**2020-2022**

Implementation Strategy



Ridgecrest Regional Hospital

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**Implementation Strategy**

# Introduction

Located in Ridgecrest, California, Ridgecrest Regional Hospital (RRH) is a nonprofit, full service, acute care hospital with 196 beds, including 25 inpatient and 125 Skilled Nursing Facility beds. RRH is the only regional healthcare system providing a variety of services to the rural communities of the Southern Sierra.

In FY2019, RRH conducted a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) to assess the significant health needs for the hospital service area. The CHNA and the resulting Implementation Strategy identify and address significant community health needs and help guide the hospital’s community health improvement programs and community benefit activities, as well as its collaborative efforts with other organizations that share a mission to improve health. This Implementation Strategy explains how RRH plans to address the significant health needs identified in the CHNA.

### Report Adoption, Availability and Comments

This Implementation Strategy was adopted by Ridgecrest Regional Hospital’s Board of Directors in December 2019. This report is widely available to the public on the web site, <https://www.rrh.org/about-us/community-benefit/community-health-needs-assessment/>. Written comments can be submitted to [Adan.MartinezGonzalez@rrh.org](mailto:Adan.MartinezGonzalez@rrh.org).

# 2019 Community Health Needs Assessment Summary

RRH conducted a CHNA to comply with state and federal regulations guiding tax exempt hospitals. The CHNA incorporated demographic and health data for the communities served by the hospital. Significant health needs were identified from issues supported by primary and secondary data sources gathered for the CHNA. The needs were indicated by secondary data sources, community stakeholder interviews and community surveys. Health indicators were considered significant health needs when they exceeded benchmark data, specifically county or state rates or Healthy People 2020 objectives. The following significant health needs were identified:

* Access to health care
* Birth characteristics (teen births, low birth weight, prenatal care, etc.)
* Chronic diseases (cancer, diabetes, heart disease, stroke, lung disease, asthma and Valley Fever)
* Dental care
* Economic insecurity
* Food insecurity
* Housing and homelessness
* Mental health
* Overweight and obesity
* Preventive practices
* Sexually transmitted infections
* Substance use and misuse
* Violence and injury

# Definition of the Community Service Area

Ridgecrest Regional Hospital is located at 1081 North China Lake Boulevard, Ridgecrest, CA 93555. The service area includes four communities consisting of four ZIP Codes in Kern County.

**Ridgecrest Regional Hospital Service Area**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **ZIP Code** | **Place** |
| 93527 | Inyokern |
| 93554 | Randsburg |
| 93555 | Ridgecrest |
| 93562 | Trona |

The population of the RRH service area is 37,709. Children and youth, ages 0-17, make up 27% of the population and 16.3% of the population are seniors, ages 65 and over. In the service area, 66.8% of the population is White and 17.4% are Hispanic/Latino, 5.9% are Black/African American, 4.9% are Asian, 1.1% are American Indian/Alaskan Native, and the remaining 3.9% are multiple races. English is spoken in the home among 82.9% of the service area population. Spanish is spoken at home among 10.8% of the population. 3.5% of the population speaks an Asian or Pacific Islander language, and 1.7% of the population speaks an Indo-European language in the home.

In the service area, 18.6% of the population is at or below 100% of the federal poverty level (FPL). Over one-third (37.2%) of the population in the service area is considered low-income, living at or below 200% of FPL. There are 14,718 households in the RRH service area. The median household income for the service area is $59,054. Among adults, ages 25 and older, 11.5% of area adults lack a high school diploma, 52.9% of service area adults are high school graduates and 35.63% are college graduates.

# Significant Health Needs the Hospital Will Address

This Implementation Strategy provides details on how RRH plans to address the significant health needs identified in the 2019 CHNA. The hospital plans to build on previous CHNA efforts and existing initiatives, while also considering new strategies and efforts to improve health. The following criteria were used by the hospital to determine the significant health needs RRH will address in the Implementation Strategy:

* Organizational Capacity: There is capacity to address the issue.
* Existing Infrastructure: There are programs, systems, staff and support resources in place to address the issue.
* Ongoing Investment: Existing resources are committed to the issue. Staff time and financial resources for this issue are counted as part of our community benefit effort.
* Focus Area: Has acknowledged competencies and expertise to address the issue and the issue fits with the organizational mission.

As a result of the review of needs and application of the above criteria, RRH will address: access to health care, chronic diseases/preventive practices, mental health, overweight and obesity, and substance use and misuse through a commitment of community benefit programs and charitable resources.

For each health need the hospital plans to address, the Implementation Strategy describes: actions the hospital intends to take, including programs and resources it plans to commit; anticipated impacts of these actions; and planned collaboration between the hospital and other organizations.

### Access to Health Care

RRH will address access to health care by taking the following actions:

* Provide financial assistance through both free and discounted care for health care services, consistent with the hospital’s financial assistance policy.
* Expand services via telehealth.
* Adopt a virtual Urgent Care program.
* Implement centralized/coordinated scheduling and authorization for RRH services.
* Continue to recruit primary care providers and a pediatric dentist.
* Explore the feasibility of providing transportation support to increase access to health care services.

