



**2015 Gundersen St. Joseph's Hospital and Clinics
Community Health Needs Assessment**

Gundersen St. Joseph's Mission Statement

We will serve our region as the trusted place for compassionate quality care, a resource for specialty services, and innovators in integrated rural healthcare

Gundersen St. Joseph's Vision

To be the leader in comprehensive rural healthcare.

Introduction and Purpose

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (2010) requires tax-exempt 501(c)(3) healthcare organizations to perform a Community Health Needs Assessment every three years and to adopt an implementation strategy to meet the identified community health needs. Gundersen St. Joseph's Hospital and Clinics is an affiliate of the larger Gundersen Health System and therefore was a participant in the collaborative community health needs assessment titled Compass Now 2015. Compass Now 2015 is currently available for review from the Great Rivers United Way website <http://www.greatriversunitedway.org/our-work/community-needs-assessment/>.

While it is widely accepted for large health systems to collaborate with other organizations to complete the community health needs assessment, the IRS intends for each hospital within an organization to document separately the community health needs identified in their respective service areas. It is also expected that multiple hospitals' implementation strategies may be similar within a large health system; however, all affiliate hospitals must prepare a customized plan specific to its own programs, resources and priorities of the service area. This *Gundersen St. Joseph's Hospital and Clinics 2015 Community Needs Assessment* which is recognized as an appendix to the *Great Rivers United Way Compass Now 2015* report is intended to serve as a description of the significant community health needs identified in Gundersen St. Joseph's service area. This data will then be used by the Gundersen St. Joseph's organization to develop an implementation strategy to prioritize needs, evaluate resources and to implement programs to address the health needs identified in this report. The Gundersen St. Joseph's Community Health Needs Assessment Implementation Plan will be published in the spring of 2016.

Section 1: Organization Overview and Demographics

Gundersen St. Joseph's Hospital and Clinics provides the community with three family clinics and a 25-bed Critical Access Hospital located in the rural, Western Wisconsin town of Hillsboro. The hospital facility offers inpatient, swing bed, surgery, emergency and urgent care

services. The St. Joseph's campus includes a rehabilitation department, medical imaging, ambulatory care, pharmacy, lab, clinics and specialty services.

Gundersen St. Joseph's Hospital and Clinics operates three family clinics. One clinic is located in Hillsboro, WI in Vernon County while the other two clinics serve the communities of Elroy, Wisconsin and Wonewoc, Wisconsin, both in Juneau County. Each clinic has a family practice and primary & preventive care focus. All three Gundersen St. Joseph's family clinics are designated as Rural Health Clinics. The Gundersen St. Joseph's clinic in Hillsboro also offers Behavioral Health outpatient services.

Gundersen St. Joseph's Hospital and Clinics is located in the Northeast corner of Vernon County, 60 miles East of La Crosse and 90 miles Northwest of Madison, Wisconsin. St. Joseph's main campus is located in Vernon County with two family clinics in Juneau County. The population of Gundersen St. Joseph's Service area is approximately 16,000 residents. Gundersen St. Joseph's patients primarily live in Vernon and Juneau Counties in Wisconsin.

Gundersen St. Joseph's Service Region Demographics

County/Demographic	Vernon	Juneau
Total Population	29,583	26,673
Population in Poverty	14.5%	13.6%
Unemployment Rate	3.3%	6.0%
Uninsured Under age 18	28.3%	13.2%
Adults Ages 25+ with High School Education or Less	55.7%	41.6%
Primary Language Spoken in Home		
English	88.6%	95.8%
Spanish/Creole	1.6%	1.6%
Indo-European	9.4%	2.1%
Asian and Pacific Island	0.4%	0.2%
Other Languages	0.0%	0.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 5-year American Community Survey

Section 2: Counties in Gundersen St. Joseph's Service Region

Vernon County

Vernon County is included in the collaborative community health needs assessment that was conducted as Compass Now 2015 by the Great Rivers United Way. COMPASS NOW 2015 is a

joint effort of Great Rivers United Way, area health care organizations, area foundations, and county health departments to improve the quality of life for everyone in our community.

