

# 2011/12 Lenoir Memorial Hospital Community Health Needs Assessment Summary:

*An assessment of Lenoir County conducted jointly by the Lenoir County Health Department and Lenoir Memorial Hospital.*

*During 2011, a community health needs assessment (CHNA) was conducted by Lenoir Memorial Hospital and the Lenoir County Health Department for the 59,495 residents of Lenoir County, North Carolina. Lenoir County includes its county seat, Kinston, a city of 22,000 residents located in the coastal plains of eastern North Carolina. Lenoir Memorial Hospital primarily serves the population of Lenoir County and surrounding counties with the overwhelming majority of all hospital discharges over the last two years coming from Lenoir County. The mission of Lenoir Memorial is to ensure exceptional healthcare for the people we serve. The values of the hospital include the plan for innovation that is visionary, creative, and serves as a catalyst for improving the health of the community. A strategic priority for Lenoir Memorial is to deliver contemporary healthcare services consistent with identified community need.*

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## **Description of Community Served by the Hospital**

Lenoir County is a rural community located in a designated Tier One County. This annual ranking by the NC Department of Commerce is based on the economic well-being of residents with the Tier One assignment given to the 25 most distressed counties in NC. The local area economy is heavily dependent on agriculture and manufacturing. Traditionally this meant the sale of tobacco. However, recently several businesses have opened and expanded operations resulting in job creation. These include Sanderson Farms, Spirit Aerosystems, West Pharmaceuticals, Pioneer Hi-Bred International and Smithfield Foods. The per capita income for county residents based on 2009 data is \$18,877 compared to \$24,547 for the state. Lenoir County's median family income in 2009 is \$34,213 compared to \$43,754 statewide. The percentage of county residents below federal poverty level based on 2009 data is 20.1% compared to 16.25% for state residents. Those below the median income level have been disproportionately impacted by the recession and the proportion of the population living below poverty has increased over the past decade. County racial/ethnic composition is 53.4% white, and 40.5% black with 7.5% other minorities, from the US 2010 Census data. This compares to the state's racial/ethnic profile of 68.5% white, 21.5% black and 12% other minorities. The Hispanic/Latino population has been the fastest growing Lenoir County population since 2000. Data and tables detailing the current demographic including income levels, age, race/ethnicity, and educational attainment for Lenoir County with a comparison to NC, is included in the full 2011 Lenoir County Community Health Assessment posted on the Lenoir Memorial Hospital website.

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## **Who was Involved in Assessment**

The assessment process was initiated and co-chaired jointly by Lenoir Memorial Hospital and Lenoir County Health Department. The existing collaboration for Community Health Needs Assessment over the past years has been a positive one for these two organizations. The Lenoir County Health Department agreed to move the cycle of assessment to every three years from an existing four year interval in order to support the new requirement for hospitals to move to a three year cycle. These entities provided roughly equal financial and in-kind support for the assessment process, however the Lenoir Memorial Foundation provided a \$4000 grant to support the costs of printing, mailing, and inserting 10,196 CHNA community perception surveys in a Sunday Free Press edition on September 11, 2011. Additionally, thousands of surveys were distributed widely throughout the county and in each municipality from August, 2011- November, 2011. The Lenoir County Alliance for a Healthy Community task force, representing over 30 Lenoir County community organization and agency leaders from diverse community perspectives, were committed to the assessment process, and

distributed surveys and stayed informed on the timeline at monthly meetings. They offered valuable input and recommendations in the prioritization process once survey results were in. This helped to ensure that input from persons with broad knowledge of the community were involved. The Kinston Free Press also provided media coverage about the importance of completing surveys in an attempt to increase diverse participation. Physicians and health care providers at Lenoir Memorial, Kinston Community Health Center and physician practices were also asked to participate in the survey process. Staff from the Health Department used a Survey Monkey calculator and analysis tool in order to provide the results of the 729 returned surveys. This represents more than a 50% increase in returned surveys compared to the 2007 CHNA process. Lenoir County Health Department health promotion staff compiled statewide and Lenoir County statistical public health data for presentation of community health status in the report.

Those organizations who committed to the assessment and planning process and continue to attend monthly meetings of the Lenoir County Alliance for a Healthy Community are found in a listing in the full 2011 Lenoir County Community Health Assessment posted on the Lenoir Memorial Hospital website.

