



FISCAL YEAR 2024 (JULY 1, 2023 - JUNE 30, 2024)

# COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT



**HolyCross**  
**Health**

A Member of Trinity Health



## WHO WE ARE

### OUR MISSION

We, Trinity Health, serve together in the spirit of the Gospel as a compassionate and transforming healing presence within our communities.

### OUR CORE VALUES

Reverence  
Commitment to Those  
Experiencing Poverty  
Safety  
Justice  
Stewardship  
Integrity

### OUR VISION

As a mission-driven innovative health organization, we will become the national leader in improving the health of our communities and each person we serve. We will be the most trusted health partner for life.

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## LETTER FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT

The work of the Community Health and Well-Being (CHWB) team in Broward County is both meaningful and transformative. Our efforts extend far beyond immediate outcomes—they lay the foundation for long-term health, resilience, and opportunity that can positively impact generations to come.

Through prioritized initiatives, we address critical needs by providing resources, support, and education that empower individuals to lead healthier, more fulfilling lives. Whether through outreach, health education, or essential services, our work ensures that every person has the opportunity to thrive. The ripple effects of this work are equally powerful. By strengthening the fabric of our community, we foster a sense of connection, belonging, and hope. This collective support enhances mental and emotional well-being and contributes to a more unified, vibrant community.

**Together, we've achieved meaningful milestones**—milestones that reflect the dedication, compassion, and tireless efforts of our community health workers, educators, healthcare providers, and leaders. Moments of celebration include the High-Performance LGBTQ+ Healthcare Equality designation from the Human Rights Campaign, Hispanic HIV Leadership Award, and the first Mission Moment Award from the Holy Cross Health Board of Directors. These accomplishments are a testament to what's possible when we work together with purpose and passion.

As we celebrate our progress, we also look ahead with renewed commitment to our mission. The work we do matters—it transforms lives, builds stronger futures, and inspires hope. Thank you for being part of this journey. Let's continue moving forward with pride and determination, knowing that every step we take is helping to create a healthier, more equitable community for all.



**Kim Saiswick**

Vice President

Community Health and Well-Being

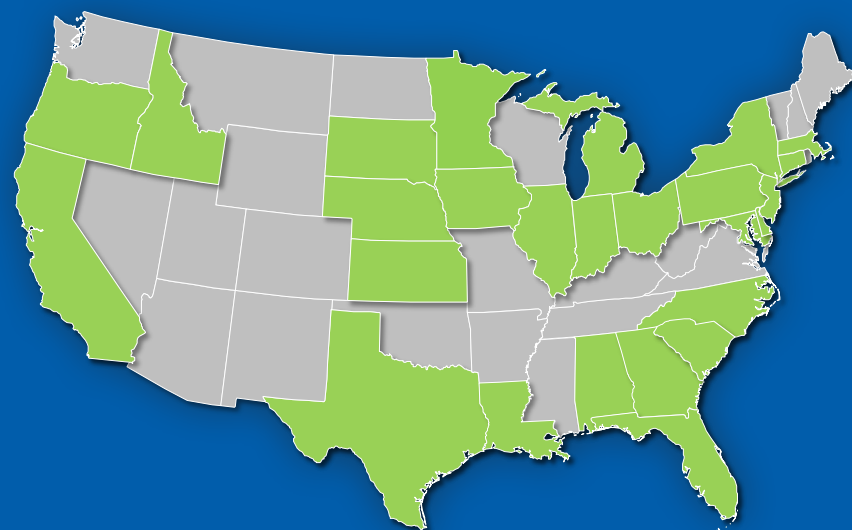


Hope is being able to see that  
there is light despite  
all of the darkness.

— Desmond Tutu

# HOLY CROSS HEALTH IS A MEMBER OF TRINITY HEALTH **ONE OF THE LARGEST CATHOLIC HEALTH SYSTEMS IN THE NATION**

Our Ministry benefits from being a member of Trinity Health through educational opportunities offered by our national partners such as the Healthcare Anchor Network, National Partnership to Align Social Care, the Healthcare Transformation Taskforce, Catholic Health Association and many more. We also benefit from national initiatives such the Community Investing Program - making low-interest rate loans to improve conditions in our communities and through Shareholder Advocacy where we amplify our shareholder voice to advance improvements in corporate social behavior that ultimately advance health equity across the United States.



**26** States



**1.4M\*** Attributed lives



**\$1.3B** in Community Benefit



**153** Community Health Workers



**93** Hospitals\*



**15** Clinically Integrated Networks



**60** Safety Net Health Centers



**10** Diabetes Prevention Programs

# HOLY CROSS HEALTH

## AT A GLANCE



**\$641M** Operating Revenue



**1** Hospital\*



**1** Ambulatory Surgery Center



**7** Outpatient Rehab Centers



**1** Urgent Care Location



**35** Medical Group Practices



**245** Allied Health Members



**38,000** Average Monthly  
Medical Group Visits



**3,381** Colleagues



**697** Credentialed Physicians



**58,000** Emergency Visits



**647,000** Outpatient Visits



**10,000** Surgeries



**185** Medical Group Physicians



**111,273** Primary Care Members

\*Owned, managed or in JOAs or JVs.



