



# POCONO HEALTH SYSTEM

## The New Face of Healthcare

Community Health Needs Assessment Implementation Plan  
Board Approved: November 1, 2012

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## **Executive Summary:**

Pocono Health System/Pocono Medical Center (PHS/PMC) located in East Stroudsburg, PA is providing its Community Health Needs Assessment Implementation Plan as a continued service to the community. The plan is a comprehensive look at the community's health needs and how PMC through the support of many community partners involved in the Community Health Connections initiative are addressing the concerns. The entire initiative comes directly from PMC's vision to build a healthier community.

The Community Health Needs Assessment was a comprehensive study done in partnership with East Stroudsburg University's Department of Public Health. The assessment looked at demographic trends, epidemiological profiles, key informants, focus groups, and a summary of findings. The following sources were used to assist in that effort (United States Census Bureau, PA Department of Health: Healthy People 2010 Objectives, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Analysis of Cancer Incidence in Pennsylvania Counties, PA Department of Public Welfare, and the PA Center for Rural Pennsylvania).

The findings of the assessment showed that Monroe County's population has experienced among the greatest population growth in the state and this growth quickly increased the county's racial and ethnic diversity. Additionally, the county has high levels of poverty that tend to be concentrated in certain areas and it has not seen rapid increases in household incomes. Monroe County has a lower than expected number of physicians as well as lower rates of most cancers with the exception of lung. It also has higher than expected rates of smoking and heavy drinking.

Monroe County has high levels of women receiving no prenatal care in the first trimester as well as a slightly higher rate of suicide. The primary data collected through the surveys and focus groups confirmed many of the findings, but also highlighted the gap in behavioral health and prevention services.

PMC responded accordingly with the creation of Community

Health Connections which includes representatives from education, local government, human services, business community, faith-based, law enforcement, among many others. Community Health Connections has a Steering Committee of area leaders throughout many industries as well as two working groups focused on improving the health of the community. These include Behavioral Health and Health and Wellness. This initiative was created to engage residents with information and knowledge required to attain the highest level of health and wellness while also creating and promoting programs that encourage prevention.

Through the input and involvement of the community, the Steering Committee decided to focus on health and wellness and behavioral health issues. The rationale behind this decision was rooted in the fact that PMC has a Heart and Vascular Institute to deal with the heart disease issues, a nationally recognized Hughes Cancer Center to handle oncology, and a Women and Children Service Line for the OB/GYN issues. PMC also works daily with many community partners to address the various access issues.

**Objective 1:** PMC will continue to provide preventive healthcare services that will reduce the prevalence of obesity and smoking.

**Objective 2:** PMC will continue to work toward enhancing access and providing more educational opportunities to behavioral health services.

PMC programs associated with each of these objectives include the following:

1. **Reducing obesity:** Spirit of Women educational programs, Bariatric Program and Classes, Clinical Nutrition Department, Primary Care Provider Network and Endocrinology, Speaker's Bureau and community outreach efforts
2. **Reducing smoking:** Free smoking cessation program and Kick Butts Day and educational partnerships with East Stroudsburg University and area schools/organizations
3. **Enhancing access to Behavioral Health Services and Information:** Adult Inpatient Behavioral Health unit, movement to Primary Care Integration with Behavioral Health, partnerships with behavioral health agencies, and various related support groups

These initiatives were developed and approved by not only PMC's

Board of Directors but also the Community Health Connections Steering Committee who care about the health of our community. From the very inception of the needs assessment, PMC clearly knew that it takes a village to raise a family and therefore it is essential to work closely with like-minded organizations and individuals. We are fortunate to be working with individuals who share our vision and realize how change can happen with community health.

PMC is excited about the difference that is being made in the health of the region. We are providing details on our progress in addressing the priority health concerns and always welcome input so we can continue to make improvements. We look forward to continuing our mission to provide world class care, close to home and our vision to build a healthier community.

