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Executive Summary

This 2018 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) was conducted by Saint Joseph Hospital (SJH) in collaboration with the Denver Public Health Department (DPH) and the Denver Department of Public Health and Environment (DDPHE) to identify significant community health needs and to inform the development of a Community Health Implementation Plan (CHIP) to address current needs.

Founded in Denver in 1873 by the Sisters of Charity Leavenworth, Saint Joseph Hospital was the first private hospital in Colorado. Today it is recognized as one of the top hospitals in the nation and largest private teaching hospital in Denver. Specializing in a variety of areas including advanced heart care, pregnancy and childbirth, and cancer treatment, Saint Joseph Hospital continues to offer the high-quality, affordable health care that has served Denver for more than 145 years. By working closely with top physicians, Kaiser Permanente and National Jewish Health, the leading respiratory hospital in the nation, Saint Joe’s is able to provide some of the best inpatient and outpatient care in Colorado. Saint Joseph Hospital is part of SCL Health, a faith-based, nonprofit healthcare organization dedicated to improving the health of the people and communities it serves, especially those who are poor and vulnerable.

Summary of Prioritized Needs

For purposes of this report, SJH’s community is defined as northeast Denver. This includes the nine Denver neighborhoods immediately north of the hospital campus: City Park, City Park West, Clayton, Cole, Elyria Swansea, Five Points, Northeast Park Hill, Skyland, and Whittier. With a 145-year presence in the same neighborhood of Denver, SJH has long served its Mission in this area and recommitted to the city of Denver with the opening of the new campus in 2014. This commitment, along with recognition that some of the city’s greatest disparities in mortality exist in these neighborhoods, led to the decision to define northeast Denver as the service area for the SJH CHNA.

Based on an assessment of secondary data at a county and sub-county level, the following were identified as significant health needs in northeast Denver. A summary of these needs is presented below in alphabetical order.

1. Access to Care
2. Behavioral Health/Substance Abuse
3. Childhood Obesity
4. Dental Care Access
5. Economic Instability
6. Food Insecurity
7. Sexually Transmitted Infection Prevalence (STI)

Access to Care

In 2018, nine percent of the Denver population had no medical insurance coverage. In the SJH service area, the spectrum of uninsured individuals ranges from seven percent uninsured in the City Park neighborhood to 20 percent uninsured in the Elyria Swansea neighborhood.

Behavioral Health/Substance abuse

Those who suffer from substance use disorders are twice as likely to suffer from mental illness like mood and anxiety disorders. More than 1/3 of Denver adults report at least one poor
menthal health day in the past month. Health issues related to excessive alcohol consumption, binge drinking, prescription drug and illicit drug use data were significant.

**Childhood Obesity**
In 2017 the average obesity prevalence across Denver neighborhoods was 14.3%; the obesity prevalence within the SJH neighborhood’s ranged from 2.2% to 26.2%, with over half showing percentages well above the state average 10.7%. (SJH Neighborhoods – City Park, City Park West, Clayton, Cole, Elyria Swansea, and Five Points).

**Dental Care**
Good oral health contributes to overall good health. Cavities are the most common childhood illness and can continue into adulthood. Fourteen percent of children screened in Denver had untreated cavities. Four out of 10 Denver adults didn’t see a dentist last year. Dental decay is preventable and routine preventative dental visits are now covered by Colorado Medicaid and CHIP+. With an extensive population of individuals and families covered by Medicaid in the SJH service area there is opportunity to raise awareness about this insurance coverage and connect families to care through resource referral.

**Economic Stability**
Economic status plays a major role in access to education, health care, and housing to name a few. Public health research within the context of the Social Determinants of Health now draws a greater correlation between economic conditions and conditions of health and well-being. With support from Denver Public Health, we were able to leverage a GIS mapping and analytics tool to gain neighborhood specific data about poverty, education, language and un-/underinsurance levels. A link is provided to this important information on page 24.

**Food Insecurity**
Society has long acknowledged the direct health impact of how and what we eat. For some Denver communities access to healthy and affordable food options pose a major challenge to improving their health. Approximately 27,000 Denver residents have low income and low access to a full service grocery store. Five of the nine neighborhoods in the SJH service area are food deserts. 134,390 Denver households are eligible for the supplemental nutrition assistance program (SNAP) but only 62% of eligible households are enrolled.

**STI Prevalence**
Denver has much higher rates of Chlamydia (1,176 vs. 268 per 100,000) and HIV/AIDS (911 vs. 415 per 100,000) than the state of Colorado.

**Assessment Methodology and Process**
In March 2017 SJH met with representatives from DPH and DDPHE to begin the process of identifying existing health needs facing northeast Denver. Quantitative and qualitative data sources were used to inform the process including the 2014 Health of Denver Report, the Colorado Department of Health and Environment’s Health Equity Map, and other resources. Qualitative data was collected through two Community Input Sessions performed by SJH and DDPHE. Findings were presented in May 2017 to the SJH Community Health Implementation and Outreach Council (CHOIC), an interdisciplinary group of hospital providers, associates and external stakeholders (attendee list, Appendix A), who provided input. The Colorado Health Assessment and Planning System Prioritization Scoring Tool was used to rate each health priority, with considerations for community, disparities, capacity to impact, and overall...
importance to address. Of the significant health needs facing northeast Denver, it was noted that most are driven by economic instability and the group suggested exploring this topic further.

After analysis of available data, stakeholder prioritization, community input and the hospital’s ability to impact, as well as current momentum, the following three health needs were selected as areas of focus for the SJH Community Health Improvement Plan: Behavioral Health/Substance Use, Economic Instability, and Food Insecurity.

The next step in this process is the development of the implementation plan to address selected priorities.

Project Oversight

The Community Health Needs Assessment process was overseen by:

Chuck Ault
Regional Director, Community Health Improvement
Saint Joseph Hospital and Lutheran Medical Center

Collaborators
Denver Department of Public Health and Environment
Denver Public Health

This report is publically available at the following locations:

https://www.sclhealth.org/locations/saint-joseph-hospital/about/community-benefit/

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**Board approval for the 2018 SJH CHNA was on December 17, 2018**