

# Vidant Beaufort Hospital's Community Health Implementation Strategy



2015 - 2018

# Executive Summary

Vidant Beaufort Hospital is a not-for-profit, community hospital located in Washington, NC. The hospital is part of Vidant Health; a regional health system serving 29 counties in eastern North Carolina. The hospital has served Beaufort and surrounding counties since 1958. The health system's mission, "to improve the health and well-being of eastern North Carolina" drives a system of care for healthier communities beyond the traditional walls of our facilities.

## Description of Community

The primary service area for Vidant Beaufort Hospital includes Beaufort and mainland Hyde Counties, North Carolina. Surrounding cities and towns include Washington, Aurora, Bath, Belhaven, Pantego, Chocowinity and Washington Park in Beaufort County and Ponzer, Swan Quarter, Fairfield and Engelhard in Hyde County. According to the 2010 Census, Beaufort County has a population of 47,759. Over 68% of the population is white, followed by 25% black, 7% Hispanic. Less than 1% consider themselves American Indian or Asian. The 2010 Census reports a population of 5,810 in Hyde County. 64% of the population is white, 31% is black, and 7.1% is Hispanic. Less than 1% consider themselves American Indian or Asian.

In Beaufort County, statistics indicated vulnerable populations as:

- Persons living below the Federal Poverty Level. Twenty-one percent of the population is living in poverty.
- Children under the age of five years. Twenty-nine point three percent of children less than five years of age are considered overweight or obese.
- Persons of the African American race. African-Americans have a higher incidence of cancer as well as higher mortality rates for heart disease, cerebrovascular disease, diabetes mellitus and Alzheimer's disease.

In Hyde County, populations at risk for poor health outcomes include:

- People without a medical home: low medical provider ratios and utilization of area hospital emergency departments for health care are indicators that many in Hyde County do not have a stable medical home.
- The growing elderly population: there is an apparent lack of nursing home and assisted living housing options for the elderly as they reach the point they can no longer care for themselves.
- Uninsured or underinsured Hyde County residents: these populations have difficulty accessing health care.
- Males: men suffer mortality and morbidity at higher rates than females.
- People without reliable transportation: the elderly and poor, especially, have limited transportation options to access the limited health care in large, predominately rural Hyde County.

Minority populations: this population group suffers the consequences of poverty and limited health care access at the highest rates.

## **Who Was Involved**

The community health assessment process was a collaboration between the health departments in both Beaufort and Hyde counties and Vidant Beaufort Hospital. To ensure input from persons with a broad knowledge of the community, organizations representing the counties in sectors such as mental health, children's health, and senior health services participated in the process. Additionally, individuals from agencies representing the uninsured and underinsured were invited to participate. Those who committed to the assessment and planning process became the stakeholder group and attended meetings beginning in the summer of 2014 for both counties respectively. Finally, partners from Vidant Beaufort Hospital, the Beaufort and Hyde County Health Departments, and East Carolina University formed leadership teams, which worked collectively to identify the types and sources of data to be collected and along with the stakeholder group, helped prioritize the community health concerns.

Both counties collected primary data with the use of a community survey and by conducting focus groups. Stakeholder groups in both counties were invited and participated in a priority setting work session. The following groups were represented during the process of this assessment:

### **Beaufort County**

- Beaufort County Health Department
- Vidant Beaufort Hospital
- East Carolina University
- Washington Senior Center
- Metropolitan Community Health Services
- Beaufort-Hyde Partnership for Children
- Beaufort County United Way
- Beaufort County Schools
- Beaufort County Department of Social Services
- NC Partnership for Children
- Evan Lewis Law Firm
- Care-O-World Enrichment Center
- Cornerstone Family Worship Center

### **Hyde County**

- Hyde County Health Department
- Vidant Beaufort Hospital
- East Carolina University
- Davis Ventures Youth and Rec Center
- Engelhard and Ocracoke Health Center
- Hyde County Hotline (Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence)
- Hyde County Sheriff's Department
- Hydeland Homecare
- Project DIRECT Legacy for Men and Their Families
- Center of Healthy North Carolina

