



St. John's Episcopal Hospital

One Year  
Community Service  
Plan Update  
2010

## 1. MISSION STATEMENT

### A. Mission Statement for St. John's Episcopal Hospital

The mission of the Episcopal Health Services Inc. of the Diocese of Long Island is to provide quality health care with an emphasis on patient safety through its hospital, ambulatory care facilities, nursing homes and continuing medical education, recognizing the emerging life-care needs of the communities served.

The mission shall be overseen by the Bishop of Long Island and guided by the teachings and traditions of the Episcopal Church. An essential element of this ministry is pastoral care provided by a chaplaincy program sensitive to the faiths and traditions of those served.

### B. Changes to the Mission Statement

In 2008, EHS added "continuing medical education" as an essential service through which patient care is provided. EHS is committed to the provision of quality medical education to meet the long term, in addition to current and emerging, medical needs of the communities served.

## 2. SERVICE AREA

### A. Hospital Service Area

The Hospital's service area remained the same in 2010.

St. John's Episcopal Hospital is a 257-bed community teaching hospital located in Far Rockaway, Queens County, New York City. The Rockaway peninsula is a narrow band of land adjoined to both Queens and Nassau Counties. It is also connected to New York City by two toll bridges, the Marine Park Bridge and the Cross Bay Bridge as well as the A subway line of the New York City Metropolitan Transit Authority. Approximately 111,113 residents inhabit the relatively isolated peninsula (2008 Claritas Inc.).

St. John's has served the community for more than 100 years. As a not-for-profit faith-based

### St. John's Episcopal Hospital Utilization 2009

Adult and Pediatric Discharges	10,500
Babies Born	940
Patient Days	79,700
Emergency Department Visits	25,600
Ambulatory Care Visits and Procedures	65,250
Hemodialysis Visits	13,400
Outpatient Mental Health Visits	41,000

institution, it is deeply committed to improving the health of the community and offers a wide range of services, as well as community outreach and health education.

The Hospital defines its primary service area as the Far Rockaway area, where the majority of its patients reside. Secondly, patients reside in the Rockaway neighborhoods of Arverne, Rockaway Beach and Belle Harbor, as well as the Nassau County town of Inwood.

### 3. PARTICIPANTS AND HOSPITAL ROLE

St. John's Episcopal Hospital collaborates with numerous community-based organizations to identify community health needs and develop plans to address these needs. The Hospital reaches out and also responds to numerous requests for cooperation and participation in the community. Its community health partners include:

Community Advisory Board: The Hospital continues to work together with the Community Advisory Board whose members continue to raise areas of community need.

St. Mary's Star of the Sea Roman Catholic Church: St. John's continues work together with St. Mary's which serves a large Hispanic congregation. The Hospital provides monthly blood pressure screenings to the congregants of St. Mary's. The screenings have been helpful by identifying those with high blood pressure and making physician referrals to those without primary care physicians.

In addition screening and follow-up was provided for nutrition counseling, podiatry care and ophthalmology care.

New York City Councilman James Sanders Jr., Addabbo Health Center, local fitness trainer, Peninsula Hospital Center

St. John's and its partners met with the goal of reducing obesity, promoting physical activity and good health.

Seaside Adult Services Catholic Charities: St. John's provided educational talks to the participants of the program.

Jewish Community Council of Far Rockaway: As a result of discussions with JCC of Far Rockaway, a program to address breast cancer and the Jewish community was held.

Ready Rockaway including Addabbo Health Center, Peninsula Hospital and others: A coalition of Rockaway health providers and community-based organizations recognize the need for planning for emergencies since Rockaway is a peninsula surrounded by water and attached to the rest of the New York via numerous bridges. St. John's is an active member of Ready Rockaway.

### Mental Health

St. John's continues to work with the Queens Mental Health Council, which meets monthly. Many of the Council's service priorities are highly pertinent to the Hospital's service area and include in-community services such as mobile crisis, home-based crisis intervention services; additional children's day treatment and acute inpatient slots, and more. It also continues to meet and participate in the Queens Child/Adolescent and Crisis Committee; Rockaway Children's Committee; the Citywide Children's Committee; the Queens Borough Based Council; and CPI: Jamaica (Community Project Initiative).

