

## **Summary of Community Health Needs Assessment**

The BMH Community Health Needs Assessment is a report required by Act 53 whose purpose is to identify and prioritize the health needs of the community. Brattleboro Memorial Hospital and The Brattleboro Retreat collaborated on a joint Community Health Needs Assessment process in 2004. An update of the BMH Community Health Needs Assessment was submitted to BISHCA March 1, 2007. It includes an update on progress made in priority areas, details the annual public meetings that were held in 2005 and 2006 and concludes with preliminary plans for the 2009 Community Needs Assessment. The Retreat and BMH continue to collaborate on Act 53 requirements.

### **Description of Annual Public Meetings**

Two Annual Meetings have been held since the January 1, 2005 BMH Community Health Needs Assessment was published, as required by Act 53.

On November 9, 2005 Brattleboro Memorial Hospital and Retreat Healthcare held a joint annual public meeting on the Brattleboro Community Health Assessment at the Robert Gibson Rivergarden in downtown Brattleboro. It was attended by staff and board members from the Brattleboro Retreat and Brattleboro Memorial Hospital, one staff from the Department of Health, six members of the public and one representative from the media.

The 2006 Annual Public Meeting was held September 14, 2006 in the Education Conference Room at the Brattleboro Retreat. It was attended by staff and board members from the Retreat and BMH as well as four community members and one representative from the media. Agenda items included:

- Quality Indicators from the Act 53 Community Report
- Community Health Assessment related activities since last year's meeting
- New programs at Brattleboro Memorial Hospital and the Brattleboro Retreat
- Input on Hospital Services

Highlights of health related activities included the BMH/Retreat Wellness Series, Vermont Department of Health activities and other community activities such as the United Way and Council on Aging survey. Barry Beeman, CEO of Brattleboro Memorial Hospital, announced the hospital's plan to create a wellness center at the new Meeting Waters YMCA and discussed their building expansion plans. Greg Miller, Vice President of Medical Affairs at the Brattleboro Retreat discussed new programs at the Retreat and the retreat's focus on implementing trauma informed care and reducing the use of seclusion and restraint.

Description of the community and hospital activities undertaken to address the communities' top healthcare needs.

**Brattleboro Community Health Assessment  
High Priority Issues  
January 1, 2005**

	# of Advisory Committee Votes	Rating
Increase access to mental health and psychiatric services for children	10	3
Reduce Obesity	10	1
Reduce financial barriers to seeking healthcare	10	3
Expand health promotion programs such as nutrition and fitness, etc.	9	1
Reduce substance abuse including prenatal and teen smoking through prevention efforts	9	1
Increase access to adult (18-65+ year olds) mental health services, including psychiatric care, case management and coordination of care	8	2-3
Address transportation to medical services	4	1
Increase substance abuse treatment programs, including a methadone clinic	4	3
Improve access to elder services, including nursing homes, adult day care and assisted living	4	3

*Rating Key:*

1. *Short term or immediate priorities that can be affected with community resources.*
2. *Priorities that require more study or resources that are not yet identified or available*
3. *Important priorities that require the involvement of organizations/government entities outside the control of our community and/or require significant sources that are not available within our region.*

Of the high priority issues above, BMH can have an impact on the four discussed below. The other high priority areas involve services BMH does not provide like mental health treatment, substance abuse treatment, nursing home, adult day care and assisted living. One priority area - reduce financial barriers to seeking healthcare - requires State and Federal resources. BMH does not deny care based on financial status, however.

❖ **Reduce Obesity**

BMH and Retreat Healthcare have sponsored two separate series of community wellness series on obesity prevention and healthy eating. The first series was offered in the fall of

2005. The 6-part series was called HEALTHY WEIGHT MANAGEMENT and included the Movie presentation: "Supersize Me" and evening programs on: Exercise for Weight Loss, New Food Guidelines and Avoiding Restaurant Pitfalls, Nutrition Information on the Internet, Weight Loss Options: Sorting Fact from Fiction. We also present Mediterranean Dinners twice a year to help teach people good eating habits, for cardiac health, and to avoid obesity.

