is addressing the needs identified in the CHNA and a description of needs that are not being addressed, with the reasons why.

The Department of the Treasury and the IRS require a CHNA to include:

1. A description of the community served by the hospital facilities and how the description was determined.
2. A description of the process and methods used to conduct the assessment.
 - A description of the sources and dates of the data and other information used in the assessment and the analytical methods applied to identify community health needs.
 - A description of information gaps that impact the hospital organization's ability to assess the health needs of the community served by the hospital facility.
 - Identification of organizations that collaborated with the hospital and an explanation of their qualifications.
3. A description of how the hospital organizations considered input from persons who represent the broad interests of the community served by the hospitals. In addition, the report must identify any individual providing input that has special knowledge of or expertise in public health. The report must also identify any individual providing input who is a "leader" or "representative" of populations.
4. A prioritized description of all of the community health needs identified through the CHNA, as well as a description of the process and criteria used in prioritizing such health needs.
5. A description of the existing health care facilities and other resources within the community available to meet the community health needs identified through the CHNA.
6. A description of the needs identified that the hospital intends to address, the reasons those needs were selected, and the means by which the hospital will undertake to address the selected needs.

Addressing Community Health Needs

In 2018, East Jefferson General Hospital began a joint process of conducting a comprehensive Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) along with regional health care institutions and organizations in Southern Louisiana. The process connected public and private organizations, such as health and human service entities, government officials, faith-based organizations, and educational institutions to evaluate the needs of the community. The 2018 assessment included primary and secondary data collection and incorporated a multitude of phases as part of the assessment process. The overall CHNA involved multiple steps that are depicted in the below flow chart.

Chart 1: CHNA Process Chart



With the conclusion of the CHNA, a regional strategic planning phase was implemented and managed by Tripp Umbach with participation from representatives of East Jefferson General Hospital, along with LCMC Health, Tulane Health System, Ochsner Health System, and Slidell Memorial Hospital. The developments and results from the implementation strategy report is to address the needs identified from East Jefferson General Hospital 's community health needs assessment completed in 2018 (i.e., education, behavioral health (mental health and substance abuse), and access to care). East Jefferson Memorial Hospital will track and monitor strategies and actions internally within the three years prior to the next assessment period.

Tripp Umbach worked closely with administrative leadership from East Jefferson General Hospital to complete the implementation strategy planning phase through the review of previous strategies and planning actions. The identification of community health priorities helped hospital leaders align needs with best practice models and available resources, defined action steps, timelines, and potential partners for each need to develop the accompanying implementation strategy plan. Hospital strategies and subsequent action steps were recognized to address the health needs identified in the service area.

Prioritizing Community Health Needs

According to the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, a healthy community is “a community that is continuously creating and improving those physical and social environments and expanding those community resources that enable people to mutually support each other in performing all the functions of life and in developing to their maximum potential.” This idyllic description is for a healthy community that also has access to health services, ample employment opportunities, high-quality education, affordable, clean housing options, and a safe physical environment. The reduction of poor health outcomes and poor health behaviors are essential in order to build a healthy community. Collaboration

and teamwork from community groups, health care institutions, government leaders, and social and civic organizations can also improve the health status of a community. Healthy partnerships can lead to building a strong community infrastructure that addresses community health needs and provides services to prevent and stem preventable diseases.

Upon review of all data collected, with feedback from community leaders who were present at the community forum, and input from internal hospital leadership, the following needs were identified as the key community health needs in the East Jefferson General Hospital ‘s community.



Community Definition

In 2018, a comprehensive CHNA was completed for East Jefferson General Hospital. Tripp Umbach has completed three CHNA cycles for the hospital and benchmarking or trending data was provided to track and observe positive or negative movements in the primary and secondary data (where applicable).

A comprehensive CHNA was completed for East Jefferson General Hospital which began in early 2018. The primary service area for EJGH was defined by ZIP codes that contain a majority of inpatient discharges from the health care facility.

In 2018, a total of 16 ZIP codes were identified for East Jefferson General Hospital as being the hospital’s primary service area with 80 percent of inpatient discharges (See Table 1). Working in partnership and collaboration with local health care institutions, a regional approach with LCMC Health, Ochsner Health System, Tulane Health System, Slidell Memorial Hospital, and St. Tammany’s Hospital was completed due to overlapping service areas. The regional approach included a total of 62 ZIP codes (See Table 2). Data was analyzed from these specific ZIP codes as they will assist in future health care planning services, community benefit contributions, and programming efforts.

