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**COMMUNITY BENEFIT
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN
FISCAL YEAR 2016**

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Introduction

Berkshire Health System's (BHS) mission is to improve the health of all people in the Berkshires and surrounding communities, regardless of their ability to pay. Our vision is to provide the region with a premier integrated health system, recognized nationally for delivering the highest-quality, patient-centered care in a learning environment. In order to transform this vision into a reality, improving the health of the population served can only be accomplished when we all work together to improve our lifestyle and how we live, work and play. Together, we can help make individual, family, organizational and environmental changes to improve the health of our community. Our view of the gaps in services encompass the factors that influence BHS but also include community based, socio-economic, physical environment and lifestyle issues that influence the creation of health as well as the incidence of illness and disease.

The Community Benefits Implementation Plan describes how BHS plans to address significant community health needs in 2016 through 2019. These needs were identified in the 2015 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) published and made widely available to the public in October, 2015.

BHS provides healthcare services and community benefits throughout Berkshire County, serving an aggregate population of approximately 130,000. While the work described in the Community Benefits Implementation Plan focuses on addressing significant health needs identified in the 2015 CHNA, BHS recognizes there are many community needs which reach far beyond our resources. The needs we are unable to directly address are often interdependent socio-economic, human and social services required for health to thrive in the Berkshires.

The 2015 CHNA and the Community Benefits Implementation Plan are undertaken to better understand and resolve community health needs. The documents are submitted for the public in accordance with proposed Internal Revenue Service (IRS) regulations pursuant to the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010. The Community Benefits Implementation Plan outlines the significant community health needs described in the CHNA that BHS plans to address in whole or in part through strategic initiatives. BHS holds the right to amend the Community Benefits Implementation Plan as circumstances warrant. For example, certain needs may become more pronounced and merit enhancements to the described strategic initiatives. Alternately, other community organizations may decide to address other priority health needs not included in this document. The Community Benefits Implementation Plan and its objectives may be realigned at any point in time to account for the ever-changing landscape of population health in the Berkshires. This report represents a small portion of the comprehensive services we provide the community. For more information on BHS additional programs and services, visit www.berkshirehealthsystems.org.

Overview

BHS mission is to improve the health of all people in the Berkshires and surrounding communities, regardless of their ability to pay. The community benefits program plays a critical role in providing healthcare to underserved populations. As medical costs continue to rise, focusing on the 2016 Community Benefits Implementation Plan is more important than ever as improving health will ultimately reduce the cost of healthcare. The mission-critical investments made with these initiatives clearly translate into an increase in services available to families, friends, neighbors, and countywide community-based organizations.

Furthering the charitable purpose at BHS, Berkshire Medical Center (BMC) and Fairview Hospital (FVH), our Community Benefit mission is to identify, prioritize and invest in our community's health needs by pursuing needed initiatives and programs. The Community Benefit goals include satisfying unmet needs in the Berkshires and improving the health status of our community with a particular focus on access to healthcare and "at risk" populations. Recognizing the value of BHS partnerships with the community, both BMC and FVH have obtained input from a network of partners and developed strategic collaborations in our effort to improve population health in Berkshire County. As affiliates of BHS, BMC and FVH work together to meet community need.

The priorities and associated target populations that were identified in the 2015 CHNA will serve as the foundation for community benefits programming and hospital planning for the next three years. BMC, including the North Adams Campus, FVH, as well as our affiliates through their Community Benefits program, will build an agenda aimed at developing these important healthcare services and community-based programs.

BHS leadership provides important oversight in the planning and implementation of our Community Benefits Implementation Plan. The Community Benefits team approves the three-year plan and evaluates progress to ensure that goals are met. Outcome measures will be reported and addressed on a routine basis. The plan will serve as the multi-year guide to improving the health status of our community and targets gaps in health services that have been identified. Five themes emerged from the 2015 CHNA and Community Benefit Plan which include the following:

1. Clinical Care
2. Health Behaviors
3. Morbidity & Mortality
4. Physical Environment
5. Social Economic

Community We Serve

BHS service area is comprised of 32 cities and towns representing primarily Berkshire County. Berkshire County is one of the more rural regions of Massachusetts covering almost 950 square miles or roughly 15% of the land mass of the state. The widespread geographical landscape creates significant concern in access to services as the population density results in approximately 140 persons per square miles compared to 835 persons per square miles for the Commonwealth. According to the US Census Bureau 2009-2013 ACS Estimates, the median age was 45. Of the estimated population of 130,545, 19.2% of those residents were 65 years of age or older. Most noteworthy, residents aged 50-70 years currently make up the largest portion of the population at 30% and this statistic is only more significant in South County, which has a median age of 48. According to the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, the aging population is directly associated with the decline in overall population as Berkshire County is experiencing an average of 280 more deaths than births each year and a migration net loss of an average of 250 residents per year. Below outlines the region as well as a summary of listed trends from the 2015 CHNA and Community Benefits Plan:



- 38 zip codes representing all of Berkshire County
 - Population (2014): 128,715
 - Race: Caucasian 93%, Hispanic 3%, African American 3%, Asian 1%
 - Median income: \$65,216
 - Per capita income: \$29,294
 - Unemployment rate: 6.5%
 - Projected population changes & trends 2014-2020:
 - Increase in the 65+ population
 - Decrease in the 19 yrs. And under population
 - Growing diversity (Asian, Black, Russian, and Hispanic populations)
 - Health disparities for African American and Hispanic residents
 - More likely to be living in poverty
 - Higher rates of stroke, heart disease, diabetes, and cancer mortality
- Data Source: US Census Bureau ACS 2009-2013*

For years, BHS and Northern Berkshire Health Systems shared a commitment to meeting the healthcare needs of North County residents. While BHS has always provided healthcare services throughout Northern Berkshires, in March 2014 our role greatly changed when Northern Berkshire Health Systems announced the closure of North Adams Regional Hospital, the VNA, hospice, and two physicians' practices. The closure created an immediate community crisis impacting thousands of residents. In 2014, BHS estimated that the towns with highest need of health services of North Adams Regional Hospital were the following: North Adams, Adams, Cheshire, Williamstown, Savoy, Florida, Rowe, and Monroe. Of the towns serviced, the population is approximately 37,000 residents ranging over 213 square miles, making it one of the more sparsely populated regions of the Commonwealth. Economically, Northern Berkshire, like Berkshire County as a whole, lags behind state benchmarks. The median household income in Berkshire County is 31 % below the state median. The per capita income of the North Berkshire area is \$27,172 compared to the Massachusetts per capita income of \$35,485. In addition to geographic and economic challenges, poor methods of transportation in the Northern Berkshires as well as an aging community frequently pose serious health challenges for the communities. The age is older compared to statewide and national distributions and the region has proportionately fewer children and younger adults and more older and elderly adults than in the Commonwealth as a whole. Within hours of North Adams Regional's closing, BHS began preparing for the next baby to be born to North Berkshire parents, the next patient to need services of hospice, and the next resident to fall ill. BHS immediately reallocated resources to ensure that no one went without healthcare. For a more detailed description of the BHS response, see the sections titled "North County Restoration" and "Neighborhood for Health" below.

