



COMMUNITY BENEFIT REPORT

2020

Improving the Life of Every Child

Children need a voice – loud and clear and knowledgeable – that is committed to protecting and supporting their access to high-quality health care and a healthy community. Children’s Hospital & Medical Center is proud to be that voice.

Engaging with Community Partners

Advocacy means empowering our Center for the Child & Community and engaging with our schools, fellow community providers and non-profit partners. By working together, we can better generate and support local solutions to large-scale children’s health issues, including childhood obesity, poverty and food insecurity.

Everyone who works at Children’s understands the great privilege and responsibility of serving as an advocate for children, families and communities. Our responsibility includes sharing information to illustrate how Children’s provides health care, education and outreach services, helping to fulfill our mission, “To improve the life of every child.”

In 2020, Children’s provided more than \$129 million in benefits to the broader community. This includes uncompensated care through financial assistance and unreimbursed Medicaid – fulfilling our commitment to ensure that no child with a medical need is ever turned away due to a family’s inability to pay.

Children’s provides additional community benefit through subsidized health services like home health care and behavioral health, as well as financial and in-kind support for numerous local charity events and non-profit organizations. Investments in health care education and training, plus research to develop new innovations, treatments and cures, confirm Children’s dedication to improving the health of the region’s children. Within the community, Children’s is working in collaboration with cross-sector partners on initiatives to improve child health outcomes. Children’s further serves the community through injury and illness prevention education, community outreach and assistance through social work, nurse case management, pastoral care, child life services and more.

This report highlights Children’s unwavering commitment to the health and well-being of children and our broader community.

OUR MISSION

To improve the life of every child through exceptional Care, Advocacy, Research and Education.

OUR VISION

To be a global leader for children’s health.

VALUES

Innovation
Collaboration
Accountability
Respect
Excellence

138,797

Unique patients served in 2020

575,730

Total patient visits in 2020

A Closer Look

Total Community Benefit = \$129,213,631

BROADER COMMUNITY HEALTH

\$82,452,610

Cash and In-Kind Contributions	\$538,156
Subsidized Health Services	\$60,162,032
Health Professions Education	\$20,333,324
<i>Education & Training for Health Professionals Including Support for Area Medical Schools</i>	\$19,994,887
<i>Scholarships/Funding for Health Professions</i>	\$41,379
<i>Including Nursing Community Education</i>	\$297,058
Pediatric Research	\$1,419,098

UNCOMPENSATED CARE

\$44,924,276

Financial Assistance	\$3,428,284
Unreimbursed Medicaid	\$40,971,177
Bad Debt	\$524,815

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS & SERVICES

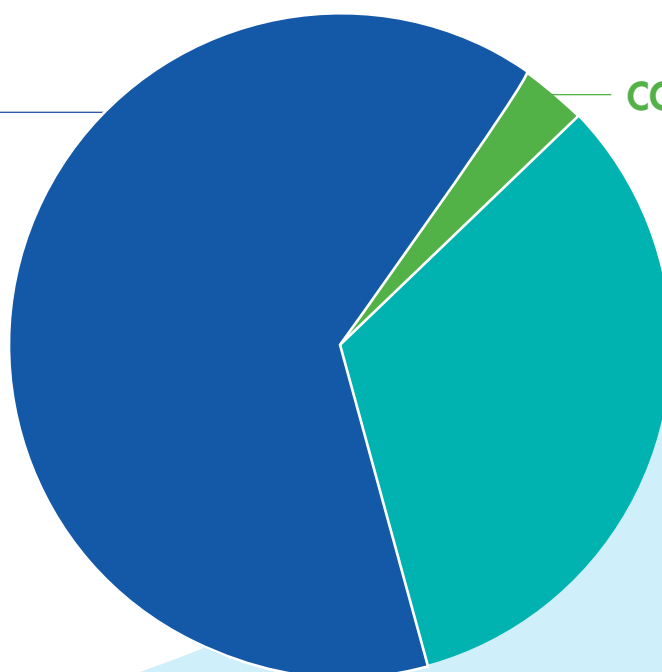
\$1,836,745

Community Health Care Support Services and Community Building Activities	\$1,013,670
Community Health Education & Outreach	\$287,803
Community-Based Clinical Services	\$46,157
Social & Environment Improvement Activities	\$10,000
Community Benefit Operations	\$479,115