Table 1: EJGH Study Area Profile

ZIP Codes	City	Parish
70001	Metairie	Jefferson
70002	Metairie	Jefferson
70003	Metairie	Jefferson
70005	Metairie	Jefferson
70006	Metairie	Jefferson
70031	Ama	St. Charles
70062	Kenner	Jefferson
70065	Kenner	Jefferson

ZIP Codes	City	Parish
70115	Orleans	Orleans
70118	Orleans	Orleans
70119	Orleans	Orleans
70121	Orleans	Jefferson
70123	Orleans	Jefferson
70124	Orleans	Orleans
70125	Orleans	Orleans
70130	Orleans	Orleans

Table 2: Regional Study Area Profile

ZIP Code	City	Parish
70001	Metairie	Jefferson
70002	Metairie	Jefferson
70003	Metairie	Jefferson
70005	Metairie	Jefferson
70006	Metairie	Jefferson
70030	Des Allemands	St. Charles
70031	Ama	St. Charles
70032	Arabi	St. Bernard
70039	Boutte	St. Charles
70043	Chalmette	St. Bernard
70047	Destrehan	St. Charles
70049	Edgard	St. John the Baptist
70051	Garyville	St. John the Baptist
70053	Gretna	Jefferson
70056	Gretna	Jefferson
70057	Hahnville	St. Charles
70058	Harvey	Jefferson
70062	Kenner	Jefferson
70065	Kenner	Jefferson
70068	LA Place	St. John the Baptist
70070	Luling	St. Charles
70072	Marrero	Jefferson
70075	Meraux	St. Bernard
70079	Norco	St. Charles
70080	Paradis	St. Charles
70084	Reserve	St. John the Baptist
70085	Saint Bernard	St. Bernard
70087	Saint Rose	St. Charles
70092	Violet	St. Bernard

ZIP Code	City	Parish
70094	Westwego	Jefferson
70112	New Orleans	Orleans
70113	New Orleans	Orleans
70114	New Orleans	Orleans
70115	New Orleans	Orleans
70116	New Orleans	Orleans
70117	New Orleans	Orleans
70118	New Orleans	Orleans
70119	New Orleans	Orleans
70121	New Orleans	Jefferson
70122	New Orleans	Orleans
70123	New Orleans	Jefferson
70124	New Orleans	Orleans
70125	New Orleans	Orleans
70126	New Orleans	Orleans
70127	New Orleans	Orleans
70128	New Orleans	Orleans
70129	New Orleans	Orleans
70130	New Orleans	Orleans
70131	New Orleans	Orleans
70148	New Orleans	Orleans
70420	Abita Springs	St. Tammany
70433	Covington	St. Tammany
70435	Covington	St. Tammany
70437	Folsom	St. Tammany
70445	Lacombe	St. Tammany
70447	Madisonville	St. Tammany
70448	Mandeville	St. Tammany
70452	Pearl River	St. Tammany

ZIP Code	City	Parish
70458	Slidell	St. Tammany
70460	Slidell	St. Tammany

ZIP Code	City	Parish
70461	Slidell	St. Tammany
70471	Mandeville	St. Tammany

Methodology

A comprehensive CHNA process performed by East Jefferson General Hospital included the collection of primary and secondary data. Community organizations and leaders within the primary region were engaged to distinguish the needs of the community. Civic and social organizations, government agencies, educational systems, and health and human services entities were engaged throughout the CHNA. The comprehensive primary data collection phase resulted in the contribution of over 100 community stakeholders/leaders, organizations, and community groups.

The primary data collection consisted of several project component pieces. Community stakeholder interviews were conducted with individuals who represented a) broad interests of the community, b) populations of need or c) persons with specialized knowledge in public health. Health provider surveys were collected to capture thoughts and opinions regarding health providers' concerns regarding the care and services they provide. Community representatives and stakeholders attended a community forum facilitated by Tripp Umbach to prioritize health needs, which assisted in the implementation and planning phase. A resource inventory was generated to highlight available programs and services within the service area. The resource inventory identifies available organizations and agencies that serve the region within each of the priority needs.

