

## Background

Creating community health is at the core of Beacon Health System's mission. We believe promoting responsible, preventive health in our community is the right thing to do, and is key to long-term cost effectiveness. Improving the health of our region's residents is as much social, economic, and environmental as it is a medical issue.

When we look at changing the health of our community members, we look at it in three ways: through the priorities identified in our last Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA), strengthening our community's capacity to promote health and well-being of residents, and focusing on engaging those who are most at-risk and/or vulnerable.

As a result of the CHNA conducted in 2021, there are two regional priorities which were identified in St. Joseph, Elkhart and Marshall Counties:

- **Mental Health:** Identifying the root cause and mitigating risks associated with mental health distress such as acute and chronic illness, Adverse Childhood Experiences, trauma, use of alcohol or drugs, and being/feeling lonely or isolated.
- **Healthcare Access (Health Literacy):** Health literacy is the conduit to increasing healthcare access, quality, and equity. It has an influence on major social, economic, environmental and behavioral factors that enable individuals and communities to make healthy choices and enjoy a long, healthy life.

Through engagement with key stakeholders and research into best practices, BCI is using the following definitions:

- **At-risk:** It's important for the programming to reach the population who needs it the most. The definition for 'at-risk' will be established at the priority level and be based on best practices. We strive to have at least 50% of the population served be identified as 'at-risk' by the priority definition.
- **Vulnerable Population:** BCI uses the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality's definition of vulnerability: Children/adolescents, elderly, low-income, racial/ethnic minorities, rural/inner-city residents, special healthcare needs, and/or women. We strive to have at least 85% of our population be vulnerable.

BCI's theory of change is that improving the community's awareness and knowledge about health will lead to improved behaviors and then create positive health outcomes. The department deploys resources and develops measures of success around this short, medium, and long term framework. In order to achieve this spectrum of change (improved knowledge, healthy behaviors, and health outcomes) a variety of types of programs and curriculums are needed. We have tiered our program portfolio into three areas: Awareness, Knowledge, and Action. Tiering programs allows us to bucket programs and evaluate their success/impact on realistic expectations based upon their delivery type (speaker series that reaches 3,000 people vs a 30 day in-patient drug treatment program). By having a mixture of programming types our goal is to achieve both broad and deep change within our community.

- **Awareness:** In order for something to change people need to be aware of the issue. Bringing an issue to the forefront and informing large numbers of people about risks, issues and opportunities of different health topics will spark resident’s curiosity about their own health status, and available options (services, practices) that could help them improve.
- **Knowledge:** Helping people better understanding the impact of behaviors (both positive and negative) and equipping them with the information necessary to take action is essential to creating positive change at the personal and community level.
- **Action:** Changing someone’s level of health is never easy and sometimes takes more intensive assistance at the personal level to equip them with the skills and resources necessary to change their status.

### **Offered Support**

Beacon Community Impact (BCI) conducts a request for proposal (RFP) process designed to identify programs to collaborate with partners to address the two priority health needs of the community and align with the implementation strategy approved to by each hospital governing Board to address the identified needs. BCI offers two types of financial support to community partners with the goal of creating an impact in St. Joseph, Elkhart, and Marshall Counties. Potential partners will use the same RFP template to apply for Program Implementation or Capacity Building funds. Technical Assistance is also available to all programs. Please note there is the potential for technical assistance to be offered whether financial assistance is awarded or not.

### **Financial Support Options**

1. **Implementation Strategy Funding** – This funding is available to programs who have a proven track record of creating impact in our community. Programs will need to be able to demonstrate established processes, procedures, and outcomes related to participant engagement, monitoring and evaluation, and impact reporting. Programs will also need to meet the objectives of the CHNA implementation strategy drafted, including tracking metrics that influence the anticipated outcomes. Funding up to \$40,000 is available per program. To be considered a strong candidate, programs should:
  - have been operating/serving participants for more than 1 year
  - have the ability to create trackable impacts in an at-risk and/or vulnerable population in at least one of the two priority areas (Mental Health and Healthcare Access)
2. **Capacity Building Funding** – For the purposes of Beacon Community Impact, these grants are intended to be a onetime funding opportunity for projects that will be completed within 1 year. Successful completion of a capacity building project allows recipients to apply for larger grants from the department the following year. Up to \$10,000 per program is available in this category. Organizations applying for these funds will ideally need assistance with:
  - Training of trainers
  - Curriculum development
  - Programs that fall outside CHNA priorities but have a positive health impact
  - Items to aid in service delivery: i.e. transportation options or supplies to conduct ongoing services. Funds cannot be used to supplement salary or rent. Organization must have

detailed plan of how they will use said funds during the year and track number of participants served.

