



**Community Health Needs Assessment  
Implementation Plan FY2021 Update**

**clarity** | child  
guidance  
center

healing young minds & hearts

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## Introduction

The following report provides an update for the activities that took place during Fiscal Year 2018 and 2019 (July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2019) in accordance with the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) – Implementation Plan 2018, the first year of a five-year plan. The first part of this report reiterates the priorities and plan previously communicated and is followed by the corresponding achievements. The latter portion outlines progress made toward our priorities in the last five years. The complete 2018 CHNA Plan can be found on our website at this link:

<https://www.claritycgc.org/about-clarity/reports-for-the-community>

## Priorities and Plan (from the 2018 Implementation plan)

As a non-profit private hospital, Clarity CGC has the capability and capacity to do the following:

- Partner with the community to receive funding from individuals, corporations, foundations, and the local United Way.
- Re-invest funds directly into our services rather than a dividend/shareholder.
- Recruit top professionals at competitive costs, particularly due to our affiliation with UT Health.

In return, with a strong and unwavering focus on our mission, we have a responsibility to:

- Meet the need of any family regardless of their ability to pay.
- Make treatment increasingly accessible.
- Provide the best services possible by optimizing the use of resources.
- Educate the community.

In evaluating the results of our key stakeholder interviews and survey respondents, we ranked the opportunities identified in the following manner:

- Does the opportunity align with our values, our mission and our vision?
- Is it a core competency currently? If not, is it a complementary core competency that strengthens our value proposition?
- Is there another organization or entity that could better address the need versus Clarity CGC?
- Is there a viable funding stream for sustainability purposes?
- Does the opportunity create the foundation to impact improvements in other areas of need, if implemented?
- What are the benefits in quantifiable terms of implementing the opportunity? Conversely, what consequences occur if it's not implemented?

## **Our Plan**

Clarity Child Guidance Center's leadership evaluated the opportunities revealed in the Community Health Needs Assessment and with the guidance of the Board of Directors, developed a strategic plan to address gaps in the community. Items prioritized were the following:

1. Continue investing in development to enable systemic and repeatable funding streams to our existing business model of billing insurance companies.
2. Explore methods to increase access to care, knowing that a severe shortage of psychiatrists and other mental health professionals has been an ongoing societal issue.
3. Expand levels of care and types of care in the community.
  - a. Deployment of neighborhood-based clinics over a period of several years to expand access to mental health care, alleviating wait times for initial care and transportation issues.
    - i. Expand traditional longer-term outpatient therapy to include a brief psychotherapy model.
    - ii. Include medication management at the clinic, when feasible.
    - iii. Offer day treatment (partial hospitalization) when feasible.
  - b. Deploy brief therapy options beyond the neighborhood clinics.
  - c. Evaluate non-medical based levels of care, such as intensive outpatient, respite beds, etc.
  - d. Evaluate addition of substance abuse services and support.
  - e. Evaluate home and school based partnerships for services.
4. Deepen relationships through continued outreach efforts to hospitals, doctors, schools, non-profits, other behavioral hospitals and etc.
5. Implement care coordination to create more effective utilization of health services for children at high-risk.

## Our Progress

Clarity Child Guidance Center's leadership evaluated the opportunities revealed in the Community Health Needs Assessment and with the guidance of the Board of Directors, developed a strategic plan to address gaps in the community. Progress made over the last five years, per the outlined priorities, includes:

- 1. Continue investing in development to enable systemic and repeatable funding streams to our existing business model of billing insurance companies.**
  - We have added the capability to determine financial eligibility of insurance coverage electronically to increase revenues from insurance billing.
  - Have integrated an electronic authorizations pilot with one of our largest payers.
  
- 2. Explore methods to increase access to care, knowing that a severe shortage of psychiatrists and other mental health professionals has been an ongoing societal issue.**
  - Deployed a call center which increased the percentage of calls answered by a live person from 17% to 92%. Employed a model of operators to answer and route calls, coupled with behavioral health specialists, to complete a phone triage and make recommendations for the appropriate level of care.
  - Launched the Next Step Center in August 2021 to provide rapid access appointments and short-term behavioral interventions. The Next Step Center also works with families to complete a warm handoff to other providers if additional or longer-term services are required.
  
- 3. Expand levels of care and types of care in the community with family friendly access points.**
  - Continued involvement with the Mobile Mental Wellness Collaborative, providing therapy services at four Bexar County Independent School Districts: South San, Edgewood, Harlandale, and Judson ISD.
  - Launched the Next Step Center in August 2021 to provide rapid access appointments and short-term behavioral interventions.
  - Removed the partial hospitalization census cap that had been put in place due to the pandemic to treat up to 30 children/adolescents at a time to meet the community demand.
  - Operated four Psychiatric Emergency Services (PES) beds in partnership with University Hospital and the South Texas Regional Advisory Committee (STRAC). Beds are designed to hold a child/adolescent for up to 48 hours and provide individual and family therapies to avoid inpatient hospitalization.
  
- 4. Deepen relationships through continued outreach efforts to hospitals, doctors, schools, non-profits, other behavioral hospitals and etc.**
  - Ongoing involvement in the South Texas Crisis Collaborative (STCC) steering committee to represent the interest of children's mental health in the larger community.
  - Establishment of the Bexar County Foster Care Stakeholders Task Force to ensure the involvement of mental health providers in the treatment of children/adolescents in CPS custody.

- Production of Conversations with Clarity in partnership with KLRN to bring together subject matter experts to dispel misinformation about children’s mental health.
  - Continue to host *Claritycon* an annual summit for advocates of children’s mental health.
- 5. Implement care coordination to create more effective utilization of health services for children at high-risk.**
- Increase family engagement to support continuity of care
  - Provide timely access to care after discharge from inpatient
  - Improve family understanding of aftercare needs
  - Provide bridge appointments to support the patient transition to community providers

The COVID-19 pandemic also required the expansion of inpatient treatment services for children with severe symptoms. A sixth and final priority follows:

- 6. Explore the need for additional inpatient beds, specifically for youth with serious symptoms requiring intensive intervention. Identified the need to construct a Pediatric Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit (PPICU) to treat children/adolescents with severe symptoms and a history of frequent hospitalizations.**
- Reconfigured psychiatric staffing patterns to allow for in-person psychiatric coverage in the Crisis Services department for approximately 18 hours daily.

### In Closing

The last two years have been some of the most challenging of our organization's history, with a global health crisis, food and job insecurity, and community violence and trauma compounding existing mental health struggles in children and adults alike.

Thinking creatively when problem-solving and being quick on our feet have not only been necessary to our successful navigation of the many obstacles we face as a community today but have changed the way we will approach problems in the future, too – with persistence and innovation.

Approved by the Clarity Board of Directors on 6/24/2022