- Hyde County Government
- Hyde County Emergency Management
- Care Share Health Alliance
- Hyde County Department of Social Services
- Vidant Behavioral Health
- Hyde County Schools
- ARHS Active Routes to School
- Hyde County Cooperative Extension
- The Outer Banks Hospital
- Cross Creek Health Care
- Hyde County Transit
- Sheila Pfaender, Public Health Independent Contractor
- Hyde County Recreation Commission
- NCDOT
- Hyde County Minister's Council for Education
- Beaufort-Hyde Partnership for Children

The 2015 CHA teams identified the following top health concerns for Beaufort and Hyde Counties:

#### **Beaufort County**

1. Chronic Disease (Heart Disease, Diabetes)
2. Weight Management, Nutrition and Obesity
3. Cancer
4. Access to Care (Including Mental Health)

#### **Hyde County**

1. Physical Activity/Nutrition (Chronic Disease Prevention)
2. Access to Primary Care
3. Substance Abuse

#### **Vidant Beaufort Hospital's Community Benefit Grants Program**

Vidant Health wants to do more for people to improve their health before they reach the point of having to be hospitalized. That's why in 1998, Pitt County Memorial Hospital (now Vidant Medical Center) made a substantial donation to the Pitt Memorial Hospital Foundation (now Vidant Health Foundation) to establish the Community Benefit and Health Initiatives Grants program. In 2006, the program extended its outreach by establishing a Regional Community Benefits Grants program which works with Vidant Health regional hospitals to distribute grants to their communities. The goal of the program is to support outreach projects that focus on wellness and prevention strategies. The Community Benefit Grants program educates people about disease prevention and management, provides people with the knowledge and tools to be successful in their own health care and locates programs within communities, making them available and more accessible to people needing the programs/services.

Vidant Beaufort Hospital has a committee of community members from Beaufort and Hyde counties to review the health needs of our community and determine focus areas for our participation in this program. The committee's current focus areas based on the 2012 CHA include:

- Chronic Disease Prevention and Management
- Access to Care
- Physical Activity and Nutrition

Vidant Beaufort Hospital distributed \$110,000 to various agencies in Beaufort and Hyde counties in July 2014. The next funding cycle will align the Community Benefit Grant focus areas with the health priorities identified in the 2015 CHA.

Vidant Beaufort Hospital's Community Health Implementation Plan is based on the findings of the community health assessment as well as the focus areas established for our community benefit activities.

## Implementation Plan

### Initiative: Chronic Disease Prevention and Management

**Goal:** To improve outcomes and quality of life for adults with chronic illness (i.e. diabetes, heart disease, stroke).

#### Strategies:

##### 1. Screening

- Provide screenings in Beaufort and Hyde counties for early detection of heart disease, stroke and diabetes in adults.
- Conduct annual free community health fair in May in conjunction with National Hospital Week, offering cholesterol, blood sugar, blood pressure, height/weight and body mass index screenings for participants.
- Partner with the Beaufort County Health Department in its annual 411 Health Fair.
- Partner with Hyde County Health Department to plan community health events and screenings.

##### 2. Health Education for Prevention

- Provide health education to prevent chronic disease at health fairs, educational events such as Dinner with a Doc, community seminars, clinical speaking engagements or at major health events including:

