



2024 Community Benefits Plan Update

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I. Introduction

Advocate Health Care

Advocate Health Care (AHC) is the largest health system in Illinois and a national leader in clinical innovation, health outcomes, consumer experience and value-based care. One of the state's largest private employers, the system serves patients across 9 hospitals, including two children's campuses, and more than 250 sites of care. Advocate Health Care is engaged in hundreds of clinical trials and research studies, and is nationally recognized for its expertise in cardiology, neurosciences, oncology, and pediatrics. To learn more, visit [Exceptional Care Any Time, Any Where | Advocate Health Care](#).

Advocate Health

Advocate Health (AH) is the third-largest nonprofit, integrated health system in the United States, created from the combination of Advocate Aurora Health and Atrium Health. Providing care under the names Advocate Health Care in Illinois; Atrium Health in the Carolinas, Georgia and Alabama; and Aurora Health Care in Wisconsin, Advocate Health is a national leader in clinical innovation, health outcomes, consumer experience and value-based care. Wake Forest University School of Medicine serves as the academic core of the enterprise. Advocate Health is nationally recognized for its expertise in heart and vascular, neurosciences, oncology, pediatrics and rehabilitation, as well as organ transplants, burn treatments and specialized musculoskeletal programs.

For reporting community benefits in compliance with the Illinois Community Benefits Act (2003), the content of this report will focus on Advocate Health Care hospitals only, which are identified as "Advocate" in the list below for state reporting and local brand identity purposes. This document provides a summary of community health programs and activities completed across Advocate in 2024--demonstrating fulfillment of all federal and Illinois state requirements while also living out our commitment to addressing the root causes of health inequity.

Advocate Health Care hospitals and sites of care:

- Advocate Christ Medical Center & Advocate Children's Hospital – Oak Lawn
- Advocate Condell Medical Center
- Advocate Good Samaritan Hospital
- Advocate Good Shephard Hospital
- Advocate Illinois Masonic Medical Center
- Advocate Lutheran General Hospital & Advocate Children's Hospital – Park Ridge
- Advocate Sherman Hospital
- Advocate South Suburban Hospital
- Advocate Trinity Hospital

Mission, values & philosophy

Advocate Health Care's mission, values and philosophy are grounded in more than 100 years of caring for individuals, families and communities. Advocate Health Care is so uniquely committed to our mission, values and philosophy that we have a dedicated Office for Mission and Spiritual Care. One of the functions of this office is to ensure that the mission, values and philosophy are understood and integrated into all aspects of our health care ministry.

Mission

The mission of Advocate Health Care is to serve the health needs of individuals, families and communities through a wholistic philosophy rooted in our fundamental understanding of human beings as created in the image of God.

Values

Advocate exists to serve. The core values of compassion, equality, excellence, partnership and stewardship guide our actions as we work together to provide health services to others in our communities.




Philosophy




The care we provide is wholistic. This philosophy means we understand people have physical, emotional and spiritual needs and their relations to God, themselves, their families and society are vital to health and healing. Finally, we believe all people are created in the image of God. All human beings live under God's care and must be treated with dignity and respect.

Advocate Health's Community Strategy





Advocate Health has a strong history of community engagement and service. To demonstrate our commitment to this work, a multidisciplinary team of leaders from our Consumer and Social Impact team convened in November 2018 and developed the Community Strategy. This strategy was a targeted, systemwide approach to addressing social drivers of health in our communities, for our patients, and for our workforce. The Community Strategy included six focus areas and four enabling strategies:

Community Strategy Focus Areas

	Access/primary medical homes: Primary care is critical for improving population health and reducing health disparities. AHC connects people with care and services at the right time, in the right place with the outcome of reducing low acuity ED visits, hospital readmissions, and increasing access to primary care settings.
	Access/behavioral health services: Mental health is integral to overall health and well-being. AHC provides behavioral health assessments to expedite referral of patients to appropriate levels of care and to supportive resources.
	Workforce development: Unemployment affects health through financial deprivation and social and emotional strain. AHC provides skill-building programs to improve employment skills for community members and workforce development programs to help existing teammates advance their careers.

	Community safety: Violence affects the survivor, their family and social network, the perpetrator, and ultimately the entire community. AHC manages programs to support survivors along their healing journey.
	Housing: Adequate and safe housing is critical to positive health outcomes. AHC hospitals are taking steps to connect people to healthy and safe home environments that promote healing.
	Food security: Food insecurity leads to poor health outcomes and is linked to obesity, increased risk of chronic disease, and malnutrition. AHC teams have activated food distribution plans to address food insecurity through collaborations with community service groups and faith partners.

Community Strategy Enabling Strategies

	Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) Screening and Referral: Collecting and using data from patients living in the communities we serve is an important first step in developing upstream solutions to address the social needs of our patients and program participants. AHC teammates developed processes, tools, and training necessary to screen patients for SDOH and refer them to a trusted network of community partners participating in our closed-loop system.
	Local Purchasing: An anchor strategy that focuses on increasing spending with underrepresented businesses and is inclusive of Veteran Business Enterprises, local and employee-owned, cooperatively owned and/or nonprofit-owned enterprises.
	Community Investment: Anchor strategy investments targeted to enhance critical services such as affordable or supportive housing and food access in communities that lead to improved health and demonstrated downstream benefits to our patients and the community.
	Philanthropy: Charitable investments and grants fund essential community programs and support execution of AHC's Community Strategy to create healthier communities and impact vulnerable populations.

The Community Strategy was Advocate Health's response to current forces of change in health care. As the identified areas of need change, our strategy must also evolve. For this reason, the Community Strategy was sunset in 2024. In 2025, we will align efforts with the new Clinical and Community Impact Priorities.

II. 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment and 2023-2025 Community Health Implementation Strategies

All Advocate Health Care hospitals' 2022 Community Health Needs Assessments (CHNAs) utilized a mixed methodology approach to completing a comprehensive study of the demographics and health needs of the communities we serve. Data utilized to complete the CHNA reports include primary and secondary data and both qualitative and quantitative data. As guided by the IRS, every hospital collaborates with other health care providers, local health departments and other community stakeholders to complete the CHNA process every three

years. Following completion of the CHNA report, each hospital develops Community Health Implementation Strategies (CHIS) to describe how they plan to address prioritized community health needs.

In Illinois, nine hospital CHNA reports were completed on an aligned three-year CHNA timeline. Additionally, two Advocate Children's hospitals (Oak Lawn and Park Ridge) also completed a comprehensive CHNA report. All 11 CHNA reports for Illinois were reviewed and approved by the Advocate Health Care Network Board and each hospital's Governing Council in late December 2022. By the first week of May 2023, the 2023-2025 Community Health Implementation Strategy plan for each hospital was made publicly available on our websites. These reports can be found online here: [Hospital CHNA Reports Implementation Plans Progress Reports | Advocate Health Care](#).

Advocate Health Care, Illinois Market 2023-2025 Community Health Implementation Strategy Plan Priorities by Hospital	
North Area	
Advocate Condell Medical Center Region: Lake County <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behavioral Health Obesity 	Advocate Sherman Hospital Region: Kane County <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behavioral Health Obesity
Advocate Good Shepherd Hospital Region: McHenry County <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behavioral Health Obesity 	
Central Area	
Advocate Illinois Masonic Medical Center Central, Cook County <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behavioral Health Health & Nutrition Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) 	Advocate Good Samaritan Hospital Region: DuPage County <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behavioral Health Health, Wellness & Nutrition
Advocate Lutheran General Hospital Region: North Suburban, Cook County <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behavioral Health Health & Nutrition 	Advocate Children's Hospital-Park Ridge North Suburban, Cook County <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to Care Behavioral Health
South Area	
Advocate South Suburban Hospital Region: South, Cook County <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mental & Behavioral Health Obesity 	Advocate Trinity Hospital Region: South, Cook County <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behavioral Health Diabetes
Advocate Christ Medical Center Region: South, Cook County <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mental & Behavioral Health Obesity 	Advocate Children's Hospital-Oak Lawn Region: South, Cook County <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to Care Behavioral Health

III. Community Benefits Plan and Program Examples/Outcomes

As indicated earlier, the Advocate Health Community Strategy Core Team identified six key focus areas to target, all of which have been identified as “game changers” in achieving health equity. Most of the program descriptions and outcomes that follow are structured according to these six areas, and the progress/outcomes provided are from the 2023-2025 Community Health Implementation Strategy (CHIS) as well as outcomes carrying over from previous CHNA and CHIS cycles. While programs can often support more than one key focus area, the following examples are organized to demonstrate fulfillment of Advocate Health’s strategy in each focus area and preferably in the area in which programs have the most impact.

1. ACCESS TO INNOVATIVE CARE AND SERVICES:

Access to health care was ranked as a top issue by community members and key stakeholders in the most recent CHNAs for all Advocate Health hospitals in Illinois and Wisconsin. Access to Innovative Care and Services is about creating conditions in our hospitals, across our health system and in our communities to provide accessible, available, affordable, and targeted health care and health services for all. Access to care offers an opportunity to detect and treat disease at an earlier stage, improve overall health, prevent disease and disability, and reduce preventable deaths. Some examples of the programs utilized to increase access for people living in the communities we served in 2024 include:

- **Financial Assistance.** Advocate Health Care (AHC) offers a very generous financial assistance program, requiring no payments from the patients most in need and providing discounts to uninsured and insured patients. Patients earning up to six times the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) and insured patients earning up to two and half times the FPL, may qualify for a full or partial financial assistance discount. Additionally, a Catastrophic Assistance discount is available for uninsured and insured patients whose incomes exceed the traditional financial assistance income guidelines and have outstanding patient balances of \$25,000 or more for a single date of service or sum of several dates of service. These patients may qualify to receive a financial assistance discount that reduces their outstanding balance to 25% of their net income. For uninsured patients, AHC will presumptively provide financial assistance if the financial status has been verified by a third party. In these cases, the patient is not required to submit a separate charity application. If presumptive criteria are not available for uninsured patients, financial assistance eligibility is available using an income-based screening. AHC extends its income-based financial assistance policy to its insured patients as well. AHC continues to review and refine its policy in an ongoing effort to ensure that financial assistance is available to those who need help. To learn more, visit our website at <https://www.advocatehealth.com/about-us/financial-assistance-for-patients>.

Emergency Department Charity Care Only, Provided at Cost

Advocate Health Care, IL North Region Hospitals			
Charity Care	Advocate Condell Medical Center	Advocate Sherman Hospital	Advocate Good Shepherd Hospital
Emergency Department Charity Care Only, Provided at Cost	\$1,733,167	\$2,317,306	\$621,746

Advocate Health Care, IL Central Region Hospitals			
Charity Care	Advocate Good Samaritan Hospital	Advocate Lutheran General Hospital, Advocate Children's	Advocate Illinois Masonic Medical Center
Emergency Department Charity Care Only, Provided at Cost	\$988,330	\$1,737,728	\$1,503,763

Advocate Health Care, IL South Region Hospitals			
Charity Care	Advocate South Suburban Hospital	Advocate Trinity Hospital	Advocate Christ Medical Center, Advocate Children's
Emergency Department Charity Care Only, Provided at Cost	\$1,678,322	\$1,321,482	\$2,824,030

- Financial Advocates.** Financial wellness includes having access to the plans, programs, and financial assistance options that are right for you. Advocate Health Financial Advocates are available to support people who don't have insurance and are within a certain income range. These advocates provide free, personalized financial assessments that include identifying each patient's unique health care needs, helping the patient understand the potential cost of medical treatment, and discussing their financial assistance options. The advocate then assists people in applying for the financial assistance programs most appropriate for them. In 2024, Financial Advocates processed 27,255 Advocate Financial Assistance applications, completed 3,445 Medicaid applications, identified 732 people for co-pay assistance and assisted people with completing 294 Marketplace applications.
- Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs).** All AHC hospitals continue to have relationships with FQHCs or other community clinics within their service areas and collaborate with those partners to improve access to care for Medicaid and uninsured patients. Advocate Sherman continues to work closely with Greater Family Health (FQHC), VNA Health Care and Aunt Martha's (FQHC) to coordinate care for low-income patients in the Elgin area. The hospital provides colonoscopies and mammograms to Greater Family Health patients, coordinated through grant-funded programs. Advocate Condell works collaboratively with the Lake County Health Department and Community Health Center (FQHC) and Erie HealthReach Waukegan (FQHC), by providing mammograms and other specialty care to uninsured and

low-income patients as they are referred to the medical center. Advocate Illinois Masonic and Advocate Lutheran General also partner with Heartland Health Centers and Community Health, one of the largest free clinics in the nation, to provide specialty care to uninsured patients and referrals to FQHCs and free clinics for primary care services. In addition, Advocate Illinois Masonic provides operations space to Heartland Health Centers on its campus to provide primary care for individuals and families that are uninsured. In partnership with the Access to Care organization, Advocate Christ continues to provide free mammograms to uninsured and low-income individuals that are referred by their clinic to the hospital when this service is required. Advocate Trinity works with Chicago Family Health Center and Christian Community Health Center to coordinate care for low-income patients. AHC Hospitals in Cook County work closely with Community Health to connect and treat uninsured patients and to connect individuals that need a primary care provider.