Although BHS healthcare services are concentrated in Berkshire County, we are proud of the fact our services are driven by need rather than geographical boundaries. BHS services extend throughout Massachusetts and even impact the lives of New York, Vermont, and Connecticut residents. BHS, with support from our Community Benefits and Access Committee and organizational partners, will continue to respond to unmet healthcare needs of underserved populations. For a more detailed description and statistics of the population of Berkshire County, including climate, race, age distribution, economic and education profile, health outcomes and mortality rates, please see our 2015 CHNA at www.berkshirehealthsystems.org.

Community Benefits Process

Guided by growing evidence that most of one's health can be attributed to non-medical determinants such as social, behavioral, and environmental factors, BHS is taking a broad population health stance. BHS community engagement efforts extend far beyond blood pressure screenings, outreach and health activities in Berkshire County. BHS works with community partners to determine target populations (especially those underserved), understand their barriers to health and required needs, and work collaboratively with our partners to bring services directly to those who need them the most.

To provide thorough guidance and assistance to help improve the health status of our communities, in 2012 the County Health Initiative (CHI) was formalized with the goal of working more closely with community partners. The diverse set of partners was selected to provide a broader platform for change. The partners include healthcare providers, planning organizations, municipalities, and public health and other community based organizations representing the county. The leadership team of the CHI included representatives of BMC, FVH, Berkshire County Boards of Health Association, Berkshire Public Health Alliance, Tri-Town Health Department, Pittsfield Health Department, Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, Berkshire United Way, and Northern Berkshire Community Coalition. The CHI meets monthly throughout the year and sets a common agenda; develops priorities, goals and standards; and identifies best practice and innovative strategies to achieve CHI goals. In addition, BHS facilitates public networking meetings for individuals to gather to discuss relevant population health topics.

BHS has utilized an active community needs assessment as part of its community benefit process since 1996. As a standing committee of the BHS Board of Trustees, the volunteers of the Community Benefits and Access Committee are responsible for understanding the health needs and barriers to care in Berkshire County. The Community Benefits and Access Committee works collaboratively with CHI to better learn and understand the true needs of Berkshire County. The committee oversees the strategic objectives of community benefits, such as the CHNA, Community Benefits Plan and Implementation Plan, determining target populations and priorities, and the performance evaluation of goals and objectives.

BHS utilized all available clinical, health status, demographic, and socio-economic data available to form the foundation of the 2015 CHNA as well as to develop the Community Benefits Implementation Plan. In addition, BHS gathered available qualitative data from many advisory groups, community forums, surveys, and focus groups.

The needs data, along with local and state priorities, are used to determine the allocation of annual community benefits resources. In its planning, BMC and FVH look for opportunities to make better and more effective use of existing resources, as well as to identify gaps in service and trends that relate to priority needs. BMC and FVH work with community and regional partners to implement programs and initiatives to meet community need and improve the health of the population we serve.

Priorities

IRS guidelines instruct hospitals to identify and prioritize significant health needs in their community. Through extensive quantitative and qualitative data assessments, the 2015 CHNA identified a number of significant health needs in the community. Specific needs were distinguished and then prioritized based on the frequency, urgency, scope, severity, and magnitude of the identified issues. A complete description of these health needs and how they were identified — including the community input taken into account, the data analyzed, the prioritization methods used — can be found in the 2015 CHNA report available at www.berkshirehealthsystem.org. The five emerging themes of the 2015 CHNA serve as the foundation on which the Community Benefits Implementation Plan and corresponding strategies and initiatives are based. Below outlines the primary needs to be addressed in this document:

- Clinical Care
 - Considers community factors that are linked to population health such as uninsured, preventable hospital stays, diabetic monitoring, mammogram screening, access to primary care physicians, dentists, and mental health providers
- Health Behaviors
 - Considers community factors that are linked to population health such as obesity, smoking, food options, access to exercise, drinking excessively, alcohol-related driving deaths, sexually transmitted disease, and teen births
- Morbidity & Mortality
 - Mortality is measured in deaths that occur before a person reaches an expected age e.g. 75. Many of these deaths are considered to be preventable
 - Morbidity refers to how healthy people feel (their overall health: physical and mental) and birth outcomes
- Physical Environment
 - Considers community factors that are linked to population health such as air pollution, drinking water, housing, and commuter transit
- Social Economic
 - Considers community factors that are linked to population health such as educational attainment, unemployment, poverty, income inequality, single-parent households, social associations, violent crimes, and accidental deaths

In the development of the priority areas, BHS Strategic Plan adopted the County Health Rankings and Roadmap framework from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is the United States' largest philanthropy focused solely on health. The foundation's goal, similar to our regional efforts, is to improve the health and health care of all Americans. The County Health Rankings & Roadmaps compare the health of nearly all of the 3,000+ counties in the United States to others within its own state, and supports coalitions tackling the myriad social, economic and environmental influences on health. The annual rankings provides a revealing snapshot of how health is influenced by where we live, learn, work and play. For BHS, it is the starting point for change in communities and thus a blueprint to improve population health in the Berkshires.

Implementation Plan

BHS is a private, not-for-profit organization, which serves the region through a network of affiliates, which include BMC, BMC North Adams Campus, BMC Hillcrest Campus, FVH, Berkshire Visiting Nurse Association, BHS physician practices, and long-term care associate Berkshire Healthcare Systems. Each of these facilities is distinguished by the high quality of its programs and services. All of the employees have the highest credentials, skills, compassion for their profession. The Community Benefit Implementation Plan identifies programs and categorizes operations as BMC, FVH, and/or throughout Berkshire County. It is noteworthy to mention that the locations listed in the below section may be operated by multiple BHS affiliates throughout Berkshire, such as designated campus or physician practice locations (i.e. BMC, FVH, BMC North Adams, BMC Hillcrest, etc.).

1. Clinical Care: Access & Health Care Disparities

Physician Recruitment & Workforce Development

The fiscal landscape for physicians in the Berkshire has become increasingly challenging in recent years, with reimbursements for their services declining in the wake of healthcare reform, endangering their ability to both serve their patients and keep their practices stable. In Berkshire County, this situation is magnified with an aging and financially challenged population. Amidst this climate, BHS plays a unique role in the development of the workforce. Physician practices have become reliant on our recruitment efforts, especially as it relates to physician turnover. Outside of the organizational operations, external community-based physician practices now lean on BHS for workforce development strategies and needs. BHS recognizes that this significant shortage in physicians is critical in moving towards long-term stability in population health and ensuring access to a wide variety of health needs.

Since the substantial shortage of physicians and chronic access issues create significant community need, BHS provides financial support to recruit new physicians. In 2015, six new primary care physicians and six emergency medicine physicians joined the BMC medical staff, along with 25 new advanced practice professionals (nurse practitioners, physician assistants). Each year BHS provides more than 300 employees with tuition/fees for nursing training, radiologic technologist or lab technician training.

In 2007 Elms College and BHS entered into a partnership to bring the RN-BS Degree Completion Program onsite as a convenient and accessible means of advancing the educational level of the registered nurses employed within Berkshire Health Systems. This is a two year program with classes offered onsite and is exclusively for BHS registered nurses. The first class of registered nurse students entered in 2008 and as of May 17, 2014, 86 registered nurses employed within Berkshire Health Systems had completed the onsite RN-BS Degree Completion Program. Most recently, the graduation class of 2015 included 15 RNs. BHS is proud to continue to pay full tuition and fees for eligible participants, as well as provide an onsite facility.

