

## INTRODUCTION

The Penn Medicine Community Health Implementation Plan (CHIP), is a blueprint designed to guide the implementation of strategies Penn Medicine will pursue to address the most pressing health needs prioritized by residents throughout the Philadelphia Penn Medicine service area. This implementation plan is directed at the geographic area served by the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, Penn Presbyterian Medical Center and Pennsylvania Hospital.

Good health—and high-quality health care—are essential to the personal, social, and economic well-being of individuals and communities. To support the health of our patients and community, every three years Penn Medicine conducts a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA), a federally mandated effort to identify and prioritize the health needs of local residents, particularly those experiencing health inequities.

The CHIP is an outgrowth of the CHNA process, an action plan for meeting the health needs in our service area—identified by the CHNA. This document will focus on Philadelphia County and provides information about the programs and investments Penn Medicine currently makes to address these health needs and acts as a guide for investment in future programs. Specifically, it represents a multi-campus health system consisting of the following hospitals within Penn Medicine: The Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, including HUP Cedar; Pennsylvania Hospital; and Penn Presbyterian Medical Center.

Good health is determined by more than the clinical care in our hospitals, and so the programs and initiatives outlined in the CHIP focus on our work outside of our health system walls and in the environments where we live, work, and play.

[Penn Medicine's 2022 CHNA](#) identified 12 health priorities (see below for the full list). This document presents and illustrates programs and strategies that can and do help address those priorities. Recognizing the continued importance of maternal health for our community, we have included this topic as one of our priority areas.

The 2022 CHNA and CHIP both build on the results of their 2019 iterations. As in 2019, key drivers of our 2022 priorities are what are known as the social determinants of health. The federal government identifies five determinants: economic stability, education, health and health care, neighborhood and built environment, and social and community contexts. Acknowledging and working to address the social determinants of health and the impact of larger societal forces on the health of our patients and communities is critical to achieving high-quality, equitable care to all.

As in 2019, Penn Medicine worked closely with the [Health Care Improvement Foundation](#) (HCIF), an independent nonprofit organization based in Philadelphia and dedicated to the vision of creating healthier communities through equitable, accessible, high-quality health care. HCIF's involvement in CHNA was pivotal, providing project management, data collection and synthesis, health need prioritization, and report development. Guided by a Qualitative Team composed of a subset of Steering Committee representatives, HCIF gathered information with extensive public engagement, including 26 “community conversations” and 21 virtual focus groups.

This report would not be possible without the assistance and input of many stakeholders, including our partners, communities, residents, and leaders, as well as Penn Medicine's own staff and leadership.

Since Fall 2021, a core team of system leaders from the Office of Government and Community Relations, the Department of Family Medicine & Community Health, and the Center for Health Equity Advancement (CHEA) have led an intentional and inclusive engagement process in concert with the regional CHNA to create the CHIP. This work included logistical coordination and programming for a monthly convening among 50+ internal stakeholders to raise awareness and acculturation to the CHNA. The team then transitioned in Spring 2022 to organizing internal stakeholders, content matter experts and colleagues dedicated to improve health outcomes in subject-specific work groups, as well as participating in external community engagement sessions to garner feedback and input on strategies.

As referenced previously, we worked with our community partners, including but not limited to, the [West Philadelphia Promise Zone](#), the University of Pennsylvania's (UPenn) First Thursday's network of community partners, and the community advisory board for the Public Health Management Corporation's Health Center on Cedar, a Federally Qualified Health Center staffed by Penn Medicine clinicians and dedicated to creating and sustaining healthier communities.

As Penn Medicine assessed its own data and programs, the need emerged for a centralized tool that could organize and manage the vast number of programs addressing community needs. In response, the CHNA/IP Core team developed a Community Health Inventory (CHI), a tool that helps us more easily track and manage a wide spectrum of Penn Medicine initiatives that address community health priorities revealed in the CHNA. Those findings were instrumental in developing this implementation plan. Our hope is that the CHI tool will allow us as a system to catalog those efforts on an ongoing basis.

This document does not include all of the many programs and activities Penn Medicine faculty, employees, and students dedicate their time to in our community. Further, many of our programs may address multiple priorities identified in the CHNA because of the interconnectedness of these health needs, but we have chosen to include programs in only one area.

The on-going COVID-19 pandemic and its cascading effects will continue to linger and play a significant role in public health and in our own activities. The disproportionate impact of the pandemic on the most marginalized from the communities we serve has only deepened our commitment to advancing health equity and enhancing community engagement to address our community's needs.

The CHIP document you are currently reading responds to the 12 community health needs identified in the CHNA. Those priorities are:

- 1) Mental health conditions
- 2) Access to care (primary and specialty)
- 3) Chronic Disease Prevention and Management
- 4) Substance Use and Related Disorders
- 5) Health Care and Health Resources Navigation
- 6) Racism and Discrimination in Health Care
- 7) Food Access
- 8) Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services
- 9) Community Violence

- 10) Housing
- 11) Socioeconomic Disadvantage
- 12) Neighborhood Conditions

We hope the 2022 CHIP draws an effective road map toward improving health and care delivery across our region. The rest of this document will detail the strategies Penn Medicine is taking to implement new efforts and monitor existing ones, and identifies the impact we aim to make from implementing these strategies throughout our system.

To that end, Penn Medicine has identified overarching strategies that will ultimately drive future iterations of the CHIP and directly address all community health priorities.

Strategies:

- Improve sustained community engagement to further the CHNA and CHIP between and through federal reporting cycles.
- Explore the creation of a centralized tracking system and process, including the development of collaborative outcome measures, to track progress of the strategies identified to address community health priorities.

Penn Medicine seeks to improve the health of the community we serve with a continued focus on our mission of dedication to discoveries that advance science, outstanding patient care, and to the education of physicians and scientists. Working together, we can improve health care across the region, and in the process create healthier, fairer, more just communities.

## Priority Area #1: Mental Health

Penn Medicine recognizes that high-quality mental health care is the top health need in Philadelphia. Mental health problems are serious and widespread and have worsened in recent years due to the isolation and stress of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Penn Medicine is committed to creating more accessible, high-quality, integrated mental health care, particularly for vulnerable populations. Penn Medicine strives to increase the behavioral health workforce capacity and diversity, emphasizing a culturally focused approach to improve community engagement and community utilization of services.

### Strategies

- **Increase access to community-based mental health programming.**
  - [Hall-Mercer Community Mental Health Center of Pennsylvania Hospital](#) is dedicated to enriching the lives of people affected by mental illness or developmental disabilities, providing a range of services for young children to adults. The center has played a significant role in broadening acceptance and advancing care for people with psychiatric disorders or intellectual disabilities. Specifically, the center provides comprehensive outpatient services to Philadelphia residents in need. As part of Philadelphia's Behavioral Health System, it is one of 11 community mental health centers in the city.
  - [The Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic at The University of Pennsylvania](#) delivers confidential mental health care for veterans, service members, and their families at no cost. The clinic uses telehealth to bring Penn Medicine's world-class treatment and care to veteran and military communities across the region. The clinic specializes in personalized, evidence-based mental health care that is proven to result in long-term outcomes. The clinic offers early morning and evening hours, transportation assistance, and telehealth to help veterans, service members, and military families easily access the care they deserve.
  - **Primary Care Service Line Integrated Behavioral Health** In 2018, the Penn Medicine Primary Care Service Line partnered with the Perelman School of Medicine's Department of Psychiatry to develop and implement an integrated model of behavioral health care called the Collaborative Care Behavioral Health (CCBH) program. CCBH puts licensed clinical social workers specially trained in mental health care into primary care offices. Five social workers work in eight Penn Medicine primary care practices in West Philadelphia and Center City and are available to more than 100,000 patients. These experts work with primary care providers and a psychiatrist to assess and treat patients as needed during or subsequent to their primary care appointments. Services range from screening for depression to supporting those who are struggling with addiction.
  - Penn Medicine will continue to invest in the [Penn Center for Youth and Family Trauma Response and Recovery](#), which provides a range of interventions for children and families to address the physical and psychological systems associated with trauma. As the only provider in the Philadelphia area that offers effective early intervention for youth, the center is an essential point of access to specialized behavioral health services for those in our community.