**BROADER
COMMUNITY
HEALTH**
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**COMMUNITY PROGRAMS
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Beyond the Numbers

Financial Assistance/Uncompensated Care

Children's Hospital & Medical Center has an uncompensated care policy that outlines how patient families can apply for financial assistance for their medical care. Eligibility is based upon family income, size and other circumstances. Specially trained social workers, nurse case managers, financial counselors and patient account representatives help families through the process. When outside sources have been exhausted, or when families identify themselves as unable to pay, staff assist them in applying for uncompensated care.

In 2020, Children's provided **\$3,953,099** in the form of uncompensated care, or charity care, to families unable to pay for their child's medical care.

Unreimbursed Medicaid

In addition to financial assistance offered to those who qualify, Children's accepts any patient covered by Medicaid insurance. The unpaid costs of Medicaid programs and the total benefits for the poor reflect the shortfall from payment methods employed by government programs versus the actual costs to provide care. The shortfall is considered a community benefit because, by covering it, Children's reduces the government's financial burden. In fiscal year 2020, Children's covered **\$40,971,177** for patient families covered by Medicaid insurance.

Cash and In-Kind Contributions

In a spirit of social responsibility and good citizenship, Children's provides financial and in-kind support for numerous local charity events and non-profit charitable organizations. The total amount given by Children's in the form of grants, charitable contributions and in-kind donations of goods or services to other 501(c)(3) organizations was **\$538,156**.

Subsidized Health Services

Children's supports several clinical programs that have been identified as addressing a need in the community, despite a financial loss to the hospital. Some examples of these subsidized services are Behavioral Health, Home Healthcare and hospital outpatient services. The total dollars provided by Children's to subsidize these necessary services was **\$60,162,032**.



A Closer Look

Health Professions Education

As an academic teaching hospital, Children's provides valuable community benefit by educating the next generation of caregivers. In 2020, Children's invested **\$20,036,266** in health care training and education under the oversight of its Office of Education. This sum includes direct financial support of medical education, internships, residencies and fellowships, as well as nursing and allied health education programs. Children's is also the region's leader in pediatric-specific continuing medical education, reaching health care professionals throughout a five-state area. In 2020, Children's touched the lives of 1,639 learners.

Children's pediatric experts are also active in educating providers at community hospitals on the latest information in the care and management of critically ill infants and children. Children's invested **\$297,058** in community and education outreach efforts in 2020.

Research

Children's is committed to pushing the bounds of pediatric medicine to develop new innovations, treatments and cures. The Child Health Research Institute, a collaboration between Children's and the University of Nebraska Medical Center, funds and supports research that advances knowledge about childhood health and diseases, ultimately improving the lives of children across the region and around the world. This community benefit equaled **\$1,419,098** in fiscal year 2020.

Community Programs & Services

At Children's, our commitment to children extends beyond the hospital and clinic walls and out into our community. Children's Center for the Child & Community, the community outreach and advocacy hub, continued its collaborative and coordinated efforts with Omaha-area and statewide partners in 2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our traditional face-to-face outreach was halted for health and safety concerns and replaced with virtual activities. Children's provides education through free Parenting U education classes, health fairs, as well as community outreach on illness and injury prevention and the holistic health and wellness of children. Assistance to patients and their families is also provided through social work, nurse case managers, pastoral and spiritual care, child life services, financial counseling and support groups. For fiscal year 2020, Children's invested **\$1,836,745** in improving community health through programs, services, community-building and health outreach.



Partnering in a Pandemic

Collaborations with Schools Help Keep Students Healthy

When COVID-19 first arrived in Nebraska in March 2020, school days came to an abrupt halt. As spring turned to summer, the pandemic continued to evolve and maintained a strong presence in Nebraska. It became very clear that this “new normal” would be with us well into the fall and winter.