COMPASS NOW 2015 gathered information in four ways:

- Random Household Survey
- Convenience Survey
- Analysis of key socio-economic indicators
- Community conversations with individuals who were otherwise underrepresented among the random household survey respondents

The most important element of the COMPASS NOW 2015 Needs Assessment is the widespread community involvement. More than 1,500 people contributed to the results of the Random Household and Convenience Surveys. In Vernon County 650 households were mailed surveys and 90 of those surveys were returned for a response rate of 13.8%. The top community issues identified in Vernon County by the respondents of the survey were:

1. Illegal drug use.
2. Alcohol use
3. Obesity
4. Identity theft
5. Bullying

The top 5 health issues in Vernon identified in the Compass Now 2015 Random Household Survey were:

1. Illegal drug use
2. Alcohol use
3. Obesity
4. Tobacco use
5. Prescription drug misuse

The top two causes of death in Vernon County are heart disease and cancer.

Juneau County

Juneau County is not included in the Compass Now 2015 Coalition, however Gundersen St. Joseph's serves Juneau County residents by having two family clinics in that county therefore Juneau County information is included in this appendix to the Great Rivers United Way 2015 Compass Now report. The Juneau County Health Department also conducts a community health needs assessment in every three years. According to their last community needs assessment in 2013 it was determined that the top needs of their services area are: To help residents with the ability to navigate the medical, dental and mental health system, obesity, chronic disease

management and mental illness. Other priorities mentioned included the importance of efforts to promote healthy lifestyles and a focus on healthy communities. As a result of the 2013 Juneau County Health Needs Assessment it was recommended that health providers in Juneau County continue to partnership with other agencies to bring more mental health providers and/or services to the area. In coordination with access to health care navigation of the medical system was also brought forward as a goal of the 2013 Juneau County Health Needs Assessment. It was determined that assisting the population who fail navigating medical, dental and mental health system is crucial in improving the health of the county's residents. The importance of programs available to get kids active was brought forward. This was in light of the growing obesity rates that Juneau County and the State of Wisconsin faces. According to the CDC's Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity and Obesity (DNPAO), 62.8% of adult Wisconsinites are overweight –26.3% are obese (30% in Juneau County). The top two causes of death in Juneau County are cancer and heart disease.

Similarity: The top two causes of death in Juneau and Vernon County are heart disease and cancer (all types).

Top 5 Causes of Death per 100,000 lives by County, 2012

County	Cause of Death	Rate Per 100,000
Vernon	Heart Disease	228.39
	Cancer (All Types)	228.39
	Unintentional Injuries (including Motor Vehicle Accidents)	77.25
	Stroke	53.74
	Nephritis (Kidney Disorder)	40.30
Juneau	Cancer (All Types)	228.77
	Heart Disease	191.27
	Stroke	105.01
	Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease	93.76
	Unintentional Injuries (including Motor Vehicle Accidents)	71.26

Source: La Crosse Medical Health Science Consortium, Health Scorecard

Section 3: Past Community Health Needs Assessment

Community Health Needs Assessments have been an ongoing process at Gundersen St. Joseph's. The last Community Health Needs Assessment was completed in 2012 in collaboration with the Great Rivers United Way.

In 2012, Gundersen St. Joseph's identified several top priorities including:

- *Implementing a new strategy for Disease Management monitoring.*
- *Developing a new Pastoral Care plan.*
- *Exploring a clinic-developed model for a “free clinic”.*
- *Developing transparent “cost of services” for staff and patient use.*
- *Supporting the development of long-term care services in Hillsboro. Possibly partnering with another entity to develop a feasibility plan.*
- *Expanding geriatric psych services offered by St. Joseph’s Health Services-Gundersen Lutheran.*
- *Developing a business plan for Home Health/Hospice Services.*

The following is a progress update of the 2012 Community Health Needs Assessment priorities:

- *Implementing a new strategy for Disease Management monitoring.*
 - * This priority has been satisfied by the addition of a Disease Management RN. The Disease Management nurse has implemented disease management quality measures and reports data to the medical staff monthly. In 2015, Gundersen St. Joseph’s began a Home Vital Sign Monitoring Program as part of the disease management program.
- *Developing a new Pastoral Care plan.*
 - * St. Joseph’s now has a chaplain on staff regularly (20 hours per week). The chaplain visits all hospital inpatients and is available to ER patients. The chaplain provides spiritual and emotional support for all patients and staff as needed. Gundersen St. Joseph’s chaplain maintains a relationship with the area community pastors and collaborates with them to meet the needs of patients and their families. The chaplain is also trained as an Advanced Care Planning facilitator.
- *Exploring a clinic-developed model for a “free clinic”.*
 - * Gundersen St. Joseph’s Family Clinics now offers at least two public health fairs/screening events from each clinic yearly (since 2012). These health fairs are free of charge to the public and are held at various locations in Hillsboro, Elroy and Wonewoc, WI.
- *Developing transparent “cost of services” for staff and patient use.*
 - * Gundersen St. Joseph’s has developed a plain language statement that informs our patients that there is help available to pay for medical expenses for those who

qualify. In 2014, the Community Care/Charity Care policy and application was updated and simplified to make it easier for patients to apply for help. Patients are able to request price quotes, within 24 hours, for non-emergent services. Since 2013, Gundersen St. Joseph's has employed Certified Application Counselors for the health insurance marketplace that can assist patients to access health insurance and medical assistance.

