



# Southcoast Health

## Community Benefits Implementation Strategy FY20-22

Southcoast Health's Community Benefits Strategic Action Plan was first formulated in 1998 as the result of an extensive needs assessment and since is updated annually. Our current plan is based on the most recent community health needs assessment completed in 2019. Through the needs assessment process, we identified nine priorities for addressing the most pressing health needs of the community and target populations.

The activities of Community Benefits are completed in accordance with these priorities. These activities are; conducting ongoing community health needs assessments, awarding Community Benefits Impact Opportunity Grants to community organizations working on projects aligned with our priorities, coalition-building and collaborating with community partners.

### Priority Area 1: Chronic Disease Prevention and Treatment

- Focus on: Chronic diseases such as Cancer, Heart Disease, COPD, Diabetes and Obesity; Improving access and eliminating barriers for healthcare.
- Target populations: Those who are at-risk of or currently have been diagnosed with a chronic disease; Residents who experience barriers to care such as language, culture, race, income or education; Residents who lack health insurance or are underinsured.
- Approaches:
  - ❑ Provide outreach education, prevention and awareness of chronic diseases.
  - ❑ Provide support group opportunities to those who are at-risk, have been diagnosed with, or are a caregiver for someone with a chronic disease.
  - ❑ Provide prevention opportunities for chronic disease through physical activity opportunities, smoking cessation education and QuitWorks referrals.
  - ❑ Provide continued health screening opportunities and education to the underserved South Coast community.
  - ❑ Provide insurance application assistance to patients who are uninsured, underinsured or denied coverage by a government healthcare program.
  - ❑ Provide non-English speaking patients with proper healthcare representation.
  - ❑ Provide continued trainings and skill development opportunities for Community Health Workers (CHW).
  - ❑ Provide Community Benefits Opportunity Impact Grants to organizations in the South Coast region who focus on programming in this priority area.
- Short term 1-year goals:
  - ❑ Southcoast Health's Patient Financial Services will expand collaboration with community partners to assist with insurance applications by participating in 50 community outreach activities.



- Southcoast Health will support and expand local efforts to provide adult education, English language instruction, and culturally and linguistically appropriate health information services in the community
  - Southcoast Health will conduct research to better understand the cultural barriers to care through conducting focus groups and survey administration.
  - The Southcoast Wellness Van will increase in the business community and continue to provide health screenings to the underserved and vulnerable populations in the South Coast region by an increase reach of 3%.
  - The Southcoast Wellness Van will have EPIC integration capabilities that will allow for better data collection that can be used to develop baseline measurements for future outcomes and inform strategic planning.
  - The Southcoast Wellness Van will have an additional position for a Community Health Worker, that will assist, support with financial and insurance services and meet the needs of the vulnerable populations within the South Coast.
  - Southcoast Health will continue to provide smoking cessation education at community events and increase QuitWorks referrals by 5% from the previous year.
  - Southcoast Health will continue to partner with community coalitions and advocate for increased tobacco free environment such as smoke-free housing initiatives in Fall River, New Bedford and Fall River.
  - Due to high rates of Lung Cancer, Southcoast Health will continue to provide smoking cessation education to staff and the community along with increase the number of individuals referred to the Lung Cancer Screening program by 5%.
  - Southcoast Health will work with local YMCA's and fitness centers to create a referral program to increase adults who qualify (based on BMI) access to participate in exercise programs to reduce those diagnosed with a chronic disease.
- Long Term 2-5-year goals:
- The Southcoast Wellness Van will create an additional wellness program for the business community, in which the Van will provide selected screenings, immunizations, education, ext., as requested per business to enhance community partner collaboration and screening opportunities.
  - Southcoast Health will work collaboratively with interpreter services and marketing to reduce health care literacy disparities among racial and ethnic minority groups, those who do not speak English as a first language, and those from different cultural backgrounds through conducting research that will highlight the needs of these communities and understanding how we can better serve this population.
  - Southcoast Health will work to reduce the number of new Cancer cases in the South Coast region by providing increased screening and prevention educational opportunities to the community
    - Due to high rates of Breast Cancer in the South Coast region, Southcoast Health will increase the proportion of women who receive Breast Cancer Screenings



- Due to high rates of Prostate Cancer in the South Coast region, Southcoast Health will work with community partners/leaders by providing training that allows them to speak to and educate the public on Prostate Cancer with the goal to increase those who are screened by 10%.
- Due to high rates of Lung Cancer in the South Coast region, Southcoast Health will increase the number of individuals who are at-risk referred to the Lung Cancer Screening Program.
- Southcoast Health will work to reduce the annual number of new cases of diagnosed diabetes in the South Coast region, through increasing prevention education provided to those who are high-risk for diabetes.
- Southcoast Health will work to improve cardiovascular health and quality of life through prevention, detection, and treatment of risk factors for heart attack and stroke; early identification and treatment of heart attacks and strokes; prevention of repeat cardiovascular events.

