

2012 “Community Health Needs Assessment” for Porter Hospital, Middlebury, Vermont

As outlined in the Affordable Care Act of 2010, Porter Hospital conducted a comprehensive Community Health Needs Assessment during the summer and fall of 2012, and published this report on our website in November of 2012. In addition to creating and publishing the CHNA report, Porter Hospital is required to prepare the following CHNA Implementation Report and have this report reviewed and approved by our Board of Directors in 2013. Following are the required sections/questions that must be addressed in the Implementation Report (in bold text) followed by our responses:

Introduction: 2012 “Community Health Needs Assessment” report;

Principally involved in the planning and implementation of this project were three individuals: Ron Hallman, Vice President of Development and Public Relations at Porter Hospital, Madison Styrbicki, a junior at Middlebury College who spent her January-Term working to conduct a series of interviews throughout the month, and myself, Heidi Sulis, as project coordinator. The project coordinator received her Master’s in Public Health from Yale University, School of Epidemiology and Public Health in 1985; and then managed the Department of Community Health Outreach at Porter Hospital for the 21-year period, spanning December of 1989 through May of 2011.

At the outset of this project, a number of resources were read, reviewed and/or reevaluated in order to better prepare for our interviews and position ourselves to assess and draw meaningful conclusions from our findings. Included in this review were: *Porter Medical Center’s 2004 Act 53 Community Needs Assessment, Healthy Vermonters 2010, The Health Disparities of Vermonters, 2010, AHEC’s 2011 Snapshot of the Vermont Primary Care Workforce, and Vermont’s 2010 Blueprint for Health.*

Another document that was thoroughly reviewed, and is included in its entirety in our completed CHNA, is the 2009 Addison County Community Needs Assessment, entitled, *The Health of Our Community*, completed by our local Middlebury District Office of the Vermont Department of Health. As the “process” was initially outlined to us through a power point presentation, it was explained that we could use pre-existing pieces of information collected by other organizations. Given the breadth of this assessment - explanation of service area, data review and a survey conducted by themselves of 180 Addison County residents in the fall of 2009 - combined with the fact that there isn’t a new body of data/numbers to look at just yet, it seemed nothing less than prudent to incorporate this entire document into our completed needs assessment.

Additionally, and unique to this year's CHNA is a brand-new assessment/survey that was initiated by Jessica Holmes, both a faculty member and economist at Middlebury College and Board Member of Porter Hospital. Collaborating with staff, board and trustees at the College and Hospital, and working closely with Ron Hallman and some of her students, in the summer of 2011, Professor Holmes developed an on-line survey to assess the community's perceptions of medical care access and quality of care in Addison County.

Between October and December, 2011, links to this survey were emailed to all faculty and staff at Middlebury College, all members of the Addison County Chamber of Commerce, and all affiliates of Porter Medical Center (both employees and board members). In addition, the Addison Independent, one of our local newspapers, published an article about the survey, with a link to it, and Porter Hospital also posted the survey link on its webpage, with the hopes of further increasing community participation.

A total of 510 individuals participated in the survey. While it should be noted that this survey primarily focused on participants' perceptions of Porter Medical Center and the role it plays within our service area - a single entity to be considered within a much larger field of players - it nonetheless validly captures the "consumer's perspective," within a specific context, and is the first survey of its kind to have been done in our community. So long as we hold it within the proper context, it does add merit and value to the CHNA as a holistic document.

Finally, between January and October of 2012, a total of 25 interviews were conducted primarily with professionals and individuals who represent a wide variety of community organizations and/or constituents that cut across all socio-economic strata including those individuals who are marginalized within our communities. Included in this group, listed below, are health care providers, legislators, Middlebury's town planner, and a variety of administrators. We did not conduct any focus groups, and admittedly are shy on the consumer perspective, at least from "face-to-face" encounters, but feel confident that through the lens and perspective of many individuals interviewed, we certainly captured consumers' concerns.

Those interviewed included:

Joanne Calvi, Jeff Heath and Staff – Middlebury District Office, VDH

Kerri Duquette-Hoffman – Women Safe

Rachel Guy – Middlebury Office, Planned Parenthood

Neil Gruber, Executive Director – Helen Porter Healthcare and Rehabilitation Center

