

French Hospital Medical Center

2022 Community Health Implementation Strategy






Adopted October 2022



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At-a-Glance Summary

<p>Community Served</p> 	<p>The community served by French Hospital Medical Center (FHMC) encompasses the areas of San Luis Obispo (93401, 93405), Atascadero (93422), Templeton (93465), Morro Bay (93442), Los Osos (93402), Cambria (93428) and Paso Robles (93446). The FHMC community extends from the City of San Luis Obispo to the East, North, and West into the unincorporated areas of San Luis Obispo County to the county limits.</p>
<p>Significant Community Health Needs Being Addressed</p> 	<p>The significant community health needs the hospital is helping to address and that form the basis of this document were identified in the hospital's most recent Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). Needs being addressed by strategies and programs are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Educational attainment ● Access to primary health care, behavioral health, and dental health ● Health promotion and prevention
<p>Strategies and Programs to Address Needs</p> 	<p>The hospital intends to take several actions and to dedicate resources to these needs, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Educational attainment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Expanded physician mentoring program for local high school students ○ Health professions education ● Access to primary health care, behavioral health, and dental health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Multiple community health outreach programs providing free preventative screenings, support groups, and community health education ○ Substance use navigation program and a street medicine program for unsheltered individuals ● Health promotion and prevention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Multiple community health outreach programs providing free preventative screenings, support groups, and community health education
<p>Anticipated Impact</p> 	<p>The strategies and programs described in this report will promote future opportunity in the healthcare field for high school and young adults residing in the community. The programs will bring medical professionals out of the hospital and into the community, where they will be able to encounter the most underserved populations that are least likely to access a traditional clinic or hospital, meeting the community where they are most comfortable. Educational programs will continue to provide community health education at low or no cost.</p>
<p>Planned Collaboration</p> 	<p>Every program identified will engage multiple, community, non-governmental organizations to execute the planned strategy/program such as: San Luis Coastal School District, San Luis Lucia Mar School District, Allan Hancock College, Cuesta College, Future Leaders of America Inc., SLO Noor free medical and dental clinics, Alliance for Pharmaceutical Assess (APA Inc.), Hearst Cancer Resource Center, Pacific Central Coast Health Centers, and FHMC Women's Imaging center.</p>

This document is publicly available online at the hospital's website. Written comments on this report can be submitted to the FHMC Manager of Community Health at 1911 Johnson Avenue, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401 or by e-mail to CCSAN-CHNA@dignityhealth.org.

Our Hospital and the Community Served

About the Hospital

French Hospital Medical Center (FHMC) is a part of CommonSpirit Health, one of the largest nonprofit health systems in the U.S., with more than 1,000 care sites in 21 states coast to coast, serving 20 million patients in big cities and small towns across America.

French Hospital Medical Center is a 112 bed acute care facility situated on 15-acres at 1911 Johnson Avenue in the City of San Luis Obispo, California and has a long and rich history of serving the needs of the community since it was founded in 1946, and joined Dignity Health in 2004. Recently, the hospital announced both phases of their new emergency department have opened and is now the most advanced emergency service facility in San Luis Obispo County. The hospital offers programs and services including cardiac care, critical care, diagnostic imaging, emergency medicine and obstetrics. French Hospital Medical Center is home to the Central Coast's first and only cardiac hybrid suite, a space where interventional radiologists, cardiologists, and cardiovascular surgeons can work side-by-side in the same room at the same time. The hospital focuses on increasing access to health care for the underserved and marginalized members of the surrounding community.

Our Mission

The hospital's dedication to assessing significant community health needs and helping to address them in conjunction with the community is in keeping with its mission. As CommonSpirit Health, we make the healing presence of God known in our world by improving the health of the people we serve, especially those who are vulnerable, while we advance social justice for all.

Financial Assistance for Medically Necessary Care

It is the policy of CommonSpirit Health to provide, without discrimination, emergency medical care and medically necessary care in CommonSpirit hospital facilities to all patients, without regard to a patient's financial ability to pay. This hospital has a financial assistance policy that describes the assistance provided to patients for whom it would be a financial hardship to fully pay the expected out-of-pocket expenses for such care, and who meet the eligibility criteria for such assistance. The financial assistance policy, a plain language summary and related materials are available in multiple languages on the hospital's website.

Description of the Community Served

The hospital serves a community that extends over 35-miles in San Luis Obispo County including the City of San Luis Obispo, Atascadero, Templeton, Morro Bay, Los Osos, Cambria, and Paso Robles. A summary description of the community is below, and additional details can be found in the CHNA report online. The geographic area of the communities served by FHMC are shown on the following Figure 1.



