

**Gundersen Lutheran Health System's
Community Health Implementation Plan
1/1/2013-12/31/2015***



***Date corrected and approved 11/30/2015**

Introduction:

In 2010, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA or the ACA) was passed. As part of this health care reform bill, there is a requirement for not-for-profit hospitals to complete a Community Needs Assessment and a Community Health Implementation Plan that addresses the needs. Completion of these requirements is to be documented on a hospital's tax Form 990, Schedule H. There is no standard format to guide hospitals in how to satisfy these requirements. The following document summarizes the regional Community Needs Assessment, and details Gundersen Lutheran's Community Health Implementation Plan for 2013-2015. This plan must be approved by the Gundersen Lutheran Board of Trustees.

Undergoing a community health needs assessment is a huge undertaking. Defining the target population and the scope of the project can be daunting. The prospect of participating in a greater community needs assessment that focuses on all aspects of life in our community was the perfect opportunity to broaden the scope of this work, and deepen partnerships in our community.

The Great Rivers United Way conducts a community needs assessment every three to five years called COMPASS Now. Gundersen Lutheran had in the past been involved with this to a varying degree. Because of the overlap in our populations and the timing of the United Way's assessment, we proposed a partnership between the 5 county health departments, the eight hospitals (including independent and competing systems) and the United Way for one community needs assessment.

Beginning in late 2010 and concluding in January of 2012, monthly leadership team meetings were held including all partners. A paper household survey was conducted and over 1100 people responded. Over 38 focus groups and key stakeholder groups (held in 3 languages and including people of varying ages and abilities) were held involving over 350 individuals. Well over 100 socioeconomic and health indicators were gathered to support the more subjective data. The leadership team led this data gathering, reviewed the report, and based on the report, their expertise, and the established criteria, prioritized issues that were considered to be our community's needs.

In January of 2012, the COMPASS Now 2012 report was released to the community. Refer to www.COMPASSNOW.org for details regarding leadership and partners, methodology, data, outcomes and a resource inventory.

The final report is divided into 4 sections with 12 key issues:

Health

- **Alcohol use**
- **Health care access and cost**
- **Mental health**
- **Obesity**

Income

- Limited economic development
- Low living wages
- Unemployment

Education

- School readiness
- Job skills training

Community

- Transportation
- **Food availability**
- Childcare

It is important to note that while Gundersen Lutheran has a 19-county service area, 70.1% of all Gundersen Lutheran’s 2009 inpatient and hospital outpatient encounters were from patients within the 5 counties (La Crosse, Monroe, Vernon, Trempealeau counties in Wisconsin, and Houston County in Minnesota) of the United Way’s COMPASS Now study. This plan reflects the work of the Gundersen Lutheran Health System, for which Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center (hospital) is a corporate member. The system’s integrated structure includes one teaching hospital, three affiliate critical access hospitals, a regional clinic network, and administrative services. This is the Health Implementation plan for Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center. The three affiliate critical access hospitals will be completing their own community health implementation plan based on the findings of their community needs assessment.

We used the following process to develop this health improvement plan:

1. Created selection criteria to determine areas of concern from the COMPASS Now report that we would address in our plan.
 - a. **Magnitude:** How widespread is this health-related issue in our community? (a COMPASS Now criteria)
 - b. **Seriousness:** How serious are the effects of the health-related issue in our community? (a COMPASS Now criteria)
 - c. **Impact:** How does this issue affect other health-related concerns? How important is the issue to the community? (a COMPASS Now criteria)
 - d. **Feasibility:** Do we have the ability to reasonably impact the issue with available resources?
 - e. **Consequences of inaction:** What is the risk by not addressing the issue early?
 - f. **Current solutions:** What is the degree to which our actions will enhance current levels of interventions by others?
2. Inventoried the Gundersen Lutheran Health System for existing programs and processes whose intent was to address this identified need.
3. Incorporated feedback from focus group meetings and survey comments from the COMPASS Now project into the formation of our Implementation plan.

4. Determined areas for opportunity for new programming or partnerships that will impact areas not currently addressed.
5. Formalized goals and activities that will directly impact those priorities.
6. Identify the priorities for areas that we are not directly addressing, but that we will maintain active partnerships with and remain supportive of the lead organizations focused on these priorities.

For each, we describe our Health System's contributions and key partnerships. Gundersen Lutheran implementation plan, including goals and objectives, have been established for the four key issues determined in the health category (**alcohol use, health care access and cost, mental health and obesity**) and one key issue in the community category, a topic affecting our neighborhoods that we feel could be directly related to overall health (**food availability**). The seven other key issues arrived at within the remaining categories will be addressed by our community partners. We look at key partnerships to engage in that will ultimately lead to community health improvement.

