

Barnes-Kasson County Hospital Community Health Needs Assessment

Who We Are

Barnes-Kasson Hospital is a non-profit critical access hospital located in the borough of Susquehanna Depot, Pennsylvania. The hospital has served the residents of Susquehanna County, northern Wayne County, and southern Broome County since 1904. To better serve this rural area, Barnes-Kasson has also established three well-staffed Rural Health Clinics throughout Susquehanna County and has a county-based home health service.

Combining hometown quality with new technology, Barnes-Kasson Hospital offers a wide range of medical, surgical, diagnostic and referral services, coronary/intensive care, outpatient rehabilitation (including physical, occupational, and speech therapy), a fifty-eight bed skilled-nursing facility, and 24-hour emergency care. Barnes-Kasson Hospital is an active health information and education resource for all of Susquehanna County.

Barnes-Kasson is dedicated to providing its patients with quality care in a home-town, friendly, caring atmosphere. If at any time patients have a question about their care, they are encouraged to consult their doctor or a member of the nursing staff. If there are questions or concerns about hospital services, or about the care received, it is encouraged that the Administration Office be contacted. At Barnes-Kasson, our quality staff is dedicated to making each patient's experience with us as memorable as possible.

Susquehanna County Demographics

According to the *Pennsylvania and County Health Profiles 2014* obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of Health, and the United States Census Bureau website the following statistics were obtained:

Basic Demographics

Population- 42,696 - Roughly 21,500 males and 21,200 females	Qualify for Medical Assistance- 14.8%
Population Density- 51.9 people per square mile	Primary Ethnicity- White/Caucasian -Makes Up 97.9% of Population
Below Poverty Level- 12.2%	Median Age- 45.1 Years Old
Per Capita Personal Income- \$34,764/year	- 0-14 Years Old- 16.3%
Unemployed- 7.4%	- 15-24 Years Old- 11.4%
	- 25-64 Years Old- 53.4%
	- 65+ Years Old- 18.9%

According to the Pennsylvania Department of Health's, *Susquehanna County Health Profile 2014*, the following information was gathered in regards to the top causes of death and risk factors that may lead to said deaths:

Causes of Death

Top Four Causes of Death (ranked highest to lowest):	Behavioral Health Risk Factors
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Heart Disease 2. Cancer 3. Stroke 4. Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease (C.L.R.D) 	<p>62% of population is overweight - 27% classified as obese</p> <p>20% are current smokers</p> <p>39% of residents received an influenza vaccine</p>

Based on the information presented in the table above it is not hard to draw conclusions as to why the top causes of death in Susquehanna County are what they are. Almost two-thirds of the population is overweight. Being overweight puts people at risk for at least the top three causes of death. Then, there's the smoking factor. Smoking is a contributing factor to all four of the top causes of death, and 1 of every 5 people in the county smoke. Throw in the fact that not even half of the population received a flu shot in the last year, and it's no wonder why C.L.R.D. is one of the top causes of death in the county. Therefore, the top behavioral risk factors directly mirror the top causes of death in Susquehanna County.

Pennsylvania Demographics

According to a document called *Pennsylvania Health Profile 2014*, from the Pennsylvania Department of Health Division of Health Informatics, the following statewide statistics were obtained:

Basic Demographics

Population- 12,763,536	Qualify for Medical Assistance- 17.1%
Population Density- 285.3 people per square mile	Race/Ethnicity:
Below Poverty Level- 13.1%	- White/Caucasian- 83.5%
Per Capita Personal Income- \$45,063/year	- Black/African American- 11.4%
Unemployed- 7.9%	Median Age- 40.1 Years Old
	- 0-14 Years Old- 17.6%
	- 15-24 Years Old- 13.8%
	- 25-64 Years Old- 52.6%
	- 65+ Years Old- 16%

The Pennsylvania Department of Health's, *Pennsylvania Health Profile 2014*, shows the following information regarding top causes of death and behavioral health risk factors for the entire state of Pennsylvania:

Causes of Death

Top Four Causes of Death (ranked highest to lowest):	Behavioral Health Risk Factors
1. Heart Disease	61% of population is overweight
2. Cancer	- 27% classified as obese
3. Stroke	
4. Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease (C.L.R.D.)	18% are current smokers
	39% of adults received a flu shot in the last year

Just as in Susquehanna County, when looking at the state of Pennsylvania as a whole, it isn't hard to see why the top causes of death are what they are. With the majority of the population being overweight, almost a fifth being current smokers and not even half of residents receiving a flu shot in the last year it isn't hard to understand why the top four causes of death in the state are heart disease, cancer, stroke, and C.L.R.D.

