

NEWS RELEASE

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BOTHWELL RELEASES FINDINGS FROM COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT

SEDALIA – Access to care, healthy behaviors and chronic disease prevalence topped the list of health issues identified through a recent Community Health Needs Assessment conducted by Bothwell Regional Health Center.

The recently completed assessment - a new, federal requirement of all not-for-profit hospitals under the Affordable Care Act - includes data from state and federal reports and social service agencies, as well as findings from a community survey of 400 participants in Pettis and Benton counties.

“The whole point of the study is ultimately to use the findings to improve the community’s health,” said Community Outreach Coordinator Sarah Nail. “That is not just a mission of Bothwell, but also the mission of many community organizations and leaders. Everybody has a role in community health.”

Access to health-care services, including mental, dental, primary and specialty care, were identified as being needs in the community. About 14 percent of the survey respondents said they or a member of their household had difficulty finding a doctor within the past two years. The majority of those who had difficulty (60 percent) said they were unable to find a physician who would take new patients.

Poor health behaviors were another common thread. Smoking and obesity were identified as major health needs, with survey respondents indicating there is a desire for more health education. Pettis County has a 29 percent smoking rate, higher than the state’s rate of 23 percent.

With health behaviors being of concern, it’s not surprising that prevalence of chronic diseases is also an issue. Rates of heart disease, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), prostate cancer and stroke hospitalization rates for both Pettis and Benton counties were higher than the state.

Findings from the report were used to develop strategies to address community health needs. Those strategies, which were approved by the Bothwell Board of

Trustees, include continued focus on recruitment and retention of health-care providers, more opportunities for health education and promotion of healthy behaviors, reduction of late-stage cancer diagnoses and continued support of programs that better equip patients with chronic disease upon discharge from the hospital.

The complete study is available online at brhc.org, or printed copies may be requested by calling Community Outreach at 660-827-9138.

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Bothwell Regional Health Center is a 140-bed regional health center serving west-central Missouri with state-of-the-art technology and comprehensive health and wellness services including surgical, cancer, orthopedic, cardiovascular, women's health, and therapy services. For more information on Bothwell Regional Health Center and its services, visit the Web site at www.brhc.org.

Graphic source: Bothwell Regional Health Center Community Health Needs Assessment