

COMMUNITY BENEFIT NARRATIVE REPORT

for

Chester River Hospital Center

Community Benefit Report FY 2010

BACKGROUND

The Health Services Cost Review Commission's (HSCRC or Commission) Community Benefit Report, required under §19-303 of the Health General Article, Maryland Annotated Code, is the Commission's method of implementing a law that addresses the growing interest in understanding the types and scope of community benefit activities conducted by Maryland's nonprofit hospitals.

The Commission's response to the legislation was to establish a reporting system for hospitals to report their community benefits activities. The guidelines and inventory spreadsheet rely in large part on the VHA, CHA, and Lyon software community benefits reporting experience, which was then tailored to fit Maryland's unique regulated environment. The narrative requirement is intended to strengthen and supplement the qualitative and quantitative information that hospitals have reported in the past. The narrative is focused on (1) how hospitals determined the needs of the communities they serve, (2) initiatives undertaken to address those needs, and (3) evaluations undertaken regarding the effectiveness of the initiatives.

Reporting Requirements

Narrative Reporting Instructions: *(please note that all of Chester River Hospital Center's information is in Times New Roman text)*

1. What is the licensed bed designation and number of inpatient admissions for this fiscal year at your facility?

Chester River Hospital Center is licensed for 47-beds and 3,527 inpatient admissions for FY 2010.

2. Describe the community your organization serves.

Chester River Hospital Center (CRHC) serves the communities of Kent County, and upper Queen Anne's County. CRHC also serves portions of southern Cecil County and northern Caroline County. This is a rural area populated by active farmers and small, close-knit communities. Transportation is often a barrier for access to health care services.

The service area population for Chester River Hospital Center is 43,704 people, with 7,560 of the people age 65 or older. Kent County, with a total population of 24,685, accounts for more than half of Chester River Hospital Center's service area. Kent County is unique in that 19.6% of its residents are 65 years of age or older, which is 65% higher than Maryland's percentage and higher than other rural areas in the state by almost a quarter. This makes Kent County's population one of the oldest, aging populations in Maryland. Approximately 19% of the residents of Kent County are African-American. The Hispanic population is rapidly growing, but accounts for only a small percentage of the population.

Thirty percent of the population is classified as low income, with 15% without insurance. In a 2010 study of Maryland counties, Kent County ranked 16 out of 24 in health factors and health outcomes. Kent County ranked number one in the state for percentage of deaths related to Alzheimer's, a disease mostly associated with the aging population. The report also noted that Kent County has a higher prevalence of hypertension, high cholesterol, obesity and diabetes than Maryland. Children living on the Eastern Shore are more likely to have dental caries, yet less likely to have dental sealant or restoration than other parts of the state. Alcohol abuse and mental health diagnoses occur at significantly higher rates than the state average, too.

3. Identification of Community Needs

a. describe the process(s) your hospital used for identifying the health needs in your community, including when it was most recently done.

To identify the health needs of the community it serves, Chester River Hospital Center (CRHC) has used the needs assessments developed by the local Kent County Health Department (last conducted in 2008) which was a collaboration that included CRHC along with other local organizations. The needs assessment incorporated surveys of community residents; data and statistics compiled by state and local governments; and included information gathered by consultation of Kent County Health Department, eleven primary care physicians and the Local Management Board (LMB).

Chester River Hospital Center utilizes data sources that include:

- Morbidity and mortality data from the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene;
- Population and demographic data from the Maryland Department of Planning and Claritas, Inc.;
- Patient origin, and market share data from the Patient Care Analyst database of SMA Informatics, provided by HSCRC.

During FY2010 Chester River Health System (CRHS) completed a strategic planning process from November 2009 through April 2010. The purpose of the strategic plan was to provide direction for Chester River Health System for the next three to five years. CRHS retained the services of a consultant and formed a planning committee to develop the strategic plan. The strategic planning process gathered input and information from a variety of community sources, including:

- Interviews with Board members, medical staff, management and community members/leaders
- Meetings/interviews with CRHS employees
- Meetings/interviews with physicians
- Consumer telephone survey (500 telephone interviews with area residents)
- Consumer survey (438 community members completed a printed form survey)

(Note: although the strategic planning process occurred during FY2010, the findings from the strategic plan validated what CRHC had in place for community benefits program, and also identified areas that need more attention in the FY2011 community benefits program.)

b. In seeking information about community health needs, did you consult with the local health department?

