

CASCADE HEALTH ALLIANCE

Cascade Health Alliance (CHA) was formed in September 2013. It serves most of Klamath County, including Klamath Falls, Merrill, Malin, Bonanza, Chiloquin, and many other outlying rural communities. Currently CHA has over 16,000 members.

CHA believes that integrating the social and medical components of Medicaid recipients' care is vital in assisting them in maintaining their independence and overall well-being.

CHIP PROCESS

A Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) - the first of its kind - was completed to better understand and document the health needs of Klamath County.

The CHNA identifies community health priorities, establishes benchmarks, monitors trends in the health status of Klamath County residents, and develops a platform for collaboration to improve health status.

The Healthy Klamath partners collected data through community health surveys, focus groups, stakeholder interviews, and secondary data sources.

A Community Advisory Council was formed that includes primarily CHA members, other community members, CHA board members, and representatives of Klamath County Government.

Subcommittees were formed to develop strategies to address the Community Health Improvement Plan Health Priorities. Because CHA was recently established, the CHIP is still in its development.

Community Health Improvement Plan Health Priorities

- 1. PHYSICAL ACTIVITY
- Support people living with chronic illness and disease in becoming empowered and engaged in their health through increased physical activity.

- 2. WELL-BEING/MENTAL HEALTH
- Improve members' healthy lifestyle through collaboration of mental and physical health care providers and reduction of substance abuse.

- 3. TRANSPORTATION
- Support members' healthy lifestyle through affordable and reliable transportation.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- Klamath County has higher than average rates for obesity and chronic disease.
- Regular exercise, along with healthy eating, are the most effective way of addressing these issues; however, can be difficult to access in a rural community.
- By providing easy access for members to enjoyable exercise and by educating them in the benefits of healthy eating, rates of obesity and chronic disease will decrease.
- The goal is to partner with local fitness clubs to sponsor memberships for CHA members and to use flex funds to help members obtain fitness clothing and footwear.

WELL-BEING/MENTAL HEALTH

- Klamath County has high rates of tobacco and substance abuse, family violence and child abuse that adversely affect the mental health and well-being of the community.
- Early intervention with pregnant mothers can prevent further risky behavior. Health care providers will address tobacco use with pregnant women by asking them about their use, advising them of the risks, and referring them for cessation assistance.
- Communication and collaboration between health providers is critical to the overall wellbeing of members and will be strengthened by meetings between providers to share information and to educate them about available resources.
- Many members have to navigate many different systems. Navigator and health advocate positions will be developed to help members manage their health care through different systems.

TRANSPORTATION

- Only one in twenty CHA members has reliable transportation. This presents a barrier for many members to lead a healthy lifestyle.
- The goal is to increase members' access to food and services that promote a healthy lifestyle and to reduce their need for higher level care.
- Non-emergent transportation provides assistance for members for whom transportation is a barrier to managing their chronic diseases.
- Community Health Workers are assigned to high risk members with a chronic disease to assist them in activities that promote a healthy lifestyles such as shopping for healthy food and purchasing prescriptions.