Similar to BMC, FVH is designated an Underserved Medical Population and thus access to medical professionals is a critical concern there too. Fairview plays a pivotal role in stabilizing existing practices. FVH strengthens access to primary care by recruiting and supporting physicians in rural practice, as well as increasing access to specialty services through BMC (e.g. cardiology, urology, and endocrinology). In 2015, Fairview provided support for the training of 26 emergency medical technicians and medical assistants. In addition, the organization provided shadow experiences, internships and clinical training to 42 students.

Overall investment by BHS in the critical shortage program is over \$12 million and the organization will continue to make significant investments in the development of the future medical workforce of Berkshire County.

- Locations: BMC, FVH, Berkshire County

Enrollment & Access to Care

With the Advocacy for Access Program, BHS facilitates the enrollment or re-enrollment of nearly 6,000 eligible applicants into MassHealth and other health coverage programs for BMC and over 5,000 individuals at FVH. In addition to the efforts at BMC and FVH, BHS provides financial support for Ecu-Health Care in North County. Ecu-Health Care is a critical agency that assists community residents in finding and enrolling in health insurance programs so that they can access the care they need, close to home. The programs they help residents access include:

subsidized and unsubsidized Qualified Health Plans implemented under national health reform, ConnectorCare, MassHealth, the Health Safety Net, The Children's Medical Security Plan, Medicare Part-D, Prescription Advantage for seniors and the disabled, Medicare premium assistance, reduced fee dental care, and all prescription assistance programs. The Advocacy for Access program is designed to eliminate or reduce the number of people who are uninsured or underinsured and to create awareness of programs that help to pay for health services. Advocacy staff will continue to take an active role in helping individuals navigate the complex healthcare landscape to get the coverage they need.

- Locations: BMC & FVH

Community Outreach Program

BHS understands that improving population health throughout the Berkshires requires a strong commitment to community outreach to remove barriers to access for every student, every business, and every home in the region. BHS offers a wide variety of Community Outreach Programs with the goal of improving health literacy and health equity, bringing key health messaging to communities, raising awareness and addressing barriers to health, and most importantly connecting the unconnected with services they desperately need.

The Community Outreach Program and mobile outreach van provide direct, on-site community access to healthcare for at-risk populations, uninsured/underinsured, and aims to improve the health of the community through preventive services and screenings. The program provides over 5,500 free health screenings, STD screenings to address behavioral health concerns, coaching, small steps to change programs, health education targeting specific health issues (i.e. fall prevention, cancer prevention, stress management, exercise, reading labels, etc.) and hundreds of referrals to social service and clinical agencies. The mobile outreach van and outreach personnel participate in over 380 community events each year and give health education lectures across the entire county. In 2015, the program provided 2,700 blood pressure screenings, 58 wellness screenings, and 16 community lectures, with over 5,500 encounters in the community.

In the southern Berkshires, FVH is actively engaged in community events and organizations to provide information, screenings and programs that target the needs of our community.

- Locations: BMC, FVH, Berkshire County

Dental Clinic

The Community Health Program (CHP) Dental Clinic, formally owned and operated by BMC, provides comprehensive dental treatment services in the community and is an important educational environment for the BMC Dental Residency Program, which helps to train tomorrow's dental professionals. In 2015, the Dental Clinic treated over 5,000 patients and provided nearly 13,000 procedures. In the community, the program provides adult oral cancer screenings, and partners with Operation Better Start to offer free dental screenings and sealants to students at several Pittsfield public schools.

With securing a substantial federal grant, CHP will become the sponsor of the Dental Clinic in 2016. The transfer is an expansion of the existing BHS partnership with CHP. With additional resources, the clinic will now undergo an upgrade and expansion of services as well as the integration of dental operations with the existing CHP primary care practice and CHP-Neighborhood Health Center services. The clinic will continue to be staffed by dentists participating in the BMC General Practice Residency Program in Dentistry. The program is an ADA-accredited residency program, providing advanced training beyond the pre-doctoral education level in oral health care. Due to CHP's geographical reach across Central, North and South County, the residents of the BMC Dental Residency Program will be able to treat more patients as well as enhance their learning experience and impact in Berkshire County.

- Locations: BMC, FVH

Telemedicine

To address the limited clinical access to behavioral health specialists and significant community mental health needs, BHS, in conjunction with BMC, FVH, over 50 other sites and primary care practices, developed a telepsychiatry service hub, forming a countywide network to meet the acute needs of residents in the most rural sections of the region. Telepsychiatry is a live, interactive videoconferencing technology utilized to assess and treat patients experiencing possible imminent danger to self or others. Telemedicine also provides important social support throughout medically necessary acute inpatient care and enhanced care transitions at time of discharge. The goal of the program is to develop a countywide acute care psychiatric service network utilizing telepsychiatry to support residents in crisis or with immediate needs, to minimize or in some cases obviate the need (and disruption to the patient) of being transferred to acute services at affiliated hospitals. The telepsychiatry network connects acute care providers and patients in extremely remote locations to the behavioral health specialists to help evaluate, stabilize and treat patients locally to the extent possible. To strengthen the program, services are integrated into the Psychiatric Residency program at BMC where there are currently 16 psychiatric resident specialists training. Behavioral health services include diagnostic assessment and evaluation of behavioral health as well as substance abuse treatment needs, and collaboration and consultation with primary care providers.

In addition to the efforts to combat behavioral health issues, BMC and FVH have utilized new technology to treat victims of stroke within the 3 hour window of opportunity that may be appropriate to administer tissue plasminogen activator. The Telestroke Program connects the highly skilled neurology and neurosurgery team at BMC with patients who arrive at FVH with symptoms of stroke. Once treated and stabilized, patients are admitted to FVH or transferred to BMC to receive proper treatment and begin the process of rehabilitation.

- Locations: BMC, FVH, Berkshire County

Population Health in Primary Care

BMC continues to support several local primary care physician practices as they transition to the medical home model. The practices include BMC's Hillcrest Family Health Center, Fairview Medical at FVH, which have a disproportionately high volume of underserved, low-income, vulnerable and high-risk patients, and in 2015 also featured Lenox Family Health. The medical home helps to promote prevention and wellness for underserved populations in the region. This is an improved model of primary care medicine that enhances the efficiency and safety of healthcare and strengthens the relationship with the patient's primary care physician. Hillcrest Family Health, Lenox Family Health and the other practices are comprised of physician-led teams that include primary care physicians, case managers, registered nurses, medical assistants, health educators and other support staff who work together to coordinate all of the primary care patients' healthcare needs.

- Locations: BMC & FVH

Care Navigation, Link Line & Translation Services

Care Navigation program helps to simplify patients' individual experiences by providing access for them to one-on-one support, services and resources. Originally created to aid patients diagnosed with breast and prostate cancers, the program is now available to help all patients. The program helps patients with questions about insurance coverage, education, coordination of care among specialties and specialists, transportation and general support. In addition, there is a toll-free Link Line, which is available for patients to call with any questions about the system and their experience in navigating through it. BMC and FVH also offer a Spanish and Russian Link Line to help answer questions and navigate the healthcare system with Spanish and Russian speaking resources. The Care Navigation Program is staffed by nurses who respond directly to all inquiries. In 2015, the BMC Care Navigation Program assisted over 500 patients.

As for language services, BMC and FVH have 24-hour coverage for 140 foreign languages through a telephone translation system. BMC and FVH currently provide in-person Spanish and Portuguese interpretation with specially-trained medical interpreters. This service is free of charge to patients. Also available are translation services for the deaf through the Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. A remote video system is also available for 24 hour coverage of translation needs for the deaf and hard of hearing.