- [Penn Psychiatry's Fellowship in Community Psychiatry](#) This is a 1-year non-ACGME training program run by the Department of Psychiatry. Through this program, Penn Psychiatry contracts out the services of up to four Community Fellows to partnering community-based agencies. Community Fellows are board-eligible psychiatrists that have completed their adult psychiatry training, and thus provide attending-level psychiatric services to these community agencies during their 1-year training program.
  - [Puentes de Salud](#) works to ensure the wellness of the Latino immigrant population in South Philadelphia by offering medical care, education, and social services. Mental health services at Puentes de Salud aim to provide the community with evidence-based approaches to empowerment and social issues.
  - [Unity Health Clinic](#) is a free clinic primarily serving uninsured Indonesian immigrants of Chinese descent. Medical student volunteers assist and shadow Penn faculty and residents. Each week, Unity Health Clinic seeks to provide high-quality, culturally competent medical care to uninsured and underinsured adults, including behavioral health care. The clinic offers free primary and preventive care services, free or reduced-cost medications, and free interpreter services.
  - [Philadelphia Human Rights Clinic](#) The Philadelphia Human Rights Clinic (PHRC) is a student-run organization with a mission to provide no-cost psychiatric and physical evaluations of survivors of persecution seeking asylum in the United States. This is not a Penn organization; however, Penn medical students are part of the leadership team; and the founder and medical director of the clinic is on Penn Psychiatry's faculty.
  - Engage the **Penn Medicine Center for Community Health Workers IMPaCT** model. Community health workers (CHWs) are uniquely poised to support community members' mental health needs and support connections with health care. The Penn Medicine Center for Community Health Workers' evidence-based IMPaCT model CHWs are skilled in system navigation and connecting with patients with complex health and social needs.
- **Continue to grow integrated behavioral health in primary care.**  
The Penn Medicine Primary Care Service Line and the Department of Psychiatry's Collaborative Care Behavioral Health (CCBH) program puts licensed clinical social workers (LCSWs) specially trained in mental health care into primary care offices. LCSWs work in Penn Medicine primary care practices to assess and treat patients as needed during their primary care appointments. Services range from screening for depression to supporting those who are struggling with addiction. Penn Medicine will continue to grow this model of care.
  - **Grow partnerships for mental health access.**  
Penn Medicine will support pediatric and family mental health by strengthening partnerships with Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, the University of Pennsylvania Netter Center for Community Partnerships and the School District of Philadelphia.
  - **Provide mental health first aid training.**

Mental health first aid training supports the well-being of our community and equips Penn Medicine staff with the tools they need to connect patients to care.

**Impact:**

- Increase in community provider partnerships and services for behavioral health patients.
- Increased patient access and engagement in mental health care.

## **Priority Area #2: Access to Primary and Specialty Care**

Penn Medicine strives to improve health care access across the communities we serve. We recognize the need to provide linkages between medical specialties and the community. Our care is distinguished by a holistic approach to treating the entire family and addressing the continuum of care. Penn Medicine recognizes the strong relationship between primary care access and improved health outcomes and is committed to providing a primary care medical home for patients throughout Philadelphia.

The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated patient access, with longer wait times and gaps in basic services becoming more acute. Given these challenges, Penn Medicine is continuously evaluating and creating new access points for primary and specialty care in order to meet the needs of our community and eliminate disparities in access to care. We will engage diverse communities to inform strategies to improve access and facilitate care connections. Enhanced partnerships with Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC) and other safety net providers will be a key strategic pathway through which we achieve this goal.

### **Strategies**

- **Increase Access to Inpatient Specialty Care**

- Through Penn's new hospital facility, the [Pavilion](#), which opened in 2021, Penn Medicine is increasing access to specialty care for patients and enhancing opportunities for collaborative care delivery. We have transformed how we organize and deliver care, using state-of-the-art technology and new ways of thinking to ensure the patient experience is at the very center of everything we do. With innovation and technology at the heart of its design, the hospital is equipped to deliver both the treatments of today and the medical advances of tomorrow.

The 17-story building on Penn Medicine's West Philadelphia campus, which houses 504 private patient rooms and 47 operating rooms, is an expanded footprint of HUP. The Pavilion houses inpatient care for cardiology and cardiac surgery, medical and surgical oncology, neurology and neurosurgery, and transplant surgery, and it is home to HUP's new emergency department. The "reinvented" Emergency Department was designed to decrease wait times, speed diagnosis, and improve the care experience.

This new hospital increases our capacity to provide emergency and specialty services and enhancing opportunities for collaborative care delivery. Cutting-edge technology helps advance telemedicine functionality, which in allows for more remote monitoring and consultations between patients—including those who face transportation or similar barriers—and their care teams.

- **Increase Access to Primary Care**

Penn Medicine will identify opportunities to expand our PCSL footprint and leverage existing FQHC partnerships to increase access to specialty services including prenatal and obstetrical care.

- The Penn Medicine Primary Care Service Line (PCSL) was created to advance Penn Medicine-wide collaboration between family and internal medicine clinical services. We continue to measure and coordinate operational efforts to develop strategies for growth in our areas of greatest need.
- **Philadelphia Department of Public Health Partnership:** The Division of General Internal Medicine faculty and residents provide primary care at two of the city's ambulatory health centers in West Philadelphia. This unique partnership increases the pool of primary care providers who are able to serve Philadelphia residents, regardless of insurance status or their ability to pay.
- **Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) Prenatal Care Partnership:** The Department of Family Medicine and Community Health faculty and residents provide prenatal care at four local West Philly FQHCs and these patients deliver on the Family Medicine service at our university hospital. This innovative model of care expands access to high quality primary care, ensures continuity of care, and improves health outcomes. Penn is about to add another FQHC network to this partnership model. Faculty from Family Medicine and Community Health will provide primary and prenatal care at several sites that are part of the Greater Philadelphia Health Action, (GPHA), FQHC system.
- **Puentes de Salud** aims to improve community and individual health and well-being not only by providing immediate services, but also by recognizing and challenging social inequities and injustices. Puentes de Salud works in partnership with community members, local and public schools, universities, and community organizations. Penn Medicine physicians, staff, and students partner with Puentes de Salud to provide clinical services including adult primary care and women's health services. On a monthly basis, Penn also offers specialized care in the following areas: cardiology, dermatology, neurology, ophthalmology, pediatrics, physiotherapy and podiatry at Puentes.
- **STDs Clinic at Health Center #1:** Along with the city's Department of Public Health, Penn Dermatology faculty and residents staff a free, biweekly STD clinic. The clinic accepts walk-ins and provides testing and treatment services at no cost.
- **[Perelman School of Medicine Community Clinics](#):** Penn Medicine physicians and staff provide primary and specialty care access in a network of community-based, student-led clinics in underserved communities throughout Philadelphia. These clinics provide support to communities that face significant access barriers to care including geography, citizenship status, and language. Two clinics with plans to expand their service footprint are highlighted here, however the [website](#) provides information for all of the clinics that provide critical access points.
  - [The Center for Surgical Health \(CSH\) is a multidisciplinary center, housed in the department of Surgery. CSH provides a new access point into sustainable, high-value surgical care for patients who typically rely on the emergency room for treatment. The CSH provided surgical and care navigation services to over 200 patients in 2021, many referred through Puentes de Salud and the University City Hospitality Coalition,](#)



[and will grow the number of patients served as the CSH expands. With Penn Medicine now managing the inpatient clinical services at the newly formed PHMC Public Health Campus on Cedar, patients from West and Southwest Philadelphia will have an additional access point at Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania \(HUP\) – Cedar Avenue to receive care through CSH.](#)

- [United Community Clinic \(UCC\) is a free health clinic coordinated weekly by University of Pennsylvania students from the Schools of Medicine, Dentistry, Nursing, and Social Work. It collaborates with residents and community partners to address the medical and social health needs, with the goal of building a stronger and healthier community. Services include health physicals, acute care, dental care, eye care, social work resources, and health insurance assistance. In 2023 UCC will be expanding to a second clinical site in Southwest Philadelphia servicing community members of the African and Caribbean diaspora.](#)
  - [ICNA Relief's Social Health and Medical Service Clinic \(SHAMS Clinic\) is a nonprofit organization that endeavors to improve the health and social well-being of underserved communities in Philadelphia. In 2022 physicians from the Department of Family Medicine and Community Health began to provide primary care services at the SHAMS Clinic West Philadelphia location, expanding access to care for that community.](#)
- **The Refugee Clinic at the Penn Center for Primary Care** is a collaborative effort between the Primary Care and Global Health tracks of the Internal Medicine Residency program in Penn Medicine, and our partner resettlement agency, HIAS Pennsylvania. The Penn Medicine Refugee Clinic is a member of the Philadelphia Refugee Health Collaborative (PRHC), a regional coalition consisting of Philadelphia's three refugee resettlement agencies and eight refugee health clinics. The core mission of the Collaborative is to create an equitable system of refugee health care in the Philadelphia region that ensures a consistently high standard of care for all newly arrived refugees. Each year, PRHC provides domestic health screenings, primary care (including newborn, pediatrics, adult medicine, geriatric, obstetric and gynecologic care) and access to laboratory, radiology and subspecialty services to 800 newly arrived refugees. PRHC also provides ongoing primary care and women's health services to established refugee patients. The Penn Medicine Refugee clinic currently operates every Monday afternoon with over 20 resident physicians, and sees over 75 new arrivals each year. Five attending physicians precept in the clinic, all of whom are experienced in global health, travel medicine or infectious diseases. Over thirty different languages are spoken in clinic by refugee populations from Bhutan, Burma, Eritrea, Liberia, Darfur, South Sudan, Russia, Ukraine, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and many other countries. The clinic hosts a once-monthly Women's Health clinic specifically focusing on the health needs of refugee women and a weekly Latent Tuberculosis Infection (LTBI) clinic, run by a Pharmacist and pharmacy students, focusing on LTBI diagnosis and treatment.
- In 2023, the Department of Family Medicine and Community Health will join the PRHC and establish a second Penn Medicine Refugee Clinic site with a focus on full-spectrum primary care for families including prenatal and obstetrical care.

