



Project Intake Form

Project Title Expansion & Access Project

Project Applicant Punxsutawney Area Hospital

Applicant Address 81 Hillcrest Drive

Punxsutawney

Pennsylvania

15767

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All counties in the North Central region are currently transitional.

Select all counties the project will serve. Jefferson

Project Type Healthcare

Primary Funding Agency Other (enter agency below)

Please enter the Primary Funding Agency Working on a loan with the USDA, nothing confirmed yet.

Select Primary Objective to Set the Goal Supporting Objective Objective 2.4: Expand access to high quality healthcare as well as programs and services that support overall mental and physical health, for workers and their families.

Building a Workforce Ecosystem

View North Central's [2018-2023 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy here](#).

Does your project align with the goals of North Central's 2018-2023 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy?

Yes

The CEDS Investment Priorities include the following:

- Expanding and strengthening employment and education opportunities that provide stable family wage jobs.
- Investments in entrepreneurship and home-grown business development to build a sustainable, diverse economy.
- Preserving and investing in the region's natural and cultural assets to strengthen economic potential.
- Creating and/or improving reliable, consistent access to critical infrastructure in North Central Pennsylvania.
- Providing sufficient availability of right-sized, right-priced housing throughout each county within the North Central Pennsylvania region.

Check the box if you'd like this project to be considered for inclusion in North Central's forthcoming CEDS and Resiliency Plan.

Yes, please consider this project for inclusion in the forthcoming CEDS and Resiliency Plan.

Project Funding

Please enter the project funding amounts for each below. Totals and Percent will calculate automatically. Do NOT include the "\$."

#	Non Construction	Equipment	Construction	Total	Percent
1	495060	0645765	015083210	16224035	95.23888771973388
2	0	0	0	0	0
3	0	0	0	0	0
4	811060	0	0	811060	4.761112280266121
5	1306120	645765	15083210	17035095	100

Funds Status

	Funds Status
Federal	Applied For
State	No Funds
Local	No Funds
Other	Applied For

Period of Performance

Start and End Date

Start Date: 01/01/2023 End Date: 12/31/2024

Purpose of Project

Punxsutawney Area Hospital ("PAH") is a 49-bed, not-for-profit community hospital located in Punxsutawney, PA, with a primary service area covering rural Jefferson County, PA, the entirety of which has been designated by the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) as rural. HRSA has also designated PAH's service area (Jefferson County) as Dental Health and Mental Health Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs) and as a Medically Underserved Area/Population (MUA/P). Even before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Jefferson County community, particularly Punxsutawney, suffered from substantial socio-economic challenges and poor community health outcomes that the pandemic has exacerbated. These challenges underscore the significant burdens and strains on PAH's already limited resources caused by COVID and highlight PAH's considerable need for additional funding support to help serve their low-income and severely burdened community. As an extremely rural area with a limited capacity in our Emergency and Outpatient Departments, the importance of the expansion project is detrimental to the services we provide including the access to care. The Punxsutawney Area Hospital offers exceptional care; however, our outdated and limited capacity department lacks physical space to accommodate the growing needs of our community. With the ongoing Covid-19 Pandemic, our facility lacks the ability to provide permanent space for patient accommodations who are suffering from aerosolized, respiratory viruses in need of negative pressure rooms and specialized care. We are also seeing an increase in the number of patients that enter the ED under psychiatric distress and those experiencing extreme emergent situations. Based on an evaluation of the services rendered at the facility and an analysis of trends, the effects of the project will be long lasting after the initial relief it will provide our community. Our mission and goal of this project is to provide our community with healthcare options they need.

Project Description

This a construction and technological advancement project. The major activities include determining what amenities the facility needs to best serve our population and community. To simplify the project the phases of the project are as follows:

Planning Process: Senior Admin, Managers, Medical Staff, Professional Architects, Department of Health, Logistic and Operational Industry Professionals, Primary Mountain Care Network Board of Directors

A throughout evaluation of the needs of the community was determined by conducting the Community Health Needs Assessment, statistical information tracking and evaluation using DRG codes, Community Input, By conducting the community blood screening program, industry advancements. The planning process has been taking place for 2 years.

Financial Securement: Senior Admin, CFO, Public Relations Specialist, Grant Writing Professionals PAH in collaboration with partner, IRMC are working to receive a loan from the USDA, the parent organization- Primary Mountain Care Network has pledged funds, and a capital campaign is being designed.

