



Gifford Health Care

Annual Progress Report

Implementation Strategies to Improve Community Health: 2017

Gifford's mission is to provide accessible, quality local health care to every person who walks through our doors. In 2015, as part of the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, we performed a Community Healthcare Needs Assessment in part through surveying community members in multiple area towns. In 2016, this assessment was reviewed and modified as required by the federal mandate. In early 2018, the Assessment was updated again using SurveyMonkey and paper surveys. The report will be finalized at the end of May.

Gifford has strategically worked to address the community's need within its role as a health care provider. Areas initially identified as health problems include: preventative health /access to health care, substance abuse counseling, obesity, and dental care. In 2017, Gifford secured funding to create a Community Outreach / Health program to respond effectively to areas of need noted in the Community Needs Assessment. This program demonstrates Gifford's commitment to serving as a community resource for improving and maintaining health. This update outlines areas of ongoing focus in 2017:

Preventative healthcare/access to healthcare

To facilitate an increased focus on preventative health care and improve access to care, Gifford has implemented a new electronic medical record (e-ClinicalWorks). The new EMR will allow our teams to work more efficiently and offer providers a powerful new tool to improve patient care.

Substance abuse counseling

As a Federally Qualified Health Center Gifford's Behavioral Health and Blueprint for Health team specialists offer counseling and one-on-one patient care at all Gifford primary care locations. Our Addiction Medicine program, fully staffed with a board-certified psychiatrist certified in addiction medicine, and a licensed alcohol and drug counselor, offers ongoing suboxone treatment for patients with complex needs; suboxone provider support, education, and consultation; and therapy to help patients rebuild lives damaged by opioid use disorder.

To date a majority of the Community Outreach Coordinators time has been focused on the growing opioid and drug epidemic in our rural communities. A drug take-back kiosk was installed in the main lobby of the hospital. Well over 100 pounds of "the most dangerous leftover" have been collected in the first three months of 2018. Outreach efforts have also included support of education in the school, a six-part community forum and establishing relationships with community partners.

Obesity

Gifford's primary care team has long been a proponent of healthy lifestyle choices for good health and the prevention of disease and obesity. BMIs are determined at annual health screenings and patients are guided by providers and Gifford's registered dietitians on healthy diets and portion control. Discussions in support group settings (such as diabetes and other chronic conditions) often focus on healthy choices to reduce and prevent disease. Patients are strongly encouraged to be physically active.

Dental care

Gifford's Federally Qualified Health Center designation has brought resources that help us support local dentists as they strive to better care for the under- and uninsured. To increase awareness of dental health, we have offered free medical and dental health screenings and distributed information about community resources that can help with access to dental care.

Gifford is partnering with HealthHub to bring their dental trailer to two different Randolph locations (at the hospital and elementary school) and the Rochester School with the goal of bringing these services to hard to reach clientele. HealthHUB has traditionally seen children during the school year, this past year it expanded the dental hygiene program to parents, grandparents, and other community members in the towns it serves. HealthHUB's mission includes increasing access to essential oral healthcare services. Transportation becomes less of a barrier to care when services are provided at school and as close to home as possible for adults. Preventative dental care does not replace seeing a dentist—the dental hygienist works with patients' dentists for their continuum of care and help those without a dental home to find one.