- **Increased Access to Cancer Care**  
Preventive screenings can save lives, yet many people put off or avoid screenings altogether. It takes strategic focused efforts such as those developed by the Abramson Cancer Center's Office of Diversity to eliminate barriers and ensure that our community takes advantage of science's best tools for cancer prevention and early diagnosis.
  - **Colorectal Cancer Screening Navigation Program:** Colon Cancer is the fourth most common cancer in our region and the second leading cause of death. Our Colorectal Cancer Screening Navigation Program helps patients overcome impediments to colonoscopy. Penn Medicine has a system wide goal to increase colorectal cancer screening in Black patients and has been very successful, achieving over 70% screening rate, even in the midst of COVID.
  - **The Healthy Woman Program:** Mammograms lead to early diagnosis and better prognosis. The Abramson Cancer Center's Healthy Woman Program offers free breast and cervical cancer screenings and diagnostic evaluations to uninsured and underinsured women ages 40 to 65 who reside in Philadelphia. Funding is provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Breast and Cervical Cancer Prevention Program and a Commonwealth of Pennsylvania contract administered through Access Matters, with navigation supported by the American Cancer Society and the Abramson Cancer Center's Rena Rowan Breast Center Fund. If cancer is diagnosed, the Pennsylvania Breast and Cervical Cancer Prevention and Treatment Program will cover treatment.
- **Increased Access to Prenatal Care**
  - The Departments of Family Medicine and Community Health and Obstetrics and Gynecology at the University of Pennsylvania are supporting Family Practice Counseling Network (FPCN) to develop a free-standing birth center in Southwest Philadelphia serving predominantly Black and immigrant populations with a goal of impacting maternal and neonatal morbidity in one of the most medically underserved communities in the city. FPCN, a network of Federally Qualified Health Centers, will run this midwifery-staffed birth center, while the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania and Penn Medicine providers will support care and act as the primary referral center for patients needing a higher level of care.
- **Develop a data-informed strategic plan for additional primary and specialty care access points in underserved communities of Philadelphia.**
- **Advocate for policy changes that address barriers to access and affordability, particularly in specialty care for Medicaid-enrolled patients.**

**Impact:**

- Increase in the number of patients with a primary care medical home;
- Increase in the number of patients in specialty care;
- Increased care coordination and navigation for medically complex patients;
- Growth in Penn Medicine OnDemand and Connected Care Programs - our range of telehealth services including virtual visits, virtual consultations and remote second opinions in a variety of specialties;

- Growth of partnerships with Federally Qualified Health Centers and Philadelphia Ambulatory Health Centers to support care coordination and access to specialty care.

### Priority Area #3: Chronic Disease Prevention and Management

The [US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) defines a chronic disease as a condition that lasts at least one year and requires ongoing medical attention, limits daily activities, or both. Some examples include heart disease, cancer, stroke, diabetes, chronic kidney disease, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)—conditions that are leading causes of death in the Penn Medicine service area. Philadelphia County has a substantially higher rate of premature cardiovascular death and above-average rates of cancer mortality when compared with other counties in the service area.

For many reasons, chronic disease can be difficult to manage—due to the complexity of medical and lifestyle change regimens and the related day-to-day challenges. These challenges are even more concerning for people who have limited access to necessary medical care, resources, awareness and support.

The following strategies were identified by a multidisciplinary team of Penn Medicine clinicians, scientists, and health experts, working alongside community partners throughout Philadelphia. The programs listed here are exemplary initiatives at Penn Medicine that help patients and community members to prevent and/or manage chronic diseases. This list is not exhaustive, and there are many more relevant programs across the health system.

#### Strategies

- **Increase screening and navigation programs**
  - **Colorectal Cancer Screening Outreach and Navigation Program:** This innovative, community-based program makes colon cancer screening accessible, convenient, and affordable to Philadelphians. Following Penn Medicine’s recent expansion of available screening options for the disease, more than 3,800 local residents have received colorectal screenings, either within health centers or through private at-home screenings, which have proven successful in screening people who would not otherwise have participated.
  - **[Screen to Save](#):** This faith-based outreach program targets Philadelphia’s Black communities. The goal of the program, which was started by the National Cancer Institute’s Center to Reduce Cancer Health Disparities and counts Penn Medicine’s [Abramson Cancer Center](#) among scores of national partners, is to increase colorectal cancer screening rates among men and women ages 45 to 75 from racially and ethnically diverse communities. This year, Screen to Save has hosted seven events, which together attracted about 2,700 attendees. Further, the program provided 195 free on-site cancer screenings. Since October 2020, the program provided 553 patients with free navigation to colonoscopies via the Drive by Flu FIT program, also facilitated in partnership with churches, of which 7 percent had a positive finding (i.e. blood in their stool).
  - **[Penn Medicine Breast Health Initiative](#):** In recognition of the barriers that can exist for women seeking breast cancer screening and treatment, Penn Medicine offers breast screenings as well as diagnostic and treatment services to underserved and uninsured women in partnership with more than a dozen nonprofits and clinics in the region. Since its inception in 2014, the initiative has provided free mammograms to more than 4,500 women. Of these, 50 percent of the women were Latina, 28 percent were Black, and 56 percent did not speak English. To date, 77 cases of breast cancer have been identified and treated through the initiative.

- **Penn Medicine Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program:** This breast and cervical cancer screening navigation program provides free breast screening and diagnostic services to eligible women who are uninsured or underinsured.
- **[The CUT Hypertension Project:](#)** This innovative program turns the corner barbershop—well-known as informal gathering places in many Black and Latino communities—into a health hub as well as a social hub. In local barbershop, Philly Cuts, volunteers conduct blood pressure screenings and spread information on how to combat hypertension in the Black community. Project leaders and volunteers also provide education on healthy dieting and exercise, and this year began handing out COVID-19 tests at the barbershop. The program not only helps address hypertension but builds trust between health care providers and the Black residents of West Philadelphia.
- **Provide chronic disease education**
  - **Can Prevent Cancer:** Penn Medicine offers an annual, community-based conference focused on spreading knowledge and awareness of different forms of cancer, including colon, breast, and lung cancers. This year, 8,350 patients and caregivers participated in the event.
  - **Stroke Community Education Program:** In recognition that stroke is the number-one preventable cause of disability, Penn Medicine offers community-based, stroke-related educational programming at every hospital in the system. Risk factors are identified through a community health needs assessment, with program staff striving to help residents combat any risk factors that emerge, while working to increase awareness of stroke and its symptoms.
  - **[Walk with a Future Doc:](#)** WWFD aims to promote physical activity and well-being in Philadelphia neighborhoods, focusing on using exercise to better manage obesity, hypertension, and diabetes. The [Penn Center for Public Health](#), in partnership with medical students from the Perelman School of Medicine, created one of the first WWFD chapters in the country. Each biweekly walk starts with a short talk from a medical student on a relevant health topic, followed by a brief Q&A session. An informal, one-hour walk follows, with talks on chronic disease and other relevant health topics continuing during the walk. School of Medicine faculty mentors provide oversight for all educational content.
  - **[Basser Center for BRCA:](#)** The center's mission is to see a world free of the devastating effects of BRCA-related cancers. Men and women with mutations in either the BRCA1 or BRCA2 genes are at heightened risk for certain cancers, including breast, ovarian, prostate, and pancreatic cancers. These gene mutations can be passed on to children by either men or women. The Basser Center conducts cutting-edge report and also conducts outreach and education in communities. The Basser Center is a place where families can turn for education and genetic counseling. The center and its leaders are dedicated to raising awareness, which is currently the most effective way to save lives and provide options to those affected by a BRCA mutation. The center's educational initiatives focus on raising awareness and providing education and resources to communities throughout Philadelphia, including targeted outreach to [Black](#), [Latino](#), and [LGBTQ](#) populations.
  - **[Heart Health Bridge to Care:](#)** Heart Health Bridge to Care Clinic provides long-term care to underinsured individuals in the Parkside section of Philadelphia. Under faculty supervision, medical, nursing, pharmacy, and social work students work together to develop care plans

for patients with heart disease. Services include free medications, support for diet and lifestyle changes, patient education, and regular follow-up visits.