Bidding & Construction: Project Manager , Senior Admin, Primary Mountain Care Network Board of Directors

The construction of the project will take place in phases and is likely to last 2 years.

Approvals/ Site Visit/ Evaluations: PA Department of Health, Project Manager , Senior Admin There are numerous governing bodies and processes a healthcare facility must go through in order to be deemed a safe, accredited facility.

Training/Implementation: Project Manager , Senior Admin, Managers, Staff

The staff will be trained on the new equipment and processes then the implementation process will

take place.

Explain the following for the Strategic Rationale:

- Identify the problems and/or opportunities the project will address.
- Explain the existing conditions or critical circumstances that would compel the funding of this project.
- Describe how the project supports a regional strategy or plan.
- Explain how this project will contribute to sustainable economic development in the service area impacted.
- Identify the types and numbers of jobs to be created or retained.
- Explain any Leveraged Private Investment because of this project.

Strategic Rationale

Providing Access to health care in rural communities is challenging. As sited in the North Central Regional Planning Commission CEDS Planning Document for 2018-2023, Healthcare is a weakness in our area.

Punxsutawney Area Hospital (“PAH”) is a 49-bed, not-for-profit community hospital located in Punxsutawney, PA, which has a total population of 5,962 and a median household income of \$28,058. PAH’s primary service area covers Jefferson County, PA, which has a total population of 45,200 and a median household income of \$38,406. PAH is located in and serves a distressed community according to the Economic Innovation Group (EIG) index.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau’s most recent 5-Year American Community Survey (2019), 25.7% of Punxsutawney residents live below the federal poverty level, and 15.1% of the County’s residents live below the federal poverty level. Meanwhile, only 12.4% of Pennsylvanians and just 13.4% of Americans live below the federal poverty level. Perhaps more striking is that 12.06% of Punxsutawney residents live at just 50% of the federal poverty level (only 5.6% statewide and 5.99% nationally do).

PAH’s community was also experiencing significant health issues even before the pandemic, which likely aggravated COVID-19’s devastation in the area. The socio-economic challenges, combined with the already poorer health outcomes in the community, only augments PAH’s need for such additional funding support to effectively manage and treat patients who are suffering from all health issues, including COVID, in our Emergency Department.

The percentage of adults in Jefferson County and surrounding areas who reported that poor physical or mental health prevented them from doing usual activities in the past month from 2017- 2019 was 29.0% (an increase from previous years) and was notably higher than the same rate statewide (25.0%). PAH’s latest Community Health Needs Assessment (“CHNA”) was completed in 2021. In the CHNA, 49.4% of the respondents from PAH’s service area identified access to affordable health care as a serious or severe problem. Access to insurance coverage was identified as a problem by 36.8% for PAH. Access to primary medical care providers (21.3%) and access to specialists (37.3%) were also identified by the community as significant problems. Transportation to medical providers and services were identified as a problem by 25.4% of respondents from PAH.

Beyond physical health, in 2019, the mental and behavioral disorders mortality rate per 100,000 was significantly higher in Jefferson County (60.8) when compared to the state (42.8). In addition, 41.3% of community survey respondents from PAH’s service area identified social isolation as a serious or very serious problem. A similar percentage (41.8%) identified access to mental health care services as a problem, while 40.1% identified access to drug and alcohol treatment services as a problem.

Stakeholders from PAH’s service area identified both mental health and substance use among the “Top 3” community health needs Jefferson County. Stakeholders noted that EMS often gets calls regarding mental health, that drugs are easily accessible in the community, which leads to drug use as a top health concern, and that the community lacks services to respond to those in a mental health crisis. There is thus a significant need for intervention and education related to drug use.

From 2018 through 2020, hospital ER and/or inpatient discharges for mental health for PAH increased for: adjustment related, anxiety, conduct/social disturbance, dementia, depression, emotional

disorders youth, mental retardation, schizophrenia, stress-related and transient organic psychotic. Many stakeholders from PAH's service area aptly noted that the fact the community is rural drives the community's health needs. A few also pointed out that the population is aging, and technology and transportation can be large barriers when it comes to accessing health services for these populations. Thus, it is abundantly clear that without additional support, PAH cannot effectively diagnose and treat the many health issues.

This project will contribute to sustainable economic development in the service area impacted by maintaining and adding new jobs. With new job creation, it is likely to have an increase in population and a need for the additional housing. The more people that are employed by the hospital, there more people will be paying taxes, shopping, dining, and utilizing the services of this area therefore translates into a positive economic impact.

