Community Health Improvement Plan

2023

Acknowledgments

Thank you to our partners who assisted in creating this Community Health Improvement Plan. With their help, together we can create systematic changes to the delivery of health services in Jefferson County.

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1.   Introduction

The Jefferson County Health Department was established in 1949 under the Revised Statutes of Missouri (RSMo) chapter 205. The agency is governed by a five-member Board of Trustees, consisting of Jefferson County residents who are voted in for a four-year term. The Jefferson County Health Department serves over 229,000 Jefferson County Residents as of 2022[1].

Mission

Champion positive health outcomes and behaviors through innovative programs and community engagement

Vision

Advancing the health and safety of Jefferson County

Values

Innovation | Passion | Adaptability | Integrity | Accountability

In 2022, the Jefferson County Health Department partnered with Mercy Hospital Jefferson, COMTREA, Jefferson County Community Partnership (JCCP), and Jefferson Franklin Community Action Corporation (JFCAC) to create a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) report. The purpose of a CHNA is to provide an overview of the health needs and priorities identified by a community. The CHNA results help guide organizations in community planning and assist in developing specific strategies to address the needs identified by the community.

Information for the CHNA was gathered through surveys of community members and organizational stakeholders, focus groups, and countywide data. The community identified four major areas of need: **mental health, substance use, access to care, and financial literacy.**

2.   Community Health Needs Assessment Results

Access to Care

Access to healthcare can be affected by the timeliness and quality of care an individual receives. For people at higher risk of chronic conditions, access to care is greatly affected by factors such as cost, availability of services, and transportation. Jefferson County has a rate of 1 primary care physician for every 4,310 residents while Missouri's rate is 1 to 1,420 residents[2]. Lack of access to preventative care can lead to a worsening of comorbidities and more chronic conditions. While Jefferson County has forms of public transportation including OATS Transit, JeffCo Express, and EZMO, the routes are limited to certain areas in the county. They are unavailable to individuals in more rural areas.

Mental Health

Mental health describes an individual's emotional, psychological, and social well-being. The effects of COVID-19 have led to a drastic decline in mental health. Jefferson County has a strong presence of mental and behavioral health services; however, there are issues with receiving care in a timely manner. Jefferson County has a 1 mental health provider ratio for every 970 residents. Missouri's ratio is 1 for every 460 residents[3] and the overall national average is 1 mental health provider for every 350 Americans[3].

Substance Use

Substance use disorder is very much present in Jefferson County. From 2014-2018 Jefferson County was the 6th highest county in Missouri for ER visits related to opioid use and 3rd highest for heroin-related visits[4]. Jefferson County also saw a 40% increase in fatal opioid overdoses from 2015 to 2017[5]. One barrier preventing effective intervention for substance use in Jefferson County is the lack of access to recent data.

Financial Literacy

Financial literacy is the ability to understand and utilize financial skills. Individuals who lack financial literacy are more likely to make financial mistakes and be unable to cope with economic fluctuations. Poor financial literacy has been correlated with poverty.

3.   CHIP-Identified Priorities

Based on data and resources available in Jefferson County, it was decided to focus specifically on three priority areas for the CHIP:

- **Access to Care**
- **Mental Health**
- **Substance Use**

After selecting the three priority areas, the Jefferson County Health Department met to identify specific issues related to each area to address in the CHIP. For access to care, it was decided to discuss transportation needs and assist underserved, populations at higher risk in receiving care. For mental health, it was decided to focus on educating the community on identifying mental health needs and connecting residents to resources. With substance use, it was chosen to focus on increasing access to substance use-related data and address cost transparency issues surrounding substance use treatment.

In April 2023, the Jefferson County Health Department met with several community stakeholders including Mercy Hospital Jefferson, JCCP, COMTREA, Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, Chestnut Health Systems, PreventEd, Jefferson College, and OATS Transit. The group met to discuss the three priority areas and identify strategies to address each area of need. The Access to Care group chose to work with transportation services in Jefferson County to add new stops to their bus routes. They also created a strategic planning process to improve how community outreach events for unhoused individuals are planned to increase attendance and the number of resources provided. The Mental Health group decided to create two programs offering mental health first aid training to community organizations and to school staff. The Substance Use group identified a way to share current substance use-related data through an opioid dashboard. They also chose to work with substance use treatment providers to improve treatment cost transparency.