“When schools closed in March, I knew that school nurses and health office staff would struggle with how to manage COVID-19 within their school buildings when school resumed,” says Judy Timmons, MSN, APRN-CNS, NPD-BC, director of Clinical Education at Children’s. Timmons reached out to Westside Community Schools to discuss how Children’s could offer support when school resumed in the fall. A team was assembled to provide needed resources for schools, educators, nurses, parents and students, and new programming was implemented

Student Symptom Checker App

When the pandemic first hit, Russell McCulloh, M.D., division chief of Pediatric Hospital Medicine at Children’s, began to think about the possibility of creating a COVID-19 symptom checker to help families better understand the novel coronavirus. As he and his team began to work on this project, Papillion-LaVista Community Schools reached out, asking for help developing an online student symptom screener tool to help families decide if their child was well enough to attend school, and things took off from there.

The Student Symptom Checker is an online symptom checker, accessible through a web browser. There is also a free mobile app that parents and students can download through iOS and Google Play stores. The tool works on the household level, allowing caregivers or students to enter symptom information and receive step-by-step guidance on whether to stay home, go to school and/or to get tested for COVID-19. The information is collected anonymously and shared with participating school districts as a summary, detailing what symptoms of acute illness students and households are experiencing and how many students are being encouraged to stay home and/or get testing.

The app is being used approximately 1,800 times each day during the school week, with around 6 percent of those sessions resulting in a stay-at-home recommendation.

“School officials often use the tool to help them guide families when they have questions,” says Dr. McCulloh. “And schools regularly report that families call in to keep their child at home and say, ‘the app told me to keep them home.’”



COVID-19 Response for School Health Learning Collaborative

In addition to providing extra tools to help families and students, Children's is also working to provide guidance and resources for school nurses and school administrators. In fall 2020, Children's hosted the COVID-19 Response for School Health Learning Collaborative for Nebraska school partners in partnership with the Nebraska Department of Education and provided opportunities for school nurses to learn and interact with Children's experts. As schools faced known and unanticipated challenges related to COVID-19 during the school year, the sessions focused on timely topics such as, "How to Manage Symptomatic Students and Staff," "Staff and Student Wellness" and "Collaboration with Primary Care Physicians."

Kim McClintick, MSN, RN, coordinated the sessions and sees them as one more resource for school professionals during this unprecedented time. "We are seeing significant improvements on before- and after-training evaluations of understanding COVID-19 transmission, screening tools, symptom identification, understanding recommended protocols and perceived proficiency," she says. "We're excited to share all of the resources available through Children's."

Partnerships such as these are a critical part of Children's mission "to improve the life of every child." That commitment includes providing exceptional clinical care, but it also extends into our communities as Children's works to find ways to improve the lives of children through advocacy, research and other educational collaborations.



Foster Care Clinic Serves the Most Vulnerable

Imagine being pulled from the only home you knew with just the clothes on your back. Unfortunately, this is the reality for nearly 800 children who are placed into foster care in Douglas County, Nebraska, each year.

To meet the health needs of this vulnerable population, Children's established the Foster Care Clinic, which is directed by Suzanne Haney, M.D., clinical service chief of Children's Child Advocacy Team. As the only board-certified child abuse pediatrician in Nebraska, Dr. Haney is leading the charge to improve the care provided to our region's pediatric patients who have endured physical abuse, failure to thrive or medical neglect. She also serves as the medical director of Project Harmony, a child advocacy center in Omaha.

The Foster Care Clinic bridges the gap between a child's initial appointment at Project Harmony and follow-up appointments with their primary care provider. After the visit in the Foster Care Clinic, the child is referred back to their medical home, if one is already established, or one will be established for them, with a comprehensive plan for treatment. This plan then can be used by the case workers, foster parents, primary physicians and even the courts to guide the ongoing care of the child.

In just 11 months, more than 373 children were seen at the Foster Care Clinic, and the monthly numbers continue to grow. Each child receives a physical exam, developmental and social assessment, and vision and dental screening. Dietitians are also available if needed.