## Community Impact

**Our Community Impact reflects both our commitment to caring for individuals experiencing poverty and our investment in communities that have historically faced—and continue to face—disinvestment due to systemic racism and discrimination.**

Until the conditions in the communities we serve are safe and all community members have access to high-quality education, health care, affordable food and housing, achieving improvements in health outcomes (individually or as a community) is not possible. This is why Trinity Health prioritizes integrating social and clinical care and investing in the social influencers of health, we must support individuals and work to improve community conditions—as healthcare only has a 20% chance of affecting health.

[We] recognize the intersection of poverty and racism; therefore, we are committed to applying a racial equity lens to our interventions and decision making to ensure we are not perpetuating harm but rather promoting health and healing. Our hope is to achieve racial equity—when race can no longer be used to predict life outcomes. This requires the intentional and continual practice of changing policies practices, system, and structures by prioritizing measurable change in the communities we serve.

# COMMUNITY IMPACT

## Culturally Rooted, Community Driven: Caring with Compassion Across Borders and Barriers

Working at the Community Health and Well-Being department is an incredibly rewarding experience, particularly when assisting vulnerable families. Many of these families come from other countries and face significant challenges navigating the complex health system in the United States. This year, I had the privilege of serving several Haitian families in need. As a Haitian myself, I was able to provide care in a culturally sensitive manner, which made a substantial difference in their experience and fostered trust.

### **The impact of this work on the community is profound.**

By offering culturally sensitive care, we bridge the gap between healthcare providers and patients from diverse backgrounds. This approach not only improves health outcomes but also enhances the overall well-being of the community. The gratitude expressed by these families is immense and deeply moving. Their appreciation reinforces my commitment to continuing this vital work.

The outstanding team at CHWB of Holy Cross Health plays a crucial role in this effort. Together, we strive to create an inclusive and supportive environment for all patients, regardless of their background. Our collective efforts ensure that every individual receives the care and support they need to thrive.

The work we do at CHWB is not just about providing healthcare; it is about building trust, fostering inclusivity, and making a lasting impact on the community. The positive feedback and gratitude from the families we serve inspire us to continue our mission with dedication and compassion.



Regine Lefevre, MPH, CHWB Coordinator

# COMMUNITY IMPACT

## Healing Begins from the Ground Up: Restoring Dignity, One Step at a Time

More than 170 individuals—ranging in age from 8 months to 83 years—gathered at HOPE South Florida for Holy Cross Health’s “Annual Foot Care for the Unhoused” event.

Supported by partners including Barry University School of Podiatric Medicine, Fountain of Ministry, In Jacob’s Shoes, and the Florida Academy of Nursing, the event offered much more than medical care. Each guest received a warm meal, foot washing, nail trimming, health assessments, and a new pair of socks and shoes—simple acts that carried profound dignity and care.

Launched more than six years ago, this outreach initiative has served thousands of unhoused residents across Broward County. With more than 2,800 individuals experiencing homelessness on any given night, foot care—often overlooked—is critical. Prolonged exposure, lack of proper footwear, and chronic conditions like diabetes make foot health a vital concern for survival and mobility.

Holy Cross Health remains deeply committed to serving the most vulnerable with compassion, respect, and healing.



Vanessa Graham, RN and client



## Our Community Impact is more than Community Benefit

We also acknowledge the deep intersection between poverty and racism. As such, we are committed to applying a racial equity lens to our interventions and decision-making processes. This means actively working to avoid perpetuating harm and instead fostering healing, inclusion, and justice. There is mounting pressure and criticism of hospital community benefit, however community benefit—as defined by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS)—doesn't tell the entire story of how not-for-profit health care impacts its communities. Holy Cross Health is committed to ensuring we comprehensively report all the IRS-defined community benefits across our system, as well as its total community impact to fully demonstrate the services and support we provide in our communities.

Our vision is to achieve racial equity—a future where race no longer predicts life outcomes. Reaching this goal requires intentional, ongoing efforts to change policies, practices, systems, and structures, with a focus on measurable improvements in the communities we serve.

Our goal in sharing our Community Impact is to demonstrate how our faith-based, not-for-profit health system makes a difference in the communities we serve—focusing on impacting people experiencing poverty—through our financial investments.

### FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

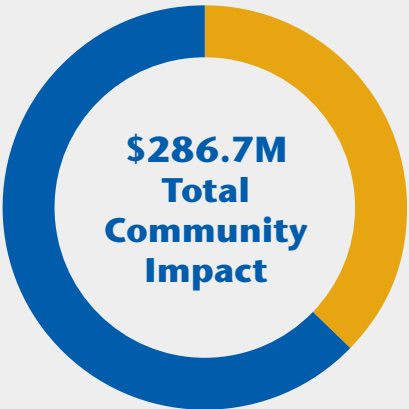
Financial Assistance expanded in early 2024, to include insured patient's co-pays, co-insurance, and deductibles for patients with incomes up to 400% of the Federal Poverty Level.

### IN FY24, HOLY CROSS HEALTH PROVIDED:

**\$45,575,499**

in financial assistance

**12,605** patients benefited



### \$107.3M in IRS-defined Community Benefit

The IRS has clearly defined standards for reporting community benefit which includes Unpaid Medicaid Financial Assistance, and other community programs.