- a) Pink Power breast cancer awareness event – October
- b) Heart Truth women's heart health awareness event – February
- Provide a health event team to represent the hospital and physician practices at community health fairs and events in the Beaufort and Hyde County areas to perform health screenings, promote health education, provide information about risk factors and provide information about resources and services to treat chronic disease.
- Provide community education about a variety of health topics including chronic disease prevention and management through a Health Beat column in the local newspaper.
- Provide editorial content for quarterly Healthy Living publication that is distributed by the local newspaper. Topics are focused on exercise and wellness, technology, senior living and breast cancer awareness.
- Utilize social media to provide information to the community about a variety of topics related to chronic disease prevention and management.
- 3. Rehabilitation and Exercise Programs
  - Provide cardiopulmonary rehab programs for heart disease and COPD patients at Vidant Wellness Center.
- 4. Provide support and/or funding through our Community Benefit Grants and Health Initiatives program and other community partnerships that focus on chronic disease prevention and management.
  - Belhaven Senior Center Healthy Aging Community program
  - Hyde County Health Department Healthy Hyde program
  - Beaufort-Hyde/Pantego Community Center Growing a Fit community program
- 5. Utilize our recently hired part-time Community Health Improvement Coordinator, a Registered Nurse, to plan, organize and oversee community health fairs / free wellness screenings and to be a liaison between our hospital with churches, schools, health departments and civic organizations to seek opportunities to share ways to improve overall community health and wellness.
- 6. Implement faith health partnerships with faith organizations in Beaufort and Hyde Counties to promote healthy lifestyles and to provide health education.

## **Initiative: Cancer**

**Goal:** To improve prevention and early detection of cancer as well as improve the outcomes and quality of life for adults with cancer.

### **Strategies:**

1. Screenings
  - Provide screenings in Beaufort and Hyde Counties for early detection of breast and skin cancer in adults.
  - Implement breast cancer awareness project to screen women for breast cancer annually during the month of October at physician practices/community centers; provide clinical



breast exams and referrals for mammography. Partner with the local health departments Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Programs (BCCCP) to provide financial assistance for mammograms to those who qualify.

2. Education for Early Detection and Prevention

- Provide education to the community about early detection and prevention of cancer at health fairs, educational events such as Knowledge as Power, Shepard Lunch and Learns, community seminars, clinical speaking engagements or at major health events including:
  - a) Prostate Cancer awareness – September
  - b) Ovarian Cancer awareness - September
  - c) Pink Power breast cancer awareness event – October
  - d) Lung Cancer Awareness - November
  - e) Colon Cancer Awareness - March
  - f) Skin Cancer awareness - May
- Provide community education about early detection of various cancers including breast, ovarian, skin, lung, colon and prostate through periodic Health Beat column in the local newspaper.

3. Programs targeted to outcomes and quality of life for adult cancer patients

- Continue to offer complementary therapies for cancer patients, survivors and caregivers such as therapeutic massage, meditative yoga, Pet Partners pet therapy and journaling.
- Continue to provide educational programs related to cancer survivorship.
- Continue to host Look Good Feel Better for female cancer survivors.

4. Provide patient navigation for cancer patients to include resource/referral, follow-up in home, and networking with other agencies to improve health outcomes.

5. Provide dedicated resources to cancer community outreach through our oncology clinical social worker.

6. Provide high quality oncology services and treatments including but not limited to; medical oncology, radiation oncology, clinical trials, brachytherapy and surgical interventions.

7. Offer early detection services including mammography and colonoscopies.

8. Provide support to the American Cancer Society through Relay for Life.

9. Provide ongoing funding to the Beaufort County Health Department Breast and Cervical Cancer Control program.

## **Initiative: Access to care**

**Goal:** To improve access to health care especially for the uninsured/underinsured patient population.

**Strategies:**

1. Continued commitment to providing quality health care to everyone who seeks our services.
2. Continue to provide financial counselors who can assist with determining if patients qualify for Medicaid and in applying for other government-assisted programs.
3. Continue to offer charity care to our patients who are unable to pay due to financial hardships.

