Baptist Hospital of Miami conducted a community health needs assessment in 2013 to better understand the healthcare needs of the community it serves in southern Miami-Dade County. As a result, the following four priority areas were identified:

- Access to Care
- Availability of Primary and Preventive Care
- Chronic Disease Management
- Heart and Vascular Disease

This written implementation plan addresses each of these four priority areas, with strategies organized around each priority area.
Community Clinics for the Uninsured

Baptist Hospital of Miami, through its parent entity, Baptist Health South Florida, directly funds the operations of local community clinics that provide healthcare to uninsured and underinsured members of the South Florida community. Baptist Health funds four clinics: the Good Health Clinic, Good News Care Center, Open Door Health Center and South Miami Children’s Clinic. In some instances, Baptist Health’s contribution amounts to more than half of the operational budget for these clinics. In 2013, Baptist Health’s combined contribution exceeded $2 million, enabling these clinics to care for patients in more than 15,000 visits.

Recognizing the great need for healthcare access, particularly within the deep south portion of Miami-Dade County, and recognizing that many individuals, such as undocumented residents, will continue to remain ineligible for federal healthcare subsidies, Baptist Health plans to commit additional resources to existing providers to improve access to care for the uninsured.

These existing community clinics have greater needs beyond funding their continuing operations. They need partners to donate medical supplies and pharmaceuticals and to provide follow-up services, such as advanced diagnostic testing and surgery, to treat patients’ conditions and prevent them from worsening. Baptist Hospital has donated over $250,000 worth of pharmaceuticals annually to the community clinics. In 2013, clinic patients sought and received follow-up and diagnostic care at Baptist Hospital more than 4,800 times. The cost of this free care amounted to over $2 million.

Support Providers in Caring for the Uninsured

Baptist Hospital directly supports the care of the uninsured in two ways: free hospital care to individuals qualifying under the Baptist Health charity care policy, and direct payments to community physicians to treat these patients at the hospital.

Baptist Health’s charity care program has been an integral part of fulfilling our mission to care for those less fortunate throughout our history. As Florida’s insurance crisis has worsened, Baptist Health has increased its effort to provide free care to those who need it and raised public awareness of this assistance through community outreach and information given to patients. The program provides free care to individuals and families with incomes up to 300 percent of the federal poverty level. In 2013, more than 7,400 Baptist Hospital patients received charity care at a cost of more than $40 million.

In addition, Baptist Hospital encourages our affiliated physicians to care for uninsured patients in the hospital and in their offices on a timely basis by providing direct subsidies to them. In 2013, Baptist Hospital payments to affiliated physicians for uncompensated care and emergency department coverage totaled more than $8 million.

Outpatient Dialysis/Renal Failure Program

Baptist Health and Baptist Hospital subsidize the cost of regular outpatient dialysis treatments for uninsured/undocumented patients who would otherwise require prolonged inpatient hospital stays or frequent return visits to the emergency department for dialysis. This program helps ensure the appropriate level of care in the appropriate setting for these dialysis patients. In 2013, Baptist Hospital paid $475,000 to outpatient dialysis providers for care to these uninsured patients. This also prevented prolonged hospital stays and unnecessary admissions for these patients.
Enrollment Assistance — Healthcare Coverage Education and Assistance

Baptist Health believes that all members of the community should have a medical home with a secure relationship with a trusted primary care physician. The lack of health insurance coverage is a longstanding barrier to this objective. Baptist Health plans to educate patients about the importance of primary and preventive care, and thus the importance of health insurance coverage to accessing this care. Essential elements of this education will include available coverage options, such as government programs and commercial health insurance through traditional means and the health insurance marketplace. Baptist Health plans to expand its existing Medicaid enrollment resources to include healthcare marketplace application assistance.

Baptist Health understands that education and application assistance alone are not enough to ensure access to timely care. Insurance premiums not covered by government subsidies, high deductibles, co-payments and coinsurance are often financial barriers to timely care. To prevent minor health issues from escalating into acute episodes that require expensive emergency and/or inpatient care, the organization is committed to identifying innovative ways to remove these barriers for patients to access timely primary care.

Miami-Dade Health Action Network — Healthcare Access Initiative

Baptist Health supported the Health Council of South Florida’s MD-HAN Health Access Initiative (HAI) through a grant that helped establish the program. The HAI promotes access and affordable care to the uninsured and underserved in Miami-Dade County. The anticipated results of the initiative will be improved access to primary care, promotion of care coordination, reductions in uncompensated care and preventable hospitalizations, and improved overall health of the community.