To maintain quality care and improve quality of life for people seeking care from AHC, it is essential to support access to medical homes and reduce reliance on emergency room visits and hospital admissions. AHC has numerous programs focused on managing the patient experience through the continuum of care—through inpatient and outpatient settings, and in the home.

- **Medicaid and Medicare.** AHC actively works to improve the provision of services to individuals and families who are covered by Medicare and Medicaid and that seek services at any of AHC's 400 sites of care. AHC collaborates with various community-based organizations (CBOs) and Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) in innovative ways to establish primary care relationships for Medicaid and uninsured patients.

Advocate Care Organization (ACO). AHC collaborates with Meridian Family Health Plan (FHP) of Illinois as part of an integrated care model for people on Medicaid. AHC has a strong history of providing high quality care to the Medicaid population within its network with key focus areas, including improved care coordination, access and quality performance. The result has been a reduction in ED utilization due to successfully connecting individuals in the plan to a medical home and due to connecting patients with community resources for unmet Social Determinants of Health needs.

- **Community Health Workers-Connecting and Navigating People to Primary Care and Social Services.** The Primary Care Connection (PCC) program deploys Community Health Workers (CHWs) as community resource navigators to serve people in the ED. The purpose of the program is to reduce unnecessary ED visits and to connect people to a primary care home. CHWs educate people about accessing the appropriate level of care and providing follow-up appointments to a convenient care site for people during the ED visit. CHWs also conduct a community health assessment to identify unmet social needs and link people to social services and community resources that contribute to a person's overall wellbeing. The PCC program has reached over 40,000 people since 2018. In 2024, a total of 11,427 patients were seen and 16,8363 referrals were given.

- **Mobile Integrated Health (MIH).** In Kane County, a hospital-based MIH system was created to improve care coordination and reduce readmissions of chronically ill people at Advocate Sherman as they transition from hospital to home. National data shows that mobile care helps prevent hospital readmissions, especially in areas where people have limited access to health care and traditional home health services are restricted due to a variety of reasons. The MIH partnership between a physician and an on-staff paramedic, allows outreach to people in their homes when the patient is unable to make a scheduled clinic visit or when symptoms/conditions arise for which an in-person home assessment is most beneficial to the patient. The paramedic then communicates back to the physician to determine the plan of care. In 2024, the MIH team served 130 people and administered flu vaccines. Additionally, the team expanded its community outreach by becoming certified Narcan trainers. They now carry Narcan, along with substance use resources and educational materials, to support patients during visits.

Advocate Health Care also provides language and other culturally appropriate services to improve access to a broad range of health-related services.

- **Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program.** Advocate Illinois Masonic’s Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program provides comprehensive mental health care in American Sign Language (ASL) to deaf and hard of hearing children, adolescents, and adults across the Chicagoland area. *(This program is described in greater detail on page 15-16, under community health strategy focus area # 2. Access/Behavioral Health.)*
- **Language Services.** Our journey to bridge gaps in languages and cultures by connecting patients, family members, and companions has continued to expand, with over 1.6 million interactions facilitated in more than 203 languages. This growth reflects our commitment to serving our increasingly diverse communities. In 2024, our focus for language services was to ensure comprehensive access at all touchpoints of the care journey. This effort aimed to enhance the patient experience by streamlining workflows and expanding access to language services technology, including telehealth support. By having interpreters available at community events and ensuring that critical content is translated into the preferred languages of our patients, we have made significant strides in improving care and communication for all.
- **Cultural Health Initiatives.** Advocate Lutheran General Hospital’s Cultural and Community Liaison role continues the more than decade-long commitment and dedicated response to the multitude and continually changing diverse cultures, languages, health literacy and demographics of the communities that we serve. This position’s priority is to create an environment that is conducive to developing lifelong relationships with members of the community, to increase access to health care services for members of the community and to help our current patients achieve the best health outcomes. The Liaison also

works in collaboration with the Central Chicagoland primary service area (PSA) and the Community Health area to meet the health care, cultural and spiritual needs of our patients and families.

The Liaison continues to assist patients in navigating the health care facility, provides linguistically competent and culturally sensitive patient education in the context of community outreach, and helps to identify potential barriers to health care for the community. The Cultural and Community Liaison collaborates with external stakeholders including but not limited to, Chambers of Commerce, community agencies and educational districts to promote our health care service lines and concurrently embed and integrate the Advocate Health Care mission of improving health access into the six components of this role – Patient Navigation, Community Relations/Outreach and Engagement, Cultural Competence, Physician Relations/Recruitment and Community Health. The Liaison partners with internal stakeholders including physicians, teammates, administrators, and volunteers to provide guidance around cultural sensitivities of the patient's care plan and possible alterations needed to further the goal of service excellence for all, which in turn promotes an environment that meets the unexpressed and expressed needs of all those in the facility. This provides an opportunity to also identify potential barriers and to assess what educational materials and hospital resources are needed that support cultural sensitivities to continue to foster greater communication between the provider and patient/family around the patient's care plan.

- **Baby-Friendly Hospitals.** There are more than 500 hospitals and birthing centers in the U.S. that hold a Baby Friendly designation, including three Advocate Health Care Hospitals—Trinity, Illinois Masonic and Sherman—all of which achieved this recognition in 2016. The Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative was established by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO) in 1991 to offer an optimal level of care for infant feeding and mother-baby bonding. The core components of the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) are the UNICEF/WHO *Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding*, which are designed to facilitate the role of the birthing facility in providing women the information, care practices and opportunity to breastfeed, regardless of the method of birth.
- **Screening Patients and Providing Critical Referrals:** Advocate Health uses an enterprise-wide technology referral platform, the Community Resource Hub (CRH), operated by Findhelp to provide access to hundreds of community-based organizations that offer services to address social drivers of health needs for patients and community members. In 2024, a total of 912,844 referrals were made to community organizations in the Midwest region using Findhelp. The most common service needs identified were food insecurity, transportation, and housing. To effectively support patients' full care needs, Advocate Health developed a screening tool in our electronic medical record to assess all patients for social determinant of health needs (SDOH) and to provide them with referrals to appropriate support services. In 2024, we expanded the SDOH assessment to be available for patients seen for outpatient visits. Additionally, SDOH screening was

added to the pre-check in process for patients in the LiveWell app, increasing the number of patients screened. Teammates are sometimes asked by patients and visitors for referrals to local community social support services. Advocate Health recognized the need for an up-to-date, reliable, tested list of community services that are easily accessed with the click of a button. Advocate Health works through Findhelp to link community members to free and low-cost options for food, safe housing, childcare, transportation and more.

To achieve better outcomes and use limited resources well, community health leaders are frequently choosing programs that have been evaluated to replicate in their communities. These evidence-based initiatives increase the likelihood that identified needs will be met. An example of the numerous evidence-based programs implemented across AHC is as follows.

- **Fall Prevention.** Given that falls are one of the most common reasons for older adults to visit an emergency room, Advocate Good Shepherd offered A Matter of Balance fall prevention program (MOB)—an eight-session evidence-based program to reduce the fear of falling among older adults. In 2024, four MOB classes were completed in the Advocate Good Shepherd service area. One winter class included 11 graduating participants, two spring classes included 11 and 12 graduates and one summer class included 16 graduates.

To further address health access, AHC works to enhance access to health care, prevention and wellness services for many diverse populations that might otherwise have difficulty accessing/receiving necessary health services. Some examples of these programs include the following.

- **Ronald McDonald Care Mobile (RMCS).** Since 2008, Advocate Children's has partnered with Ronald McDonald House Charities to deliver free primary health care via Ronald McDonald Care Mobile – fully-equipped medical clinics on wheels – to school children on the north and south sides of Chicago. The teams also provided physician referrals, helped with Medicaid enrollment, housing assistance, and screened for food insecurity (providing food and information about social services, food pantries and other resources). There were also distributions of winter clothing and basic personal hygiene supplies for those accessing care. Through the two mobile units, we engaged more than 3,000 patients and provided over 7,000 immunizations and 1,367 physicals. Thirty percent of all patients who screened positive for food insecurity, received a backpack filled with a day's worth of emergency food as well as referrals to local food pantries and state and federal assistance programs. In 2024, the RMCS provided services to 165 migrant/newcomer children in the City of Chicago and State of Illinois shelters.
- **Advocate Adult Down Syndrome Center.** Established in 1992 through a partnership between Advocate Lutheran General and the National Association for Down Syndrome

(NADS), the Advocate Medical Group Adult Down Syndrome Center provides crucial psychosocial and medical services to adolescents and adults with Down syndrome living in all areas of Illinois. Each year, approximately 1,800 individuals are served through over 6,000 visits, including care in the office, the patient's home, at residential facilities, nursing homes and in the hospital. The Center's multidisciplinary approach to comprehensive medical care, with a strong emphasis on preventive medicine, provides practical approaches to health education and health risk reduction, including supporting people with Down syndrome in their own health promotion efforts. More time is provided to each patient visit to allow individuals with Down syndrome to participate in their own health care which reduces reimbursement. Further, only one-third of the cost of the clinic is reimbursed through billing insurance due to the payor mix. In addition, AHC provides some services through the Center that are key to health promotion but that are not reimbursable or billable. In addition to patient care, the mission of the Center includes education and research. In 2024, the Center staff provided numerous educational events and classes, published research studies, provided extensive educational materials online and in print form, and participated in national and international projects educating about and researching the effect of a variety of conditions on people with Down syndrome such as COVID-19, Alzheimer's disease, and mental health conditions.

- Pediatric Developmental Center.** Advocate Illinois Masonic's Pediatric Developmental Center (PDC) serves children with autism and other developmental differences and their families--both those with commercial insurance and Medicaid plans. The PDC remains one of the only centers in Illinois to provide diagnostic evaluations and therapy services for autism and other developmental differences to low-income families. In 2024, for example, over 67% of scheduled visits at the center were through Medicaid or government-funded Early Intervention programs. The PDC provides both comprehensive diagnostic evaluations, specialty medical care (developmental pediatrics) as well as comprehensive therapy services (individual behavior therapy, socialization groups, speech, occupational and physical therapy, social work services, parent training and sibling support). In 2024, the PDC provided services to 2,011 unduplicated patients for a total of 16,174 patient visits--approximately half of which represented patients with Autism. The PDC offers services in both English and Spanish, including ongoing parent training and support to enhance generalization of skills into all environments.
- Illinois Oral Health Programs.** Advocate Illinois Masonic provides two dental programs focused on improving access to oral health services. The Mobile Dentistry Program brings oral health care services to all populations, including low-income children and families, people experiencing homelessness, older adults and people with special needs at 18 different locations across the community. The Special Needs Dentistry Program provides access to oral health for children and adults with developmental disabilities. Most

dentists lack the training or equipment needed to effectively serve patients with special needs, resulting in many individuals lacking access to even basic dental care. In 2024, the Special Needs Dentistry program had 2,408 visits, serving 2,072 persons with special needs, and the Mobile Dental Van provided 2,904 services to 601 patients in 1,290 visits.

- **Faith and Health Partnerships.** Advocate Health Care’s Faith and Health Partnerships program works side by side with faith communities to promote health access by mobilizing the transforming power of social connectedness and spiritual wisdom. The program supports a Neighborhood Model that embeds Advocate Health teammates in specific zip codes identified as priorities through the Advocate Health Community Strategy. Team members work with a collaborative network of faith communities and community-based organizations to address health issues that have been identified by community members as issues that are important to them. In Illinois, we have Neighborhood Network programs in South Chicago and Avondale and are focused on reducing stress and increasing social connectedness, managing chronic disease, and supporting food access. Faith and Health Partnerships also work across our footprint on building the capacity of faith leaders and congregations to promote the wholistic health of their members and the communities they serve, particularly around mental health, trauma healing, and loneliness/social isolation.

Advocate Health Care’s Faith and Health Partnership program is a key convener of the Chicagoland Trauma Informed Congregations Network (CTICN), a multifaith learning community that explores how faith communities can support healing and resilience across communities. The CTICN hosts conferences, provides training and education, and convenes regular Community of Practice gatherings around topics of common interest. In 2022, Faith and Health Partnerships received a 4-year grant from the Chicago Department of Public Health Office for Violence Prevention to work with faith and community-based organizations to develop trauma-informed practices, policies, and culture.

Mental Health is a priority in each of our hospitals’ Community Health Needs Assessments. Faith and Health Partnerships provides a Faith and Mental Health Specialist to work with congregational leaders and members on reducing stigma and increasing support for people experiencing mental health challenges.