Yes. Chester River Hospital Center consulted with the local health department to determine community health needs. A community health needs assessment was conducted by the Mid-Atlantic Association of Health Care Centers for the Kent County

Health Department in March-April of 2008. It was a collaborative effort and some of the other organizations that participated and contributed included: Choptank Community Health System; Kent County Department of Social Services; Chesapeake College; Chester River Hospital Center; and Kent County Public Schools. This assessment enabled Kent County to examine the health needs and concerns of its residents. The full report can be viewed online at <http://www.kentcountylmb.com/news.htm>.

4. Please list the major needs identified through the process explained question #3.

Chester River Hospital Center identified the following major health care needs of the community:

- Hypertension, heart disease, stroke and cancer
- Obesity and diabetes
- Not enough physicians locally/access to care

5. Who was involved in the decision making process of determining which needs in the community would be addressed through community benefits activities of your hospital?

The senior Administration of Chester River Hospital Center, along with the Board in support of FQHC addresses these issues. A Community Benefits Committee was formed in FY2009, which includes members from each department in the hospital. The Community Benefits Committee's members provide insight and feedback from health fairs and community events that assists in developing the goals and activities in the community benefits program at the hospital.

6. Do any major Community Benefit program initiatives address the needs listed in #4, and if so, how?

Yes. Chester River Hospital Center offers free screenings for a variety of cancers, including prostate cancer screening during the month of September; colon cancer screenings; and breast cancer screenings through the local health department. CRHC also has yearly educational events and seminars featuring presentations by physicians and nurses on breast cancer; prostate cancer; colon cancer; and lung cancer. The yearly

education events and seminars are free to the public. CRHC staff also attends yearly health fairs and events in a variety of locations throughout the community, including places of worship.

The diabetes educator and the dieticians at CRHC work together to offer diabetes education, in the form of diabetes classes and seminars. There is also a diabetes support group that meets monthly. The dieticians focus is on healthy eating and provides opportunities to the community to learn how to make healthy choices when shopping for food; portion control; and low sodium/low fat options.

Physician recruitment is a top priority at CRHC. It is a challenge to recruit new physicians to a rural area. In FY2010 one gynecologist was credentialed and one plastic surgeon (specializing in reconstruction surgery after cancer) joined the specialty clinic at CRHC. Recruitment for additional physicians in the following specialties include: primary care; pediatrics; pulmonology; oncology; ophthalmology; and hospitalist.

7. Please provide a description of any efforts taken to evaluate or assess the effectiveness of major Community Benefit program initiatives.

At this time the Chester River Hospital Center has not completed a formal evaluation or assessment to determine the effectiveness of current community benefit initiatives. Feedback and comments from the community are gathered by surveys conducted after seminars and educational events.

8. Provide a written description of gaps in the availability of specialist providers, including outpatient specialty care, to serve the uninsured cared for by the hospital.

Based on the most recent formal physician needs assessment conducted by Chester River Hospital Center, the hospital currently has the following gaps in the availability of specialist providers to serve patients in our service area, including but not limited to the uninsured:

Gastroenterology – there are no gastroenterologists practicing in the community. Most basic gastroenterology procedures, specifically endoscopies, are performed by local general surgeons. Patients are referred to gastroenterologists at Shore Health System

(SHS) for non-emergent medical needs and consultation. More complex emergencies are transferred to University of Maryland Medical Center (UMMC).

Neurology – there are no neurologists serving our community. While there is not a population to support a full-time neurologist, there is a need for this service on a part-time basis. Emergent neurology patients are currently transported to University of Maryland Medical Center or other specialty centers.

Psychiatry – there are no psychiatrists serving our community and mental health is a significant need. We refer patients requiring inpatient treatment to surrounding facilities in Cambridge and Elkton; we refer outpatients to psychiatrists, social workers, counselors in private practice or to the Kent or Queen Anne's counties mental health departments, if the patients qualify for those services.

Ophthalmology – there is only one ophthalmologist serving the Chestertown area, creating a need for additional access and choice for our community. Ophthalmic emergencies are transferred to Wilmer Eye Center. Currently we are recruiting for ophthalmologists.

Cardiology – although there are two cardiologists on the medical staff at Chester River, which is an appropriate number according to our medical staff development plan, during FY 2010 we had cardiology coverage for the emergency department less than 1/2 the time. We transfer emergency cardiology cases primarily to University of Maryland Medical Center. Cardiology coverage for one weekend a month and all holiday weekends for FY2010 cost \$75,000.

Pulmonology – our one pulmonologist left our rural community in July 2008 and worked only on a half-time basis until July 2010. So, for FY2010, we had only part time coverage in this area. As of FY2011, we now have a full time pulmonologist.

