

# STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2020



**NCH** NORTON  
COUNTY HOSPITAL

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## Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to guide future priorities and decisions for Norton County Hospital to expand its scope during the years 2018-2020. The plan addresses four focus areas: Facility Status and Condition, Funding and Public Financial Support, Recruitment and Retention, and Regional Engagement and Needs.

## Plan Format

**Strategic Focus Areas:** Based on themes derived from data and stakeholder input, these areas are the focus of planning efforts.

**Goals and Objectives:** Based on discussions of “what success would look like” for each focus area, goals represent an overall desired end-result, and objectives provide specific results to be achieved.

**Dashboard Measures:** Methods to track desired changes in productivity, effectiveness, efficiency, and/or resource acquisition.

**Health Needs:** Numbered topics highlighted in the Community Needs Health Assessment that informed the focus area.

**Strategies:** The general means or methods used to arrive at the desired goal.

**First Step Action Plans:** First steps to operationalize strategies, associated with champions to facilitate the change effort, and a proposed timeline for the activity. This is to encourage using what is learned to adopt, adapt, or abandon tactics over time.

**Champions:** For each strategy, the person(s) who will initiate steps, track progress, and engage others in ongoing strategic thinking and doing.



# From the Administrator

**Gina Frack**  
*Norton County Hospital*  
*Chief Executive Officer*

Norton County Hospital is a critical access hospital in northwest Kansas that serves residents of Norton County and the surrounding area in both Kansas and Nebraska. The community served by the Hospital is determined, in large part, from its organization and status as a county hospital pursuant to state statute. In respect to the values of ***caring*** for our patients and residents, ***commitment*** to improving the quality of our care and providing ***communities*** in the region with health care that is relevant to their needs, we conducted this strategic planning process with the Norton County Health Department and Norton Regional Health Foundation.

The purpose of this strategic and implementation plan is to guide future priorities and decisions for Norton County Hospital over the years of 2018-2020. This document will be for public knowledge and referenced consistently both within the organization and as a part of community engagement. It is considered a living document that will be modified as circumstances change and the future unfolds.

The strategic planning effort stretched more than 10 months in an effort to collect input from as diverse of representation of our patients and region as possible, including input received from uninsured or underinsured community members. This was done by the following methods utilizing Wichita State University Community Engagement Institute facilitators and Wichita State University Center for Applied Research and Evaluation researchers:

- A community survey for the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) was promoted for all residents in our service area to complete. It was distributed in a variety of online methods as well as by hard copy in May and June 2018.
- A public forum reviewing the CHNA findings and gathering additional input from the attendees was hosted in July 2018.
  - All eight health concerns/needs in the CHNA are addressed in the strategic and implementation plan.
- A stakeholder engagement meeting reviewing hospital data, health care trends and the findings from the CHNA yielded focus areas to be considered moving forward. This meeting was hosted

in late October 2018 with about 50 community members. Initially, six focus areas were identified and then condensed to four. These are the same focus areas seen here in the strategic and implementation plan.

- The staff at the Norton County Hospital and Norton Medical clinic were then given a survey to address the four focus areas reflecting the top community health needs as identified at the stakeholder engagement meeting. They answered the five questions listed below.
  - What should Norton County Hospital keep in mind in the area of Facility Status and Condition?
  - What should Norton County Hospital keep in mind in the area of Funding and Financial Support?
  - What should Norton County Hospital keep in mind in the area of Recruitment and Retention of Providers?
  - What should Norton County Hospital keep in mind in the areas of Community Engagement and Needs?
  - What is missing in this planning discussion so far?
- A dozen staff with diverse roles met for a day to develop goals, objectives and ways to measure success; assure all health needs in the CHNA are addressed; and develop strategies, identify first steps and name champions for each strategy. It was a long but very productive day.

All the hard work by staff, the board and community members have led us to this place. In short, through this process, the community identified four focus areas or top community health needs, including: (1) have facilities that meet emerging health care needs of the region; (2) maintain strong public financial support and other diversified resources to meet the needs of patients, the communities served and hospital/clinic staff; (3) attract and develop qualified providers and staff with long-term commitment to the hospital and clinic; and (4) respond to the fact Norton County depends on the Hospital for much of its health-related needs. We now have identified the significant health needs of the community, created an implementation strategy to address those needs, and prioritized our next steps for the immediate future.

