



PRIORITY OF HEALTH NEEDS

Based upon both the Community Needs Assessment for Region 12 and the extensive community survey prepared by our hospital, we have prioritized the following as our target list of community health needs to focus on:

Adult Diabetes

Obesity (and Low Income Preschool Obesity)

Potentially Preventable Hospitalization

Mental Health Issues Relating to Access and Shortage of Mental Health Professionals

Inappropriate Utilization of Emergency Room

Tentative Narrative of How Falls Community Hospital

Might Meet the Community Needs

1. Adult Diabetes: As can be seen in both the region and the community, this is a major problem. We currently have health fairs where we have vendors providing free finger sticks. We have put on a diabetes drive through and partnered with the HEB food store locally in a health event that also provided free blood sugar tests. We are planning to continue support in this area and possibly have a diabetes support group hosted by our facility.
2. Obesity: Adult and preschool obesity are ranked very high both in the Region 16 assessment and also through the Survey conducted by the Hospital. Changes in this area are important to the overall health of the community. This applies to low income preschool obesity as well as seen on both assessments.

Falls Community has just promoted a weight and fitness program for all of its employees. This program is sponsored by the Texas Organics for Rural and Community Hospitals.

Falls Community has partnered with HEB food store locally to provide educational events geared toward healthy eating.

We also continually educate our patients when they are in our clinics by our providers.

Falls is presently in conversations with the mayor of Marlin to help develop a program to address this problem.

3. Potentially Preventable Hospitalization: This is a national as well as a regional and local problem. It is particularly acute in rural counties. Hospitalizations for the conditions below are called “potentially preventable”, because if the individual had access to and cooperated with appropriate outpatient healthcare, the hospitalization would likely not have occurred:
 1. Bacterial Pneumonia;
 2. Dehydration;
 3. Urinary Tract Infection;
 4. Angina (without procedures);
 5. Congestive Heart Failure;
 6. Hypertension (High Blood Pressure);
 7. Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease or Asthma in Older Adults;
 8. Diabetes Short-term Complications; and
 9. Diabetes Long-term Complications

As an entity, Falls Community Hospital and Clinic has two clinics in Falls County and two clinics in the neighboring counties of McLennan and Robertson to help address this on an outpatient basis as opposed to the more expensive inpatient route. We will continue to look for ways to help this problem.

4. **Mental Health Issues Relating to Access and Shortage of Mental Health Professionals:** There is definitely a need for mental health professionals in Falls County. We currently have one full time physician doing only mental health services in our Rural Health Clinics. We also have on Physician Assistant who has a specialty in treating mental health patients. We will continue to monitor this area. We also have a psychiatrist on staff for the hospital.
5. **Inappropriate Utilization of Emergency Room:** Our challenge has always been that we must see ALL patients that present in our ER regardless of their ability to pay. We do have a Rural Health Clinic that is open during the weekday to handle minor emergencies. However, after regular clinic hours and on weekends we are the only healthcare provider available. We plan to continue to concentrate on this area to see if any other alternative might be available.