

Geisinger Lewistown Hospital
Community Health Needs Assessment
Update: 2017

Community Health Needs Assessment

In each of the following sections, you will read about regional or system-wide programs offered by Geisinger as a focused effort to fulfill community and patient needs that were identified through the latest Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) surveys.

Geisinger Health System collaborated with outside organizations across a 13-county region to contract Tripp Umbach, a private healthcare consulting firm and nationally recognized leader in health needs assessments. Between October 2014 and March 2015 information was gathered from key community stakeholders using a variety of methodologies including: interviews, hand distributed surveys, and analysis of secondary data.

Some of the programs described in the following synopses are completely operated and/or funded by Geisinger and some are offered in cooperation with local health and human service agencies. Often, the needs of the communities we serve are similar throughout the areas of Pennsylvania and southern New Jersey where Geisinger providers care for patients. In these cases, we develop system-wide programs to benefit patients throughout our system. For more specific needs found in our local communities, we offer programs to serve patients close to home.

The program synopses are sorted by Geisinger hospital. The services and programs we provide are a response to needs identified in the most recent or, in some cases, past CHNA surveys. The synopses describe how the programs or services we provide fall into one of three broad categories:

Improving access to healthcare

Perhaps the most significant need identified in the CHNA survey was for better, faster, more convenient and less costly access to healthcare services of all kinds. Geisinger is taking innovative steps to address barriers to healthcare and help provide physical, mental, dental, rehabilitative and preventive services to patients, regardless of their health insurance status. The topics addressed include: how to find the right doctor, provider or facility; special services provided to patients with specific needs (such as the elderly or underinsured or uninsured); trauma prevention and treatment; and many others.

Addressing behavioral health and substance abuse

Geisinger and its partners have a wide range of programs aimed at helping patients find healthcare services when they are facing mental, psychiatric, developmental or behavioral health challenges or struggling with addiction. Alzheimer's disease and other aging brain issues as well as alcoholism and opioid abuse are addressed in a large and growing number of programs specifically aimed at expanding services.

Improving healthy behaviors

Prevention is key when addressing lifestyle choices and preventable health conditions. Geisinger has numerous educational programs to help patients get well and stay well. These efforts include classes offered to the community and outreach programs that bring healthcare professionals, education, nutrition and medication to the people. Our goal is to assist patients with their health before a serious problem arises that sends them to the hospital.

For more information about Geisinger Health System or to read the 2016 CHNA brochures, please go to <http://www.geisinger.org/chna>

Geisinger Lewistown Hospital (GLH)

Geisinger Lewistown Hospital has been caring for the people of Lewistown and its environs for more than a century. With 123 beds and more than 1,000 employees, GLH provides inpatient and outpatient care and a full range of wellness services to residents of Mifflin, Juniata, Centre, Perry, Snyder and Huntingdon counties. Our experienced physicians represent a range of specialties from family medicine, internal medicine and cardiology to infectious disease and general/ cardiovascular surgery, and, most recently, bariatric surgery and neurology.

Table of Contents

[Improving Acces to Healthcare](#)

A partnership for health: PHN reduced/sliding fee

Emergency Department, Imaging renovations

Adding providers, streamlining services to boost patient convenience

[Addressing Needs Related to Behavioral Health and Substance Abuse](#)

Expanding mental health options and services

[Improving Healthy Behavior](#)

Community wellness: Food as medicine and fighting addiction

Improving access to healthcare

A partnership for health: PHN reduced/sliding fee

Geisinger Lewistown Hospital has teamed up with Primary Health Network (PHN) to expand healthcare access for Juniata and Mifflin counties. PHN is a nonprofit community health center that reaches thousands of people annually through comprehensive health and educational services.

PHN services are offered regardless of age, race, creed, sex, national origin or ability to pay. PHN participates in most managed care plans, processes most health insurance plans and offers a sliding fee scale based on family size and income, regardless of insurance status.

Embracing the same team-based approach to healthcare as Geisinger, PHN offers many services in one location. Family medicine is provided on site, and dental services are available just a few doors away. Since opening in 2014, providers at PHN's Lewistown Community Health Center have seen more than 13,000 patients. Providers have been added at both the health center and at the dental clinic, allowing for expanded office hours.

PHN is preparing to break ground on a 45,000-square-foot, multi-story health center off U.S. Route 322 in Burnham. The facility is tentatively scheduled to open in 2018, bringing medical and dental services into one space and expanding the scope of services to include behavioral health. The facility is also expected to house other community agencies and some Geisinger ancillary services and programs.

Emergency Department, Imaging renovations

Renovations to the Geisinger Lewistown Hospital (GLH) Emergency Department deliver better access to efficient, sensitive healthcare by providing more privacy, a streamlined flow and improved amenities for patients and those accompanying them.