## **4. IDENTIFICATION OF PUBLIC HEALTH PRIORITIES**

The Hospital's prevention agenda items remain the same in 2010. They are:

### Inactivity

Inactivity, another modifiable risk factor, is also high in the Rockaways, with 44% stating that they do no physical activity. Only 20% of residents meet the amount of activity recommended by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

Increased levels of obesity and associate diseases commonly occur in areas of poverty, with a direct relationship between high obesity rates and high poverty rates. Although obesity rates have risen in the United States, it has been shown that the highest levels are found in communities with limited resources, high rates of minorities and lower education levels, all factors found in Far Rockaway.

### Chronic Disease and Physical Activity/Nutrition

With input from members of local community-based organizations, churches and synagogues and its local community health partners, St. John's assessed that of the Prevention Agenda toward the Healthiest State set by the New York State Department of Health, Chronic Disease and Physical Activity/Nutrition most met the needs of the Rockaway community. The statistical data supports the need to address heart disease as a longtime healthcare concern in the Rockaways as well as its preventable risk factors of obesity and inactivity. Indicators included the high death rate caused by heart disease, high rates of hospitalization due to heart disease, the high rate of cholesterol among residents, and prevalence of diabetes. For Physical Activity/Nutrition, indicators included high rates of obesity among children and adults and who had less physical activity.

Additional criteria for selecting these two Agenda items included the need raised by community organizations in the past, close local partners interested in these Agenda items, and health care professionals and services available to lead and support the plan and initiatives taken.

Both Agenda items represent ongoing programs addressing these concerns that have been supported by community partners in the past.

## 5. UPDATE ON PLAN OF ACTION

### NEW YORK STATE PREVENTION AGENDA PRIORITY AREA: CHRONIC DISEASE

#### Health Screenings and Education:

In 2009, St. John's said it conducts approximately 20 screenings a year throughout the community at street fairs, senior centers, churches, and New York City Housing Authority developments, and with local community health providers such as breast cancer support groups.

- Nearly doubled number of screening and educational events –

In the past year, since the last community service plan, St. John's nearly doubled its screenings for high blood pressure, cholesterol, and diabetes, as well as talks on chronic diseases, totaling 39 in number.

- Increased numbers of patients screened for

Disease	Total No.
High Blood Pressure –	1,079
Diabetes -	53
High cholesterol -	52

- Providing greater access to care

For the first time, there was an effort to determine if patients were being followed by a doctor and to make appointments if the patient had no primary care physician. The number of appointments made was 74.

- Need to improve record keeping by staff for determination of high screenings, for counseling, and for clinic appointments. Better education of staff and a better form should help.

- Need to improve follow-through with Ambulatory Care to help determine if appointments are being kept by patients.

- Train more staff in diabetes and cholesterol screening.

**NEW YORK STATE PREVENTION AGENDA PRIORITY AREA:  
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY/NUTRITION/CHRONIC DISEASE**

**Healthy Hearts for Kids**

Healthy Hearts for Kids is an educational and support group for children at risk for unhealthy lifestyles and their caregivers. Led by two pediatricians and a nutritionist, monthly meetings offer topical discussions on healthy eating, recipes, food demonstrations, and physical activity and include trips to the supermarket for on-hands instruction of food purchasing. The program includes a health assessment.

Evaluation: The program is moving to develop a different model of program to individual appointments. The decision to change the program was based on uneven participation and difficulty recruiting participants.

**NEW YORK STATE PREVENTION AGENDA PRIORITY AREA:  
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY/CHRONIC DISEASE**

**Rockaway Walks**

Rockaway Walks is a collaboration among local Rockaway health activists, New York City Councilman James Sanders Jr., Addabbo Health Center, St, John's and others. The program includes weekly walks led by a fitness trainer, and stretching and instruction on proper exercise to reduce risk of injury. The program is supported by the local newspaper where columns on health and nutrition appear that support the program.