Figure 1. FHMC Communities' Served



According to the American Community Survey (2016-2020, 5-year average), the FHMC community is home to 186,377 residents, of which, approximately 47,000 reside within the City of San Luis Obispo.¹ Approximately 70% of the FHMC community considers themselves White alone, not Hispanic or Latino(a). The Hispanic or Latino(a) population of the FHMC community is approximately one-fifth (20.4%) of the total population, and the Asian community accounts for 4% of the total population. In addition to the residents mentioned above, San Luis Obispo County is home to a transient farmworker population drawn to work in the fields, which includes indigenous migrants from the Mexican states of Oaxaca and Guerrero. These individuals are often monolingual in their native pre-Hispanic indigenous language of Mixtec or Zapotec, and have an estimated population of 17,771 farmworkers in San Luis Obispo County. The 2022 Homeless Count and Survey Comprehensive Report for San Luis Obispo County documented 1,448 sheltered and unsheltered individuals experiencing homelessness in San Luis Obispo County.

¹ U.S. Census Bureau (2022). *2016-2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate*. <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/profile?g=1600000US0669196>

Community Assessment and Significant Needs

The health issues that form the basis of the hospital’s community health implementation strategy and programs were identified in the most recent CHNA report, which was adopted in May 2022. The CHNA contains several key elements, including:

- Description of the assessed community served by the hospital;
- Description of assessment processes and methods;
- Presentation of data, information and findings, including significant community health needs;
- Community resources potentially available to help address identified needs; and
- Discussion of impacts of actions taken by the hospital since the preceding CHNA.

Additional detail about the needs assessment process and findings can be found in the CHNA report, which is publicly available on the hospital’s website or upon request from the hospital, using the contact information in the At-a-Glance Summary.

Significant Health Needs

The CHNA identified the significant needs in the table below, which also indicates which needs the hospital intends to address. Identified needs may include specific health conditions, behaviors and health care services, and also health-related social needs that have an impact on health and well-being.

Significant Health Need	Description	Intend to Address?
Educational attainment	Adults with a lower educational attainment level are more likely to encounter barriers obtaining health care and negatively impacted by other social determinants of health.	Yes
Access to primary health care, behavioral health care, and oral health	Adults have barriers in accessing primary health care which also includes behavioral health and dental health.	Yes
Health promotion and prevention	Adults have barriers accessing preventive health screenings awareness, and education	Yes

2022 Implementation Strategy

This section presents strategies and program activities the hospital intends to deliver, fund or collaborate with others on to address significant community health needs over the next three years, including resources for and anticipated impacts of these activities.

Planned activities are consistent with current significant needs and the hospital's mission and capabilities. The hospital may amend the plan as circumstances warrant, such as changes in community needs or resources to address them.

Creating the Implementation Strategy

The hospital is dedicated to improving community health and delivering community benefit with the engagement of its management team, board, clinicians and staff, and in collaboration with community partners.

Hospital and health system participants included social workers, care coordination, transitional care center, community benefit program coordinators, mission integration, cancer center, maternal health, health centers leadership, and the hospital executive leadership team.



Community input or contributions to this implementation strategy included meetings with the Marian Family Residency Program, Community Benefit Committee of the Community Board, and community stakeholders.

The programs and initiatives described here began with a review of current programs already offered by FHMC and the newly identified needs in the CHNA. Existing activities were reviewed for effectiveness, the need for continuation, or the need for enhancement. New programs were developed and existing programs have been enhanced based upon feedback from internal and external stakeholders. Program development includes a plan for monitoring for performance and quality to find areas of improvement to facilitate their success.

Community Health Strategic Objectives

The hospital believes that program activities to help address significant community health needs should reflect a strategic use of resources and engagement of participants both inside and outside of the health care delivery system.

CommonSpirit Health has established four core strategic objectives for community health improvement activities. These objectives help to ensure that our program activities overall address strategic aims while meeting locally-identified needs.



Create robust alignment with multiple departments and programmatic integration with relevant strategic initiatives to optimize system resources for advancing community health.



Scale initiatives that complement conventional care to be proactive and community-centered, and strengthen the connection between clinical care and social health.




Work with community members and agency partners to strengthen the capacity and resiliency of local ecosystems of health, public health, and social services.



Partner, invest in and catalyze the expansion of evidence-based programs and innovative solutions that improve community health and well-being.