- *Supporting the development of long-term care services in Hillsboro. Possibly partnering with another entity to develop a feasibility plan.*

* Gundersen St. Joseph's did not have the opportunity to enter into a partnership with another entity to develop long-term care services in Hillsboro as identified in the 2012 Community Health Needs Assessment. However, we have strengthened our cooperation with the already existing CBRF's and SNF's available in our service area. Gundersen St. Joseph's has also hosted quarterly "Reducing Readmissions" collaborative meetings which included representatives from the Weber Haus CBRF, Milestone Senior Living CBRF & Assisted Living, Heritage Manor SNF, and Western Wisconsin Cares-MCO.

- *Expanding geriatric psych services offered by St. Joseph's Health Services-Gundersen Lutheran.*

* Gundersen St. Joseph's behavioral health department has expanded to offer a range of mental health services for children, adolescents, adults and geriatric patients. Gundersen St. Joseph's currently has three staff available in behavioral health who can all serve the geriatric population (in accordance with insurance acceptance). Gundersen St. Joseph's behavioral health department consists of a nurse practitioner, licensed marriage and family therapist and a licensed social worker.

- *Developing a business plan for Home Health/Hospice Services.*

*Gundersen St. Joseph's Hospital and Clinics received a grant in 2015 and has started a Home Vital Sign Monitoring program. This program is an adjunct service that allows discharging hospital patients to learn how to better manage their chronic disease while also providing technology for direct communication with the disease management nurse and the primary care provider. This program is free of charge to the patient and participation is voluntary. Gundersen St. Joseph's also collaborates with numerous home health and hospice agencies that provide care in our service area.

Section 4: Rural Health Care Services

Gundersen St. Joseph's Hospital and Clinics is a leader in rural health care. We are proud to work closely with the other health care providers in our service area including dental, chiropractic, and pharmacy services in the town of Hillsboro. The town of Elroy offers dental services and two family medical clinics to their residents. The three communities of Hillsboro, Wonewoc and Elroy each have volunteer EMS services that respond to 911 calls. Elroy has a skilled nursing home, whereas Hillsboro and Wonewoc each provide an assisted living facility in their respective communities. All three towns provide K-12 public schools, senior meal services and delivered meals.

Section 5: 2015 Community Health Needs Methodology and Data Collection

Methodology

Compass Now 2015 used a variety of data collection methods to create an overall depiction of the issues facing our communities. These methods included a random household survey, convenience survey, community conversations and an extensive review of socio-economic indicators, which provides an inventory of community resources. In addition, this report includes information from the Gundersen St. Joseph's Patient Advisory Council (focus group), community conversations, and the most recent information available from the Juneau County Health Department.

Data Collection

Compass Now 2015

Data for the community needs assessment was obtained through a partnership with the Great Rivers United Way-Compass Now 2015 coalition. Compass Now 2015 was a joint effort of the Great Rivers United Way area healthcare organizations and county health departments to assess the needs of the community, to identify resources, and to address the most urgent needs. The COMPASS NOW 2015 partnership is made up of the Great Rivers United Way, Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center, Mayo Clinic Health System-La Crosse, Mayo Clinic Health System-Sparta, Otto Bremer Foundation, Gundersen St. Joseph's Hospital and Clinics, Tomah Memorial Hospital, Gundersen Tri-County Hospital, Vernon Memorial Healthcare, La Crosse Community Foundation, La Crosse County Health Department, Monroe County Health Department, Trempealeau County Health Department, Vernon County Health Department and Houston County Health Department.

