

## Executive Summary

*The Health of Morrison County* is a comprehensive community health needs assessment (CHNA) conducted by three partners—Morrison County Public Health (MCPH), Morrison County Social Services (MCSS) and St. Gabriel’s Hospital. It is modeled after the assessment process outlined in *Assessing and Addressing Community Health Needs*, a publication developed by the Catholic Health Association, with additional evidence-based practices offered by Catholic Health Initiatives—the parent organization for St. Gabriel’s Hospital. *The Health of Morrison County* has six sections: 1) a report on a written/email survey that was mailed to county residents and distributed via various email lists throughout the county (Section I – What the People Told Us); 2) a report on the results of more than 20 face-to-face interviews with community stakeholders (Section II: What Stakeholders Told Us); 3) a report on secondary data sources containing information on the health of the people of Morrison County (Section III: What the Secondary Data Told Us); 4) a directory listing of the health system capabilities for addressing the health needs of the people of Morrison County, including both system capacity as well as some of the gaps in the health resources available in the county; 5) a brief summary and conclusions based on the previous first four sections (Section V: Summary and Conclusions); and a three-year action plan for improving the health of Morrison County residents (Section VI: Implementation Strategy - Our Three-Year Action Plan).

The written survey provided useful information on community perceptions of the health of Morrison County, including what respondents thought were the most serious community health issues that were impacting the quality of life in the county. Obesity was listed as the most serious health issue by respondents. In addition, several of the top 12 issues were related to chemical use and abuse or mental health. Chronic disease was also a concern as were stress-related and socioeconomic issues. While the overall respondents to the survey are slightly younger and more affluent than the county population as a whole, we believe the written survey provides an accurate view of public perceptions of the health issues facing the county.

The stakeholder interviews confirmed a lot of the data from the written survey. Stakeholders with close contact to the “poor” were specifically sought out for their opinions to ensure that the needs of individuals in poverty in the county had a “voice” in the survey process. In addition, local health leaders and others with in-depth knowledge of the local health care environment were included in the interviews, which were conducted “gratis” by the Initiative Foundation. Stakeholders spoke of eight common themes related to the health issues facing the county. Obesity, mental health and chronic disease were common topics of the interviewees. The stakeholder interviews provided qualitative and more in-depth information surrounding community health issues, including their perceptions of what may be helpful in addressing the health needs in the county.

The search for secondary data (data, in most cases, collected by someone other than the community partners through a written survey or personal interviews) again confirmed the perceptions of written survey respondents and stakeholders. The list of county-specific data sources included in the CHNA is extensive (see Appendices III.A – M, pages A-21 through A-89). *The County Health Rankings* is one of the data sources that will be utilized to measure our progress toward achieving improved health in the county. People with interests in a specific health topic are encouraged to review the List of Appendices (page A-1). Data for Morrison County is included in the individual appendices. High points and summaries of the various secondary data are included in Section III of the CHNA.

An easy-to-use comprehensive directory of health care resources in Morrison County doesn't exist. Such a directory was compiled as part of the CHNA, in order to determine what assets are available to address the primary community health issues and where there are "gaps" in the resources available. The county has fewer primary care providers, mental health providers and dentists per capita than state and national benchmarks. The county also doesn't have inpatient treatment facilities for either mental health or chemical dependency, although both services are available approximately 30 minutes from the county seat in Little Falls and not presenting a significant barrier to accessing services. Domestic violence resources—such as a women's shelter and a child visitation center are also not available in the county. Generally speaking, Morrison County has sufficient resources to care for the people of Morrison County, with the exceptions noted previously (primary care, mental health and dental services).

A summary of all information sources—written survey, stakeholder interviews, secondary data collection and health assets directory—shows that community agencies, including the hospital, need to be more effective in utilizing their health care assets to improve the health of the people in the county. There needs to be better coordination among the various entities working on health issues and shortages of primary care, mental health and dental providers need to be addressed in some fashion. *The County Health Rankings* will be among the data sources CHNA collaborators will be utilizing to determine how effective our strategies are in addressing community health needs.

The implementation strategy is our blueprint for improving the health of Morrison County over the next three years. It was developed in collaboration with a variety of community individuals representing several organizations. The implementation strategy will primarily address three core areas: chronic disease, obesity and mental health. In a more supportive role, St. Gabriel's Hospital will explore with its community health partners (Morrison County Public Health, Morrison County Social Services and others) how the hospital can assist in addressing chemical dependency and poverty in the community. A collective and integrated effort is needed to address these broader, societal concerns.

The Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) is both the cornerstone and foundation of the St. Gabriel's Hospital (community) implementation strategy. It is what aligns the hospital's strategic plan with the CHNA. It is also the base from which all health improvement activities are derived. We believe the PCMH will favorably impact the health of the people of Morrison County in a variety of ways, marshalling resources needed to make health improvements on a case-by-case basis.

Success in achieving the goals and objectives in the CHNA action plan depends upon further developing the relationships with the communities we serve and the continued participation in health improvement activities and strategies by individuals and organizations throughout Morrison County. The CHNA is a vital first step toward improving *The Health of Morrison County*.