

**Asante Three Rivers Medical Center**  
**FY23 Supplemental Community Benefit Narrative**

**ASANTE THREE RIVERS MEDICAL CENTER**

Asante Three Rivers Medical Center is one of three hospitals owned and operated by Asante, a 501(c)3 organization operating in Jackson County, Oregon. Asante exists to provide quality health care services in a compassionate manner valued by the communities we serve. As the only hospital in Josephine County, Asante Three Rivers serves a primary service area of Josephine County, as well as neighboring Jackson County and Asante's secondary service area of Curry, Douglas, Klamath and Lake counties in Southern Oregon and Del Norte, Siskiyou and Modoc counties in Northern California. Asante Three Rivers is licensed for 125 inpatient beds and provides an array of services including primary care, surgical services, obstetrics and gynecology, diagnostic imaging, intensive care, emergency care, trauma, cancer care and more.

**COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS**

Asante Three Rivers published its most recent Community Health Needs Assessment Sept. 30, 2022. The accompanying Community Health Improvement Plan was put in place in February 2023.

Upon completion of the quantitative and qualitative data analysis for the 2022 CHNA, Asante Three Rivers leadership evaluated the findings and selected three of the top identified community health needs as areas of focus for the hospital's CHNA/CHIP cycle initiated with the 2022 Asante Three Rivers CHNA:

**Priority 1: Access to care**

Availability of primary and specialty care providers through alternative access such as telehealth; intentional inclusivity of marginalized populations; reduction of barriers to care; improved care coordination and enhanced access for people without the means to pay for care.

**Priority 2: Chronic conditions**

Prevention and treatment of diabetes, hypertension, high cholesterol, asthma, cancer and other chronic conditions.

**Priority 3: Mental health**

Prevention, education and treatment for depression, anxiety and PTSD; increased availability of crisis care; improved access for youth and elders and enhanced relationships with community partners to improve access to mental health care across community sectors.

**THE COMMUNITY WE SERVE**

Asante Three Rivers' 2022 CHNA evaluated the primary service area of Jackson and Josephine Counties in Southern Oregon which included a population of approximately 308,903 people across both counties, at the time of the survey, with approximately 89,000 of those residing in Josephine County. At that time, demographic data indicated Josephine County was comprised of approximately 90% White. In Josephine

County, 1.9% were identified demographically as “other,” with 6% of the population designated as such in Jackson County. Overall, the two-county region was comprised of approximately 88% White, with roughly 4% identified as bi- or multi-racial, 1.3% Asian, 0.75% Black and .30% Pacific Islander. Between the two counties an average of 11% were identified to have Hispanic ethnicity, with Jackson County having a higher concentration at 14.20% and only 8% of Josephine County residents identified as having Hispanic ethnicity. Both Jackson and Josephine Counties had a distribution of 51.1% female, 48.9% male at the time of the survey. The counties share a similar distribution of ages with Jackson County’s population skewing slightly younger. The lowest volume group in both counties is the 55-64 age range, 16.1% for Josephine County and 14.5% for Jackson County, respectively. Overall, Josephine County is comprised of a higher percentage of elders with 24.7% of residents aged between 65 and 85 compared with 20.3% in Jackson County.

### **OUR COLLABORATIVE CHNA PROCESS**

The CHNA research, completed collaboratively with Asante Rogue Regional Medical Center, Asante Ashland Community Hospital and Providence Medford Medical Center relied upon input from key informants and community members recruited collaboratively through community partners in the following sectors: social services, education, government and health care. To ensure representation across all sectors of the community, Asante Three Rivers worked closely with community-based organizations to ensure people with a variety of identities and experiences were invited to participate in the process. Community organizations in direct service to these marginalized groups were selected for collaboration in listening sessions and community health survey distribution. This collaboration helped to ensure the interests and needs of many diverse groups were represented including older adults, young people, people who identify as LGBTQIA+, Hispanic/Latinx people, people of color, people experiencing homelessness, people experiencing mental illness and substance use concerns and people impacted by the wildfires of 2020.

Asante Three Rivers employed a mixed-method approach using quantitative and qualitative data from a variety of sources to identify community needs for 2022 CHNA. Public health data sources included the American Community Survey, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, County Health Rankings & Roadmaps, Oregon Health Authority, Student Wellness Survey (2020) and the U.S. Census. Nineteen individuals from multi-sector organizations participated in key informant interviews and approximately 60 more residents and community stakeholders participated in listening sessions to offer feedback on community strengths, challenges and priority health concerns. Both English and Spanish opportunities were offered for listening sessions and community health surveys to ensure inclusion and accessibility. More than 1,200 regional residents participated in the community health survey. The online survey was made available to the community at large and marketed widely using direct email invitation and online and social media marketing. Paper surveys were made available to those without internet access and to those for whom answering an electronic survey would be prohibitive due to vision, dexterity or learning issues. Established community partner relationships were leveraged to maximize the quantity and quality of paper survey responses and provide a supportive environment in which to complete the survey for those that needed it.

