



Community Health Needs
Implementation Plan

Benefis Teton Medical Center



Community Health Needs Implementation Plan

Benefis Teton Medical Center (BTMC or the Medical Center) is a critical access hospital for adults and children in central Montana whose primary market covers Teton County, Montana. With 25 beds as well as 5 primary providers, the Medical Center is able to offer its community key medical services, which include acute care, imaging, emergency medicine, chronic care management, and preventative care among others.

Organized as a non-profit hospital, BTMC conducted a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) in 2023 to comply with IRS Section 501(r)(3)(a). BTMC identified key community health priority areas through its 2023 CHNA process. The complete findings from this CHNA process can be found in the [CHNA Benefis Teton Medical Center report](#) on the BTMC website.

As a follow-up to the CHNA process, BTMC developed an implementation plan to address certain identified community health needs over the next three years. The identified community health need focus areas were selected because (1) they were seen to align with the Medical Center's clinical mission and (2) the Medical Center has resources available to carry out an action plan for each. This document outlines plans for BTMC to support specific community benefit efforts as part of a larger community-wide plan. Details of the plan are discussed in this document.



Priority #1

Access to Specialty
and Pediatric Care



Priority #2

Mental Health



Priority #3

Access to Wellness
and Life Improvement
Resources



Priority #4

Community
Health Education

Impact Initiatives - Priority Health Issues



Priority Health Issue #1

Access to Specialty and Pediatric Care

Description of Community Need

A majority of CHNA community survey and focus group respondents identified the need for additional healthcare providers in Teton County. Specifically, there is a limited specialty and pediatric care presence in Teton County, forcing community members to seek care outside of the county.

Vision

BTMC recognizes that there is a need for additional specialty care and pediatric providers in Teton County to prevent community members from having to travel long distances in potentially adverse weather conditions for care outside of the county. BTMC plans to explore expansion of the care offering available to community members through outreach opportunities with Benefis across a variety of additional specialties. Further, BTMC, with the help of partnering agencies, will seek to make the current care offering at local medical practices more widely known to show community members that quality specialty and pediatric care alternatives are offered in Teton County.

Partner Agencies

- Teton County Health Department (County Health Department)
- Benefis Health System (Benefis)
- Independent local physician practices

Priority Health Issue #1

Access to Specialty and Pediatric Care

Hospital Strategy

- Over the past couple of years, BTMC and the County Health Department have been committed to providing more access to pediatric and specialty care providers for Teton County community members. Together, BTMC and the County Health Department will continue to bring in outside healthcare professionals that provide care to people of Teton County in specialties, such as pediatrics, and will seek out new opportunities to bring additional specialists to expand the care offering in the community.
- BTMC will have access to Benefis' electronic medical record, Epic, which will improve care coordination, help the community understand available services within the county, and increase access to telehealth for Teton County community members. After implementation is completed, all patient information/records will be transferred to the new system enhancing the patient care experience.
- BTMC will do the following to make Teton County care offerings more widely known: (1) increasing visibility of providers to community members in various ways including, but not limited to, provider meet-and-greet events and (2) leveraging existing social media platforms and the local newspaper and community publications to drive health initiative advertisement campaigns.
- To the extent that there are facility/equipment/infrastructure restrictions to providing types of care that make sense for the community, BTMC will work with Benefis on a plan to make the necessary upgrades to improve care access.

Measure

BTMC will measure success using 2024 as a baseline for measurement by: (1) increasing the number of new medical providers participating in health communication efforts year-over-year, (2) making new medical specialties available to patients in Teton County year-over-year, and (3) maintaining or increasing the number of social media and related marketing materials released to the public year-over-year.



Priority Health Issue #2

Mental Health

Description of Community Need

The World Health Organization defines mental health as a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community. Through the CHNA process, mental health was identified as a need within the Teton County community for members of all ages, including education of mental health resources and related issues. Specifically, over 50% of the CHNA community survey and focus group respondents reported inadequate mental health resources in Teton County.

Vision

BTMC recognizes that mental health resources, including ones for prevention, screening, and clinical assessment among others are vital to a healthier community. Combined with local community organizations, BTMC will (1) make existing resources and capabilities at the County Health Department more widely known to community members and (2) contribute more mental health resources and education to make Teton County a healthier community.

Partner Agencies and Roles

- Teton County Health Department (County Health Department)
- Local dedicated mental health and addiction services organizations.
- Statewide (Montana) dedicated mental health and addiction services organizations.
- Benefis Health System (Benefis)

Priority Health Issue #2

Mental Health

Hospital Strategy

- Leveraging its relationship with Benefis, BTMC looks to promote the use of mental health resources made available through the partnership. One particular Benefis mental health resource that BTMC plans to leverage in this initiative is technology for virtual meetings. BTMC hopes that this technology will allow Teton County community members to have a new access point to mental health counseling sessions, addiction recovery programs, and other related mental health platforms.
- BTMC also seeks to find opportunities to empower existing community mental health professionals (counselors) to help them better accomplish their work.
- Given that BTMC employs a significant portion of the Choteau, Montana, population, BTMC will invest into promoting health resources to its employees. Through its affiliation with Benefis, BTMC has access to many mental health-related resources, such as Deprexis, a mental wellness application, and Empower, Benefis' employee wellness group. In the coming years, Benefis will work with BTMC leadership to promote these resources and others to BTMC employees and their families to raise awareness for the importance of mental health.