- Locations: BMC & FVH

Connected Communities

With grant support from Massachusetts Technology Collaborative, the goal of the BHS Connected Communities effort is to connect the disparate electronic medical record systems in the community in order to improve transitions of care and ultimately patient care. With varying health information exchange systems in Berkshire County, there are continuous gaps in data being transmitted from hospitals to community practices, long-term care facilities and many other health agencies. In the initial stages, BHS will be connecting six agencies electronic medical record systems, improving transitions of care to and from the acute-care setting as well as improving access to critical medical information for our consultants.

Locations: BMC

BHS Bloodmobile and BMC Donor Center

An ongoing effort, the Bloodmobile and Donor Center has collected over 2,300 life-saving units of blood from nearly 1,000 donors. The program continues to provide tremendous benefits throughout the county.

- Locations: Berkshire County

2. Health Behaviors: Creating Health & Promoting Health Behaviors: Adolescent & Youth, Lifestyle Improvement & Wellness, Infectious Disease, Smoking, Substance Abuse

BHS/Canyon Ranch Institute Life Enhancement Program

The BHS Canyon Ranch Institute (CRI) Life Enhancement Program is an evidence-based, multidisciplinary program that transfers the best practices of Canyon Ranch, through BHS health professionals, to underserved members of the Berkshire community to prevent, diagnose and address chronic diseases. The CRI Life Enhancement Program uses the integrative health approach to advance health literacy and improve health outcomes through physical activity, healthy nutrition, positive behavior change, and stress management techniques. The participants in the program face significant health challenges, often suffering from chronic disease, obesity, high blood pressure and other co-morbidities that negatively impact their overall health and wellness.

Three years ago, BHS embarked on a journey to partner with the Canyon Ranch Institute to implement the program. Offered in three 10-week sessions during the winter, spring and fall, participants commit to engaging experiences, which include a health pre-and post-assessment; goal setting; intensive coaching on topics such as nutrition, medical, exercise, and behavioral health components; stress management; physical activity; grocery store tours; and much more. The results, identified below, have been remarkable:

- Established the Core Team to serve the greater Pittsfield community in 2013 through BMC
 - Total of 9 classes graduated -- over 180 individuals
- Established the Core Team in Great Barrington in 2015 through FVH
 - Total of 4 classes graduated -- over 60 individuals
- Establish a Core Team in North Adams to expand the program through the BMC North Adams in 2017

The 240 individuals who have graduated from the program each share a unique success story. Following each program completion, a series of reunions are held for participants to share their positive results. Post assessments of these programs, held at the three-month mark, show that participants continue to adhere to their new lifestyles, embracing better health and well-being, and experiencing weight reduction and chronic disease improvement. In addition, participants use this experience to promote better health to their friends and family. Since the initial investment, BHS has significantly expanded its financial support for the program to expand it throughout the county.

- Locations: BMC & FVH

Operation Better Start

Operation Better Start (OBS) is nationally recognized for its nutrition services as well as health and fitness program serving young people from Berkshire County and surrounding areas. OBS provides services to thousands of children and their families through medical nutrition therapy, clinical counseling, school- and community-based health projects, and fitness programs. At the core of the program is its onsite clinical staff. In addition to registered nurses,

OBS provides the services of registered and licensed dietitians with advanced certifications in fitness and national certifications in adult and adolescent weight management. The OBS nurse practitioner leads the Health and Medical Nutrition Therapy Team. The NP works directly with the RD and the family to generate a comprehensive treatment plan with individualized, achievable goals for each client.

An innovative program working with youth and families to help overcome or prevent obesity and other health challenges, OBS continues to be offered throughout Berkshire County, including at the BMC, BMC North Adams Campus, and FVH. The partnership includes local schools, the Pittsfield Family YMCA and Pittsfield Community Television, which promote wellness and prevention to children in the schools and their parents through Pittsfield Connecting Activity and Nutrition (Pittsfield CAN). Pittsfield CAN reaches beyond the school day and year to include before, after and summer school programs to support the implementation of healthy changes. An element of the Harvard-based curriculum, Food and Fun After School, is designed to develop healthy habits outside school hours. The program incorporates healthy snacks, recipes, physically active games, and creative learning activities into regular program schedules. The highlight of the program is the production of You Can Cook, a professional-chef-led cooking show aired on public television. With school-based operations, the program impacts nearly 6,000 students, while providing educational information to almost 500 teachers and 230 paraprofessionals. OBS also provides free dental screenings for children and applies free preventive sealants to students in local schools. OBS staff works with clients and families to address health issues, including obesity, failure to thrive, eating disorders, hypertension, food allergies, gastrointestinal disorders, high cholesterol, pre-diabetes, diabetes and sports nutrition. In 2015, OBS provided 1,230 clinical visits and helped over 100 new families with nutrition education and support. The program also works with Berkshire Head Start to provide nutrition programs at seven Head Start sites, benefiting more than 365 children.

In addition to the aforementioned wrap around services, OBS, through its Growth and Nutrition Program, provides nutrition counseling, case management, physical assessment, and behavior health services to up to 80 Massachusetts families. Good nutrition and daily exercise are critical recipes for population health improvement, and this program targets specific strategies to combat obesity and foster positive family dynamics.

- Locations: BMC & FVH

Partnership for Health (Prevention Wellness Trust Fund)

Supported with state grant funds, Partnership for Health engages community and clinical partners throughout Berkshire County in an effort to reduce tobacco use, uncontrolled hypertension and falls among older adults. Since its inception, innovative and evidence-based programs have operated throughout the Berkshires to create a multitude of opportunities to improve the health and wellness of our community including developing novel links between clinical and community partners; providing clients with important health education, services and programs; and engaging care coordinators and community health workers to provide a supportive environment of care.

It is noteworthy that the success of the Partnership for Health Program is heavily reliant on the CHI and its diverse community partners. In monthly meetings and synchronized strategic actions, Partnerships for Health and CHI continue to succeed at combating critical population health concerns.

- Locations: BMC, FVH, Berkshire County

Women, Infant, & Children (WIC)

WIC is a nutrition program that provides nutrition and health education, healthy food, breastfeeding education and support and other services free of charge. WIC's goal is to help keep pregnant and breastfeeding women, infants and children under 5 years old healthy. To do this, WIC provides personalized nutrition consultation; checks to buy free, healthy food; tips for eating well; referrals for medical and dental care; health insurance; child care; housing and fuel assistance; issuance of Farmer's Market Checks in the summer, and other services that benefit the whole family. WIC also offers immunization screenings and referrals, along with educational workshops on such topics as meal planning, maintaining a healthy weight, picky eating, caring for a new baby, and shopping on a budget. Women who are pregnant can receive WIC benefits before they see their obstetrician. WIC also provides benefits for 6 months for postpartum women who have miscarried.

- Locations: BMC

Wellness at Work

Wellness at Work provides health risk analyses and screenings and a range of programs to provide support towards healthier lifestyles and ultimately improve the health and well-being of the communities we serve. A secondary objective is to help reduce health coverage costs for employers and develop a healthier, more reliable workforce. In 2015, the program provided wellness services to over a dozen local companies, reaching close to 9,000 employees, including large employers such as Crane and Co., General Dynamics, Hillcrest Education Centers and others. The program also serves the employees of several municipalities and school districts. Within BHS, the program reaches over 2,800 employees. In 2015, the program facilitated several employee health fairs, with over 600 participants receiving free screenings and health information.

