



RUSH UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER  
FY2014 – FY2016 Implementation Strategy



## *Introduction*

For more than 175 years, Rush University Medical Center (Rush) has been dedicated to enhancing the health of the diverse communities of the Chicago area. Since 2007, Rush has conducted a community benefits report that highlights the many ways that Rush's mission components of education, clinical care, community services, and research serve the needs of the community.

In FY2013, Rush conducted a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) to assist the organization's understanding of their community health needs, and in accordance with Section 501(r)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. For purposes of the CHNA and this implementation strategy, the Rush service area has been defined as the zip codes of 60607, 60608, 60612, 60622, 60623, 60624 and 60661, which includes the community areas of Near West Side, Lower West Side, West Town, East Garfield Park, West Garfield Park, North Lawndale, and South Lawndale.

The CHNA process integrated public health data, community interviews, and an internal steering committee to analyze and process the data. A list of eight top health needs were identified and described through the CHNA posted to the Rush University Medical Center website. These are the community health needs that will be addressed in this implementation strategy.

The top eight community health needs include:

- Social Determinants of Health
- Access to Health Services
- Physical Activity, Nutrition, and Weight Control
- Diabetes
- Heart Disease & Cardiovascular Risk Factors
- Women's Health
- Mental Health
- Asthma & Chronic Respiratory Diseases

## *Community Benefit Planning*

### Priority Health Needs of the Rush Service Area

Rush is committed to improving the health outcomes of the community as well as improve any structure and process focused needs, ultimately improving the health outcomes of the community. A community health needs assessment will be conducted on a tri-annual basis. We hope that our efforts, outlined in this implementation strategy, will improve the public health data in our next CHNA report. Below is a brief description and definition of each top health need as identified through the Community Health Needs Assessment process. These are the health needs that this report will address via our strategies identified.

#### **Social Determinants of Health**

The social determinants of health – education, poverty, violence and safety, and employment - are greatly responsible for health inequities seen within and between our surrounding communities. To improve the long-term health of our community, Rush is committed to supporting programs and research that will tackle the inequitable distribution of health and health care in the Chicagoland area.

## **Access to Health Services**

Access to health services is significantly limited by structural, financial and personal barriers within the Rush service area. Patients and their families often have difficulty getting appointments and receiving continuity of care, and may face significant out of pocket costs due to poor insurance coverage. Furthermore, our diverse community may not know how or when to seek care due to race, ethnic or cultural differences. Rush is committed to broadening the delivery of care to our patient population through a variety of programs and initiatives.

## **Physical Activity, Nutrition, and Weight Control**

It is widely recognized that poor physical activity levels and nutrition play a major role in being overweight or obese, and developing a variety of related chronic conditions. Within Chicago, many populations, especially those living in lower income areas, have little to no access to healthy foods or safe places to exercise. To combat the obesity epidemic, Rush will address the importance of preventative behaviors through educational programs, and will support primary care strategies that focus on lowering the incidence of obesity and related diseases.

## **Diabetes**

Diabetes is not only the fifth leading cause of death across Chicago, but is also a significant factor in the health variation seen between racial and ethnic groups. Rush is committed to addressing health disparities associated with diabetes in targeted community populations and will promote the self-management of diabetes through educational sessions and seminars.

## **Heart Disease and Cardiovascular Risk Factors**

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for men and women in the United States, and is significantly linked to risk factors such as high blood pressure and cholesterol. To combat this major health concern, Rush will promote the management of acute cases related to heart disease and other cardiovascular risk factors. Rush will also promote the education of preventative behaviors and lifestyles that lower the risk of heart disease in the community.

## **Women's Health**

Breast cancer and compliance with mammography screening guidelines, maternal health and teen pregnancy are specific health and health care issues affecting women in the Rush service area. Rush will serve as a safety net for family planning, reproductive health care and support services in underserved communities. Rush also supports programs offering screening and diagnostic services to female populations.