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## **How the Assessment was Conducted**

The Lenoir County CHNA began with a review of the 2007 CHNA conducted by the Lenoir County Health Department and Lenoir Memorial Hospital. This information was updated with more recent statistics from county, state, and national sources. New data sources were identified and incorporated including the newly published County Health Rankings and the NC State Center for Health Statistics, and other relevant information resources.

The initial review included analysis of trends and comparisons of secondary data within the community and with other communities in eastern NC. Members of the Lenoir County Alliance for a Healthy Community held discussions at several meetings to gather a larger understanding of the secondary data and survey results. With the assistance of these groups, a list of possible major problems or community needs was acknowledged under four main categories including: Living in Our Community, Unhealthy Behaviors, Violence, and Disease and Disabilities. Members of the Lenoir County Alliance for a Healthy Community agreed on a set of criteria to use in order to rank major health needs identified through the fact finding process. The top 12 issues were then identified through a voting process that attached an importance of rank by using a colored dot ranking process. The 12 most important issues identified were: illegal drug abuse/substance and youth violence/gangs; obesity; job opportunities; poor eating habits/lack of good nutrition; responsible parenting; youth access to and use of guns; illegal drugs; high blood pressure; diabetes; cigarette smoking among people under age 18; drinking and driving; and lack of physical activity or exercise. Of the twelve issues ranked, it was decided that four problems would be selected based on:

1. the availability of community resources to address the need,
2. current and potential actions in any given area of focus,
3. likelihood of being able to impact the issue with measureable results, and
4. the breadth of issue as it impacts the county population groups.

After discussion, members were then given an opportunity to revise their rankings and these individual rankings were summed to produce a composite ranking. Discussion and consensus was gained for prioritization.

The prioritization process identified the following four priority issues for the community over the next three years:

- +Obesity (physical activity and nutrition),
- +Diabetes,
- +High Blood Pressure, and
- +Responsible Parenting

It should be noted that the assessment process identified some gaps in information. The demographics of the survey respondents did not closely mirror the community demographics. However, the process included various means to obtain input from the entire county such as having surveys available throughout the community in trusted locations. Surveys were located in agencies that serve as safety nets such as the Department of Social Services, Lenoir County Health Department and Kinston Public Housing. Churches were a particular target for surveys and the surveys were printed in both English and Spanish and did not require names in order to protect confidentiality.

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## Health Needs Identified

The health of Lenoir County residents continues to be poor. Lenoir County ranks 88<sup>th</sup> lowest, in all NC counties, for overall health outcomes by the 2012 County Health Rankings measures. The ten leading causes of death in Lenoir County are similar to the overall causes in NC but the top two leading causes of death in Lenoir, heart disease and cancer, are switched for the state. Lenoir County has some of the highest rates of heart disease in NC. A comparison of the surrounding counties of Greene, Duplin, and Pitt reveals that the five leading causes of death were the same as Lenoir County during the same period. However, Lenoir County's rate per 100,000 for each of the five leading causes of death is higher in all diseases. Craven and Wayne counties five leading causes of death are much like the state's leading causes of death.

Many deaths are preventable in Lenoir County and involve risky behavior and lifestyles. The major causes of preventable death continue to be tobacco use, unhealthy diet, a lack of physical exercise, alcohol misuse, firearms, sexual behavior, and illicit drug use.

Health statistics reveal that Lenoir County's infant mortality rate for the five year period from 2005-2009 is 10.0 compared to the state of 8.3. Low birth weight/prematurity is the primary cause of infant deaths. Data reveals that infant mortality rates for minorities is significantly higher than for whites.

Diabetes is the 5<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death in our community with preventable Type 2 making up the majority of cases. Obesity and lifestyle are factors.

The surrounding counties rates for all cancers were lower than Lenoir County from 2006-2010. Lenoir County ranks higher than the state averages for age adjusted incidences of cancers found in the colon, lung, breast, and prostate categories.

Lenoir County ranks 5<sup>th</sup> in all NC counties pertaining to AIDS cases. This rank is based on a three year average rate. The rates of gonorrhea and syphilis are also above state averages with the burden of these diseases seen in minorities.

As noted previously, the African-American and other minorities population in Lenoir County is almost double that for the state. It is known that African-Americans have higher death rates from heart disease, cancer, HIV, diabetes, homicide, and stroke

compared to whites. Lenoir County's statistics document higher than state averages in most of these areas.

Other indicators for community health status are found in the full 2011 Lenoir County Community Health Needs Assessment posted on the Lenoir Memorial Hospital website.

