

UPDATED IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY – 2020

As a result of Washington Regional's 2019 Community Health Needs Assessment, the following significant needs were identified:

1. Access to affordable health care
2. Access to primary care
3. Access to specialty care, including neurosciences, cardiac care, trauma services, and women and infant care
4. Wellness and health education
5. Access to specialty care for rural communities

In the months since the 2019 Community Health Needs Assessment was completed, Washington Regional has developed the following implementation strategy:

Community Health Need Priority #1

Access to affordable health care

Access to affordable health care for individuals who are uninsured or underinsured and are therefore unlikely to seek health care.

Objective #1

Washington Regional will continue to improve access to affordable health care for community members who are uninsured or underinsured and ensure its primary care clinics have necessary resources to provide patients with support throughout the entire continuum of care.

Implementation Activities:

- A. Washington Regional will maintain an executive level position that was created to oversee practice transformation initiatives.
- B. As a benefit to the community, Washington Regional will continue to offer financial assistance for uninsured and underinsured individuals who need services determined to be medically necessary, non-elective, emergent and urgent.
- C. Washington Regional's Public Benefits Department will remain available to assist individuals who need help with the Medicaid application process.
- D. Washington Regional will continue to provide support to its primary care clinics participating in Comprehensive Primary Care Plus (CPC+), a partnership designed to provide patients with improved access to quality healthcare at lower costs.
- E. Washington Regional will continue to provide financial support to organizations who offer community health services, including the Washington County Department of Health, Washington County Crisis Stabilization Unit and WelcomeHealth.
- F. The Washington Regional Cancer Support Home will provide expanded support services at no cost to area residents who have a cancer diagnosis.
- G. Washington Regional will operate off-site COVID-19 screening center and hotline to provide care to community members with upper respiratory illnesses that suspect COVID-19 exposure or illness.
- H. Washington Regional will provide medical services related to education, screening, diagnosis and treatment of COVID-19 will be provided to the entire community regardless of insurance coverage or ability to pay.

Community Health Need Priority #2

Access to primary care

Additional primary care access is needed in Northwest Arkansas.

Objective #2

Washington Regional will continue to improve access to primary care in the communities it serves while coordinating closely with primary care providers to promote excellence throughout the entire continuum of care.

Implementation Activities:

- A. Washington Regional will maintain executive-level positions that were created to oversee practice transformation initiatives and provide oversight of clinics/physicians.
- B. Washington Regional will assess primary care needs in the communities it serves and recruit physicians and advanced practice providers as needed.

- C. Washington Regional care managers/coordinators in primary care clinics will continue to monitor and encourage patients to take their medicines as prescribed, follow recommended treatment plans, and take advantage of preventive care benefits, including wellness visits, labs, colonoscopies, and mammograms.
- D. As many area residents utilize urgent care centers for primary care related services due to convenient evening and weekend hours, Washington Regional will continue to assess demand for urgent care services and alter its existing urgent care footprint if warranted.
- E. Washington Regional, through its partnership with the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences will continue to offer primary care services and health education for seniors at the UAMS Schmieding Center in Springdale.
- F. Washington Regional will continue to provide convenient space for the patients of Northwest Arkansas' two leading OB/GYN clinics, HerHealth Clinic and Park Hill Clinic for Women, where numerous women in the region receive their primary care.
- G. The Washington Regional Faith in Action program will continue to provide volunteer-based services at no cost to homebound older adults, including assistance in arranging transportation to clinic appointments and in securing groceries and needed household supplies.
- H. Washington Regional will expand the utilization of telehealth, including utilization of phone calls and video visits, to expand primary care services to community members with limited ability to travel for in-person visit and to vulnerable populations that prefer to limit exposure to COVID-19 present in the community.
- I. Washington Regional will work with the Northwest Arkansas Council and community leaders to explore alternatives to meaningfully expand Graduate Medical Education to the Northwest Arkansas region within next 12-24 months.