**Anticipated Impact**

RRH will conduct these strategies with the overarching goal in mind to improve access to health care services, especially for the uninsured and underinsured.

RRH anticipates the following impact from these efforts:

* Provide financial assistance to qualified patients.
* Support access to health care services by providing transportation assistance.
* Improve access to primary care providers and specialty care providers.
* Increase access to health care and reduce wait times through telehealth, Urgent Care and improved scheduling.

**Planned Collaboration**

In order to accomplish the planned activities, RRH anticipates collaborating with:

* Community clinics
* Kern County Health Department

### Chronic Diseases/Preventive Practices

RRH will address chronic disease and preventive practices by taking the following actions:

* Provide support groups to assist those with chronic diseases and their families.
* Expand population health initiatives.
* Provide preventive health screenings.
* Offer Heartsaver CPR and first aid classes.
* Implement an integrated chronic disease management and patient engagement program.
* Provide public health education in the media and community health awareness events to encourage healthy behaviors.
* Promote preventive health care.
* Increase access to Health Coaching.

**Anticipated Impact**

RRH will conduct the above referenced strategies with the overarching goal in mind to reduce the impact of chronic diseases on health and increase the focus on disease prevention and treatment education.

RRH anticipates the following impact from these efforts:

* Enhance health-related knowledge related to management of chronic disease.
* Promote available community resources to prevent and treat chronic diseases.
* Improve communications and engage clients in self-management practices.
* Increase availability and access to preventive care services.
* Increase awareness of and compliance with preventive care recommendations (screenings, immunizations, lifestyle and behavior changes).

**Planned Collaboration**

In order to accomplish the planned activities, RRH anticipates collaborating with:

* American Diabetes Association
* American Cancer Society
* American Heart Association
* American Stroke Association
* Kern County Health Department

### Mental Health

RRH will address mental health by taking the following actions:

* + Expand access to mental health tele-psych services.
  + Expand mental health services to schools via Mobile Health Unit.
  + Expand mental health services to Trona.
  + Increase access and emphasis on mental health early intervention for children and teens.

**Anticipated Impact**

RRH will conduct the above referenced strategies with the overarching goal in mind to increase access to mental health services.

RRH anticipates the following impact from these efforts:

* Increase availability and access to mental health services.
* Improve understanding and identification of mental health needs.
* Improve coordination among health care providers with community resources and programs.

**Planned Collaboration**

In order to accomplish the planned activities, RRH anticipates collaborating with:

* City of Trona
* Kern County
* School district

### Overweight and Obesity

RRH will address overweight and obesity by taking the following actions:

* Host fitness classes for seniors.
  + Provide health information focused on activity, exercise and nutrition.
  + In collaboration with Kern County and the City of Ridgecrest, improve access to healthy foods and exercise facilities for low-income and socially disadvantaged residents.
  + Provide education at schools on healthy foods and activities.

**Anticipated Impact**

RRH will conduct the above referenced strategies with the overarching goal in mind to reduce the impact of overweight and obesity on health and increase the focus on healthy eating and physical activity.

RRH anticipates the following impact from these efforts:

* Enhance health-related knowledge and behavior.
* Support programs that promote healthy eating and active living.

**Planned Collaboration**

In order to accomplish the planned activities, RRH anticipates collaborating with:

* City of Ridgecrest
* Kern County
* Preschools
* School district

### Substance Use and Misuse

RRH will address substance use and misuse by taking the following actions:

* + Explore feasibility of pursuing a county contract for services.
  + Maximize partnership with Tarzana Treatment Center.
  + Provide education focused on substance use prevention.
  + Contact with inpatient facilities to increase access to substance use care.

**Anticipated Impact**

RRH will conduct the above referenced strategies with the overarching goal in mind to increase access to substance use services.

RRH anticipates the following impact from these efforts:

* Increased availability of substance use services in community settings through collaboration with community partners.
* Improved screening and identification of substance use needs.
* Improved coordination among health care providers and community resources and programs.

**Planned Collaboration**

In order to accomplish the planned activities, RRH anticipates collaborating with:

* City of Ridgecrest
* Kern County Health Department
* School district
* Tarzana Treatment Center

# Evaluation of Impact

RRH will monitor and evaluate the programs and activities outlined above. The hospital anticipates the actions taken to address significant health needs will improve health knowledge, behaviors, and status, increase access to care, and help support good health. The hospital is committed to monitoring key initiatives to assess impact and tracks the implementation of the activities. An evaluation of the impact of the hospital’s actions to address these significant health needs will be reported in the next scheduled CHNA.

# Needs the Hospital Will Not Address

Taking existing hospital and community resources into consideration, RRH will indirectly address dental care through increasing access to care for this health needs. RRH will not directly address birth indicators, housing and homelessness, economic insecurity, food insecurity, sexually transmitted infections and violence and injury as priority health needs. Knowing that there are not sufficient resources to address all the community health needs, RRH chose to concentrate on those health needs that can most effectively be addressed given the organization’s areas of focus and expertise. The hospital has insufficient resources to effectively address all the identified needs and, in some cases, the needs are currently addressed by others in the community.