Health

Preventing disease and promoting healthy behaviors improves lives, lowers health care costs and improves quality of life

Community Issue: Alcohol Use

Gundersen Lutheran Goals:

- *To assure cost effective alcohol treatment*
- *Provide screening and triage for risky alcohol use and addiction, and*
- *To partner, support and document (human resource, financial, in-kind) community efforts to reduce the impact of alcohol use and misuse.*
- *Measure the impact of community initiatives on alcohol-related injuries and occurrences.*

Wisconsin and the Gundersen Lutheran service area have one of the highest rates of excessive and risky alcohol use in the nation.

Gundersen Lutheran Initiatives:

Gundersen Lutheran Behavioral Health provides a full continuum of chemical dependency services to residents of our area, including support groups, inpatient and outpatient treatment and detoxification, and acute residential treatment for addiction treatment. Beginning in 2010, Gundersen Lutheran included a process called “Screening, and Brief Intervention, Referral and Treatment (SBIRT)” for hospitalized trauma patients. Extended to include all hospitalized patients in 2011, it is a key strategy to identify and intervene for risky alcohol, and other drug-use.

Beyond clinical care, Great Rivers 211, sponsored by Gundersen Lutheran provides a vast array of information and is the 24-hour crisis telephone line. As a founding member of the La Crosse Medical Health Science Consortium (LMHSC), Gundersen Lutheran provides an annual financial contribution to support the overall operating expenses. Efforts are in the areas of workforce development (health occupations), population health and telemedicine. As part of the LMHSC partnership, the “Burden of Alcohol-Related Injuries” report was completed in 2008 and 2012 by Gundersen Lutheran staff. Additionally, various staff members are actively involved and provide leadership for community initiatives including the La Crosse County “Changing the Culture of Risky Drinking Behavior” coalition. Gundersen Lutheran staff lead or help to promote local awareness campaigns such as “Parents Who Host Lose the Most.”

Gundersen Lutheran conducts an annual employee campaign for the United Way. Besides employee contributions, there is a corporate pledge. These dollars support this priority area. In addition, financial support for local programming and partners is considered and processed according to our community benefit policy. For example, programs supported may include:

- Coulee Council on Addictions
- Local high school prom and graduation lock-ins
- La Crosse Public Education Foundation (New Year’s Eve Party)

Gundersen Lutheran Activities for next 3 years:

- Monitor the use of inpatient, outpatient, residential facilities and support groups for the treatment of alcohol addictions.
- Provide screening (SBIRT) for risky alcohol use/addiction in hospitalized patients. Measure the impact of this effort.
- Provide expertise, leadership, and support community initiatives through Gundersen Lutheran employee participation.
- Support and document (human resource, financial, in-kind) community efforts to reduce the impact of alcohol abuse and misuse.
- Complete Burden of Alcohol-Related injuries report.

Community Issue: Health Care Access and Cost

Gundersen Lutheran Goals:

- *Provision of medically necessary services at reduced or no charge to patients who meet specified criteria according to the Financial Assistance Policy,*
- *Raise awareness of appropriate utilization of the various levels of care services based on health status,*
- *Partner, support and document (human resource, financial, in-kind) community efforts and other designated health centers, clinics or providers providing care to uninsured,*
- *Document benefit to our community.*

Gundersen Lutheran has been recognized as delivering superb quality healthcare. However, healthcare access and cost are a significant concern for residents according to the COMPASS Now survey and focus groups.

Gundersen Lutheran Initiatives:

Gundersen Lutheran is committed to the health of the communities we serve. Our commitment is reflected in state-of-the art clinical care. Through our regional network of clinics and hospitals, we strive to bring services closer to the patient when it is feasible both for effectiveness and efficiency. Interpreters are available to meet a variety of needs reflected by our diverse population including spoken, written and sign language. Employee training is provided to ensure cultural competency for a variety of ethnic/racial/religious/etc. groups common to our population.

At Gundersen Lutheran, all patients who present with an emergency medical condition are cared for and stabilized regardless of their ability to pay. Charges for our services are closely monitored. When the patient is unable to afford services, eligibility for any payor source is evaluated, as described in Gundersen Lutheran’s Financial Assistance Policy and application. Gundersen Lutheran will provide medically necessary services at reduced or no charge to patients who meet specified criteria. The policy outlines this process and encourages open communication to our patients on options to proceed. A

process incorporates front- and back-end revenue cycle processes to help get eligible patients onto Medicaid.

