

North Carolina Medical Care Commission
Executive Summary: Community Health Improvement Plan
(Hospitals)

Organization: CaroMont Health Date: FYE June 30, 2008

1. Statement of organizations mission and commitment to community health improvement:

The vision of CaroMont Health is to be the healthcare provider of choice in the region, offering state of the art care, education and support programs to foster wellness, cure illness and improve health. In support of this vision the mission of CaroMont Health is to provide exceptional healthcare to the communities we serve. Program development is driven by the following values: quality of patient care, respect for the individual, integrity, open and responsible communication, pride of ownership, customer service and patient satisfaction, fiscal responsibility, teamwork, and innovation. Finally, CaroMont Health's customer service philosophy is that it is an expectation that patients and families will know: They are the sole purpose for CaroMont's existence. They are included in care decisions. They are safe, and that CaroMont employees care unconditionally.

Strategy and Objectives

CaroMont Health undertakes a comprehensive assessment of its services every three to five years to determine strategic changes required to address the changing healthcare environment, and thus the overall program directions that need to be pursued. On an annual basis, goals and objectives are established that will allow progress towards the desired direction. Many of CaroMont Health's Fiscal Year 2008 objectives related to activities to improve the health of the community, such as:

- 1) Renovate area in the ED for Psych patients to provide more privacy and a safer environment.
- 2) Renovation or area and redesign of intake for "care initiation" area in ED to streamline triage and ED through-put.
- 3) Participating in, and/or sponsoring/cosponsoring 10 or more healthcare related community events or programs that contribute to improving the health status of the communities we serve.
- 4) Publish at least 24 articles on health education authored by various GMH Medical Staff or employees.
- 5) Participating in at least 48 speaking engagements or promotions regarding various CaroMont Health services and programs.
- 6) Conduct or participate in at least 4 wellness health screenings.
- 7) Submit application for Primary Stroke Center certification.
- 8) Develop a case management program in the emergency department.

In addition, several of CaroMont Health's business objectives focused on improving the quality of care provided to our patients. Examples are:

- 1) Million Lives Campaign
- 2) AHA Hospital Quality Alliance/CMS Quality Initiative Demonstration Project,
- 3) HealthGrades
- 4) JCAHO Core Measures
- 5) Leapfrog
- 6) National Patient Safety goals (NPSG)
- 7) Surgical Care Improvement Project (SCIP)

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- 8) Implementation of the Medication Administration Checking System (MAK) to reduce medication errors
- 9) Implementation of Smart IV pumps through-out the hospital

Gaston Memorial Hospital Foundation

The Gaston Memorial Hospital Foundation (a subsidiary of CaroMont Health) was established in 1985. In addition to the Foundation utilizing its investment earnings for donations, CaroMont Health donates up to 10% of its operating income to the GMH Foundation each year. During fiscal year 2008, \$1,187,275 in donations were distributed to charitable causes throughout Gaston County. Funds were given for the following organizations: Gaston Family Health Services, North Carolina Physicians Health Program (NCPHP), United Way, Gaston Together and Daniel Stowe Botanical Gardens. In addition, Foundation grants were provided to for the following: ED- child safety seats, indigent medications and services, productivity system for nursing, Came Summer Breeze (camp for children with asthma) H. Spurgeon Mackie Scholarship Fund, Dr. Lonnie Waggoner Scholarship Fund, and UNCC student partners program (fund salary of clinical facilitator as well as class supplies).

Gaston Memorial Hospital Foundation actively supports Gaston Family Health Services (GFHS), a private non-profit corporation providing medical and dental services to the uninsured and underinsured population of Gaston County. During fiscal year 2008, the Foundation donated \$480,778 to help cover their operating costs. This clinic is important to assuring that the uninsured and underinsured have access to health care in Gaston County. CaroMont Health is committed to assisting GFHS in providing for these patients who might otherwise go without primary care services.

United Way

CaroMont Health is a pace setter organization for United Way and in fiscal year 2008, 898 employees pledged \$217,970.00 to United Way. Since 1990, CaroMont Health has donated a 10% match of the United Way employee pledges to the employee hardship fund on an annual basis. Funds are distributed to CaroMont Health employees who experience an unforeseen catastrophic event (for example; fire, serious accident, etc.) during the year.

Gaston Community Healthcare Commission

In 1992 the Gaston Community Healthcare Commission (GCHC) was established with Gaston Memorial Hospital as a sponsoring organization. The GCHC has been a certified Healthy Carolinian Task Force since 1994. The purpose of this organization is to develop a workable community-wide agenda through a problem solving network of organizations and individuals to improve health status of Gaston County. As a designated Healthy Carolinian Task Force, initiatives have to be coordinated by a Board that is representative of the community, and document the impact that its initiatives have on health status. Since 1998, the following organizations have had a permanent position on the GCHC: Gaston Memorial Hospital, Gaston County Health Department, Gaston/Lincoln/Cleveland Mental Health Authority, Gaston Family Health Services, Gaston County Department of Social Services, Gaston County School System, Gaston College and Gaston Emergency Medical Services.