### \$179.3M in Community Impact Activities

Community Impact meets the spirit of community benefit and acknowledges the investments made that are making an impact in the community that the IRS does not consider.



# INTEGRATING SOCIAL AND CLINICAL CARE



Integrating social and clinical care is a transformative approach in modern healthcare that seeks to address not only medical conditions but also the broader social factors that influence health. The core purpose of this integration is to improve overall health outcomes by recognizing that issues such as housing instability, food insecurity, lack of transportation, and limited social support can significantly impact a person's well-being. By addressing these social determinants of health, healthcare systems can move “upstream,” shifting from a reactive model that treats illness to a proactive one that prevents it.

The goals of this approach are multifaceted. At its heart, it aims to enhance patient-centered care by responding to the full spectrum of individual needs—clinical, behavioral, and social. This holistic view helps reduce health disparities by ensuring that vulnerable and underserved populations receive comprehensive support. Additionally, integrating social and clinical care can improve the efficiency of healthcare systems by reducing unnecessary emergency room visits and hospital readmissions, ultimately leading to better resource utilization and cost savings.

The primary intent behind this integration is to create a seamless, coordinated care experience that bridges the gap between healthcare providers and social service organizations. It acknowledges that medical care alone is often insufficient to achieve optimal health outcomes. By fostering collaboration across sectors, this model empowers individuals and communities, ensuring that care is not only more effective but also more equitable and responsive to real-life challenges. This approach represents a shift toward a more inclusive and sustainable healthcare system that truly supports the whole person.

# INTEGRATING SOCIAL AND CLINICAL CARE



## Addressing Patient Social Needs

Only 20% of our overall health and well-being in the United States is affected by the medical care we receive. The remaining 80% is related to social influencers of health (housing needs, financial insecurity) and individual behaviors. At Holy Cross Health, we recognize that achieving true health goes far beyond hospital walls. That's why we are committed to serving our communities—especially those facing poverty and other vulnerabilities—by addressing the broader factors that impact health.

## Everyone Deserves the Opportunity to Live Their Healthiest Life

Health is more than just clinical care. It's about having access to safe housing, nutritious food, reliable transportation, and financial security. That's why we've made social needs screening a core part of our care model.

## Social Needs Screening

We ask our patients about challenges that may be affecting their health—such as issues with employment, housing, food, safety, and transportation. This helps us:

- Better understand the barriers our patients face
- Connect them to tailored resources and support services

In FY24, Holy Cross Health screened over 35,087 patients for social needs in primary care settings. When a need is identified, our care teams—including Community Health Workers (CHWs) step in to provide support and connect patients to community resources.

**17% of those screened reported at least one need. The most frequently reported were:**



Food Access



Financial Assistance



Housing support



Transportation services

# INTEGRATING SOCIAL AND CLINICAL CARE

## CONNECTING PEOPLE TO RESOURCES



### Community Health Workers

Community Health Workers (CHWs) play a vital role as trusted connectors between healthcare and social services and the communities they serve. At Holy Cross Health, CHWs help patients overcome barriers to care by assessing social needs, evaluating home environments, and identifying risk factors. They then connect individuals and families to essential community resources.

Holy Cross Health currently employs four CHWs as integral members of our care teams. Each has completed over 40 hours of foundational training, along with certifications in Mental Health First Aid, Motivational Interviewing, and ongoing professional development through the Florida CHW Board and our national CHW affinity group.

### Holy Cross Health Community Resource Directory

To further support our community, Holy Cross Health invested in an online Community Resource Directory, powered by Find Help. This platform connects individuals with free or low-cost services and programs in their area. It also allows participating organizations to respond directly to referrals, creating a more connected and responsive support network.

**In FY24, community members conducted nearly 1,731 searches on the platform.**



**Scan code to explore resources  
or get connected today.**

### COMMUNITY RESOURCE DIRECTORY



**Need a  
little help?**

Find community  
resources  
quickly and easily

**¿Necesita  
Ayuda?**

Encuentre recursos  
comunitarios de  
manera rápida y fácil

SCAN HERE



ESCANEAR AQUÍ



[communityresources.trinity-health.org](https://communityresources.trinity-health.org)

# INTEGRATING SOCIAL AND CLINICAL CARE

## SPOTLIGHT



### The Heart of Service: A Final Chapter Written in Care

When Alexis, one of our CHWs, received a referral for a 65-year-old man facing food insecurity, she quickly discovered deeper challenges. Mr. Jones lived alone, had no nearby support system, and was struggling financially. He also suffered from congestive heart failure, edema, and infected cellulitis in both legs.

#### A coordinated team at Holy Cross Health came together to support him:

- Alexis connected Mr. Jones with a Primary Care Physician (PCP) and a cardiologist, while also addressing his urgent social needs—providing emergency food, helping with medication access, arranging transportation, and assisting with housing applications.
- The PCP provided medical care, referred him to Holy Cross Wound Care, and later facilitated his hospital admission.
- Working closely with a hospital case manager, Alexis helped secure safe, long-term housing. Upon discharge, Mr. Jones was welcomed into a high-quality nursing home, where he now receives the care and support he needs.