Due to differences in the mandated cadence for community health assessments and corresponding improvement plans between hospitals, county health departments, CCOs and FQHCs, combined with staffing and capacity concerns across all public and social service sectors recovering from the COVID-19

pandemic and wildfires, Asante and Providence hospitals led the effort for the 2022 CHNA cycle. Jackson County Health, Josephine County Health, AllCare Health and La Clinica were approached with opportunities for participation throughout the process. Representatives and designees participated in key informant interviews, listening sessions, community health surveys and key informant surveys. These health organizations, along with many other public and not-for-profit community partner agencies facilitated opportunities for the hospitals to engage with both key Informants and community members during the CHNA process.

In addition to the work completed for Asante Three Rivers' CHNA in 2022, hospital representatives are presently serving alongside Jackson County Health, Josephine County Health and the region's CCOs, FQHCs and other community partners for the regional collaborative community health assessment "All in for Health." This collaborative adheres to the five-year cadence required of county health, CCOs and FQHCs. The regional All in for Health Community Health Assessment was published on Dec. 30, 2023. Several representatives are now engaged in the collaborative effort to develop Community Health Improvement goals and strategies around the four mutually agreed upon identified needs: access to health care, behavioral health, housing and community building. Asante Three Rivers is represented on the All in for Health steering committee.

Josephine County, and neighboring Jackson County, are both located in Health Professional Shortage Areas designated by the Federal Health Resources and Services Administration with Josephine County experiencing both income and geographic designations. Josephine County is also designated as a Medically Underserved Area by the Oregon Office of Rural Health, while Jackson County is identified as a Medically Underserved Population. Accordingly, access to care is the top concern for the community. Wait times, insurance coverage, number of providers and provider availability were all cited as barriers to receiving prompt health care by community members and key informants during Asante Three Rivers' CHNA process. These concerns were reiterated during the 2023 All in For Health CHA process. These challenges, existent even before the COVID-19 pandemic and noted in previous Assante Three Rivers CHNAs, have worsened in the wake of the pandemic. The system continues to make good faith efforts to meet increased demand for services amid challenges resulting from constrained provider availability, lengthening wait times, increasing case complexity and post-pandemic financial recovery efforts.

### **ADDRESSING ACCESS TO CARE**

Despite these obstacles, Asante Three Rivers invested nearly \$1.7 million dollars toward programs and initiatives addressing access to care in FY23. Asante Three Rivers remained focused on the overall health and safety of our community through continued investment in COVID-related care, education and prevention. Other investments around access to care included health care professions education, care navigation for complex illness and addressing barriers to access for vulnerable populations. Asante Three Rivers invested over \$600,000 in supervised clinical licensure experiences required of emerging doctors, nurses, technicians and medical support personnel entering the health care profession. Through The Family House, Asante Three Rivers provided 584 people with low-to-no-cost accommodations while seeking care for themselves or a family member. Asante has continued to make strides toward improving this critical need for our region year over year.

Not delineated with a financial investment as community benefit, but still reflective of Asante Three Rivers' investment in access to care was the introduction of an immediate care service, expanding options and access to non-emergent care in Josephine County.

## **ADDRESSING CHRONIC CONDITIONS**

In past assessments, Asante Three Rivers has identified specific health conditions for enhanced focus through the work of the CHNA and CHIP, including heart disease, stroke, cancer and diabetes. The 2022 CHNA process identified the following chronic conditions as top causes of adult mortality Josephine County: cancer, heart disease, chronic lower respiratory disease and cerebrovascular disease. As such, Asante Three Rivers elected to widen the scope defined in previous CHNA processes and address these and other ongoing health concerns through a single aggregated health need: chronic conditions.

It can be difficult to disaggregate initiatives that address access to care from those that address chronic conditions since there is a high degree of intersectionality between the two. For example, Community Health Education often serves individuals who are navigating a newly emerging or diagnosed health condition. During FY23, Asante made advancements to improve community outreach and education through expansion of print media, televised health segments and online offerings such as informational inserts in the Daily Courier, Better Health and the Asante Health Blog. Additional examples are nurse navigators and social workers who facilitate access to care, but often for patients navigating chronic conditions. That said, more than \$575,000 of the \$1.7 million noted above were invested in nurse navigation and social work programs across Asante Three Rivers, with just under \$220,000 of that total dedicated to nurse navigation and social work for patients engaged with cancer services. Dietitians working with Spears Cancer Center provided nutrition education and support to 288 individuals with special focus on those navigating head, throat and neck cancers.