A robust regional profile (secondary data profile) was analyzed. The regional profile contained local, state, and federal data/statistics providing invaluable information on a wide-array of health and social topics. Different socioeconomic characteristics, health outcomes, and health factors that affect residents' behaviors; specifically, the influential factors that impact the health of residents were reviewed and discussed with members of the Working Group and Tripp Umbach. In total, six regional health profiles were compiled based on the locations and service areas of the participating

hospitals. For the overall assessment process, the regional profiles were: Baton Rouge, Jefferson, New Orleans, North Shore, West Bank, and St. Anne (Raceland)/Lafourche region.

Additional data from Truven Health Analytics was supplied to gain a deeper understanding of community health care needs.¹ The Community Needs Index (CNI), jointly developed by Dignity Health and Truven Health, assists in the process of gathering vital socioeconomic factors in the community. CNI is a strong indicator of a community's demand for various health care services.

East Jefferson General Hospital continues to contribute towards regional programming efforts, educational initiatives, and high-quality patient care to improve the health and security of its community. East Jefferson General Hospital continues their obligation and devotion to their region not only with the completion of their CHNA but also with the implementation strategies and planning efforts involving strong partnerships with community organizations, health institutions, and regional partners through a comprehensive implementation strategy plan. East Jefferson General Hospital is a strong economic driver in Southern Louisiana with a strong focus on improving the health of the residents in their community and surrounding regions.

Note: The implementation planning strategy report identified specific approaches and actions to address the community health needs from the 2018 CHNA. Specific timeframes and measures/metrics are tracked internally for reporting purposes. Hospital administration will utilize these measures/metrics to ensure benchmarking efforts are being tracked between each assessment cycle. East Jefferson Memorial Hospital is committed to improving the health of their community.

Key Community Health Priority 1: Education

Education is essential to successfully managing all aspects of life including health care needs, nutrition and food preparation, financial health needs, and basic life skills. Education provides the necessary tools to make informed decisions; where to look for information, determine its validity, and how to interpret and best apply it to the decision at hand. Typically, this knowledge is attained through a combination of trusted sources (e.g., home, school, and community); and continues to evolve as we live through experiences and increased exposure to the world. Today copious amounts of information are just a click away. Sifting through and deciphering what is true is a daunting task; especially, when experiencing a crisis.

Education plays a critical role in overall public health. Individuals without basic education and life skills are more likely to experience lifelong disadvantages such as lack of job opportunities, poor health outcomes, increased likelihood to engage in risky health behaviors, and a general inability to be self-supporting/productive and or to be a contributing member of society. Reading and reading comprehension skills are important to helping us understand and interact with the world around us. The Nation's Report Card is the largest continuing and nationally representative assessment of what our nation's students know and can do in subjects such as mathematics, reading, science, and writing. Standard administration practices are implemented to provide a common measure of student achievement. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is a congressionally mandated project administered by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), within the U.S. Department of

Education and the Institute of Education Sciences (IES). The NAEP reading scale ranges from zero to 500.

The 2017 Reading State Snapshot Report revealed that the average reading score of Louisiana eighth grade students was 257; lower than the national average score of 265. When compared to the rest of the United States, Louisiana's average reading score was lower than 41 other states/jurisdictions, not significantly different than nine, and only higher than the District of Columbia. The 2017 report also indicated score gaps among different student groups. Black students had an average score that was 27 points lower than white students. Hispanic students had an average score that was 16 points lower than that of white students. Students who were eligible for free/reduced-price school lunch, an indicator of low family income, had an average score that was 24 points lower than students who were not eligible. This performance gap was not significantly different from that in 1998 (20 points).

In recognition of the serious lack of educational performance among students in Louisiana school districts, the Louisiana Department of Education created and implemented the Louisiana Believes initiative. Louisiana Believes is a cohesive academic plan that raises expectations and educational outcomes for students through five priority areas: access to quality early childhood education, academic alignment in every school and classroom, teacher and leader preparation, pathways to college or a career, and supporting struggling schools. As a result of this focus, over the past five years, Louisiana has seen an increase in student performance in every measure both locally and nationally.

NEED: Education

WHAT IS THE GOAL? Improve awareness and improve access to medical services for our communities.

