Advocate Aurora Health is one of the 12 largest not-for-profit, integrated health systems in the United States and a leading employer in the Midwest with more than 75,000 team members, including more than 22,000 nurses and the region’s largest employed medical staff and home health organization. A national leader in clinical innovation, health outcomes, consumer experience and value-based care, the system serves nearly 3 million patients annually in Illinois and Wisconsin across more than 500 sites of care.

As an Advocate Aurora Health hospital, we recognize our role in addressing concerns about the accessibility and affordability of behavioral health care in Milwaukee County and across our Wisconsin footprint. Further, we acknowledge that we are accountable to our patients and communities, and that our initiatives to support our communities must fit our role as a not-for-profit community hospital.

The strategies presented here are the result of our process for assessing community health needs, obtaining input from community members and public health representatives, prioritizing needs and consulting with our hospital staff and physician partners.

Our full Milwaukee County Community Health Needs Assessment Report is available here: www.aurora.org/commbenefits.
Our Implementation Strategy is organized into three main priorities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Community Benefit Core Principle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Priority #1</td>
<td>Access and Coverage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Increase access for persons in our community with disproportionate unmet health needs. In this section we outline our approach to link our community’s most vulnerable residents with behavioral health care.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Priority #2</td>
<td>Behavioral Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>In this priority we outline our approach to addressing behavioral health needs, a top finding in our needs assessment.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Priority #3</td>
<td>Social Determinants of Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>In alignment with the Advocate Aurora Health Community Strategy, this section describes our approach to addressing social determinants of health, the structural elements and conditions of our communities that influence the health of residents.</strong></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to alignment with community benefit principles, our strategies illustrate the coordination between population health activities within our hospital or clinic walls and outreach activities designed to target the broader community.

**Principal community health improvement tool: Community Partnerships**

For any community health concern, it is widely recognized that a diverse team of engaged community partners is essential for implementing strategic community health improvement initiatives that make a difference. Therefore, we acknowledge the need to be a good community partner. Our strategies strongly reinforce our role as a partner for community capacity-building to address unmet community health needs.

These strategies do not constitute the entirety of the community benefits our hospital provides each year. An annual account of our community benefits can be found by visiting [http://www.aurora.org/commbenefits](http://www.aurora.org/commbenefits).

This Community Benefit Implementation Strategy was adopted by the Aurora Health Care Community Board on August 7, 2019.
Priority No. 1: Access, a signature community benefit focus for Advocate Aurora Health

Target population
Adults and children in need of behavioral health care

Principal partner
• Aurora Medical Group (AMG)
• Aurora Behavioral Health Services (ABHS)

Community partner
• Progressive Community Health Center
• Milwaukee Health Care Partnership (MHCP)

Impact goal
Increased access to behavioral health care

Current findings
Mental health and alcohol and other drug use (behavioral health) ranked among the top five health issues for Milwaukee County. In 2018, 28% of Milwaukee County adults reported a mental health condition (such as depression, anxiety disorder or post-traumatic stress disorder), and 3% of respondents reported someone in their household had an unmet mental health need (Source #1).

Our strategy
For our patients
• Continue to provide Aurora behavioral health team members at all 16 Aurora Health Care hospitals, either in person or via secure video link, to conduct intake assessments in the ED and direct patients to appropriate resources and levels of care
  – Past impact: 20,893 assessments were provided in 2017 and 2018
• Continue to provide tele-intake assessments to direct patients to appropriate resources and levels of care
  – Past impact: 381 urgent care assessments were provided in 2017 and 2018
• Provide 24/7 ABHS call center coverage
• Continue to provide psychiatry/tele-psychiatry consultations at all Aurora Health Care hospitals, providing recommendations to all patients appropriate to their needs
  – Past impact: 1,165 inpatients were provided with consultations in 2017 and 2018
• Continue to expand outpatient capacity by partnering with outside organizations, and directing appropriate referrals to provide coordination of care
  – Past impact: 312 referrals were made through CIN agreements in 2018
• Continue the behavioral health - primary care integration model of care at pilot sites
  – Past impact: 121 patients served through this model in 2017, with work to include new sites completed in 2018 and 2019

MEASURES:
• Number of assessments and screenings provided
• Number of ABHS Call Center calls offered; Number of calls answered; Number of service to Behavioral Health orders
• Number of psychiatry consultations provided
• Number of referrals provided
• Process milestones of behavioral health - primary care integration

For our community
• NEW: Through the MHCP and in response to the lack of a psychiatric Emergency Department within Milwaukee County, provide leadership on the Behavioral Health Provider group dedicated to increasing inpatient and outpatient behavioral health care capacity and psychiatric crisis center planning
• Provide Outpatient and Intensive Outpatient care for veterans
• Continue to provide expanded access to virtual Behavioral Health care

MEASURES:
• Number of visits
• Process milestones in expanding service and participation in MHCP Behavioral Health Provider Group
Priority No. 2:
Behavioral Health, a signature community benefit focus for Advocate Aurora Health

Current findings
In 2018, 32% of Milwaukee County residents reported binge drinking in the past month (Source #1). When compared to other Wisconsin counties, both the 2015-2017 age-adjusted ER rate due to substance use (42.6 per 100,000 population) and age-adjusted hospitalization rate due to substance use (21.3 per 100,000 population) in Milwaukee County is in the worst quartile (Source #2). According to the CDC, the rate of dispensed opioid prescriptions peaked in 2012 and has since decreased steadily. However, the rate of opioid prescriptions dispensed was higher in Milwaukee County at 76.8 prescriptions per 100 population than the state rate (52.6/100 population). Residents and key informants identified substance use as one of the top health issues challenging the community (Sources #1, #3).