## **Mental Health**

Mental health illness, such as depression, is a serious public health issue affecting many residents in the Rush service area. It may often lead to substance and alcohol abuse, and may greatly impact the livelihoods of our youth populations. Rush is committed to promoting the understanding of the social and biological determinants of poor mental health. Rush also provides patient-centered health services to combat substance abuse and other mental illnesses in underserved populations

## **Asthma and Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease**

Asthma and chronic lower respiratory disease affect people of all ages in the Rush service area. Furthermore, there are lifestyle behaviors, such as cigarette smoking, that greatly impacts the chance of developing chronic lower respiratory diseases. Rush is committed to educational programs and lifestyle interventions that help individuals manage their respiratory issues.

### Integration with Operational Planning

Rush has developed a Community Health Needs Assessment Steering Committee that is comprised of operational leadership throughout the organization. One focus of the steering committee is to review CHNA data and help create strategies, which has been utilized by these individuals in creating upcoming operational plans. In addition, the Rush annual budget process identifies and prioritizes strategic and operational initiatives for current and future fiscal years. This process focuses on helping to meet annual goals, which includes creating and maintaining partnerships in our community. The process is aligned with operational leadership. Each operational area: clinical, academic, research and corporate services has taken into consideration the outcomes of the CHNA and implementation strategy process and has supported program and partnership efforts through the operational budget process. Current and future programmatic investments will be assessed and funded based in part on how these initiatives address the top health needs identified by the Community Health Needs Assessment.

### Health Needs Not Addressed

This implementation strategy addresses all top health needs of the community identified in the CHNA process. Rush also supports many programs and partnerships that address additional health needs or are outside the Rush service area. Rush remains committed to programming that address all health needs, as it best aligns with other strategic and operational imperatives. This report focuses on program examples that are aligned with the strategies, service area and top health needs identified.

## *Implementation Strategy & Action Plans*

This section outlines five specific strategies that Rush has created to address the top health needs described above. These strategies include:

1. **Direct patient care:** This strategy includes any direct patient care, both preventive and acute care, provided by Rush faculty, staff or students to disadvantaged populations. This can include, but is not limited to:
  - Health care services provided by students in real-life teaching scenarios at community practice sites and community centers
  - Screening and diagnostic services
  - Social work services integrated into primary care settings

The goal, over the next three years, is to commit \$4,500,000 to programs and partnerships that provide these services. Rush also sets a goal of providing 30,000 staff, faculty and student volunteer hours and aim to have 75,000 person encounters via these programs in the Rush service area.

2. **Health education and promotion:** This strategy includes any program providing educational resources or opportunities that promote preventive lifestyle behaviors and/or the self management of disease. This can include, but is not limited to:

- Counseling
- Health fairs, classes, and workshops
- Lectures and presentations

The goal, over the next three years, is to commit \$1,200,000 to programs and partnerships that provide these services. Rush also sets a goal of providing 15,000 staff, faculty and student volunteer hours and serve 135,000 people via these programs in our community.

3. **Pipeline training programs:** This strategy includes directing existing and future programs that train and educate people of all age groups on careers in health science, focusing on building the pipeline for future health care careerists. This can include, but is not limited to:

- Educational events for young children on job opportunities and training in a health care setting
- Educational events and on-the-job training for adults interested in pursuing a career in health-related field

The goal, over the next three years, is to commit \$170,000 to programs and initiatives that are focused on pipeline development, and to provide 7,000 staff, faculty and student volunteer hours and train or expose 22,000 people in our community to health science and the health care field.

4. **Community-based Research Studies:** This strategy focuses on finding internal and external means to fund community-based research or studies developing evidence-based approaches to addressing top health needs. This can include, but is not limited to:

- Investigations on the reasons for health disparities between vulnerable populations
- Development and testing of innovative interventions

The goal, over the next three years, is to commit a specified amount of Rush faculty and research dollars obtained in the community in support of these studies that investigate ways we can improve the health needs in the Rush service area.

5. **Allocation of corporate resources and building partnerships:** This strategy will focus on the overall organizational and corporate resources that are dedicated to building partnerships and support organizations that address health needs in the community. This can include, but is not limited to:

- Direct funding to community programs or partnerships
- Organizational-wide initiatives to raise money on behalf of community partners

The goal, over the next three years, is to support partnerships and programs external to Rush that address community health needs, equal to \$250,000. Rush also plans to work with existing and new partners to support programming that focuses on health needs in the community. Rush, over the next three years, commits to raising \$750,000 in support of these partners.