This story is just one example of how CHWs at Holy Cross Health are transforming lives—by building trust, coordinating care, and addressing the full spectrum of health and social needs.

Mr. Jones passed away about 6 months later. He died in hospice care, in an environment where his dignity was respected and he was cared for and about.

**This was such a special experience because he became like family to me. Working as a community health worker has not only been rewarding but a career where I have gained a deeper appreciation of the important things in life such as spending time with your family, being healthy, and being there for others.**



Alexis Hunter LPN, Community Health Worker



# INTEGRATING SOCIAL AND CLINICAL CARE

## SPOTLIGHT



### From Despair to Dignity: A Story of Hope and Healing

When I first met my client, she was living in heartbreaking conditions—HIV positive, nearly blind, and alone in a home with nothing but an air mattress. Her fridge and freezer were empty, and she struggled with severe food insecurity. At night, she would crawl along the floor, feeling the walls to navigate her space.

Recognizing the urgency, I took immediate action. I bought groceries and stocked her pantry, then connected her with local food resources for sustained support. I reached out to my community and gathered furniture to make her home livable. We also helped her reconnect with her family, and her son moved in to care for her.

Today, she receives ongoing support from a local community service agency within the community as well as other community services. Her life has been transformed—not just with food and furniture, but with dignity, connection, and hope.

This experience underscores the profound difference that community outreach and I as a community health worker can make in someone's life, turning a situation of despair into one of hope and support.



Brittany Dixon, Community Health Worker

# INTEGRATING SOCIAL AND CLINICAL CARE

## SPOTLIGHT



### Holy Cross @ Sistrunk Brings Care Into the Community

Located in the heart of Fort Lauderdale's historic African American neighborhood—an area redlined as early as 1924—Holy Cross Primary Care Health Center @ Sistrunk serves a community long affected by systemic inequities. This neighborhood is not only a food and healthcare desert, but also faces daily challenges such as generational poverty, incarceration, low literacy rates, chronic illnesses, and poor birth outcomes.

Through a unique partnership with the YMCA, Holy Cross Health operates a nurse-led health center embedded in the 33311 zip code. Working hand-in-hand with community members, leaders, and stakeholders, the center is actively addressing these deeply rooted issues.

#### Key Health Challenges in the Community:

- Many patients have not seen a primary care provider in over a decade
- The Emergency Room has often served as the default source of care
- Hypertension, obesity, and diabetes are the most prevalent diagnoses

A dedicated care team—led by a nurse practitioner—is responding to these needs using a trauma-informed, patient-centered approach. By building trust one patient at a time, the team is creating a welcoming, non-judgmental environment that encourages individuals to seek consistent, preventive care.

For over a century, this community has endured the lasting effects of poverty and systemic racism. In response, Holy Cross Health has invested significant resources and energy into supporting the area. In addition to the primary care center, initiatives such as community health workers, medication assistance programs, and the Transforming Communities Initiative are working to improve health outcomes, enhance well-being, and foster long-term economic resilience.

### FROM HESITATION TO HEALTH: DEXTER'S JOURNEY TO WELLNESS

After over a decade without care, Dexter arrived at the Sistrunk clinic with dangerously high blood pressure and uncertainty about seeking help. With compassion, education, and support, he embraced a healthier lifestyle -losing 33 pounds and achieving a blood pressure of 116/72. Inspired by his transformation, he even referred his spouse to the clinic. This is the power of care without judgment.



Valerie Fox, APRN, FHAP and Patient, Dexter

# INTEGRATING SOCIAL AND CLINICAL CARE

## SPOTLIGHT



### From a Friendly Face to a Lifeline: Meeting a Young Man Where He Was and Walking Beside Him Toward Wellness

Having the privilege of helping many under-resourced residents access the healthcare they deserve is one of the best parts of serving at the Sistrunk safety net clinic. One young man stands out in my memory. He would often visit the clinic—not for medical care, but simply to cool off, grab some water, and chat. I eventually learned he hadn't seen a doctor in quite some time, despite dealing with asthma, severe dental issues, and other medical concerns.

As we talked, it became clear that his only barrier to care was confusion about his health insurance—he didn't have his ID card and wasn't even sure what coverage he had. I did some research, tracked down the plan he was enrolled in, and found out we needed his presence to retrieve his member ID and request a new card.

It wasn't easy to coordinate, but a few days later he returned. I seized the moment—we got his information, arranged for the card to be sent to his mother's home, and scheduled appointments with both our medical provider and dentist.

**I'm proud of the role I played in helping him take that step toward consistent care.** More than anything, his gratitude reminded me why this work matters: sometimes, what people need most is someone to pause, listen, and advocate on their behalf.



Virginia Wiley, BS, Community Benefits Coordinator

# INTEGRATING SOCIAL AND CLINICAL CARE

## CONNECTING PEOPLE TO RESOURCES



### Breaking Barriers, Saving Lives: Partners in Breast Health at Holy Cross Health

Regular mammograms and self-breast awareness are essential tools women can use to reduce their risk of breast cancer. Recognizing that cost can be a significant barrier to these preventive services, Holy Cross Health's Partners in Breast Health program is dedicated to reducing the number of late-stage breast cancer diagnoses among uninsured individuals.