ANTICIPATED IMPACT: Increase the awareness of residents and providers related to health service and resource availability as well as access to accurate information related to healthcare in the communities served by East Jefferson General Hospital.

Strategy -1	Target Population	Actions	Timeframe/Measures	Potential Resources/Partners
<p>Increase access to accurate health education and outreach services on site at the hospital, in the community, and online.</p>	<p>Residents of communities served by East Jefferson General Hospital</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to provide a variety of events, topics, screenings and health information that are relevant to the needs of the EJGH community. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Community seminars, screenings and events (e.g., nutrition, smoking cessation, cancer, chemotherapy, women’s health, etc.). B. Support and educational groups C. Information dissemination through social media and targeted marketing D. Patient portal E. Educational material and classes offered online F. Diabetes education G. EJGH Cancer program 	<p>1A: # of events each year, # of events attendees, and # of residents screened 1B: # of support groups and # of community events 1C: # of outreach marketing efforts and # of topics covered 1D: # of patient portal web traffic; # of visits 1E: # of web hits online education topics 1F: # served, # of documents distributed 1G: # served, # of documents distributed Document support provided by EJGH staff</p>	<p>Partners: Amer. Cancer Society Amer. Diabetes Assoc. Amer. Heart Association Amer. Lung Association Susan G. Komen, LA Breast and Cervical Health Program, American College of dermatology, and the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, schools, churches, businesses, and local community organizations</p> <p>Resources: Budget/funding, staff time, web resources, space, educational material, etc.</p>

Strategy -2	Target Population	Actions	Timeframe/Measures	Potential Resources/Partners
Provide health services in the patients' language of preference when offering care at EJGH.	Patients with limited English-speaking skills receiving care at East Jefferson General Hospital	1. Continue to provide language translation when indicated through: A. Language Line B. In-person translation through individual certified interpreters	# of uses of translation services # of uses of translation services	Partners: One World Language Resources: Cost of language line, translators, and/or certified staff salary
Strategy -3	Target Population	Actions	Timeframe/Measures	Potential Resources/Partners
Increase cultural competence of all persons employed by EJGH.	EJGH Employees and the patients they serve	1. Continue to provide training as a component of employee orientation regarding cultural competence and respect of multiculturalism.	# of trainees # of documents distributed	Partners: Municipal agencies, schools, businesses, and corporations. Resources: Cost of training materials, space, and staff time
Strategy -4	Target Population	Actions	Timeframe/Measures	Potential Resources/Partners
Increase health topic information to the communities served by EJGH.	Communitywide	1. Provide a variety of screenings, topics events, and seminars on a variety of topics and diseases.	# of participants at events # of documents distributed # of partners involved	Partners: Municipal agencies, community organizations, schools etc. Resources: Cost of training materials, space, and staff time

Key Community Health Priority 2: Behavioral Health

Mental disorders and substance use disorders affect people of all racial groups and socioeconomic backgrounds. Mental health is defined as a state of well-being in which every individual realizes their own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to contribute to their community. Mental health affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices. Good mental health is freedom from depression, anxiety, and other psychological issues. It also refers to the overall coping mechanisms of an individual. Having a behavioral health condition is not the result of one event but rather multiple linking causes such as genetics, environment, and lifestyle.

People with serious mental and/or substance use disorders often face higher rates of cardiovascular disease, diabetes, respiratory disease, and infectious disease; elevated risk factors due to high rates of smoking, substance misuse, obesity, and unsafe sexual practices; increased vulnerability due to poverty, social isolation, trauma and violence, and incarceration; lack of coordination between mental and primary health care providers; prejudice and discrimination; side effects from psychotropic medications; and, an overall lack of access to health care, particularly preventive care.ⁱⁱ

Providers are approaching patient health with an integrated care model because they realize the importance of treating the whole individual. Behavioral health impacts physical health and vice versa. With proper monitoring and treatment, individuals suffering from behavioral health issues can lead healthy, productive lives and be contributing members of the community. The difficulty lies in identifying these issues and linking these individuals with behavioral health services.