Since 2009, AHC has supported The Center for Faith and Community Health Transformation. The Center works to advance health equity by partnering with faith-based community organizations to build community, nurture leaders and connect the unique spirit power of faith communities to promote social justice and abundant life for individuals, families and communities. The Center is a partnership between AHC and the Office for Community Engagement and Neighborhood Health Partnerships at the University of Illinois at Chicago. AHC invests staff time and some programming dollars as part of our commitment to this work.

2. ACCESS/BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES:

Behavioral health, which includes treatment and services for mental health conditions and substance use disorder, is an urgent public health concern in all communities where Advocate Health provides care. An analysis of health data within the Advocate Health patient service areas reveals the burden of mental illness and substance abuse.

Advocate Health has implemented many programs/services focused on improving the continuum of care for the benefit of mental health and behavioral health patients. In addition to having strong partnerships with community-based programs across our service areas, Advocate Health Behavioral Health offers a full continuum of treatment options including Inpatient, Residential, Partial hospitalization, Intensive outpatient, Outpatient, Day treatment programs, and Support Groups. Examples of other initiatives include:

- **Behavioral Health Integration.** Many studies have shown that integrating behavioral health into primary care practice can lead to increases in a person's adherence to treatment, improves quality of life, and increases a person's satisfaction with their care. At Advocate Health Care, we are integrating behavioral health into primary care practices in Illinois using the collaborative care approach and embedding social workers to work alongside the primary care team to help people in need when they come in for their primary care visit. In addition, patients have access to a virtual licensed clinician for brief targeted solution-focused therapy. Thirdly, primary care physicians have access to a consulting psychiatrist to address questions regarding prescription medications that treat mental health conditions. The goal of this initiative is to address lower-level behavioral health issues in the primary care setting where people feel most comfortable. In 2024, the BHI clinics completed 9,353 visits to patients in primary care clinics. The program is based on an evidence-based and collaborative care model from the University of Washington. In line with evidence-based recommendations, we use evidence-based screening tools, PHQ-9 and GAD-7 to conduct behavioral health assessments. Program metrics have demonstrated an average latency to first appointment as 11 days. Early metrics captured an increased time to first appointments by 83% compared to referral to usual outpatient behavioral health providers.
- **Behavioral Health Assessments.** Behavioral health assessments help providers identify when a person is experiencing behavioral health issues and assists in expediting referrals to appropriate levels of care and other supportive resources. In 2024, 9,697 assessments were completed by a behavioral-health specialist for people presenting Advocate IL hospital ED's in acute mental/behavioral health crisis.
- **Mobile Crisis Response team (Formerly known as MICCS).** The team is comprised of four clinicians and a peer support specialist. They provide crisis interventions, therapy and case management to acutely ill behavioral health patients, offering community-based encounters. In 2024, 25 patients received 754 services, delivered in the community.

- Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program.** As briefly mentioned earlier under Language Services, AIMMC's Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program provides comprehensive mental health care in American Sign Language (ASL) to deaf and hard of hearing children, adolescents, and adults across Illinois. The program offers a continuum of care that includes clinical assessments; pre-screenings and linkage; individual and family therapy; psychiatric evaluations and medication monitoring; as well as crisis intervention with a 24-hour phone line. Tele-psychiatry is available to clients using a variety of methods, including videophone equipment supported by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and Teams/Zoom, which suit the individual's linguistic and technological needs to enable the provision of otherwise scarce deaf-friendly psychiatric services in the homes of deaf patients. Over the years, the hospital has distributed several thousand free ASL DVDs on HIV/AIDS, STDs, breast health, diabetes, depression, and smoking cessation. In 2024, BHS provided 1,513 services (visits) to 71 clients, including 811 visits with ASL-fluent providers and 702 visits with reasonable accommodation or interpreting.
- First Access Program.** Given the high number of admissions and ED visits for behavioral health conditions at Advocate Illinois Masonic and the high number of discharged patients that were not keeping their outpatient follow-up appointments, the hospital's behavioral health department created the First Access program in 2013. The goal of First Access is to provide immediate access to follow-up behavioral health services to support recovery and prevent relapses. Through this program, behavioral health ED patients, as well as patients referred by the hospital's inpatient psychiatric unit, medical floors and Advocate physicians, are linked to follow-up for outpatient appointments with minimal wait time. Since its implementation, First Access consistently increased behavioral health patients' appointment follow-through rates from 40 percent in 2013 to 100 percent in 2019. Discharged patients received warm hand-offs to behavioral health services and left with an outpatient plan of care. Having achieved that, First Access started to focus on providing access to care to all Advocate patients and its volumes have steadily grown. In 2024, BHS collaborated with all Illinois Behavioral Health outpatient and ambulatory sites to launch the Illinois Behavioral Health Call Center, providing a single access point for all clinics. As a result, the First Access Program was sunsetted. IMMC OP Behavioral Health continued to deliver robust care, engaging 1,678 new patients in outpatient therapy in 2024.
- Community Linkage Specialist (CLS).** In response to the increasing rates of substance abuse and mental illness in DuPage County, Advocate Good Samaritan employed a Community Linkage Specialist that works with Detox and Behavioral Health Unit patients to connect them to the appropriate community support services and resources. This individual also conducts community and home visits with discharged patients.
- Mental Health First Workshops.** Mental Health First Aid training aims to increase awareness around mental illness through helping people identify mental health issues/illness and address mental health crises in the community. The Community

Health team implemented several Mental Health First Aid trainings across the Illinois region (Good Samaritan's EMS/paramedic students and Avondale Restorative Justice Community Court. In 2024, the community health team partnered with the Downers Grove Public Library to train 15 individuals, library staff and local community members, on Mental Health First Aid. The program is centered around suicide prevention and incorporates overall awareness of various behavioral health concerns. In 2024, one hundred and eighteen participants completed the Adult Mental Health First Aid Training and forty-eight people completed the Youth Mental Health First Aid training held at area non-profit organizations in the community. Advocate Health IL hospitals hosted forty-five companionship and peer support group trainings events in the South Chicagoland area reaching a total of 343 people.

Community Mental Health Wellness Programs:

Advocate Health remains committed to supporting individuals at risk for opioid overdose across the Midwest region, particularly in Illinois and Wisconsin. The Free Naloxone Distribution Program provides critical access to life-saving medication for patients presenting with an opioid use disorder or substance use disorder, overdose, past overdose events, high risk patients or those who request naloxone. In 2024, Advocate Health hospitals distributed a total of 1,376 doses of naloxone, while Advocate Health Wisconsin hospitals distributed 526 doses, bringing the total for the Midwest region to 1,902 doses. This marks a significant 81% increase compared to the 1,052 doses distributed in 2023. This increase highlights the program's expansion and ongoing impact in addressing the opioid crisis and improving access to overdose prevention resources in high-risk communities.

- **Central Region:** . In 2024, Advocate Lutheran community health team provided Turning Point with a grant of \$1,000 to support in their endeavors to help people in need in the community. Advocate Lutheran General continues partnership with Onward Neighborhood House's Welcoming Center for Immigrant and Refugees in the Belmont Cragin community to increase access to behavioral health services for immigrant and under insured individuals. The partnership increases access to individual, couple and family psychotherapy.
- **North Region:** In 2024, to help address high substance use deaths from opioid overdoses, three north Illinois Advocate Hospitals developed and implemented a NARCAN Training Program, including the launch of a special "training Crew" of internal clinicians. Through collaboration with the three county health departments and local harm reduction agencies, a curriculum was designed to train internal teammates on how to identify an opioid overdose and administer nasal NARCAN spray to save a life. Pop-up education booths were launched in the three north Illinois hospitals and at community events. Advocate nurses and other teammates trained 32 individuals and distributed 628 doses of NARCAN.

- **South Region:** In December 2023, Advocate South Suburban Hospital opened its new inpatient behavioral health unit to enhance access to mental health services in the south suburban communities of Chicago. The unit features 27 private, single-occupancy rooms equipped with the latest technology, as well as recreational and fitness spaces designed to support patient recovery. This expansion strengthens our capacity to meet the increasing demand for behavioral health services. The adult day hospital programs are led by a multidisciplinary team that includes psychiatrists, psychologists, licensed clinical professional counselors, occupational therapists, and licensed clinical social workers. The PHP provides 20–25 hours per week of in-person or virtual programming focused on stabilization, group therapy, individual check-ins, and medication evaluation and monitoring. The IOP offers 9–20 hours per week of structured programming emphasizing skill-building and therapeutic support, also available in person or virtually. In 2024, the behavioral health programs at Advocate South Suburban served 662 adult inpatient admissions and completed 1,083 patient visits through PHP and IOP services.

3. **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT:**

A steady job in favorable working conditions can mean a link to health insurance benefits for a family, the ability to pay for childcare services and education, and the opportunity to purchase healthy, nutritious food. Unemployment, on the other hand, can lead to negative health outcomes including a decline in one’s ability to access care, development of depression or other behavioral health issues, or an inability to pay for basic living expenses.

- **Advocate Workforce Initiative (AWI).** The Advocate Health, Workforce Development team originated from a generous grant from JPMorgan Chase in 2015 via a grant entitled the “Advocate Workforce Initiative” (AWI). AWI was created to address high-unemployment rates and employment disparities in the city of Chicago’s most underserved areas. Since the grant completion in 2020, Advocate Health has continued this work by establishing a systemwide Workforce Development team across services areas. This team has created and continues to scale programs to create equitable workplace programs, meeting the talent needs of the organization and building sustainable workforce development programming. These programs include, but are not limited to:
 - **Registered Apprenticeship.** Launched in 2019, Advocate Health has created several apprenticeship models through the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) and the US Department of Labor (DOL) to address urgent talent needs. These programs include a Facilities Maintenance, Millwright, Industrial Electrician, and Culinary Arts apprenticeship in partnership with local colleges. Seven teammates participated in 2024.
 - **Diverse Abilities.** Since 2017, Advocate Health has created a focused effort to source and employ individuals with disabilities while creating a more inclusive hiring

process. To date, Advocate Health has employed 35 individuals through the program.

- **Teammate Success Coaching.** Launched in 2022, this effort addresses social determinants impacting retention by providing complex case management and providing wraparound support to select new teammates from the most vulnerable talent populations. This effort launched with two “Teammate Success Coaches” in South Chicagoland at Christ Medical Center in June 2022 and Central Chicagoland at Illinois Masonic Medical Center in January 2023. A total of 143 teammates participated in 2023.
- **Corporate Internships.** Each summer, Advocate Health Care and Aurora Health Care employs 20+ corporate interns from around the country to introduce college students to careers in HR, Finance, IT, Communications as well as Administration.
- **Community Scholarship.** Starting in 2021, the Advocate Health Community Scholarship Program awards \$5,000 scholarships to ten community members and ten dependents of Advocate Health teammates. In 2024, Advocate Health awarded twenty, \$5,000 scholarships for students across Illinois and Wisconsin that are pursuing STEM-related careers.
- **Historically Black Colleges and University (HBCU).** Starting in 2021, Advocate Health partnered with several HBCUs across the nation to provide sponsorships, scholarships, internships, and mentoring for students enrolled in college programs. Partner schools include Florida A&M (FAMU), Central State University (CSU) and Spelman College. In 2024, our organization celebrated its third-year partnerships with Spelman and CSU and continued with the 2nd year of partnership with FAMU. In 2023, we reached 800 HBCU students.
- **Herzing Upskilling Programs.** Starting in 2021, Advocate Health developed and launched two upskilling programs with Herzing University – ‘Sterile Processing to Surgical Technologist’ and ‘Medical Assistant’. Advocate Health teammates in entry-level roles can enroll in regularly scheduled cohorts as they work through online education and on-site skills training. To date, 60 teammates have enrolled across Illinois and Wisconsin with many more on the way.
- **Workforce Development.** In 2021, AWI and Central Chicagoland Community Health partnered with community colleges and organizations to provide phlebotomy and medical assistant externships for individuals living in underserved, disenfranchised communities. The initiative provided hands-on and workforce development training to 11 individuals from communities with high rates of unemployment. In addition, Advocate Lutheran General Hospital partners closely with Maine East High School and their JumpStart Program. JumpStart is a youth employment program, federally funded through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act based out of Main Township High School District 207. The program serves youth in and out of school with employment and education barriers throughout Northern Cook County with an emphasis on the Des Plaines, Park Ridges, Niles, Morton Grove, and Glenview neighborhoods. Advocate

Lutheran offers working opportunities in various entry-level departments, such as Food and Nutrition Services and Environmental Services. The Community Health Department oversees the orientation process and works with the JumpStart team and hospital staff to ensure that the students are equipped with the proper tools to start their paid internship. From 2018 to 2024 a total of 97 JumpStart youth has had work experiences at Advocate Lutheran General and completed and placed in paid internships in the Food and Nutrition department. In 2024 there was a total of 13 students who gained paid internships and 3 secured permanent employment as a result of their internships.