- Locations: BMC, FVH, Berkshire County

Walk with Me in the Berkshires

This highly popular BHS community-walking program entered its 13th year in 2015 and recorded over 3,000 participants, who all benefited from increased exercise through walking or running. Walk with Me in the Berkshires provides free pedometers and an online step-reporting system for teams that participate. In 2015, nearly 3,100 people participated in Walk with Me, recording over 900 million steps.

- Locations: BMC, Fairview Hospital, Berkshire County

Mass in Motion/Be Well Berkshires

As the lead administrative agency, the Tri-Town Health Department sub-contracts with BHS and the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition to provide services for the grant program. Be Well Berkshires is comprised of community leaders such as public health officials, board of health members, town administrators, nutritionists, restaurant owners, school leaders and many other interested members of the communities. Be Well Berkshires combats the ongoing problem of overweight and obesity by promoting healthy eating and active living. Highlights include assisting local restaurants, food pantries, meal sites and farmers markets with technical assistance to increase access to healthier food options. Additionally, staff works with municipal officials to implement policy changes to promote safer streets and increase physical activity opportunities such as walking loops and bicycle paths. Other focus areas include fitness challenges, WIC/SNAP/Senior Coupon distribution at farmer markets, healthy dining programs, safe routes to school, and walkable communities.

- Locations: BMC, FVH, Berkshire County (Lee, Lenox, Stockbridge, Pittsfield, Great Barrington, North Adams, Adams and Clarksburg)

Injury Prevention

With leadership from the Trauma Program, BMC has identified key areas where preventive programs help to reduce the number of injuries caused by participation in risk-associated activities. These programs include Teens at Risk, which works with local teens on the dangers of drinking and driving, and Think First, a program aimed at youth and adolescents, stressing the importance of injury prevention through wearing seatbelts and helmets. In addition, with support from BMC-based orthopedic surgeons and volunteers with athletic training backgrounds, the Sports and Wellness Program conducts education seminars on keeping sports safe and fun throughout the Berkshires, including schools and youth sports organizations. The goal is to help everyday athletes enjoy their sports throughout their lives without overextending themselves or suffering injuries that could prevent them from staying active.

FVH initiatives in the southern Berkshires mirror the priority of injury prevention through improved road safety targeting elders and teens, alcohol and drug awareness messaging, helmet donations for children distributed at Fairview Hospital and other community events.

- Locations: BMC & FVH

Concussion Evaluation and Rehabilitation Clinic

In partnership with pediatrician Alan Kulberg, MD, BMC works with the local medical, educational, and mental health communities to provide comprehensive care for children, adolescents, and young adults who have sustained mild traumatic brain injury. During the program first year of operations in 2015, 120 patients received services. In addition, these services are provided in South Berkshire by MACONY Pediatric & Adolescent Medicine, for patients of MACONY.

- Locations: BMC & FVH

Project Empowerment, State Clinic & Infection Prevention & Control

In 2012, BMC assumed responsibility for the operation of the area's HIV/AIDS self-management program from the American Red Cross. Renamed Project Empowerment, the program helps clients to coordinate their care with a range of services, including mental health, nutrition, medical care, peer support and mentoring and substance abuse counseling. In 2015, Project Empowerment helped nearly 50 patients with HIV/AIDS to obtain the services they needed and to achieve self-management. In addition, BMC also continues to provide a DPH funded State Clinic program for HIV/AIDS Prevention and Screening and Sexually Transmitted Illness screening. These services are available to anyone 13 years or older. The program also provides a safe place for individuals to drop off used sharps.

- Locations: BMC

Tobacco Treatment Program

Providing individual and group counseling, the Tobacco Treatment Program provides smokers with the tools needed to quit and to become healthier. The program offers support services and medications that can help the smoker to cope with the physical and emotional reactions to quitting. In 2015, the program provided counseling services to nearly 2,000 people, both individually and in group sessions. The program continues its collaboration with the Berkshire Partnership for Health, Northern Berkshire Community Coalition, YMCA, Tri-Town Health Department and several multi-unit housing sites and local housing authorities across the county. The program also provides appointments at a multitude of clinical practices in the area. Moreover, services and best practice strategies have been integrated into BMC and Fairview hospital inpatient programs.

- Locations: BMC & FVH, Berkshire County

3. Clinical Services & Chronic Health Conditions: Morbidity & Mortality: Behavioral Health, Pain Management, Cardiovascular, Diabetes, Senior Health, Nutrition

Behavioral Health

BMC employs 14 psychiatrists and 12 clinical nurse specialists, who team with clinical psychologists, neuropsychologists, social workers, nurses and other clinicians to staff a Clinical Collaborative of comprehensive mental health and substance abuse services with the Brien Center. The majority of the acute services are located at BMC, with most long-term outpatient services at the Brien Center.

The comprehensive program offers two inpatient behavioral health psychiatry units, one inpatient chemical dependency unit, a partial hospital, a child crisis stabilization unit, two adult acute crisis houses, half-way houses, rehabilitation programs, seven outpatient clinics and a crisis team. Most recently, to better support the McGee Recovery Unit, a 21-bed acute treatment service and accredited opioid treatment program providing medically monitored detoxification services, BMC opened the Clinical Stabilization Services for Substance Abuse. The 30-bed unit allows patients to be treated for 14 to 30 days in the hospital, providing individual counseling, group therapy and behavioral health educational groups. The unit is a critical juncture between detox and residential recovery services. The optimal treatment plan for individuals with substance abuse and/or opioid addiction includes admission to the McGee Recovery Center, followed by admission to the Clinical Stabilization Services for Substance Abuse unit for up to 30 days, and then transition to the Keenan House, operated by The Brien Center, or another residential recovery home.

In addition, services within BMC, the Behavioral Health Primary Care Outreach Team links the Partial Hospitalization Program, primary care and mental health treatment systems by providing primary care physicians with rapid access to consultation, assessment, brief intervention, triage and referral resources. The team includes clinicians with expertise in working with patients who have co-existing medical and psychiatric conditions. Areas of expertise include pain management, traumatic brain injury, dementia and other memory disorders, co-morbid medical and psychiatric disorders and the psychosocial aspect of coping with chronic medical illnesses.

The team's goal is to provide rapid, comprehensive and helpful psychiatric services to primary care physicians. Additional initiatives to increase awareness and educate the primary care community in regards to substance abuse and opioid addiction are referenced in the “Telemedicine” and “BHS Pain Management” sections of this document.

- Locations: BMC, Berkshire County

BHS Pain Management

The BHS Pain Management Initiative is a collaboration of local healthcare providers, social and law enforcement agencies, schools, the court system and other stakeholders. The program is designed to help prevent the misuse and/or diversion of pain medications in the community. The program collaborates with local law enforcement and the federal Drug Enforcement Agency on medication roundups, where the community can bring unused or outdated medications - prescription or over the counter - for proper disposal. This program also accepts used sharps devices. Program representatives meet with local and state officials to discuss strategies on curbing the abuse of opioid medications in the community.

To augment the capacity of the primary care practices in Berkshire County, BHS developed a decentralized chronic pain primary-care-based care management and navigation program. The program includes several primary care practice partners in Central and Southern Berkshire County, including over 50 clinical providers. The three-prong approach is directed to improve care for patients with chronic pain and substance use disorder, with a specific focus on opioid addiction or dependence being cared for by participating primary care practices.