- **[National Diabetes Prevention Program \(NDPP\)](#)**: This year-long, research-based program uses curriculum published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to promote healthy eating and physical activity in individuals at risk for developing type 2 diabetes. Provided at most Penn Medicine Diabetes Education Centers, the NDPP encourages healthy lifestyle changes to delay or prevent a diagnosis of type 2 diabetes.
- **Diabetes Self-Management Education and Support programs (DSMES)**: Diabetes is a complex condition that involves many daily self-management habits. DSMES programs provide individuals living with diabetes with the tools and support needed to address the behavioral, educational, medical, and mental aspects of diabetes management. These skills can help people with diabetes enhance their daily self-care, decrease complications of diabetes, and improve overall health outcomes. In the past fiscal year, over 500 individuals have attended diabetes self-management education and support sessions offered at the accredited Penn Medicine Diabetes Education Centers, including Pennsylvania Hospital.
- **Provide support for participation in clinical trials**
  - **[Lazarex Cancer Foundation reimburses for cancer trials participants](#)**: The Lazarex foundation works to improve cancer health outcomes and diversity in clinical trials. The Abramson Cancer Center takes part in the foundation's patient financial assistance program, which provides lower-income people with sliding-scale reimbursement for the out-of-pocket costs, such as travel and lodging, that are often viewed as barriers to participating in cancer clinical treatment trials.
- **Create a “staying healthy” campaign**

The staying healthy campaign for community partners will be simple, concrete, easy to understand, and scientifically credible. It will include compelling storytelling about the values of a healthy lifestyle, including by managing chronic conditions, modelled on existing evidence based programs suitable for low-intermediate English speakers for whom English is not a first language.
- **Advance health literacy, with a strong focus on local populations**

Identify and replicate model programs to help foster healthy living and health care access for people with low health literacy levels.
- **Enhance accessibility of patient education resources for historically underserved communities**

Penn Medicine provides [web-based, easy to understand content](#) for specific chronic diseases. Building on existing resources, Penn Medicine will initially focus on the most common chronic health problems, such as cancer, diabetes, heart disease and stroke, and work with community partners to develop and disseminate culturally accessible materials.

**Impact:**

- Increased programming and place-based activities to educate and advocate for chronic disease prevention.
- Increased number of screenings for chronic diseases within community, particularly for breast and colorectal cancer.
- Increased diverse participation in clinical trials for cancer treatment.

## Priority Area #4: Substance Use and Related Disorders

The opioid crisis continues to take its toll on Philadelphia, with an alarming impact during COVID-19, including a 30 percent increase in overdose deaths throughout Penn Medicine's Philadelphia service area, and a 30 percent increase in overdose deaths specifically among Black patients in the city, both since 2019.

Penn Medicine is working to change those statistics, providing high-quality care to those in need, working in hard-hit neighborhoods to help people struggling with addiction, advocating for positive change, and training physicians and other health professionals in addiction medicine. Penn Medicine recommendations and programs for substance use and related disorders include the following.

### Strategies

- **Increase access to prevention and treatment**
  - [Penn Medicine Center for Addiction Medicine and Policy](#) Founded in 2019, CAMP is a multidisciplinary initiative that helps advance Penn Medicine as a leader in addiction medicine education and substance use treatment and research. A range of professionals, from nursing to social work to surgery, work in partnership with recovery specialists to improve evidence-based and stigma-free care for patients with opioid use and/or any other substance use disorder. CAMP staff work to raise awareness that opioid use disorder (OUD) is treatable, while strategizing to facilitate enhanced care in the emergency department, primary care, and hospital settings. CAMP also provides harm reduction and overdose education and resources in the community.
  - **Primary Care Medication for MOUD** Primary care is a critical part of any response to the opioid epidemic. Primary care physicians from the Perelman School of Medicine's Department of Family Medicine and Community Health and Division of General Internal Medicine led efforts to build and expand access to medications for opioid use disorders (MOUDs) and harm reduction services at Penn Medicine. Incorporating MOUD care into primary care has decreased stigma, expanded access, emphasized harm reduction, and provided critical health care services. Five Penn Medicine practices in downtown Philadelphia now offer high-quality MOUD care within their clinical operations. In combination, more than 400 patients with substance use disorders passed through their doors the last year.
  - [Prevention Point Philadelphia](#) Celebrating 30 years of service in 2022, PPP is a nonprofit public health organization providing harm reduction services to Philadelphia and the surrounding area. Penn Medicine will continue its partnership with the organization, providing counseling services, case management, needle exchanges, legal services, and overdose prevention and reversal training. Faculty and residents from the Perelman School of Medicine's Department of Family Medicine and Community Health are part of the care team at PPP and will continue to provide care for individuals with substance use disorders.
  - **Perinatal Resource for Opioid Use Disorder:** Through its PROUD initiative, Penn Family Care in downtown Philadelphia provides comprehensive, multidisciplinary care to patients with a history of opioid use disorder during and after pregnancy. Patients are seen in dedicated sessions by providers trained in managing opioid use disorders as well as prenatal/intrapartum/postpartum care. The PROUD team also includes certified recovery specialists, a clinical pharmacist, an HIV and viral hepatitis specialist, and access to psychiatric services.

- [Mobile Overdose Surge Bus Project](#) In collaboration with Prevention Point Philadelphia and the Philadelphia Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual Disability Services, expert caregivers deliver services and resources to communities that are especially vulnerable to overdose. This includes distributing Narcan, delivering trainings on harm reduction and overdose reversal, case management, and COVID-19 vaccines, among other services. The project pairs harm reduction services with mobile MOUD treatment in overdose “hotspots” in Philadelphia. Many of these patients are then referred to Penn Medicine primary care sites for ongoing treatment, thus creating a critical link for many patients who had not previously accessed care.
- [Philly Respond](#) To raise public awareness of overdose prevention, Perelman School of Medicine faculty, staff, and students partnered with experts from [Penn’s Center for Public Health Initiatives](#) and the *Philadelphia Inquirer* to form Philly Respond, a project that uses community storytelling, visual images, and data analysis to shift social norms and reduce the stigma surrounding substance use disorders. The project’s mission is to reduce the toll of the overdose crisis by empowering Philadelphia citizens to carry naloxone, a drug that can reverse an opioid overdose. Philly Respond maintains a publicly available calendar of naloxone trainings, maintains an FAQ page on naloxone, and provides information on where to get naloxone. The project also features Story Slam, a series of storytelling events where participants share stories about their personal experiences with naloxone in Philadelphia, with the goal of encouraging Philadelphians to be part of the community’s efforts to halt overdose deaths in the city.
- **Penn Medicine Opioid Task Force** The Penn Medicine Opioid Stewardship Task Force is a health-system wide initiative that aims to significantly standardize and improve patient care for all irrespective of their culture or background, reduce opioid-related harm to patients, decrease rates of leaving against medical advice (AMA) in patients with OUD, and reduce the number of unused opioids in the community.
- [Center for Opioid Recovery and Engagement](#) CORE provides comprehensive peer support for individuals struggling with opioid use, as well as their loved ones. The center’s mission is to support all pathways to recovery and remove barriers for patients throughout the Penn health system.
- **School of Medicine Addiction Medicine Fellowship:** The Perelman School of Medicine’s Department of Family Medicine and Community Health was approved to provide training for two fellowship positions in addiction medicine. Two clinicians will be trained annually in one-year positions to become clinical experts in addiction medicine. This fellowship will create an addiction medicine consult service in to provide guidance to clinicians treating patients with substance use disorder. The fellowship will add to the pipeline of providers who can provide clinical addiction services and education in Philadelphia.
- [Care Connect Warm Line](#) This telehealth addiction bridge service is a new innovation designed to improve same-day access to treatments. The project emerged from the early phases of the COVID-19 pandemic, when the need for safer, remote solutions like telehealth led to a swift transformation of many aspects of outpatient and inpatient care.
- **Peer Fellowship Program for Certified Recovery Specialists (CRS)** The CRS is an important professional in addiction and recovery care teams. Penn Medicine provides



training opportunities for CRS on improving patient transitions from acute care back into the community.

- **Develop enhanced data systems to drive equity and high quality care**

Penn Medicine will develop data systems that inform our goals of equity in access to treatment for substance use disorder, evidence-based care for patients with substance use disorders, and community engagement in prevention. Data systems will support patient engagement across health care settings including the emergency room, inpatient care, and outpatient MOUD. Tracking overdoses and overdose deaths, both overall and in communities of color

**Impact:**

- Growth in programmatic outreach to help reduce substance use overdoses, emergency department visits and deaths related to drugs and opioids.
- Growth in patient engagement in MOUD.
- Equity in access to MOUD and treatment for other substance uses disorders.
- Increased distribution of Narcan in clinical and community settings.

## Priority Area #5: Health care and Health Resources Navigation

Penn Medicine recognizes that barriers to navigating the health care system contribute to inequities and poor health outcomes.

Community health workers, social workers, clinicians, students, and a host of other Penn Medicine professionals are helping patients more easily navigate the system. Penn Medicine is a part of a regional collaborative that invests in [Resource Connects](#) and works together to improve health care and health resource navigation for Philadelphia.

The below strategies and programs work to link patients directly to health resources and assistance programs, coordinating office visits, and health related social need resources.