4. COMMUNITY SAFETY:

Experiencing violence, sexual assault and other forms of trauma can have harmful and lasting consequences for survivors, families and communities including, but not limited to, long-term physical consequences, immediate and chronic psychological issues, health behavior risks and financial costs. For example, the chronic stress associated with feeling unsafe can cause anxiety and depression, and fear of violence can keep people indoors, limiting access to social encounters, exercise, or even healthy foods options.

- **Illinois Advocate Health Forensic Nurse Examiners (FNEs).** FNEs, specially trained and state certified nurse examiners located in Advocate Health hospitals in both Illinois and Wisconsin, provide compassionate, trauma-informed care to sexual assault and domestic violence survivors seeking care in the Emergency Department. These highly trained practitioners perform forensic exams pertaining to sexual assault/abuse, address sexually transmitted infection concerns, collect forensic evidence, testify in court as expert witnesses, and provide access to advocacy and after-care resources—supporting survivors through the entire process. In Illinois, we actively trained and recruited sexual assault nurse examiners to meet the regulatory mandate that went into effect January 2023. In 2024 we trained 29 RNs to support coverage at all Advocate Hospitals in Illinois. We currently have 54 adult/adolescent SANEs with an additional 56 in training. We have 18 Pediatric/Adolescent SANEs with an additional 14 in training. We have developed a regional response to sexual assault victims that will provide 24/7 coverage within 90 minutes of the patient's arrival at our facilities. In 2024 across our Illinois market, 417 adults/adolescents and 235 children <13 years were treated for sexual assault, with an additional 91 children referred for further evaluation to Advocate Children's Hospital Child Protection Team Sexual Abuse Clinic.
- **Southland Rise.** Southland RISE (Resilience Initiative to Strengthen and Empower) is a collaborative uniting the Trauma Recovery Center of Advocate Christ Medical Center in Oak Lawn and the Violence Recovery Program of Hyde Park-based UChicago Medicine (UCM). Inspired by U.S. Senator Dick Durbin's HEAL (Hospital Engagement, Action, Leadership) Initiative, the two hospitals work together and alongside community partners to improve long-term trauma recovery care and mitigate violence-related injury in Southland and on the South Side of Chicago. Through its active leadership role in Southland RISE, Advocate Health champions efforts that increase access to quality care for survivors of intentional violence and strives to build stronger, more resilient communities. Advocate Health's leadership role in Southland RISE had a profoundly

positive impact on South Side communities in 2024. The collaborative marked its 5th anniversary with an all-day community summit to celebrate the progress made through local partnerships and identify ways to continue bolstering violence prevention efforts across the Chicagoland area. Through the Southland RISE Community Violence Prevention Grant Program, 19 South Side community groups received \$150,000 to strengthen their grassroots work around violence prevention and trauma resiliency in 2024. To date, this grant program has provided \$800,000 to over 70 programs supporting youth and families. Southland RISE hospital partners have again renewed their commitment to fund the Southland RISE Community Violence Prevention Grant Program in 2025, with the continued goal of strengthening collaboration between grant receiving organizations. Additional funds were received to support awareness efforts such as the Strides for Peace, Race Against Gun Violence event; to improve communication between street outreach and hospital response staff through cross-professional trainings; and to provide much-needed support to survivors of intentional violence and their families in the form of housing, utility, and food support. Through the Southland RISE Steering Committee, Advocate Health will continue building community partnerships, fostering deeper collaboration with key violence prevention stakeholders, and encouraging continued collaboration between the two hospitals.

- **Advocate Trauma Recovery Center (TRC).** The TRC is a health care-based violence intervention program that provides social and behavioral health services, individual and group therapeutic services, and psychiatric consultation to survivors of intentional crime and/or trauma. The purpose is to aid individuals who have experienced trauma in rebuilding, restoring and strengthening their sense of safety by ending the cycle of violence. The TRC provides access to trauma-informed care by acknowledging how past and present traumatic experiences and stress may impact the individuals and families served—responding to the unique needs of each survivor and their family. The TRC program began at Advocate Christ Medical Center in 2019. In late 2022, the TRC program expanded its services to Advocate Condell Medical Center and Advocate Illinois Masonic through support from the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority. The TRC services have expanded from Cook County, Will County, Kankakee County and DuPage County to also serve Lake County, Kane County, Kendall County, McHenry County. The program now has Trauma Outreach Workers that are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. In 2024, a total of 2,861 people were served by the TRC program. The top three groups serviced, by race and ethnicity, were Black or African American (62.6%), Hispanic or Latino (19.5 %) and White Non-Latino or Caucasian (14.4 %).
- **Violence Reduction.** The Trauma Recovery Center has partnered with Communities Partnering 4 Peace (CP4P) to better serve our communities that are impacted by gun violence. CP4P is part of Metropolitan Family Services; they work with street outreach organizations that cover 28 communities in the Chicagoland area. TRC teammates are trained by CP4P to identify high risk for retaliation situations and then to partner with the street outreach organization in the neighborhood in which the incident occurred. Street Outreach will work within the neighborhood to prevent retaliation and partner

with members of the TRC to help the patient in their healing process and do our best to ensure safety upon discharge.

- **Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) Training.** Through staff meetings, student education, and specialized training as requested by Advocate Health teams, the Trauma Informed Care (TIC) Manager located at Aurora Sinai Medical Center in Milwaukee provided a fundamental overview of trauma-informed care to teammates in various roles across the system. The training provides an overview of the Four Rs of Trauma-informed Care (realize, recognize, respond, and resist re-traumatization) and historical trauma as a factor impacting a person's lifetime wellness. In 2024 there were a total of 9 department trauma-informed care trainings for Advocate Health Teammates. The “Trauma-Informed Leadership” digital learning module was launched in March 2024, in addition to the existing TIC digital learning modules launched in 2023. Introduction to Trauma-Informed Care Practices had 1,426 Midwest (MW) Teammates enrollments, Trauma-Informed Communication had 714 MW teammate enrollments, Trauma-informed Leadership had 56 MW teammate enrollments, totaling 2,196 trained teammates.

5. HOUSING:

The impact of housing on health is widely understood. Environmental factors in homes contributes to respiratory conditions like asthma and lead poisoning, while those who are “cost burdened” because they spend more than 30% of their household income on housing may lack the ability to spend money on other necessities like food or prescription medications. Homelessness is also closely connected with medical conditions such as HIV infection, alcohol and drug abuse, mental illness, tuberculosis, and other conditions ([Center for Disease Control and Prevention](#)). It is for this reason that Advocate Health has focused on helping people navigate to safe environments to heal.

- **Southland Housing and Health Partnership:** Southland Housing and Health Partnership is a collaboration between Advocate Health Care and local social service agencies collaborating to provide medical care, emergency housing services, and short-term emergency assistance to families who are experiencing homelessness in Cook County. Advocate Christ in Oak Lawn coordinates services through a specialized community health worker- housing navigator that identifies and bridges the needs of homeless patients with trusted local social service partners. Medical respite beds are specifically developed for the homeless and emergency assistance services are provided by BEDS Plus. Respond Now provides street outreach to homeless patients as collaborative partners. Enhanced staffing at the hospital and at social service agencies help improve care coordination and meet the needs of patients who need shelter in our target population. The housing navigator is a new role supported by the health system who serves as a dedicated community health worker and a member of the care team. The navigator coordinates care and supports homeless patients’ needs within the emergency room and hospital inpatient discharged from the hospital system. In 2024,

the AHC teams in Cook County placed 78 unhoused individuals and families in emergency shelters or medical respite in Cook County.

- **The Carol Street Apartments.** The Advocate Lutheran General Care Management Department plans safe discharges for patients recovering from hospitalization and who have no housing resources. The department manages the Advocate Lutheran Carol Street apartments. Located on the hospital's campus, these apartments are available for rent on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis. The apartments are used by patients that are actively getting services on campus, i.e., chemotherapy, radiation, etc., and are also available for family members of inpatients that do not live near the hospital. Financial assistance is granted to patients and families that demonstrate financial hardship. In 2024, the program served 14 individuals.

6. FOOD SECURITY:

Over 15 million households in the U.S., face some level of food insecurity. This statistic hits close to home for many of the communities that Advocate Health serves. Food security and access to fresh meat and produce has been identified as one of the primary social drivers of health affecting health outcomes. Food deserts in parts of Advocate Health's service area create barriers for people to access healthy food. Advocate Health teams continued food distribution plans to address food insecurity by collaborating with community service groups and faith partners. Examples of various programs used to distribute food include Pop-up Farmers Markets, Food Farmacy, Hospital Based food pantries and community food distributions. Below are some examples of the programs that took place in 2024:

- **Food Security Programs.** Since 2018, Advocate Health's Illinois hospitals have served over 30,000 families with 1.3 million pounds of fresh food through programs like mobile pantries, food pharmacies, hospital pantries, and community garden donations. In 2024, the Healthy Living Food Farmacy distributed over 265,000 pounds of food to more than 12,000 patients at Trinity, Christ, and South Suburban hospitals. Advocate Children's Hospital expanded its emergency food distribution to three clinics, serving 771 families with 5,000 pounds of food. In Central Chicagoland, the Healthy Schools program supported 50 families monthly with produce boxes and cooking demos, while new and existing hospital pantries provided non-perishable goods to food-insecure patients. Good Samaritan launched a new food pantry partnership with Northern Illinois Food Bank and served nearly 6,000 household members through a mobile pantry. In the North Region, Condell's Rx Mobile Pantry served 2,250 families with 93,000 pounds of food, showing measurable health improvements. Sherman Hospital's garden donated 143 pounds of produce to diabetes patients. Across Illinois, over 29,000 individuals were served and more than 369,000 pounds of food were distributed in 2024.
- **Sherman Natural Prairie and Community Garden (SNPCG).** Advocate Sherman Hospital is addressing food insecurity by donating produce harvested from the Master Gardeners (collaboration with University of Illinois Extension Office) and excess produce from

community garden beds through the on-campus community garden. In 2024, 305 pounds of produce was harvested and donated to the Elgin Community College Spartan Student Food Pantry and clients of Food for Greater Elgin Food Pantry.

IV. Addressing Community Health Needs with Community Partners

Advocate is working locally and nationally with many prominent community partners to address social determinants of health. Examples of these efforts include the following:

- **Metopio.** To support hospitals in conducting CHNA's, Advocate Health purchased access to Metopio, a CHNA data tool. Metopio is a software and services company that is grounded in the philosophy that communities are connected through places and people. Metopio's tools and visualizations use data to reveal valuable, interconnected factors that influence health outcomes in different locations. Metopio offers data tailored to support all Advocate Health Care hospitals with identifying health inequities in communities. Metopio uses the most current data sources and creates tools and indices that focus on the communities within the Advocate Health services areas. The data can be used to improve health access focused on specific regions, communities, and hospital services areas. Below is a description of two important indices found in Metopio.
 - **Hardship Index Description.** The Hardship Index was originally developed by Richard P. Nathan and Charles F. Adams, Jr. in 1976 to compare socioeconomic conditions between communities. It is highly correlated with other measures of economic hardship, such as labor force statistics, and with poor health outcomes. The index combines the following topics into a single composite value on a scale of 0-100:
 - Crowded housing (more than one person per room)
 - Poverty rate for households
 - Unemployment rate
 - Adults with a high school degree or equivalent
 - Age dependency ratio (% of residents who are <18 or >65 years old, compared to those of working age)
 - Per-capita income

Higher values indicate greater hardship and correlate higher with poor health outcomes. The index does not preserve the ratio between two places, so if one place has twice the hardship index of another, we cannot say that it experiences "twice as much hardship" as another place.

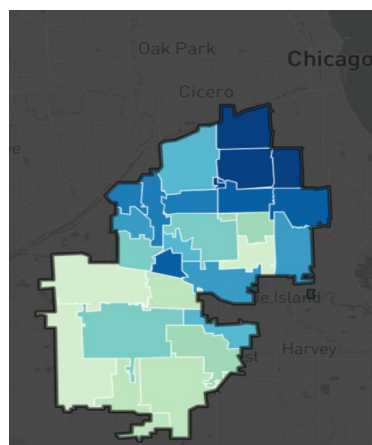
- **Social Vulnerability Index.** The Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) was developed by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to help public health officials and emergency response planners identify and map the communities

that will most likely need support before, during, and after a hazardous event, such as a natural disaster, disease outbreak, or chemical spill. SVI indicates relative vulnerability by ranking places on 15 social factors that can be divided into 4 categories:

- Socioeconomic
- Household Composition & Disability
- Minority Status & Language
- Housing Type & Transportation

The original score is on a scale from 0-1, but it is multiplied by 100 for readability on Metopio. A higher score represents a community more vulnerable to a hazardous event. Detailed documentation is available from the CDC [here](#).

Advocate Christ Primary Service Area (PSA) and Hardship Index Map 2019-2023



Source: Metopio, American Community Survey, 2023.

The example map above identifies the 27 communities within Advocate Christ's PSA (882,555 residents), and it highlights, in dark blue, the communities that are experiencing greater hardship within the Community Health specific, primary service area. The map incorporates unemployment, age dependency, education, per capita income, crowded housing, and poverty into a single score that allows comparison between geographies.