Day of Smiles Program

In support of pediatric uninsured patients, Baptist Children’s Hospital and its affiliated physicians donate services to perform corrective facial surgeries and other reconstructive procedures to South Florida children at no cost for families unable to pay. Surgeries include correction of cleft palates, cleft lips, scars, tumors, burns, port wine birthmarks and congenital hand deformities. Doctors from various specialties, including plastic surgery, anesthesiology and oral surgery, donate their time and expertise for this cause.
Availability of Primary and Preventive Care

Increase Primary Care Providers
The United States has a recognized shortage of primary care physicians and Miami-Dade County has fewer primary care physicians per 1,000 residents than the national average. Making these key healthcare providers available to deliver routine care and manage chronic disease conditions before they flare up into acute episodes is critical to a well-functioning local healthcare system. Recognizing this, Baptist Health plans to invest heavily in increasing the supply of primary care providers within our community. Eight primary care clinics, each following the best-practice “patient-centered medical home” model are in the planning stages, including two in deep south Dade, the area in the study exhibiting the greatest need. Several of these will be located near Baptist Hospital. Success in this endeavor will be judged by reduced emergency department use and a reduction in preventable admissions.

Sponsor FIU Neighborhood Help Program to South Miami-Dade Community
Florida International University’s Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine has developed a program to address the social determinants of health. This program pairs interdisciplinary teams of health students, including medical, nursing and social work students, with families in a low-income area. The teams regularly visit these families in their homes, make comprehensive assessments, provide basic care when needed and devise treatment plans. Part of this care is also provided through a mobile health clinic. This support is coordinated with the families’ regular medical care providers. Currently, FIU offers this program to families in northwest Miami-Dade. Baptist Health is proposing to sponsor this program to target families in low-income areas of south Miami-Dade County, the area within the Baptist Hospital service area of greatest healthcare need. This program will reduce costly emergency department visits, avoid preventable admissions and increase health literacy.

Support of Primary Care Providers Through Continuing Medical Education Activities
Baptist Health provides continuous medical education in support of its primary care providers and allied health professionals through its accredited medical education department. In the past year, more than 700 educational courses were held, amounting to more than 1,300 CME credit hours. This benefits the community greatly by keeping physicians up to date on the latest techniques in primary care and prevention on an ongoing basis.

Primary Care and Prevention Activities
Baptist Health’s Community Health department organizes and staffs free health fairs, which include screenings for cholesterol, blood pressure, glucose, body composition and osteoporosis. The screenings occur both on the hospital grounds and at public events throughout the community. Community Health runs the screenings on behalf of Baptist Health hospitals. During the events, the screening participants are counseled about their results and given information and instructions on how to manage any chronic disease that may result. During the past year, Community Health conducted more than 50 health screening events for Baptist Hospital.
Diabetes Education Program

Diabetes is a chronic disease of increasing prevalence in the U.S. and higher than average rates in the South Dade Hispanic community. It is associated with increased morbidity and mortality for patients admitted to acute care settings. Approximately 45-55 percent of the inpatient population at Baptist Hospital either has diabetes or experiences hyperglycemia (high blood sugar) that requires monitoring or management. Baptist Hospital plans to focus diabetes education on this inpatient population in order to reach a critical mass of diabetic patients within its community. It will offer a multifaceted approach, beginning with teaching “survival skills” (i.e., insulin administration technique, blood glucose testing, basic nutrition and when to call the doctor). High-risk patients will be identified and referred to outpatient educational classes and online seminars, and will receive follow-up phone calls from diabetes educators. In addition, Baptist Hospital will offer frequent interactive classes at no charge to discharged patients and the general community organized through Community Health. Baptist Health also will dedicate additional resources to its Community Health department to provide diabetes educational programming.

Support Groups

An important psychosocial component of managing chronic disease is to have support groups in place where people with similar diseases can get together and share the challenges they face living with their disease. These groups also can become a source of hope and strength to the participants as they realize that they are not alone in their suffering and can share stories on how to successfully cope with their disease. It also can play an important role in educating them on community resources that may benefit them. Baptist Health and Baptist Hospital encourage and promote support groups through advertising and the use of our facilities to host the groups. Thirteen support groups meet regularly on the Baptist Hospital campus to address chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease and cancer. The groups are coordinated at the corporate level by the Community Health department.

Community Offerings: Exercise, Nutrition and Weight Management

Living a healthy lifestyle is an important part of preventing and managing illness and disease. Baptist Health and Baptist Hospital recognize this and promote health and wellness by sending a dietitian into the community to promote healthy eating and holding regular free exercise classes that are open to the community.

Baptist Health dedicates one registered dietitian through Community Health to travel throughout the community and educate residents on healthy eating. Through programs such as “Understanding Nutrition Facts Labels” and “Healthy Eating 101,” the dietitian instructs community members on the principles of good nutrition.
Baptist Health understands the value of regular exercise and physical activity. Not only does it place gyms at each hospital and encourage regular use by employees, it also employs certified fitness instructors to hold monthly free exercise classes in the community. Through Community Health, it offers monthly Zumba, aerobics, Tai Chi, Pilates and walking groups. During the past year, more than 120 free exercise classes were held every month at Baptist Hospital or the surrounding community, including the popular Dadeland Mall walking group.