This program provides outreach, education, clinical breast exams, screening mammograms, and diagnostic procedures to low-income and minority women aged 40 and older who lack access to healthcare. It also extends services to symptomatic women under 40, ensuring that no one is left behind due to age or financial status.

#### **In FY24, the Partners in Breast Health program achieved the following:**

- Reached 1,000 individuals with prevention education at 47 community-based events
- Hosted 2 Early Detection Clinics in partnership with the Broward County Department of Health's Breast and Cervical Cancer Program
- Completed 646 intake assessments
- Facilitated 11 support groups for women diagnosed with breast cancer
- Delivered 472 screening and diagnostic breast health services
- Diagnosed 7 women with breast cancer and successfully linked them to care and treatment

This program exemplifies Holy Cross Health's commitment to health equity, ensuring that all women—regardless of income or insurance status—have access to life-saving breast health services.

# INTEGRATING SOCIAL AND CLINICAL CARE

## SPOTLIGHT



### COMPASSION IN ACTION: GUIDING ROSE FROM UNCERTAINTY TO LIFE-SAVING CARE

“ It was a profound honor to walk alongside Rose, an uninsured woman living with a developmental disability. Despite overwhelming challenges, she courageously sought medical attention concerning breast symptoms.

Together, we navigated the complexities of the healthcare system. Following a life-changing breast cancer diagnosis, I was able to support her in accessing expert care at Holy Cross Health’s Cancer Center.

Rose’s unwavering strength and determination inspired me at every step, reaffirming my belief that no one should be denied the care they need due to barriers. Her journey stands as a powerful testament to resilience and the life-changing impact of compassionate advocacy. ”



Skarlleth Kauffmann, RN BSN, Patient Navigator  
and patient

# INTEGRATING SOCIAL AND CLINICAL CARE

## CONNECTING PEOPLE TO RESOURCES



### Nurse Family Partnership Program at Holy Cross Health

The Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) is a life-changing community health program that supports first-time mothers and their children during the critical early years of life. Through this initiative, expectant mothers are paired with specially trained Holy Cross Health nurses who provide personalized care, education, and emotional support from pregnancy through the child's second birthday.

Nurses visit mothers in their homes and maintain at least weekly contact between visits, building strong, trusting relationships. These visits focus on empowering mothers with the knowledge and tools they need to navigate pregnancy, childbirth, and early parenting. Topics include prenatal care, child development, nutrition, and safe sleep practices—all aimed at ensuring a healthy start for both mother and baby.

**Beyond health education, the program helps mothers build confidence, set goals, and create a stable foundation for their families.** Research shows that NFP leads to improved maternal and child health outcomes, lower rates of child abuse and neglect, and better long-term economic prospects for participating families.

By fostering meaningful, supportive connections between nurses and mothers, the NFP program helps create healthier, more resilient communities—one family at a time.

#### MORE THAN A NURSE: A LIFELINE OF SUPPORT AND UNDERSTANDING

**My experience with the Nurse-Family Partnership has been amazing. My Nurse Marylin has been more than a nurse to me. She has been a motivator, therapist, support system and an encouraging friend. She truly helps me to feel heard, understood, seen, and validated**

**for my feelings. I am so grateful to be able to be in this program.**



Marilyn Velazquez, RN BSN and Stefani

# INTEGRATING SOCIAL AND CLINICAL CARE

## CONNECTING PEOPLE TO RESOURCES



## Kristen Schroeder-Brown, BSN, RN, CHES, CDCES— CHWB Manager, Healthy Living Programs

Community health initiatives play a crucial role in ensuring the well-being of underserved populations. Holy Cross Health's Community Healthy Living Programs offer a whole-person approach to wellness—providing tools, education, and support to help individuals and families thrive.

From Diabetes Prevention and Self-Management to Food Is Medicine, these initiatives empower community members with the knowledge and resources to take control of their health. Programs also include School Health Services and Childhood Immunizations, ensuring that children grow up strong, protected, and ready to succeed in the classroom and beyond.

By meeting people where they are and addressing both medical and social needs, these programs strengthen the foundation for lifelong well-being—one family, one neighborhood at a time.



Kristen Schroeder-Brown, BSN, RN, CHES, CDCES

# INTEGRATING SOCIAL AND CLINICAL CARE



## National Diabetes Prevention Program

More than 1 in 3 American adults have prediabetes, and alarmingly, 80% of them don't know it. Prediabetes is a condition where blood sugar levels are elevated but not yet high enough for a type 2 (T2) diabetes diagnosis. The good news? Making simple lifestyle changes can cut the risk of developing type 2 diabetes in half.

**To support prevention, Holy Cross Health offers a 12-month, evidence-based lifestyle change program. The program focuses on three key goals:**

- Achieving a targeted percentage of weight loss
- Attending regular group sessions
- Engaging in at least 150 minutes of physical activity per week

Sessions are led by a CDC-certified Lifestyle Coach, who guides participants through sustainable behavior changes. Throughout the program, participants are also screened multiple times for health-related social needs—such as transportation, housing, or food insecurity. If needs are identified, they are referred to a Community Health Worker (CHW) who helps address these barriers and supports participants in staying on track.

