

*2019 Status Update on the Implementation Plan of  
the 2018 Community Health Needs Assessment*



# Mission Regional Medical Center



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Mission Regional Medical Center is an award-winning not-for-profit community hospital serving the city of Mission, Texas, and the surrounding area with a comprehensive range of inpatient and outpatient acute medical care services. Since joining the Prime Healthcare system as a member of the Prime Healthcare Foundation in 2017, Mission Regional Medical Center has seen unprecedented growth and improvement with the aim to fulfill the Prime Promise: *To provide compassionate care and clinical excellence to all patients as we create hospitals that improve healthcare in every community we serve.*

True to its not-for-profit status, Mission Regional Medical Center's mission is to *deliver compassionate, quality care to patients and better healthcare to communities.* The hospital's most recent Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) resulted in the adoption of a three-year Implementation Plan in response to some of the region's most pressing healthcare needs. The plan is oriented around a range of strong community-oriented strategies that complement the compassionate, quality patient care the hospital is known for and for which it is gaining increasing recognition.

The following Community Benefit Report features highlights illustrating each of the five Priority Areas identified through the CHNA, as well as a compilation of progress made in 2019 on the implementation strategies associated with each Priority Area. As the Report clearly illustrates, Mission Regional Medical Center has made significant progress on each Priority Area in the first year of the Implementation Plan, in keeping with the hospital's strong commitment to provide better healthcare to the communities it serves.



## Priority 1: Access to Care Including Primary Care and Specialists

Mission Regional Medical Center is located in Hidalgo County, one of the most medically underserved counties in the nation. According to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the county has one primary care physician per 2,220 people, which is nearly double the national ratio of 1,325 to 1. Adding to the lack of access is a high 31% uninsured rate, and the absence of a comprehensive public transportation system which hinders patients accessing preventive and follow-up medical care. The result is that significant numbers of residents experience serious negative health outcomes.



Mission Regional Medical Center has undertaken several initiatives to increase access to both primary and specialist care. Among these efforts in 2019 were coordination with Help America to enroll more than 4,500 patients in Medicaid and other services to cover medical expenses. Additionally, in 2019 the hospital began providing a list of Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC) and the services each provides to patients served through the Emergency Department. Discussions also started with a FQHC on establishing an “after-hours” clinic to provide non-emergent care for uninsured patients who would normally be admitted through the Emergency Department. Finally, in 2019 MRMC began developing the infrastructure to provide telehealth services to help non-acute patients access care they are currently unable to receive due to the lack of public transportation.

Coordination with community partners is essential to the continued expansion of access to primary care and early intervention by specialists in our medically underserved region. Mission Regional Medical Center remains committed to these efforts to head off more serious health outcomes for our population.

## Priority 2: Chronic Disease

The historical lack of access to primary and specialty care in the region has contributed to high rates of diabetes and obesity which, in turn, trigger other serious chronic diseases. These conditions include kidney disease, heart and circulatory problems, and pressure on the heart and lungs that cause other chronic ailments including congestive heart failure, shortness of breath, and other respiratory issues.

To assist those already affected by chronic disease, Mission Regional Medical Center initiated new educational and support services to targeted groups in 2019, such as Better Breathers for those with respiratory problems and a Congestive Heart Failure support and education group.



Another strategy, aimed at providing those with chronic disease improved regular monitoring of their condition, as well as identifying those at risk for chronic conditions, are wellness screenings offered to the public upon request. The wellness screenings consist of basic men's and women's laboratory panels that patients can take to their primary care physician or specialist for interpretation and consideration in managing their care. In 2019, the MRMC Laboratory performed 13,463 wellness screenings, a 14% increase over 2018.

### Priority 3: Health Knowledge and Education

Community health education is essential to positively influence the health behavior of individuals and their communities, as well as to advance improvements in the social determinants of health at home, in the workplace, and in the community. Mission Regional Medical Center utilizes several means to advance health knowledge and education in the City of Mission and surrounding communities, including the offering of educational seminars, coordination with strategic partner agencies, and outreach through larger scale community events.

In 2019 Mission Regional Medical Center provided seminars on a range of topics. Monthly CPR training sessions were offered to the community, resulting in 83 people being certified. Dr. Mario del Pino provided monthly weight loss seminars to the public, while diabetes education was provided in the community through a partnership with Texas A&M University's School of Public Health. The month of October focused on breast cancer awareness and early detection, including the involvement of thousands in the Rio Grande Valley's largest "pink" event, the 10th Annual Mission Pink Run, in partnership with the American Cancer Society. The year also saw the formation of a Senior Panel to develop and promote a series of educational seminars of interest to older members of the community in 2020.