### **Pocono Health System/Pocono Medical Center Overview**

Pocono Health System (PHS) is a not-for-profit healthcare provider and its flagship hospital, Pocono Medical Center (PMC) has served as Monroe County's sole provider for nearly 100 years. We have grown from our humble origins as a small, community hospital to becoming a national leader in health care excellence. In service to our community, we are all aligned to provide world class care close to home and to build a healthier community. Our commitment to the region extends beyond the walls of our medical center and we have directed resources to make that happen by advancing our agenda for health education, risk assessment, screenings, and healthy living programming.

PMC is fully accredited by The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations and staffed by more than 230 members of the Medical Staff and over 1,900 dedicated employees. It is equipped with 235 beds for optimal health care and has the only Level III Trauma Center in the Commonwealth. The Dale and Frances Hughes Cancer Center offers the latest cancer care as an affiliate of the elite Jefferson Kimmel Cancer Network with a comprehensive service line including a dedicated breast surgeon, highly acclaimed oncologists, and nurse navigators. The ESSA Heart and Vascular Institute offers the full breadth of the state-of-the-art cardiovascular services, including diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation.

From planned to emergency procedures, PMC offers a full range of superior surgical services, as well as the region's most technologically advanced surgical suites. All PMC surgical services, including follow-up and recuperation care are backed by a team of committed, Board-certified surgeons and specially trained staff. PMC is also dedicated to providing the best possible services to address the unique healthcare needs of women through the latest technology and dedicated providers in Obstetrics and Gynecology, Perinatology, and Urogynecology. The Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit provides advanced care for newborns that require specialized care.

PMC also has patient-centered medical homes where all services are comprehensive and coordinated in one location. This is enhanced by our Endocrinology service line, diabetic education program, and nutrition services. In addition, PMC has three Immediate Care Centers that provide exceptional care for treating most major illnesses and injuries for all ages, along with routine physicals, screenings, and more.

Our mission, vision, and core values define who we are and demonstrate the service we are providing to the community.

**Our Mission** is to provide world class care close to home;

**Our Vision** is to build a healthier community;

**Our Core Values** that guide PMC are:

**Integrity**  
**Respect**  
**Teamwork**

In serving a community without a public health department, PMC has routinely taken the leadership position in maintaining and improving community health. As one of the area's largest employers, it serves as an advocate on important health care issues that will enable Monroe County residents to become healthier. PMC has always been mindful of the needs of those that we serve.

## **Community Health Needs Assessment Overview**

The community health needs assessment was finalized in October 2011 and was jointly sponsored by PMC and East Stroudsburg University. It was conducted by East Stroudsburg University's Public Health Department and its area of focus was Monroe County. The complete 37 page community health needs assessment is accessible at <http://www.poconohealthsystem.org/connections>.

## **PMC Implementation Plan Overview**

While this community health needs assessment was the first comprehensive community assessment, PMC has consistently responded to and addressed the health concerns of the residents through its strategic plans. PMC has served the community for nearly 100 years and thus establishes tangible initiatives clearly focused on making a difference in the health of those that we serve. We also recognize the importance of partnerships and throughout our Community Health Connections initiative; this has been a core building block.

In looking at the three objectives once again, we recognized the following opportunities:

1. **Reducing obesity:** Spirit of Women educational programs, Bariatric Program and Classes, Clinical Nutrition Department, Primary Care Provider Network and Endocrinology, Speaker's Bureau and community outreach efforts
2. **Reducing smoking:** Free smoking cessation program and Kick Butts Day and educational partnerships with East Stroudsburg University and area schools/organizations
3. **Enhancing access to Behavioral Health Services and Information:** Adult Inpatient Behavioral Health unit, movement to Primary Care Integration with Behavioral Health, partnerships with behavioral health agencies, and various related support groups

In doing so, the following programs were developed as a result of the community health needs assessment and in close collaboration with members of our community who have dedicated many hours to being a part of our Behavioral Health and Health and Wellness working groups.