The first of these three prongs aims to improve capacity in the primary care practices through a series of educational programs and seminars on best practices in care management for these high-risk patients. Following this dissemination of knowledge in care management, the second prong includes the development of a centralized referral hub consisting of care managers with expertise in neuroscience (pain), acute care behavior health, and Brien Center Outpatient Addiction Services. The final element of the program includes the development of a comprehensive continuum of evidence-based integrative health programs, including yoga, acupuncture in primary care and acute treatment settings, nutrition, pain school, mindfulness groups, integrative health physician consultations, and cognitive behavioral groups for chronic pain. Referrals to these treatments have far exceeded our projections and expectations. BHS aims to continue referrals based on resources available. For additional behavioral health services, including behavioral health psychiatry units, reference the above Behavioral Health section.

In addition, BHS continues its longstanding partnership with many local partners to combat this issue, including the Brien Center for Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services. The Brien Center is a community-based, non-profit agency with a 90+-year history of providing a continuum of care for children, adolescents, adults and families who suffer from serious and persistent behavioral health disorders. In line with their missions, BHS and the Brien Center are guided by the belief that everyone in Berkshire County benefits when people are mentally, physically and emotionally healthy.

- Locations: BMC

Naloxone Program

In an effort to stem the escalating tide of opioid overdoses throughout the Berkshire County, the Naloxone Program provides naran medication directly to patients, their families, and significant others to have on hand in case of future overdose occurrences. Naran distribution through BMC and FVH emergency rooms is an additional layer of access to the medication, which also is available through hospital pharmacies, social service agencies and is carried by first responders. In collaboration with the aforementioned partners, BMC and FVH ensures proper protocols, distribution methods, and continuous education is provided to those who need to access naran to save the lives of overdose victims.

- Locations: BMC & FVH

Suicide Prevention

Continuing the partnership with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health's Suicide Prevention Program, the program aims to reduce suicide within Berkshire County and identify best practices that could be emulated by others in order to reduce the suicide rate across the Commonwealth. Part of the focus is on educating "gatekeepers" and improving screening for depression, substance abuse and suicide risk in mental health settings, primary care settings, employee wellness programs, and the medical center's inpatient population. Depression screening among hospitalized patients is one critical element in the five-year project. In addition, the program trains hundreds of local police, firefighters, first responders, visiting nurses, elder-outreach workers, pastors, parole officers and jail staff to better recognize people at risk for suicide. In two pilot projects, 45% of patients who answered yes on a questionnaire about depression showed moderate to severe forms of depression, a treatable condition. Some 30% of those answering yes to the screening question showed evidence of suicidal thinking. Annually, BMC facilitates community education programs focusing on suicide prevention and recognizing the signs of suicide potential.

- Locations: BMC

Diabetes Self-Management & Education Program

The Diabetes Self-Management Program, certified by the American Diabetes Association, provides essential support and care to those with type 1 or type 2 diabetes, with staff working in the community and with local physician practices to promote education aimed at prevention for those with pre-diabetes. The program offers expertise in the newest technology for glucose testing, continuous glucose sensing and insulin pump therapy. In 2015, this program helped 1,100 patients. The program has a Diabetes Patient Need Fund, which assists qualified individuals with co-pay and deductible support, as well as emergency insulin. A Diabetes Walk is conducted annually, with funding raised being directed towards the Patient Need Fund. Free classes on pre-diabetes and diabetes prevention programs continue to be conducted to learn how to prevent the onset of diabetes. In addition, a Diabetes Support Group meets regularly, with nearly 10 people per meeting, discussing important topics related to managing their disease and improving their health.

- Locations: BMC & FVH

Get Cuffed Berkshires

BHS continues its initiative highlighting the dangers of hypertension and how to prevent or control it. The Get Cuffed program provides monthly blood pressure screenings, educational programming, and provides home-monitoring blood pressure machines to those with uncontrolled hypertension. Get Cuffed is a nurse-led program and participants receive a free automatic blood pressure machine, instruction on its use, lifestyle change education and telephone follow up for a year. The program provides the tools people need to get to a healthy blood pressure and stay there.

- Locations: BMC, FVH, Berkshire County

Berkshire VNA Senior Health

Berkshire VNA serves nearly 3,700 residents with over 74,000 visits by registered nurses; physical, occupational and speech therapists; medical social workers and home health aides. The agency provides specialty programs for patients with heart failure, chronic lung disease, complex wound issues, joint replacement therapy, high-risk pregnancy, pediatric needs, balance problems and IV therapy. The BVNA also provides a full range of preventive

care services through over 70 wellness clinics in seven communities and provides over 1,500 vaccinations. A special emphasis continues on outreach to Northern Berkshire following the closure of North Adams Regional Hospital, including BVNA satellite location in Northern Berkshires and weekly health clinics at the Food Pantry, among other free outreach programs.

- Locations: BMC

4. Physical Environment: Emergency Preparedness

Hospital & Community Safety Initiatives

BMC & FVH Department of Safety & Security provides a 24-hour safety and security program that protects patients, visitors, staff and property at all BHS campuses. Security officers conduct rounds through the facilities, provide escorts and patrol vehicles, manage and oversee parking.

All of the in-house and community outreach activities are aimed at maintaining safety for patients, visitors and staff. All BHS in-house safety efforts are extended to all community members and partners. BHS not only needs to plan county-wide safety exercises and participate in special events, but ensure community partners have the ability to operationalize safety services when needed. Routine safety activities and events are facilitated for targeted incidents or exercises, identifying strengths and opportunities for improvement in BHS response. Following these outcomes, Safety & Security personnel revise safety plans and then re-test the revised plans. All of these activities lead to a safer community. BHS recognizes the increasing trend in violence in the community and is actively working with partners to find effective resolutions to this concern. Below outlines the community planning and response safety partners:

- Western Massachusetts Regional Hospital Emergency Planning Committee
- Western Regional Homeland Security Advisory Council
- Springfield Metropolitan Medical System
- Western Massachusetts Emergency Medical Services
- Local Fire, Police, Emergency Management and School Departments
- All Ambulance Services and First Responder Agencies
- Central Berkshire Regional Emergency Planning Committee
- Northern Berkshire Regional Emergency Planning Committee
- Berkshire County Community Emergency Response Team
- Berkshire Medical Reserve Corps
- Northern Berkshire Amateur Radio Club
- Congregation Of Marian's – Stockbridge
- Josh Billings Race Committee
- Pittsfield July 4th Parade Committee
- Pittsfield Halloween Parade

- Locations: BMC, Fairview Hospital, Berkshire County

Emergency Operations Program

Emergency service providers at BMC and FVH work collaboratively with numerous organizations, municipalities and state and local agencies to maintain and enhance preparedness for potential disasters. The organization facilitates communitywide drills and tabletop drills testing response to mass casualty, hazardous materials spills, evacuation, potential terrorist threat and other situations, along with EMS education programs. In addition, the program supports mass vaccinations, in coordination with city and town public health agencies, in the event of a pandemic. In 2015, the Emergency Operations Team participated in several emergency drills with community collaborators in Central, South and North County.

Due to FVH's Critical Access designation, the hospital serves as the medical hub for the rural communities served, providing a wide range of services that strengthen access to, and quality of, community emergency response. FVH was a key partner in one of the region's major medical advances in 2015. With FVH efforts, the elevation of the Southern Berkshire Volunteer Ambulance Squad from Intermediate Level to Paramedic Level, dramatically improves the standard of care available in the field during an emergency, thus enhancing outcomes for patients.

