



*"Committed to Our Community"*

*Past, Present and Future*

## Community Health Implementation Plan (2020-2022)

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Mid-Columbia Medical Center is committed to the health care of our community and takes pride in the community benefit services we provide. These services include health education, public-assistance programs, and free and discounted services to vulnerable populations. As a mission-driven community healthcare system, we understand that our commitment to health and wellness extends beyond the walls of our hospital.

Community needs are assessed every three years through a collaborative effort conducted by a cohort of hospitals, community clinics, public health entities and community partners dedicated to the health and well-being of the residents of the Columbia River Gorge. This regional assessment assures the optimization of our area's health care and allows for a unique and powerful opportunity to cooperatively serve our community. Once this evaluation is completed, each participating organization is responsible for customizing their own individualized implementation plan that aligns with the identified needs and is consistent with their respective mission.

## MISSION STATEMENT

To provide exceptional and affordable healthcare services and experiences to those we are privileged to serve, through person centered care.

## VALUES

- Integrity - We promote trust through open and respectful communication. We take pride in what we do, feel responsible for the outcome of our efforts, and recognize our work as a reflection of ourselves.
- Wellness - We view individuals as active participants in their own healthcare and partner with them so they can achieve their highest health potential and live life to its fullest.
- Compassion - Grounded in our Planetree history, we demonstrate empathy for patients, families, and staff and believe that person-centered care is the cornerstone of compassion.
- Quality - We strive to provide high value healthcare, delivering excellent clinical quality with a focus on patient safety and outstanding service.
- Teamwork - We recognize that we can only achieve our mission by working collaboratively to achieve organizational excellence and superior patient experiences. Diversity, equity, and inclusion principles drive rich, innovative solutions to patient care issues.

## BACKGROUND

The history of Mid-Columbia Medical Center is one of community commitment. Serving the Gorge for over 100 years, MCMC has acted as a catalyst for new ideas, new services and new approaches to quality health care. Its anchor facility is a 49-bed hospital located in the heart of the Columbia River Gorge in The Dalles, Oregon. In addition to our hospital, MCMC is proud to offer residents full access to specialists from Oregon's renowned medical school through an innovative clinical collaboration with Oregon Health and Science University. MCMC is also the sponsor of the region's first and only Immediate Care Center which opened in the Spring of 2020. The Immediate Care Center further reflects MCMC's commitment and mission to look for new ways to provide easy access to care for our community.

In 1992, Mid-Columbia Medical Center became the first hospital in the nation to fully integrate the Planetree philosophy of care which emphasizes the need to address a person's intellectual, environmental, emotional and spiritual concerns in addition to their physical needs. This philosophy continues to impact the way we serve our patients and community members, and often takes us outside the walls of our hospital.

## OUR COMMUNITY

Located in Wasco County with a population of 26,505, MCMC serves a wide geographic area of rural north-central Oregon along the Columbia River. In addition to Wasco, other service areas include Sherman and Gilliam counties in Oregon and Klickitat County in Washington for a combined population total of 52,214. Median income and ethnic demographics vary by geographic location. Census data from 2018 shows median incomes range from \$42,976 to \$50,973.

Wasco County has the largest ethnic diversity with a distribution that is 74.3% white, 18.4% Latino, 3.9% American Indian/Alaska Native and 1% other. Approximately 14.5% of the population lives below the poverty level.

In addition to the year-round population, The Dalles experiences a substantial influx of over 15,000 seasonal workers in support of the harvest of its agricultural economy.

*See figure 1.1 in addendum.*

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE, UNINSURED AND UNDERINSURED

We recognize that the costs for medically necessary services are often unexpected and can create financial challenges. MCMC aims to provide high-quality, cost-effective health care services for every patient regardless of their ability to pay. In keeping with this philosophy, MCMC offers both charity care and a sliding-fee scale to qualifying patients. Full financial assistance will be provided to a patient/guarantor with household income less than 150% of

Federal Poverty Guidelines. A patient/guarantor will be given partial financial assistance based on his/her household income level up to 250% of Federal Poverty Guidelines based on the sliding scale.

For information on our Financial Assistance Program, visit <https://mcmc.net/for-patients-guests/financial-assistance/>.

## IDENTIFICATION AND SELECTION OF SIGNIFICANT HEALTH NEEDS

Needs were identified through the community health assessment and the cumulative health data gathered. Needs that worsened over time—or were poorer than the state and/or national average—were prioritized along with needs that disproportionately affected vulnerable populations.

## COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN PRIORITIES

The identified top focus areas throughout the seven-county region are:

- Housing.
- Food.
- Transportation and mobility.
- Equitable health care services.
- Equitable physical activity.
- Social connection and communication.
- Children and youth safety.

**The full CHIP can be accessed here:**

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5e7109f83cff1b7d10e22da6/t/5f121c8cd72bc729c955c2c9/1595022476435/Columbia+Gorge+Regional+2020+CHIP+Priorities+SUMMARY-+ENGLISH.pdf>

In response, the MCMC community benefit committee—in alignment with our mission and vision—has set the following focus priorities for the 2020-2022 community benefit cycle:

### **Priority 1: Access To Equitable Health Care Services**

Focus on providing navigation and coordination for primary care, specialty care and mental health services. Provide timely care to patients when and where they need it. Ensure patients have affordable and adequate insurance coverage.

- **Community Need Addressed**  
Access to primary, specialty and behavioral health care.
- **Goal (Anticipated Impact)**  
Increased accessibility for timely care; Increased patient establishment with PCP; Increased navigation and supportive services to vulnerable populations; Increased access to clinic based Behavioral Health Services.

### Priority 2: Social Determinants of Health

Address these barriers, which may include, but are not limited to: transportation, affordable housing and food insecurity.

- **Community Need Addressed**  
Access to Healthy Food/Food Insecurity.
- **Goal (Anticipated Impact)**  
Increased access to healthy foods to vulnerable patient population, open eligibility beyond diabetic patients.

### Priority 3: Patient Empowering Education

Focus on providing education to help patients make informed and empowered decisions regarding their health and wellness including pain management, nutrition, healthy living and chronic disease prevention.

- **Community Need Addressed**  
Providing access to information and education on wellness, health promotion and disease prevention. Offering free educational opportunities to allow the community access to a variety of health care topics, giving them the information to make empowered decisions about their own well-being.
- **Goal (Anticipated Impact)**  
People get the language-appropriate information they need or want on paper, online or video to be able to access the services they need.

### CONTINUED EFFORTS

Many of the key identified needs from the previous CHA remained, in response, MCMC has maintained the following community benefit programs and activities.

- Working closely with our **local school district** to both assess identified needs and promote equity in physical activity to help address the various health issues faced by today's youth. This includes identifying all physical activity opportunities of local youth and pinpointing disparities in which to focus our efforts.
- Free **athletic training services** to eight local middle and high schools. Our free services include injury prevention, triage, rehabilitation and concussion care. Our five full-time staff members dedicate their entire workload to keeping student athletes at these schools safe and healthy through the year-round sports season.
- **School nursing services** at local schools.
- **Nutrition programs** that provide in-depth support and education for diabetes and diabetes prevention as well as facilitating support groups for weight management and providing community education on various nutritional topics.

- **Mommy Wellness classes**—an interdisciplinary program for pregnant and new mothers with children up to 2 years of age to provide education and exercise to promote healthy lifestyle habits for mother and child. Mommy Wellness targets low-income, minority and underserved women and their young children.
- **Free car seat and bike helmet evaluations and fittings** through our emergency department.
- **Mentoring and internship programs** designed to help train existing and future care providers such as pharmacy technicians, EMS technicians, medical assistants, health information management students, childcare providers, radiological technicians, nurses and rural health providers.
- Facilitating a variety of **support groups** on a regular basis.
- Trained full-time assisters to **help patients navigate the Oregon Health Plan enrollment process**.
- Providing **free meeting facilities** for various charitable, civic and support groups.

In addition, our frontline staff, management team and hospital leadership personally give of their time and knowledge to participate in many local coalitions and boards to help advocate for the health of our community. These affiliations include:

- Columbia Gorge Health Council
- Clinical Advisory Panel
- Fit in the Gorge
- Food Coalition
- Health and Safety Advisory Council
- Oregon Association of Hospitals and Health Systems

Mid-Columbia Medical Center is proud to be a community hospital, driven by a mission of quality health care for all. We are dedicated to providing the services that address the unique needs of the community we serve.

#### NEEDS BEYOND THE HOSPITAL'S SERVICE PROGRAM

Some identified needs fall outside of the scope of MCMC's practice. While MCMC itself is unable to address these, we are confident that now that they have been acknowledged – such as the need for dental care and additional focus on housing, for example – these needs will be appropriately addressed by one of our community partners.

**CHNA/CHIP Contact:**

Stephanie Bowen  
Community Benefit &  
Public Relations Manager  
stephaniela@mcmc.net