Below are examples of existing programming and outreach initiatives that already are making measurable impacts on the top health needs in our community. The examples listed are not the complete list of programs that Rush supports and where Rush faculty, staff and students volunteer. Rush conducts a Community Benefit Report for the State of Illinois Attorney General. Additional programming can be found in that report. Some of the programs mentioned below, may have several components and may address more than one strategy. A program is highlighted in the strategy category that it most represents. As mentioned previously, current programming is and future programming will be aligned with the previously defined strategies and top health needs of community as is feasible with resource constraints, strategic orientation of the organization and other internal and external factors.

### Strategy: Direct Patient Care

- The *BRIGHTEN Program* was developed to address **depression** and anxiety among older adults by integrating existing health care resources and technologies to overcome the barriers characteristic of healthcare delivery. BRIGHTEN is a patient-centered assessment and treatment program that relies on a virtual infrastructure for team communication and treatment planning.
- The *Community Health Clinic* provides free preventive and primary health care services to members of the community who cannot afford or are ineligible for medical insurance. The serves **improve access to care** by offering health services ranging from routine physicals and immunization programs to a full laboratory and pharmacy. First- and second-year medical students triage patients, inquire about the nature and course of patients illnesses, perform laboratory procedures, and observe and participate while patients are examined and treated. Third- and fourth-year medical students examine patients as well as diagnose and recommend a treatment plan under the close supervision of attending physicians. Students also work with an otolaryngologist at Rush who is scheduled on a monthly basis. This clinic has a multilingual population with the majority Spanish-speaking and a significant Polish-speaking contingent.
- In 1998, Rush and the Cook County Health and Hospitals System collaborated to create the *Ruth M. Rothstein CORE Center*. The CORE Center is the nation's first public-private outpatient facility dedicated to **improving access to care** for people with HIV/AIDS. Today, it is the largest, most comprehensive provider of HIV/AIDS treatment in the Midwest. Faculty members from Rush and Stroger Hospital work side-by-side delivering care to this population and serving patients with tuberculosis, hepatitis and other infectious diseases. Clinical research projects at the center seek new answers in screening, treating and halting the spread of infectious diseases.
- The *Faculty Practice and Outreach*, administered by the College of Nursing, provides healthcare services to underserved individuals, families, and communities at a variety of diverse community practice sites. These sites include School-Based Health Centers, employee wellness programs, **women's health** clinics, nurse practitioner primary care, and case management programs for **mental illness** and **substance abuse**. Most of the recipients of care at the faculty practice sites are uninsured or underinsured and rely on the Rush Faculty Practices sites as their main healthcare source. In addition to care provided by Rush College of Nursing (CON) faculty practitioners, Rush nursing students provide care at various Faculty Practice sites delivering healthcare and health education programs. These services **improve access to care**, as many recipients of care are not charged for their services, and Faculty Practice and Outreach practitioners receive reimbursement from various community partners at a rate well below fair market value for their work.