The 25 member GCHC Board directed the activities of seven initiatives that were undertaken to improve health status. These efforts focused on improving the health of children, assisting residents of all ages to make better life styles choices, and improving access and decreasing the cost of medical services.

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During 2003 the GCHC was transferred to Gaston Together. Gaston Together allows the GCHC to have broader exposure in the community, and greater ability to seek grants to assist with the implementation of the numerous initiatives, while taking a broader advocacy position for addressing local health issues. The GCHC has been identified as the point organization for addressing health issues as a part of Gaston County's Vision 2012. Vision 2012 is a collaborative effort between Gaston County and the Gaston County Chamber of Commerce to implement initiatives for addressing economic development, infrastructure development, housing, safety, social/arts, and health issues. All of these actions have resulted in a stronger Board and community involvement for GCHC in order to continue to address health related issues.

Health Insurance Enrollment Programs

Gaston Memorial Hospital has developed a program to assist uninsured and underinsured community members with enrollment in public programs. Seven employees assist individuals with enrollment in Medicaid, NC Health Choice, Medicare, Crime Victims program, food stamps, vocational rehab, public housing, Wal-Mart prescription program, meals on wheels and adult services at DSS at an annual cost of \$436,559.

2. Describe geographic service area and target populations for community initiatives:

The primary service area of CaroMont Health is Gaston County in North Carolina. However, because of the regional nature of multiple services and/or programs that are provided through the organization, we provide a substantial amount of health care services to residents outside Gaston County. These out of county residents primarily come from Cleveland and Lincoln Counties in North Carolina, as well as York and Cherokee Counties in South Carolina.

In fiscal year 2008, Gaston Memorial Hospital provided over \$47 million of uncompensated care services to patients who had no insurance representing 6.1% of total services provided. In addition, the hospital provided over \$119 million in services to Medicaid patients, representing 15.3% of the total services provided. No funding is received by CaroMont Health from Gaston County to provide this uncompensated care. Services are provided to all Gaston County residents, regardless of their ability to pay.

3. How are the programs in which you are involved funded?

All programs are funded from excess working capital. On occasion grants are received from The Duke Endowment, local foundations, federal or state agencies for specific programs, such as assistance with the start-up of parish nurse ministries, assistance with bioterrorism readiness, Breast Health Navigator position, and most recently the construction of the Hospice House.

4. Describe your methodology for determining community priorities and how you collaborate with others:

Community priorities are established through a number of mechanisms:

- Leadership opinions are sought to help identify needed services in the community.
- Telephone surveys are conducted on a periodic basis to gather opinions from residents in the service area, the most recent study was completed in the fall of 2006.
- Patient satisfaction data is analyzed to determine where and/or how services need to be improved.

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- Service area data (vital statistics, demographics and utilization) are analyzed for trends. This information is coordinated with public health data to determine voids and service area health problems.
 - Findings from community surveys/reports published by other organizations (United Way, Chamber of Commerce, Partnership for Children, Gaston County, etc.) are gathered and reviewed for pertinence to community health problems.
 - Gaston Memorial Hospital through the GCHC in conjunction with the Gaston County Health Department conducts a Community Assessment every four years. The first study was completed in 2004, with a follow-up survey currently underway, (Fall 2008). This assessment gathers opinions and is combined with public health data to determine the top four community-wide health issues.
 - Service area strengths, weaknesses and opportunities are used as a basis for establishing community priorities. All this information is used to establish organizational priorities, identify agencies and organizations to be involved in resolving community issues, and implement programs to resolve identified issues. Goals, objectives and strategies are established and the progress is evaluated on an annual basis.
 - Board members, senior management and department directors are involved in numerous organizations. Through this network of relationships, further information about the community and the needs of area residents and organizations are used in the development of programs and services available through CaroMont Health.
5. List current community service programs sponsored or co-sponsored:

Community Health Services

52 speakers for community meetings and or events were provided

58 seminars were provided covering topics such as;

Joint replacement – 6 seminars
Women's heart health - 3 seminars
Heart health – 7 events
Arthritis
Ostomy Care
Women's health
Lung Cancer
Mother Daughter Tea (Cancer Center event)
Evening for Women (Cancer Center event)
Walking the Cancer Journey
Breast Cancer Retreat
Adaptive Gardening – 3 events
Blessing & Anointing for Cancer patients
Breast cancer
Numerous topics relating to grief
Alzheimer's awareness
Freshstart (smoking cessation)
Colon cancer
Allergies
Vascular disease
Balloon sinuplasty
Incontinence and prolapse
MRSA, School injuries
Stroke awareness
Grocery store tours and healthy shopping tips
Good nutrition – 5 events