In FY24, 82 new individuals enrolled in the program. This initiative is made possible through funding from Trinity Health, in partnership with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), to advance health equity in diabetes prevention.



**Want to know your risk for type 2 diabetes?** Take the risk test and talk to your doctor about getting a blood sugar test if you're at high risk.

To learn more or check your eligibility, email us at [dpp@holy-cross.com](mailto:dpp@holy-cross.com) or visit [holy-cross.com/diabetes](https://holy-cross.com/diabetes).

## GLADYS' JOURNEY TO WELLNESS

**"The yearlong Prevent T2 class has changed my behavior. I am very conscious of my food choices, monitor my weight and exercise daily."**

Gladys joined Prevent T2 in June 2024 after receiving an elevated A1c result indicating prediabetes. Over the course of the year-long program, and by session 23 Gladys has lost 14.4 pounds, 8% of her initial body weight. She has also lowered her A1c into the normal range. Gladys enjoys the group setting and valued discussing challenges and brainstorming solutions with the other program participants.

**"This class has made me more enthusiastic about taking responsibility for my health. At this age where I am right now, I feel very positive about what I'm eating, my activity level, and mental clarity."** Gladys intends to remain strong and active to travel with her daughter.



Jennifer Sawyer, MS, RDN, LDN, CDCES

# INTEGRATING SOCIAL AND CLINICAL CARE



## Holy Cross Health's Diabetes Self-Management Education and Support Services

**More than 38 million Americans—approximately 11.6% of the population—are living with diabetes, including both diagnosed and undiagnosed cases.** This chronic condition is a leading contributor to serious health complications such as cardiovascular disease, kidney failure, vision loss, and lower-limb amputations. It also ranks as the fourth leading cause of disability-adjusted life years (DALYs) in the U.S., underscoring its significant impact on quality of life.

To address this growing health challenge, Holy Cross Health offers a comprehensive Diabetes Self-Management Education and Support Services (DSMES) program. This initiative empowers individuals with diabetes to take control of their health through personalized education and support. Participants learn essential self-care skills, including healthy eating, physical activity, medication adherence, blood sugar monitoring, and emotional coping strategies.

## Scale and Impact

The impact that the CHWB has had on the Diabetes Self-Management program has been tremendous. Led by a Certified Diabetes Care and Education Specialist (CDCES), the program tailors care plans to each participant's unique needs and lifestyle. The goal is to improve health outcomes, prevent complications, and enhance overall quality of life—while also reducing healthcare costs through proactive disease management and fewer emergency interventions.

### In FY24, the DSMES program delivered:

- 290 individual appointments
- 29 group classes
- 24 support group sessions

**More than 400 individuals benefited from the program, gaining the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to manage their diabetes effectively.**

## FINALLY HEARD

The impact of Community Health and Well-Being on the Diabetes Self-Management Program has been truly significant. Providing in-depth education and supporting individuals who face real challenges in managing their diabetes brings me great fulfillment. The most rewarding part of my role is witnessing the transformation in a patient's attitude and confidence when they successfully lower their A1c—it's a powerful reminder of why this work matters.

“One patient I had seen recently was struggling with their diabetes when he came to see me. I went through the initial session with the patient, and by the end,



his demeanor had changed. I asked him if everything was all right, and he responded, “You are the first person who's actually listened to my concerns.”

Dylan Chang, RDN, CDCES



# INVESTING IN OUR COMMUNITIES

## Community Health Needs Assessment & Implementation Strategy Update

Furthering our commitment to achieving racial equity—we are committed to authentically engaging with our community members, organizations and leaders. Every three years, each of our 18 hospitals conduct a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) which identifies community assets, needs, and the current state of health and social well-being of a community. The process requires input, from those who live in the community, on both identifying and prioritizing the needs that will be addressed in the three-year Implementation Strategy. Our process applies a racial equity lens in addressing the identified needs in order to advance health equity.

Together, the CHNA and Implementation Strategies foster collective action for the equitable allocation of resources from the hospital and other community sources, directed toward needs being addressed and for those most impacted.

## Identified Needs & Hospital Commitments

In FY23, Holy Cross Health conducted their CHNA and identified the following significant health and/or social needs that continue to be focused on addressing through FY25:

- Health Care Access and Quality
- Food Environment
- Diabetes/Obesity



# INVESTING IN OUR COMMUNITIES

## Holy Cross Health: Championing Student Wellness in Broward County Parochial Elementary and Public Schools

In Broward County's parochial schools—where 82% operate without full-time nurses and many students face poverty—Holy Cross Health's School Health Program stands as a critical lifeline. **Throughout the 2023–2024 school year, the program reached 2,048 students across 17 schools, delivering vaccinations, health education, and more than 4,000 hearing, vision, and scoliosis screenings.** Without these services, many children might never receive preventive care. Nationally, 1 in 4 students has an undetected vision issue, and untreated hearing loss or scoliosis can severely impact academic and social development. Through early detection and referral, 508 students—nearly a quarter of those screened—were connected with the care they needed, helping remove barriers to learning and well-being.

At its core, the program bridges critical gaps in care and fosters educational equity. It also prepares school staff for emergencies through CPR, First Aid, and Bloodborne Pathogen training, ensuring they're ready to respond when seconds matter. Health education is delivered in fun, age-appropriate ways: younger children explore dental hygiene, while older students engage in interactive lessons like germ transfer demonstrations using blacklight technology—bringing health concepts to life.

