

## **June 2014 - Implementation Update**

In 2011 and 2012, Shands Teaching Hospital and Clinics, Inc. (Shands) participated in the conduct of a community health needs assessment and the formulation of a community health improvement plan. These activities were led by the Alachua County Health Department and included input from diverse interests, including dozens of people representing public and private organizations, community groups, and others. One result of this collaboration was the emergence of a vision for Alachua County to be "A community where everyone can be healthy."

The assessment and planning processes resulted in the identification of community wellness goals, with the highest priority issues being access to care (medical, dental, behavioral health, and pharmacy services); management of diabetes; pregnancy outcomes; overweight/obesity; special groups (minorities, persons with chronic mental illness, homeless persons, and veterans); violence (child abuse, domestic violence, and gangs); graduation rates of African Americans; the service delivery system; need for collaboration among providers; establishment of a policy advocacy group; and the environment (infectious diseases and water resources).

Two broad strategic goals were chosen to be the focus of the community health improvement workplan:

- Residents of Alachua County will be able to access comprehensive primary care and preventive services
- Promote wellness among all Alachua County residents.

The 2010 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act requires that nonprofit hospitals conduct a community health needs assessment every three years and adopt implementation strategies to meet the outstanding community health needs identified in the assessment. In 2013, Shands Teaching Hospitals and Clinics adopted select activities to support the strategic goals from the needs assessment and posted an implementation plan outlining these activities. This report is intended to provide an update on those selected goal-supporting activities.

### **Access to Care**

Shands has policies for providing financial assistance for patients requiring care but who have limited or no means to pay for that care. These policies provide free or discounted health and health-related services to persons who qualify under certain income and asset criteria. Because Shands does not pursue collection of amounts determined to qualify for financial assistance, they are not reported as net patient service revenue. Shands maintains records to identify and monitor the level of financial assistance it provides. Charges foregone for services provided under Shands' financial assistance policy as a percentage of total charges for the years ended June 30, 2013 and 2012 were approximately 6.1%. In 2013, Shands provided unreimbursed financial assistance for patient care valued at an estimated cost of \$59.7 million.

In addition to direct financial assistance, Shands has a long history of helping patients and their families identify and qualify for various healthcare insurance and assistance programs – including Medicaid, disability and other alternatives. In calendar year 2013, 21,500 hospital

accounts were screened for potential assistance. Of those accounts approximately 15,000 were identified for potential program qualification, and applications and further information were collected from the patients to pursue qualification. In addition, Shands provides patient assistance in identifying and qualifying for pharmaceutical assistance programs and through the pharmacy programs provides approximately 1,400 free or reduced cost prescriptions per month to needy patients.

Further, during the first open enrollment period of the Health Insurance Marketplace that formed as a result of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), Shands undertook a number of activities in an effort to help patients and individuals in the community to obtain healthcare coverage. These activities included holding education forums on the ACA and Healthcare Marketplace; training staff to serve as Certified Application Counselors; providing space in the hospital for Navigators; making and submitting presumptive eligibility determinations; and sending letters to current patients who might qualify for coverage under the ACA. As of April 1, 2014, Shands had assisted 572 people with getting coverage through the Marketplace.

As a hospital safety net provider, Shands provides care to patients in Alachua County at multiple locations. In August 2013, a new remote freestanding Emergency Department (ED) was opened on NW 39th Avenue in Gainesville, FL to provide services for patients. For the time period of August 2013 through May 2014, the remote ED has provided approximately 1,000 visits per month. The majority of the patients are treated and released from that site, however approximately 664 patients requiring inpatient services were transferred to the main campus of UF Health Shands Hospital.

In 2012 Shands started an in-house ED diversion program for some patients referred to as the Care One Clinic. The Clinic activity is available on an as-needed basis and is focused on patients who are frequent ED users and who do not have an identified physician. Patients are seen by internal referral. The goal is to transition patients to a permanent medical home to avoid continued inappropriate ED use and to provide improved continuity of care. Services provided in the Care One Clinic include physician, nursing, psychiatric and social services and pharmacy. In calendar year 2013 there were approximately 1,030 service appointments with 394 unique patients seen in the Clinic.

Access to mental health services is an ongoing challenge for many residents of Alachua and surrounding counties, as identified in the Community Health Needs Assessment. A consortium of peers, providers, advocates, citizens, family members, community leaders, law enforcement and the business community has formed the Mental Health Coalition of North Central Florida with a focused interest in and commitment to improving the community's mental health. The 4-member Executive Committee and 17-member Board meet monthly and also hold quarterly public meetings. The multi-disciplinary group is chaired by Ms. Marina Cecchini, Administrator of the UF Health Shands Psychiatric Hospital and the UF Health Shands Rehabilitation Hospital.

After patients receive needed hospital care and are ready to transition to a more appropriate setting, frequently there are barriers to safe discharge from the hospital. Examples of barriers include lack of transportation home, inability to provide self-care, need for nursing assistance,

etc. Many patients have inadequate resources to deal with the post-hospital care their illness requires. To address these barriers for some patients, Shands has a limited program to help patients bridge the gap to the next level of care – for example, ground transportation to home or assistance with initial nursing home placement or home care. The primary focus areas of funding needs assistance are transportation, home care, nursing home and pharmacy.

Diabetes is a devastating chronic condition affecting many patients and their families. There are multiple groups, including UF Health Shands Diabetes Center, seeking to provide education and outreach assistance to help individuals learn to manage their disease. UF Health Shands Diabetes Educator Ms. Kathryn Parker was able to spearhead and coordinate a county-wide group that meets quarterly to identify and coordinate educational resources for patient and family diabetes education and management. The first meeting was held in October 2013 and was well attended. Progress is being made in coordinating classes, referring patients and other educational activities. The goal is to use the available resources to effectively reach as many individuals as possible.

Cancer care was identified as a high need area in the Community Health Needs Assessment and is an area of strategic focus for UF Health Shands Hospital. In calendar year 2013, Shands provided 14 live educational and health screening events that reached an estimated 2,290 individuals. In addition, there are ongoing activities to promote cancer awareness via the internet or other means. One recent 2013 highlight at UF Health was serving as a host site for a giant, inflatable, walk-through colon in the hospital atrium to promote colon cancer awareness among the public.

## **Wellness**

Promoting community wellness – including to employees and their families – is another overarching implementation activity. UF Health Shands promotes these activities through a variety of programs, several of which are highlighted below.

In 2013, UF Health launched the GatorCare self-insurance initiative as well as GatorCare Wellness. The Wellness program provides an opportunity for employees and families in the areas of weight management, fitness, nutrition, emotional well-being, stress reduction, smoking cessation, health services (including flu shots) and training and information. Many programs and wellness benefits are offered at little or no cost for program participants.

UF Health is a smoke-free campus, and no smoking is permitted in the facilities or on the grounds. Smoking cessation and counseling tools are offered to employees at little or no cost. Patients are screened for tobacco use and are directed and advised of tobacco use consequences as a routine part of their healthcare. Smoking cessation and counseling program services are offered to patients as necessary.

Patients, staff and their families, and members of the community all benefit from an active UF Health Arts in Medicine program which promotes diverse activities aimed at promoting healing and reducing stress. T'ai chi, yoga, gardening, art and dance therapy are provided in many

facility and community venues. Music therapy, pet therapy and other activities are provided using volunteer or paid staffs. Most activities are free or low cost.

### **Community Benefits**

Including the types of implementation activities highlighted above, Shands provided \$113.8 million in community benefit and reinvestment in categories defined by the Internal Revenue Service in FY2013.