# Data Overview

This strategic plan was informed by multiple sets of data including:

- Community Health Needs Assessment (page 5)
- Hospital Trend Data (page 6)
- Staff Survey (page 10)

## Community Health Needs Assessment

Prior to developing the Strategic Plan, the Wichita State University Community Engagement Institute conducted a Community Assessment of Norton County on health and related issues. A total of 354 surveys were analyzed and synthesized into the following primary health concerns/needs for Norton County:

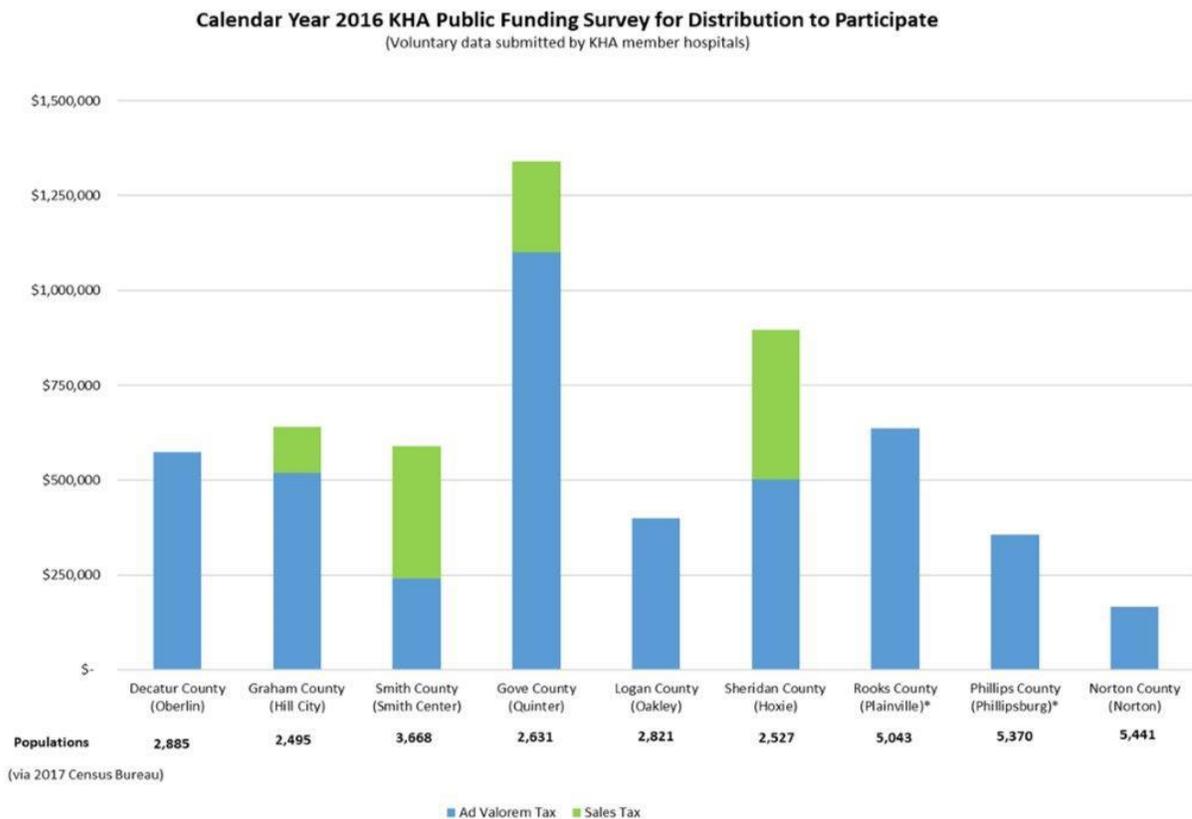
1. **A need for better access to health care in Norton** – Good access to health care was most important to respondents in creating a healthy community.
2. **Improvement needed in the availability of mental/behavioral health care** – Mental and behavioral health were considered by respondents the third greatest impact on community health.
3. **Cost of care is a barrier** – Affordable health care was considered the greatest need for community health by respondents overall, with 72% putting it in the top three needs.
4. **Appointments and services with specialists are in short supply locally, if at all** – Seeing the specialist(s) they needed was the top reason that respondents received care outside of Norton County.
5. **Quality of care in Norton is an issue for nearly half of respondents** – Forty percent (40%) of respondents seeking health care outside of Norton indicated they do so because they receive a higher quality of care.
6. **There is concern about health care organization leadership in Norton** – This came up in open-ended responses as it was not specifically targeted in survey questions.
7. **The community is impacted by health issues due to aging** – Fifty percent (50%) of respondents placed this in the top three greatest impacts on community health.
8. **Cancer was the condition listed as having the greatest impact on community health** – Fifty-eight percent (58%) of respondents put this in the top three impacts on community health.