Our strategy
For our patients
• Provide increased access to ambulatory substance abuse treatment
• Provide increased access to hospital-based substance abuse treatment

MEASURES:
• Number of visits

For our community
• The Lighthouse on Dewey is a stand-alone facility dedicated to addressing the physical, spiritual, and emotional effects of drug and alcohol addiction to build the foundation for life-long recovery. At Lighthouse, continue to provide non-clinical meeting space seven days a week to accommodate support groups serving individuals and their families through the journey to maintain sobriety. Support groups utilizing Lighthouse include Alcoholics Anonymous, Cocaine Anonymous, Heroin Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, SMART Recovery, Women for Sobriety, ALANON, Couples in Recovery, Family Dynamics, Parents of Addicted Children, Veterans groups, and more
  - Past impact: An average of 39 support groups supporting 947 individuals utilized Lighthouse on Dewey in 2017 and 2018
• Participate on local coalitions to address substance abuse

MEASURES:
• Average number of hours per week Lighthouse on Dewey is utilized by support groups
• Average number of support groups and individuals attending per week
• Progress milestones of local partnerships

Target population
Individuals in need of care for alcohol and other drug abuse (AODA)

Principal partners
• Aurora Medical Group (AMG)
• Aurora Behavioral Health Services (ABHS)

Impact goal
Increased and improved linkages to appropriate care for AODA treatment
Priority No. 3: Alignment with Community Strategy focus on social determinants of health – workforce development

Current findings
Across the majority of Aurora’s footprint, there are HRSA-designated mental health provider shortages from the census tract level to a county-wide level. Efforts to recruit, train and retain providers are necessary to increase the numbers of providers available to patients in the Aurora service area. Additionally, as with all health professions, continuing education is highly valuable for behavioral health professionals. It ensures that providers’ practice is current, aids in the development of contact with other behavioral health professionals, provides information about the health system, and enhances self-efficacy.

Our strategy
For our patients
• Continue to hire additional behavioral health providers system-wide
  - Past impact: 40 new behavioral health providers were hired in 2018
• Create training opportunities to continue to support workforce expansion
• Continue to host and provide continuing education through the Evidence-Based Health Series of lectures and intensive workshops to enhance knowledge in specialized areas of behavioral health and requested clinical topics
  - Past impact: 1,205 individuals were educated in 2017 and 2018
• Continue to provide Verbal Defense and Influence (VDI) training on how to manage aggressive behavior for providers within Aurora hospital and outpatient facilities
  - Past impact: 361 providers were trained in 2017 and 2018

MEASURES:
• Number of providers employed, by type; new providers
• Process milestones of workforce expansion
• Number of individuals educated/trained

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### Current findings

On April 4, 2020, Governor Tony Evers declared all counties in the State of Wisconsin as a disaster area in response to the outbreak of COVID-19. Since then, cases have been reported in every county in the Advocate Aurora Health Wisconsin service area. Advocate Aurora has implemented several initiatives aimed at increasing the amount of available outreach and education resources in Wisconsin during the Coronavirus/COVID-19 pandemic.

### Our strategy

#### For our patients

- **NEW:** Provide increased number of virtual and telephone visits in order to provide necessary care for patients while minimizing the transmission risk of COVID-19
- **NEW:** Launch the Safe Care Promise, which includes extra steps we are taking to keep our patients, visitors and team members safe. This includes virtual check-ins, universal masking and screening for all who enter our locations, encouraging social distancing through rearranged furniture and staggering appointment times, and enhanced cleaning in all areas, including additional disinfectant for high-touch spaces.
- **NEW:** Provide COVID-19 vaccine to patients and community members

**MEASURES:**
- Number of virtual and telephone visits provided
- Number of patients vaccinated; number of community members vaccinated

#### For our community

- **NEW:** Increase community member access to reliable COVID-19 information with our system-wide COVID-19 Resource Center
  - Online Symptom Checker
  - COVID-19 Symptom Checker Hotline (866) 443-2584
- **NEW:** Provide education to community members and local organizations to help them update operations in response to the COVID-19 pandemic so they may continue to provide services safely
- **NEW:** Collaborate with appropriate community partners to increase access to community testing

**MEASURES:**
- Number of community organizations our team members work with to update operations
- Process milestones related to establishing or increasing local community testing

**Note:** Plans to address selected priorities are dependent upon resources and may be adjusted on an annual basis to best address the health needs of our community during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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