Strategies and Program Activities by Health Need

 Health Need: Educational Attainment					
Anticipated Impact (Goal)	Raise awareness and provide opportunities for local high school students to explore various careers in health care. Contribute the future supply of licensed health care providers by serving as a training site for health professions students. Improve community health efficacy by providing programs based on an individuals' spoken language and literacy level.				
Strategy or Program	Summary Description	Strategic Objectives			
		Alignment & Integration	Clinical - Community Linkages	Capacity for Equitable Communities	Innovation & Impact
Dignity Health Community Health Improvement Grants	Fund Accountable Care Communities (ACC) whose goal is to encourage higher education, adult literacy and medical literacy.	●		●	●
Physician Mentoring Program	Provides local high school and college students the opportunity to participate in a rotation which introduces them to the many multidisciplinary facets of medicine.			●	●
Health Professions Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The hospital provides a clinical setting for undergraduate training and internships for dietary professionals, technicians, physical therapists, social workers, and pharmacists. Nursing students conduct their clinical rounding at the hospital. The hospital provides the local community colleges financial support to further address community wide workforce issues, such as school-based programs for health care careers. 			●	●
Planned Resources	The hospital will provide registered nurses, community health educators, philanthropic cash grants, outreach communications, and program management support for these initiatives.				
Planned Collaborators	Planned collaboration with San Luis Coastal School District, Lucia Mar School District, Allan Hancock College, Cuesta College, Central Coast Boys and Girls Club, United Way, and Future Leaders of America, Inc.				




Health Need: Access to Primary Health Care, Behavioral Health, and Dental Health


Anticipated Impact (Goal)	Increase access to free medical care and community resources to provide early detection, prevention, and management of illness. Increase smooth transitions for discharged patients by providing access to “medical homes” and pharmaceutical patient assistance programs.				
Strategy or Program	Summary Description	Strategic Objectives			
		Alignment & Integration	Clinical - Community Linkages	Capacity for Equitable Communities	Innovation & Impact
Dignity Health Community Health Improvement Grants	Fund Accountable Care Communities (ACC) whose goal is to provide access to health care, medical prescriptions, and behavioral health care.		●	●	●
Street Medicine Program	In collaboration with the Marian Regional Medical Center Family Residency program, basic health and needs assessments are provided to unsheltered individuals in the FHMC community.		●		●
Chronic Disease Prevention and Self-Management Programs	Chronic Disease Self-Management Program and the Diabetes Education and Empowerment Program (DEEP) are offered to community members.		●		●
Financial assistance programs to improve access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Financial assistance programs are offered to medically underserved individuals to cover basic needs, hospital bills, transportation vouchers, and hotel vouchers. ● The cancer center also provides financial assistance for basic needs (mortgage payment assistance, rent, gas cards) to community members affected by cancer. 			●	●



Health Need: Access to Primary Health Care, Behavioral Health, and Dental Health

<p>Behavioral Wellness Support Groups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide mental health support to families impacted by perinatal mood and anxiety disorder (PMAD). ● Community support groups are offered to community members that have been affected by cancer, stroke, chronic illnesses, and grief. ● Prenatal education programs for expectant mothers. ● A breastfeeding program offers a warm line where mothers can all in with questions or come in to see a nurse. New mothers are also offered free lactation consultants. 		●		●
<p>Behavioral Wellness Center (Crisis Stabilization Unit)</p>	<p>The Behavioral Wellness Center provides a safe haven for those individuals experiencing a mental health crisis.</p>	●	●		
<p>Community Health Navigator Program</p>	<p>The Community Health department will coordinate with the Transition Care Center to develop a “whole person” approach, for example, the DEEP participants, in helping those patients navigate access to medical, behavioral health, and basic needs services.</p>	●	●		
<p>Faith Community Nurse Program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Further develop and expand the FCN program throughout the CA Central Coast market. ● The FCN program will support the whole person including their spiritual, physical, mental and social well-being. 		●	●	●
<p>Cancer Prevention and Screening Program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support patients' psychosocial emotional needs and assess using the Distress Screening Tool. ● Conduct community outreach surrounding cancer awareness, nutrition, and screening. ● Provide financial support to medically underserved patients for transportation and genetic counseling. 		●		●
<p>Substance Use Navigation Program</p>	<p>Dedicated social workers assist patients presenting with Substance Use Disorder to link with appropriate resources. A naloxone distribution program is also part of the program.</p>	●	●	●	

 Health Need: Access to Primary Health Care, Behavioral Health, and Dental Health	
Planned Resources	The hospital will provide registered nurses, community health educators, philanthropic cash grants, outreach communications, and program management support for these initiatives.
Planned Collaborators	Planned collaboration with Marian Family Medicine Residency Program, SLO Noor free medical and dental clinics, FHMC care coordination and social work departments, Alliance for Pharmaceutical Access (APA Inc.), Hearst Cancer Resource Center, Pacific Central Coast Health Centers, FHMC Community Health Department, San Luis County Drug and Alcohol, Transitions, Mental Health, Community Counseling Center, and Community Health Centers of the Central Coast.