Orthopedics – although there's an adequate number of orthopedic surgeons on the medical staff based on our medical staff development plan, we do not have continual emergency department coverage in this area; in Fiscal Year 2010 we lacked coverage 13% of the time. Orthopedic trauma cases are generally transported directly to Shock Trauma, bypassing our hospital. Emergency cases may be transferred to Union Hospital in Elkton. Inpatients are visited by our orthopedic surgeons following admission and patients who are discharged from the Emergency Department are directed to follow-up with orthopedic physicians in their private practice.

9. If you list Physician Subsidies in your data, please provide detail.

Chester River Hospital Center started a hospitalist program August 2008 to better serve the community. During FY2009 CRHC also contracted additional physicians for on-call coverage. This includes some on call pay of existing practitioners for general surgery. In addition, we pay for some cardiology coverage about one weekend per month. In FY2010, we also paid for coverage of the pediatrics/newborn/neonatal one weekend per month.

To Be Attached as Appendices:

1. Describe your Charity Care policy (*taken from IRS Schedule H, Part V, Question 3*):

a. Describe how the hospital informs patients and persons who would otherwise be billed for services about their eligibility for assistance under federal, state, or local government programs or under the hospital's charity care policy. (**Appendix 1**)

For ***example***, state whether the hospital:

● posts its charity care policy, or a summary thereof, and financial assistance contact information in admissions areas, emergency rooms, and other areas of facilities in which eligible patients are likely to present;

● provides a copy of the policy, or a summary thereof, and financial assistance contact information to patients or their families as part of the intake process;

● provides a copy of the policy, or summary thereof, and financial assistance contact information to patients with discharge materials;

● includes the policy, or a summary thereof, along with financial assistance contact information, in patient bills; and/or

● discusses with patients or their families the availability of various government benefits, such as Medicaid or state programs, and assists patients with qualification for such programs, where applicable.

b. Include a copy of your hospital's charity care policy (**Appendix 2**).

2. Describe the hospital's mission, vision, and value statement(s) (**Appendix 3**).

a. Attach a copy of the statement (**Appendix 4**).



APPENDIX 1

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Description of Chester River Hospital Center's Charity Care Policy:

A patient's inability to obtain financial assistance does not, in any way, preclude the patient's right to receive and have access to medical treatment at Chester River Hospital Center.

Chester River Hospital Center is committed to providing excellent medical care to our patients regardless of their ability to pay for those services. This policy has been established to assist patients in obtaining financial aid when it is beyond their financial ability to pay for services received.

Chester River Hospital Center's registrars provide the hospital's patient financial assistance program packet to all self-pay inpatients and outpatients at the time of registration. Emergency department patients who are self-pay also receive this packet if their condition permits. Emergency department patients who are admitted are visited by the hospital's credit and collection officer while in the hospital, and the packet is provided to them at that time. The packet is also available by request. The forms are available in English and Spanish.

Signage is posted in the Emergency Department, registration and Business Office areas to notify patients of our patient financial assistance programs.

Chester River Hospital Center has engaged ROI, a firm which works with patients to help them qualify for medical assistance.

Chester River Hospital Center uses the following guidelines to determine eligibility for uncompensated care (taken from our Charity Care Policy):

1. Patients shall be eligible for financial assistance provided they meet the necessary criteria for both the services provided and their ability to pay. Income guidelines are based on 200% of the Federal Poverty Income Guidelines.
2. Financial Assistance will be considered for those patients who live in the geographical service area of Chester River Hospital Center. This includes the following counties: Kent and Queen Anne's.
3. Patients who apply for financial assistance, who live outside of our geographic area may be eligible for "one time" assistance.
4. Financial Assistance will be granted without regard to age, race, creed or sex.
5. The application for financial assistance should be made as soon as possible in the admission process; however, an application may be taken at any time on open accounts.
6. The Credit and Collections Officer, Business Office Manager and/or Director of Patient Financial Services will determine if a patient is eligible for financial assistance. In

making this determination, 200% of the current Federal Poverty Income Guidelines will be used as a base guide.

7. If it is determined that the patient may be eligible for other third party coverage, including Maryland Medical Assistance, that determination must be made before our internal financial assistance policy can be considered.
8. Approval for financial assistance is granted for six months. After that time limit has expired, a new application must be submitted for continuation of assistance.
9. Patients are NOT ELIGIBLE for financial assistance if they do not comply with their insurance coverage requirements and restrictions. This includes services that should have been performed at another provider location, but the patient chooses to have services rendered at Chester River Hospital Center.
10. Financial Assistance will not cover elective or non-emergent services, such as cosmetic surgery, dental procedures or other services as deemed non-covered by Chester River Hospital Center.
11. Financial Assistance will not cover any account that has been referred to a collection agency or referred for legal action.

