

Community Health Improvement Plan

- Mercy Hospital Watonga
- Fiscal Year 2026





Our Mission

As the Sisters of Mercy before us, we bring to life the healing ministry of Jesus through our compassionate care and exceptional service.

Our Values

Dignity

Excellence

Justice

Service

Stewardship

Contents

Introduction	4
Implementation Plan by Prioritized Health Need	7
Prioritized Need #1: Access to Specialty Services	8
Prioritized Need #2: Community Transportation	10
Prioritized Need #3: Obesity	12
Prioritized Need #4: Diabetes	14
Other Community Health Programs Conducted by the Hospital	17
Significant Community Health Needs Not Being Addressed	19



Introduction

Mercy Hospital Watonga is a 25-bed critical access hospital located in Watonga, Oklahoma. It is one of eight hospitals in Mercy's West Region. The hospital began as Watonga Municipal Hospital, opening its doors in 1969. In 2012, the hospital joined the Mercy network and was officially renamed Mercy Watonga Hospital.

The facility proudly serves the communities in Blaine County and western Oklahoma and offers a range of medical services including a 24-hour emergency room which is designated by the State of Oklahoma as a Level 3 stroke center, diagnostic radiology, laboratory, occupational and physical therapy, respiratory care, and skilled nursing/swing bed.

The Rural Health Association of Oklahoma recognized the hospital as a top overall performer in 2024, and the hospital was awarded the Leadership Award in 2024 by the Chartis Center for Rural Health.

Mercy Primary Care Watonga is located in close proximity to the hospital and serves community members of all ages including children.

Introduction *(continued)*

Mercy's mission is to deliver "compassionate care and exceptional service" to every community member. In dedication to this mission, our work includes the development of a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) during the last year, with the assistance of the Oklahoma Office of Rural Health and in cooperation with stakeholders throughout the community.

Introduction *(continued)*

The CHNA identified top-priorities and of the thirteen, **four have been chosen as health needs for the Mercy Hospital Watonga community.** We will strive diligently to address these needs with a Health Equity lens over the next three years:



As always, we seek to develop a rich and rewarding network of partnerships with our neighbors. We welcome any thoughts you may have on ways to achieve our goal for a healthier community.

Improvement Plan by Prioritized Health Need





Prioritized Need #1: Access to Specialty Services

GOAL:

Increase access to specialty services through service expansion and community collaborations.





Prioritized Need #1: Access to Specialty Services

Program 1 of 1: Service Expansion

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

Mercy Hospital Watonga has secured additional primary care services with the community. Additional specialty service expansion includes outpatient infusion services as well pediatric physical therapy and exploring adding additional services by working with Opportunities Inc.

ACTIONS MERCY INTENDS TO TAKE TO ADDRESS THE HEALTH NEED:

Central focus on securing more specialty providers and space to complete the expansion of services.

ANTICIPATED IMPACT OF THESE ACTIONS (OBJECTIVES):

Quicker access to specialists will help patients to not delay treatment, and struggle less with transportation to providers further away.

PLAN TO EVALUATE THE IMPACT:

Track patients referred elsewhere for specialty services.
Track patients utilizing new services at Mercy Hospital Watonga.
Track patients seeking specialty care through Opportunities Inc.

PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES MERCY PLANS TO COMMIT:

Additional providers and medical staff
Space for additional services

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS:

Opportunities Inc.



Prioritized Need #2: Community Transportation

GOAL:

Increase access to transportation for patients.



Prioritized Need #2: Transportation

Program 1 of 1: Transportation Collaboration

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

Collaborate with Cherokee Strip and other transportation providers to provide transportation for patients unable to get to and from their medical appointments.

ACTIONS THE HOSPITAL INTENDS TO TAKE TO ADDRESS THE HEALTH NEED:

Utilize community health workers (CHW) to identify patients with transportation issues and connect them to resources including Cherokee Strip.

ANTICIPATED IMPACT OF THESE ACTIONS (OBJECTIVES):

Lower no show rate for patient appointments
Ease of access to get to appointments

PLAN TO EVALUATE THE IMPACT:

Track number of referrals to transportation resources
Track utilization of Cherokee Strip as a transportation provider

PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES THE HOSPITAL PLANS TO COMMIT:

CHW support for Watonga Clinic and Hospital (shared with Kingfisher)
Funding for Cherokee Strip to provide transportation if all other options have been exhausted

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS:

Cherokee Strip Transportation Services, community partners that help with transportation, Managed Care Organizations assisting patients enrolled in Medicaid



Prioritized Need #3: Poor Nutrition/Access to Healthy Food

GOAL:

Increase patient knowledge on budget-friendly healthy eating and food selection.



Prioritized Need #3: Poor Nutrition/ Access to Health Food

Program 1 of 1: Outpatient Dietician Services

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

Mercy Hospital Watonga will an outpatient program that helps patients with learning how to eat healthier on a budget by providing an outpatient dietician.