*Each number, 1-8, corresponds with the 'Health Needs' section under each Focus Area.*

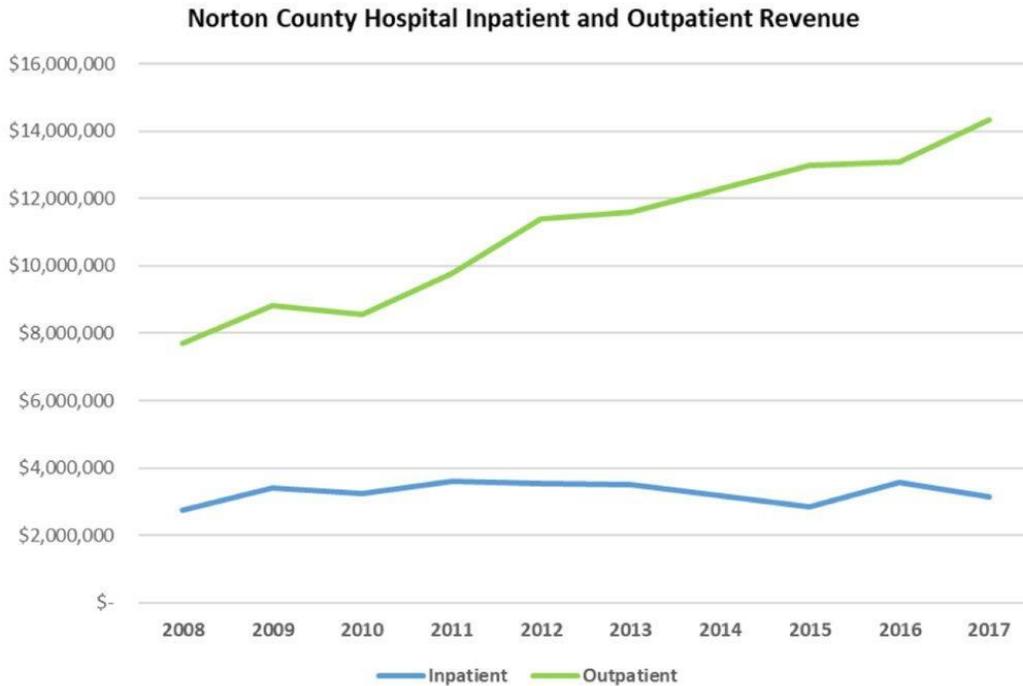
# Hospital Trend Data

In October 2018, Norton County community leaders, hospital staff, and residents reviewed the Community Assessment findings and the following trend data, put together and presented by hospital staff:

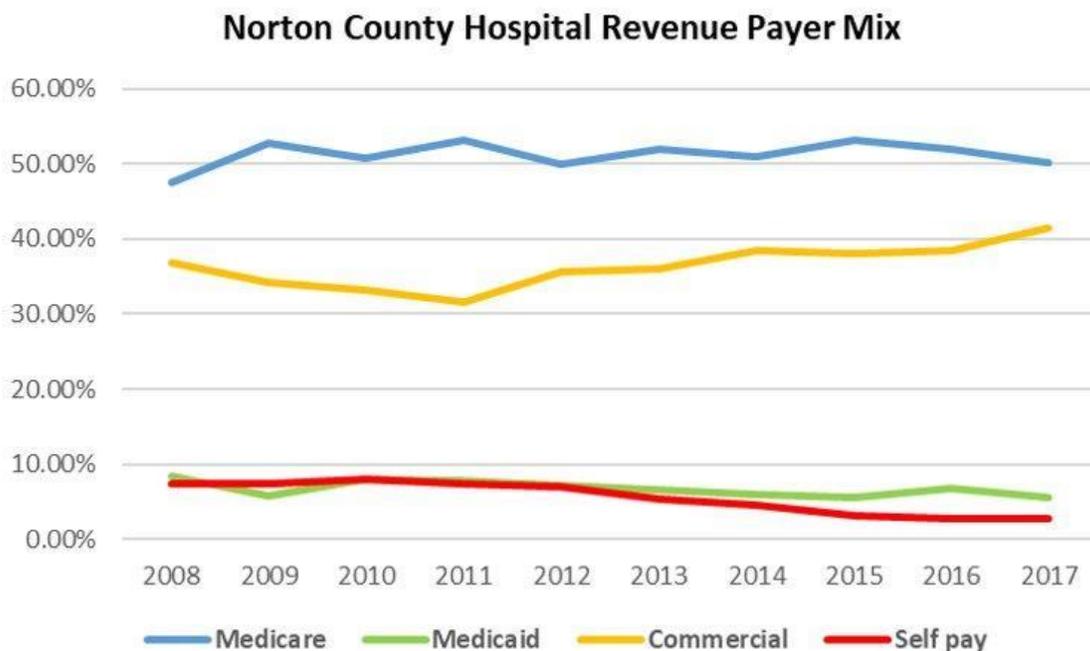
**Public Funding:** This graph shows the amount and type of financial support for the critical access hospital in Norton County and surrounding Kansas Counties in the way of local tax and/or sales tax.



**Norton County Hospital Inpatient and Outpatient Revenue:** This graph shows the increasing revenue coming from outpatient services at Norton County Hospital.