Senator Claire Ayer, Legislator, Addison County

Mike Fisher, Representative, Addison County

Larry Goetschius, Executive Director – Addison County Home Health and Hospice

Bob Thorn, Executive Director – Community Services of Addison County

Eileen Fuller, MD – Middlebury Family Health

Harvey Green, DDS – Harvey Green Dentistry

Kate McGowan and Helen Friesmuth – United Way of Addison County

Mike Fernandez – Resident of Bristol and Board Member, Porter Hospital

Christopher Mason, Police School Resource Officer – Middlebury Police Department

Sharon Koller, Student Assistant Program Counselor – Mount Abe Union High School

Tom Fontana, School-based Clinician – Vergennes Union High School

Melanie Clark, Coordinator, Addison County Youth Prevention and Control Grants

Jeanne Montross, Executive Director - HOPE

Fred Dunnington, Town Planner – Town of Middlebury

Gretchen Gaida Michaels, MD – Bristol Internal Medicine

Poppy Cunningham, RN and Donna Bailey, Co-Director - Addison Co. Parent/Child Center

Julie Arel, MSW, MPH – Executive Director/Open Door Clinic

Joanne Corbett, MSW, ACSW, LICSW – Executive Director/Elderly Services

Jody Brakeley, MD – Pediatrician

Martha Redpath, CNM and Heather Kidde Brown, CNM – Tapestry Midwifery

James L. Daily – President/Porter Medical Center

How the CHNA Report was made available to the public;

The Porter Hospital 2012 CHNA was made available to the public via the following methods:

- A Press Release published at the time of the report;
- Posting on the Porter Web Site;
- Focus Groups/Forums conducted by the CNHA Project Coordinator;
- Dissemination of the final report throughout community via partner agencies;

What does the Porter Hospital CHNA Describe?

The Porter Hospital 2012 CHNA includes the following information:

- Definition of the community served by Porter Hospital
- Demographics of our community
- Existing community resources available to respond to needs
- Information about how data was obtained
- Summary of Health Needs of our community
- Health needs and issues of uninsured persons and/or low-income persons as follows:
 1. Access – to primary care providers, to insurance, to comprehensive services (including long-term care)
 2. Substance Abuse/Addiction - Opiate addiction, abuse and addiction of/to prescription drugs and narcotics
 3. Mental Health
 4. Dental Health
 5. Obesity – Nutrition – Exercise
 6. Homelessness

How Porter Hospital is Meeting Identified Needs through the Community Health Needs Assessment (strategy for prioritizing and addressing needs overall; and prioritizing needs that Porter will address, including budget for implementation);

- Access – to primary care providers, to insurance, to comprehensive services

Porter Hospital operates a comprehensive network of provider practices throughout Addison County and the town of Brandon, and is now the community leader in terms of ensuring access to primary care services to our community. Additionally, via our specialty practices and the comprehensive services offered via Porter Hospital, our organization makes available a range of health care services to meet the needs of our community. As a not-for-profit Critical Access Hospital, Porter provides services to our patients regardless of their insurance or financial circumstances, and has a staff of financial counselors who work with our community to connect them with programs offered either through Porter or Green Mountain Care.

Ensuring access to primary and comprehensive specialized services appropriate for a community hospital remains a core priority for our organization and represents a significant investment in both staff time and via our annual operating budget.

Additionally, via our Helen Porter Healthcare and Rehabilitation Center, our organization also addresses a comprehensive range of needed services for long-term care, short-term rehabilitation care, and memory loss/dementia care services. Recently, we have added additional capacity and services to address the special needs of our community members facing end-of-life issues via new “home-like rooms” in collaboration with Addison Respite Care Home (ARCH).

- Obesity – Nutrition – Exercise

Through the Blueprint for Health and our efforts to introduce Community Health Team members throughout our primary care network, Porter Hospital is now taking a more formal and active role in promoting wellness and health maintenance programs for our patients and community.

We now have Community Health Teams throughout our Addison County and Brandon facilities, and are coordinating our efforts via the state-wide Blueprint for Health initiative.

- Substance Abuse/Addiction - Opiate addiction, abuse and addiction of/to prescription drugs and narcotics

Needs Identified in the CHNA that are not directly addressed by Porter Hospital and why (including how “partners” in the community, i.e. VDH, Counseling Service, ODC and local Dental Group are working to identify specific needs);

Addison County is fortunate to have a large number of not-for-profit health and human service organizations which are independent of Porter Hospital, but which address some of the specific needs outlined in our 2012 CHNA report. Rather than try to compete with these agencies and extend our services outside of our core mission of providing primary, acute and long-term care services to the people of Addison County, Porter supports and collaborates with these agencies whenever possible.

The list of needs contained in our 2012 CHNA that are not being directly addressed by Porter Hospital, but are being worked on by other local organizations listed in our CHNA report include:

- Mental Health
- Dental Health
- Homelessness

A summary of these needs and how they are being addressed by agencies in our community is outlined in Porter Hospital’s full 2012 CHNA report found on our website www.portermedical.org.