Palliative care and end-of-life care, provided by the hospice team, is provided to meet the needs and wishes in the last months of life. Gundersen Lutheran has become a Children's Miracle Network Hospital, and as such, raises money to decrease or offset costs for those in need. Options Clinic is a corporation within the health system providing low-cost reproductive care for women in the community of La Crosse and Monroe counties. Express Care clinics have been established to provide specific primary care services on a minimal fee basis regardless of insurer. Community and worksite health screens are conducted to increase awareness of the importance of prevention and early intervention.

In addition to services provided at our facilities, Gundersen Lutheran partners with a variety of community initiatives to meet the needs of those financially unable to afford care, the medically underserved and special needs populations. Gundersen Lutheran is a founding partner of St. Claire Health Mission and our staff continues to provide volunteer professional service every week. As a founding member of the La Crosse Medical Health Science Consortium (LMHSC), Gundersen Lutheran contributes financially annually to the overall operating expenses. Ongoing efforts are in the areas of workforce development (health occupations), population health and telemedicine. Great Rivers 211, sponsored by Gundersen Lutheran provides 24-hour access to information on services available. The Nurse Advisor Line provides 24 hour access to guidance on how best to resolve a health issue, from at-home remedy to call to 911.

Gundersen Lutheran conducts an annual employee campaign for the United Way. Besides employee contributions, there is a corporate pledge. These dollars support this priority area. In addition, financial support for local programming and partners is considered and processed according to our community benefit policy. For example, programs supported may include:

- American Cancer Society's Navigator program
- March of Dimes
- La Crosse Lion's Charities

Gundersen Lutheran Activities for next 3 years:

- Monitor utilization of TEC, Urgent care, Palliative Care, Hospice care, Express care and MedLink by payor source and/or other arrangements made in conjunction with the Financial Assistance Policy.
- Conduct and monitor outcomes of community and worksite screenings.
- Provide expertise and support community initiatives through Gundersen Lutheran employee participation & leadership
- Support community programming through financial contributions
- Complete 990 Schedule H, (Tax document that verifies our Community Benefit Reporting).

Community Issue: Mental Health

Gundersen Lutheran Goals:

- *To assure cost effective mental health services,*
- *To provide information and crisis intervention for the community,*
- *To partner, support and document community efforts to improve mental health and reduce the stigma of mental illness, and*
- *To measure the impact of community initiatives on mental health status.*

Mental illness is the leading cause of disability in the US for people ages 15-44. In 2010, mental healthcare spending reached \$27 million, an 11% increase in one year.

Gundersen Lutheran Initiatives:

Gundersen Lutheran has made a commitment to assure quality services are available for those with mental health needs, including completion of the new behavioral health hospital. Historically, services have been provided and relied upon by the community, both for inpatient and outpatient needs. Beyond clinical care, Great Rivers 211, sponsored by Gundersen Lutheran provides a vast array of information and is the 24 hour crisis telephone line. As a founding member of the La Crosse Medical Health Science Consortium (LMHSC), Gundersen Lutheran contributes financially annually to the overall operating expenses. Ongoing efforts are in the areas of workforce development (health occupations), population health and telemedicine. As part of the LMHSC partnership, the “Burden of Mental Illness” report was completed in 2011 by Gundersen Lutheran staff. Additionally, various staff members are actively involved and provide leadership for community initiatives including the local chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), the Mental Health Coalition of the Greater La Crosse Area, the Y Teen Center, and Kaitlin’s Table. Objectives necessitate the need to continue this involvement. Financial support for local programming and partners is considered and processed in our community benefit policy.

Gundersen Lutheran conducts an annual employee campaign for the United Way. Besides employee contributions, there is a corporate pledge. These dollars support this priority area. In addition, financial support for local programming and partners is considered and processed according to our community benefit policy. For example, programs supported may include:

- Y Teen Center
- La Crosse Suicide Prevention Initiative

Gundersen Lutheran Activities for next 3 years:

- Monitor utilization of inpatient, outpatient services and support group; outreach offerings provided.
- Conduct mental health training for Law Enforcement, and depression screening and other assessment and awareness events for the community.

- Provide expertise and support community initiatives through Gundersen Lutheran employee participation & leadership (in programs such as the Y Teen Center, Kaitlin’s Table, NAMI)
- Support community programming through financial contributions
- Monitor the burden of mental illness for the region.