- Increasing participants: Rockaway Walks has been able to attract a steady group of people to its weekly walks and provide a regular activity for exercise. In 2010 53 people participated in Rockaway Walks.
- Measuring weight loss: Of the 53 people who came to Rockaway Walks, 9 weighed in at both the beginning and end of the program. Of the 9, 6 lost weight and 2 lost more than 20 pounds over the 9 weeks. Because of the informality of the program, it is hard to get more consistent data.
- Demonstration of proper ways to exercise: Through its fitness trainer, Rockaway Walks has been able to demonstrate proper ways to walk and increase joint flexibility.
- Link to year-round exercise: Rockaway Walks fitness trainer has created a link throughout the year to programs offered at York College in Queens where participants can choose to continue individual exercise goals.

### **Non-prevention agenda programs:**

The Diabetes Education Support Group continued to meet and provide up-to-date information and education as well as support for its participants. The Prepared Childbirth Program also continued to meet as well but requires more support to increase numbers of participants.

## **6. DISSEMINATION OF THE REPORT TO THE PUBLIC**

The Hospital's Community Service Plan was available on its website at the following link: <http://www.ehs.org/stjohnshospital/communityserviceplan.html>

Also on the Hospital's website is the latest Community Wellness Calendar.

## **7. CHANGES IMPACTING COMMUNITY HEALTH:**

St. John's has been working hard to improve the quality and service provided to patients and has achieved the following:

### **Improved Core Measures and Patient Satisfaction**

Significant improvements in the quality of care and patient satisfaction at St. John's Episcopal Hospital have been publicly reported over the past year. On key core measures, St. John's is providing the gold standard of care on heart attack, heart failure, and pneumonia. In some cases, the Hospital exceeds New York State averages and these core measures rank among the core measures of major New York City academic medical centers.

Patient satisfaction scores as reported by HCAHPS have increased significantly over the past three years since St. John's scores were publicly reported. The percentage of patients who rated the Hospital a 9 or 10 (10 being the highest), rose 14 points, a 40% increase; and the percentage of patients who would definitely recommend the Hospital to others, rose 15 points or 40.3%.

### **Family Resource Center Established**

Through the New York Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, the Hospital established a Family Resource Center in Jamaica and Far Rockaway, Queens, to provide a comprehensive range of direct family support services to parents and caregivers whose children (0-24 years old) have been identified as having, or at risk of developing, emotional, behavioral, or mental health challenges. Services offered include youth peer-to-peer support and information.

### **Green Market**

St. John's partnered with community organization, Culinary Kids, to provide a weekly Green Market for the community and staff from May through September. Access to fresh produce is limited in the Rockaways so the Green Market helped to provide a venue for fresh and locally grown fruits and vegetables in a convenient location on the Hospital campus.

### Centralized Information Systems

The Hospital is implementing a centralized information system which will eventually bring it closer to an electronic medical record system.

## **8. FINANCIAL AID PROGRAM**

### Successes and Challenges

A significant - and growing - number of patients have applied for financial assistance since the initiation of the Financial Aid Program. In 2007, 2008 and 2009, 1,389, 2,016, and 2,153 cases, respectively, applied for assistance. The growing numbers of patients applying for financial assistance show that more patients who are uninsured or underinsured are able to receive health care and can be reassured by the knowledge that a program is in place to help them with the costs. Patients and the Hospital are very pleased with the overall success of the program.

Challenges to the process include: 1. Immigration status - patients are reluctant to provide information; 2. Patients claiming to be uninsured when they are; 3. Patients' whose initial claims of lack of income are determined to be false and do not qualify for assistance. There are also cultural barriers.

In addition, the financial aid application process is time-consuming and labor-intensive.

There are no other foreseeable changes that will have an impact on the Hospital's provision of community health programs and/or financial aid.