The promotion of widespread health knowledge and education requires partnerships with significant stakeholders, a role that Mission Regional Medical Center gladly embraces on behalf of the community it serves. Leading examples of this commitment in 2019 were the annual Mission Community Health Fair held in January in partnership with the Greater Mission Chamber of Commerce, and the August 2019 health fair for school district and city employees in partnership with the Mission Consolidated Independent School District (Mission CISD) and the City of Mission.



#### **Priority 4: Obesity and Healthy Nutrition**

A leading cause of the region's poor health outcomes is the high incidence of obesity, estimated at over one-third of the adult population in Hidalgo County by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. As noted in the Priority Area on Chronic Disease, Mission Regional Medical Center has implemented several strategies to assist those affected by conditions where obesity plays a major factor. In addition to these strategies, the hospital is also committed to preventing the onset of adult obesity through the promotion of healthy nutrition and the importance of exercise.

Under the leadership of our Director of Food Services, who is a licensed registered dietitian, Mission Regional Medical Center has initiated joint planning with Mission CISD to implement health food policies within the school district and thereby ensure that the school district's nearly 16,000 students receive good nutrition. Additionally, the Food Services department participates actively in all community health fairs and other events to promote information to the public about making healthy nutrition choices in their daily life.



## Priority 5: Preventative Care and Elderly

While the median age in Hidalgo County is fairly young, we have a growing senior population, which grows significantly in the winter months thanks to the thousands of “Winter Texans” from throughout the United States and Canada who make Mission their home for several months. In addition to special outreach programs targeting RV parks where many Winter Texans reside and through community events to reach permanent senior residents, Mission Regional Medical Center is on track to create a Senior Services Department to provide in-patient and out-patient experiences aligned with the specific needs of seniors.

As a first step, in 2019 Mission Regional Medical Center applied to the American College of Emergency Physicians for Geriatric Emergency Department Accreditation, and was notified in early 2020 of its accreditation, making it the only hospital south of San Antonio to earn this honor. Already in place is a pharmacist who is available to assist all seniors served by the hospital with review and reconciliation of their medications and provide guidance on potential side effects. With the added input of an advisory Senior Panel of community members created in 2019, the hospital will continue implementing additional services to ensure that seniors have a seamless experience from admission to discharge that is tailored to their needs, eventually leading to the creation of a dedicated Senior Services Department.



## Priority 1: Access to Care including Primary Care and Specialists

**Objective:** To improve access to care for the uninsured or underinsured population.

**Rationale:** The data suggests that the population in the MRMC service area does not have adequate access to primary care services and providers. The service area of MRMC has a higher discharge rate for preventable hospitalizations than the State and Country. The service area also has a lower number of primary care providers per 100,000 population than the State and Country. Participants in the study indicated that those members of the populace with low incomes or unemployed are most likely underserved when it comes to accessing services. The elderly were also identified as a group that faced challenges in accessing care due to transportation issues. Access to healthcare can be categorized by three topics - coverage, services, and timeliness.



### Current and Future Steps

Implementation Activity	FY19 Progress
<p><b>1.1</b> Develop a clinic on the campus of the hospital where patients, without insurance or a PCP, who come through the ED and need follow-up care can be seen for follow-up care.</p>	<p>Planning initiated to allocate resources for development of PCP clinics for non-insured/non-emergent care patients.</p>
<p><b>1.2</b> Recruit additional primary care providers into the hospital's service area to make it easier for individuals seeking care to be seen in a timely manner.</p>	<p>Met with Federally Qualified Health Clinic <i>Nuestra Clinica</i> to explore the option of an "after-hours" clinic to treat patients in need of primary care.</p>
<p><b>1.3</b> Provide resources in the emergency department listing local community clinics that will see uninsured patients.</p>	<p>Compiled a list of community clinics that is provided upon discharge to uninsured patients. List is regularly reviewed for accuracy by the case management team.</p>



