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 health care in Sheboygan County. 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 Sheboygan 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>
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</table>
| Priority #1    | **Access and Coverage**  
*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 medical care.* |
| Priority #2    | **Behavioral Health**  
*In this priority we outline our approach to addressing behavioral health needs, a top finding in our needs assessment.* |
| Priority #3    | **Social Determinants of Health**  
*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.* |

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 [www.aurora.org/commbenefits](http://www.aurora.org/commbenefits).
Priority No. 1: 
Access, a signature community benefit focus for Advocate Aurora Health

Target population
• Uninsured residents of Sheboygan County
• Employers of Sheboygan County

Principal partner
Aurora Medical Group (AMG)

Community partner
• Lakeshore Community Health Care (LCHC)
A Federally Qualified Health Center that provides primary and preventive medical, oral and behavioral health services to uninsured and underinsured individuals in Sheboygan County and surrounding communities
• Anchor of Hope Health Center
• A non-profit organization working to engage men and women facing a pregnancy decision and provide education and support
• Advance Care Planning Coalition

Impact goal
Increase access to care

Current findings
In 2019, 6% of Sheboygan County respondents had an unmet medical need in the past 12 months, 12% delayed medical care due to cost, and 7% delayed filling a prescription due to cost. Access to health care was ranked as a top issue by community members and key stakeholders (Sources #1, #3).

Our strategy
For our patients
• Provide appropriate follow-up with non-emergent patients using our emergency department (ED) for primary care
  – Past impact: 499 non-emergent ED patients without a primary care physician saw an AMG provider within 28 days in 2018 and 2019
• Refer uninsured and self-pay patients using our ED for primary and dental care to Lakeshore Community Health Care
  – Past impact: 123 ED patients referred to Lakeshore Community Health Care in 2018 and 2019
• Actively screen patients for coverage through the Marketplace or financial assistance programs and assist with application processes
• Provide operating costs to maintain reliable transportation services for patients in need
  – Past impact: 1,845 rides provided for patients in Plymouth in 2018 and 2019
• Provide transportation home for patients facing transportation barriers
  – Past impact: 571 rides home provided for ED patients with no support in 2018 and 2019
• NEW: Provide Pharmacy Delivery Program, with delivery free of charge, to ensure patients receive prescriptions after hospital discharge or procedures
• Provide palliative care and advance care planning utilizing Goals of Care through home visits by a nurse practitioner or chaplain
  – Past impact: 1,182 palliative care and advance planning home visits provided

MEASURES, number of:
• Non-emergent ED visits without a primary care physician; seen by an AMG primary care provider within 28 days
• Patients referred to LCHC
• Rides provided
• Patients served
• Prescriptions provided
• Palliative Care home visits
For our community

• Support Anchor of Hope Health Center through provision of lab testing
  – Past impact: 160 lab tests provided for Anchor of Hope Health Center in 2019

• Provide virtual hospital tours for vulnerable populations with anticipated challenges navigating the healthcare system to increase their comfort levels in accessing care.
  
  Tours cover an orientation to health services, including:
  • Registration process, forms required
  • Demonstration of Interpretation Services
  • ED process for patients and families
  • Virtual visit a patient room demonstrating bed functionality, call lights, equipment, and family lounge
  • Women’s Health, NICU delivery rooms, and bassinets
  – Past impact: Provided 6 hospital tours to 73 individuals from vulnerable populations with anticipated challenges navigating the healthcare system in 2018 and 2019

• In collaboration with Advance Care Planning Coalition, provide community palliative care/advance care education on various topics including:
  • Advance Care Planning and completion support
  • Memorial services
  • Grief support
  – Past impact: Advance Care Planning and completion support provided to 307 individuals in 2018 and 2019; 1 memorial service education session provided to 15 individuals; 13 grief support sessions provided to 36 individuals

• NEW: Participate on the Healthy Sheboygan County Coalition which aims to promote conditions in Sheboygan County in which people can be healthy

MEASURES, number of:
• Anchor of Hope patients tested
• Tours provided; number of attendees
• Community palliative care/advance care planning education sessions provided; topics and attendees
• Process milestones of Healthy Sheboygan County initiatives
Priority No. 2: 
Behavioral Health, a signature community benefit focus for Advocate Aurora Health

**Current findings**
Mental health and alcohol and other drug use (behavioral health) ranked among the top five health issues for Ozaukee County. In 2019, 25% of Sheboygan County adults reported a mental health condition (such as depression, anxiety disorder or post-traumatic stress disorder). Additionally, 28% of Sheboygan County residents reported binge drinking in the past month (Source #1). The rate of opioid-related hospital discharges was 305.8 per 10,000 population in 2018, lower than Wisconsin rate of 403.4 per 10,000 population (Source #2).