Chester River Hospital has the following procedure(s) in place:

1. Patients presenting with no insurance will be given an application at the point of registration, or any time when requested.
2. Patients admitted to Chester River Hospital Center without proof of insurance will be referred to an outside agency to determine eligibility for any federal, state or other assistance program. If they are deemed to be ineligible for outside assistance, internal financial assistance is offered.
3. Patients must complete the application and return it within 30 days and provide any or all of the following information:
 - a. Most recent tax return
 - b. Two most recent pay check stubs, if employed
 - c. If not employed, proof of income
 - d. Two bank statements, if self employed
 - e. Documented household expenses
 - f. Letter documenting circumstances if income is slightly above guidelines or unable to document income
 - g. Letter of denial from Maryland Medical Assistance
4. Applications will be processed no more than 14 days after receipt of completed application and supporting documentation.
5. The application and supporting documentation will be reviewed by the Credit and Collections Officer and the Business Office Manager for approval. The Director of Patient Financial Services will review any application with questionable documentation or for amounts over \$5,000.00.
6. The Credit and Collections Officer will notify the patient by mail of the decision made with regard to financial assistance and will document the reason for approval or denial. If approved, the Credit and Collections Officer will write off all eligible accounts with the appropriate code.
7. The Credit and Collections Officer will continue to review eligible accounts and complete the write-off for a period of one year.
8. If a patient does not agree with a denial of financial assistance, they may appeal to the Director of Patient Financial Services who will review the documentation and may request additional information to assist in making the determination. If the Director agrees with the initial determination, the patient may request a final review by the Chief Financial Officer of Chester River Hospital Center.



APPENDIX 1

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SUBJECT: Patient Financial Assistance

SERVICE: Patient Financial Services - Registration

MANUAL: Patient Financial Services

POLICY:

A patient's inability to obtain financial assistance does not, in any way, preclude the patient's right to receive and have access to medical treatment at Chester River Hospital Center.

PURPOSE:

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GUIDELINES:

The following guidelines will be used to determine eligibility for uncompensated care.

1. Patients shall be eligible for financial assistance provided they meet the necessary criteria for both the services provided and their ability to pay. Income guidelines are based on 200% of the Federal Poverty Income Guidelines.
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PROCEDURE:

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REVIEWED/REVISED BY AND DATE:

Director, Patient Financial Services
December, 2008

APPROVED BY AND DATE:

Chief Executive Officer
December 2008

ORIGINAL DATE:

December 2008

REVIEW CYCLE:

Three Years

DISTRIBUTION:

Patient Financial Services staffs, Case Management, Risk Management

COMPREF:

S:\Shared\Policies and Procedures\Patient Financial Services\Financial Assistance policy



APPENDIX 3

Description of Chester River Health System's Mission, Vision and Values (revised FY2010):

Chester River Hospital Center's Mission, Vision and Values Statement was created with input from the Board of Directors, Medical Staff and senior management team during the development of the Chester River Health System's strategic plan which was adopted in June 2010.

Prior to this current statement, Chester River Health System (Chester River Hospital Center, Chester River Home Care & Hospice, and Chester River Manor) was not part of the University of Maryland Medical System. The Strategic Planning Committee concluded that as the health system developed, evolved and became more integrated it was important to have a system-wide Mission, Vision and Values Statement that reflected our new affiliation and our new strategic plan.

The mission statement clearly communicates to internal and external constituencies why the organization exists and what important purpose it intends to achieve. The vision statement encapsulates our mission statement and clearly and simply describes what we provide to the community. The values describe the character and the culture of the organization. The specific values identified as critical to the success of Chester River are compassion, respect, excellence, collaboration, responsibility and integrity.



APPENDIX 4

Mission Statement:

Chester River Health System, a member of University of Maryland Medical System, is an integrated rural delivery system dedicated to providing excellent and caring health services and facilities to the people of the Upper Eastern Shore.

Vision Statement:

Exceptional healthcare services in a caring environment.

Values:

- **Compassion:** We attend to the needs of those we serve with tender care, empathy and equality.
- **Respect:** We recognize the dignity and value of life in every stage and condition.
- **Excellence:** We strive for the highest of personal and organizational standards.
- **Collaboration:** We build relationships based on cooperation, commitment and teamwork.
- **Responsibility:** We operate in an efficient manner to meet our fiscal and social obligations to the communities we serve.
- **Integrity:** We conduct ourselves in an honest, fair and ethical manner.