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**Community Assets Identified**

The assessment identified a number of strong community assets, including Lenoir Memorial Hospital and its community benefit programs, Kinston Community Health Center, Lenoir County Alliance for a Healthy Community, and dozens of health and human service agencies in Lenoir County. Lenoir County Transit, Boys & Girls Club, local law enforcement, and volunteerism in Lenoir County were also identified as assets. The full list is found within the full 2011 CHNA on the Lenoir Memorial website.

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**Summaries:  
Assessments and Priorities**

Assessment data is summarized in the 2011 CHNA found on the Lenoir Memorial website. It is also found on the Lenoir County government website. The full 2011 CHNA also lists the needs identified and the identified priorities. In summary, priority needs identified were:

- +Obesity (physical activity and nutrition),
- +Diabetes,
- +High Blood Pressure, and
- +Responsible Parenting

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**Next Steps**

Lenoir Memorial Hospital, Lenoir County Health Department, and the members of the Lenoir County Alliance for a Healthy Community will work together to identify existing resources and strategies related to the four key priority areas. An action plan including identifying a community lead organization and partners for each priority has been developed with timelines for when they will be implemented. Metrics have been established that will include reporting intervals for measureable outcomes and tie to statewide goals for Healthy NC 2020. Best practices and evidence-based approaches will be incorporated. Education and awareness of the issues and plans will be promoted to the community with identified health marketing strategies.

This assessment summary will be placed on the Lenoir Memorial website. The full 2011 Community Health Needs Assessment and the final community action plans for the four targeted priority needs will also be posted on the Lenoir County Government website. A paper copy can be obtained by contacting the administrative offices of both organizations.

# Lenoir Memorial Hospital

## Implementation Strategy

For 2012- 2015

*Lenoir Memorial Hospital is part of a rich tradition of hospital care that has been meeting the health needs of Lenoir County residents for over 105 years. When Kinston residents, James and Laura McDaniel, transformed their home into the community's first hospital, little did they know that they had set in motion an evolution that would continue to grow after one hundred years. Over this time, the hospital name and location changed but the mission to provide exceptional care to the people it serves, has not.*

*Lenoir Memorial Hospital, at its current location since 1973, opened for patient care with 285 beds and to this day remains a stand-alone community hospital, governed by a local board with strong ties to the local community. Over the last two years, patients who have been hospitalized have been mostly from Lenoir County (76%) while others have been in very small portions from nine other surrounding counties. This report summarizes the plans for Lenoir Memorial Hospital to sustain, partner, and develop community benefit programs that 1) address prioritized needs from the 2011 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) and 2) respond to other identified community health needs.*

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### Target Areas and Populations

The 2011 Lenoir County CHNA identified Lenoir County as one with an aging and higher minority population than the state averages. The majority of the population is more concentrated in the county seat of Kinston. However, Kinston has been losing population since 2000 and is currently a little over 22,000. Lenoir County residents have vastly lower incomes than state averages and 20.1% are at poverty levels according to 2009 data. The Hispanic and other minorities population is increasing but is still below 10%. Unemployment remains in double digits even though new industry has located in Lenoir County over the last several years. The Lenoir Memorial Implementation Strategy focuses primarily on the older African- American population as those with the greatest health needs.

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### How the Implementation Strategy Was Developed

Lenoir Memorial Hospital's Implementation Strategy was developed based on the findings and priorities established by the 2011 Lenoir County CHNA and a review of the hospital's existing community benefit activities. Lenoir Memorial Hospital provided leadership for the 2011 CHNA and is co-chairing the Lenoir County Alliance for a Healthy Community along with leadership from the Lenoir County Health Department through the end of 2015. Other members of the Alliance include representatives from the county health department health promotion team, key health and human services agencies, and other organizations providing services in the community. After completion of the CHNA (found on Lenoir Memorial website), and published in April, 2012, a joint hospital and health department action plan team formed to respond to each of the priority needs. Goals and action plans have been developed that will be monitored and reported on annually. Many community partners were identified and engaged in order to develop a comprehensive plan.

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### Major Needs and How Priorities Were Established

Lenoir Memorial Hospital and the Lenoir County Health Department led an effort in 2011 that took a structured approach to review public health data, conduct surveys, and foster community discussions and input. This assessment resulted in a list of 12

major health needs (full 2011 CHNA report on website) which were discussed at multiple Lenoir County Alliance for a Healthy Community meetings.