**Our strategy**

**For our patients**
- Provide ABHS referrals through tele-intake services in our ED and through inpatient tele-psychiatry consultations
  - Past impact: Provided Behavioral Health intake processes for 1,407 patients in 2019
- Provide intensive outpatient (IOP) care for adults with alcohol and other drug abuse (AODA) disorders and adolescents, with extended evening hours
  - Past impact: Provided intensive outpatient (IOP) care and partial-hospital (PHP) care for 411 patients with alcohol and other drug abuse (AODA) disorders in 2018 and 2019
- Provide partial hospitalization for behavioral health patients
  - Past impact: Provided partial hospitalization for 2,540 behavioral health patients in 2018 and 2019
- Participate in the county-wide Zero Suicide initiative in both our ED and primary care settings, predicated upon a commitment by healthcare leaders to:
  - make suicide a “never” event so that not one person dies alone and in despair
  - promote a just culture where caring, competent and confident staff are supported to continuously improve and learn together
  - keep patients actively engaged and supported to talk about suicide and despair and rediscover hope and finding ways to thrive
  - provide Question. Persuade. Refer. (QPR) to train community participants how to recognize the warning signs of suicide and how to question, persuade and refer someone to help
  - Past impact: Provided 31,266 suicide screenings and 2,206 follow-up calls as part of the county-wide Zero Suicide initiative in 2018 and 2019

**Target population**
Residents of Sheboygan County

**Principal partners**
- Aurora Medical Group (AMG)
- Aurora Pharmacies
- Aurora Behavioral Health Services (ABHS)

**Community partners**
- Healthy Sheboygan County
- Sheboygan County Health and Human Services
- Mental Health America
- United Way
- Wisconsin Recovery Community Organization (WIRCO)
- Local school districts
- Wisconsin Safe and Healthy Schools (WISH) and State of WI
- Lakeshore Community Health Care

**Impact goal**
Increase linkages to appropriate care for behavioral health
• Provide Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT), which combines behavioral therapy and medications, to treat patients with opioid abuse disorders  
  – Past impact: 567 individuals received Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) in 2018 and 2019

**MEASURES, number of:**
• Individuals served through tele-intake and tele-psych  
• Individuals served through IOP AODA  
• Individuals served through the Behavioral Health In-patient unit  
• Suicide prevention trainings held  
• Individuals screened through Zero Suicide initiative; caring contact calls made  
• QPR sessions provided; individuals trained  
• Individuals served through MAT

**For our community**
• Partner with Healthy Sheboygan County Mental Health Committee to build broad-based community systems change and support for:  
  • Medication management to reduce the availability of opioids (street drugs) within the community  
    – Past impact: 2,460 pounds of drugs collected through 5 take-back days in 2018 and 2019  
• Promote careers in behavioral health services by hosting Behavioral Health Student Intern program  
  – Past impact: 10 Behavioral Health interns placed in Aurora Sheboygan in 2018 and 2019  
• Sponsor Teaming Together for a Brighter Tomorrow to address binge drinking in Kiel and New Holstein school districts  
  – Past impact: 3,040 students reached in 24 Teaming Together for a Brighter Tomorrow sessions to address binge drinking in Kiel and New Holstein school districts in 2018 and 2019  
• Support “There is Hope” walk for suicide awareness and prevention  
  – Past impact: 64 attendees in “There is Hope” walk for suicide awareness and prevention in 2018 and 2019  
• Support Mental Health America AODA Resource Fair  
  – Past impact: Supported Mental Health America AODA Resource Fair for 78 attendees in 2019  
• NEW: Participate in the Sheboygan County Overdose Review Committee

**MEASURES:**
• Number of take-back days held; pounds of drugs collected by the County and lock boxes provided  
• Number of behavioral health interns placed in our hospital for clinical experience  
• Number of Teaming Together programs held; students reached and families counseled  
• There Is Hope Walk attendees and volunteers  
• AODA Resource Fair attendees and volunteers  
• Process milestones of the Sheboygan County Overdose Review Committee
Priority No. 3: Alignment with Community Strategy focus on social determinants of health – community safety

Current findings
Threats to an individual’s safety can take many forms. In 2019, the total number of injury emergency department (ED) visits among Sheboygan County adults aged 65 and older was 1,108, which is a rate of 5,415.8 per 100,000 lower than the state rate of 7,096.9 per 100,000.1 Of the ED visits by Ozaukee County adults aged 65 and older, 714 resulted from falls.2 Respondents who were aged 65 years or older were also more likely to report heart disease and high blood pressure. Sexual violence is defined as sexual activity when consent is not obtained or not given freely.3 The rate of rape for Sheboygan County was 30.35 reports per 100,000 persons, higher than Wisconsin’s overall rate of 27.91 per 100,000 in 2019 (Source #2). However, sexual assault and rape are underreported and the definition of sexual assault varies across different agencies; therefore, the number and rate may vary depending on the source.