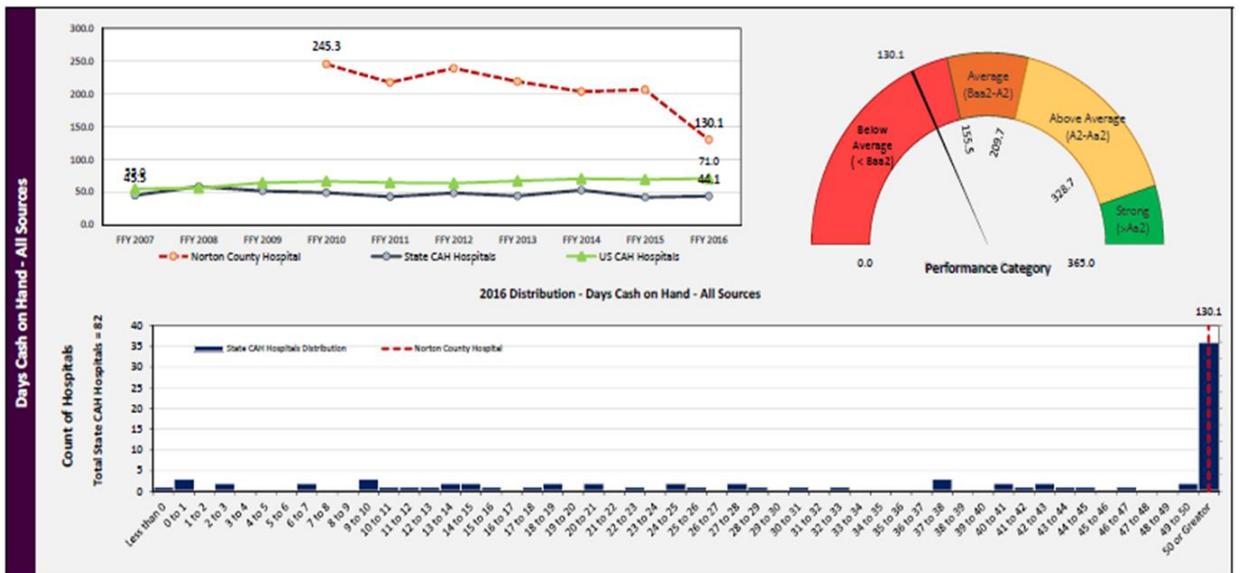
**Norton County Hospital Payer Mix:** Payer Mix shows from which sources Norton County Hospital receives payment for patient services and the trend over time.



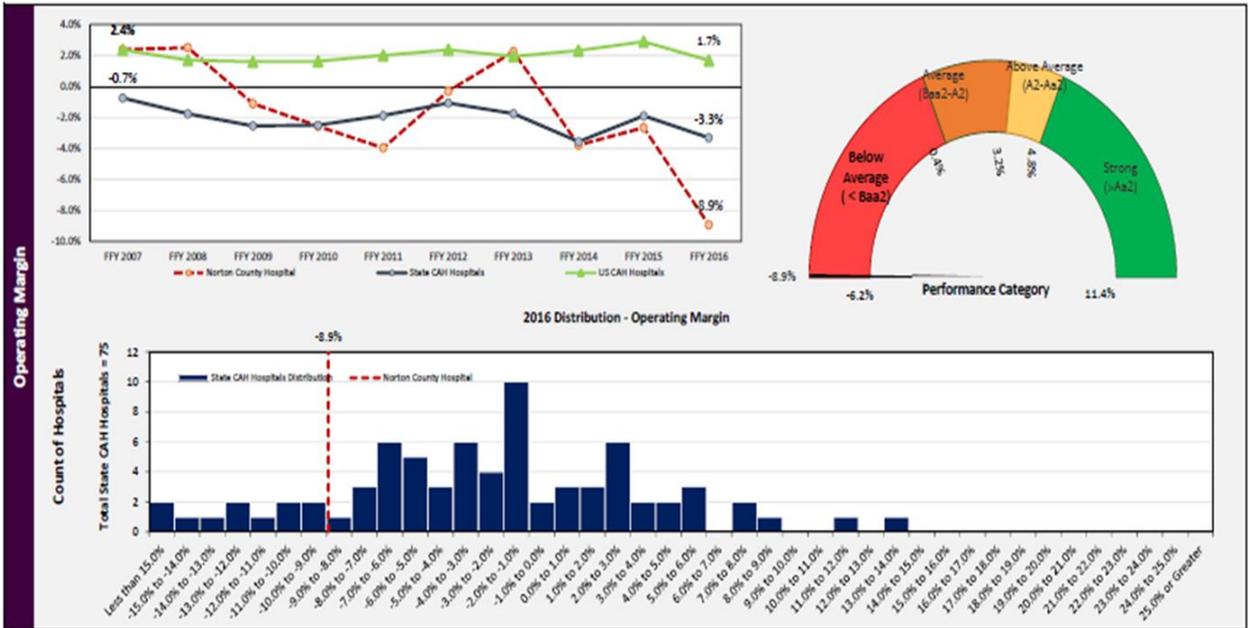
**Norton County Hospital Age of Plant:** The age of the physical structure, mechanical (ex. HVAC, plumbing, and wiring) and equipment assets of the hospital is an indicator of the financial position of the organization. The older the average age, the greater the short-term need for funds to cover repairs, replacement and maintenance. This graphic compares Norton County Hospital to other critical access hospitals in Kansas and the nation.