<b>1.4</b>	Continue to work with local hemodialysis centers to provide access for uninsured patients who require ongoing care and treatment.	Enrolled eight previously unfunded and uninsured patients with the Fresenius Insurance program.
<b>1.5</b>	Continue providing qualification services to enroll uninsured patients into Medicaid programs who are presently uninsured and meet the program guidelines.	Coordinated with Help America to assist with enrollment of non-insured patients, resulting in a 93.7% enrollment rate of 4,522 patients with various insurance providers.
<b>1.6</b>	Investigate the utilization of telehealth services for the chronically ill patients to identify early onset of medical issues before they become critical.	MD offices have moved to providing telehealth in lieu of in person office visits. It is also being used for acute patients. MRMC is actively evaluating telehealth for acute patients and for wound care and cardiology clinics.
<b>1.7</b>	Investigate the area services for low cost transportation for individuals who have limited transportation availability and need transportation to physician offices for assessment and treatment.	List of low-cost transportation providers is maintained and provided to patients for their use to assist in making it to physician appointments after discharge.
<b>1.8</b>	Participate in the Mayor's council on healthcare needs for the City of Mission.	MRMC CEO serves as chair of and CNO serves as a member of the City of Mission Mayor's committee on healthcare.
<b>1.9</b>	Continue to provide and consider expanding hours for "Fast Track" Clinic in the ED to treat the non-emergent patient who has no other access to primary care.	Planning initiated to consider feasibility of an "after-hours" clinic to treat non-emergent patients in need of primary care.

## Priority 2: Chronic Disease

**Objective:** To improve the health of populations with chronic diseases and related complications.

**Rationale:** The data suggests that the population in the MRMC service area has a higher incidence of Diabetes (Type II) and Obesity than the State and the Country. The incident of chronic uncontrolled diabetes impacts key organs causing issues with kidneys, heart and circulatory problems, especially peripheral appendages (feet). Obesity puts pressure on organs such as the heart and lungs causing other chronic ailments including CHF and shortness of breath and other respiratory issues.



### Current and Future Steps

Implementation Activity	FY19 Progress
<p><b>2.1</b> Implementation of a CHF Support and Education Group that meets quarterly.</p>	<p>CHF Seminars were held for skilled nursing attendees and for a public Better Breathers/CHF Support Group.</p>
<p><b>2.2</b> Partner with area facilities to implement a Better Breathers Program for those with chronic respiratory conditions.</p>	<p>Initiated a Better Breathers/CHF Support Group for the public.</p>
<p><b>2.3</b> Continue to offer Wellness Screenings at a cash price.</p>	<p>Performed 13,463 Wellness Screenings for the public.</p>
<p><b>2.4</b> Continue to partner with Texas A&amp;M to offer free Diabetes Education to the public.</p>	<p>Partnered on several community-based outreach activities on diabetes education with Texas A&amp;M School of Public Health.</p>
<p><b>2.5</b> Partner with the City of Mission to offer ongoing education for Chronic Disease to the public.</p>	<p>Coordinated eight different community events and health fairs with the City of Mission, Greater Mission Chamber of Commerce, and Mission CISD, all of which incorporated education about chronic disease.</p>

## Priority 3: Health Knowledge and Education

**Objective:** To improve the overall knowledge level of the population toward general health to reduce episodes of care in a hospital setting.

**Rationale:** The purpose of health education is to positively influence the health behavior of individuals and communities as well as the living and working conditions that influence their health. Health education improves the health status of individuals, families, and communities and thereby the quality of life for the people. Better knowledge of health status and available resources reduces premature deaths and addresses the causative factors for chronic diseases early when lifestyle changes are easier to implement.



### Current and Future Steps

Implementation Activity	FY19 Progress
<p><b>3.1</b> Offer seminars to address health topics and to educate the community on risk factors, prevention measures, disease symptoms, and treatment resources in partnership with the City of Mission.</p>	<p>Coordinated eight different events to address health topics and educate the public, including health fairs, walks and runs, wellness events, and seminars.</p>
<p><b>3.2</b> Offer CPR classes once a month at the hospital</p>	<p>Provided monthly CPR certification classes, resulting in 83 attendees being certified.</p>
<p><b>3.3</b> Develop a Senior Care Panel to give educational information to Seniors on topics of interest. Once a month.</p>	<p>Initiated Senior Care Panel with organizational luncheon in July, followed by monthly meetings.</p>
<p><b>3.4</b> Increase the emphasis in Diabetes Education on obesity education and high blood pressure awareness as a consequence of diabetes, by offering monthly seminars to the Diabetic population to include MRMC patients and community residents.</p>	<p>Included education on obesity and high blood pressure awareness at eight community events.</p>