Data Specific to Gundersen St. Joseph's Hospital and Clinics

This report, as an appendix to the Compass Now 2015 report, includes data specific to Gundersen St. Joseph's Hospital and Clinics service area. Data for this appendix is compiled from:

Compass Now 2015, Great Rivers United Way
 2009-2013 5-Year American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau
 2015 Wisconsin County Health Rankings & Roadmaps
 Juneau County Health Department, Juneau County, Wisconsin
 Gundersen St. Joseph's Patient & Family Advisory Council
 La Crosse Medical Health Science Consortium, Health Scorecard

County Health Rankings Health Outcomes and Risks

County	Health Outcomes Ranking	Health Behavior Ranking	Adult Smoking %	Adult Obesity %	Excessive Drinking %	Social & Economic Factors Ranking	Quality of Life Ranking
Vernon	27	48	23%	30%	23%	34	8
Juneau	63	71	26%	32%	27%	64	66
Wisconsin	-	-	18%	29%	24%	-	-

Source: 2015 Wisconsin County Health Rankings. Wisconsin has 72 counties.

County Health Rankings-Quality of Clinical Care

County	Clinical Care Ranking	Primary Care providers (ratio of population to providers)	Uninsured Population	Mental Health Providers (ratio of population to providers)	Preventable Hospital Stays
Vernon	65	1375:1	14%	820:1	59
Juneau	67	1158:1	13%	2413:1	70
Wisconsin	-	1215:1	10%	623:1	51

Source: 2015 Wisconsin County Health Rankings. Wisconsin has 72 counties.

Section 6: Gundersen St. Joseph's Community Health Needs Priorities

Areas of Need

In October 2015, Gundersen St. Joseph's Patient and Family Advisory Council, a local focus group, provided an opportunity to identify key issues for our specific service region. These key issues are specific to Gundersen St. Joseph's facilities in both Vernon and Juneau Counties.

The Gundersen St. Joseph's Patient and Family Advisory Council identified these key issues:

- Maintaining a variety of services
- Recruitment of quality providers and specialists
- Access to Behavioral Health Services
- Updating Gundersen St. Joseph's building and facilities

The purpose of the Compass Now 2015 Report is to assess the needs in our community, identify community resources to address the most urgent needs, and to encourage action plans that have the potential to solve the identified community problems.

Compass Now 2015 identified these key health issues for our region:

- Chronic Disease
- Mental Health and Substance Abuse
- Lifestyle Factors
- Oral Health

Rationale for Health Areas of Need As Reported in Compass Now 2015

The health areas of need identified as priorities in the Compass Now 2015 needs assessment region wide are chronic disease and contributing factors, mental health and/or substance abuse and oral health.

Chronic Disease and Contributors to Chronic Disease

Chronic diseases are considered to be diseases not preventable by vaccines or that can be cured by medication and that last three months or longer. The leading chronic diseases in the U.S. (i.e. heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes, and obesity) are largely preventable through lifestyle choices and behavior. Ways in which one can minimize their risk of developing one of the top chronic diseases include engaging in regular physical activity, choosing a healthy eating plan, managing blood pressure and cholesterol levels, abstaining from tobacco products, and maintaining a healthy weight. John Hopkins University reported that nearly 75% of all healthcare spending in the U.S. is due to treating a chronic disease. Moreover, workers with chronic conditions are more likely to miss work than peers without a chronic disease. In 2010, less than 25% of adults in the Great Rivers Region reported consuming the recommended servings of fruits and vegetables. In addition, nearly 19% of Great Rivers Region community members reported smoking. This is higher than both Minnesota and Wisconsin averages. Due to the high cost of treating these chronic and preventable illnesses, the Great Rivers Health Council determined this was a priority issue, with special attention around access to care and a better understanding about how disparities play a role in the prevalence of chronic disease in our community.

Mental Health and/or Substance Abuse

There are countless types of mental health issues and many of these issues have a variety of

ways in which they can impact both an individual and their community. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 18.5% of Great Rivers Region community members 18 years or older self-reported insufficient social or emotional support most of the time over the past year. This is higher than both state averages (Wisconsin: 16.1%, Minnesota: 14.1%). Moreover, according to the 2013 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), approximately 24% of Great Rivers Region youth reported feeling sad or hopeless almost every day for at least consecutive two weeks and did not participate in their usual activities due to these feelings. Despite the lack of mental health data available for our community or nationally, mental health was deemed a top area of need in the Great Rivers Region. This is due to the growing awareness of the impact mental health issues have on an individual and community. In addition, there is often a strong stigma and discrimination against those with mental health issues. The Mental Health Foundation reported that nine out of ten people with mental health problems say stigma and discrimination have a negative effect on their life. The abuse of harmful or hazardous use of a psychoactive substance, including alcohol and illicit drugs, can result in numerous negative health outcomes for an individual and community. In 2012, there were 725 drug arrests within the Wisconsin counties of the Great Rivers Region for the possession of marijuana alone. Moreover, there were a total of 16 drug-related deaths in the Great Rivers Region. However, one of the mostly widely used and abused substances is alcohol. Approximately 24% of adults reported excessive drinking in the past 30 days. Some people with mental illness also have ongoing substance abuse problems and many people who abuse drugs and alcohol may experience mental illness as drugs and alcohol can worsen underlying mental illnesses. This can happen both during acute intoxication (i.e. a person with depression becomes suicidal in the context of drinking alcohol) and during withdrawal from a substance. In addition, drugs and alcohol can cause a person without mental illness to experience the onset of symptoms for the first time. The theme that mental health and substance abuse are sometimes linked was often discussed on the Community Council therefore; both of these issues were added as top areas of need for the Great Rivers Region.