“House Calls” Program
Baptist Hospital views transitions from the acute care setting to home-based care as a crucial time for patients, particularly those with chronic illnesses. One way to prevent readmission and improve outcomes is to follow up with a physician early after being discharged. Many avoidable readmissions have occurred, particularly with heart failure, when patients do not follow up with a physician in a timely manner after their hospital stay. To prevent unnecessary hospital admissions and emergency department visits, Baptist Hospital is partnering with Physicians At-Home Visiting Program, a service that sends physicians, nurse practitioners and physician assistants directly to patients’ homes in instances where patients are unable to travel to their physician’s office, with the goal of providing the same consistency of care that one would receive through regular physician office visits. This service provides complete medication reconciliation, an important part of treating this chronic disease population, many of whom take multiple medications and are commonly prescribed different medications during their hospital stay. Baptist Hospital will be subsidizing Physician At-Home Visiting Program costs to treat uninsured, high-risk, chronic disease patients who are unable to travel to their primary care physician’s office.

Medication Reconciliation Program
Many chronic disease patients take multiple medications and frequently are placed on different medications during their hospital stay. Upon discharge, they are unsure which medications prescribed in the hospital to continue at home and which of their old medications to resume. Often these patients, particularly the heart failure population, wind up being readmitted because they take too much of a certain class of medications and not enough of another. One proven strategy to reduce this type of readmission is to reconcile the patients’ medications by a pharmacist prior to discharge and educate them on what to take and when to take it. Baptist Hospital plans to hire additional pharmacists to provide this service to high-risk patients, based on a recently completed pilot study that successfully reduced these types of readmissions by half.
Heart and Vascular Disease

Heart and Vascular Health Events

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States. Miami-Dade County performs worse on several leading indicators of heart disease than other Florida counties and the U.S. as a whole. Baptist Hospital partners with the leading voluntary organization working toward preventing, treating and defeating heart disease, the American Heart Association, through its annual Heart Walk. The Heart Walk celebrates healthy lifestyle changes and encourages people to pledge to live a healthier life while raising the dollars needed to fund research, education and advocacy.

Vascular disease often goes undiagnosed until a major event occurs. Baptist Hospital’s Baptist Cardiac & Vascular Institute recognizes the benefits of early detection in preventing major vascular events and informing individuals to reduce disease risk factors through lifestyle changes. To facilitate early detection and preventive treatment, the Institute offers discounted peripheral vascular screenings to the community aimed at identifying individuals at risk and offering preventive measures to reduce disease progression.

Community Offerings — Heart and Vascular Disease

Baptist Cardiac & Vascular Institute will offer at least two large-scale educational events on relevant cardiovascular disease and prevention topics per year. Past topics have included women’s heart health. The Institute recognizes the leadership role it must play in educating the community and aims to increase its educational offerings accordingly.

Similar to the chronic disease support groups, Baptist Hospital facilitates several monthly support groups on cardiovascular disease topics. These support groups include topics such as heart failure, cardiac rehabilitation and women’s heart health. The support groups play a key role in enabling individuals with heart disease to reach out to people with similar challenges and share ideas on how to overcome them.

Heart Month Activities

Every February is Heart Month, and Baptist Cardiac & Vascular Institute partners with local news outlets to educate the community regarding heart disease prevention strategies and education. This collaboration has led to the development of an educational series entitled “Are You Heart Smart?” complete with its own website and multimedia presentations.

Women and Heart Disease

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in American women, killing more than a third. Women are less likely than men to receive appropriate treatment after a heart attack. Hispanic women have a slightly higher risk for cardiovascular disease than non-Hispanic whites and are less aware of their cardiovascular risk. For these reasons, Baptist Cardiac & Vascular Institute has long been involved with the national organization WomenHeart and became part of the National Hospital Alliance alongside WomenHeart in 2013. This alliance is composed of hospitals dedicated to advancing women’s heart health. The Institute currently co-hosts with WomenHeart a monthly support group in both English and Spanish. Over the next several years, the Institute plans to expand cardiovascular disease programs to women through educational offerings, walking clubs, WomenHeart screenings and access to lifestyle and risk factor modifications.
Cerebrovascular Disease/Stroke

Stroke is the fourth-leading cause of death and the number-one cause of disability in the United States. Stroke has a higher prevalence in the African-American and Hispanic patient populations. Education and public awareness of stroke and its symptoms is key to reducing the stroke risk in these patient populations and getting them help more quickly. Earlier treatment following a stroke increases the likelihood that patients can receive clot-busting treatments such as tPA, which is associated with greatly improved functional outcomes. Baptist Hospital’s current community awareness plan consists of an annual Strike Back Against Stroke Awareness Fair, including lectures and screening, stroke awareness lectures at African-American churches, several radio shows, a monthly “Life After Stroke” support group, an annual stroke dinner and lecture, quarterly lectures to EMS partners on various stroke topics, and marketing of stroke patient stories in Baptist Health community newsletters reaching over 716,000 households. Baptist Hospital plans to increase the frequency of these initiatives over the next three years, targeting younger age groups, integrating more into the Hispanic community and partnering with the American Heart and American Stroke Associations on local stroke awareness and educational campaigns in the South Florida community.