In addition to the growing behavioral health problem in the East Jefferson General Hospital study region, there is an increased use of drugs. Drug use and its consequences touches every sector of our society. Drug use affects our health and has a significant effect on the criminal justice system. Drug use also endangers the future of our youth. Addiction is a chronic disease, difficult to control as well as being difficult to break. Individuals who take drugs do so for many reasons including environmental influences, genetics, to escape reality, etc. An essential role the community can implement to stem its use is to provide programs towards prevention and reinforcement of keeping drugs and alcohol out of neighborhoods and schools; therefore, providing a safe and secure environment for all community residents. Prevention is a cost-effective approach to promoting safe and healthy communities.

Successful treatment of drug abuse is, most often, a life-long process. Treatment is intensive and expensive and requires a significant investment of time and effort on behalf of health professionals, social services, community-based organizations, the patient's support network, not to mention the patients themselves. Substance abuse treatment often requires multiple attempts to be deemed successful.

East Jefferson General Hospital provides programs and services to many in the parish and surrounding regions. Behavioral health was identified as a top need through the 2018 community health needs assessment. While East Jefferson General Hospital is not the only health care institution in the region, the following strategies were identified and revealed to address the growing issue. East Jefferson General Hospital working in partnership and collaborating with other regional health care organizations will continue to capitalize on the communities' existing resources to tackle and confront the needs of the region.

NEED: Behavioral Health (Mental Health and Substance Abuse)

What is the Goal? Improve awareness and improve access to medical services for our communities.

Anticipated Impact: Increasing access to and awareness about behavioral health care services.

Strategy -1	Target Population	Actions	Timeframe/Measures	Potential Resources/Partners
Provide inpatient psychiatric services to residents requiring care that are 65 years old and older.	Seniors (65+) requiring geriatric psychiatric care at EJGH.	1. Continue to provide inpatient geriatric psychiatric care to seniors 65+ years of age.	# of patients served	Partners: Referral resources in the community Resources: Staff time, Dedicated space, etc.
		2. Continue to provide social work services for care coordination to assist with resource information, referrals, safety assessments, and assistance with financial information and applications, and placement to ensure safe discharge.	# of patients served	Partners: Referral resources in the community Resources: Staff time, Dedicated space, etc.
		3. Continue to provide medication reconciliation upon discharge. When possible, follow up with discharged patients	# of patients served Document # of follow up services	Partners: Referral resources in the community Resources: Staff time, Dedicated space, etc.
Strategy -2	Target Population	Actions	Timeframe/Measures	Potential Resources/Partners
Ensure safety in cases of emergency behavioral health needs.	Patients that seeking acute episodic behavioral health care at EJGH regardless of ability to pay.	1. Continue to provide access to emergency behavioral health hold, information, and referrals for patients that require acute episodic care services which may include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult and pediatric behavioral health hold until placement can be made • Referrals made to outside organizations 	# of psychiatric holds taking place in the ED annually # of partners involved # of documents distributed	Partners: Referral resources in the community Resources: Staff time, Dedicated space, etc.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information provided to the patient regarding available community-based resources 		
Strategy -3	Target Population	Actions	Timeframe/ Measures	Potential Resources/Partners
Increase awareness of available behavioral health and social service resources.	Patients that seek services at the hospital	1. Continue to make the resource inventory, which includes behavioral health resources publicly available as a component of the EJGH CHNA.	Track the number web hits on the CHNA site	Partners: TBD Resources: Website resources
		2. Continue to make referrals to community-based services when they are available and there is a patient need	Track the number web hits on the CHNA site	Partners: TBD Resources: Website resources
Strategy -4	Target Population	Actions	Timeframe/ Measures	Potential Resources/Partners
Provide referrals for behavioral health and substance abuse.	Patients that require outpatient behavioral health services.	1. Continue to provide to patients that require outpatient and/or substance abuse treatment will be provided referrals to outpatient community-based settings. Upon discharge from the Geriatric Psychiatric unit, patients will be provided the necessary resources through social work services which may include medication assistance, referrals for outpatient treatment, placement, etc.	# of consultations # of screens # of patients participating	Partners: Community-based behavioral health and substance abuse resources Resources: Staff time

Key Community Health Priority 3: Access to Care

Access to comprehensive, high-quality health care services is important for promoting and maintaining health, preventing and managing disease, reducing unnecessary disability and premature death, and achieving health equity for all Americans. The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) of 2010 improved access to health care by providing health insurance for 20 million adults. Despite this increase, significant disparities still exist with all levels of access to care by sex, age, race, ethnicity, education, and family income.ⁱⁱⁱ

Most Americans underuse preventive services and vulnerable populations with social, economic, or environmental disadvantages are even less likely to use these services.^{iv} Both routine preventive and regular primary care are essential to good health; providers are able to detect and treat health issues early; preventing complications, chronic conditions, and hospitalizations. Individuals without insurance or the financial means to pay out of pocket are less likely to take advantage of routine preventive and primary care. These individuals consume more public health dollars and strain the resources of already overburdened facilities dedicated to free and low-cost care.