Oral Health

Oral health impacts all aspect of our lives but is often taken for granted or not considered to be as important as other health promotion practices. The mouth allows for a glimpse into one's overall health. It can show signs of nutritional deficiencies or general infection. In addition, systemic diseases (those impacting the entire body) may first become apparent because of mouth lesions or other oral problems. Some of the systematic diseases related to oral health include cardiovascular disease, low birth weight, premature birth, diabetes, osteoporosis, and Alzheimer's disease. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, approximately 30.4% of community members in the Great Rivers Region reported not visiting a dentist, dental hygienist, or dental clinic within the past year. Moreover, on average, there are only 61.1 dentists per 100,000 populations in the Great Rivers Region. This is lower than the state and national averages. Due to the lack of providers and the impact good oral hygiene has on one's life, oral health was determined to be an area of need for our community.

Section 7: Costs of Health Care

We understand that paying for healthcare is sometimes challenging so Gundersen St. Joseph's extends Community Care (Charity Care) to any person who qualifies for a reduction in the cost of their medical care. Gundersen St. Joseph's Hospital and Clinics has dedicated staff to help patients obtain price quotes for services, establish flexible payment plans and to apply for medical insurance and/or medical assistance via the Federal Health Insurance Marketplace. Gundersen St. Joseph's works closely with patients and their representatives to ensure that each individual gets the medical attention they need while also being mindful of their unique financial situation and payer resources.

Section 8: Adopting the 2015 Gundersen St. Joseph's Community Health Needs Assessment

The Gundersen St. Joseph's Board of Directors approved this plan November 19, 2015. Compass Now 2015 is provided to all board members via <http://www.greatriversunitedway.org/our-work/community-needs-assessment/> . The support, guidance and input from the Gundersen St. Joseph's Board of Directors is appreciated in the development of this document. Their dedication to the health of the community is greatly acknowledged.

Section 9: Dissemination of 2015 Gundersen St. Joseph's Community Health Needs Assessment

Gundersen St. Joseph's Hospital and Clinics will make its Community Health Needs Assessment available by request, free of charge, through the Department of Social Services. The Gundersen St. Joseph's Hospital and Clinics Community Health Needs Assessment is also available on-line at the following websites:

The Compass Now 2015 Final Report and Report Summary are available online at <http://www.greatriversunitedway.org/our-work/community-needs-assessment/> .

This document, Gundersen St. Joseph's Hospital and Clinics Community Health Needs Assessment: Appendix to Great Rivers United Way Compass Now 2015 is available online at <http://www.gundersenhealth.org/st-josephs>.

Section 10: Implementation Strategy

Gundersen St. Joseph's Hospital and Clinics will post a written plan that addresses the significant community needs identified and prioritized through this community health needs

assessment. The plan will be posted on Gundersen St. Joseph's website and made available to the public in print (by request) by May 15, 2016. The implementation strategy will be tailored to meet the particular needs of the Gundersen St. Joseph's Hospital and Clinics service area, taking into account specific programs, resources and community collaboration available in our region.

Sources

Compass Now 2015, Great Rivers United Way, La Crosse WI. Accessible at
<http://www.greatriversunitedway.org/our-work/community-needs-assessment/>.

Gundersen St. Joseph's Patient & Family Advisory Council (2015) *Report to the Leadership Meeting, October 26, 2015*.

Juneau County Health Department Website, Juneau County, Wisconsin.
<http://www.co.juneau.wi.gov/health1.html>

La Crosse Medical Health Science Consortium. *Health Scorecard 2015*. Accessible at
www.communityscorecard.com

U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 5-year American Community Survey.

University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute. *County Health Rankings 2015*. Accessible at www.countyhealthrankings.org

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November 2015