Community Issue: Obesity

Gundersen Lutheran Goals:

- *To assure quality and effective treatment of obesity for people of all ages,*
- *To provide information and education on obesity and its impact*
- *To partner, support and document community efforts to reduce obesity in our community, and*
- *Measure the impact of community initiatives on obesity.*

Nearly 30% of adults in the Gundersen Lutheran service area are obese; 35% are overweight. This rate increased by 16% in the past 5 years and greatly increases the risk for, and cost of treatment of chronic disease.

Gundersen Lutheran Initiatives

Gundersen Lutheran has long been a leader in the management and treatment of obesity. Winning Weighs, a clinically-based weight management program available and promoted in the community has assisted thousands of people in weight loss and lifestyle management in its nearly 20 years. The program has evolved to a Comprehensive Weight Management Center offering various in types and intensity of programs based on the patient’s needs; from on-line support, nutritional support, one-on-one registered dietitian visits, group-based programs for kids, families, women, and men, to management of bariatric surgery patients. Gundersen Lutheran is the only Wisconsin hospital to receive a HealthGrades Specialty Excellence Award™ for Bariatric Surgery. In addition, Gundersen Lutheran’s Bariatric Surgery program received a 5-star rating from HealthGrades, the organization’s highest ranking. More than 1,000 patients have had successful bariatric surgery at Gundersen Lutheran using the latest minimally invasive techniques. In addition to the clinical management of obesity, primary prevention community-based programs are offered by various departments. Less intense programs like Movin’ & Improvin’, Metabalance, Smartest Loser, and Minutes In Motion, are focused on community members or groups of patients.

As a founding member of the La Crosse Medical Health Science Consortium (LMHSC), Gundersen Lutheran contributes financially annually to the overall operating expenses. Efforts are in the areas of workforce development (health occupations), population health and telemedicine. Gundersen Lutheran also is a leader in environmental strategies to prevention obesity through its 500 Club, Farm-to-School, and active involvement in community collaboratives (LMHSC – Healthy La Crosse County 2015 initiative,

La Crosse County Communities Putting Prevention to Work, Coulee Region Childhood Obesity Coalition, and Pioneering Healthier Communities). Gundersen Lutheran will begin a new partnership with Michelle Obama's "Partnership for a Healthier America, Inc. (PHA)" in 2012. Partnership for a Healthier America is making the commitment to curb childhood obesity within a generation. Gundersen Lutheran's commitments will be to deliver nutritious options to meet the needs of the children and families we serve, meeting nutrition goals each year for the next 3 years.

Gundersen Lutheran conducts an annual employee campaign for the United Way. Besides employee contributions, there is a corporate pledge. These dollars support this priority area. In addition, financial support for local programming and partners is considered and processed according to our community benefit policy. For example, programs supported may include:

- American Heart Association
- Brice Prairie Time Trial
- Centerville Curling Club
- Minds in Motion
- NEOS Exhibit at the Children's Museum
- Root River Triathlon
- June Dairy Day Classic Bike Tour
- La Crosse Fitness Festival
- Triquest
- YMCA Strong-Kids Campaign

Gundersen Lutheran Activities for next 3 years:

- Monitor quality and effectiveness of outpatient weight management and bariatric surgical services.
- Monitor participation and effectiveness of primary prevention programs offered by Gundersen Lutheran
- Participate in the Partnership for a Healthier America initiative by meeting system nutrition goals each year for the next 3 years.
- Provide expertise and support community initiatives through Gundersen Lutheran employee participation.
- Support community programming through financial contributions
- Complete the Burden of Obesity Report. Information utilized for planning of initiatives.

Income

A high quality of life in a thriving community requires safe, satisfying jobs that offer wages that can provide adequate housing and a good standard of living

Community Issue: Limited Economic Development

Community Issue: Low Living Wages

Community Issue: Unemployment

As an integrated health system, we concern ourselves with the health needs of our community. For other topics in the COMPASS Now report such as income, education, and community development, we look at key partnerships to engage in that will ultimately lead to community health improvement.

A resource inventory included as part of the COMPASS Now, community needs assessment indicates key resources within each of the 5 counties to address these issues. Gundersen Lutheran conducts an annual employee campaign for the United Way. Besides employee contributions, there is a corporate pledge. These dollars support this priority area.