Small Area Variation Analysis

How does our service area, Susquehanna County, compare to the state of Pennsylvania as a whole? Other than the fact that the population of Susquehanna County doesn't even make up 1% of the population of the entire state, and that the number of people per square mile multiplies by five when looking at the state as a whole, the other statistics are actually pretty close to each other when compared. Susquehanna County only has 1% less people living below poverty level, but the average personal income is just over \$10,000 less than the average personal income of the state as a whole. The statistics of unemployment, those who qualify for medical assistance, and people's age are all within 3% of each other when comparing Susquehanna County to the entire state of Pennsylvania. The only other big gap in percentage is when it comes to race/ethnicity. The percentage of White/Caucasian people drops from 98% in Susquehanna County to 84% when looking at the whole state. Susquehanna County only has 2% of its population with minority ethnic backgrounds while the state overall has 16%, 11% of which are Black/African American. Unfortunately, according to the Pennsylvania County Health Rankings, Susquehanna County comes in at 53 of the 67 counties in Pennsylvania in terms of overall health. Susquehanna County has dropped one spot in overall health rankings since 2013 when it came in at 52 of 67.

Health Care Resources

Here in Susquehanna County the available health care resources consist of:

- Barnes-Kasson County Hospital
- Endless Mountains Health Systems
- NEPA Community Health Care
- Private Practices

Barnes-Kasson Hospital and Endless Mountains Health Systems are both critical access hospitals which offer a variety of services including family and primary care, specialist services, emergency rooms, operating rooms,

labs, radiology, etc. NEPA Community Health Care is a federally qualified health center which offers primary care and behavioral health services. There are also a number of private practices located throughout the county that offer primary or family care.

Susquehanna County has a number of agencies that offer services to those in need during times of emergency or crisis:

- United Way of Susquehanna County
- CareNet Pregnancy Center of NEPA
- Habitat for Humanity of Susquehanna County
- Salvation Army
- Trehab

Trehab is an excellent organization that serves six counties in northeastern Pennsylvania. According to their website, “The Trehab Community Action Agency is committed to act as both a service provider and an advocate for the poor, unemployed, and underemployed, the elderly, and other groups at risk. The agency is committed to serving the community as a catalyst for asset building and by helping to increase access to capital.” Trehab works with numerous agencies to help those who fall into the above categories get the help they need in various areas such as addiction counseling, home heating assistance, low-income housing, and much more.

The above agencies, as well as many others not listed, provide education or services to those who are in immediate need. The services that are provided are not direct health care services such as doctor appointments, but rather life services that provide assistance to those categorized in an at risk group. The CareNet Pregnancy Center provides emergency assistance, baby items, and education on all aspects of parenting. Habitat for Humanity helps renovate or build homes for families in dire need. The Salvation Army provides assistance to families in financial crisis such as fuel and utility assistance.

Between the available health care facilities, private practices, and a number of local agencies dedicated to assisting those in need, some form of health care resource is never too far away for the people of Susquehanna County.

Community Health Needs Assessment

A committee of health professionals and administrative professionals was formed, here at Barnes-Kasson, to assess the health needs of the community. After looking at the demographics of our service area, a survey was created that we determined would help assess the community’s health needs. In today’s technologically advanced world, we decided to make our survey available online with the use of an online survey building website called surveymonkey.com. This website allowed us to create our survey exactly as we wanted, as well as keeping track of the responses and compiling the results once we removed the survey.

The survey was advertised on our website and Facebook page, and made available for one month. The local school districts and aging centers were also contacted and encouraged to have their employees and staff participate in the survey.

The advertisement gave a brief description of what a Community Health Needs Assessment is and why Barnes-Kasson Hospital is conducting one. It also encouraged all members of the community to participate in the survey, regardless of where they seek healthcare.

Barnes-Kasson wanted to stress the fact that even if people do not use our facility for their healthcare needs, that they are still members of the community in which we serve and that their feedback was important to us.