All Advocate hospitals in Illinois incorporate a similar map in their community health needs assessment that serves as an instrumental tool in the implementation planning process. These maps can help focus efforts where they are most needed. To learn more about the 2022 CHNA cycle data assessment results for each hospital, visit [Hospital CHNA Reports Implementation Plans Progress Reports | Advocate Health Care](#).

Advocate Christ PSA Zip Codes with the Highest Hardship Index 2019-2023

Community Name	Zip Code	Hardship Index
Advocate Christ Medical	PSA	60.9
West Englewood	60636	91.6
Chicago Lawn	60632	86.6
Brighton Park	60629	86.2
Auburn Gresham	60620	81.4

Source: Metopio, American Community Survey, 2023.

- **Health Care Anchor Network (HAN).** Advocate Health is a founding member of the Healthcare Anchor Network which has expanded to include 70 other area health system and hospital partners. Advocate Health has significant economic and human resources across its service area as the largest employer in the Milwaukee area and the fourth largest in Chicago. To leverage these resources, in 2019, Advocate Health announced a commitment to invest \$50 million to help address the economic, racial, and environmental disparities that impact community health outcomes and decrease health inequity. Additionally, Advocate Health is committed to driving community health and well-being through its inclusive, local hiring and local purchasing strategies and initiatives.

Advocate Health, in alignment with HAN strategy, has launched two significant initiatives to address health equity in the communities it serves.

- **Advocate Health \$50M Investment Pledge.** Advocate Health is among the first health systems in the country to make a significant commitment to investing in targeted community development. The anchor strategy investments are targeted to enhance critical services such as affordable or supportive housing and food access in communities that lead to improved health and demonstrated downstream benefits to our patients and the community. Initially, the investment work was done in partnership with Community Development Financing Institutions (CDFIs) to fund projects. Although not a profit maximizing activity, this investment commitment will result in a return of the principal to the organization with interest in ensuring a sustainable investment capacity for reinvestment over time. To date, investments have supported projects that focus on various areas such as nutrition, healthy food access, affordable housing units and more. There are nearly 710 affordable housing units that have been developed or remodeled. A Community Investment Strategy Team was formed to plan and guide the work—consisting of Finance and Treasury, Community Health and Operations teams to develop the scope and process. The team is responsible for deploying \$50 million in loans to CDFIs across our footprint by the end of 2025. To date, the team has completed five contracts with local CDFIs (representing 77% of our 2025 goal) to drive development of

affordable housing, food pantry space, Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) expansion and business loans to minority and women owned small businesses in vulnerable neighborhoods:

\$25M with Local Initiative Support Corporation (LISC)

\$5M with IFF

\$5M with Generation Growth Capital Fund IV

\$2.5M with Chicago Community Loan Fund (CCLF)

\$1M with Wisconsin Women's Business Initiative Corporation (WWBIC)

- **Advocate Health Purchasing Commitment.** The commitment, designed by the Healthcare Anchor Network (HAN) in partnership with Health Care Without Harm and Practice Greenhealth, is focused on increasing spending with underrepresented businesses and is inclusive of Veteran Business Enterprises, local and employee-owned, cooperatively owned and/or nonprofit-owned enterprises. The group plans to collectively increase spending by at least \$1 billion over a five-year period to impact the communities we serve.

Throughout unprecedented times with supply chain challenges, securing consistent and reliable suppliers yielded a universal challenge. Continuing to work through the impacts from the pandemic, we are diligent in developing strategies and programs that provide equal opportunities for all Suppliers and expect our Suppliers to uphold the same standards of non-discrimination. We have increased our suppliers who report Tier 2 spend and work to add more. Our organization recognizes the importance of fairness and opportunity and is committed to ensuring that they are an integral part of sourcing construction suppliers.

There are several additional examples of efforts to strengthen corporate options through human resources, supply chain, environmental stewardship and investment policies that impact the social determinants of health in the communities served by Advocate Health.

- **Environmental Leadership.** Advocate Health's commitment to environmental sustainability is rooted in supporting a healthy environment for our patients, teammates and the communities we are privileged to serve. We recognize that the health of our people and the strength of our economy are tied to clean air, energy security, reliable food systems, and strong, resilient communities. As Advocate Health works to reduce the environmental and health impacts of health care, its environmental stewardship practices ease the burden of health care costs both directly (lower energy costs) and indirectly (lower environmentally related disease burden) and helps to save resources for future generations. *Lead on Environmental Sustainability* is one of Advocate Health's 6 strategic pledges, and our environmental sustainability work is governed by 5 core commitments:

- > 50% reduction in Scope 1 & 2 greenhouse gas emissions by 2030

- By 2030, we will achieve carbon neutrality and strive for net zero carbon by 2035.
- Achieve Net Zero by 2050 = offsetting and removing all GHG emissions
- Reduce Chemicals of Concern throughout our system
- Build a Climate Resilience Strategy that ensures continuous operations and centers our most vulnerable community members

Through our membership and participation in several sustainability leadership councils and groups, we are collaboratively addressing multiple sustainability issues, including safer chemicals in furnishings and medical products, climate resiliency, clinical plastics recycling, and environmentally preferable and local purchasing. Our leadership is spurring the movement toward healthier and more sustainable practices throughout the health care sector and in the wider marketplace. Current partnerships include:

- Healthcare Anchor Network and the Impact Purchasing Commitment
- Health Care Climate Council
- Healthcare Plastics Recycling Coalition – Healthcare Facility Advisory Board
- Practice Greenhealth
- Sustainable Leadership Purchasing Council Collaborative for Healthcare Action to Reduce MedTech Emissions (CHARME)
- Ceres Policy Network
- The Cool Food Pledge

In 2024, we launched more than 10 different task forces that are helping to integrate sustainability into the way we design strategy, operate our facilities, and provide care. We are crafting an energy decarbonization plan that will move us to 100% renewable electricity by 2030 and significantly reduce our operational energy use while also driving significant cost reductions that we can then reinvest in patient care. We've developed a supply chain decarbonization strategy that will build sustainability into our sourcing process and engage our suppliers and service providers in reaching our net zero target. And we are working with Social Impact and our clinical leadership to prioritize a set of key initiatives to drive innovation, reduce our environmental footprint, provide less carbon-intensive care, and support community resilience and well-being.

- **National Recognition.** Advocate Health is consistently recognized for its commitment and achievements in sustainable health care. Advocate Health was recognized as a national leader in environmental sustainability by Practice Greenhealth, winning the "System for Change Award," for 2024 sustainability performance - reflecting the enterprise-level commitment to deeply embedding sustainability within our operations. In addition to the system-level award, three of our Illinois hospitals were listed as the Top 25 sustainable

hospitals in the nation. All Advocate Health Care hospitals placed within the top 20% of sustainability performers nationwide.

- Several of our IL hospitals are Energy Star (ESTAR) certified, which means they are in the top 25% of energy performers nationwide, which helps to significantly lower our contribution to air pollution and climate change, ESTAR certified hospitals include:
 - Advocate Christ Medical Center, Oak Lawn, Illinois
 - Advocate Good Samaritan Hospital, Downers Grove, Illinois
 - Advocate Illinois Masonic Medical Center, Chicago, Illinois
- **Social Impact.** In collaboration with the Social Impact team, Environmental Sustainability launched the Sustainable Food Systems Task Force. The task force is charged with increasing healthy food access and addressing food insecurity within our communities, re-envisioning our hospital menus with plant-forward meals to better support health, reducing our food-based greenhouse gas emissions, and building a resilient local food economy centered on local farmers and food producers. In 2024, 20% of our total food purchases in Illinois were sourced from local farmers and producers.
- **Sustainable Buildings and Energy Security.** Sustainability, safety, and efficiency are core elements of Advocate Health's Building and Operations pillar.
 - In 2024, Advocate Health initiated a suite of energy reduction and onsite renewables projects which will culminate in over \$5.1M in annual utility expense reduction, while also reducing our emissions by more than 22,000 MTCO₂e –equivalent to the electricity used by 4,383 homes in a year. The renewables projects will also result in an estimated \$24.1 to \$54.2M in avoided healthcare costs from fossil-fuel related pollution¹.
 - Advocate Health Care pursues Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification for all new major buildings and *The Healthy Spaces Roadmap* certification for all other applicable construction projects to ensure sustainability in all its renovations and projects. The Healthy Space Roadmap is an internal self-developed checklist based on LEED and several other leading sustainability certifications programs for projects not suited for LEED certification.
 - In 2024, Advocate Health across Illinois and Wisconsin transitioned 554,409 MWh of its electricity load to renewable energy or 13% of our estimated energy consumption, avoiding thousands of tons of carbon dioxide and other

¹ <https://www.epa.gov/statelocalenergy/estimating-health-benefits-kilowatt-hour-energy-efficiency-and-renewable-energy>

pollutants. Additionally, we have built 1,000 MWh of onsite solar in our efforts to reduce utility costs, build resiliency, and reduce pollution from fossil fuels.

- **Waste Reduction.** Advocate Health's sustainable operations include waste minimization and recycling.
 - Advocate Health is a medical equipment and supply donation partner of Project C.U.R.E., the world's leading medical supply distribution organization benefiting resource-limited areas across the globe. In 2024, Advocate Health donated 79,600 LBS of medical supplies and equipment to Project C.U.R.E.
 - In 2024, IL hospitals diverted 4,018 tons of materials for recycling, equivalent to the weight of 803 adult elephants.
- **Addressing Chemicals of Concern.** Our commitment to human environmental health is demonstrated through the products we choose to use. As part of our commitment to the Healthcare Anchor Network's Impact Purchasing Commitment, we have committed to transitioning away from medical products that contain the toxic chemicals polyvinyl chloride (PVC) and di-ethylhexyl phthalate (DEHP). To date we have nearly eliminated the use of products containing these chemicals from breast pumps and accessories and patient exam gloves. We continue to deploy safer chemicals strategies throughout our system. Ninety-nine percent of furniture/furnishing purchases in Illinois are free of 5 priority chemicals of concern that threaten human and environmental health.
- **Resilience.** Advocate Health is committed to creating and implementing a Resilience Plan that ensures business continuity, evaluates physical infrastructure, centers our most vulnerable populations, and equips our clinicians to prepare for extreme weather and climate-exacerbated health impacts while innovating adaptation and mitigation strategies to ensure continuous operations and support for our communities. Towards this goal, we have included the consideration of climate-exacerbated risks in our Hazard Vulnerability Analysis, identified key threats as part of our enterprise risk assessment process, and mapped the intersection of climate impacts and our most vulnerable communities.
- **Teammate Engagement.** In 2024, Advocate Health launched a task force centered on uniting teammates with community partners in meaningful service opportunities that improve personal, community, and planetary health. In its first year, the task force collaborated with the Corporate Social Responsibility team on 6 community partner projects focused on green space, neighborhood clean-ups, and food security.

Community Engagement/Collaborative Assessments

Advocate Health works to leverage resources and maximize community engagement by building and strengthening community partnerships with health departments and other diverse

community organizations. One of the primary values of Advocate Health's Community Health Department is collaboration with partners, preferably through a collective impact model. To align initiatives with local health departments and their community health priorities, all Advocate Health hospitals collaborate with their respective health departments during the CHNA and health improvement (implementation) plan cycles. One such notable collaboration for Advocate Health began in the 2017-2019 CHNA cycle, as noted below.

The Alliance for Health Equity. Advocate Health Care, Amita Health and the Illinois Public Health Institute (IPHI) were the three founding organizations of the Health Impact Collaborative of Cook County (HICCC). These organizations invited health departments and all Cook County nonprofit hospitals to join them in creating what is now one of the largest CHNA and community health improvement collaboratives in the country. The initial participating hospitals and health departments worked together to design a shared leadership model and collaborative infrastructure to support community-engaged planning partnerships and strategic alignment of implementation plans to facilitate more effective and sustainable community health improvement.

In late 2017, HICCC merged with the Healthy Chicago Hospitals Collaborative to create The Alliance for Health Equity (The Alliance). IPHI serves as the backbone organization for the collaborative and the hospitals provide funding for the shared assessment and community health improvement planning work.

In 2019, the Alliance grew to include 37 nonprofit and public hospitals, six local health departments and more than 100 community organizations. In 2022, the Alliance completed a collaborative Community Health Needs Assessments (CHNA) for Chicago and Suburban Cook County. The report builds on the previous assessments and allows partners to identify strategic priorities that they can collectively address to improve community health. A copy of the report and the appendices can be found at this link [2022 CHNA Report - Alliance for Health Equity \(allhealthequity.org\)](https://allhealthequity.org/2022-CHNA-Report)

Primary and secondary data from a diverse range of sources were utilized for robust data analysis and to identify community health needs in Chicago and Suburban Cook County. For the 2022 CHNA, the Alliance for Health Equity built on the previous collaborative CHNA work (2019). Advocate Health Care continues to be actively involved in leadership of The Alliance partnership, serving on the steering committee. AHC hospitals, as well as the other member hospitals, provide monetary support for the collaborative's work and support the cost of staff and oversight provided by the Illinois Public Health Institute. Additionally, AHC has been involved in leading this assessment work as an active member of the Steering Committee, providing financial support to the Alliance each year.