Gundersen Lutheran activities that will continue to address these issues related to income include:

In conjunction with a development agreement, a comprehensive master campus plan was created. Initiatives to improve the neighborhood adjacent to the La Crosse campus include development of Gund Brewery Lofts (including low-income rental options), and an employee policy that encourages single family home ownership. Leadership or membership and/or financial support in key community organizations includes: La Crosse Area Development Corporation (LADCO), local Chambers of Commerce, Downtown Main Street, 7 Rivers Alliance, housing task forces, and local planning commissions. In addition equipment and supplies are donated as available and appropriate to local not-for profit organizations and individuals (eg. computers, blankets, make-up, food donations). Gundersen Lutheran makes every effort to utilize local source vendors and suppliers for food, supplies and building construction projects.

Gundersen Lutheran will continue to be the major employer in the region, including highly paid, highly technical jobs and skills. We are committed to providing jobs that offer a competitive wage and benefits package, including health insurance. Due to the low occurrence of displaced workers at Gundersen Lutheran at this time, additional partnership and projects related to unemployment of our workforce are outside the realm of our mission. Unemployment services are currently provided by private and public organizations within our communities.

Education

Education provides us a better understanding of the world around us; it is a key building block to a healthy community reaching its full potential.

Community Issue: School Readiness

A resource inventory included as part of the COMPASS Now, community needs assessment indicates key resources within each of the 5 counties to address this issue.

Gundersen Lutheran is identified in the key resource list as providing direct services in the school readiness area in the following:

Gundersen Lutheran Learning and Developmental Diagnostic Center offers early identification and treatment for children with learning disabilities.

Other Gundersen Lutheran activities that address the issue of school readiness include:

Gundersen Lutheran provides opportunities for new families to optimize their child's learning experiences by offering the resource book, "The Brain Game" to new parents, and through the Reach Out and Read program in the Pediatrics department in which parents are given age-appropriate books to their children from birth through adolescence. A computer donation program provides computers to local not-for-profit organizations and schools. There are also numerous employee drives for school supplies.

Gundersen Lutheran conducts an annual employee campaign for the United Way. Besides employee contributions, there is a corporate pledge. These dollars support this priority area. In addition, financial support for local programming and partners is considered and processed according to our community benefit policy. For example, programs supported may include:

- Bluff Country Family Resources
- Boys & Girls Club
- Boy Scouts
- Family and Children's Center
- Family Resources
- La Crosse Public Education Foundation

As an integrated health system, we concern ourselves with the health needs of our community. For other topics in the COMPASS Now report such as income, education, and community development, we look at key partnerships to engage in that will ultimately lead to community health improvement.

Community Issue: Job Skills Training

A resource inventory included as part of the COMPASS Now, community needs assessment indicates key resources within each of the 5 counties to address this issue.

Gundersen Lutheran activities that address the issue of job skills training include:

Offering a variety of job shadowing, internships, summer research fellowships, and volunteer opportunities, the Health Explorers, Health Science Academy (La Crosse, Whitehall, Prairie du Chien, Viroqua), UW Nursing School (ending in 2012), the Medical Residency Programs (MEO), WARM, pharmacy residency, other clinical placements programs (occupational/physical therapy, sports medicine, nuclear medicine, radiography). Additionally Gundersen Lutheran offers tuition reimbursement through its TIP program to encourage employees to continue their education and job skills training.

As a founding member of the La Crosse Medical Health Science Consortium (LMHSC), Gundersen Lutheran contributes financially annually to the overall operating expenses. Efforts are in the areas of workforce development (health occupations), population health and telemedicine. A partnership with the LMHSC includes several career development initiatives examining workforce shortage and clinical placements.

Gundersen Lutheran conducts an annual employee campaign for the United Way. Besides employee contributions, there is a corporate pledge. These dollars support this priority area. In addition, financial support for local programming and partners is considered and processed according to our community benefit policy. For example, programs supported may include:

- CESA #4 Math and Science Expo
- La Crosse Agricultural Society (4-H)
- Options Clinic (nursing education program)
- UW-La Crosse Exercise Physiology-Cardiac Rehabilitation Workshop
- UW-La Crosse Self-Sufficiency Program
- Viterbo University Nursing Center
- Wisconsin Medical Society's White Coat Campaign and Operation Education

Community

A healthy natural environment, public safety, transportation, leisure, and support services contribute to strong community life.

Community Issue: Food Availability

Gundersen Lutheran Goals:

- To explore the food availability issue that was identified in COMPASS Now in La Crosse, Vernon and Monroe Counties to determine if this issue is truly a concern or an artifact of the measurement method,
- To begin to work on solutions in the communities by engaging in conversations and developing partnerships with others,
- To partner with key community groups in other food insecurity discussions and possible collaboratives in the community.