Community Health Need Priority #3

Access to specialty care

Increased access to highly specialized care unique in the market, such as neuroscience care, cardiac care, trauma services, women & infants care and COVID-19 care.

Objective #3

Washington Regional will continue to offer unique programs that have a positive impact on the health of the community, and will further expand those programs as necessary to provide elevated capabilities.

Implementation Activities:

- A. Washington Regional will maintain an executive-level position created to provide oversight of clinics and physicians.
- B. Neurosciences - Washington Regional has been the neuroscience leader in Northwest Arkansas for many years and will continue to invest in neuroscience services by expanding education, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation for injuries and illness related to the brain and spine.
 - Washington Regional will maintain its newly achieved status as the region's only certified Comprehensive Stroke Center as designated by The Joint Commission and the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association.
 - Washington Regional Medical Center will continue to provide 24/7/365 in-person stroke coverage and actively recruit stroke care specialists as needed.
 - Washington Regional will continue to serve as a hub in the Arkansas SAVES program (Stroke Assistance through Virtual Emergency Services), a partnership between Washington Regional, the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences Center for Distance Health, the Department of Health and the Department of Human Services.
 - Washington Regional will continue to financially support and collaborate with the American Heart Association to educate the public about cerebrovascular and cardiovascular health.
 - Washington Regional will continue to provide education about cerebrovascular disease, including stroke, at health fairs and community events, on TV with the *Your Health* morning-news segments and through publications distributed to the community, such as *Health for Life* senior newsletter and *You at Your Best*, the local newspaper's monthly health publication.
 - Washington Regional will develop a Spine Center of Excellence and participate in the American Spine Registry.
 - Washington Regional will recruit a general neurologist to provide expanded services in its neurology clinic and a neuro-hospitalist to provide hospital care.

- C. Cardiac Care - Washington Regional's Walker Heart Institute has been the longtime leader in cardiovascular services in Northwest Arkansas. It will continue to lead the way in advanced technology, evaluation and treatment for conditions of the cardiovascular system.
- Washington Regional Medical Center will continue to provide 24/7/365 cardiovascular and cardiovascular & thoracic surgery coverage and actively recruit cardiovascular specialists as needed.
 - Washington Regional will continue to offer advanced cardiovascular technology to support the health care needs of the community.
 - Washington Regional will continue to financially support and collaborate with the American Heart Association to educate the public about cardiovascular and cerebrovascular health.
 - Washington Regional will continue to provide education about cardiovascular disease and prevention at health fairs and community events, on TV with the *Your Health* morning-news segments and through publications distributed to the community, such as *Health for Life* senior newsletter and *You at Your Best*, the local newspaper's monthly health publication.
- D. Trauma Services - Washington Regional, as the market leader in trauma services, will continue to invest in its Trauma Program and to provide community education related to trauma.
- Washington Regional Medical Center will maintain its status as an Arkansas Department of Health designated Level II Trauma Center.
 - Washington Regional, through its Trauma Program, will continue to educate the community about trauma prevention.
 - Washington Regional will offer integrated surgical services, including employing general surgeons and advanced practice providers who specialize in general surgery.
 - Washington Regional will implement 24/7/365 surgicalist care for hospitalized patients.
- E. Women and Infant Care - Washington Regional will continue to provide enhanced women and infant services to meet the growing needs of Northwest Arkansas families.
- Washington Regional will continue to provide convenient space in the Women and Infants Center for the patients of Northwest Arkansas' two leading OB/GYN clinics, HerHealth Clinic and Park Hill Clinic for Women, where many women in the region receive care.
 - Washington Regional will continue to provide the exceptional labor and delivery services, including low intervention services, various pain management options, accommodation of a variety of birth plans, lactation services and pelvic therapy services.
 - Washington Regional will maintain its Level III-A Neonatal Intensive Care Unit status, which allows it to care for the most fragile of newborns in the region.
 - Washington Regional will continue to provide space for the region's only Ronald McDonald House conveniently located in the Women and Infants Center.
 - Washington Regional, through its Women and Infants Center, will continue to provide community classes such as birth basics, baby basics, breastfeeding support, and infant CPR.
 - Washington Regional's Infant Nutrition Lab will continue to be available to store and fortify mothers' breast milk.
 - Washington Regional will continue to serve as a depot for the Oklahoma Mothers' Milk Bank, which allows nursing women in the region to donate their extra breast milk at the hospital, where it is stored until collected by the milk bank.
 - Washington Regional will continue to provide a social worker/care navigator for high risk NICU and L&D populations.
 - Washington Regional will partner with University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences to provide outpatient and inpatient maternal fetal medicine support for patients with high risk pregnancies.
- F. COVID-19 Preparedness - Washington Regional will develop and implement COVID-19 preparedness plan.
- Washington Regional will provide education, screening and evaluation of patients with upper respiratory illnesses and suspected exposure to COVID-19.
 - Washington Regional will develop and expand COVID-19 ready workforce, providing retraining opportunities to personnel that could be directed to pandemic response during a surge.
 - Washington Regional Medical Center will develop a designated COVID-19 inpatient unit that will include ICU capacity, negative pressure rooms, telehealth options for consultation, and video connectivity for visitors/families of infectious patients.
- G. Washington Regional will work with the Northwest Arkansas Council and community leaders to explore alternatives to meaningfully expand Graduate Medical Education to the Northwest Arkansas region within next 12-24 months.