**Norton County Hospital Days Cash on Hand:** Simplistically this represents the amount of cash available. Hospitals usually balance the amount of days cash on hand by tying their strategic plans to their capital plan and budgets and projecting how much cash is needed. This graphic also compares Norton County Hospital to other critical access hospitals in Kansas and the nation



**Norton County Hospital Operating Margin:** Operating margin is a profitability indicator. It shows the income received from only patient care operations. This doesn't include other revenue sources such as tax support, grants and/or donations. This graphic compares Norton County Hospital to other critical access hospitals in Kansas and the nation.



# Staff Survey

As a result of the stakeholder meeting in which the community assessment and hospital trend data were presented, 4 focus areas were decided upon for Norton County Hospital. A short survey was created and sent out to staff to gain input on each focus area to further inform focus areas and strategies for the strategic plan. Response totals for each question ranged from 13 to 30, with an average of 24 respondents per question. The survey was composed of five open-ended questions and resulted in the following responses:

**1. What should Norton County Hospital keep in mind in the area of Facility Status and Condition?**

There was unanimous agreement that NCH facility equipment is outdated and in need of updates. Areas to prioritize included surgery/OR, kitchen/dietary, general surface updates, navigation, and accessibility.

**2. What should Norton County Hospital keep in mind in the area of Funding and Financial Support?**

Responses for this question fell into 3 categories:

- Increase local funding support through tax/mill levy increases, fundraising, bonds, grants, and donations.
- Improve staffing practices by focusing on retaining current staff and maximizing employee potential.
- Improve community relations and reputation through more community service engagement and higher transparency.

**3. What should Norton County Hospital keep in mind in the area of Recruitment and Retention of Providers?**

Responses for this question fell into 3 categories:

- Reduce turnover by treating staff better and offering rewards and incentives.
- Improve workplace culture and management by creating a positive environment through higher senses of trust and ownership.
- Recruit and hire providers by addressing turnover, providing incentives, and recognizing the community's role in attracting providers.

**4. What should Norton County Hospital keep in mind in the area of Community Engagement and Needs?**

Responses for this question fell into 3 categories:

- Rebuild community trust – inform community and provide transparency.
- Engage in more community activities.
- Improve poor reputation due to poor employee treatment and high turnover.

**5. What is missing in this planning discussion so far?**

Responses for this question fell into 2 categories:

- Focus on caring for current employees.
- Inform staff about changes at NCH and provide opportunities for involvement in processes.

# Strategic Focus Area 1

## Facility Status and Condition

### GOAL

Norton County Hospital's facility meets the emerging health care needs of the region (form follows function).

### OBJECTIVES

- Increase community and partner support for assessing and addressing hospital facility needs.
- Improve access to high-quality medical services.
- Witness hospital capacity for state-of-art equipment and procedures.
- Increase in number of people utilizing services (market share).

### DASHBOARD MEASURES

- Number of region-wide community meetings to identify health care needs
- Unduplicated census at public engagement activities
- People utilizing services at the hospital (market share)
- Public financial support for the hospital

### HEALTH NEEDS

1. Better access to health care in Norton
5. Quality of care in Norton



**1.1** Share messages/facts about the current status of the hospital (finances, facility, services, staffing) and assess support for the hospital.  
**[Timeline: January 2019 – January 2021]**

**1.1.1** Prepare messages/facts that tell the story of the hospital’s past, present, and future status (where we’ve been, where we are, and where we need to go in comparison with benchmark communities).

**1.1.2** Equip staff with talking points and message materials to informally share with the community.

**1.1.3** Conduct education activities including:  
- Series of community and in-house meetings to share messages and assess support for the hospital  
- Social media communication  
- Health care provider communication

**1.1.4** Provide positive patient experience stories and health outcome statistics.

**1.2** Study feasibility of new building, expansion, repurposing and other options including co-location.  
**[Timeline: July 2019 – January 2020]**

**1.2.1** Assessment of regional health care needs and desires.

**1.2.2** Analyze community utilization trends including facility classification comparisons.

**1.2.3** Study what’s working in benchmark communities.

**1.2.4** Conduct financial feasibility assessment of current operations and options to meet voiced regional needs.

**1.3** Explore existing and potential opportunities to negotiate partnerships that inform the design, increase the demand, and promote sustainability of the hospital facility.  
**[Timeline: March 2019 – January 2020]**

**1.3.1** Identify peer hospitals that have partnerships in place and assess pros and cons (partnerships can include: informal, collaborative, partnership agreements, resource sharing, co-location of services, etc.).