Under the restrictions for COVID-19, the clinic has moved to seeing patients by virtual visits. If additional paperwork or items are needed, Children's Advocacy Team members drop off materials at homes prior to the virtual visit.

"Our families are seeing increased needs for food and baby items due to the loss of wages," Haney said. "Children's team is working with our resources to help where we can."



PATCH: Adapting Care to Improve Patient Experiences



Any trip to a medical facility can be traumatic for a child – especially now when caregivers are all wearing masks as a COVID-19 precaution. But for kids with developmental, neurological and behavioral challenges, each visit has the potential to result in an inability to treat or need for sedation. To better serve these patients, Children’s developed a team-based program called PATCH (Patient Assistance Team at Children’s Hospital).

PATCH aims to promote quality care and support positive health care experiences for patients we serve with developmental and behavioral challenges, particularly children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

Prior to a hospital or clinic visit, a PATCH team member develops an individualized Adaptive Care Plan by consulting with parents and using their insights to inform actionable accommodations. For example, a child who has negative associations with gurneys may have their visit on a play mat. A child sensitive to touch may be given choices about ID band placement or use of Band-Aids. The care plans are then entered into the patients’ medical records so that before any future admissions, the staff can review the plan and determine how best to provide a calming environment for the patient.

In 2020, PATCH developed more than 250 care plans with remarkable results. In a 12-month period, these patients have had no need for restraints or assistance from Security and there has been a reduction in pre-sedation medication. Families and medical staff members are grateful for the positive experiences.

The PATCH program partnered with the Holland Foundation and the Weitz Family Foundation to make these supports available to even more patients and families. Future plans for expanding the PATCH program include the development of care plans for patients seen on the hospital inpatient floor, in the specialty clinics and at Children’s Physicians locations.



Visionmobile

The Visionmobile is eye care on wheels for underserved children – a 33-foot Winnebago, retrofitted with state-of-the-art vision equipment, two exam lanes, and a small waiting area as it moves from school to school throughout the region. Since August 2018, the Visionmobile has been a rolling demonstration of the power of partnership — Children’s teaming up with Building Healthy Futures, 10+ area school districts and dozens of community care partners to make it a reality.

Staffed by Children’s with an eye doctor, a coordinator, an optician and an op-tech (one of whom also doubles as the driver), the Visionmobile traveled to 50 different schools in nine school districts in 2020. Students were prescreened prior to arrival with the vast majority of these by photo screener – technology that takes a picture of the child’s eyes and can help determine if more comprehensive eye care is warranted.

Visionmobile services include comprehensive eye exams, refraction for glasses, basic eye disease treatment and care coordination for advanced care. However, when the pandemic struck and schools closed in March 2020, the Visionmobile paused services. Later that year in September 2020, services resumed with a modified schedule, providing care to students at schools and via scheduled appointments for remote learners. Despite the shortened school year, the Visionmobile provided 782 students with a comprehensive eye exam, and 484 students were given prescription glasses.



"In spite of all the challenges 2020 brought us," said Colby Fletcher, O.D., the Visionmobile's optometrist, "we were able to ensure nearly 500 students received the glasses they need to learn, and we referred another 228 students to community providers for further testing and follow-up. That care is important, because 80 percent of learning is visual. If a child can't read, a child struggles learn. This not only impacts them now, but also sets a precedent for their lifetime."

Dr. Fletcher went on to say, "without the Visionmobile, it's very plausible to think those students would have gone without optimal eyesight and would have been at risk of feeling even more isolated as schools transitioned to remote learning."

"The community often does not understand how much need exists for vision care because we don't hear about it. Unlike a toothache or an ear infection, kids don't usually complain about poor eyesight. It's extremely difficult for young kids to articulate that their vision isn't clear because they don't know it's a problem," says Dr. Fletcher.

Fortunately for our community, the Visionmobile staff serve as advocates for children's vision by finding and addressing vision issues among the students they serve and helping them be successful learners – giving them hope for a brighter and clearer tomorrow.





Community Health & Advocacy
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