The level of access a community has to health care has a tremendous impact on the community's overall health. Several factors including, geography, economics, and culture, etc., contribute to how residents obtain care. Geography impacts the number of providers that are available to patients in a given area as transportation options are limited to some residents. Health problems affect productivity resulting in 69 million workers reporting missed days due to illness each year.^v Lack of job opportunities

can reduce access to affordable health insurance. Both geographic and economic factors are impacting residents of the East Jefferson General Hospital service area. While there are quality health care resources available to residents within the service area, many residents either cannot afford health services or are limited in transportation options to obtain the services they need.

Characteristically, access to care refers to the utilization of health care services or the ability in which people can obtain health care services. Disparities in health service access can negatively impact and affect an individual's quality of life. High cost of services, transportation issues, and availability of providers are some of the top barriers or problems to accessing health care services. Identifying access to care was a top community need in the East Jefferson General Hospital community; as this community need was a top community concern in 2015.

East Jefferson General Hospital provides access to health care to many in the parish and surrounding regions. Access to care was identified as a top need through the 2018 community health needs assessment. While East Jefferson General Hospital is not the only health care institution in the region, the following strategies were identified and revealed to address the growing issues. East Jefferson General Hospital working in partnership and collaborating with other regional health care organizations, will continue to capitalize on the communities' existing resources to tackle and confront the needs of the region.

NEED: Access to Care

What is the Goal? Improve awareness and improve access to medical services for our communities.

Anticipated Impact: Increase the access that residents in communities served by East Jefferson General Hospital have to health services.

Strategy -1	Target Population	Actions	Timeframe/Measures	Potential Resources/Partners
Offer access to information and assistance related to the affordability of health services	Patients receiving care at East Jefferson General Hospital regardless of ability to pay	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to offer information related to navigating the healthcare payment system including Medicaid enrollment. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Patient financial services to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactively contacting patients • Assistance with Medicaid applications and financial assistance applications • Financial assistance and sliding scale fees for patients that qualify B. Provide cash pricing on the hospital website. C. Offer assistance with costs of medications including low cost prescription programs, pharmacy discount programs, and equally effective low-cost generic medications, procure free or discount cards from Pharmaceutical companies. D. Provide referrals and information regarding reduced cost services available in the community. 	# of patients served Document the availability of cash pricing # of patients interested in participating # of referrals provided # of documents distributed	Partners: HCR Resources: Salaries and staff time, and unfunded care budget
		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Continue to offer assistance with the cost of health services secured at East Jefferson General Hospital through the Financial Assistance Policy 	Document the availability of the FAP # of participants interested in program	Partners: HCR Resources: Salaries and staff time, and unfunded care budget

Strategy -2	Target Population	Actions	Timeframe/Measures	Potential Resources/Partners
Increase the number of physicians trained in the local communities	Physician shortage areas	1. Continue to offer Family Medicine Residency to provide training and education for physicians through: A. Graduate Medical Education clinical training	# of students, residents, and fellows trained at East Jefferson General Hospital annually	Partners: Medical schools, MPSI, etc. Resources: Costs, staff time, funding, and compensation for oversight
		2. Continue to increase the number of health professionals serving local communities through physician recruitment.	# of physicians recruited # of physicians retained	Partners: Medical schools, MPSI, etc. Resources: Costs, staff time, funding, and compensation for oversight
Strategy -3	Target Population	Actions	Timeframe/Measures	Potential Resources/ Partners
Provide necessary health services to residents seeking care at EJGH	Patients seeking care at East Jefferson General Hospital regardless of ability to pay	1. Continue to provide necessary medical care to patients seeking care at EJGH and through EJGH clinics in the community through: A. Continue to provide care in East Jefferson General Hospital emergency department B. Continue to provide care to patients with Medicaid insurance C. Continue to offer education to patients regarding safety net resources available in their communities including transportation.	Document annual unfunded care Develop methods to track the amount of Medicaid services provided annually Track the level of prescription assistance secured on behalf of patients	Partners: Low cost prescription resources and diagnostic and imaging partners (e.g., Susan G. Komen, American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, American Dermatology Association, etc.) Resources: Financial resources, use of durable medical equipment, and staff time
		2. Offer low cost imaging and diagnostic testing when appropriate and available	Document the # of referrals made for low cost diagnostics	Partners: Diagnostic and imaging partners Resources: Financial resources, use of durable medical equipment, and staff time