**In the public school system, Holy Cross Health's Community Health and Well-Being team partners with the Innovative Learning Department to provide 320 movement-based classes.** These sessions introduce mindfulness, breathing techniques, and physical activity to enhance brain function, stress management, and classroom focus. Beyond the school year, Holy Cross Health runs its Smart Moves summer program, offering skills training, nutrition education, and healthy decision-making tools to at-risk youth. Held in partnership with the South Florida Hunger Coalition, these events provided 21,950 meals and fresh produce via a Mobile Food Pantry. Youth also learned how to prepare simple, healthy meals—skills they'll carry for life. Whether it's through screenings, education, or summer engagement, Holy Cross Health is deeply committed to cultivating a healthier future—one child, one classroom, and one community at a time.

### STIRRING UP WELLNESS—BUILDING LIFELONG HABITS ONE HEALTHY BITE AT A TIME

During a Smart Moves session, students immersed themselves in a hands-on healthy eating activity—preparing yogurt parfaits with Greek yogurt, fresh berries, and crunchy granola. But this wasn't just about making a snack; it was an experience designed to cultivate lifelong habits around nutrition and self-care.

As one young girl exclaimed with radiant joy, **“This is the best day ever!”**—her reaction captured the heart of the program: the empowerment that comes from learning new skills and making choices that nurture both body and spirit. For many participants, access to health education and hands-on learning is limited. The Smart Moves program bridges that gap, offering a supportive environment where children are encouraged to grow, thrive, and take ownership of their well-being.

# INVESTING IN OUR COMMUNITIES

## Advancing Health Equity Through Food Access and Community Empowerment

Holy Cross Health's most recent Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) identified food access as the second most urgent health concern—closely following mental health. The report revealed that 8% of the local population experiences food insecurity, a figure exceeding the state average. Contributing factors include limited access to nutritious food in areas without grocery stores, as well as widespread gaps in nutrition education and cooking skills—conditions that contribute to chronic illnesses such as Type 2 diabetes and hypertension.

**To address these inequities, Holy Cross Health allocated \$330,000 in FY24 matching funds to support the Transforming Communities Initiative (TCI) in Fort Lauderdale's 33311 Sistrunk neighborhood. In partnership with the South Florida Hunger Coalition—a leader in hunger relief, nutrition advancement, and food security—these funds power innovative, collaborative solutions and push forward policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) change.**



At the heart of TCI is REACH (Racial Equity Advancing Community Health), a project dedicated to confronting the legacy of systemic racism that continues to influence access to healthcare and nutritious food in underserved communities. The REACH Coalition is comprised of local community members who meet regularly to discuss food injustice and sustainable solutions. The membership provides outreach and education, participates in local advocacy, and works to bring reliable nutritious options into their food desert.



Chef Sharon Allen

# INVESTING IN OUR COMMUNITIES

## Advancing Health Equity Through Food Access and Community Empowerment

### FY24 REACH HIGHLIGHTS:

- **PENNY TAX FOR FOOD SECURITY.** Community support was strong for a proposed “penny tax” to fund food security initiatives. REACH members held meetings with the Broward County Supervisor of Elections and County Commissioners. Despite advocacy efforts, the Commission declined to pursue the measure.
- **MOBILE MARKET EXPANSION.** In partnership with Commissioner Pamela Beasley-Pittman, REACH successfully reinstated the Mobile Market at Lincoln Park, previously banned from operating there. The market offered bi-weekly fresh produce distributions and on-site cooking demonstrations that empowered residents to prepare healthy meals. Approximately 80 families received nourishing foods through this effort.
- **VOTER ENGAGEMENT AND REGISTRATION.** REACH collaborated with organizations such as the League of Women Voters and the Broward County Supervisor of Elections to register voters and ensure ballot access. Members addressed barriers like transportation to support civic participation and elevate community voices.

- **SUN BUCKS ADVOCACY AND LOCAL ACTION TO SUPPORT FOOD SECURITY.** REACH members actively advocated for the SUN Bucks (Summer EBT) program - an initiative that offers \$120 in summer grocery benefits to eligible families when school meal programs are unavailable. Their campaign included signature drives, outreach to congressional representatives, and a robust letter-writing initiative to state legislators. Although the effort did not yield the desired outcome, it powerfully underscored the urgent need for policies that support food-insecure children.

In response to the setback, the South Florida Hunger Coalition and REACH Coalition quickly mobilized. They secured a grant from the Children’s Services Council (CSC) to launch Mobile Summer Breakspot sites, providing breakfast, lunch, and snacks at nine locations—serving 250 children and youth ages 5 to 16. A total of 21,950 meals were distributed. Importantly, all meals were prepared by a local chef and caterer, creating a dual impact: nourishing young people while also supporting neighborhood-based businesses and boosting economic opportunities within the community.

Looking ahead, the REACH Coalition is renewing its advocacy to the Florida State Legislature in support of Summer EBT. Encouragingly, CSC has already approved a renewal of the Mobile Summer Breakspot grant for FY2024–2025 and increased the budget (\$154,000) by an additional \$14,000 to expand food support efforts.