The results of the survey indicated the following data:

1. 79% of those who participated were females between the age of 26-55
2. The majority of participants were from Susquehanna Borough and surrounding areas
3. 67% classified their overall health as 'good' and 22% as 'excellent'
4. 76% felt that drug abuse is the biggest health issue present in our community, followed by obesity at 71%
5. 87% go to their primary care physician for medical care, 43% go to walk-in clinics
6. 84% consult a medical professional for health information
7. 72% use the internet in addition to consulting a medical professional
8. Health topics that are important to participants and their family members are high blood pressure, exercise, nutrition, cholesterol, cancer, heart disease, and diabetes.
9. 42% of participants showed interest in attending free health fairs or health presentations at our facility, 65% said they would attend free health screenings at our organization
10. The top screenings of interest were blood pressure, skin cancer, cholesterol, and blood sugar
11. 69% showed interest in attending a weight management support group
12. Saturdays and evenings would be the best time to attend screenings/events at our facility
13. 97% have health insurance, 64% said they understand their health insurance benefits

Assess and Prioritize

After careful consideration, it was determined that the major health needs of the community revolve around the topics of weight management, exercise, nutrition and all of the medical conditions that relate to those topics. Conditions such as obesity, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, and being at risk for heart disease and cancer can all stem from poor weight management, poor diet, and a lack of exercise.

The survey also indicated that participants feel that drug abuse has become a major issue within our community. According to state statistics, Susquehanna County has the second highest incidents of opioid overdose deaths per capita in the state. According to the *Report on Overdose Death Statistics 2014* from the Pennsylvania State Coroners Association, 53% of all overdose deaths in Susquehanna County were caused by opioids.

We determined that there is not much in our community that caters to proper nutrition, exercise, and weight management, and all of the conditions that go along with it. There is not much within our community that directly addresses the increasing drug abuse problem either. Therefore, we came up with a plan to help address these issues in our implementation strategy.

Implementation Strategy

Barnes-Kasson Hospital will continue to develop and reach out to the community through “B-K’s Healthier U Initiative.” The initiative consists of education and direct community involvement to help tackle the topics of weight management, proper nutrition, and exercise. Through education and community involvement we will continue to encourage people to learn about the importance of these topics and how they can all help prevent obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, heart disease, and certain types of cancer.

We plan to continue to educate the community on these topics. For example, we will hold free seminars or classes on diabetes. Members of the community who choose to attend will learn the importance of diabetes, what the long term effects are, and how proper diet, exercise, and weight management can keep it under control.

Similar seminars or classes will be held regarding the other topics as well. All of the topics coincide with one another. We want to make people aware of all the health problems they are putting themselves at risk for developing if they choose to ignore the importance of weight management, diet, and exercise.

The next thing we are going to do will require direct involvement from members of the community, as well as the help of a dietician. We will work to help educate the community as well as play a role in the next part of our initiative, which will be to form a walking group. The walking group will consist of Barnes-Kasson employees and anyone from the community who wants to join, as long as they are medically fit to do so. Our goal is that the walking group will meet at least once a week, and do just that. Whether there’s a whole bunch of people walking in one large group or people decide to separate into smaller groups, the idea will be to get everyone together, and to get out, move, and be active. However, this walking group will be much more than just that.

Anyone from the community who joins will get a free BMI screening at the start, access to a free monthly weigh-in, and a free dietary consultation. Health providers will be available to answer questions and educate members on the importance of proper diet and exercise. We all agreed that sometimes it’s hard to find self-motivation, but if there’s a whole group of people involved it usually makes things easier, more appealing, and even fun.

Barnes-Kasson Hospital will work with local agencies like Trehab to offer the community smoking cessation classes and guidance for those struggling with addiction. In an effort to address the steadily growing drug abuse problem within our community, Barnes-Kasson is currently looking into the possibility of starting a medically assisted outpatient treatment center for opioid addiction.

We hope that our initiative will become a community-wide effort to help promote healthier lifestyles for the community as a whole. The people spoke, and we listened. If they want more weight management education and health screenings then we are going to do everything within our power to provide that for them. We feel that our initiative has something for everyone. Whether you want to learn more about certain health topics, lose weight, develop and maintain an active and healthy lifestyle, or just want the occasional screening to give you peace of mind, Barnes-Kasson Hospital is going to be there to help our community become healthier.

Plan to Update Community Needs Assessment

Barnes-Kasson will prepare a progress report that will be presented annually at the hospital's yearly open board meeting in July. The annual update will include progress made to meet the goals of this assessment, who has received the Community Health Needs Assessment Reports/Data, a description of any changes that may have occurred in the community, and a description of preliminary plans for the next comprehensive assessment. Barnes-Kasson will complete a comprehensive Community Health Needs Assessment every three years.

For information related to this Community Health Needs Assessment, please contact Andy Napolitano, Marketing and Public Relations, Barnes-Kasson Hospital, 2872 Turnpike Street, Susquehanna, PA 18847. Andy can also be reached at anapolitano@bkhcs.org or (570) 853-5136 ext. 111.