**1.3.2** Establish criteria for a ‘good partnership’ for Norton County Hospital and the region. Identify potential partners and initiate discussions.

**1.3.3** Based on feasibility, determine whether or not to initiate negotiations.

**1.1** Lead – CEO, CFO, Foundation Director

**1.2** Lead – CFO, Engineering Manager, Rehabilitation Manager, Possible Vendor Support

**1.3** Lead – CEO, Board of Trustees Representative, medical Staff Representative, CFO

# Strategic Focus Area 2

## Funding and Public Financial Support

### GOAL

Norton County Hospital has strong public financial support and other diversified resources to meet the needs of patients, the region, and hospital/clinic staff.

### OBJECTIVES

- Use hospital resources effectively and efficiently.
- Increase funding for personnel, services, and technology.
- Increase perception of hospital stability to promote financial support.
- Increase diversity of hospital funding sources.

### DASHBOARD MEASURES

- Percentage of income by source
- Profit-loss
- Non-service generated income

### HEALTH NEEDS

3. Cost of Care



## STRATEGIES AND ACTION STEPS

- 2.1** Increase regional funding support.  
**[Timeline: November 2018 – February 2019, November 2019 – February 2020, November 2020 – January 2021]**
  - 2.1.1** Prioritize fundraising opportunities based on the strategic plan and communicate priorities to donors and potential donors.
  - 2.1.2** Refocus grant writing efforts based on strategic planning priorities.
  - 2.1.3** Initiate an employee giving program with incentives.
  - 2.1.4** Based on success of strategy 1.1, seek increased tax support.
  
- 2.2** Promote a sustainable hospital environment.  
**[Timeline: July 2018 – January 2021]**
  - 2.2.1** Assess, develop, and utilize current employees' capacities to increase effectiveness and morale.
  - 2.2.2** Address and improve staff trust, sense of ownership, and retention (see 3.2.2).
  - 2.2.3** Maximize cost-sharing service opportunities (CFO).
  
- 2.3** Create a stable provider network including specialty clinics.  
**[Timeline: March 2018 – January 2021]**
  - 2.3.1** Explore existing and potential opportunities to negotiate partnerships (see strategy 1.3).
  - 2.3.2** Recruit and retain providers (see focus area 3).

- 2.1** Lead – Foundation Director, Foundation Board Representative, CEO, Medical Clinic Manager, Risk Manager
- 2.2** Lead – HR Manager, Risk Manager, Medical Clinic Coding, Director of Nursing
- 2.3** See strategies/areas sited above

## CHAMPIONS

# Strategic Focus Area 3

## Recruitment and Retention

### GOAL

Norton County Hospital attracts and develops qualified providers and staff with a long-term commitment to the hospital/clinic.

### OBJECTIVES

- Improve sense of support and connectivity among providers and staff.
- Create new opportunities for provider/staff recruitment and retention.
- Enhance menu of recruitment and retention incentives.

### DASHBOARD MEASURE

- Turnover and retention rates
- Provider recruitment (contracts)
- Health care Provider Shortage Area score
- Contracted service costs

### HEALTH NEEDS

4. Short supply of specialists appointments
6. Health Care organization leadership in Norton



- 3.1** Develop regional efforts that promote recruitment.  
**[Timeline: December 2018 – January 2021]**
  - 3.1.1** Develop a business leaders’ task force that identifies possibilities for incentives.
    - Utilize Economic Development partnerships to identify business leaders, organizations, etc.
  - 3.1.2** Develop outreach efforts and a range of opportunities for staff spouses/families.
  
- 3.2** Explore best way to incentivize long-term commitment.  
**[Timeline: July 2018 – October 2018]**
  - 3.2.1** Reach out to peer hospitals and research best practices for incentivizing long-term commitments.
  - 3.2.2** Work with local foundations and others to explore new opportunities to fund incentives (tuition reimbursement, longevity bonuses, etc.)
  - 3.2.3** Explore and study ways to foster a positive workplace culture.
    - On-call scheduling
    - Work-life balance
    - Policies
    - Respect and valuing employees
    - Internal organizational communication
  - 3.2.4** Create community integration opportunities for providers and staff.
  
- 3.3** Develop current employees to fill needed positions.  
**[Timeline: July 2019 – January 2021]**
  - 3.3.1** Find ways to have discussions around employee development goals and strategies (link goals to current staffing needs).
  - 3.3.2** Develop career tracks (plans) including staff development opportunities.