Strategy -4	Target Population	Actions	Timeframe/Measures	Potential Resources/Partners
Provide care coordination to residents seeking care at EJGH	Patients seeking care at East Jefferson General Hospital regardless of ability to pay	1. Provide team-based care with persistent nurse /physician follow-up that will help patients: A. Schedule appointments B. Navigate the referral process C. Ensure that the patients get the healthcare they need.	# of patients served	Partners: Post-acute providers in the service area Resources: Staff time, committed space, care coordinator salary, etc.
		2. Assess the need for care coordination upon discharge and provide care coordinators, warm hand-offs and referrals when possible.	# of patients receiving care coordination (i.e., the transfer center, etc.)	Partners: Post-acute providers in the service area Resources: Staff time, committed space, care coordinator salary, etc.
		3. Contact at-risk individuals through A. EMT follow up B. Post-discharge tele-nursing	Document the number of contacts	Partners: Post-acute providers in the service area Resources: Staff time, committed space, care coordinator salary, etc.
		4. Provide post-discharge programs targeting at-risk patients (e.g., stroke, oncology, heart attack, joint replacement, patients using Ems frequently, etc.) while increasing after-hours access to patients with targeted diagnosis.	Document the number of patients served	Partners: Post-acute providers in the service area Resources: Staff time, committed space, care coordinator salary, etc.
		5. Provide support groups to patients related to a variety of diagnosis.	Document the number of groups offered annually	Partners: Post-acute providers in the service area Resources: Staff time, committed space, care coordinator salary, etc.

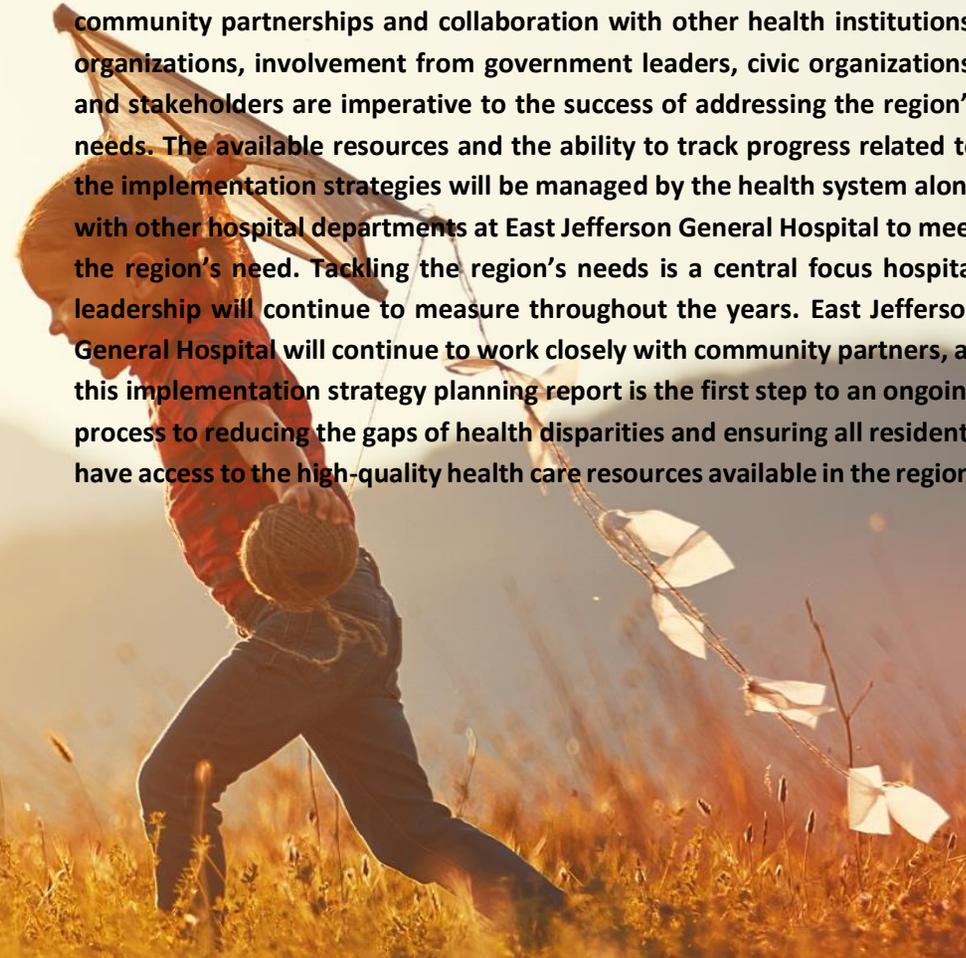
		6. Provide patient portal for patients to access medical records, “physician finder”, and health information	# of patient portal users	Partners: Post-acute providers in the service area Resources: Staff time, committed space, care coordinator salary, etc.
Strategy -5	Target Population	Actions	Timeframe/Measures	Potential Resources/Partners
Increase access to accurate information and health services related to maternal health	Expecting mothers in the East Jefferson General Hospital community.	1. Continue to provide free prenatal classes on-site along with free online education for women that are child bearing age.	# of class offerings annually	Partners: Baby First, Destination Maternity Resources: Staff time, committed space, medical equipment, website resources
		2. Continue to participate in community events related to maternal health.	# of events annually	Partners: Baby First, Destination Maternity Resources: Staff time, committed space, medical equipment, website resources
		3. Continue to make prenatal and infant education classes more readily available by offering classes at Destination Maternity.	Document existence of web information	Partners: Baby First, Destination Maternity Resources: Staff time, committed space, medical equipment, website resources
		4. Continue to ensure safe delivery of babies for patients presenting in labor at the EJGH ED.	# ER of deliveries	Partners: Baby First, Destination Maternity Resources: Staff time, committed space, medical equipment, website resources