Members of the Lenoir County Alliance for a Healthy Community came to agreement on a set of criteria that they would use to evaluate the list of 12 health needs identified through the assessment process. The criteria included the availability of community resources to address the need, current and potential actions in any given area of focus, likelihood of being able to impact the issue with measureable results, and the breadth of issue as it impacts the county population groups. Each team member ranked the health needs using a colored dot process. These individual results were then shared with the Alliance for further discussion. Team members were given an opportunity to revise their rankings and these individual rankings were used to produce a priority ranking for the top issues to be addressed.

The prioritization process identified four priority issues for the community:

- +Obesity ( physical activity and nutrition),
- +Diabetes,
- +High Blood Pressure, and
- +Responsible Parenting

Lenoir Memorial Hospital's review of current community benefit programs found that the hospital is meeting existing community needs through provision of charity care; Medicaid and many free or low-cost community health services; a recently introduced diabetes outpatient program, other community health initiatives, outreach partnerships, and lifestyle improvement programs. These activities were determined to be additional priorities for the hospital's implementation strategy.

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**Description of What Lenoir Memorial Hospital Will Do to Address Community Needs**

Lenoir Memorial Hospital will address strategies in each of the four priority areas with focused community benefit programming through the leadership of the hospital.

Strengthening partnerships with key community health providers will be a focus in all areas of priority.

Corporate and Community Health program staff work closely with leaders in the hospital to meet the needs of the community. Staff from the program co-chair the Lenoir County Alliance for a Healthy Community and participate in the Healthy Carolinians task forces in Greene and Jones Counties.

The full action plans have been developed in all four key priority areas and will be used as the framework for multiple community strategies with annual progress reporting. Progress reporting will be provided to the NC Department of Public Health, the IRS, the Lenoir Memorial Board of Directors, as well as the overall community on the Lenoir Memorial website through the Community Benefits Report. The Lenoir County Alliance for a Healthy Community will review progress at monthly meetings.

In addition, the hospital will continue to meet community needs by providing charity care, and continuing its sponsorship of community studentships, serving as an educational setting for a large number of education programs, and through in-kind leadership to area boards, advisory groups and programs. Improving patient access to care through recruitment of physicians and physician practice management is identified in the hospital led physician needs assessment, and will be ongoing.

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## Action Plans

1. **Obesity (physical activity and nutrition):** Lenoir Memorial is leading a community-wide weight loss initiative, Lighten Up Lenoir in 2012 with early successes in the program. Plans include running this web-based program in 2013. Lenoir Memorial will participate in a newly formed Lenoir County Childhood Obesity Task Force. A local elementary school will be targeted for a physical activity and nutrition education program reaching students and families in the neighborhood. Lenoir Memorial is providing a staff dietitian to assist with the Common Ground of ENC community gardening project in an effort to increase access to fresh fruits and vegetables for people who could not otherwise afford it. Ongoing support will continue for maintaining a free community walking track on the campus of the hospital and offering low fee or scholarship support for an onsite medically based fitness facility in order to help community members begin an exercise intervention with clinical exercise professionals. Free lifestyle improvement programming will be offered on and off site.

2. **Diabetes:** Lenoir Memorial has implemented an AADE accredited outpatient program which uses outreach programming to provide free community diabetes and pre-diabetes screenings and diabetes awareness education in churches and other community settings. Two African- American churches in Lenoir County have been identified for the 2012/13 period in order to reach structured nutrition and weight loss goals. An RD will seek to increase medical nutrition therapy counseling for diabetes over the next year. A Diabetes Wellness Program community advisory group including lay persons with diabetes helps to provide input about barriers for outreach planning. Diabetes education outreach will also incorporate the Pink Hill Education and Wellness Program site in Pink Hill in 2013. Plan to increase hospital certified diabetes educators to three trained staff. The Lenoir Memorial Diabetes Wellness program will increase provider education over 2013/2014 in order to improve education about ADA standards of care. Two yearly provider education forums will be provided. An insulin pump education program will be evaluated and implemented. The community will be provided with an annual diabetes state of the community report. Physician recruitment services include the search for an endocrinologist for the community.