- 3.1** Lead - Director of Nursing, Administrative Assistant, Board of Trustees Representative, Economic Development representatives (Norton County and Regional)
- 3.2** Lead - Medical Clinic Coding, CEO, Director of Nursing, HR Manager, Foundation Director
- 3.3** Lead - HR Manager, HR Partners, CIO

# Strategic Focus Area 4

## Regional Engagement and Needs

### GOAL

Norton County region looks to Norton County Hospital for all health-related needs.

### OBJECTIVES

- Norton County community looks to the hospital as a trusted and credible organization.
- Norton County Hospital collaborates with other providers to offer integrated services.
- Hospital and Health Department staff are better able to communicate regional health-related needs and how their organizations address those needs.

### DASHBOARD MEASURE

- Percentage of Norton County community using Norton County services
- New services and additional integrated services provided in Norton County
- Measured improvement on community assessment related to perceived quality of care.

### HEALTH NEEDS

2. Availability of mental/behavioral health care.
5. Quality of care in Norton
7. Community Impact of health issues due to aging.
8. Cancer has the greatest impact on community health.



**4.1 Integrate health services.  
[Timeline: July 2019 – January 2021]**

**4.1.1** Study the gap between needs and resources for areas identified in the 2018 needs assessment and market analysis, including but not limited to:

- Behavioral Health
- Oncology
- Substance Abuse
- Aging population needs

**4.1.2** Develop cross-sector work groups to address findings of gap analysis, best practices, integrated programs to address identified needs, etc.

**4.1.3** Seek funding strategies to develop programs.

**4.2 Improve confidence and positive experiences with patient care/encounters.  
[Timeline: July 2018 – January 2021]**

**4.2.1** Identify areas of daily patient care/encounters that can be improved.

**4.2.2** Address findings by standardizing processes throughout the facility based on best practices.

**4.2.3** Strategically communicate to staff and public efforts to improve care and positive results.

**4.3 Collaborate with the Norton Regional Health Foundation and County Health Department to lead promotion of healthy living in the region.  
[Timeline: January 2018 – January 2021]**

**4.3.1** Identify other partners in this effort.

**4.3.2** Reach out to other peer hospitals to gain information on community activities.

**4.3.3** Develop a plan to initiate higher levels of internal organizational and regional engagement.

**4.3.4** Lay the groundwork for future healthy organizational and public policy development.

**CHAMPIONS**

**4.1** Lead - Outpatient Coordinator, Surgery Director, CEO, Health Coach, Norton County Health Department representative, High Plains Mental Health representative, Valley Hope representative

**4.2** Lead – CIO, Medical Clinic Manager, PFAC (Patient and Family Advisory Council) representative, Risk Manager, Lab Manager, Radiology Manager, Cardiac Rehab Manager, Rehabilitation Manager, Shared Governance

**4.3** Lead - Trauma/Safety/Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, CEO, Foundation Director, Live Well Norton Representative, Norton County Health Department representative

# Timeline

## Focus Area 1: Facility Status and Condition

- Strategy 1.1: Share messages/facts that tell the story of the hospital's past, present and future status.
- Strategy 1.2: Study feasibility of new building, expansion, repurposing and other options including co-location.
- Strategy 1.3: Explore existing and potential opportunities to negotiate partnerships that inform the design, increased demand, and promote sustainability of the hospital facility.