### Strategies

- **Provide personalized, high-quality, supported navigation**
  - [Penn Center for Community Health Workers](#) (PCCHW) For more than a decade, this national center of excellence has conducted, applied, and disseminated important research on community health work and community health workers. The center's cornerstone initiative is **IMPACT**, which helps community health workers strike the right balance between community and clinic. Community health workers integrate with other care teams to optimize processes around patient referrals, data infrastructure, team interaction, and communication via the electronic medical record. Skilled in system navigation and problem-solving, community health workers assist clients with everything from finding the right care to battling eviction notices.
  - [PHMC Public Health Campus on Cedar](#) Anchored by the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania – Cedar Avenue, the PHMC Public Health Campus on Cedar is founded on the guiding principle of providing high-quality, community-informed, patient-centered health care and social services supporting the needs of the facility's West and Southwest Philadelphia neighbors. The Coalition's goals for the new public health campus focus on health equity and aim to provide the community with access to primary and behavioral health care, emergency services, acute care services, substance use treatment, and other social support services. PHMC Public Health Campus on Cedar is a partnership consisting of Public Health Management Corporation (PHMC) as the owner and operator of the property, with Penn Medicine managing the hospital emergency department, inpatient services, and hospital-based behavioral health programming as a remote location for the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania (HUP), known as Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania – Cedar Avenue. Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) and the Independence Blue Cross Foundation join PHMC and Penn Medicine as Coalition partners for the transformation.
  - [Community Resource Connects](#) When PennChart's health screener identifies someone with potentially unmet social needs, Penn Medicine takes action, working with health care providers, community-based organizations, the Philadelphia Department of Public Health, and entities like [Find Help](#), a closed-loop referral network for social services. Penn Medicine providers and staff can then connect the patient with resources that can help them after they leave the hospital.

- **Social Needs Response Team (SNRT)** This program was created by the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania's Department of Social Work with support from the Center for Health Equity Advancement, in order to ensure all Penn Medicine patients and employees have the support they need to be safe and well. SNRT is a virtual call center established in April 2020 that supports Penn patients and the wider Philadelphia community with access to resources to address social needs. SNRT is a clinical social worker-supervised virtual interdisciplinary team of graduate-level health professionals (medicine, nursing, social work) who address patient safety, distress, and a myriad of other unmet social needs in order to effectively mitigate their compounding negative effects on health. Penn Medicine will grow the SNRT with a full-time licensed clinical social worker to oversee the growth of the team.
- **Penn Medicine Contact Center** The Penn Medicine Contact Center (1-800-789-PENN) provides health system navigation services to new and established patients who are seeking clinical care at Penn Medicine. The contact center employs customer service representatives and registered nurses who are available Monday through Friday to the general public. Contact center agents are familiar with the complete scope of Penn Medicine clinical care, including physicians, departments, programs, centers, services, and locations. Agents help callers find an appropriate health care provider based on the caller's needs, symptoms, or diagnosis. Once appropriate care has been identified, scheduling specialists help callers set up their appointment. Annual contact center volume currently averages approximately 800,000 calls.
- **GoVaxx Philly** is a team created with funding through the Health Resources and Services Administration and supported by the Department of Family Medicine and Community Health to build COVID-19 vaccine outreach infrastructure. Specifically, this team of outreach and education ambassadors provides critical public health information to West and Southwest Philadelphia, which are among the neighborhoods hardest hit by COVID-19. Through door-to-door community outreach, GoVaxx and its ambassadors provide longitudinal support to address barriers to vaccine access, vaccine hesitancy, establishing trust, and achieving health equity. Given recent disease outbreaks like monkeypox and polio in addition to COVID-19, Penn Medicine will support an expanded scope of work for its vaccine education and outreach ambassadors
- [Puentes de Salud](#) works to improve the health and wellness of uninsured Spanish speakers in Philadelphia through provision of care and social programs. The program connects students with patients with complex health needs and helps them navigate the health care system by assisting with finding appropriate care and scheduling appointments, among other services.
- **Strengthen behavioral health navigation through:**
  - A central intake system that refers people to the appropriate setting.
  - Increase access and support for Medicaid patients.
  - Navigation support for dual diagnosis.
  - Navigation support for those experiencing homelessness at all downtown hospitals.

**Impact:**

- Growth and connection of patients to resources.

- Decreased missed opportunities for a warm hand-off between health care and social care providers. Decreased patient experiences in which care and resource needs go unmet.

## Priority Area #6: Racism and Discrimination in Health Care

Penn Medicine is committed to ensuring equity and eliminating racism for its employees and patients alike.

Racism is an urgent health crisis driving poor health outcomes for Black and Brown communities. Distrust in health care institutions and providers, and systemic racism within these systems lead to increased mortality.

There are huge gaps in care and care outcomes for poorer communities of color when compared with more resourced areas. In the city of Philadelphia's [2020 Health of the City](#) report, Black and Hispanic/Latino communities were more likely to describe their health as "fair" or "poor" compared to their White counterparts.

The disparities are well-documented and only worsened during the COVID-19 pandemic. During the pandemic, Black communities experienced higher rates of COVID-19 infection, hospitalization, and mortality.

Penn Medicine is committed to eliminating structural injustice across our organization and the communities we serve to achieve a vision for the future: Penn Medicine is united as an anti-racist, equitable, diverse, and inclusive organization.

### Strategies:

- **Strengthen recruitment, training, and promotion practices to become an anti-racist institution.**
  - **DEI Forums** The Action for Cultural Transformation (ACT) Strategy identified a need to design forums at multiple levels of Penn Medicine dedicated to diversity, equality, and inclusion (DEI)—and to ensuring employees and leaders are engaged in DEI learning and deepening understanding. The forums foster anti-racist training, learning modules including those provided to new hires, participation in surveys and town halls, DEI groups, and other resources like book clubs.
  - **[The HUP Clinical Nurse Mentorship Program](#)** pairs clinical nurses with HUP Nurse Leaders in a yearlong mentorship. Leaders seek to guide and shape clinical nurse mentees by providing information, advice, support, and ideas. As part of the program, mentors and mentees read a list of recommended readings include articles aimed to focus on creating diversity, equity and inclusivity.
  - **Penn-CHOP Alliance of Minority Physicians** brings together faculty, residents, fellows and medical students from across both institutions for social and professional networking and career development. Initiatives include the Visiting Clerkship for URiM medical students as a pipeline program from medical school to medical residency, a mentorship program, professional development workshops and social events.
- **Expand and strengthen mechanisms for identifying disparities, by creating tools such as equity dashboards and by optimizing data collection methods for reporting race, gender, language etc.**

- [Action for Cultural Transformation \(ACT\)](#) is Penn Medicine’s strategic plan and commitment to anti-racism. Launched in 2020, ACT’s mission is to eliminate structural injustice across Penn Medicine and the communities it serves. ACT’s strategic priorities span all institutional functions and touchpoints, including clinical care, research, education, community, culture, and people. Since ACT’s creation, more than 5,500 voices in a strategic planning process produced a strategic roadmap, governance, and infrastructure. Participants identified 71 ‘Just Do Its,’ or immediate action steps to address systemic issues of bias and discrimination. Since 2020, 76 percent of the ‘Just Do its’ have been completed. Additionally, ACT engaged 44,000 employees, students, faculty, and trainees in unconscious bias education.
- **Increase the accessibility and awareness of processes for reporting incidents of bias and discrimination for both employees and patients.**
  - [Lift Every Voice](#) is an anonymous digital platform designed to collect experiences and observations of racism in the health care workplace and provide leaders with the on-the-ground information they need to dismantle racism. Lift Every Voice also leverages the power of stories to spark conversation. Penn Medicine staff submit stories to the platform, which are then reviewed, illustrated, and posted publicly. Departmental leaders regularly review submissions and develop action plans.

**Impact:**

- Entire Penn Medicine workforce trained in implicit bias and anti-racist practices.
- Increased representation of underrepresented groups in Penn Medicine leadership positions.
- Increased investment in longitudinal pipeline programming to cultivate a more diverse pool of applicants into all roles of the health professions.
- Additional affinity spaces exist where people of shared identity groups may come together to learn, share experiences and build community.
- Increased representation from the groups with the most significant disparities in health outcomes, including racial and gender minorities, for [Penn Medicine’s Patient Experience](#) staff, Community Advisory Boards and Patient and Family Advisory Committees across the health system.
- Increased accessibility and awareness for identifying disparities in patient care practices, including new equity dashboards and optimized data collection methods for reporting race, gender, language etc; and,
- Accountable and transparent reporting processes for incidents of bias and discrimination, for both employees and patients.

## **Special Section: Addressing Maternal Mortality within Racism and Discrimination in Health Care**

For years, [Penn Medicine has been taking bold steps to better understand and reduce maternal mortality](#). As maternal mortality was identified as a community health priority in the 2019 CHNA, it remains an important part of our efforts to tackle racism and discrimination across the entire health care enterprise—one of Penn Medicine’s health priorities for 2022.

The death of a new or expectant mother because of complications related to pregnancy or childbirth is one of the greatest tragedies a family and a community can face. In Philadelphia as in much of the rest of the country, these devastating events affect Black women and neighborhoods of color most acutely.

A study from the city of Philadelphia’s Maternal Mortality Review Committee, which analyzed 110 pregnancy-associated deaths, found that 73 percent of these deaths occurred among Black women, even as Black women accounted for less than half of all live births. Black women also are more likely than their White counterparts to experience postpartum hemorrhaging, which can require blood transfusions or even a hysterectomy to control.