The groups then created action plans for each strategy identified. The action plans are made up of activities that need to be completed to reach the overall goal, timelines to complete the activities, and resources needed to complete the activity. They identified key partners involved in each plan and their expected outcomes. Each action plan also has listed the specific Healthy People 2030 objective they align with to ensure they are working towards a national goal shared by other healthcare organizations across the country[6].

3.1 CHIP Priority #1: Access to Care

Action Plan 1

Goal: Increase access to transportation in Jefferson County
Program Description: JeffCo Express will promote the new "Flag Stop" program in Jefferson County online and through other media. JeffCo Express will work with Mercy Hospital Jefferson to identify potential improvements to the transportation options provided to the hospital.
HP 2030 Alignment: EH-02, SDOH-02, AHS-08

Activity:	• Add a list of flag stop options to the JeffCo Express website • Add flag stop locations and pick-up times to JeffCo Express pamphlets • Promote flag stop program to community partners and the general public to increase awareness of transportation options • Survey Mercy Hospital Jefferson employees to identify potential changes to bus routes
Timeline:	• Complete JeffCo Express updates immediately • Complete the Mercy survey by September 30th, 2023
Resources Required:	• Supplies for print media • Staff time to survey Mercy employees
Key Partners:	Lead: JeffCo Express Participants: Mercy Hospital Jefferson
Anticipated Result:	• Increase utilization of transportation • Improved quality of life for Jefferson County residents

Action Plan 2

Goal: Increase the number of individuals served at community outreach events for unhoused individuals

Program Description: Jefferson County's Homeless Coalition will create a strategic plan to improve the process by which community outreach events for unhoused individuals are planned.

HP 2030 Alignment: MHMD-R01, NWS-01, NWS-02, AHS-04, AHS-08

Activity:	• Identify an individual to act as the Strategic Planner • Identify a group to act as a Logistics Support Team • Create a communications plan to promote events effectively to the target audience and community organizations • Create a transportation plan to coordinate transportation to and from the events • Create a list of all community organizations and resources that participate in events • Coordinate with event hosts to create a year-out schedule of quarterly outreach events and two Project Homeless Connect events
Timeline:	• Identify Strategic Planner and Logistics Support Team by June 2023 • Create a communications plan, transportation plan, and list of community resources and organizations by January 2024 • Create a year-out schedule of events by January 2024
Resources Required:	• Volunteer time to create plans, lists, and year-out schedule • Computer to coordinate meetings and schedule
Key Partners:	Lead: Strategic Planner Participants: Jefferson County Homeless Coalition, JCHD, Mercy Hospital Jefferson, JFCAC, COMTREA, Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, JeffCo Express
Anticipated Result:	• Improved process in which outreach events for unhoused individuals are planned • Increase the number of participants served at events • Increase the number of services offered at events • Provide four quarterly events and two Project Homeless Connect events per year

3.2 CHIP Priority #2: Behavioral Health

Action Plan 1

Goal: Increase the community's knowledge on how to identify individuals with mental health needs and how to intervene

Program Description: Mental Health First Aid Training will be provided to organizations in the community to equip staff on how to identify an individual with mental health needs and how to properly intervene.

HP 2030 Alignment: MHMD-01, MHMD-04, MHMD-05, MHMD-R01

Activity:	• Identify an organization to provide Mental Health First Aid Training • Identify organizations in the community that interact with individuals at a higher risk of having mental health needs • Primary organizations to consider: New Hope Church, libraries • Secondary organizations to consider: rehab services groups, urgent care front office staff, Section 8 housing staff, food pantry volunteers • Provide training to community organizations
Timeline:	Ongoing
Resources Required:	• Funding for staff to provide training • Training facilitator • Space for training
Key Partners:	Lead: Jefferson County Sheriff's Office Participants: New Hope Church, county libraries, food pantries, community volunteers, community social service organizations
Anticipated Result:	• Community members will be better prepared to help individuals with mental health needs • Individuals with mental health needs will receive intervention sooner

Action Plan 2

Goal: Increase school faculty's knowledge on how to identify students with mental health needs and how to intervene

Program Description: Youth Mental Health First Aid Training will be provided to faculty in community schools to equip staff with how to identify a student with mental health needs and how to properly intervene.