<b>3.5</b>	Increase the number of patients who receive free flu shots; and other health screenings by participating in Community Health Fairs and Winter Texan events.	Administered flu shots at the Mission Community Health Fair and the City of Mission and Mission CISD Health Fair.
<b>3.6</b>	Offer health education to people by partnering with Dr. Mario Del Pino and having monthly weight loss seminars presented by physician to promote health education on nutrition and weight management.	Monthly weight loss seminars led by Dr. Mario Del Pino.
<b>3.7</b>	Offer Breast Cancer Awareness seminars to our community during the month of October to educate all women in our community and the importance of self-examination and early detection. Seminars to be presented by specialty physicians.	Held multiple events advocating for breast cancer awareness and early detection, including a health fair and annual Mission Pink 5K Run in partnership with American Cancer Society.
<b>3.8</b>	Partnering with an Alzheimer support group in our community to provide support groups at Mission Regional Medical Center.	Planned for 2020.

## Priority 4: Obesity and Healthy Nutrition

**Objective:** Improve life choices of obese persons to reduce chronic side effects impacting the health of the population.

**Rationale:** The purpose of nutritional awareness in conjunction with the prevalence of obesity in the hospital's service area is to address the early lifestyle choices that lead to unhealthy eating habits and high BMI. Providing alternative healthy choices for meals and exercises options improve the chances that associated diseases such as Type II diabetes and congestive heart failure can be curtailed, or their effects minimized.



### Current and Future Steps

Implementation Activity	FY19 Progress
<b>4.1</b> Sponsor seminars, classes, and programs to promote healthy living, including nutrition assessments, cooking classes, support groups and wellness contests.	Planning initiated for provision of expanded nutrition and healthy living programming.
<b>4.2</b> Coordinate with the local school district on healthy food policies.	Planning initiated for MRMC Food Service Department to provide in-service for Mission CISD food services department in 2020.
<b>4.3</b> Hold periodic wellness fairs/events that stress healthy eating and exercise.	Incorporated examples of healthy eating and exercise resources at health fairs and walks throughout 2019.

## Priority 5: Preventative Care and Services for the Aging

**Objective:** Improve the healthy life span of the elderly patient and reduce the need for acute intervention in the Emergency Department setting.

**Rationale:** The purpose of access to preventative care, especially as it relates to the elderly, is to reduce acute episodic health interventions, usually in the high cost Emergency Department setting and to provide ongoing treatment and monitoring of chronic health issues. Early identification, treatment and follow-up provides better outcomes than when the illness becomes acute and requires hospitalization which puts more stress on the body's systems. Maintenance of immunizations for flu, pneumonia, shingles, etc. improves the ability of the individual to remain healthy and out of the acute hospital setting.



### Current and Future Steps

Implementation Activity	FY19 Progress
<p><b>5.1</b> Investigate expanding the current Seniors program to include chronic disease self-management with periodic contact with enrollees through phone calls or seminars to improve compliance with medication dosing, exercise programs and routine physician follow-up visits.</p>	<p>Developed and implemented a series of senior health talks based on the recommendation of a senior focus group. Began advertising senior health talks for 2020.</p>
<p><b>5.2</b> Investigate partnering with local "Winter Texan" RV parks to provide health screenings for diabetes, peripheral vascular disease, and other chronic diseases.</p>	<p>Held multiple health screenings for diabetes, physical therapy screening, peripheral vascular diseases, and other chronic diseases. Screenings occurred at the Texas Trails RV Resort Health Fair, South Texas Senior Summit, and Winter Texan Homecoming.</p>

<b>5.3</b>	Investigate offering annual flu shots to seniors and other susceptible populations.	Provided flu vaccinations at the Mission Community Health Fair and City of Mission & Mission CISD Health Fair to seniors and other susceptible populations.
<b>5.4</b>	Investigate the development of a "geriatric ED" to address the specific needs of the aged patient who presents with multiple ailments and multiple prescribed drugs for chronic conditions.	Applied to the American College of Emergency Physicians for Geriatric Emergency Department Accreditation to make MRMC the only south of San Antonio with this honor. Employed an on-premise pharmacist to assist patients with medicine reconciliation and education. Next steps include hiring a dedicated geriatrician and developing a Senior Services Department.
<b>5.5</b>	Investigate developing programs for the senior population around "healthy aging" including self-directed safety assessments for home falls, core strength development and healthy eating.	Developed educational plans for core strength development and gait training in conjunction with the Rehabilitation Department.
<b>5.6</b>	Investigate the means by which the elderly patient can be provided with a comprehensive medication profile and dosing chart to better ensure compliance with dosing recommendations.	Developed workflows and processes for medicine reconciliation at senior health fairs in 2020.