

**Lindner Center of HOPE**  
**Community Health Needs Assessment**  
**June 2022**

**IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

1. **Mental Health (Depression and Anxiety):** Over the past several years, increased attention has been paid nationally to the level of mental illness present in our society, partially due to the increased number of violent incidents in schools, places of entertainment and even places of worship. Since March 2020 and the emergence of the COVID pandemic, the need for mental health services has increased exponentially in all age groups. Recent data is showing a climb in suicide deaths as well. These factors have led to a decrease in the stigma related to mental health issues. However, the increase in demand has only magnified the access and reimbursement needs to provide appropriate and quality care.

LCOH will follow up on this area of focus as follows:

- LCOH recognizes that physicians, healthcare providers and first responders also experience mental health issues at least at the rate of 1 out of 5, yet their roles in our community are even more critical in their impact on others. LCOH has created special access programs to services for these groups to eliminate barriers to receiving treatment, in the hopes of positively impacting the lives of those our community depends upon. In addition, LCOH has benefited from donor funding to support first responders access to care.
- In 2021, LCOHPA went in network with the largest commercial payer in the region to expand access through insurance channels vs. self-pay for provider services to our community. LCOH continues to work with payers to secure reimbursement commensurate with the quality and services provided. LCOH also continues to investigate other channels to create programs to enhance services and access to patients.
- In 2019, LCOH with support from the City of Mason and other sponsors, sponsored our third community-wide mental health education event which was intended to help decrease the stigma associated with mental health diagnosis. Over 400 community members attended the day-long series of education modules. The event has been a bi-annual event; however, it was not held in 2021 due to the pandemic. The plan is to hold the event in May 2022 dependent on the status of the pandemic.

2. **Access to Care/Services/Resources:** The 2021 CHNA data collection activities identified mental health as a key concern, specifically Depression and Anxiety. Both financial and nonfinancial barriers exist for most community members. The severity of this problem can be better understood knowing there is a national shortage of providers (see 3 below for discussion on workforce planning) and general lack of mental health parity in insurance plans.

LCOH will follow up on this area of focus as follows:

- LCOH will continue to participate in efforts to educate legislators about mental health needs and the importance of parity in health care coverage. LCOH is also looking to partner with employers and payers to continue the conversation to improve access to quality mental healthcare at reasonable rates.

- To provide care to patients during the pandemic, LCOH transitioned a significant portion of its outpatient practice to telehealth services. LCOH has invested in technology and other resources to enhance this treatment delivery method over the past two years. LCOH continues to evaluate technology, markets and program service offerings that provide appropriate care to mental health patients in a virtual setting. LCOH also continues to work with professional boards and State and Federal representatives on regulations surrounding the provision of telehealth services to allow for as much flexibility as required to appropriately care for such patients.
- Additionally, to address the shortage of providers and access issues, LCOH has a Rapid Access program for adults to quickly be seen by a psychiatrist and social worker with recommendations for next steps to be coordinated following the appointment. Appointments for this program significantly reduce the wait time for those looking for outpatient assessment.
- On a monthly basis, LCOH offers Grand Rounds presentations for LCOH providers as well as community-based healthcare providers. These sessions provide these providers with ongoing training and development in the areas of mental health diagnosis and treatment. In addition, at least four additional education and development opportunities are offered by LCOH on an annual basis to selected groups such as area hospital staff, primary care providers and other defined groups. LCOH plans to continue to investigate additional opportunities to access in the development and education of local mental healthcare providers, as resources are available for this purpose.
- Like other organizations, LCOH has expanded its social media presence and routinely posts relevant information and short video clips from providers related to environmental issues that impact mental health. LCOH providers have also been active with several radio and television stations as well as speakers for interested groups and corporations.
- LCOH also continues its commitment to community outreach with clinicians presenting educational offerings through organizations such as NAMI, MHA and even some local school systems. LCOH also participates in some community health fairs. Additionally, LCOH offers an ongoing community education series and began a webcast continuing education series in 2018. It is expected that LCOH's growing focus on the need for and support of ongoing professional training and development will result in a higher level of state-of-the-art mental healthcare available to local residents as well as those who travel to receive care at LCOH. Community education will also remain a priority as long as adequate resources are available.

- LCOH more formally expanded efforts to area businesses in 2019 with the launch of Start the Conversation. This program uses educational videos, surveys, emails and web landing pages to increase awareness of employees of the businesses that engage with the effort. In addition, LCOH has commenced a CARES program whereby services such as Coaching/Advisory and Rapid Access are offered to employees on a priority status for employers who enroll. Over the next several years, LCOH expects to expand this offering to more area businesses.
- LCOH, as previously mentioned in the mental health section continues to make changes to provide access to more individuals in need, through program changes and other modifications.

It is expected that improved access to care will continue to be a major challenge for the foreseeable future. All mental healthcare providers should share responsibility for improving access to care as much as possible.

3. **Strengthen workforce pipeline and diversity:** Prior to the COVID pandemic and the increased need for mental health services there was a national shortage of providers, including nursing staff. The impact of the pandemic has only magnified such shortages due to both the increase in demand for services coupled with the “Great Resignation” and qualified personnel choosing to retire or leave the healthcare profession.

LCOH will follow up on this area of focus as follows:

- LCOH is continuing to evaluate its participation in training programs for all provider types, including nurses and allied health professionals. LCOH engages with higher learning organizations to partner for clinical rotations and other needs to be on the forefront of training healthcare providers of the future as well as creating a pipeline of talent.

LCOH serves as a clinical rotation site for various healthcare disciplines including but not limited to medical students and residents, nursing students, social work students, chefs who are in training and dietician students. Although there is a time commitment as well as a cost to LCOH associated with these efforts, the organization feels that each healthcare provider that has a commitment to continuation of high-quality healthcare services in the future has an obligation to support local students in their educational efforts.

- LCOH has focused on growing our clinician recruitment and retention endowment fund to assure resources for a good supply of mental healthcare providers for our patients. It is intended that the endowment fund will continue to be a major source of support for clinician recruitment and retention in future years
- LCOH also works to educate primary care providers in mental health and addiction diagnosis and treatment via training and educational articles in our newsletters, with the goal of helping them be better positioned to manage mental health concerns in their offices, as may be appropriate

As it relates to the remaining prioritized health needs identified in the CHNA, LCOH chose not to focus on improving access and equitable outcomes for cardiovascular disease, dental and vision as well as addressing access and use of resources for food security and housing as those are not areas of LCOH expertise nor is there internal funding available to support such initiatives.

#### MONITORING AND FOLLOW UP

Compliance with the implementation plan components and results will be monitored and reported periodically to the LCOH leadership team and Board of Directors.