- Locations: BMC, Fairview Hospital, Berkshire County

5. Social Economy: Community Development

County Health Initiative

The goal of CHI is to improve the health status in Berkshire County by fostering a healthy lifestyle environment. BHS is the backbone organization with collaboration by other diverse partners including healthcare providers, planning organizations, municipalities, public health and other community based organizations representing the county. The CHI sets a common agenda; develops priorities, goals and standards; identifies best practice and innovative strategies to achieve the CHI goals. The priorities as such are: tobacco use, obesity, substance abuse, mental health/depression, teen pregnancy and motor vehicle accidents. The group holds semi-annual meetings with key community stakeholders to provide networking opportunities and to share and leverage assets and resources. Moving forward, the objectives will be to develop a community health improvement plan, imbed health equity into standardized practice, sustain prevention and wellness trust fund and continue bi-annual stakeholder meetings.

- Locations: BMC, Fairview Hospital, Berkshire County

North County Restoration

During the first full year of operations at the North Adams Campus of BMC, many more patient services have been added, creating a vibrant environment for comprehensive outpatient care, with innovative programs that are expanding access to the full strength of the community's healthcare system. In less than two years, the following services have been restored or added to the North Adams Campus of BMC: 24-hour emergency care (including observational beds), laboratory drawing stations, cardiovascular testing, outpatient imaging services, screening mammography, Berkshire VNA, endoscopy care, outpatient general, orthopedic, urologic and GYN surgery, New England Pain Diagnosis & Treatment Center, Operation Better Start, Renal Dialysis Center, and Specialty Physician Practices. In addition, BHS provides the Berkshire Partnership for Health program, Ecu-Health Care, Berkshire North WIC, and CHP North Adams practices.

- Locations: BMC

Neighborhood for Health

A focal point in the restoration of services in North County is the Neighborhood for Health program. The goal of the Neighborhood for Health, a new initiative for North Berkshire, is to break the cycle of frequent hospital admissions and to support patients as they make real headway toward recovery. Located on the 2nd floor of North Adams Campus of BMC, the Neighborhood for Health provides the entire range of outpatient clinical and community services typically needed to regain health following hospitalization. These services include diabetes education, congestive heart failure clinic, nutrition counseling, expanded behavioral health services, outpatient detox center, and smoking cessation. Co-locating these services is critical in helping patients manage the often complex referral process.

- Locations: BMC

Rural Health Network

The Massachusetts State Office of Rural Health (SORH) builds partnerships to improve access to health services, build better systems of care, and improve health status in rural communities. The program has successfully developed an institutional framework that links small rural communities with State and Federal resources to develop long term solutions to rural health problems. As an advisory council to the SORH, BHS is proud to continue to partner with the re-formed MA Rural Council on Health (MARCH) and the wider Massachusetts Rural Health Network of rural providers and community leaders. The members of the Council and the Rural Health Network,

including BHS Senior Management, provide guidance to the Department of Public Health on rural needs assessment; communication and training needs; policy development; and the planning of health services and public health programs.

Above & Beyond

BHS continues its commitment to providing comprehensive healthcare services throughout the region, serves Berkshire County with numerous outreach programs, enhancing access to care and promoting healthy lifestyles. Each year as outlined in the annual Community Benefits Report, BHS goes above and beyond the call of duty to support health initiatives in the Berkshires.

Financial Support

Since the healthcare industry evolves rapidly, BHS supports community partners in the pursuit of their missions, fostering the improvement of health and wellness of the overall community. BHS is proud to have the opportunity to financially support organizations, community programs, events, and to provide in-kind donations.

The priorities identified in the 2015 Community Health Needs Assessment guide our decisions on charitable giving.

The primary focus is making life-changing, long-term differences in population health for residents in Berkshire County. Below are the last three years of net charity care for the patients we served. In accordance with the regulations set forth from the Massachusetts Hospital Association (MHA) and Attorney General’s Office, the net charity care calculations are derived from the following sources: health safety net assessment and shortfall as well as Division of Health Care Finance and Policy Operational Assessment paid by hospitals, health safety net denied claims, and the free or discounted care provided to patients that meet the hospitals’ financial assistance policy.

Net Charity Care	
FY	Expenditures
2013	\$2,371,274
2014	\$2,639,670
2015	\$2,482,152

In the Community

BMC and FVH, through its affiliation with BHS, are able to support additional wraparound services to individuals and communities in Berkshire County that are not directly linked to hospital services, yet address community health needs. In addition, BMC and FVH both participate in community partnerships that work collaboratively to further our mission. Below outlines efforts directed at empowering the community to thrive.

Berkshire Bridges – Working Cities Pittsfield

BHS is a proud core team member and partner of the Berkshire Bridges – Working Cities Pittsfield Initiative. The initiative is designed to support the journey from poverty to sustainability by collaboratively building community resources and removing barriers. The goal is to improve individual, institutional, social fairness and respect in the community, and thus support individuals moving out of poverty.

As a community partner, BHS is committed to using the evidence-based Bridges Out of Poverty model, which is proven to effectively bring people from all sectors and economic classes together in communities around the country. Volunteers apply this model in educational seminars and integrate a common language, which will help them identify policies, competencies and procedures within their organizations that must be changed to better work with our Berkshire neighbors.

Fresh, Local & Equitable: Food as a Creative Platform for Neighborhood Revitalization (FreshLo)

An unprecedented approach to strengthening economic vitality, culture and health, BHS serves as a lead partner in the FreshLo initiative in the Morningside neighborhood of Pittsfield. Through creative, cross-sector visions of food-

oriented development activities, the program introduces access to healthy choices, enriches cultural expression, and creates a platform for community engagement.

BMC Independence Day Run

The BMC Independence Day Run is held annually immediately prior to one of the country's largest Fourth of July parades. Approximately 100,000 people line the Pittsfield parade route, where most of the race is run.

Patient & Family Advisory Council

The Patient and Family Advisory Council (PFAC) are dedicated volunteers who focus on the improvement of quality in patient and family care within BHS. PFAC members are comprised of past and present patients and family as well as BHS, BMC and FVH staff members. BHS operates five independent council's to serve the geographical regions within the county as well as two councils dedicated to targeted needs of patients and families. The PFAC include BMC PFAC focusing on Central Berkshires, BMC North County PFAC focusing on Northern Berkshires, FVH PFAC focusing on Southern Berkshires, Cancer PFAC focusing on cancer services across the Berkshires, and Language Service PFAC focusing on assistance with patients and families who are primarily Spanish speaking. The mission of PFAC is to provide a forum that enables patients and families to have direct input and influence on policies, programs, and practices. PFAC primary duty is to act as a liaison between their patient experiences or those in the community and health care providers. Council members listen to and speak of their work with the hospital in the community to garner ideas and initiatives, regularly attend and contribute to monthly meetings, and attend opportunities outside of the recurring monthly meetings in an effort to gain exposure to and information on the vast functions of the hospital and health system. BHS understands that patients and their families are often the most knowledgeable members of the care team, and offer unique perspectives and valuable feedback regarding the standard of care they receive. As an organization, PFAC continues to serve as a critical link between health care services and improvement in population health.