## Focus Area 2: Funding and Public Financial Support

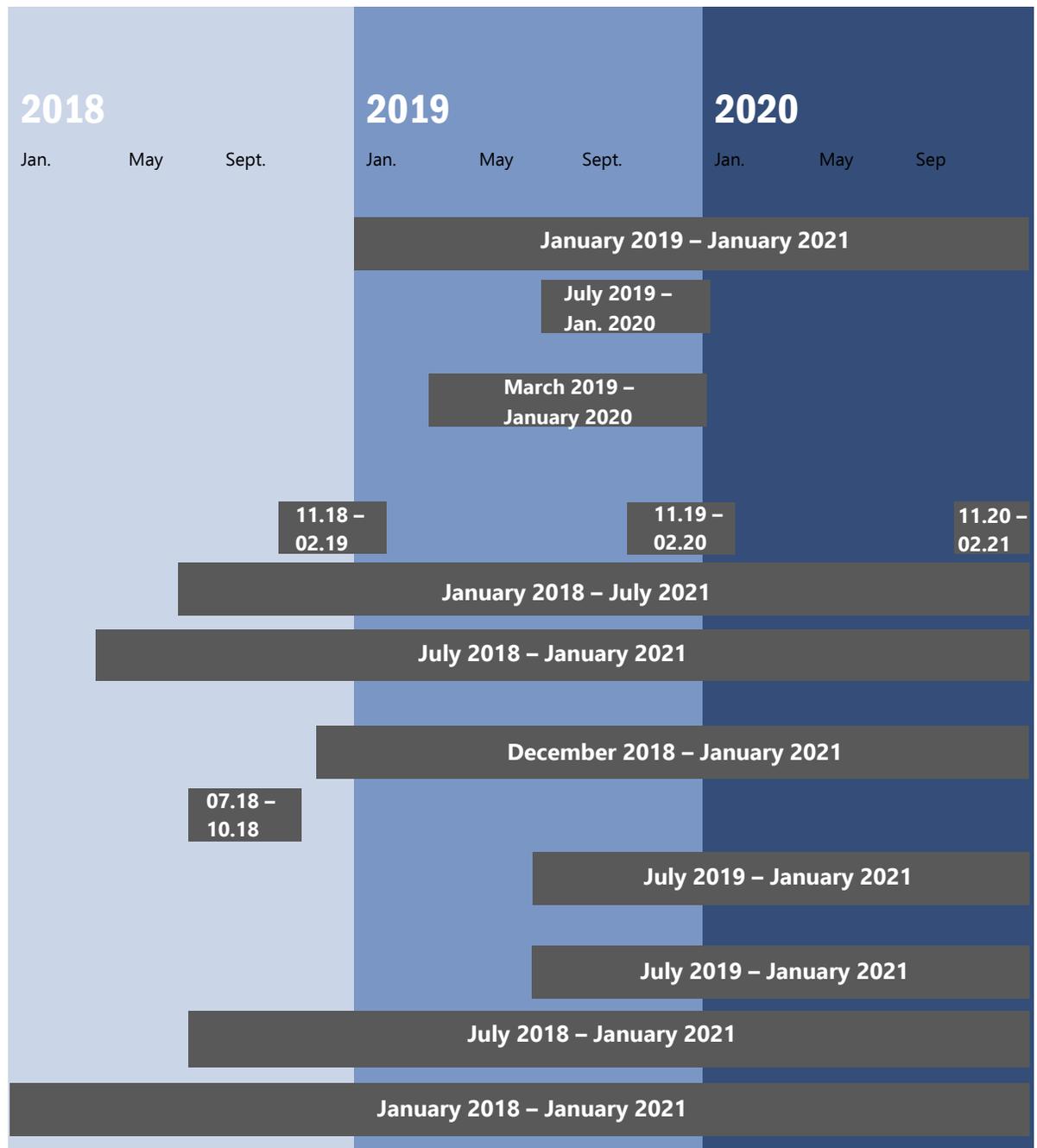
- Strategy 2.1: Increase regional funding support
- Strategy 2.2: Promote a sustainable hospital environment.
- Strategy 2.3: Create a stable provider network including specialty clinics.

## Focus Area 3: Recruitment and Retention

- Strategy 3.1: Develop regional efforts that promote recruitment.
- Strategy 3.2: Explore best way to incentivize long-term commitment.
- Strategy 3.3: Develop current employees to fill needed positions.

## Focus Area 4: Regional Engagement and Needs

- Strategy 4.1: Integrate Health Services
- Strategy 4.2: Improve confidence and positive experiences with patient care.
- Strategy 4.3: Collaborate with the Regional Health Foundation and County Health Department to lead promotion of healthy living in the region.



# Moving Forward

This plan aligns with the Norton County Hospital's historical tagline: Caring, Commitment, Community is lived each and every day. The strategic planning effort was informed by stakeholder input, as well as data related to trends, conditions, challenges, and opportunities.

A first and crucial step to ensuring a strategic plan's effectiveness is clearly communicating the roles of stakeholders. When they understand their roles, stakeholders actively work together to implement strategies, learn from their efforts, adapt, and continue to move forward until the desired outcomes are accomplished. During the planning process, champions were identified for each focus area strategy. These leaders will not necessarily be the ones doing the work associated with their named strategy; instead, they will *facilitate* the work. Performance measures will be used to track changes in productivity, effectiveness, and/or efficiency. Over time, Norton County Hospital will be able to see progress towards objectives in each focus area, leading the organization to achieve their overall desired end-results.

**This strategic plan will be a living document.** Updates will constantly inform, and perhaps change, the course of the plan. Adaptability insures that the organization may stay attuned to the needs of its stakeholders—patients and their families, staff, volunteers, donors, and regional citizens at large. These recommended steps will help to insure Norton County Hospital makes progress toward stated goals and objectives:

- The Norton County Hospital Board of Trustees, serving in a governance capacity, should review, revise as needed, and approve the plans.
- Ongoing strategic 'thinking and doing' is required if any progress is to be made toward goals and objects. WSU has provided (separately) a 90-120 Day Strategic Thinking and Doing Worksheet. This tool can guide the work of leaders as they implement strategies, monitor progress, and adapt strategies based on what is learned.

*A design team, composed of Hospital leadership and members from the Wichita State University Community Engagement Institute, facilitated this planning process.*



## **Norton County Hospital**

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## **Norton Medical Clinic**

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**Norton, KS 67654**

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