## **Priority Area 2: Educational Attainment and Income**

- Focus: Enhancement of South Coast resident's employment skills, increased job opportunities and access to education. Minimization of the skills gap across all sectors through assisting adults continue or expand their educational attainment (ex. a high school diploma or certificate), and to assist adults further their skills/advance in their careers through additional job training and readiness skills. Increase early literacy by boosting enrollment and access to early head start and preschool programs.
- Target populations: Students or individuals who are interesting looking to explore healthcare professions or expand skills; developing the skills of the workforce in our community, local schools, as well as our employees; College students who are enrolled in the healthcare field; supporting adults who want to further their education and improve skills; supporting adolescents, youth and children in literacy promotion and skill development.
- Approaches:
  - Provide opportunities for college students in the healthcare field to receive clinical training and one-on-one skill development.
  - Provide the opportunity for youth who are unable to get vaccinated prior to the beginning of the school year to receive their vaccinations.
  - Provide equipment donations to local vocational schools` for clinical programming and training.
  - Provide continued trainings and skill development opportunities for Community Health Workers (CHW).
  - Provide Community Benefits Opportunity Impact Grants to organizations in the South Coast region who focus on programming in this priority area.



- Short term 1-year goals:
  - ❑ The Southcoast Health Wellness Van continue to participate in predication vaccination clinics as needed, increasing students vaccinated by 5% from the previous year.
  - ❑ Southcoast Health will continue working with the Greater New Bedford Allies for Health: Health Equity Committee to facilitate two additional trainings for Community Health Workers.
  - ❑ Southcoast Health will continue to provide training opportunities for staff and outside providers to take-part in.
  - ❑ Southcoast Health will continue to support Farm to Table programming that allows students to gain access to healthy, local foods as well as education opportunities such as school gardens, cooking lessons and farm field trips.
  
- Long Term 2-5-year goals:
  - ❑ The Southcoast Health Wellness Van will expand the pediatric vaccinations clinics to an additional school district.
  - ❑ Southcoast Health will work continue to work with local Colleges and Universities to increase clinical rotations and one-on-one opportunities with students in the healthcare field by 5%.
  - ❑ Southcoast Health will work with organizations to increase the number of individuals and families that utilize the resources of Early head start and Head Start programming.
  - ❑ Southcoast Health will continue its' partnership with local High Schools to provide opportunities for students to learn about careers in the healthcare industry.
  - ❑ Southcoast Health will continue to work with organizations through the Southcoast Health Worksite Wellness Coalition to increase the proportion of worksites that offer an employee health promotion program.

### Priority Area 3: Housing and Homelessness

- Target populations: Individuals and families who are at risk of becoming homeless or are experiencing homelessness; those who are living in an environment that poses a threat to health, safety and well-being.
  
- Approaches:
  - ❑ Provide outreach by giving free health screenings, vaccinations and prevention education
  - ❑ Provide support and continued participation on regional committees and coalitions that are focused on addressing and assisting those who are at-risk or experiencing homelessness to assist with coordinating services and identifying available resources.
  - ❑ Provide support for community partner's events that address housing and homelessness.



- Provide Community Benefits Opportunity Impact Grants to organizations in the South Coast region who focus on programming in this priority area.
- Short Term 1-year goals:
  - Southcoast Health will continue to participate and support regional coalitions and organizations who are focused on addressing the housing shortage and assisting those who are or have experienced homelessness.
  - The Southcoast Health Wellness Van will continue to expand their outreach and services through community partners and organizations to provide screenings, immunization and referrals to care as needed.
- Long Term 2-5-year goals:
  - Southcoast Health will work to reduce the number of individuals who identify as homeless in the South Coast Region
  - Southcoast health will work with community partners to increase the number of homeless adults with mental health problems that receive access to mental health services.

#### Priority Area 4: Behavioral Health

- Focus on: Addressing Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders.
- Target populations: Those who experience behavioral health issues or are at high-risk such as substance use disorders, mental health diagnosis or dual diagnosis with both substance use and mental health disorders.
- Approaches:
  - Provide an online database that offers regional behavioral health services and community resources.
  - Provide support programs for mothers and their opiate exposed newborns to receive treatment plans and care coordination services.
  - Provide support programs for those who are suffering from postpartum mental health disorder.
  - Provide support to those who are struggling with addiction through weekly support groups.
  - Provide health professionals with education on prevention, intervention, treatment and management of patients with a mental health or substance use disorder.
  - Provide outreach support, education and referrals to mental health and substance use disorder assistance and programming.
  - Provide support through participation on numerous community coalitions to address various behavioral health issues including, the misuse of prescription drugs, underage substance use, risk behaviors in youth, maternal mental health,



substance-exposed newborns, suicide prevention, and overdose prevention/intervention.