Measure

BTMC will measure our success by increasing the number of additional mental health resources (i.e., virtual visits, programs, professionals, etc.) made available to community members over the next three years, using the year 2024 as a baseline.



Description of Community Need

Through the CHNA process, access to wellness and life improvement resources (e.g., blood pressure readings, diabetes management, exercise/physical activity programs) were identified as needs in the community. Improving the current lifestyles of community members and promoting healthy habits were seen as imperative for various population health initiatives in Teton County.

Vision

BTMC recognizes that Teton County community members need additional health/life improvement resources. BTMC will attempt to reestablish key community exercise/wellness programs and events as well as better leverage its relationship with Benefis to offer additional services to Teton County community members and increase the level of care coordination for local patients.

Partner Agencies and Roles

- Teton County Health Department (County Health Department)
- Benefis Health System (Benefis)
- Independent local physician practices

Priority Health Issue #3

Access to Wellness and Life Improvement Resources

Hospital Strategy

- Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, BTMC and its partnering community organizations offered various health and wellness programs to the people of Teton County (e.g., disaster preparedness programs and the “Stay Active & Independent for Life” (SAIL) fitness program). Health and safety concerns from the COVID-19 pandemic have prevented many of these programs from happening in recent years. BTMC looks to reestablish these programs.
- Better leveraging its long-term relationship with Benefis, BTMC will use Benefis’ existing care coordination strategies to effectively track patients from their initial check-in through subsequent follow-up visits. BTMC will evaluate weaknesses in the current care continuum to improve the process in the future.

Measure

BTMC will measure success by increasing the number of resources and services (e.g., health and wellness programs, etc.) made available to the community over the next three years, using 2024 as the baseline year. Additionally, BTMC will measure success by increasing the number of individuals utilizing the birthday month discount each year over the next three years.



Priority Health Issue #4

Community Health Education

Description of Community Need

Through the CHNA process, education and preventative care were identified as needs in the community. Preventing diseases and obesity is associated with lifestyle, education level, and income levels of the local population. More specifically, education in key health areas (e.g., risks in underage drinking/substance abuse, necessity for vaccinations, etc.) were identified as needs within the Teton County community.

Vision

BTMC recognizes that education and preventative care are essential to promoting a healthier community. Combined with local community organizations, BTMC will offer more health education and resources through key community organizations. BTMC will also leverage social media platforms to make available health resources more widely known to the community members regardless of age.

Partner Agencies and Roles

- Teton County Health Department (County Health Department) and partnering organizations
- Independent local physician practices
- Local school systems (elementary, intermediate, and high schools)
- Other community organizations (e.g., Choteau Lions Club and Choteau Senior Center)

Priority Health Issue #4

Community Health Education

Hospital Strategy

- Several organizations in the community are working to improve the level of health education, including BTMC. As an organization, BTMC will seek to educate the public on various topics, including the care offering already available in the community, proper uses of the emergency room, and dangers of substance abuse among others.
- BTMC will seek to provide more education on health and related topics to all community members by way of local school systems, Choteau Lions Club, and Choteau Senior Center among others. Examples of these efforts could include speaking at town hall functions, hosting healthcare professional panel discussions for certain groups in the communities served, and holding immunization clinics at local schools during operating hours among others.
- Benefis is in the process of launching a new website, which will have individual webpages for each Benefis hospital including BTMC. Website enhancements will allow Teton County community members to easily identify health services offered at BTMC as well as the other general health information/services provided in the county. Benefis will staff a team to ensure that the BTMC webpage is constantly updated with accurate health information for the people of Teton County.

Measure

BTMC will measure success by increasing the number of health educational resources made available to the community over the next three years, using 2024 as the baseline year. Additionally, BTMC will measure success by increasing the number of new healthcare professionals engaging in health education initiatives over the same time period.



Process for Identifying and Prioritizing

All areas identified in the CHNA report dated November 30, 2023, were considered for impact planning. Results of the surveys and interviews, as well as community data, were presented to the Board of Directors at Benefis. In analyzing the data, the Board of Directors determined the above to be the most significant health needs in the community.

Areas Not Covered by Impact Initiatives

BTMC identified the four top areas to focus on after careful consideration of all needs identified within the CHNA. These four are considered the most significant health needs in the community and will be covered by the impact initiatives. Other health needs identified in the assessment, not deemed significant, may be indirectly impacted by the initiatives, but resource constraints prevent BTMC from directly addressing these initiatives.