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- Advanced directives
- Look Good, Feel Better
- 27 health fairs were held providing services to 19 different organizations as well as a large health fair at the mall for the general public that reached over 5,000 participants.
- 19 on-going support groups
 - Breast Cancer
 - Living beyond cancer
 - I Can Cope
 - Cancer support
 - Just for kids and teens
 - Man-to-man prostate cancer
 - Spinal cord stimulator
 - Stroke
 - Widowed of Greater Gaston
 - Understanding Grief after loss
 - Widowed person's lunch bunch
 - Diabetes
 - Fibromyalgia
 - Multiple sclerosis
 - Parkinsons
 - Pulmonary
 - Implanted Cardio Defibrillator
 - Celiac
 - Death of a spouse
- 14 Screenings, including;
 - Prostate screening (2)
 - Glucose/Diabetes screening
 - Hearing screening
 - Skin Cancer screenings
 - Vascular screening
 - Depression/Holiday Grief
 - Colon Cancer screen
 - Numerous other screenings with over 1,200 attendees
- Five sports clinics were hosted
 - Two Soccer clinics
 - One baseball injury clinics
 - Two general sports injury clinics
- Super-sitters (baby sitting clinic for teens) with 133 attendees
- Camps
 - Phoenix (grief for children)
 - Summer Breeze (for children with asthma)
- Blood drives for Community Blood Center of Carolinas (4)
- Medical Explorers
- Seven staff provide enrollment assistance in public assistance programs.

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Health Professionals Education

CaroMont Health provides over \$548,000 for the below listed educational activities.

Students from 66 colleges and universities ranging from 2 year programs to traditional 4 year programs to Masters level receive all or part of their clinical training at various CaroMont Health facilities, including the following disciplines:

- Nursing
- Counseling
- Occupational therapy
- Clinical pastoral education
- Respiratory therapy
- Paramedic – basic and EMT's
- Laboratory technology
- Physical therapist assistant
- Phlebotomy
- Radiographic technology
- Recreational therapy
- Therapeutic recreations
- Health services and information management
- Nurse midwifery
- Family Nurse practitioner
- Neonatal nursing
- Communication sciences and disorders
- Cardiovascular interventional technology
- MRI
- Radiation therapy
- Social Work
- Pharmacy
- Physical therapy

Numerous programs for Middle and High school students are also provided to assist in career exploration and decision making.

Funding is provided for a UNCC Nursing program clinical facilitator and class supplies. Lunch and Learn sessions were held for nursing students covering the following topics:

- Lab values, Understanding medication safety, Core quality measures, Pharmacy tour, Radiology tour, ABG interpretation, Blood gas analysis, Ventilators, Tubes and drains, Perinatology nursing, and IV therapy.

Financial Contributions

Financial contributions and in-kind contributions cover a wide array of community events and activities such as:

- Samaritan's Purse
- United Way
- Special Olympics
- Heart Walk
- American Cancer Society Relay for Life – over 500 employees participate
- American Cancer Society Relay for Life - Survivors Dinner Primary Sponsor
- American Cancer Society Relay for Life - auction
- Poker Run (benefits Hospice)
- Run for the Money (community run that benefits numerous non-profits)
- March of Dimes
- Heart Ball
- United Arts Council Fund Drive
- Indigent Medications, Services & Transportation

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Clover Area Crisis Center
United Way Alexis de Tocqueville Event
Gaston Chamber of Commerce
Gaston County Spirit of the Carolinas
Gaston County Museum
Heart Society of Gaston County
Heart Society Fundraiser
Holy Angels Fundraiser
Salvation Army Boys & Girls Club
Catawba Land Conservancy
Gaston Chamber Education Summit
Gastonia Jaycees
Belmont Chamber of Commerce
Cancer Services of Gaston County
Boys & Girls Club of Greater Gaston
Breast Cancer Fundraisers
Physician and Staff Mission Trips
Gaston Christian Schools
Boy Scouts
Gaston County schools – school supply donation programs
Mud Run
Gastonia Gargolyes Rugby Tournament
Garibaldi Fest
Community Blood Center of the Carolinas – Belmont
Spencer Mountain Run

Community Building Activities

Staff provide time and expertise to the following organizations

- United Way Day of Caring – over 100 employees participate
- American Cancer Society Relay for Life – Steering committee
- Rotary Club of Gastonia
- Great 100 Nurses – Board of Directors
- Gaston County Chamber of Commerce – Board of Directors
- Heart Society – Board of Directors
- Leadership Gaston Healthcare Day
- Gaston County Medical Society (provide all staff support)
- Cancer Services of Gaston County – Board of Directors
- House of Mercy – Board of Directors
- Gaston County Healthcare Commission
- Light a Path Grief Walk – Steering committee
- Gaston County YMCA Central Board of Directors
- Cleveland Community College – Advisory Board
- Special Olympics
- The Carolina Center for Hospice and End of Life Care - Directors Council
- Project Connect
- Gastonia Civitan Club
- Cleveland Community College – Applications Board
- New Urbanization Committee
- Girl Scout - Board of Directors
- United Way – Board and Directors Council
- Kiwanis of Gastonia
- Caldwell Community College Ultrasound Advisory Board

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Homeless Task Force
Highland School of Technology – Advisory Board
Local Emergency Preparedness Committee
Gaston Chamber Economic Development Committee
Gaston 2012 Marketing Committee
Gaston 2012 Strategic Council
Commissioners School of Excellence
United Way Board
Gaston Chamber Health Care Professionals
Quality of Natural Resources Commission
Activate Gaston – YMCA
Holy Angels – Board of Directors