3. **Hypertension:** Lenoir Memorial provides considerable time and input on the advisory group for the Heart Healthy Lenoir project, led by researchers at UNC, assisting in the coordination of processes to implement a Blood Pressure Study with 600 local participants. This project includes six physician practices and the implementation of standardized hypertension guidelines, home blood pressure monitoring and telephone coaching as an evidence-based approach for better hypertension management. Lenoir Memorial will assist in implementing a community kidney education and outreach program with UNC for three chronic kidney disease screenings at Lenoir Memorial and African- American churches in the next year. Corporate Health services will deliver worksite wellness visits that include blood pressure screening and risk factor education at area business and industry. The Lenoir Memorial Foundation will continue to support the four community blood pressure machines in the community with one traveling from church to church. Lenoir Memorial is partnering with the ENC Stroke Network to provide staff with advanced stroke life support education, implement a stroke team, collaborate with Lenoir County EMS for a county-wide effort to decrease stroke treatment times and increase community awareness of stroke risk factors. Lenoir Memorial will

incorporate the CDC Million Hearts risk factor campaign awareness in hospital social media.

**4. Responsible Parenting:** Lenoir Memorial has participated in the Little by Little mentoring program at SE Elementary School for two school terms to provide support for reading and mentoring with children in an underserved neighborhood school. Plan to support over a dozen hospital leaders to continue to mentor weekly in an effort to increase end of grade passing rates. Lenoir Memorial will provide a parenting workshop for smart discipline techniques in 2013. Lenoir Memorial supports the Safe Kids ENC program through their child passenger safety education program with donations to enable community parents who cannot afford to make a co-payment for a state funded car seat. Lenoir Memorial will collaborate with the Lenoir- Greene Partnership for Children in the soon to be implemented project, Transformation Zone: Race to the Top” in order to strengthen family systems with positive parenting programs. A local task force will be developed. A local Breast Feeding Coalition has been recently initiated by the hospital in an effort to increase breastfeeding education and awareness. A goal of achieving a star status by increasing community education through the Carolina Global Breastfeeding Institute over the next two years will be met. The Family Birth Center plans to work with the NC Healthy Start Foundation to put standards in place for the Infant Safe Sleep Hospital Model of Excellence regarding community education for infant safe sleep practices. The Family Birth Center is implementing a PURPLE crying education program in an effort to join other hospitals in NC to reduce the incidence of Shaken Baby Syndrome by 50% by the year 2014.

The full community health action plans for each of the four priority areas can be found on the Lenoir County government website.

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**Next Steps for Priorities**

For each of the priority areas listed above, Lenoir Memorial will work with the Lenoir County Alliance for a Healthy Community and identified community partners to identify any related activities being conducted by others in the community that could be built upon, use the measurable goals and objectives identified for each priority so that the effectiveness of their efforts can be measured, and foster support for the initiatives within the community and among other health care providers.

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**Priority Needs Not Being Addressed by Lenoir Memorial and the Reasons**

Lenoir Memorial is not currently involved in the illegal drugs and drug abuse/substance and youth violence/gangs issue but a group of community organizations led by Kinston Public Safety has formed a task force to work on this issue. Lenoir Memorial hosted meeting space and a breakfast for leaders in this regard to get the initiative started. Youth access and use of guns may also be closely related to this issue and Safe Kids ENC works to provide the community with gun locks and gun safety education.

Job opportunities were identified as a top issue in the community and even though Lenoir Memorial received a workforce development grant from the Golden Leaf Foundation in 2010 and trained 20 certified nursing assistants for the local workforce, Lenoir Memorial does not have any current plans in this area other than serving as a training site for students who may join the workforce once they complete their programs. Lenoir Memorial is a major employer in Lenoir County and will hire as vacant positions necessitate. Hospital leadership participates in a variety of economic development committees and projects throughout the year.



Drinking and Driving continues to be seen as a priority issue in the 2011 CHNA. Local law enforcement and statewide programs have initiated programs in our community such as Booze It and Lose It and other road stop programs in an effort to address the problem. Lenoir Memorial offers smoking cessation programming through the Minges Wellness Center and does not limit the programs to adults only. The issue of cigarette smoking among people under age 18 has been a discussion at the Lenoir County School Health Advisory Committee on which Lenoir Memorial serves. It will not be a priority for Lenoir Memorial since services for cessation exist and the hospital serves as an organizational role model as a tobacco-free campus.

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**Approval**

This report was prepared for the August 27th, 2012 Lenoir Memorial Hospital Board of Director's meeting. The report addresses priorities identified in the most recent 2011 Community Health Needs Assessment and provides context for the Community Benefit program through a plan for implementation strategies for Lenoir Memorial Hospital.

Lenoir Memorial Hospital Governing Board Approval:

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*By Name and Title*

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*Date*