The priority areas selected by The Alliance include social and structural determinants of health, access to care, mental health and substance use disorders, chronic health conditions, injury including violence, and maternal/fetal health. All participating hospitals selected some of the

priorities to address in the areas served. There are multiple work groups addressing the priority areas and AHC staff serve on most of the work groups.

2022 Collaborative Assessment and Health Improvement Plan Partners

As previously mentioned, Advocate Health hospitals leverage local partnerships as a strong component of all community health initiatives. The following chart shows the local health department(s) and other community organizations with whom each Advocate Health hospital partnered in the community health needs assessment (CHNA) and community health improvement planning for the 2022 CHNA and are actively continuing for the 2025 cycle. The partners listed below were instrumental in the data analysis, both qualitative and quantitative, and they were also involved in the strategy planning process to create alignment across the county.

Hospital	2022 Collaborative Assessment/ Health Improvement Plan	Partners
Advocate Christ Medical Center	Alliance for Health Equity	Chicago Department of Public Health, Cook County Health Department, 4 Regional Health Departments, 37 Hospitals, 100+ Stakeholders/CBOs
Advocate Condell Medical Center	Lake County IPLAN	Health Department, Hospitals, CBOs
Advocate Good Samaritan Hospital	DuPage County Health Department IPLAN	Health Department, Hospitals, CBOs
Advocate Good Shepherd	McHenry County IPLAN Collaborative; Lake County Health Department IPLAN; Healthier Barrington Coalition Study	Health Departments, Hospitals, CBOs, Mental Health Board
Advocate Illinois Masonic Medical Center	Alliance for Health Equity	Chicago Department of Public Health, Cook County Health Department, 4 Regional Health Departments, 37 Hospitals, 100+ Stakeholders/CBOs
Advocate Lutheran General Hospital	Alliance for Health Equity	Chicago Department of Public Health, Cook County Health Department, 4 Regional Health Departments, 37 Hospitals, 100+ Stakeholders/CBOs, Healthier Des Plaines, Niles and Park Ridge members
Advocate Sherman Hospital	Kane County IPLAN Collaborative, McHenry County IPLAN Collaborative	Health Departments, Hospitals, CBOs, Mental Health Board
Advocate South Suburban Hospital	Alliance for Health Equity	Chicago Department of Public Health, Cook County Health Department, 4 Regional Health Departments, 37 Hospitals, 100+ Stakeholders/CBOs
Advocate Trinity Hospital	Alliance for Health Equity	Chicago Department of Public Health, Cook County Health Department, 4 Regional

		Health Departments, 37 Hospitals, 100+ Stakeholders/CBOs
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Other Community Benefits

In addition to the provision of programs and services to address access and health inequities, Advocate also devotes considerable staff and resources to other efforts that benefit the community and that align with the reporting categories of the Illinois Community Benefits Act.

Training Future Health Professionals. To further the tradition of providing medical education to undergraduate and graduate medical students, nursing students and students in other health professions, Advocate Health Care has developed long-term academic affiliations with all major universities in the Chicago metropolitan area for the education and training of students in undergraduate medical education (UME), graduate medical education (GME), nursing undergraduate and graduate education and in numerous other allied health professional fields.

- **Medical Education (Undergraduate Medical Education [UME]/Graduate Medical Education [GME]/Post-Graduate [CME] Medical Education.** The Advocate Health Medical Education Department’s mission is to train the next generation of physicians through undergraduate (UME) and graduate medical education (GME), and to continue the development of Advocate Health physicians through continuing medical education (CME).

Advocate Health is accredited by the [Interprofessional Continuing Education \(IPCE\) | Joint Accreditation](#) to provide continuing medical education (CME) for physicians. Advocate Health’s CME program provides professional development through year-round scheduling and planning of accredited courses, seminars and meetings for AH and non-AH physicians and health care professionals in the region. Advocate’s medical staff share their expertise through grand rounds, mortality and morbidity conferences, and enduring material—as well as single activities addressing a variety of clinical and research topics. In 2024, Advocate documented 187,365 learners and provided 995 activities to over six different health professions ranging from physicians, nurses, pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, physician assistants, social workers and more.

- **Nursing Education.** Undergraduate and graduate (APN/NP/management) nursing education occurs at ten AHC hospitals and support centers, many Advocate Medical Group sites, and Advocate Home Health-Hospice. Notably, eight AHC hospitals have earned Magnet Recognition from the American Nurse Credentialing Center (ANCC), including Advocate Children’s, Advocate Condell, Advocate Christ, Advocate Good Samaritan, Advocate Good Shepherd, Advocate Illinois Masonic, Advocate Lutheran General and Advocate Sherman. Magnet status represents hospital-wide teamwork and dedication to creating a positive environment, which helps attract the best physicians and nurses, resulting in better overall patient care.

- **Allied Health Education.** Advocate Health Care is committed to teaching students in a broad range of specialties. These students come from local universities and colleges with whom Advocate Health Care has contracted to provide education. Students are provided a clinical environment in which to learn in over twenty health care disciplines/fields, including, but not limited to: pharmaceutical; cardio diagnostics; cardiac rehabilitation; radiology, nuclear medicine, MRI and X-ray; radiation therapy; exercise physiology; physical, occupational, speech and recreational therapy; psychiatry; behavioral health; respiratory; audiology; pathology; podiatry; phlebotomy; nutrition/dietary; and dentistry (dentistry is only available through Advocate Illinois Masonic).

Several Advocate Health Care hospitals provide emergency medical technician (EMT) education from basic through paramedic level. In fact, some of these AHC facilities serve as the lead hospital in their counties/service areas, providing education, standardization of protocols of care among all hospitals (non-AHC included) and EMS responders, and direction of county-wide emergency medical services in response to community-based, mass injury/casualty disasters. Multiple Advocate Health enterprise and AHC hospital departments also provide learning environments for undergraduate and graduate students in Public Health and Health Information Management.

- **Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE).** Advocate Health Care’s spiritual leaders oversee a nationally accredited CPE program. The program provides opportunities for seminary students, chaplains and local faith leaders to grow and develop self-awareness and spiritual care ministry skills. In 2024, a total of 14 CPE students were supervised in Illinois, not including an additional 4 students in Wisconsin.

Volunteer Services. As part of its community programs, Advocate Health engages community volunteers to strengthen hospital and community initiatives. These programs and opportunities are described below.

- **Volunteers from the Community.** Each year, volunteers from the community share their time and talents through service at Advocate’s hospitals, Advocate Medical Group and Advocate at Home, and in their own way, further Advocate’s commitment to providing excellent health care. In 2024, Advocate Health Care managed to open volunteer services and welcomed a total of 2,279 community volunteers that engaged patients, families and staff in a variety of activities, some of which were: providing information desk services to visitors; clerical support to staff; serving customers in hospital gift and resale shops; offering compassionate concern to patients and their loved ones in multiple hospital areas, such as the Emergency Department, Intensive Care Unit, Surgery Waiting Room, Post-Anesthesia Care and Nursery Intensive Care Units; assisting with community health screenings and blood drive events; providing cheerful service to patients by delivering flowers, mail and newspapers; and providing support services in the hospital that have libraries and/or wellness centers.

Volunteers from the community also give their time and talents to various other programs and fundraising activities. Members of Advocate Health Care's hospital auxiliaries plan and engage in fundraising efforts to support not only services in the hospital but also community-focused programs and services. Students from the community volunteer their time to take care of children in the Pediatric Developmental Center located on Advocate Illinois Masonic's campus so that parents can meet with the center's staff to learn the skills necessary to work with their children with special needs so they can reach their full potential. The Hearts for Hope group at Advocate Children's—Oak Lawn is comprised of grateful parents, concerned families and caring community members who support the mission of the hospital. The volunteers ensure they have a presence in the hospital by positively impacting family-centered care, as well as working to raise funds and awareness through philanthropic events and activities benefiting Advocate Children's.

Advocate Health Teammates Community Service.

In 2024, Advocate Health launched its Advocate "Serves" volunteer initiative across the enterprise. Advocate Health teammates (employees) and physicians are encouraged to volunteer with community partner organizations in our service areas that align with our Community and Social Impact strategic priorities including food security, employment and housing. There are four signature "Serves" events annually: January (MLK Month of Service); April (National Volunteer Month); September (Season of Purpose); and November/December (Holiday Cheer). Last year, Advocate Health teammates donated hundreds of service hours to community organizations such as the Greater Chicago Food Depository, Project C.U.R.E., Special Olympics MedFest, United Way April Food Day and Advocate Health's Food Farmacy.

Advocate Health teammates devote work time volunteering to dozens of community boards, committees, councils, task forces and coalitions, using their talents to support a variety of community-based organizations. An example of associate volunteerism is Advocate Good Samaritan's Vice President of Support Operations, and the President of Medical Staff devote time to serve on the DuPage Health Coalition's board—DuPage Health coalition is an organization that links uninsured and undocumented individuals to primary and specialty healthcare and insurance. Yet another example of associate volunteerism is Advocate Trinity Hospital's President and Advocate Health's Regional Vice President time devoted to the South Side Healthy Community Organization, a community coalition focused on improving health access on the south side of Chicago.

System and Site Accountability for Community Health. Advocate Health has taken several steps to assure system and site accountability for and alignment of community health improvement efforts. These actions include developing a governance and departmental infrastructure at the sites and system levels to lead and support efforts, and to include Advocate Health's ample clinical expertise in developing and sustaining evidence-based programs that measurably impact/improve community health.

Engaging System Board in Support of Community Health Vision. As the function accountable for Advocate Health’s system wide CHNA process, CHNA Report and Implementation Plan development and execution, as well as community benefits regulatory reporting, the Community Health Department provides updates at least annually to the Advocate Health Care Network Board. The Advocate Health Care Network Board is responsible for the adoption of community health strategy.

Expanded Role of Governing Councils in Community Health. Community Health is strongly integrated into Advocate Health’s governance structures. Community Health Councils, comprised of community experts and hospital leaders, have been developed at each of the Advocate Health hospitals. These councils are co-led by the hospital community health leader and a hospital Governing Council member. A minimum of 50% of the council members for the 2022 CHNA Report and 2023-2025 Community Health Implementation Plan cycles were community representatives with a focus on people who represented underserved and vulnerable populations. Dependent on the hospital, the councils meet three or four times during the year.

Hospital community health staff analyzed and presented primary and secondary community health data to the hospitals’ Community Health Councils. The council members identified the hospital service areas’ significant health needs, subsequently employing consensus-based, priority-setting processes to determine the needs upon which to focus. As part of the prioritization process, the councils scanned hospital and community challenges and assets, as well as potential partnerships with other organizations that might result in larger health improvement impact.

To learn more about the 2022 CHNA cycle data assessment results for each hospital, visit [Hospital CHNA Reports Implementation Plans Progress Reports | Advocate Health Care](#).

Engaging System Clinical Service Lines to Expand Their Focus on Community Health. Advocate Health is viewed as a leader in the population health management arena. An early adopter of managing care across populations, Advocate Health has significant success in improving health outcomes while decreasing or maintaining cost of care delivery.

Advocate Health’s Community Health Department has intentionally aligned with Advocate population health leaders and Advocate Health service lines. This alignment assures that members of the communities Advocate serves, and our patients receive community-based interventions, as well as education and programming that aligns with their health needs. Community programs are tailored to meet the specific health needs identified in a community or a specific population.

Many of the examples of education and programming aligned with population health and service line development have already been discussed in other sections of this plan. All Advocate Health hospitals, for example, are participating in local community behavioral health

and substance abuse collaboratives, following Advocate Health's integrated approach to implementation. Several examples of the Behavioral Health initiatives are provided below.

- **Warm Handoff Program.** Three Advocate Health Care hospitals, Advocate Condell Medical Center, Advocate Good Shepherd Hospital and Advocate Sherman Hospital work in partnership with Gateway Foundation, a community-based addiction medicine treatment provider, to implement an evidence-based model to screen and assess patients coming to the hospital for substance use. The Warm Handoff program integrates a full-time credentialed engagement specialist employed by Gateway Foundation into the hospital ED team to assess and counsel patients with substance use disorder, and then assists with linking them to treatment. A Gateway Foundation-employed recovery coach on the team also provides support to patients as they transition into treatment. In 2024, the Gateway engagement specialists at these three hospitals completed patient encounters with 901 patients and 286 (32 percent) were connected and placed in substance use treatment.
- **Narcan Accessibility** Community health staff joined the McHenry County Department of Health (MCDH) and other harm reduction agencies for national Fentanyl Awareness Day on April 29, 2024. Teams spanned out throughout the county to train community residents how to use nasal Narcan and distributed Narcan and Fentanyl testing strips. A total of 62 boxes of Narcan, 30 fentanyl tests and 13 xylazine were distributed in McHenry County that day. In McHenry County, four new Narcan vending machines have been purchased by the MCDH and placed at the local community college, a local FQHC, a sober bar and at a non-profit immigrant support organization. Fentanyl strips and Narcan are available for free at these machines and MCDH staff monitor and restock the machines.