ACTIONS THE HOSPITAL INTENDS TO TAKE TO ADDRESS THE HEALTH NEED:

Set up a referral mechanism to refer patients to outpatient dietician services from the clinic or inpatient setting.
Utilize community health workers (CHWs) to help with local resources and follow up

ANTICIPATED IMPACT OF THESE ACTIONS (OBJECTIVES):

Patients will gain improved nutrition and ability to select healthy, cost-effective foods.
Patients utilizing the outpatient dietician services will be less likely to admit to the hospital due to nutrition related health concerns.

PLAN TO EVALUATE THE IMPACT:

Track the number of patients referred to the service, their admission or readmission rates, and ability to afford and follow a healthier diet.

PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES THE HOSPITAL PLANS TO COMMIT:

A referral mechanism to refer patients to the program, a full-time dietician to support the program and provide consultation services, resources on places to purchase or receive low-cost healthy foods.

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS:

Local food pantries, Opportunities Inc., Integrated Health and Social Care leaders and team members



Prioritized Need #4: Diabetes Management

GOAL:

Improve diabetes control and management for patients with diabetes.



Prioritized Need #4: Diabetes Management

Program 1 of 1: Senior Citizen Diabetes Management Program

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

Mercy Hospital Watonga offers a monthly program at the Senior Citizen's Center to assist the community members with Diabetes Management. Mercy Caregivers provide glucose monitoring through fingerstick blood sugar tests. Results are provided to patients to share with their primary care providers in effort to better manage their condition.

ACTIONS THE HOSPITAL INTENDS TO TAKE TO ADDRESS THE HEALTH NEED:

Support outpatient program for seniors with diabetes.

ANTICIPATED IMPACT OF THESE ACTIONS (OBJECTIVES):

Patients will have better control and management of diabetes and related issues.

Patients will follow up with their PCP appropriately to help manage their diabetes.

Patients will be less likely to be admitted to the hospital for diabetes or related health issues.

PLAN TO EVALUATE THE IMPACT:

Track the number of patients seen at the senior center

Track and evaluate blood sugar results.

Monitor improvements and progress of each patient that attends program.

PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES THE HOSPITAL PLANS TO COMMIT:

Medical staff to conduct the finger stick tests, medical supplies for testing, community resources

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS:

Watonga Senior Center

Other Community Health Programs

Mercy Hospital Watonga conducts other community health programs not linked to a specific prioritized health need. These programs address a community health need and meet at least one of the following community benefit objectives: improve access to health care services, enhance the health of the community, advance medical or health care knowledge or relieve or reduce government burden to improve health. The need for these programs was identified through documentation of demonstrated community need, a request from a public health agency or community group, or the involvement of an unrelated, collaborative tax-exempt or government organization as partners in the activity or program carried out for the express purpose of improving community health. Although this is not an exhaustive list, many of these programs are listed on the next page.

Other Community Health Programs (Continued)

Community Benefit Category	Program	Outcomes Tracked
Community Health Improvement Services	Community health education programs	
	Charitable care for the uninsured	
Health Professions Education	Health professions student education nursing, imaging, therapy, pharmacy, medical student, lab, emergency medical technician and advanced practice nursing	
Financial & In-Kind Contributions	Local sports teams sponsorships	
	Sponsors for the local community festivals	



Other Community Health Programs (Continued)

Community Benefit Category	Program	Outcomes Tracked
Community Building	Lions Club	
	Kiwanis Club	
	Ministerial Alliance	
	Opportunities Inc.	
Health Care Support Services	Therapy services	
	Dietary consults	



Significant Health Needs Not Being Addressed

In any case of prioritization, there will be some areas of needs that are identified that are not chosen as a priority. Because MHW has limited resources, not every community need will be addressed. Throughout the CHNA process, the following need arose as a community concern. However, it will not be addressed as a top priority because other organizations are more appropriate to address this need.

- **Teen Pregnancy**
While the hospital works collaboratively with the community to address community needs, the issue of teen pregnancy will not be a focus of this health improvement plan as the other aforementioned issues were found to be most relative to our patients.
- **Mental Health Resources**
Mercy does provide some mental health resources for patients seeking behavioral health treatment. This done through various modalities and while the issue was presented, it is not one of the most pressing issues presented by our community. For these reasons, mental health resources will not be an area of focus for our health improvement plan.

Now What

Next Steps

After carefully reviewing the data and mapping existing resources, MHW is developing an implementation plan with evidence-based strategies. The plan will be submitted to a committee of appointed members from Mercy Hospital Watonga, for their approval. The final version of the CHNA and Implementation Plan will be available to the public on the Mercy Hospital Watonga website, www.mercy.net/communitybenefits.



Your life is our life's work.