Community Health Need Priority #4

Wellness and health education

Area residents need wellness and health information that could be beneficial to their health.

Objective #4

Washington Regional will promote health and wellness in the community through education and wellness activities.

Implementation Activities:

- A. Washington Regional will maintain an executive-level position to lead population health initiatives across the spectrum of care for patients in the Washington Regional Medical System.
- B. Washington Regional, through its partnership with the University of Arkansas, will continue to support collaborative nursing and pre-professional programs.
- C. Washington Regional will continue to support an employee wellness program, including offering health insurance discounts for participating employees.
- D. Washington Regional, through its Women and Infants Center, will continue to provide community classes such as birth basics, baby basics and breastfeeding support, infant CPR.
- E. Washington Regional will continue to provide CPR instruction and/or provide resources to obtain CPR instruction to the community and local businesses.
- F. Washington Regional will continue to provide health and wellness information relating to a variety of topics at health fairs and community education events. Washington Regional will also provide education and wellness tips on KNWA during the *Your Health* morning-news segments and through publications distributed to the community, such as the *Health for Life* senior newsletter and *You at Your Best*, the local newspaper's monthly health publication.
- G. Washington Regional will provide COVID-19 education to the community via social media channels, website, interviews with medical experts, and collaboration with media partners.
- H. When able to do so, Washington Regional will reopen its Center for Exercise, which provides health education and classes to employees and community members.

Community Health Need Priority #5

Access to specialty care for rural communities

Access to specialty care for the underserved in rural communities.

Objective #5

Washington Regional will coordinate with Washington Regional clinics, independent clinics, and other systems to provide access to specialty care in rural communities.

Implementation Activities:

- A. Washington Regional will continue to offer cardiovascular, renal and general surgery services rural communities and will evaluate expansion opportunities for these specialties into other rural communities.
- B. Washington Regional will evaluate opportunities to expand other specialty services into rural markets as demand warrants.
- C. Washington Regional will continue to serve as a hub in the Arkansas SAVES program (Stroke Assistance through Virtual Emergency Services), providing acute stroke neurology consultation to rural hospitals.
- D. Washington Regional will develop offsite COVID-19 testing capacities for our patients that live in rural Carroll, Boone and Newton counties.
- E. Washington Regional Cancer Support Home will continue to offer navigation services to those impacted by cancer in rural communities.
- F. Washington Regional will offer telehealth services, including phone and video visits, to patients in rural areas with limited transportation opportunities with specialty services that improve access and limit exposure to medically vulnerable populations.