The second series is taking place in the winter and spring of 2007.

Another important obesity prevention effort is, Jumpstart for Healthy Living, a project of Cornerstone Pediatrics of Bellows Falls and the Holt Fund. BMH's parent company Southern Vermont Health Services Corporation owns Cornerstone Pediatrics. The practice received a Holt Foundation grant to reduce obesity in children. With the support of the grant the practice has expanded health promotion efforts to increase activity and improve nutrition practices of Cornerstone patients, especially those considered at-risk.

At the community level, Jumpstart was a key force behind the development of a Boys and Girls Club in Bellows Falls. Also, we developed ten programs/events in the Bellows Falls community to promote more active lifestyles and better nutrition for children and families. By partnering with more than 30 local and regional agencies, volunteer organizations, businesses and trade groups, Jumpstart was able to extend and expand its outreach and program effectiveness in 2006.

In the course of the year, Jumpstart became known in the community as an advocate and resource for information about healthy lifestyles and nutritional improvement.

We hope to continue to expand opportunities for children and families to become more active and engaged in efforts to change the environment to support more active lifestyles and healthy eating, especially for kids. These efforts include increasing the available healthy food options in the community and making it easier for people to select them, and building incentives for more health-promoting lifestyles into the school and club environments.

In 2007 we plan to continue to promote health promotion activities and events in the community and coordinate the development of a monthly calendar of activities and events sponsored by various organizations that can be announced and promoted in the press. Also, we will create a resource kit for use in other communities. We will continue to extend the opportunity for Cornerstone patients and families to receive nutrition counseling services.

❖ **Expand health promotion programs such as nutrition and fitness, etc.**

BMH in conjunction with the Retreat Healthcare, Brattleboro Area Hospice and Brooks Memorial Library, offers ongoing health promotion and disease prevention programs.

Barry Beeman the BMH CEO is forging a connection between a new YMCA facility to be built in Brattleboro and BMH. The Hospital will have a sports medicine program and

expand health promotion programs in specially designed space. We plan to offer exercise classes, medical screenings, Cardiac Rehabilitation Phase III, among other programs.

❖ **Reduce substance abuse including prenatal and teen smoking through prevention efforts**

Although much more work is needed in the area of substance abuse prevention, BMH offers ongoing smoking cessation classes. The Ready, Set Stop Tobacco treatment program, for adults 18 years of age and older is comprised of 6 one hour classes offered at BMH. There is no cost for the program and free nicotine replacement products that include patches, gum and lozenges are free for Vermont residents. BMH also supports the Baby and Me program with the coalition against tobacco. A counselor sees expectant moms at the OB/GYN practices. As of March 1, 2007 88 moms were seen and we know that 9 have quit smoking.

❖ **Address transportation to medical services**

This is an expensive and difficult area to impact. BMH and many of the medical staff offices are on the town bus route. The town taxi service also provides a source of local transportation. Various volunteer groups offer rides to the elderly and people without reliable transportation and church groups often give rides to members who must receive radiation therapy in Keene or appointments at DHMC in West Lebanon. Improving transportation is an area that requires more effort from a broad based group of community agencies. This problem is especially acute in the more rural towns around Brattleboro.

### How Consumers May Obtain Copies of Reports or More Detailed Information.

Consumers may obtain copies of the BMH 2007 Community Health Needs Assessment Update and the BMH 2005 Community Health Needs Assessment by calling Nicole Zinn, BMH Professional Services Assistant at 257-8833. Nicole can also refer any detailed questions on the assessment to the appropriate person. Or you may click on [http://www.bmhvt.org/act53/pdf/Reportcard\\_2007\\_Summary\\_of\\_CHNA.pdf](http://www.bmhvt.org/act53/pdf/Reportcard_2007_Summary_of_CHNA.pdf) to receive a downloadable report.