

# COMPASS NOW Key and Emerging Health Issues in Monroe County

## *What's Being Done and Planning for the Future*

In addition to the specific actions and initiatives described below, the Hospital conducts an extensive review of its scope of services every three years (coinciding with a three year strategic planning cycle). The strategic planning process includes significant input from Hospital board members (community members representing a broad cross section of business and industry) as well as medical staff members (employed by other health systems). The input from these groups, as well as the results of the 2018 COMPASS NOW report, help guide Hospital leadership in developing goals and implementation strategies to address the healthcare needs of Tomah and the surrounding communities. In the case of needs that cannot be addressed directly by the Hospital (primarily mental health issues and dental care access) due to inadequate resources or inhouse expertise, we remain committed to seeking out partnerships and contributing whatever resources are available to ensuring the need is addressed.

## **Alcohol Use and Illegal Drug Use**

### **Current Action**

- Drug and alcohol abuse presentations to area businesses and community education events:
  - These presentations cover the physical, mental, and emotional effects of drug and alcohol use (both short and long term) with information specific to Monroe county. Participants are shown what signs to look for in drug abuse and how to help someone who is struggling with substance abuse.

- Cancer prevention presentations
  - One of the ways to reduce the risk of developing cancer is to limit the amount of alcohol consumed. These presentations touch on this topic with emphasis on the physical effects of long term alcohol abuse.
- Prescription drug abuse:
  - Partnered with local law enforcement and area physicians to provide education on prescription drug abuse.
  - Implemented a new hospital policy that provides firm guidance on the use of prescription narcotics for patients presenting with pain.

### **Future Actions**

- Hospital staff is currently working with Couleecap, a non-profit organization that fights poverty and promotes self-sufficiency, economic development, and social justice, to host professional forums for prescription drug education. CEUs will be offered to encourage local healthcare providers to attend.
- The Hospital's Community Outreach Department is currently exploring a relationship with the Tomah Area School District to provide presentations on the health effects of drug and alcohol use to Tomah high school freshman and advanced health classes.

## **Health Care Access and Cost**

### **Current and Future Actions**

- Tomah is currently served by two primary care clinics operated by the Gundersen and Mayo healthcare systems. Physicians from these clinics comprise the majority of the hospital's medical staff, and the hospital has a longstanding tradition of working collaboratively with these groups to ensure the healthcare needs of the community are met. Hospital administration has been and remains supportive of joint recruiting efforts to bring new providers to the community, and when access to a particular service is limited, the hospital has worked independently to recruit providers to the community, including orthopedic and general surgery coverage, as well as sleep medicine.

- Since 2007, the Hospital has operated a walk-in clinic in the outlying community of Warrens, WI, helping to ensure residents access to urgent care services that would otherwise need to be addressed in the hospital's ED. Although this facility is subsidized by the Hospital, leadership is committed to the operation and recognizes the key access it provides to residents in Warrens and the surrounding areas.
- In August, 2013, the Hospital entered into an agreement to implement a hospitalist program to treat patients admitted to the hospital. This program is seen as a key element to improving the professional satisfaction of the local primary care physicians, thereby decreasing the likelihood that physicians will leave the community and exacerbate current primary care access issues.
- The Hospital continues to explore opportunities to expand occupational health services, implement a formal ICU program, and assist the local medical groups with ensuring adequate general surgery, orthopedic surgery, and obstetric coverage are available to the community.
- The Hospital is committed to ensuring that patients that utilize hospital services are not left with an undue financial burden, and as such continuously revises and improves its Community Care program to better address the needs of those that may qualify for free or discounted care.
- Hospital leadership is committed to maintaining a relatively low pricing structure, and annual budgets are assembled with an operating margin of 3% - 5%. This target represents a reasonable balance between keeping prices low for our community and ensuring that the Hospital can continue to reinvest in its building, equipment, and workforce to remain competitive.
- Dental Care:
  - The Hospital's Emergency Department provides a dental care handout for patients (primarily those without some form of dental benefit or coverage through the State of WI) in need of dental care

- The Hospital has maintained a partnership with a pediatric dentistry group to provide services to area youth in need of extensive dental care (primarily patients requiring significant sedation).

## **Mental Health**

### **Current Actions**

- The Hospital has partnered with the Monroe County CHIP Mental Health Workgroup in order to discover how mental health services available to Monroe County can be expanded. The workgroup is currently planning a mental health education forum in an effort to break down some of the social stigma surrounding mental health issues.
- The Hospital is part of the Tomah Veteran's Administration Mental Health Executive Committee, a committee developed to lead, coordinate and encourage coherent principles to improve mental health care and services for Veterans.
- Stress relief presentations to area businesses and community education events:
  - These presentations introduce healthy ways to handle stress, including how to start a beginner exercise program and ways to manage stress eating.
- Anti-bullying presentations:
  - These presentations address bullying and encourage parents and students to become empowered and take a stand against both cyber and in-person bullying.
- National Night Out
  - The Hospital sponsors and helps coordinate the local National Night Out event, in which the police, emergency responders, and the community come together to promote safety, health, anti-crime activities, and neighborhood friendliness.

### **Future Actions**

- Developing several suicide prevention presentations to deliver to area students.
- Conducting feasibility study regarding the possibility of having a mental health provider on call for emergencies.

- The Hospital has begun offering counseling services via a Licensed Clinical Social Worker to patients and families that utilize Palliative Care services. The feasibility of expanding this service is currently being explored, increasing access to mental health services for individuals that may not qualify for Palliative Care. Any expansion of services will coincide with the Hospital's annual budgeting process for fiscal years 2013 and 2014.

## **Obesity**

### **Current Actions**

- Women and Men's Health Night and the Senior Health and Safety Expo
  - Annual community events planned and sponsored by the Hospital that provide free health screenings, health information, and healthy refreshments.
- Winnebago Wednesday Presentations
  - Winnebago Wednesday occurs each week during the summer months and encourages children to have fun with learning. The Hospital has an interactive booth where children are education on the positive health effects of exercise, and information is provided to parents regarding ways to keep their kids active throughout the year.
- Taking Advantage of the Fall Harvest
  - This education opportunity addresses easy and cheap ways to prepare foods that can be purchased at local farmers' markets and produce stands, in addition to providing a list of local produce, farm, and farmers' markets.
- Fall Walking Program
  - Exercise program open to both employees and the community that encourages individuals to take advantage of the fall walking weather.
- Heart Health Presentations

- This education opportunity focuses on teaching people to control their blood pressure and weight by limiting the amount of processed foods they eat, and gives healthier, but still delicious, alternatives to heavily processed meals.
- Label Reading Presentation
  - This education opportunity provides strategies for reading and interpreting information on the food labels, and direction on how to choose healthier processed food options in the grocery store.

### **Future Actions**

- New Year's Resolution Wellness program
  - Program for Hospital employees that will encourage healthy lifestyle changes and weight loss management
- Developing relationship with the Tomah Area School District to explore how the Hospital can help promote exercise and a healthy lifestyle.