V. Communities Served

Service Area

Advocate Health Care's primary service area, in Illinois, is comprised of the Chicago Metropolitan Six-County Area, including Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry and Will counties.

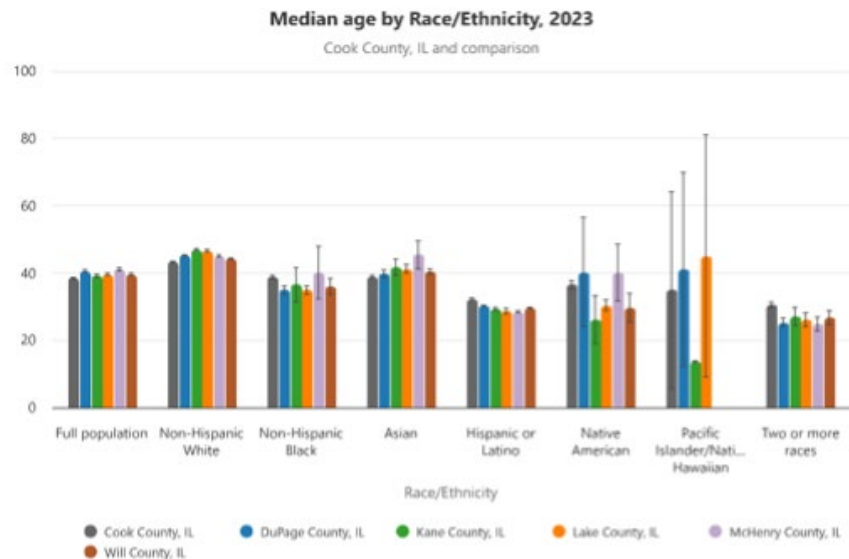
Demographic Characteristics - Chicago Metropolitan Six-County Area

Population. The Chicago Metropolitan counties with the greatest population are Cook (includes city of Chicago) at over 5M, DuPage at 920K, Lake at 709K, and Will at 697K. Kane and McHenry counties continue to be the less populated counties at 515K and 311K, respectively.

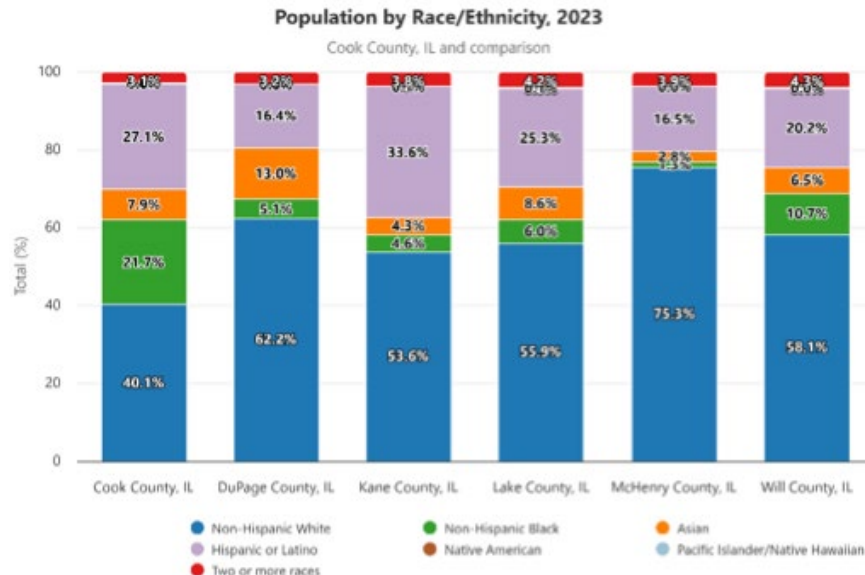
Chicago Metropolitan Six-County Area –		
County	2023 Population	(%) Change
Cook	5,087,072	1.56
DuPage	921,213	1.74
Kane	514,982	0.24
Lake	708,760	1.55
McHenry	312,800	0.48
Will	700,728	2.77
Chicagoland Six-County Area	8,245,555 total	1.39 average

Source: Metopio, American Community Survey, 2023; Decennial Census 2010-2020.

Age. The counties with the lowest median age are Cook County (38.4 years), Kane(39.1), Will and Lake Counties (39.6 years). When compared to all racial and ethnic groups, the Hispanic or Latino population have the lowest median age for all six counties. The Non-Hispanic White population have the highest median age for all counties. Due to confounding variables, the life-expectancy is also the lowest in Cook County (77.4years) when compared to the other counties in the Advocate Health Care service area. DuPage(81.3), and Lake(80.4) County are the only two counties with life expectancy rate over 80 years of age. (American Community Survey, 2020-2022).



Source: Metopio, American Community Survey, 2023.



Source: Metopio, American Community Survey, 2023.

Ethnic/Racial. The following tables display the racial distribution of the metropolitan area. McHenry County has the largest non-Hispanic White population (75.3%), Cook County has the largest non-Hispanic Black population (21.7%), DuPage has the largest Asian or Pacific Islander population (13.0%), and the Hispanic or Latino population make up 33.6percent of the Kane County population. In Illinois, the non-Hispanic White population remains the largest population overall (60%) followed by the Hispanic or Latino population (18.6%).

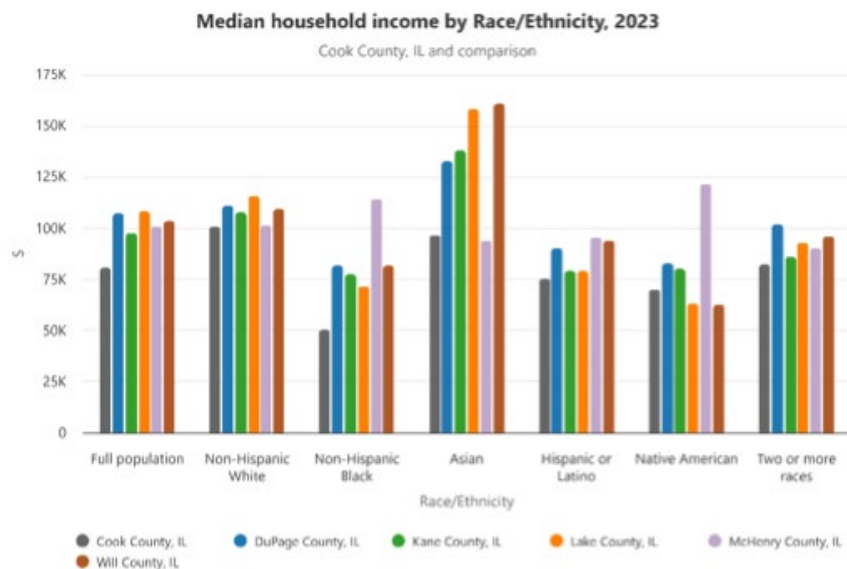
When compared to the counties in Advocate Health’s service area in Illinois, Cook County has the highest poverty rate (13.3%), the highest percent of residents with Medicaid coverage (22.3%) and the highest percent of uninsured (7.8%) residents. Cook County is also the largest, more diverse county. Kane County is the second county with the highest poverty rate (8.2%) and Kane County with the second highest uninsured rate (7.7%). McHenry County has the lowest poverty rate (6.2%) when compared to all other counties. McHenry County has the highest percentage of Medicare coverage (17.63%).

Chicago Metropolitan Six-County Area – Poverty and Insurance Coverage by County (% of residents), 2023							
Topics	Units	Cook County, IL	DuPage County, IL	Kane County, IL	Lake County, IL	McHenry County, IL	Will County, IL
Poverty rate, 2023	% of residents	13.29	6.52	8.21	8.07	6.18	7.08
Medicare coverage, 2023	% of residents	16.65	17.33	16.23	17.15	17.63	15.59

Medicaid coverage, 2023	% of residents	22.31	11.60	16.62	14.21	11.45	14.15
Uninsured rate, 2023	% of residents	7.79	5.16	7.47	5.94	4.05	4.24

Source: Metopio, American Community Survey, 2023.

According to Healthy People 2020 “residents of impoverished neighborhoods or communities are at increased risk for mental illness, chronic disease, higher mortality and lower life expectancy”². Advocate Health is committed to addressing health disparities and leveraging community data to strategically focus its resources on communities with greatest need. Advocate Health Care hospitals are responsible for analyzing the community disparities and leveraging additional data to identify those communities and populations that have higher socioeconomic needs when compared to other communities, populations and the overall county rate.



Source: Metopio, American Community Survey, 2023

The average household income for all six counties in the AHC service area is \$91K. The Asian population have the highest median household income by race in Will County (\$160k) exceeding the median household income when compared to the Chicago Metropolitan Six County area. The median household income is lowest in Cook County area. By race and ethnicity, the Asian population have a higher overall median income when compared to other populations. The median household income is lowest among the Non-Hispanic Black population for all counties, with exception to McHenry County (\$114K). Of the six counties, Lake County

² U.S Department of Health and Human Services, Healthy People 2020, retrieved from www.healthypeople.gov/Poverty.

(\$108K) has the highest median household income with Cook County (\$80K) reporting the lowest median household income.

Education is one of the main domains in the Healthy People 2030 Social Determinants of Health wheel. Individuals with higher education tend to have access to better-paying jobs and are less likely to experience poverty, which contributes to better health outcomes. Higher education has a strong correlation with higher income and better health outcomes.

When comparing the six counties in the AHC service area, Cook County and Kane County have the lowest high school graduation rates (under 90%), all other counties reported a percentage above 90 percent. DuPage and McHenry County are excelling, with an above 93 percent of high school graduation rate. When evaluating higher degree graduation rates, DuPage and Lake County are above 50 percent; neighboring counties have a percentage rate well under 50 percent. DuPage County (52.4%) and Lake County (47.8) reported the highest college graduation rate; neighboring counties reported a college graduation rate under 45 percent.

Chicago Metropolitan Six-County Area – Education Level & Mean Wage or Salary Income, 2023							
Topics	Units	Cook County, IL	DuPage County, IL	Kane County, IL	Lake County, IL	McHenry County, IL	Will County, IL
High school graduation rate, 2023	% of residents	88.55	92.51	88.08	91.11	93.53	91.66
Higher degree graduation rate, 2023	% of residents	49.98	58.99	46.20	53.54	45.26	44.88
Any higher education rate, 2023	% of residents	66.69	74.21	64.86	70.73	65.46	65.46
College graduation rate, 2023	% of residents	46.63	52.38	39.38	47.79	36.01	36.58
Mean wage or salary income, 2023		\$92,478	\$115,846	\$97,229	\$119,633	\$95,707	\$102,390

Source: Metopio, American Community Survey, 2023

The Chicago Metropolitan Six-County Area currently has a consistent labor force participation across all six counties. By race and ethnicity, the labor force participation is consistently between 60 percent and under 71 percent. There are no significant disparities by race and

ethnicity. However, DuPage and Lake County do have the largest work from home population (19.6% and 19.4%, respectively) followed by Cook County with 15.9 percent of the population working from home (American Community Survey, 2023). The ability to work from home allows families more flexibility and helps with reducing commute time and added stress associated with travel.