## **Priority Objective 1: Reducing obesity**

1. PMC has developed an innovative partnership with East Stroudsburg University that aims to improve the lives of patients and curb readmissions by training a select group of volunteer students to act as health coaches. The students visit the patients' homes to help them follow their doctor's advice. This launch has led to the creation of the Community Care Network which is focused on assisting patients in these vital efforts. This effort also included media coverage.
2. PMC launched its Healthy Living Series in 2013 with the creation of a healthy menu initiative. The first business to partner was the SCI-The Restaurant at Stroudsmoor Country Inn. The initiative involves working with area restaurants to offer healthy menu options endorsed by PMC's Nutrition Department. The first event had over 160 people in attendance and they were treated to healthy food and an informative presentation by Dr. Goldner on healthy living.
  - a. The second restaurant to join in the initiative is Smuggler's Cove and they are also partnering to offer healthy options. The third restaurant that joined is Barley Creek.
  - b. PMC also recently partnered with Kinsley's Shoprite to host a Healthy Cooking Demonstration where each organization's chef and clinical dietitian made healthy food and clearly demonstrated how to cook in a healthy manner. Over 60 people attended and were very appreciative.
3. PMC also engaged Innovative Educational Resources to develop a Community Health Portal that will provide an electronic platform to increase community engagement throughout the region. It will create supportive relationships between people in need and people who care. Its goal is to maximize the effectiveness of existing health and social service resources while being user-friendly and engaging. On the portal, members will be able to identify providers and programs that meet their health, social service, and educational needs. They will also have access to a calendar of events, list of community partners participating, and a social networking component that will allow for interaction between the users and community partners. The tools of the portal will allow us to focus on population health initiatives and

use technology to appropriately and effectively improve the health of the community.

4. PMC continues to engage the community through Spirit of Women, a national health education program and our community outreach efforts. Throughout the year, we hold educational functions at both lunch and dinner times to engage residents in their health on various topics including obesity. We also send out our providers and clinical dietitians to senior groups, youth groups, and more to talk about healthy eating and living. Many of these efforts include media coverage.

### **Priority Objective 2: Reducing smoking**

1. PMC has continued to partner with Tobacco Free Northeast to provide free Smoking Cessation Counseling to interested members of the community. PMC's Respiratory Department is now championing this and continues to work with our primary care providers to appropriately assist patients.
  - a. Program flyers are distributed at many events and meetings throughout the year and primary care providers also refer patients to it.
2. PMC partnered with East Stroudsburg University and area schools to host the first-ever Kick Butts Day where both organizations collected tobacco butts left on their properties and then had them appropriately disposed of. This also served as a teachable moment for the students, faculty, and staff involved. The effort also included media coverage.

### **Priority Objective 3: Enhancing access to Behavioral Health Services and Information**

1. PMC has worked closely with many behavioral health agencies including Carbon-Monroe-Pike Mental Health and Developmental Services to bring more partners to the table. This resulted in a coordinated webcast showing at PMC offered by SAMSHA on "Everyone Plays a Role in Suicide Prevention." Many important tips and resources were shared.
  - a. This program and discussion led to the creation of a National Suicide Day Awareness Program featuring Jim Tkach of the Bo Tkach Foundation on September 10, 2013. Jim's talk on promoting positive mental health for students

in the community and his son's story were very impactful. Information and resources on suicide prevention were shared at East Stroudsburg University that evening. Media coverage was involved too.

- b. Members of the Behavioral Health working group have continued to meet to discuss additional suicide prevention opportunities specifically dealing with the schools.
2. Through the Community Health Connections discussions at the working group level, PMC decided to partner with ESU and Stroud Area Regional Police to develop a School Resource Officer Program. Dr. Anthony Drago and Dr. Paul Bartoli of ESU's Psychology department developed the program with the support from PMC and community team members. It focused on developing recognition and interviewing patterns which would enable School Resource Officers (SROs) to identify behavioral health risks and initiate intervention by school counselors and/or administration as determined by school district policy. The first training ever brought together a total of 14 SROs from all four public school districts (East Stroudsburg, Pleasant Valley, Pocono Mountain, and Stroudsburg). The feedback provided through the evaluation demonstrated the program's success and interest in future offerings.
3. As a result of the August 2013 Ross Township Municipal building shooting that took the lives of three citizens and injured other residents, PMC partnered with the Western Pocono Library and Pleasant Valley School District to offer a special West End community healing event. Two speakers were offered, Rev. Dr. Sherrie Sneed, Director of Pastoral Care at PMC, and Joseph Kearns, Program Therapist for Behavioral Health at PMC. Both covered faith and behavioral health responses to trauma caused by a tragedy.
4. PMC once again offered the National Depression Day screenings but decided to hold them in three different locations. The first was held at the Western Pocono Community Library in Brodheadsville, second at the hospital, and third at the Mountain Healthcare Center in Tobyhanna. Residents were offered 15-20 minute confidential screenings with a behavioral health professional. For the educational component, PMC partnered with the Pocono Community Theater to offer a free showing of