HP 203 Alignment: MHMD-02, MHMD-03, MHMD-06, MHMD-D01, EMC-06

Activity:	• Chestnut will provide Youth Mental Health First Aid Training • Identify schools in need of training for staff • Create a list of school districts, schools, and their main point of contact(s) • Create a yearly schedule of training to be provided to community schools • Initiate conversations about providing training to Chestnut's five school districts for the upcoming school year • Reach out to other districts to offer training in following year • Reach out to private schools to offer training in the future
Timeline:	• Send an initial email to five Chestnut school districts in June 2023 • Provide training to staff before school sessions begin in August 2023 • Reach out to other school districts by May 2024 to provide trainings in August 2024 • Repeat staff training for all schools annually
Resources Required:	• Two training facilitators • Grant funding for materials and lunch for participants • Classroom • Computer and internet access for training • School faculty time
Key Partners:	Lead: Chestnut Participants: Jefferson County Schools
Anticipated Result:	• Chestnut will provide 2 Youth Mental Health First Aid Trainings per year initially with 20 participants per session • 40 school faculty in the community will be better equipped to identify students with mental health needs • Youth in the community with mental health needs will receive intervention sooner • Increase in student referrals to community mental health organizations and preventative care

3.3 CHIP Priority #3: Substance Use

Action Plan 1

Goal: Increase access to substance use data for Jefferson County
Program Description: JCHD will complete and share the Opioid Dashboard with community partners to spread awareness and education on relevant topics related to drug prevention.
HP 2030 Alignment: SU-03, SU-05, SU-15, SU-18, SU-D04, IVP-20, IVP-23

Activity:	• Complete the Opioid Dashboard • Identify community partners to share dashboard data with including those focused on drug prevention • Work with partners of Jefferson County Drug Prevention Coalition (JCDPC) to provide drug prevention and general substance use education to the community based on dashboard data
Timeline:	• Final version of the Opioid Dashboard to be complete by Fall 2023 • Share Opioid Dashboard and data with community partners by Winter 2023/Spring 2024 • Data collection and updates to dashboard are ongoing • Prevention education are ongoing as education is updated based on trends in dashboard data
Resources Required:	• JCHD staff time to complete, maintain, share, and future expansion of the Opioid Dashboard • Time from partners of JCDPC to create drug prevention education for community partners • Grant funding to provide marketing of the dashboard data with community
Key Partners:	Lead: JCHD Participants: JCDPC and their partners
Anticipated Result:	• Comprehensive and real-time database of opioid use in Jefferson County • Education provided by JCDPC will be more data driven • Targeted education towards at-risk population based on dashboard data • Early identification of new drug trends and risk factors in Jefferson County

Goal: Make substance use treatment costs in Jefferson County transparent and in plain language

Program Description: Partners of JCDPC will gather substance use treatment costs, translate into plain language, and note them in Prevent Ed's resource guide. PreventEd will share resource guide with the community and JCHD for utilization in ASPEN program.

HP 2030 Alignment: SU-01, SU-03, SU-18, IVP-20, IVP-23, HC/HIT-R01

Activity:	• Gather substance use treatment costs and accepted insurances for providers in Jefferson County • Translate treatment costs into plain language and note in the resource guide • Complete the resource guide • Share resource guide with community partners and residents • Share resource guide with JCHD for ASPEN program
Timeline:	• Complete resource guide by Fall 2023 • Share resource guide with JCHD and community by Fall 2023
Resources Required:	• PreventEd staff time to create resource guide • JCDPC partners' time to gather substance use treatment costs • JCDPC time dedicated to collecting information to include in a resource guide • JCHD staff time to update ASPEN with information form resource guide
Key Partners:	Lead: Prevent Ed and JCDPC Participants: JCHD, JCDPC partners
Anticipated Result:	• Public resource guide consisting of substance use treatment costs in plain language • Increase utilization of treatment services • Removal of cost barriers preventing individuals from seeking treatment • Increased awareness of treatment options in the community

4.   Conclusion

The health and safety of Jefferson County residents relies on the strategic coordination of community partners. When community partners work together with a shared vision, it leads to improved communication between organizations, improved processes of coordinating care, and creates systematic changes to address the needs of the community. The nineteen participants, representing nine community stakeholders, who came together to create this Community

Health Improvement Plan found several ways to successfully address access to care, mental health, and substance use in Jefferson County. Through the cooperation of these organizations, the residents of Jefferson County can begin to see improvements to their health with increased access to care and transportation, increased awareness of mental health needs in the community, and increased knowledge of substance use and treatment costs in Jefferson County.

5.   References

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