4. Collaborate with Hyde County Health Department, Beaufort County Health Department and the Metropolitan Community Health Center, Inc. (The Agape Center) to help residents access health care services in the community.
5. Collaborate with Vidant Medical Group to help recruit additional primary care and specialty providers to help keep care local.
6. Partner with Vidant Medical Group and local primary care practices as they work towards implementing the patient-centered medical home model of care which will provide greater access to needed services, better quality of care, greater focus on prevention, as well as early identification and management of health problems.
7. Serve as one of the lead organizations for Beaufort County 360, an alliance of community health agencies, schools, social service organizations and non-profits working to address the most critical needs in Beaufort County including access to care.
8. Provide representation on the Hyde Partners for Health committee.
9. Provide support and/or funding through our Community Benefit Grants and Health Initiatives program and other community partnerships that focus on access to care.
  - Healthy Outcomes for Pregnant and Parenting Students program
  - Blounts Creek Fire Department AED's
  - Coastal Pregnancy Center Families of Grace program.

### **Initiative: Weight Management/Obesity, Physical Activity and Nutrition**

**Goal:** To educate adults and children on the benefits of physical activity and nutrition and provide a wellness center with resources to improve general health and fitness.

#### **Strategies:**

1. Provider height, weight, and body mass index screenings at community health events in Beaufort and Hyde counties for obesity prevention.
2. Serve on advisory councils and partnerships for health to promote wellness, health and fitness including Beaufort County Physical Activity and Nutrition Council, Beaufort County Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) Coalition, Hyde Partners for Health.
3. Provide the North Carolina Prevention Partners program Learn Healthy to Hyde County Schools. A program that will improve nutrition and health education, increase physical activity, and create healthier policies affecting everyone in the school.
4. Provide a medical model wellness center (that includes health risk assessment) for community (membership required) that offers exercise equipment, weights, and other exercise options as well as personal trainers, and consultation with exercise specialists to improve outcomes.
5. Offer wellness scholarships through the Tayloe-Ainsworth endowment for low-income community members on a sliding fee schedule or reduced membership rate based on need and health indicators.
6. Provide community education about a variety of topics related to wellness, nutrition, and physical activity through Health Beat column in the local newspaper.



7. Annually host at least one employee wellness challenge that targets weight loss and/or an increase in physical activity.
8. Promote healthy eating and educate employees and visitors on how to make healthy choices by providing all calorie information at the point of service at both of our hospital eateries. This will include all snack and vending machines. We will continue to offer a discounted rate on the healthiest entrées served in our hospital cafeteria.
9. To promote healthy eating, all hospital-sponsored functions (internal and external) where food is served will offer healthy options.
10. Provide support and/or funding through our Community Benefit Grants and Health Initiatives program and other community partnerships that focus on physical activity and nutrition:
  - Beaufort County Community College Beau-FIIT program
  - Boys and Girls Club Triple Play Healthy Habits
  - Be Global Teens Leading Change
  - Hyde County Health Department Healthy Hyde
  - Food Bank of the Albemarle Mobile Food Pantry
  - Beaufort-Hyde Pantego Community Center Growing a Fit Community
  - Ruth's House – Heart of the Kitchen.
  - Eagles Wings Feed Our People

## **Initiative: Mental Health/Substance Abuse**

**Goal:** To improve access to services for mental health and substance abuse patients.

### **Strategies**

1. Continue to provide an inpatient behavioral health unit.
2. Collaborate with Vidant Medical Group to continue to provide mental health services in the region through Vidant Behavioral Health with locations in Washington, Swan Quarter and Ocracoke.
3. Provide comprehensive care management and transitional care program for low-income individuals diagnosed with both severe mental illness and chronic disease including care management, care coordination, primary care, and pharmaceutical assistance.
4. Participate on the Beaufort County 360 mental health task force.
5. Support Project LAZURUS in both Beaufort and Hyde counties.

## **Approval**

Vidant Beaufort Hospital's Implementation Strategy for 2015 - 2018 was approved by the Vidant Community Hospitals' Board of Directors on December 15, 2015.

Dr. David Herman, Chair  
Vidant Community Hospitals' Board of Directors