As part of a multi-step approach to addressing this priority, we set ambitious system-wide health equity goals and undertaking efforts to ensure our people are accountable and empowered to help women in need and reduce maternal mortality and pregnancy complications in Philadelphia. We are achieving important clinical breakthroughs, caring for pregnant women across the city regardless of their ability to pay, and tying executive compensation to progress on maternal mortality and serious complications.

## Priority Area #7: Food Access

Food security is defined as having reliable access to enough affordable, nutritious food. Food insecurity occurs when communities experience challenges obtaining enough food.

The financial challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic have led to higher rates of food insecurity across the Penn Medicine service area—and, by extension, a greater need for food assistance. Nearly a quarter of Philadelphia households receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. Black, Hispanic/Latino, and immigrant communities, as well as older adults, are all disproportionately affected by food insecurity.

Through food pantries, community education, and its own nutrition policies, Penn Medicine is pushing to address food security within Philadelphia and serving as a positive example for healthy behaviors.

### Strategies:

- **Bring health system and university partners together to achieve greater efficiency in serving and sharing resources across all Penn Medicine food initiatives.**
  - The [Agaston Urban Nutrition Initiative](#) was created to help build and sustain healthy communities in West Philadelphia. The initiative strives to promote and facilitate good nutrition and exercise practices and works closely with Penn Medicine’s student-run health clinics and HUP Cedar’s Federally Qualified Health Center. Other partners include Penn Farm as part of the [Penn Food and Wellness Collaborative](#).
- **Expand and sustain resourced programs that facilitate sustainable food solutions to food-insecure patients and Penn Medicine employees.**
  - [HUP Food Pantry](#) began in May 2020, shortly after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Created and led by HUP nursing staff, and with guidance from hospital nutrition professionals, pantry volunteers assemble bags of food to feed a family of four for a day. Bags are distributed every Wednesday. Many recipients are Penn Medicine employees, who may receive one bag of food with no questions asked. HUP Food Pantry partners with Philabundance to receive a minimum of 500 pounds of food each week. In October 2020, the pantry cemented relationships with the Penn Food and Wellness Collaborative and started receiving produce from Penn Farm. The program again expanded in December 2021, offering bags of food to food-insecure, diabetic prenatal and postpartum patients at Penn’s Helen O. Dickens Center for Women’s Health. A continuation of this strategy is to expand the HUP Pantry program to Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania - Cedar Avenue, which serves West and Southwest Philadelphia.
  - **Hungry Harvest** is a community-based organization that “rescues” fresh produce that otherwise would have been farm waste and distributes it to individuals and families in need. Currently Hungry Harvest brings fresh fruit and produce boxes to food-insecure postpartum patients at the Dickens Center for Women’s Health.
  - [Chosen 300](#) distributes hot, nutritious meals six days per week at three Philadelphia locations. Penn Medicine supports the organization by donating \$6,000 per year and coordinating dinner service at the organization’s West Philadelphia location on the first Monday of each month and selected other days.



Blood pressure screenings are offered on those nights of service, along with information on how and where to access primary care, including within the Penn Medicine system.

- [Hall Mercer Food Pantry](#) is a non-perishable food pantry established eight years ago to serve Pennsylvania hospital patients and, starting in 2020, its employees. The pantry was established and is maintained by two employees: Donna Campo and Maureen DeCarlo. Patients are referred to the pantry through case managers, who work with the individual to improve his or her food security.
- **Further collaborations among program leaders with other experts and stakeholders, including the hospital's food service employees and food contractors, as well as nutrition and social work students, including establishing a food-security referral system for patients and organizations.**
- **Foster and bolster new and existing relationships with community-based organizations**, including the [Collaborative Opportunities to Advance Community Health \(COACH\)](#), [Food Connect](#), [Philadelphia Orchard Project](#), and the [Food and Wellness Network \(FAWN\)](#) at the [Public Health Management Corporation](#), a nonprofit provider of public health resources in Philadelphia and beyond.
- **Consider 'Food as Medicine' models when planning food service and providing education for patients tailored to medical condition with focus on food insecure families and community outreach** (i.e. nutrition and cooking classes).
  - Following a major initiative of the Pennsylvania Department of Health, Penn Medicine made several institutional changes aimed at transforming its hospital food environments by launching the **Good Food, Healthy Hospital initiative**: Policy and operational changes include:
    - Removal of all sugar-sweetened beverages from vending machines.
    - Snack machine transition has been completed whereby healthier options are made available.
    - [Vending machine policies](#) have been updated to reflect new health requirements
    - [Catering Services Policy](#) contains healthy recommendations and sugar-free beverage rules.
- **Develop and implement methods and standards for food-insecurity screening tool, social determinants of health screening tool, and tracking outcomes measures.**
  - **Food Access Support Technology (FAST) App** is a centralized online platform connecting food-insecure patients with pantries and other community resources. Created by the Penn Medicine Center for Health Equity and Advancement, the FAST App has been adopted by other local organizations including another health system.
- **Socialize existing referral resources such as MANNA, Community Health Worker programs and FAST technology.**

**Impact:**

- Stronger coordination and collaboration, and increased efficiency, within the system and with community-based organizations working to improve food access.
- Patients and community routinely receive healthier food options and resources on how to obtain them.
- Sustained and enhanced partnerships delivering nutritious food to Penn Medicine patients and neighbors.

## Priority Area #8: Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services

According to Census data, nearly 10% of Philadelphia's speak English less than "very well." In the Penn Medicine service region, this ranges from 5% up to 14% of the population.

Many of these are English language learners with varying degrees of English proficiency. There is a need in Philadelphia for high-quality, widely available oral and written translations, including interpretation services.

In a health care setting, language services strengthen access to care and the quality of that care, as effective clinician-patient communication is critical for success.

Beyond language, patients' identities, cultural and religious norms also influence individual beliefs about health as well as experiences in the health care system.

Penn Medicine is working to ensure every patient who walks through Penn Medicine's doors receives care in a culturally responsive way that includes and values all aspects of a patient's identity, experiences and background.

### Strategies

- **Ensure more timely assignment of interpretation resources and minimize missed opportunities via language services infrastructure.**
  - **My Accessible Real-Time Trusted Interpreter (MARTTI):** Clinicians and staff across Penn Medicine are able to use MARTTI units for quick and effective interpretation in a range of languages. The easy-to-use mobile tablets are HIPPA-approved and create a virtual connection between patients and certified medical interpreters. Along with non-native English speakers, MARTTI can serve the needs of people who are deaf and hard of hearing. Spanish, Arabic, American Sign Language, and Russian—four of the most commonly spoken non-English languages among hospital patients—are readily available, but users can access a number of other languages through the tool.
  - **The Refugee Clinic at Penn Presbyterian Medical Center** provides initial health assessments for refugees upon arrival to the city, as well as follow-up health services for women's health care. The clinic provides culturally sensitive care by partnering with refugee resettlement agencies, translators, and physicians familiar with refugee health.
- **The [LGBTQ Health Program](#)** is Penn Medicine's program to support access to care, quality of care and patient experience for LGBTQ+ patients across the system. Care is delivered by compassionate and skilled providers across the health system who offer culturally competent care in a judgment-free setting. The Program also works to support change to policies, workflows and operations to affirm LGBTQ+ people. The Program also runs the **Transgender Patient Advocate Program** which connects patients identifying anywhere along the transgender spectrum to facilitate outpatient or specialty care at Penn Medicine. Advocates help people find appropriate providers, make it to appointments, and communicate gender identity and pronouns in use to staff and providers.

- **[Penn Medicine Pastoral Care and Education](#)**: Available at all downtown hospitals, pastoral care is an important part of Penn Medicine’s healing mission. Chaplains, as a valued part of the health care team, help patients draw upon spiritual resources, values, and traditions to cope with illness and tragedy. Care is culturally competent, following an interfaith model and respecting the full range of patient faiths and spiritual expressions. Penn Medicine Pastoral Care and Education is nationally accredited through [ACPE](#), an organization providing the highest quality clinical pastoral education programs for spiritual care professionals of any faith and in any setting.
- **Penn Medicine Dietary Services** provides custom dietary options that respect religious and cultural diversity. This includes kosher, halal, vegetarian, and other options, all of which are available upon request.
- **Enhance/streamline interpreter appointment scheduling, including use of PennChart, Penn Medicine’s electronic medical record system**
- **Support more consistent data collection related to non-native English and non-auditory communicators and standardize translation of patient facing materials, including for forms, digital communication and MyPennMedicine patient portal**

**Impact:**

- Increased access and awareness of culturally and linguistically appropriate services by staff and patients.
- Increased availability of translated outward-facing materials and resources.
- Verified usage data of interpretation and translation services.

## **Priority Area #9: Community Violence**

There is an epidemic in the Philadelphia community and the statistics are unprecedented. Violent injury and homicide rates disproportionately impact the neighborhoods and communities Penn Medicine serves. In a single year (2021), Philadelphia lost 550 people to gun violence, the most in 30 years. Firearm homicide is the leading cause of death for Black men ages 15-43 and Hispanic/Latino men ages 15-31. Rising rates of violence affect individuals, families, communities, health systems, and our city as a whole.