Chicago Metropolitan Six-County Area – Labor Force Participation by Race/Ethnicity (% of residents 16 and older), 2023							
Topics	Units	Cook County, IL	DuPage County, IL	Kane County, IL	Lake County, IL	McHenry County, IL	Will County, IL
Labor force participation	% of residents 16 and older	66.96	67.81	68.96	68.58	70.29	68.73
Private not-for-profit workers	% of civilian employed population	10.84	9.20	7.08	7.70	6.35	7.46
Private for-profit workers	% of civilian employed population	72.27	75.97	77.43	76.09	77.56	76.35
Local government workers	% of civilian employed population	7.40	6.91	8.08	7.62	10.02	7.91
State government workers	% of civilian employed population	2.78	1.92	1.93	1.86	1.14	2.64
Federal government workers	% of civilian employed population	2.15	1.75	1.53	2.21	0.82	1.81
Self-employed	% of civilian employed population	4.40	4.16	3.62	4.44	3.95	3.66
Work from home	% of workers 16 years and older	15.93	19.61	13.06	19.39	14.94	13.46

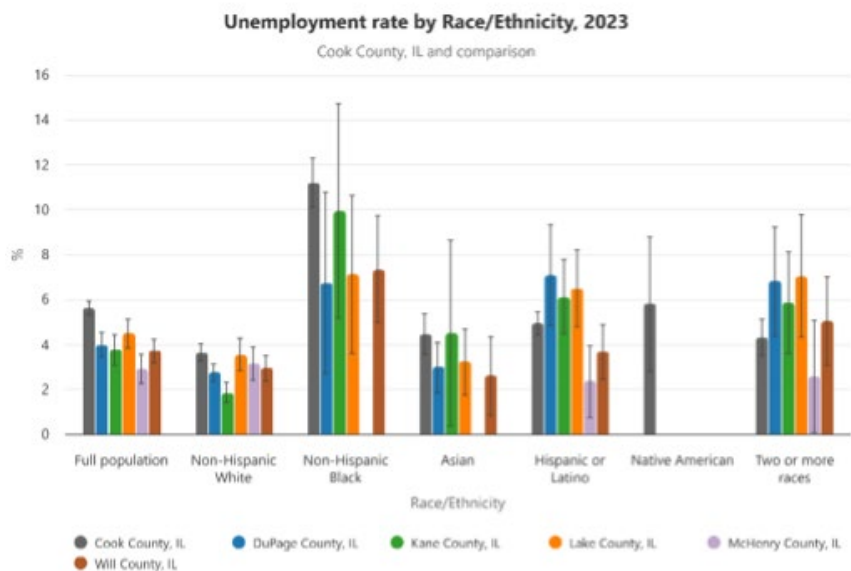
Source: Metopio, American Community Survey, 2023

Over the years, research has identified a correlation with unemployment and negative health outcomes. According to Healthy People 2020, “those who are unemployed report feelings of depressions, anxiety, low self-esteem, demoralization, worry and physical pain. Unemployed individuals tend to suffer more from stress-related illnesses such as high blood pressure, stroke, heart attack, heart disease and arthritis³.

When comparing the unemployment rate in the Chicago Metropolitan Six-County Area, we observe that Cook County (5.61%) has the highest unemployment rates, which is higher than the Illinois rate (4.72%). All other counties in the AHC service area for Illinois reported an unemployment rate below 5.6%. McHenry County (3%) reported the lowest unemployment

³ U.S Department of Health and Human Services, Healthy People 2020, retrieved from www.healthypeople.gov/unemployment.

rate when compared to all other counties. By race, the Non-Hispanic Black population reported the highest unemployment rates across five of the six counties.



Source: Metopio, American Community Survey, 2023

VI. Advocate Health Care Hospitals Presence in Communities

An examination of inpatient hospitalizations by MSDRG identified the top ten services (see following table) based on volume across Advocate Health Care in Illinois. These services represent the highest patient demand at AHC and directly relate to diseases that are, per national statistics, among the most prevalent in the country. The top three services with the greatest discharge percentage for AHC in 2022 were infectious disease (17%), obstetrics (11.6%) and cardiology (10.7%). Across the six-counties, the top three were infectious disease (24.4%), pulmonology (24.0%) and cardiology (23.7%).

2022 Inpatient Hospitalization Trends – Chicago Metropolitan Six-County Area		
Service	% of Total Advocate Hospital Discharges	Advocate % of Six-County Discharges
Infectious Disease	17.0%	24.4%
Obstetrics	11.6%	21.5%
Cardiology	10.7%	23.7%
GI	7.2%	22.4%
General Medicine	5.9%	23.2%
Neurology	5.6%	21.7%
Neonate	4.9%	21.8%
Pulmonology	4.9%	24.0%
Orthopedics	4.7%	21.4%
Psychiatry	4.6%	9.3%

Source: IHA COMPdata, 2022, excludes observation care and normal newborns

VII. Community Health Needs

During the 2022 CHNA cycle, multiple data sources were examined to help determine the types of programs and services provided to meet the needs of the diverse communities AHC serves. Each AHC hospital worked with at least one health department in addition to many community organizations and hospital leaders to complete the assessment and identify program priorities for implementation. As mentioned earlier, the 2022 CHNA Reports and the 2023-2025 Community Health Implementation Strategy reports can be found by clicking [here](#).

In addition to the demographic and market data presented above, selected utilization, chronic disease and health risk data by county is presented for the Six-County Metropolitan Chicago Area, where AHC hospitals are located. This information provides a snapshot of some of the health issues faced by hospitals servicing these regions, as an example.

The first set of health data is ED utilization or hospitalization data for selected conditions. This data was provided by the Illinois Hospital Association through Advocate Health Care to Metopio, a data analytics organization. Metopio's research team analyzed the data, age-adjusted it and created PSA, secondary service area (SSA), county and zip code values for selected utilization indicators.

The following is a summary of key observations from the data reviewed during the 2022 CHNA cycle.

- **Asthma** continues to be a substantial problem on Chicago’s south side and south suburbs with ED rates in Advocate Trinity’s PSA (709.8 per 100,000 residents) that are two to four times the rates in other service areas. Other hospitals with alarming emergency room rates due asthma include Advocate Christ (280.8 per 100,000 residents), Advocate South Suburban Hospital (369.3 per 100,000 residents) and Advocate Illinois Masonic Medical Center (246.1 per 100,000 population). Advocate Good Shepherd Hospital in McHenry County has the lowest emergency department visit rates due to asthma. Overall, asthma is a greater health concern in the southern Cook County area.

Asthma hospitalization & ED visit rates per 100,000 residents in the PSAs of Advocate Hospitals in Chicago Metropolitan Area			
Advocate Hospital PSA	Asthma hospitalization rate per 100,000 residents	Asthma emergency department visit rate per 100,000 residents	Current asthma (% of adults)
North Region			
Good Shepherd Primary Service Area	21.2	109.8	9.14
Sherman Hospital Primary Service Area	29.8	187.2	9.41
Condell Medical Center Primary Service Area	28.0	158.4	9.11
Central Region			
Good Samaritan Hospital Primary Service Area	28.5	159.9	8.78
Illinois Masonic Primary Service Area	39.6	246.1	9.04
Lutheran General Hospital Primary Service Area	27.8	140.7	8.60
South Region			
Christ Medical Center Primary Service Area	47.3	280.8	9.88
South Suburban Hospital Primary Service Area	45.6	369.3	10.56
Advocate Trinity Primary Service Area	108.5	709.8	11.66

Source: Metopio, Illinois Hospital Association, COMPdata, 2016-2024

- According to the CDC, Heart Disease continues to be the leading cause of death in the United States and stroke is ranked fifth ([Access Report Here](#)). By region, the South region hospital sites experience the highest emergency department visits for stroke, heart failure

and hypertension. The hospitals in the North and Central region share similar outcomes for the three categories. Advocate Health as a whole, is committed to addressing the health disparities and developing programs that improve health outcomes in communities experiencing greater need.

Stroke, Heart Failure and Hypertension ED visit rates per 100,000 residents in the PSAs of Advocate Hospitals in Chicago Metropolitan Area			
Advocate Hospital PSA	Stroke emergency department visit rate per 100,000 residents	Heart failure emergency department visit rate per 100,000 residents	Hypertension emergency department visit rate per 100,000 residents
North Region			
Good Shepherd Primary Service Area	47.7	54.3	303.9
Sherman Hospital Primary Service Area	51.8	60.4	365.6
Condell Medical Center Primary Service Area	38.3	48.7	294.9
Central Region			
Good Samaritan Hospital Primary Service Area	38.9	48.9	304.4
Illinois Masonic Primary Service Area	47.3	62.7	306.7
Lutheran General Hospital Primary Service Area	28.7	43.0	246.6
South Region			
Christ Medical Center Primary Service Area	62.0	84.8	346.1
South Suburban Hospital Primary Service Area	77.9	151.4	668.8
Advocate Trinity Primary Service Area	93.2	204.2	651.6

Source: Metopio, Illinois Hospital Association, COMPdata, 2016-2024

- Emergency department visit rates for **heart failure** are highest in Advocate Trinity's PSA (204.2 per 100,000 residents) and Advocate South Suburban Hospital's PSA (151.4 per 100,000 residents). By site, both hospitals have more than double when compared to other Advocate Health Care hospitals. The emergency department visit rates for hypertension are also significantly higher for Advocate Trinity, Advocate South Suburban Hospital and Advocate Sherman, all of which are above the Illinois ED visit rate of 411 per 100,000 residents.

- Hospitalization rates due to **Suicide and Intentional self-injury** for all service areas in Metro Chicago are relatively the same when compared across the three regions. Advocate Good Shepherd Hospital has the highest hospitalization rates compared to the other hospitals, at 46.8 hospitalizations per 100,000 residents. However, Illinois Masonic Medical Center and Christ Medical Center have the highest suicide and self-injury emergency department visits at 405 and 388 visits per 100,000 residents, respectively.

Suicide and Self-injury ED visits and Hospitalization rates per 100,000 residents in the PSAs of Advocate Hospitals in Chicago Metropolitan Area		
Advocate Hospital PSA	Suicide and self-injury hospitalization rate per 100,000 residents	Suicide and self-injury emergency department visits
North Region		
Good Shepherd Primary Service Area	46.8	161
Sherman Hospital Primary Service Area	41.1	176
Condell Medical Center Primary Service Area	32.2	265
Central Region		
Good Samaritan Hospital Primary Service Area	33.5	268
Illinois Masonic Primary Service Area	29.5	405
Lutheran General Hospital Primary Service Area	37.1	357
South Region		
Christ Medical Center Primary Service Area	33.9	388
South Suburban Hospital Primary Service Area	34.0	179
Advocate Trinity Primary Service Area	40.2	200

Source: Metopio, Illinois Hospital Association, COMPdata, 2024

Finally, the third set of data (2017-2021) reviewed was cancer diagnosis rates per 100,000 residents from the Illinois Department of Public Health Illinois State Registry, all ages, risk adjusted. The following are key observations from the county data reviewed. The data has not changed as of 2022.

- DuPage County, Advocate Good Samaritan PSA, had the highest oral cancer diagnosis rate when compared to other Advocate Health Care hospitals.
- By hospital site, Good Shepherd PSA, had the highest invasive breast cancer diagnosis rate followed closely by Good Samaritan (DuPage), Lutheran Hospital's PSA (Suburban Cook County) and South Suburban Hospital's PSA (Suburban Cook County).
- The South region and Advocate Good Shepherd had the highest diagnosis rates of cervical cancer when compared to the Central Region and other hospitals within the North Region.
- Prostate diagnosis cancer rates are also highest in the Advocate Trinity and Advocate South Suburban hospital PSAs.

- Lung and Colorectal cancer were also more prevalent in the South region when compared to the Central and North Region.

Cancer Related Diagnosis Rates per 100,000 Residents, 2017-2021 PSAs of Advocate Hospitals in Chicago Metropolitan Area					
Advocate Hospital PSA	Cancer diagnosis rate	Invasive breast cancer diagnosis rate (female)	Colorectal cancer diagnosis rate	Cervical cancer diagnosis rate (female)	Lung cancer diagnosis rate
North Region					
Good Shepherd Primary Service Area	598.15	190.66	40.97	9.19	67.49
Sherman Hospital Primary Service Area	548.62	162.16	40.81	7.87	64.52
Condell Medical Center Primary Service Area	558.58	156.75	43.49	8.71	58.95
Central Region					
Good Samaritan Hospital Primary Service Area	568.71	178.90	42.50	7.42	55.06
Illinois Masonic Primary Service Area	490.34	142.72	44.36	8.75	53.41
Lutheran General Hospital Primary Service Area	559.62	171.39	44.16	8.60	55.06
South Region					
Christ Medical Center Primary Service Area	555.97	155.42	49.67	9.10	73.09
South Suburban Hospital Primary Service Area	607.36	170.81	56.16	11.38	73.15
Advocate Trinity Primary Service Area	593.68	160.52	56.35	9.10	82.89

Cancer Related Diagnosis Rates per 100,000 Residents 2017-2021 PSAs of Advocate Hospitals in Chicago Metropolitan Area					
Advocate Hospital PSA	Nervous system cancer diagnosis rate	Oral cancer diagnosis rate	Other cancers diagnosis rate	Prostate cancer diagnosis rate	Average stage of cancer at diagnosis
North Region					
Good Shepherd Primary Service Area	6.96	14.42	180.83	152.16	1.71
Sherman Hospital Primary Service Area	64.52	13.04	173.92	134.56	1.74
Condell Medical Center Primary Service Area	7.76	13.06	174.95	147.57	1.75
Central Region					
Good Samaritan Hospital Primary Service Area	7.60	14.80	167.67	151.85	1.72
Illinois Masonic Primary Service Area	5.65	13.85	150.66	119.90	1.76
Lutheran General Hospital Primary Service Area	7.29	14.24	172.01	136.58	1.74
South Region					
Christ Medical Center Primary Service Area	5.32	13.09	161.16	153.04	1.79
South Suburban Hospital Primary Service Area	6.26	13.99	163.86	208.44	1.78
Advocate Trinity Primary Service Area	3.28	14.27	159.72	205.45	1.84

Source: Metopio, Illinois Department of Public Health Illinois State Cancer Registry, 2017-2021