Jobs created: This project will create a minimum of 25 jobs, both clinical and non-clinical. We current have 410 employees, this project will not cause a reduction of any staff.
No Leveraged Private Investments have been identified.

Collaborative Partnerships

Jefferson County Commissioners
Young Township, Jefferson County
Primary Mountain Care Network
Drug and Alcohol Commission
PA Department of Health
Primary Mountain Care Network Board of Directors
Peer Recovery Network Partners
Pennsylvania Rural Health Model
Rural Health Redesign Center Authority
Jefferson County Department of Emergency Services

Project Sustainability and Capacity

Punxsutawney Area Hospital ("PAH") is proud to represent and serve its local rural community of Jefferson County, PA. In fact, PAH's very foundation was deeply entrenched with the community. Founded in 1889 by Adrian Iselin, the original Adrian Hospital (what is now PAH) was established at the site of the coal mines in Adrian to care for sick and injured miners. As the community prospered and grew, the hospital opened its doors to treat all residents and became a general hospital. With this increased usage, soon the services offered at this site became inadequate and steps were taken to improve health care in the community. In 1898, a "new" Adrian Hospital, including a Training School for Nurses, was built at the corner of Jenks and Park Avenues in downtown Punxsutawney. For nearly 75 years the Adrian Hospital served the community faithfully, seeing it through two World Wars, a Depression, and countless advancements in medical technology. Sadly, in the '70s it became evident that the field of medicine had passed by this aging facility, so a group of impassioned residents began planning to build a new hospital. A campaign was launched in 1973 with local citizens and businesses pledging their faith and money, and in 1975, ground was broken to begin the construction. Finally in July 1977, the new facility ("Punxsutawney Area Hospital") opened its doors and continued the tradition of providing quality medical care for area residents.

In 1999, PAH launched a Capital Campaign called "Building Upon Success" and, with tremendous support from the hospital family as well as community members, raised more than \$2.1 million. This funding was used to construct a new 30,000-square-foot West Wing Unit which now houses the Rehabilitation, ICU, and Behavioral Health Departments in addition to several physician specialist

offices. Phase II of this building project included the expansion and unification of the Short-Stay Surgery Unit for optimum patient convenience and comfort.

PAH maintains incredibly close ties to the Punxsutawney, Jefferson County, and surrounding communities to this day. The Boards of Directors of PAH and Indiana Regional Medical Center (Indiana, PA) entered into a definitive agreement in November 2020 that established Pennsylvania Mountains Cares Network (PMCN) as the parent organization with governance control over both hospital organizations. PMCN was formed in 2015 as an affiliation among PAH and IRMC, and also included Clarion Hospital (who later parted with the network when it merged with the Butler Health System) as the three facilities explored opportunity to more closely collaborate in an increasingly challenging health care marketplace. In the new organizational model of PMCN, there will be one governance authority populated initially by representatives of the former Board of Directors of the respective

hospitals who will oversee the operation of both hospitals and their related subsidiaries. As further evidence of ties to the local community, PAH had extraordinary community support and engagement during its 2021 Community Health Needs Assessment. Despite the relatively small population of its service area, PAH worked with representatives of the CHNA Steering Committee and 1,085 citizen-participants of interviews and community surveys who generously gave their time and input to provide insight and guidance to the process.

Today, as a 49-bed, not-for-profit community hospital, we are striving to provide the services that are needed to our community. We have recently invested in a property located at 240 W. Mahoning Street. This location is being used as our Home Health Office. Since 2020, PAH has added the following services: Rapid Care: Walk In Clinic, Dermatology, Hillman Cancer Center, Gastroenterology, Bariatrics, Podiatry, and a Pain Clinic. We are listening to our community, and providing services that will ensure our position in the community for many more to come.

Output and Outcome Measures

Stand-Alone Output Measure

plans/reports

new visitors: days

square feet

Stand-Alone Outcome Measure

jobs created

jobs retained

programs implemented

Congressional and Legislative Districts

Cris Dush (PA StateSenate, 25th)

Brian Smith (PA StateHouse, 66th)

Glenn Thompson (US House, 15th)

Pat Toomey (US Senate)

Bob Casey (US Senate)

Miscellaneous Notes

Our outcomes and measurements would also include patients seen statistics that would include services provided, which can be determined by the DRG coding.