A new program that touches upon all prioritized areas of need is the Opioid Use Disorder Initiative at Asante Three Rivers. Part of a Hospital Based Opioid Treatment study initiated at Asante Rogue Regional, in collaboration with OHSU and other community partners, this program seeks to address the root causes of substance use disorder, reduce recidivism and ensure continuity of care after hospital discharge for acute illness for patients experiencing opioid use disorder. During FY23, the program was expanded to both Asante Three Rivers and Asante Ashland. Asante Three Rivers invested over \$30,000 in the program, with 65 patients benefitting from the new order sets and workflows that were put in place.

## **ADDRESSING MENTAL HEALTH ALONGSIDE SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH AND HEALTH EQUITY**

Asante Three Rivers recognizes that all three identified health needs—access to care, chronic conditions and mental health—are intricately woven. While activities like community health education, health professions education and the development and expansion of available services have the potential to help lift the whole community, Asante Three Rivers recognizes some community members need more support to rise along with their friends and neighbors. For many, the social determinants of health around housing stability, transportation and food security and the residual effects of the pandemic have created a lasting impact on their mental health. Asante Three Rivers employs an array of professionals whose primary focus is to support vulnerable community members. Certified application counselors work with people who are uninsured or underinsured to attain health care coverage, thus increasing their access to ongoing care for chronic conditions as well as preventive and non-emergency care. Community resource coordinators work with patients referred by Asante's clinicians to address social determinants of health and barriers to care. Employees in these roles work to address individual needs around social determinants of health on a case-by-case basis, for our most vulnerable community members. More than \$400,000 of the \$1.7 million previously noted under access to care was directly

invested in programs to assess and address individual needs around transportation, shelter, food and medication access and other basic needs and social determinants of health during FY23.

Community resource coordinators serving Grants Pass assisted 622 individuals with community referrals addressing access to housing, food, caregiving support, care navigation, financial insecurities, insurance navigation, missed appointments and access to needed durable medical equipment, with many individuals requiring support for multiple needs. Hospital-employed social workers addressed similar concerns for individuals seeking care at the hospital, absorbing the costs for transportation, temporary or transitional shelter, adult foster care, caregiving, home monitoring and the purchase of medical equipment to support community members' health care goals upon discharge.

Across the system, Asante Foundation has made Compassion Funds available to support patients navigating health difficulty with critical needs around housing, utilities, transportation, food and medication. Asante Three Rivers social workers facilitated the payment of over \$5,500 in Compassion Funds to the direct support of vulnerable patients' transportation, housing, utility and other social determinants of health needs during FY23.

### **INVESTING IN OUR COMMUNITY THROUGH CHARITABLE GIVING**

While Asante Three Rivers does not have a formal granting process in place, we do support our community through intentional charitable gifts to community partners directly addressing priority needs in the community. While most of the larger ongoing charitable contributions support identified health needs, others address the social determinants of health, such as food security, that contribute to the overall health and well-being of marginalized community members. An annual contribution to Jackson County Sexual Assault Response Team ensures access to immediate and follow up care for community members impacted by sexual violence; for FY23 that amount was of \$15,400. During FY23, Asante Three Rivers contributed \$20,000 to the Friends of Josephine County Food Bank was used for the direct support of food security in Josephine County and to garner additional support from others in the community. A \$10,000 contribution supported health and safety for community members engaged with the Grants Pass Sobering Center. Beyond these larger gifts, Asante Three Rivers also provided more than \$13,500 in sponsorships and donations to support work around access to health care, mental health, suicide prevention, children and youth and education access and quality.

### **CONCLUSION**

FY23 was another transitional year for Asante Three Rivers. It was the first year of the 2022 CHNA/CHIP cycle; the first year being referred to as "post-pandemic" throughout the community but, in actuality, the fourth year adapting to co-existing with COVID. Overall community benefits spending was reduced, as cost related to COVID support at Asante Three Rivers decreased and the hospital took initial steps along the long road to financial recovery. During FY23, Asante Three Rivers continued efforts to align its community benefit offerings more closely with state and federal guidelines and community expectations. Asante looks forward to the on-going evolution and refinement of Asante Three Rivers' community benefit programs and initiatives for FY24 as we continue to support our community's return to "normal."