- Provide youth with opportunities while in school to experience and participate in wellness techniques.
- Provide Community Benefits Opportunity Impact Grants to organizations in the South Coast region who focus on programming in this priority area.

➤ Short Term 1-year goals:

- Southcoast's Behavioral Health Connect portal will be integrated with a new platform called Aunt Bertha. The new database is in development and will be called South Coast Resource Connect. The launch of the database will assist with community linkages and referrals if a patient screens positive for a social determinant of health.
  - Southcoast Health's primary care offices and the Southcoast Wellness Van will engage 60% of patients in screenings for social determinant of health.
- Southcoast Health's New Beginnings program will increase referrals to the program by 15% by the end of the year.
- Southcoast Health's New Beginnings program will continue to expand the services of the Care Coordination position and have a 10% increase in Mom's referred to the Care Coordinator.
- Southcoast Health will continue to co-chair the Bristol County Regional Alliance to end the Opioid Crisis in Bristol County and provide training and educational opportunities to providers and the community.
- Southcoast Health will work to reduce the suicide rates in the South Coast Region through collaboration with the MA Departments of Mental and Public Health to provide trainings to providers and to establish a workflow designed to address the gaps in support for those who are discharged after a suicide attempt.
- Southcoast Health will increase the number of individuals who enroll in the postpartum support group by 2.5%.

➤ Long Term 2-5-year goals:

- Southcoast Health will work to increase the proportion of adults in the South Coast region who self-report good or better mental health.
- Southcoast Health will work in partnership with local schools and community partners to increase the proportion of youth in the South Coast region who self-report good or better mental health.
- Southcoast Health will work to increase the proportion of children with mental health problems who receive treatment.
- Southcoast Health will work to decrease the proportion of women who experience postpartum depressive symptoms.
- Southcoast Health will work to Increase the proportion of persons with co-occurring substance abuse and mental disorders who receive treatment for both disorders.



## Priority Area 5: Environmental Health and Wellness

- Focus on: Improving the conditions where people live, work and play; increasing the health and overall well-being of the residents in the South Coast; improving hunger and food insecurity.
- Target populations: Those who are living in at-risk communities; violence prevention and neighborhood crime minimization; the at-risk, disadvantaged and underserved youth; those who are suffering from hunger and food insecurity; those who live in inadequate housing conditions.
- Approaches:
  - Provide continued support to local farmers and food pantries
  - Provide continued support to increase access and availability of fresh local produce.
  - Provide the youth with programming opportunities to increase wellness techniques.
  - Provide monthly physical activity and wellness programming for the community to attend.
  - Provide support for lactation classes and consultants.
  - Provide and give back to the community through participation on local community group Boards, coalitions and volunteer efforts.
  - Provide support for healthy homes and resources to those in the community to improve the living conditions of individuals and families.
  - Provide Community Benefits Opportunity Impact Grants and support to organizations in the South Coast region who focus on programming in this priority area.
- Short Term 1-year goals:
  - Southcoast Health will continue to provide, partner and support local farmers through farm stands and farmers markets.
  - Southcoast Health will implement a CSA pilot program in partnership with local farmers that has at least 25 participants and increase their access and the affordability for healthy produce.
  - Southcoast Health will expand the “Be Well Wareham” programming to include health screenings and a nutritional component.
  - Southcoast Health will increase volunteerism by 10% among Southcoast Health Staff in collaboration with community partners through the use of an online platform that will track hours, impact and availability opportunities based of community needs.
- Long Term 2-5-year goals:
  - Southcoast Health will continue to explore opportunities to install a lactation pod at the Buttonwood Park Zoo, after discovering a need for breastfeeding mothers to have a private place to nurse their babies.



- Southcoast Health will continue to increase the number of women breastfeeding upon discharge by 2%.
- Southcoast Health will continue to increase the proportion of pregnant women who receive early and adequate prenatal care
- Southcoast Health will work to increase the proportion of adults in the South Coast region who self-report good or better physical health.
- Southcoast Health will work with local schools and community partners to increase the proportion of youth in the South Coast region who self-report good or better physical health.
- Southcoast Health's Nutritional Service Department will continue to expand and explore nutritional outreach services through counseling and education to the community.