Several areas within the Gundersen Lutheran service area have been recently defined by the USDA as “food deserts,” where low income families have poor access to fresh food.

Gundersen Lutheran Initiatives

Relatively new research has shown that health is significantly poorer in areas where residents have poor-to-little access to healthy food. **Food deserts** are defined as a low-income census tract where a substantial number or share of residents has low access to a supermarket or large grocery store. Furthermore, to qualify as a food desert tract, at least 33 percent of the tract's population or a minimum of 500 people in the tract must have low access to a supermarket or large grocery store. Low access to a healthy food retail outlet is defined as more than 1 mile from a supermarket or large grocery store in urban areas and as more than 10 miles from a supermarket or large grocery store in rural areas. Data from the US Department of Agriculture's website shows food deserts exist in much of Vernon and Monroe counties, and in a small area in the city of La Crosse. Farmer's markets and community supported agriculture (CSA) are informal sources of fresh foods that are growing in availability. The inability to pay for these foods using food stamps, make these new sources of food not an accessible option for low income families.

Gundersen Lutheran provides support to local agencies that supply food to community members. Agencies include: the Salvation Army (financial support and direct food donations), and 15 food shelves in the region (financial support). A recent partnership has also been formed with the Fifth Season Cooperative, whose goal is to build a robust regional food system that supports a healthy environment, a strong economy, and thriving communities. Gundersen Lutheran conducts an annual employee campaign for the United Way. Besides employee contributions, there is a corporate pledge. These dollars support this priority area. In addition, financial support for local programming and partners is considered and processed according to our community benefit policy.

Gundersen Lutheran Activities for next 3 years:

- Conduct a study of the food desert identified in La Crosse County to determine if there are food availability issues, and how they may impact the health of people living in this area.
- If food availability is deemed a health concern, begin discussions in Year 2 with key community and business partners to explore options for providing fresh and affordable food to this population.
- Extend this research and model to Vernon and Monroe counties in Years 2 & 3.
- Provide expertise and support community initiatives through Gundersen Lutheran employee participation
- Support community programming through financial contributions.

Community Issue: Transportation

A resource inventory included as part of the COMPASS Now, community needs assessment indicates key resources within each of the 5 counties to address this issue. Gundersen Lutheran is identified in the key resource list as providing direct services in the transportation area in the following:

Coulee Trails, offering transportation services in Crawford, Grant, Iowa, Jackson, Juneau, La Crosse, Monroe, Richland, Sauk, Trempealeau, and Vernon counties.

Additional Gundersen Lutheran activities that address the issue of transportation include:

Providing financial support to a variety of services to get patients to our facility, supporting the use of the La Crosse MTU for our employees by subsidizing monthly bus passes, encouraging carpooling by maintaining a coordinated carpool board and close parking, supported the La Crosse area Complete Streets Initiative and alternative commuting activities (Bike To Work).

Gundersen Lutheran conducts an annual employee campaign for the United Way. Besides employee contributions, there is a corporate pledge. These dollars support this priority area. In addition, financial support for local programming and partners is considered and processed according to our community benefit policy. For example, programs supported may include:

- Coulee Region Retired and Senior Volunteer Program – Senior Ride Program

As an integrated health system, we concern ourselves with the health needs of our community. For other topics in the COMPASS Now report such as income, education, and community development, we look at key partnerships to engage in that will ultimately lead to community health improvement.

Community Issue: Childcare

A resource inventory included as part of the COMPASS Now, community needs assessment indicates key resources within each of the 5 counties to address this issue. Gundersen Lutheran is identified in the key resource list as providing direct services in the childcare area in the following:

Gundersen Lutheran Child Care Center – caring for children ages birth through 11 years; primarily for Gundersen Lutheran employees

Other Gundersen Lutheran activities that address the issue of childcare include:

Through the Gundersen Lutheran Kohl's Cares Kids Care College program, education is offered to childcare providers and other specialists and families about specific family and childcare issues. Gundersen Lutheran provides babysitting classes to youth in the La Crosse and surrounding areas several times each year. Great Rivers 211, sponsored by Gundersen Lutheran provides a vast array of information on childcare. Gundersen Lutheran staff also provides leadership or financial support to key child service agency boards (eg. the Parenting Place).

Gundersen Lutheran conducts an annual employee campaign for the United Way. Besides employee contributions, there is a corporate pledge. These dollars support this priority area. In addition, financial support for local programming and partners is considered and processed according to our community benefit policy.