### **Technical Assistance Support**

Additionally, Beacon Community Impact has created a team (nicknamed the Health Equity & Outcomes Team) focused on providing technical services to our partners. Their focus is supporting the work of the programs by providing project based assistance in an effort to increase the capacity of our community to address its most pressing health needs. If a program applies for technical assistance the team will work one-on-one with organizations to help identify potential opportunities, develop strategies for improvement, and assist with implementation.

- **Areas of expertise:** data collection, monitor & evaluation, and strategic planning
- **Restrictions:** Engagements should be project based. The Team will not complete operational activities.
- **Scale:** Projects should require less than 250 hours and no more than three months of the Team's time to complete
- **Types of projects:** research, facilitation, tool development, data analysis, strategy creation

### **Funding Criteria**

Beacon Community Impact's primary focus is to ensure that health programming is being delivered to those who need it. The department's philosophy for program delivery support looks at three major criteria:

- **Delivery Level:** Look to achieve both breadth and depth in terms of reach and impact in a way that produces the greatest return on investment in terms of positive health impact. Beacon Community Impact investment into the four tiers of programming (Awareness, Knowledge, Action and Impact) allows the department to not only reach a significant number of people with information but also work in depth with people who need it most
- **Health Equity Approach:** Invest in a diverse mix of programming that addresses the root issues and immediate barriers of the priority areas identified by the Community Health Needs Assessment. This mix is based upon the level of need in our community, the quality of the current programming and the potential for positive change based upon new innovations, ideas and initiatives.
- **Reach:** Ability to create change in every corner of our community. Beacon Community Impact classifies its community as Elkhart, Marshall and St. Joseph Counties. We look to have programming in each county. We also have a number of programs that operate in more than one county.

### **Partner Requirements**

Organizations who receive funding will be required to meet the following requirements:

#### **Implementation Strategy Funding**

- Attend partner orientation held in February
- Attend at least one partner workshop
- Submit Quarter One report

- Submit a Mid-Year report (June)
- Submit Quarter Three report
- Submit an End of Year report (December)

**Capacity Building Funding**

- Attend partner orientation held in February
- Attend at least one partner workshop
- Work with the Outcomes Team to develop a work plan for the funding period (January – December)
- Submit 1 progress report made on the established work plan (June)
- Submit a final report (December)

**Technical Assistance**

- Attend at least one partner workshop
- Submit a post engagement feedback survey (immediately after project)

*Please note: This is the baseline for reporting. BCI may request additional information.*

**How to Apply**

The funding and technical assistance application process involves three steps for partners:

1. **RFP application and review:** Partners submit the proposal with all associated materials. The application is reviewed and scored by BCI staff as well as BCI's Community Advisory Committee. Please refer to BCI's January 13th Workshop that has been recorded for additional information.
2. **In Person or Virtual Discussion:** If approved to move forward, a meeting between BCI staff and relevant program staff to clarify any questions on either side will occur. This call is expected to take about one hour. The areas of focus for the BCI team will be:
  - Understand the current state of the program and clarify any questions related to programming
  - Confirm BCI administrative criteria related to priority and tier, and discuss reporting and engagement requirements (overview listed in the Background section)
  - Talk through future plans for the program
  - Answer any outstanding questions the program has related to requirements or engaging with BCI
3. **Final Approval:** If approved to move forward, BCI will reach out with a funding offer and a final confirmation of expectations.

### General Instructions

In order to successfully apply for funding (Implementation or Capacity Building), final proposals should be submitted online no later than January 28, 2022 by 4pm EST. For fairness and consistency, applications will be assessed only on what is presented below in the Proposal Narrative. All submissions should be made through BCI's online portal. **If an organization is interested in applying for support for multiple funding opportunities, separate applications should be submitted for each program.** The required templates and guidance documents can be found within the online application portal or on the BCI website.

Applications for Technical Assistance will be reviewed on a rolling basis throughout the year. There is no deadline for completing a request. Completion of a request will be based on the capacity of the BCI team to meet the need.

For questions about the Request for Proposal contact Kimberly Green Reeves, Director Community Impact: [kgreenreeves@beaconhealthsystem.org](mailto:kgreenreeves@beaconhealthsystem.org)