- The *Freedom Center* is a clinic based at a nearby Salvation Army **improves access to care** by providing free health care for men and employees currently participating in the facility's **substance abuse** program. Medical students take histories, perform physical exams and develop diagnosis and treatment plans with the patients
- The *Haymarket Center* is a 400 bed medical detox facility that serves 18,000 mostly homeless and indigent residents of Illinois. Rush formed a partnership with Haymarket to **improve access to care** by providing triage, histories, and physical exams along with distribution of medication.
- The *Komen Culturally Competent Breast Center Navigation* approach provides health education and treatment programs for medically underserved women. This program strives to reduce the disparity that exists between minority and Caucasian women in access to high quality screening mammograms and ensures that women screened at Rush receive an ongoing navigation and treatments for **breast cancer**.
- The *Medical Home Network* **improves access to care** by establishing connections to information, patients and other providers to enhance the quality of patient care across Rush and seven primary care practices.
- The *RU Caring* program is a student-run interdisciplinary community service organization that served the uninsured and underserved populations of the city of Chicago. RU Caring services **improve access to care** by providing basic vital checks; physical exams; dental, vision and hearing screenings; immunizations; disease screenings; health and **nutrition** education; health benefits enrollment; and referrals for follow up care.
- The *Rush Wellness Program* **improves access to care** by providing evidence based programs and health promotion and chronic disease management services to primarily minority older adults. Advanced practice nurses, dietitians, pharmacists, and social workers from Rush or supported by Rush educate and care for older adults at five Chicago senior centers.
- The *Rush Center for Veterans and their Families* program improves the lives of service members who deployed in support of the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan and have returned to civilian life with combat-related conditions such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and/or traumatic brain injury (TBI). The program offers job training programs, child and family services, **mental health** counseling, and TBI treatment and rehabilitative services.
- The *School-Based Health Clinics*, administered by the College of Nursing, provide primary care, intermittent care, sexual and reproductive health care, prenatal care and mental health care to students in local high schools. The goals of this health care and education collaboration include improved immunization rates, decreased incidence of infectious disease, decreased emergency room usage, detecting and treating illness, healthy baby deliveries, increased access to **mental health services**, success in **teen pregnancy** prevention programs, and students establishing healthy **nutrition** and **physical activity levels**.
- The *Stemi Community Outreach Program* is an outreach program to the community hospitals of the city of Chicago that do not have catheterization laboratories. This program addresses **heart**

**disease & cardiovascular risk factors** by offering standardized and improved approach to patient care in management of Acute Coronary Events.

### Strategy: Health Education & Promotion

- The *Department of Food and Nutrition* staff, faculty and students volunteer at multiple food pantries, promote **nutrition** at health fairs, and provide nutrition classes to children, high school students and senior citizens.
- The *Health Promotion: Chronic Disease Self-Management Program* in Health and Aging offers interactive, six-week workshops to help those with ongoing health conditions — such as arthritis, heart or lung disease and **asthma** — maintain control and confidence in managing their health while doing the things that matter most in life. This workshop is a way to meet new people, share experiences and learn ways to improve one's life
- The *Health Promotion: Diabetes Self-Management Program* in Health and Aging is an interactive, six-week workshop to help those with type 2 **diabetes** improve skills to manage diabetes and overall health. Participants learn about the importance of **healthy eating, physical activity**, stress management and medications among other self-management strategies.
- The *Maternal Advocates Program* partners with Simpson Academy, a local school for pregnant and parenting teenagers, in order to provide health education, guidance, and resources to girls prior to, during, and after child birth. Volunteers lead educational seminars and events on a large variety of topics, including child development, **women's health**, and career guidance.
- The *Mexican Consulate Health Outreach* program plans quarterly health education and screening events to address **social health disparities** in the Latino population. This interdisciplinary program educates attendees on a wide range of topics including **nutrition, diabetes management and hypertension**.
- The *Psychotherapy Services* in Rush Health and Aging provides specialized assessment and treatment of **depression**, anxiety and other **mental health** concerns for older adults. This program also helps older adults connect to community-based treatment providers.
- The *Rush Generations* program in Health and Aging plans a robust, year-round calendar of classes, workshops and health screenings that enhance physical and emotional wellbeing of adults and older adults. This program increase **physical activity levels** of older adults by offering fitness classes such as Zumba, Yoga, and Tai Chi.

### Strategy: Pipeline Training Programs

- *Malcolm X College (MXC)* and Rush have a rich, multi-year history of interactions and cooperative activities. These include hosting health occupation students' clinical rotations in nursing, surgical technology, radiologic technology, EMT/paramedic, and respiratory care at Rush and providing anatomy labs for MXC health occupations students. Rush also provides guest lecturers and recently began offering a monthly inter professional lunch and learn series for MXC students and faculty on issues and trends related to health care. This partnership



addresses **social determinants of health** through the promotion of workforce training and education.