Our strategy
For our patients
- Utilize the ISAR (Identification of Seniors at Risk) tool in our ED to identify our elderly patients who are at risk, and establish a network of referrals and care throughout the Advocate Aurora system that will enhance population health and reduce emergency department visits and readmissions
  - Past impact: 7,997 individuals screened using ISAR in 2018 and 2019
- Partner with the Dementia Task Force of Sheboygan County to prevent and/or deescalate dementia crisis incidents through education, video series, training and support for those affected by the disease
  - Past impact: 400 individuals attended training sessions to prevent and/or de-escalate dementia crisis incidents in 2019
- Consistent with Aurora’s system-wide Forensic Nursing and AHAS programs, provide:
  - 24/7 trauma-informed and victim-sensitive services by our specially trained Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANEs), including examination, STI and HIV prophylactic medications, forensic evidence collection and SDFI®-TeleMedicine forensic photodocumentation system based on the Federal Rules of Evidence
  - Referrals as appropriate to medical, clinical, counseling and advocacy services
  - Introduce a Safe Mom Safe Baby (SMSB) program, a case-management service provided to pregnant or recently delivered women experiencing intimate partner violence
    - Past impact: 402 sexual assault victims provided medical care and services in 2018 and 2019; 5 women served through SMSB program

MEASURES, number of:
- Individuals assessed
- Individuals attending training sessions
- Individuals served and referrals provided
- Women served through SMSB; women provided with intensive support
- Women reporting improved safety behaviors
- Babies born to women participating in SMSB who reach full term and a healthy birth weight
For our community
• Conduct community trainings on how to care for and work with victims of crime using trauma-informed care techniques, including:
  • Sexual Assault Response Teams (SART) training for law enforcement
  • Abuse Training
  • Department of Justice SANE training
    – Past impact: 20 community educations/prevention/outreach trainings provided to 200 attendees in 2018 and 2019
• Support the Tri-county (Sheboygan, Ozaukee, Washington) Child Advocacy Center in Saukville to provide care to children who are suspected to have experienced domestic/sexual abuse
  – Past impact: 495 children served in 2018 and 2019

MEASURES, number of:
• Community trainings; attendees
• Children served through Child Advocacy Center

Priority No. 3:  
Alignment with Community Strategy focus on social determinants of health – infant mortality

Target population
Residents of Sheboygan County

Principal partner
Aurora Medical Group (AMG)

Current findings
In 2018, the rate of infants dying before their first birthday in Sheboygan County was 3.1 deaths per 1,000 live births, lower than the statewide rate of 6.1 deaths per 1,000 live births. Sheboygan County mothers who are Laotian or Hmong had a higher rate of 20.0, or Hispanic at 9.3, compared to Non-Hispanic White (1.0) (Source #2).

Our strategy

For our patients
• In partnership with United Way, Family Connections and the Family Resource Center, sponsor the Welcome Baby Program, in which nursing staff conduct an assessment for all first-time and NICU moms to determine if they could benefit from a visit by a Resource Specialist and further referral to home visits from Parents as Teachers
  – Past impact: 830 Welcome Baby assessments completed in 2018 and 2019

MEASURES, number of:
• Welcome Baby assessments completed

For our community
• Provide free community classes including:
  • Labor, Birth & Beyond
  • Bringing Home Baby
  • Big Kid New Baby
  • Teenage Pregnancy
  • Breastfeeding
  • EMMI Post-partum Depression emails
  – Past impact: 26 Labor, Birth & Beyond classes provided to 286 individuals in 2018 and 2019; 23 Bringing Home Baby classes provided to 182 individuals; 11 Big Kid New Baby classes provided to 59 individuals; 4 Teenage Pregnancy classes provided to 12 individuals; 24 Breastfeeding classes provided to 253 individuals; 1,577 Post-Partum Depression emails sent
• Host virtual Footprints on our Heart program, a memorial service for families who have experienced the loss of a baby through miscarriage, stillbirth, or neonatal death
  – Past impact: Hosted Footprints on our Heart program with 189 attendees
• Provide upon request, infant car seat checks and installations free of charge at the local fire department for community members
  – Past impact: 245 car seat checks provided

MEASURES, number of:
• Classes provided; attendees
• Individuals attending Footprints on our Heart program
• Car seats checked
Priority No. 3: Alignment with Community Strategy focus on social determinants of health – workforce development

Target population
Residents of Sheboygan County

Principal partner
Aurora Medical Group (AMG)