Direct and indirect exposure to violence contributes to depression, anxiety, PTSD, suicide, abuse, and neglect. Many survivors of violence encounter barriers to follow up care and recovery. Without someone to help navigate, the labyrinth of systems can seem an impossible hurdle.

We must also collaborate with the communities we serve to prevent violent injury in the first place. Because the root causes of violence include structural racism and systematic underinvestment in communities of color, the economic impact of Penn Medicine as an employer and an anchor institution is essential. We must also expand our collaborations with the community-based organizations that are using evidence-based strategies to interrupt violence and to improve environmental conditions to prevent violence.

As a Level 1 trauma center, Penn Presbyterian Medical Center treats over 3,000 injured patients annually. Approximately 33% are the victims of interpersonal violence. In addition to continuing to provide the highest level of acute care for injured individuals, the mission of Penn Medicine must include both supporting holistic healing of those injured through violence and preventing violent injury in the first place. To improve healing from violence Penn Medicine has the opportunity to make mental health care readily available to survivors of violent injury and to members of communities disproportionately affected by violence. Hospital-based Violence Intervention Programs (HVIPs) provide essential resources to recovering patients, but often struggle to reach patients in need due to limited funding opportunities. Penn Medicine can directly support these essential services and can also advocate for sustainable sources of funding at the municipal, state, and federal level.

The need to support our communities is evident. However, we should not forget that the community also includes those who work within Penn Medicine. By adding additional layers of support both internally and externally, we can make a real difference.

### **Strategies**

- **Create a sustainable Hospital Based Violence Recovery Program**
  - **Penn Trauma Violence Recovery Program:** The Penn Trauma Violence Recovery Program aims to accelerate and optimize holistic recovery from violent injury. Hospital-based violence intervention programs are multidisciplinary collaborations between clinical teams, community organizations, and trained violence prevention professionals who build connections with injured patients, provide psychosocial support, and help patients navigate the healthcare and social services landscapes. Two decades of evidence show that these programs can improve outcomes, prevent re-injury, and save costs. Our new program began enrolling patients in August, 2021, and has been very well received. This program works to connect individuals at risk for involvement with violence to key

resources and supports. This intervention also helps these victims better manage their health, work, housing, and other barriers. This grant-funded program is supported by the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) and the Philadelphia Department of Public Health. The trauma program also received small grants to fund **Trauma Injury Prevention** programming which included educating the public on safe gun handling and in some cases provided gun locks to promote safe storage.

- **Improve and expand street outreach and direct interaction to the community (including youth and others most at risk) by creating additional opportunities for engagement through trauma informed prevention and outreach.**
  - **Penn Community Violence Prevention Program:** Primarily grant funded by PCCD, this new program aims to develop a collective impact partnership to support community-engaged, evidence-based violence prevention in West/Southwest Philadelphia. To do this, we will convene a network of stakeholders in the PHIGHT network (Philadelphia’s Hub to reduce Interpersonal Violence, Gun Violence, Homicide and Trauma) to provide wrap-around services; Identify a cohort of 40-65 adult and young adults at highest risk for future involvement in gun violence for focused intervention; and implement and evaluate trauma-informed violence interruption services and tailored support from community-based organizations including short and long-term conflict resolution and tailored support. This is a community-relevant expansion and adaptation of the Global Cure Violence model.
  - **[Stop the Bleed](#):** Teaching community members, including teachers and youth, to administer hemorrhage control. Residents with no formal training learn to apply pressure to wounds—and maybe save a life—until first responders arrive. Making these programs, including equipment for education and distribution, more readily available, even expanding into schools, could help increase the safety and preparedness of under-resourced communities. August in 2022 we’ve trained nearly 200 participants in STB and provided about 90% of students with STB kits through the ATS or tourniquets we have purchased by acquiring small non-sustainable grants. Funding is needed to support programmatic efforts in collocating bleeding control kits with AEDs. The program is associated with the [American College of Surgeons’ Zero Preventable Deaths and Disability initiative](#), which has established an ambitious roadmap to achieve zero preventable injury deaths in the United States.
- **Penn Injury Science Center (PISC):** Funded by a grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Penn Injury Science Center brings together university, community, and government partners to develop intervention programs for injuries and violence. The center promotes and performs the highest-quality research, training, and translation of scientific discoveries into practice and policy for people in Philadelphia and around the world.
- Administrators for **Penn Medicine CAREs Grant** understands the devastating impact of violence on communities. For fiscal year 2022, highest priority was given to projects that aimed to curb violence within Philadelphia. Projects that improved neighborhood rec

centers, greened vacant lots and outside community spaces, and mentored and engaged youth after school and on weekends were funded.

- PISC, Trauma and other departments work to advance the following:
  - **Create a Trauma Survivors Support Network for patients and families who experienced traumatic injuries**
  - **Identify ways to increase access to mental health resources to address PTSD, as well as mental health in our community. Identify avenues to address prevention of mental health crises to strengthen community resiliency, communication and conflict resolution skills.**
  - **Develop community and inter-hospital partnerships to combine efforts and work towards similar missions**
  - **Expand educational opportunities for Penn Medicine employees on Workplace Violence and Trauma Informed Care**
  - **Improve connections to resources specifically aimed at support and recovery for adolescent youth**

**Impact:**

- Increased and strengthened collaborations with community based organizations.
- Increased access to mental health services and supports for gun violence survivors and family members.
- Increased number of Penn Medicine employees educated and trained in trauma informed care.
- Increased number of community members trained in 'Stop the Bleed'.

## Priority Areas #10 & #12: Housing & Neighborhood Conditions

Safe, stable housing and livable neighborhoods are indispensable to physical and mental health and well-being.

According to a 2020 study from Pew Charitable Trusts, 40 percent of Philadelphia residents reported difficulty paying their mortgage or rent. Citywide, 54 percent of renters are cost-burdened, meaning they spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing. Among residents earning less than \$30,000 per year, that figure jumps to 88 percent, with West, Southwest, and North Philadelphia having particularly high rates of housing cost burden.

Further, access to outdoor greenspaces and recreation areas like parks and trails have been shown to improve physical and mental health. But these amenities are less familiar in high-poverty areas, where abandoned homes and vacant lots are more the norm. Neighborhood blight has been linked to increased community violence, which in turn has a negative impact on physical activity as youth avoid going outside to exercise due to fears of violence.

With its wide breadth of programs to improve housing and make neighborhoods more livable, Penn Medicine has committed significant investment over the next three years improve quality of life across the city and meet these pressing and complex problems head on.

### **Strategies:**

- **Continue working with communities to support neighborhoods served by downtown hospitals and expand Deeply Rooted, one of Penn Medicine’s most innovative neighborhood programs.**
  - **Deeply Rooted** is a community-academic collaborative led by [Penn Urban Health Lab](#) that uses the healing power of nature to promote health and well-being in Black and other minority Philadelphia neighborhoods. The collaboration is forged between health systems, non-profits, and community groups and is driven by a \$6 million investment from Penn Medicine and CHOP. Among its functions, Deeply Rooted:
    - Empowers communities to create new green space including planting trees, greening vacant lots, and building community gardens and mini parks.
    - Provides grants to community organizations and residents to put on events and run activities in parks and other greenspaces.
    - Creates career development opportunities for youth, formerly incarcerated citizens, and other community members through leadership and nature-based job training.
    - Advocates for policies and investments that promote environmental justice in Philadelphia’s neighborhoods.
- **Center for Excellence in Environmental Toxicology (CEET):** The CEET is a regional resource and the only Environmental Health Sciences Core Center in Pennsylvania, though it also serves Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, and Washington, DC. The center works directly with communities to identify environmental health questions and concerns, then mobilizes its research expertise to resolve those questions.



One common and important theme in the center's work is air pollution and lung health. CEET team members are always taking action in this area. For example, the center worked with day-care facilities in Philadelphia communities to decrease air pollution exposure at Philadelphia day-care facilities in Philadelphia and by work with air management services professionals to map releases of airborne toxins. To further CEET impact, Penn Medicine's Office of Government and Community relations support advocacy effort with local, state and federal regulators and legislators.