- The *Chicago Area Schweitzer Fellows Program*, in partnership with Rush University and other health professions educational programs, cultivates aspiring health and human services professionals to be informed, concerned and involved with addressing health inequities. Each year, the Schweitzer Program provides 30 exceptional students with opportunities to design and implement projects that address **social determinants of health** by focusing on tutoring, violence prevention, health education, healthy lifestyles promotion, and outreach to vulnerable and marginalized groups.
- The *Instituto Health Science Career Academy* is specifically tailored for Latino students interested in fields of science and health care. Rush University students will work closely with the IHSCA staff to mentor high school students IHSCA opened September 2010. The IHSCA mentors address **social determinants of health** by giving students the necessary support and encouragement to strive for personal and academic success.
- The *Rush Center for Urban Health Equity* merges expertise from a broad range of scientific disciplines (including medical, biological, and behavioral sciences) to develop interventions and programs that reduce health disparities and address **social determinants of health**. This program also provides training opportunities for promising individuals from underrepresented and underserved communities to pursue careers in multidisciplinary research on health disparities.

#### **Strategy: Community-based Research Studies**

- The *BRIGHTEN Heart* trial is testing the hypothesis that an enhanced primary care delivery system intervention can reduce the risk of development of **cardiovascular disease** in low income elderly blacks and Hispanics. The overall purpose of the study is to reduce racial disparities in cardiovascular morbidity and mortality in black and Hispanic elderly by effectively controlling behavioral and psychosocial risk factors.
- The *CHART study* will test the value of a culturally-sensitive, multilevel, chronic care intervention for low-income patients hospitalized with **heart failure**.
- *The Community United to Challenge Asthma (CURA)* is a research study that compares a community health worker (CHW) self-management intervention to standard **asthma** education in high-risk Puerto Rican children in elementary and high school. During home visits, the family will be educated using a standard asthma core curriculum which is tailored to individual needs, strengths, and beliefs. The first aim is to assess the ability of the CHW intervention to reduce home asthma triggers and increase medication adherence in Puerto Rican children and adolescents with asthma. The second aim is to determine if any changes in triggers and adherence associated with this intervention are sustained 8 months after the completion of the active intervention.
- The *SWAN Study* tracks and analyzes the natural history of the menopausal transition. The Chicago site is studying the early pathogenesis of **cardiovascular disease** in women as well as sleep problems and **mental health**.

## Strategy: Allocation of Corporate Resources & Building Partnerships

- *Rush Charitable Contributions* is a program where Rush’s senior management allocates corporate funds to non-profit organizations who have a focus on health and other needs of their community. Donations are made based on the alignment of the requesting partner’s mission with Rush’s focus on the **health needs** of the community.
- The *Science and Math Excellence (SAME) Network* is a large-scale community service enterprise to improve the **social determinants of health** by focusing on education. Formed in 1990, the SAME Network provides students in these neighborhoods with the same opportunities to learn math and science as are available to their peers in more affluent areas. At the time of its formation, Rush Community Affairs staff spearheaded the SAME Network’s first effort to improve education in the area by raising funds from the community to build state-of-the-art science laboratories in local schools that lacked these facilities. Since then, the SAME Network has grown into a collaborative between Rush and 45 elementary schools, six high schools and many Chicago-area businesses. Several of its specific programs are mentioned in this plan as well.
- *Rush Heart Walk* team promotes **heart health** and associate camaraderie while raising lifesaving funds. For this event, Rush is closely aligned with the American Heart Association’s (AHA) mission of building healthier lives free of **cardiovascular diseases** and stroke. Our partnership is evidenced in our patient care, community education and employee wellness programs, and Heart Walk participation.
- The *United Way of Metropolitan Chicago* seeks to assist local communities of greatest need around income, education and health – the building blocks to a good quality of life. Each year, Rush employees raise money through an annual campaign to support the United Way mission, focused on the **social determinants of health** for individuals and families across the Chicagoland region.

## *Adoption of Implementation Strategy*

This report supports and responds to the Community Health Needs Assessment conducted by RUMC during this fiscal year and has been reviewed and adopted by the Rush University Medical Center Board of Trustees with the full support of the Government and Community Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees.

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Richard M. Jaffee  
Chair of the Board of Trustees  
Rush University Medical Center

Date



Rush is a not-for-profit health care, education and research enterprise comprising  
Rush University Medical Center, Rush University, Rush Oak Park Hospital and Rush Health.