Community partners
• Local high schools
• Lakeshore Health Care Alliance
• Lakeshore Technical College
• Sheboygan County Chamber of Commerce
• The Commons
• UW-Green Bay
• UW-Sheboygan

Impact goal
Increased opportunity for stable employment, education

Current findings
A steady job in favorable working conditions means more than just a paycheck. Employment can also mean a link to health insurance benefits for a family, the ability to pay for childcare services or education, and the opportunity to purchase healthy, nutritious food. Unemployment, on the other hand, can lead to negative health outcomes such as a decline in one’s ability to access care for themselves or their family members, development of depression or other behavioral health issues, or an inability to pay for basic living expenses.⁴ Employment can also affect health if one’s working conditions are unsafe or if wages are not at a level that sustains one’s living expenses. In 2018, the average unemployment rate in Sheboygan County was 2.4%, similar to the Wisconsin average of 2.7% (Source #2).

Our strategy
For our community
• To increase opportunities to learn about and secure employment in the healthcare field, provide:
  • Three Career Experience sessions per year in collaboration with Eastern Wisconsin Health Care Alliance, enabling local high school students to hear presentations from up to six different clinical departments
  • Scholarships for students pursuing degrees related to healthcare
  • Clinical site experiences for local technical schools and universities
    – Past impact: Provided Career Experience session to 53 local high school students in 2018 and 2019; $43,000 in scholarships provided to students pursuing degrees related to health care; provided clinical site experiences for 300 local technical schools and universities
• Partner with Sheboygan County Chamber of Commerce Business Education Partners Committee to offer Explore Your Future virtual workshops
  – Past impact: 1,576 workshop attendees in 2018 and 2019
• Participate in the UW-Green Bay Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Virtual Conference
  – Past impact: 121 conference attendees in 2018 and 2019
• NEW: Establish the Central Wisconsin Patient Service Area Inclusion Core Team to facilitate the local execution and implementation of system-wide Diversity, Equity & Inclusion strategies and actions. The Core Team serves as a platform for sharing best practices and serves as a conduit for sharing Diversity, Equity & Inclusion resources and education

MEASURES, number of:
• Students participating in Career Experience
• Students shadowing; hours
• Scholarships provided; dollar amount
• Students completing clinical rotations
• Explore Your Future workshops offered; students attending
• STEM Conference attendees
• Number of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion education hours completed by team members

Priority No. 3: Alignment with Community Strategy focus on social determinants of health – food security

**Target population**
- Vulnerable congestive heart failure patients
- Residents of Sheboygan County

**Principal partner**
Aurora Medical Group (AMG)

**Community partner**
- Meals on Wheels
- Plymouth Joint School District

**Impact goal**
Increased access to nutritious foods for local residents

**Current findings**
Food insecurity is defined as the disruption of food intake or eating patterns due to lack of resources. Food insecurity, long-term or temporary, may be influenced by several factors including income, employment, neighborhood conditions, transportation, race/ethnicity and disability. Adults and children who are experiencing food insecurity may be at an increased risk for a variety of negative health outcomes and health disparities, including obesity. In 2019, less than 1% of respondents reported their household went hungry because they were unable to afford enough food in the past year, however only 36% reported they ate the recommended amount of fruit servings and vegetable servings on an average day. Additionally, 74% of Sheboygan County residents are overweight (Source #1).

**Our strategy**

**For our patients**
- Provide Meals on Wheels program for our vulnerable congestive heart failure patients for 30 days post-discharge to assure availability of nutritious meals
  - Past impact: 1,159 meals provided for 81 vulnerable congestive heart failure patients in 2018 and 2019

**MEASURES:**
- Meals on Wheels provided; patients served; readmissions

**For our community**
- Provide interactive or virtual program focusing on nutrition and physical activity to continue to help foster lifelong healthy habits for families in the Plymouth Joint School District
  - Past impact: 7 sessions offered to 147 families in 2018 and 2019
- NEW: Support local food pantry Holiday Run/Walk

**MEASURES, number of:**
- Sessions provided; children and family members participating
- Evaluations
- Number of participants

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Priority No. 3:
Alignment with Community Strategy focus on social determinants of health – Coronavirus/COVID-19 Pandemic Response

Target population
Sheboygan County Residents

Principal partners
• Aurora Medical Group (AMG)
• ACL Laboratories

Community partners
• Wisconsin Department of Health Services
• Sheboygan County Health and Human Services
• Local Federally Qualified Health Centers, Free Clinics and other local organizations addressing health inequities and social determinants of health exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Impact goal
Increase the amount of outreach and education resources available to Sheboygan County residents during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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 Health 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: Test patients scheduled for elective procedures as supplies allow
• 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:
• Process milestones to establish testing for hospital patients
• Number of patients tested within our hospital
• 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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