- [Penn Medicine CAREs Grants](#) are available to all Penn Medicine employees and medical students For fiscal year 2022, projects addressing housing and neighborhood conditions were funded. Those projects include improvements to Christy Rec Center at 56<sup>th</sup> and Christian; support to the Season House, a nonprofit sanctuary helping people in North Philadelphia struggling with homelessness, to purchase a washer and dryer; funding to The Block Church for its volunteer-run Serve Saturday Program, where under-resourced parts of the city are cleaned; money to purchase hardwood floors and a floor cleaner for Horizon House, a night-bed emergency housing facility in West Philadelphia that provides shelter for 50-75 individuals experiencing chronic homelessness; and support for TREES (Towards Racial and Environmental Equity) () in Philadelphia, a group working with Pennsylvania Horticulture Society to plants trees in the under-greened Point Breeze and Southwest Philadelphia.
- **Expand research on home improvements as potential correlations with outcomes for housing and neighborhood conditions.**
- **Explore current external relationships for the possibility of educating and supporting residential tree tending.**
- **Explore deeper partnerships with the city of Philadelphia on home and neighborhood improvement programs, potentially to include basic systems repair, adaptive modifications, and the Philadelphia Water Department's Rain Check program.**

**Impact:**

- Increased bodies of research created regarding correlations between health, neighborhoods and housing conditions
- Greater tree cover in neighborhoods and surrounding communities
- Increased and enhanced partnerships and investments into neighborhoods and housing via Deeply Rooted and CAREs grants

## Priority Area #11: Socioeconomic Disadvantage

Penn Medicine recognizes that people living at or near the poverty line face poor health outcomes. Poverty rates are nearly four times higher in Philadelphia than its neighboring suburbs, although pockets of poverty exist across all five counties in the Penn Medicine service area. Rates in West and Southwest Philadelphia, which comprise Penn Medicine's primary service area, are 32.8% and 29.6% respectively – significantly even higher than the city's 23.1%.

As a leading employer and academic medical and research institution, Penn Medicine is committed to eliminating economic injustice and inequity across our organization and the communities we serve.

### Strategies:

- **Expand partnerships focused on workforce development and education**
  - [DrosoPhila](#) is a high school-level, classroom-based neuroscience program developed in partnership with the [Bashaw Lab](#) at Penn Medicine. Students go through a range of experiments, including Flies on Ice, which uses the scientific method and neuroscience principles to study the effects of cold temperatures on fruit flies. Five Penn Medicine lab members collectively volunteered nearly 100 hours of time. Last year, DrosoPHILA was taught to 620 students at four schools in the region.
  - **Pathway Program Associates:** In partnership with Penn's Netter Center for Community Partnerships, the West Philadelphia Skills Initiative (WPSI), and JEVS Human Services, the new Penn Medicine Pathways program created workforce development and economic opportunities with a focus on recent high school graduates. Penn Medicine has identified full-time roles within its system where associates can gain employment, receive career training, develop a career pathway, and enjoy comprehensive benefits packages. The program launched in summer 2022.
  - **Pathways to Promotion:** Facilitating career advancement for internal frontline staff while working to improve diversity in supervisory and management roles. To date, the program's first cohort has collectively received 15 offers for advancement. A total of 25 employees are participating in the second cohort, which began in Spring 2022.
  - **Penn Futures:** Identifying Penn Medicine employees who have high potential but are not currently in a management or supervisory role. The program guides participants to identify strengths and plan their own career development.
  - **HUP Gateway Program:** New-to-practice nurses have an opportunity to be paid while participating in an accelerated, immersive clinical experience that prepares them for higher-level surgical and critical care nursing roles.
  - **Project Quaker:** A partnership with WPSI designed to prepare individuals for lab assistant roles. To date, 50 project alums have entered lab assistant positions.
  - **Penn Presbyterian Medical Center Sterile Processing Candidate Pipeline:** Starting in 2018, this medical center has worked with the James Institute for

Learning and Central Source to develop and place students in jobs in the sterile processing field. Students receive the instruction and internships needed to become a Certified Registered Central Service Technician (CRCST), as well as hands-on experiences in a busy health care environment. To date, the program has hosted 30 students.

- **Penn Assist:** Penn Medicine was a partner in training Philadelphia high school graduates for careers in the building trades by exposing graduates to some of the region's most visionary building projects, including the state-of-the-art HUP Pavilion.
- **[Penn Academy for Reproductive Science](#)** (PARS) is a workshop for high school students led by clinicians, scientists, and medical students. The free program is designed for students interested in health care and medicine, with an emphasis on reproductive science. The academy runs twice per year for four consecutive Saturdays and involves hands-on activities such as the in-vitro fertilization of a mouse egg. The program also offers sessions dedicated to college applications, resumes, and networking. Since its inception in 2010, PARS has educated 262 students from across the Philadelphia area.
- **[Penn Academy for Skin Health](#)** (PASH) is a free program offered to Philadelphia public school students interested in a career in dermatology. Over four Saturdays, PASH teaches students about the science behind their skin. Since its inception in 2017, PASH has educated 69 students.
- **Office of Outreach, Education and Research Summer Research:** This office was created to help PARS and PASH alumnae continue their STEM career paths through additional instruction and even employment opportunities. In 2022 alone, Penn Medicine hired 25 alumnae as temporary researchers. All students in the program work side-by-side with Penn Medicine researchers and participate in producing journal articles and case studies, among other activities.
- **[Rising Scholar Success Academy](#)** is a series of free, virtual postsecondary programs designed to prepare Philadelphia high school students for educational and career pathways in a post-pandemic world. For the third year in a row, Penn Medicine developed and hosted a week of educational activities called "From the Bench to the Bedside." From July 18-22, 150 high school students learned about careers in research and medicine.
- **Focus on diverse hiring and procurement**
  - As part of **[Penn's Economic Inclusion Initiatives](#)**, the Penn Medicine campuses continue to find economic opportunities for local residents. Opportunities cover various employment types, from construction to procurement of goods and services.
  - Since 2019, Penn Medicine has directed more than \$119 million in contracting to minority-, woman-, and disabled-owned businesses.
  - **[Vendor Fridays](#)**: Launched in February, this HUP event series features local small businesses. Many participants come from the **[Dorrance H.](#)**

[Hamilton Center for Culinary Enterprises](#) at The Enterprise Center, a longstanding minority business accelerator in West Philadelphia.

- **Sustain investments in community programming**
  - [Penn Medicine CAREs Grant](#): A flagship among Penn Medicine’s community outreach efforts, CAREs Grants were created to support employee volunteerism and promote community engagement. Each grant provides monetary and institutional support to people and programs dedicated to improving health—including social determinants of health—in the Penn Medicine service area. In fiscal 2022, Penn Medicine awarded nearly \$120,000 to 126 projects, mainly led by community-based organizations. Among those receiving grants were a West Philadelphia Alzheimer’s disease support group meeting at – and thus, supporting, Black-owned businesses, gun-violence initiatives, urban greening efforts, and better food access for hungry families in Philadelphia neighborhoods.
  - [Penn Medicine Community Events Calendars](#): This tool links volunteer opportunities with Penn Medicine employees seeking to donate their time or other support to charitable efforts outside the hospital walls. In fiscal 2022, the calendar featured 64 events [representing 342 employees volunteering over 1,000 hours of volunteer service in Philadelphia](#).
- **Increase community connections with resources**
  - [Community Resource Connects](#): When PennChart’s health screener identifies someone with potentially unmet social needs, Penn Medicine takes action, working with health care providers, community-based organizations, the Philadelphia Department of Public Health, and entities like [Find Help](#), a closed-loop referral network for social services. Penn Medicine providers and staff can then connect the patient with resources that can help them after they leave the hospital.
  - **Accelerate Health Equity (AHE)**: The [Penn Medicine Center for Digital Health](#) and the [Penn Center for Health Incentives and Behavioral Economics](#) worked strategically with local health systems, payors, and the city of Philadelphia to launch the [AHE program](#) in 2020. This broad initiative deploys tools from behavioral economics, digital health, innovation science, urban health, communications science, and public health to address physical, behavioral, social, economic, and clinical barriers to sustainable health equity.
  - [Regional health equity dashboard](#): This web-based tool centralizes and benchmarks critical metrics across key health care need areas such as maternal and infant mortality and morbidity, cancer screening and prevention, access to specialty care, and socioeconomic disadvantage, helping to inform a wide variety of projects and inquiries.

**Impact:**

- Increased and cultivated partnerships that elevate local minority- and women-owned businesses.

- Increased participation and enhanced programmatic offerings for workforce development pipeline programs,
- Increased number of patients connected to social support services.

## Conclusion

The Penn Medicine Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) and Community Health Implementation Plan (CHIP) together serve as a road map for tackling Philadelphia's greatest health needs. Penn Medicine is committed to acting on these priorities, and setting and achieving goals for progress on annual basis.

These documents will guide the system in setting initiatives and priorities, improving care and services, coordinating among departments and partners, financial decision-making, and creating and assessing community impact.

These reports would not be possible without a host of collaborators, including community members, internal engagement stakeholders, core staff members, executive sponsors, and system leaders. In particular, Penn Medicine would like to recognize the hard work of the [Health Care Improvement Foundation](#) (HCIF), an independent nonprofit organization based in Philadelphia and dedicated to creating healthier communities through equitable, accessible, high-quality health care. HCIF was a founding partner of the regional approach to the federally mandated [Community Health Needs Assessment](#), on which this document is based, from conception to completion, with guidance from a Penn Medicine steering committee and extensive public outreach and discourse.

Community partners include, but are not limited to, the [West Philadelphia Promise Zone](#), the University of Pennsylvania's (UPenn) First Thursday's network of community partners, and the community advisory board for the Public Health Management Corporation's Health Center on Cedar, a Federally Qualified Health Center staffed by Penn Medicine clinicians.

Last but not least, thank you for reading this document. Working together, we can succeed in improving the health of every Philadelphian.