Silver Linings Playbook which focuses on a serious and believable portrayal of bipolar disorder. There was also a discussion and question and answer led by Dr. Drago and Dr. Eleanor Antolin, Medical Director of Behavioral Health and Chair of Psychiatry at PMC.

5. PMC has continued to focus on behavioral health and primary care integration. This integration will further develop with the opening of the new patient centered medical homes throughout the community and offer additional access points for residents.
6. Carbon-Monroe-Pike Mental Health and Developmental Services also plans to offer Trainer Certification Programs on Mental Health First Aid, Youth Mental Health First Aid, and QPR. This need was identified through the working group meetings.

**Objectives to be achieved:**

Through all of these objectives, PMC is striving with the close collaboration of community partners to improve the health of the community and increase access to not only health care but also information, so residents can take control of their own health and work alongside of PMC to live healthy and sustainable lives.

**Community Partners engaged in Community Health Connections:**

- Tobacco Free Northeast
- Compassionate Care Hospice
- Pleasant Valley School District
- Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau
- A Pocono Country Place
- Pocono Slow Foods
- Women’s Resources of Monroe County
- Access Office Technologies
- National Park Service
- PA Department of Health
- Fitzmaurice Community Services
- Pocono Alliance
- Northampton Community College
- Monroe County Transportation Authority
- East Stroudsburg University
- Riverside Rehabilitation

- Frailey Insurance and Financial Services
- Stroud Regional Open Space
- Massage Academy of the Poconos
- Amerihealth Mercy
- Blue Cross of Northeastern PA
- Kinsley's Shoprite
- State Rep. Mario Scavello
- State Rep. Rosemary Brown
- 93.5 SBG
- Stroud Area Regional Police
- First Presbyterian Church
- Pocono Community Church
- Main Street Counseling Center
- New Perspectives
- Red Cross of Monroe County
- United Way of Monroe County
- Manpower
- Monroe County Area Agency on Aging
- Carbon-Monroe-Pike Mental Health and Developmental Services
- Monroe County Commissioners
- Rotary Club of the Stroudsburgs
- Pyramid Healthcare
- The RedCo Group Behavioral Health
- Foundations Behavioral Health
- Greater Pocono Chamber of Commerce
- Pocono Family YMCA
- Inn at Pocono Manor
- Eastern Monroe Public Library
- Monroe County Emergency Services
- The Friendly Community Center
- Reaching Out For Jesus Christ Church
- Monroe County Homeless Initiative
- VALOR Clinic Foundation
- Innovative Educational Resources
- Inter-Agency Council of Monroe County and the organizations involved
- Community Residents

**Funding:**

To date, PMC has funded all of the Community Health Connections programs as a part of our community benefit and commitment to serving the community. This also demonstrates long-term sustainability with the support and collaboration of our community partners. The Community Health Portal is currently funded through a CHIPRA grant provided by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

**Summary:**

PMC continues to build a healthier community through its services and programs focusing on care for all populations. PMC has worked closely with community partners to align the results from the community health needs assessment with prioritized health concerns in Monroe County. The entire team identified key initiatives that work toward addressing these needs through this implementation plan. PMC continues the collaborative efforts with community partners in order to pool limited resources and make a positive impact in the community that we serve. We look forward to continued teamwork efforts that will improve the health of Monroe County.

**Board Approval:**

PMC's Board of Directors was informed of the Community Health Needs Assessment process, Community Health Connections, and all of the associated requirements. The Board understands its commitment that all tax-exempt hospitals must perform this assessment once every three years through the federal mandates of the Affordable Care Act. A publically available report must include a needs assessment, as well as an implementation strategy. The assessment and implementation plan are reported on the organization's IRS form 990 (for FY 13).