Conclusion

East Jefferson General Hospital will continue to work to close the gaps in health disparities and continue to improve health services for residents by leveraging the region's resources and assets; while existing and newly developed strategies can be successfully employed. The collection and analysis of primary and secondary data armed the Working Group with sufficient data and resources to identify key health needs. Local, regional, and statewide partners understand the CHNA is an important building block towards future strategies that will improve the health and well-being of residents in their region. East Jefferson General Hospital will work closely with community organizations and regional partners to effectively address and resolve the identified needs.

East Jefferson General Hospital took into consideration the ability to address the region's identified needs and viewed the overall short and long-term effects of undertaking the task. East Jefferson General Hospital will address the identified needs and view them as positive and encouraging changes. East Jefferson General Hospital will complete the necessary action

and implementation steps of newly formed activities or revise strategies to assist the community's underserved and disenfranchised residents. Future community partnerships and collaboration with other health institutions, organizations, involvement from government leaders, civic organizations, and stakeholders are imperative to the success of addressing the region's needs. The available resources and the ability to track progress related to the implementation strategies will be managed by the health system along with other hospital departments at East Jefferson General Hospital to meet the region's need. Tackling the region's needs is a central focus hospital leadership will continue to measure throughout the years. East Jefferson General Hospital will continue to work closely with community partners, as this implementation strategy planning report is the first step to an ongoing process to reducing the gaps of health disparities and ensuring all residents have access to the high-quality health care resources available in the region.



Endnotes

ⁱ Truven Health Analytics, formerly known as Thomson Reuters, is a multinational health care company that delivers information, analytic tools, benchmarks, research, and services to a variety of organizations and companies. Truven Health Analytics uses: Demographic data, poverty data (from The Nielsen Company), and insurance coverage estimates (from Truven Health Analytics) to provide Community Needs Index (CNI) scores at the ZIP code level.

ⁱⁱ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration: www.samhsa.gov/wellness-initiative

ⁱⁱⁱ Healthy People 2020: www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/Access-to-Health-Services

^{iv} Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: www.cdc.gov/healthcommunication/toolstemplates/entertainmented/tips/PreventiveHealth.html

^v Ibid.

Tripp
Umbach