

Summary of MMH Fiscal Year's 2013-2016 Community Health Needs Action Plan

The initial HNA was conducted during the winter of 2012/2013 and adopted by the Board of Trustees at the March 27 2013 meeting. The items identified in the action plan to be addressed during the subsequent 3 years are stated below along with a brief summary of their status.

1. "Increase Mental Health Provider access to the community, primarily to low income residents"
The local community mental health provider in Alger County, Pathways was in jeopardy of significantly reducing services and access due to increasing financial pressures. Pathways could no longer afford their current location in Munising. MMH provided both financial and material assistance by creating office space for them on the hospital campus and providing the first year occupancy rent free. The action also provided better access to low income residents due to MMH being on the public transit system route. It is the conclusion of administration that this action item met its goal.

2. "Increase Medical Provider access to the community, primarily to low income residents"
MMH placed significant investment in both man hours and expenditures to recruit additional medical providers to the community. At the time of adoption of the action plan, Alger County had 3 hospital based physicians and 1 independent physician. All the physicians were less than full time available so the combined availability amounted to less than 3 full time medical providers. Within a year several of those physicians departed the community. While the initial goal was to increase number of medical providers the hospital struggled and invested over \$100,000 to recruit physicians. By September 2014 the hospital had successfully increased the number of physicians to 4 hospital based and 1 independent physician. Unfortunately that did not last long since by October 2015 the number remaining and declined to 2 hospital based and 1 independent physician. This issue is the most significant health issue to the community and has taken significantly more resources than MMH had available, just to maintain a minimum of medical providers.
By October 2015 MMH was able to open an Urgent Care service extending availability of lower cost medical services to evening's and weekends. This significantly expanded availability for the first time provided low income residents of Alger County availability of medical services 359 days a year including all evenings and weekends.
However, with a national shortage of medical providers willing and able to practice in a rural community, this issue will remain as a top priority.

3. "Establish a means by which the community residents can easily access knowledge of health services available in the community and how to acquire them"
Due to the monumental expenditure of time and money to the issue above, MMH was not able to make any improvement on this issue. The need remains and there are mechanisms available that could fulfill the need but they would require an annual expenditure of \$30-40,000 a year.

4. "Evaluate in more depth the need and necessary scope of relevant preventive health services to the community"

This issue was not attempted to improve due to the issues above.

5. Increase Dental providers access to the community, primarily to low income residents"
Initial efforts were begun to address this issue. The only practical means of providing low income residents access to dental services was to make arrangements with the Federally Qualified Health Center in Gwinn, MI just west of the Alger County border. The dental provider and the financial support existed there so the logical solution was to make arrangements with the local public transit system for MMH to subsidize or even completely cover the cost of low access residents to be transported to and from the Gwinn center. However, shortly after efforts began the Gwinn center lost its dental provider. Should the center recover a dental provider MMH will then proceed with the initial plan.