The GLH Emergency Department (ED) has a completely redesigned waiting and registration area to accommodate the 33,000 patients visiting each year. Patients now enter and exit the ED via more private routes. A new treatment room for bariatrics, an isolation room and more patient rooms also enhance patient privacy and comfort. Small changes, like taller screens in patient consultation areas, mean improved confidentiality. The renovation adds four extra beds to the ED, bringing the licensed bed space to 20 and enabling ED staff to treat more people in a timely manner. Three "fast-track" patient rooms give patients with less serious issues the possibility of being in and out quicker.

Comprehensive renovations to the Imaging Department that serves the ED make the process of obtaining X-rays and other studies more efficient, as well. A large-bore MRI machine was added in December 2016 to make the procedure more comfortable and less intimidating for patients.

Other amenities include new floors, cabinetry, lighting and fresh paint in non-institutional colors, making the space more cheerful. Upgraded televisions can be found throughout the ED, and electronics charging stations are available to patients or families in the waiting area. Care Cart volunteers circulate in the waiting room, offering snacks, beverages, reading materials and activities for children. Upgraded stretchers make patient transportation safer and more comfortable.

Adding providers, streamlining services to boost patient convenience

Based on a recent determination that several areas in the Juniata Valley have a shortage of health professionals,

Geisinger Lewistown Hospital (GLH) launched an effort to bring new primary care physicians (PCPs) to the area. Each added PCP could conduct approximately 3,500 appointments annually, reducing wait times and caring for more patients. In the past year, GLH added PCPs in Mifflin and Juniata counties, and will continue recruiting to make primary care accessible to more people.

Establishing a relationship with a PCP allows patients to actively participate in maintaining their health. This helps ease the strain on high-cost options such as emergency or urgent care. A PCP familiar with all aspects of a patient's health can manage his or her care based on an overall health profile.

GLH provides a centralized medical home for its patients, taking a team-based approach to healthcare. If a patient has a specific medical issue, specialists in most fields are available locally, either in person or by using GLH's new telemedicine program, which allows patients to confer with specialists in other locations without traveling. Procedures are performed in onsite exam rooms and in Surgical Services. After-care programs, such as inpatient rehabilitation and wound care, are also available at GLH.

For added patient access and convenience, many area specialists, including hematology, oncology and OB-GYN physicians, relocated their offices to the GLH campus to be closer to their related treatment centers. Geisinger FHA Family Practice and Geisinger Lewistown Family Practice are now both in Lewistown's Green Avenue facility. Having two family practice offices working together in one location means patients can be seen sooner during especially busy times, and only need to walk to a different floor rather than drive to another location.

Addressing behavioral health and substance abuse

Expanding mental health options and services

Geisinger providers know that overall health is more than just physical wellness; the overlap of mental and physical health has a great impact on general well-being. Geisinger Lewistown Hospital's physicians and staff strive to provide patients with the healthcare they need, both physically and mentally.

Geisinger maintains an integrated care approach to mental health, meaning screening and treatment begin in primary care providers' offices. As with a physical diagnosis, early detection and routine maintenance of mental health issues may prevent problems from developing to the point where a patient needs to seek emergency help or be admitted for inpatient treatment. Mental health screening during routine doctor visits provides an opportunity for people to talk to their trusted physicians about concerns they may not otherwise have mentioned.

The hospital's inpatient facility can accommodate 14 patients, but the concerted effort between PCPs, mental health professionals, social workers, case managers and nursing staff aims to prevent hospitalization, when possible. This means inpatient space is reserved for patients with needs that truly warrant admission.

In addition to the integrated care approach, behavioral services are also expanding with the continuing addition of providers. A child and adolescent psychologist will soon be joining the team in Lewistown to provide services to the area's younger patients.

Improving healthy behaviors

Community wellness: Food as medicine and fighting addiction

In 2016, Geisinger implemented two innovative wellness programs that will expand to Mifflin and Juniata counties in 2017. The Fresh Food Pharmacy program uses food as medicine in the treatment of chronic illness. Diabetic patients work with a care team that addresses food insecurity, offers education and menu planning guidance, and provides a “prescription” for fresh and healthful foods. Geisinger partners with the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank to fill the prescription for patients and their families. Food insecurity means a person does not have consistent access to enough or to the right type of food to lead a healthy, active life. The pilot program, which also offers education on self-care and healthy cooking, has shown early success, allowing patients to start taking back their lives, their freedom and their mobility.

The second program expands Geisinger’s award-winning Medication Therapy Disease Management program by adding social workers who specialize in substance misuse and addiction to patients’ primary care team. Extending the program to include these specially trained social workers means the patient’s primary care physician, the pharmacist and the social worker all play an active role in addiction recovery and prevention.

This open communication allows the team to provide alternatives in pain management, reducing the over-prescription of medication. In turn, this reduces the number of prescription drugs available for abuse in the community. Geisinger’s Drug Takeback Program, which provides a safe way for area residents to dispose of unused prescription medications through secure drop boxes, will be coming to Mifflin and Juniata counties in 2017, as well.