Age-Friendly Communities

Berkshire County was accepted into the AARP/WHO Network of Age-Friendly Communities in May 2015. In June 2015 the Berkshire County Age-Friendly Vision 2020 Task Force Hosted the Age-Friendly Vision 2020 Summit in Pittsfield. The task force is currently analyzing results from a recent survey to determine how Berkshire County could better serve older residents.

The task force is a collaboration between the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission and Home Instead Senior Care, in conjunction with Berkshire County Boards of Health Association, municipal Councils on Aging (esp. Williamstown, Adams, Great Barrington and Pittsfield), Be Well Berkshires, Mass Council on Aging, Berkshire Health Systems, Elder Services of the Berkshires, and local Board of Health organizations. With healthcare the number one job sector in the Berkshires, BHS is a committed partner, helping to find solutions to the challenging obstacles our elderly community faces.

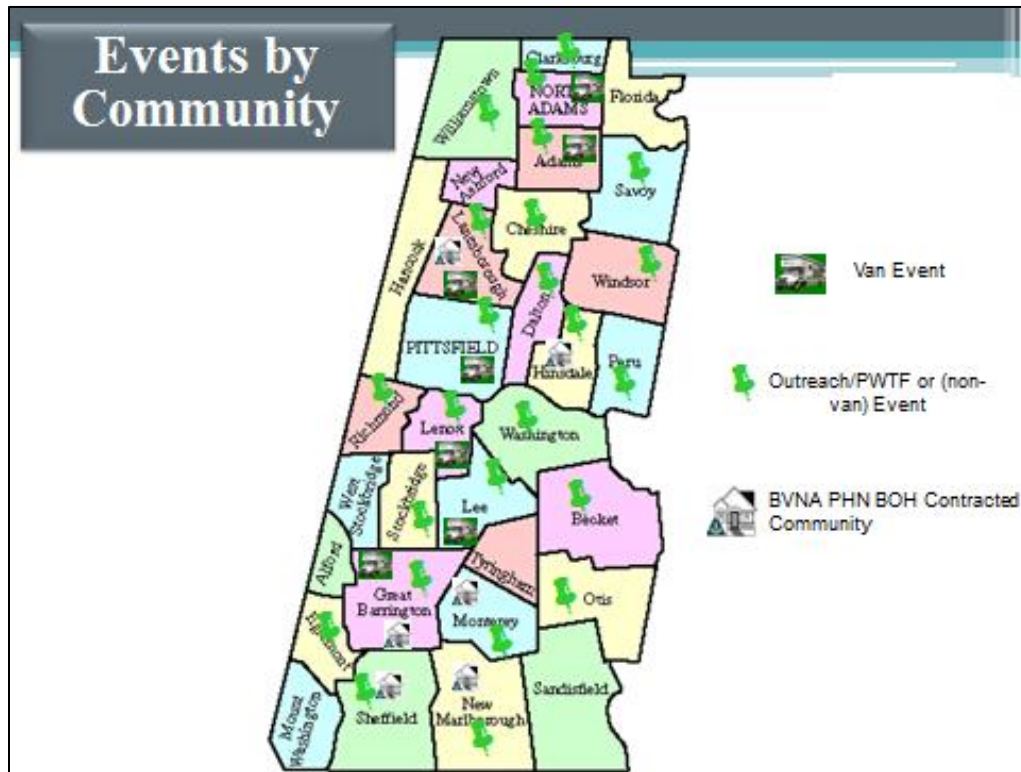
Berkshire United Way

Berkshire United Way advances the common good by focusing on early childhood literacy, positive youth development and financial stability – the building blocks for a good quality of life. As the communities leading healthcare provider, BHS is focused on the well-being, health and needs of the community. Berkshire United Way's Live United is a call to action for everyone to be part of the change and to work together to improve the community that we live in for the future of our children. As a significant contributor to the Berkshire United Way, BHS's commitment to Live United is reflected in our employee participation in the annual giving plan. In 2015, BMC employees raised over \$175,000, and FVH employees contributed over \$11,200. In addition to these contributions, employees at BHS partner company Berkshire Healthcare employees donated \$9,000. In total, BHS, including all subsidiaries, contributed over \$199,800 to the Live United campaign.

In addition, BHS proudly supports a wide variety of other Berkshire United Way community-based initiatives. These initiatives and programs include the following:

- Early Childhood Literacy Programs
- Pittsfield Promise
- Berkshire Priorities
- Pittsfield Prevention Partnership
- Berkshire Youth Development Project

BHS makes every effort to impact each community in Berkshire County. Because environmental factors play a fundamental role in shaping population health, locational issues are of central importance to addressing health disparities. A variety of place-based influences affect health, including physical circumstances, social context, and economic conditions. To ensure BHS services are being accessed and connected throughout the county, additional community outreach events, Prevention Wellness Trust Fund (PWTF) activities, mobile van events, as well as outreach efforts by Berkshire Visiting Nurse Association are continuously being conducted.



Community Partners

Some of our formal partners include: Pittsfield Public Schools, Pittsfield Board of Health, Head Start, Berkshire Community Action Council, Center for Ecological Technology, Teen Parent Program, Brien Center for Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, Pittsfield Police, Massachusetts Coalition for Suicide Prevention, Massachusetts Department of Public Health, local community pharmacists, Elder Services, Pittsfield Senior Center, Greylock Federal Credit Union, Boxcar Media, Tri-Town Health Department, SHINE program, Berkshire Immigrant Center, Berkshire Community College, Berkshire County Sheriff's Department, local ambulance companies, Berkshire Breast Health Team, Community Health Program, Berkshire District Attorney, Berkshire United Way, Berkshire Youth Development Project, Community Health Network Association, Berkshire YMCA, Berkshire South, Volunteers in Medicine, Berkshire Healthcare, physician practices, home-care and additional community-based organizations and the local business community.

Other resources and organizations include: Massachusetts Department of Public Health; University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute; Berkshire County Boards of Health; local school districts; Berkshire County Regional Planning Commission; Berkshire United Way; Berkshire, American Heart Association, American Stroke Association, American Diabetes Association, American Cancer Society, Chamber of Commerce; Massachusetts Medical Society; Regional Pain Collaborative; Berkshire County Regional Emergency Operations Planning Committee.

Conclusion

The premise — and the promise — of community benefit investments is the chance to extend the reach of BHS resources beyond the patient community, and address the suffering of our most underserved, at-risk community members. The funds allocated towards Community Benefits programs provide an essential, potentially life-saving, resource to people who do not have access to healthcare. Community Benefit dollars fill important gaps by funding critical, innovative services that would otherwise not be provided in the Berkshires. The Community Benefits Implementation Plan helps BHS fulfill its mission of improving the health and wellness of the entire community, far beyond the hospital walls.

The CHNA revealed five significant areas of health needs in Berkshire County target communities: clinical care, health behaviors, morbidity and mortality, physical environment and social economic. The priority needs are interconnected in that persons suffering from one of the conditions are likely to face challenges in another. The proposed strategies in this plan have been carefully screened, based on their ability to impact at least one of the five priority areas. The Board of Directors' support of the Community Benefit Implementation Plan allows BHS to continue responding to the most pressing needs faced by the most vulnerable residents in our communities.

BHS has complied with the Attorney General's Community Benefits Guidelines for Non Profit Hospitals since the inception of the program in 1994 and is also compliant with the IRS Form 990 Schedule H requirements. This compliance requires ongoing engagement with the community to ensure that identified needs are addressed appropriately—either independently, through collaboration with third part organizations—or, when resources and expertise are not available, by referring residents to appropriate services.