 Health Need: Health Promotion and Prevention					
Anticipated Impact (Goal)	Increase cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and stroke awareness, prevention, and management to the most vulnerable populations in the community, improving early detection and management.				
Strategy or Program	Summary Description	Strategic Objectives			
		Alignment & Integration	Clinical - Community Linkages	Capacity for Equitable Communities	Innovation & Impact
Cancer Prevention and Screening Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support community members' psychosocial emotional needs and assess using the Distress Screening Tool. Conduct community outreach surrounding cancer awareness, nutrition, and screening. Provide financial support to medically underserved patients for transportation, genetic counseling. 		●		●



Health Need: Health Promotion and Prevention

<p>Faith Community Nurse Program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further develop and expand the FCN program throughout the CA Central Coast market. • The FCN program will support the whole person including their spiritual, physical, mental and social well-being. 		•	•	•
<p>Behavioral Wellness Support Groups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide mental health support to families impacted by perinatal mood and anxiety disorder (PMAD). • Community support groups are offered to community members that have been affected by cancer, stroke, chronic illnesses, and grief. • Prenatal education programs for expectant mothers. • A breastfeeding program offers a warm line where mothers can all in with questions or come in to see a nurse. New mothers are also offered free lactation consultants. 		•		•
<p>Chronic Disease Prevention and Self-Management Programs</p>	<p>Promote to the community and provide Chronic Disease Self-Management Program and the Diabetes Education and Empowerment Program to community members. Conduct post workshop testing to determine efficacy of the program.</p>		•		•
<p>Planned Resources</p>	<p>The hospital will provide registered nurses, community health educators, philanthropic cash grants, outreach communications, and program management support for these initiatives.</p>				
<p>Planned Collaborators</p>	<p>Planned collaboration with Marian Family Medicine Residency Program, SLO Noor free medical and dental clinics, FHMC care coordination and social work departments, Alliance for Pharmaceutical Access (APA Inc.), Hearst Cancer Resource Center, Pacific Central Coast Health Centers, FHMC Community Health Department, San Luis County Drug and Alcohol, Community Health Centers of the Central Coast, and Transitions Mental Health.</p>				

Program Highlights

The FHMC community is unique due to its location on the Central Coast, with vast unincorporated areas, striking natural beauty, and thriving communities. Behind the striking natural beauty are geographically isolated communities, where marginalized individuals can be found residing in poverty, working in the shadows of the agriculture, tourism, or retail industry. The following paragraphs are a brief reflection of FHMC's commitment to improving community health, especially for the vulnerable, while advancing social justice for all.

The FHMC Community Health Department and Marian Family Residency Program have collaborated to expand their Street Medicine Program to the FHMC Community. The Street Medicine Program will provide very basic health and basic needs assessments to unsheltered individuals in the FHMC community. The Street Medicine conducts regular outings to several homeless encampments in the community.

Substance Use Navigation Program: The Substance Use Navigation Program focuses on providing increased support through dedicated social workers to patients presenting with Substance Use Disorders. The primary goal of the provider is to provide assessment, intervention, and support while in hospital care, but also to link to appropriate resources with the flexibility to follow patients post-acutely as needed. Identified patients who are seen by providers after hours may also receive a follow up call from social work to coordinate care if/when appropriate. A naloxone distribution program was also launched through the support of this program.

Health Professions Education at FHMC provides: 1) a clinical setting for undergraduate training and internships for dietary professionals, technicians, physical therapist, social workers, pharmacists, and other health care professionals from universities and colleges; 2) hospital experience based training opportunities for nursing students needing to conduct clinical rounds; and 3) partners with local community college by donating money so the college could disperse funding as needed for the purpose of addressing community wide workforce issues such as school-based programs for health care careers.

FHMC also engages in a variety of essential community building activities as a means to further the mission of advocacy, partnership, and collaboration. Activities will include executive, system leadership and staff involvement in community boards such as: Cencal Health Board, Hospital Council of Northern and Central California Board, American Heart Association, YMCA of SLO County, San Luis Obispo Health Commission, Adult Services Policy Council, Long term Ombudsman Program, Cal Poly Prevention Committee, Latino Health Coalition of SLO County, ACTION: For Healthy Communities, SLO County Human Trafficking Task Force, and Promotores Collaborative of SLO County.