# INVESTING IN OUR COMMUNITIES

## Prescribing Nourishment: Where Every Bite Becomes a Step Toward Healing—Holy Cross Health Launches Food Is Medicine

Launching a Food is Medicine program marks a powerful step toward treating nutrition as an essential part of healthcare. By connecting patients with healthy food, nutrition education, and support services, we can improve chronic disease outcomes, address food insecurity, and promote health equity. Rooted in compassion and clinical insight, this program empowers individuals to heal from the inside out—one meal at a time.

**The Food Is Medicine approach directly targets the root causes of obesity and diabetes by treating nutrition as a key element of medical care—not just a lifestyle choice. Starting programming at a local library, the staff of the CHWB team are anxiously awaiting the opening of their Teaching Kitchen in 2025.**

When individuals face food insecurity or lack access to nutritious, culturally familiar foods, managing chronic conditions like obesity and type 2 diabetes becomes incredibly challenging. A diet high in ultra-processed foods and low in fiber-rich produce can lead to weight gain, insulin resistance, and poor glycemic control.

**By prescribing medically tailored meals, offering produce prescriptions, or connecting patients with cooking and nutrition education, Food Is Medicine programs:**

- Improve blood sugar control in people with diabetes
- Promote healthy weight loss in those with obesity
- Reduce reliance on medications over time
- Lower rates of hospitalization and emergency care visits

This model also acknowledges the social drivers of health—like income, access, culture, and education—that contribute to chronic disease. It shifts care from reactive to proactive, helping people build long-term habits that nourish both body and dignity.

More than a concept the Holy Cross Health Food is Medicine program strategy rooted in equity—meeting patients where they are, acknowledging barriers like cost and access, and treating food as a powerful tool for healing and prevention.



CHWB staff members: Dylan Chang, Candace Bustamonte, Jennifer Sawyer, and Sammi Willins



Mark Doyle, CEO, Virginia Wiley, Jolene Mullins (South Florida Hunger Coalition), Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz, Kim Saiswick, and Michael Farver (South Florida Hunger Coalition)

# INVESTING IN OUR COMMUNITIES

## Nourishing Colleagues, Strengthening Community: A Testament to Care in Action

The Community Health & Well-Being department at Holy Cross Health has taken a proactive approach to supporting colleagues and their families through a bi-monthly food distribution program. This initiative aims to ease the financial burden caused by rising food costs in the U.S. by providing essential items that contribute to healthy, balanced meals.

**Over the past fiscal year, the program has made a meaningful impact, reaching approximately 7,256 individuals, including 4,316 adults, 2,249 children, and 691 seniors.** These figures underscore both the widespread need and the program's vital role in promoting colleague health and well-being.

**Each distribution event is thoughtfully planned to ensure the nutritional value of the food provided. Typical bags include:**

- **NON-PERISHABLE STAPLES:** rice, oatmeal, soup, canned fish or chicken
- **FRESH PRODUCE:** carrots, onions, apples
- **FROZEN PROTEINS:** whole chickens, fish fillets, shrimp
- **ADDITIONAL ITEMS:** nuts (walnuts or pecans), milk or juice, and even pet food for household animals

Feedback from colleagues has been overwhelmingly positive. Many have shared how the program has helped them better manage household expenses while maintaining access to nutritious food—especially important during times of economic strain.

The success of this initiative is a testament to the dedication of Holy Cross Health employees, whose efforts in organizing, packing, and distributing food have been instrumental. Beyond providing immediate relief, the program fosters a strong sense of community, compassion, and solidarity among staff.

## FROM OUR HANDS TO THEIR HOMES: SUPPORTING EACH OTHER THROUGH SHARED STRENGTH

The Holy Cross Health food distribution program is a powerful reflection of the organization's deep commitment to its own colleague community and their well-being.

By tackling food insecurity and encouraging healthy eating habits, the program is making a meaningful, lasting impact on the lives of colleagues and their families. As the initiative grows,



Holy Cross Health remains dedicated to finding new and innovative ways to support the community and expand the reach of its mission.

Community Health & Well-Being team members

# INVESTING IN OUR COMMUNITIES

## Innovating Community Care: Holy Cross Health's HIV Self-Testing Initiative

With Broward County ranking first in new HIV and STI infections in 2024, the need for innovative and accessible prevention strategies is urgent. Rising to the challenge, Holy Cross Health is transforming community outreach through its HIV Self-Testing Program—offering confidential, stigma-free testing options across the county.

Led by a State Certified HIV Peer Specialist, the program empowers individuals with education, resources, and compassionate support. This peer-led approach helps demystify the healthcare journey and encourages treatment adherence. With medical advancements, people living with HIV can maintain viral suppression and enjoy long, healthy lives—an outcome made more achievable through programs like this. Holy Cross Health's presence in the community is deeply rooted and intentional.

**In 2024, the organization participated in 51 events and held 2,891 service-focused conversations, amplifying awareness around HIV testing, prevention, and the broader spectrum of community-based health services.** This outreach extends to training future healthcare leaders, including educational sessions with NOVA University Ophthalmology students, who gain firsthand insight into patient-centered HIV care and stigma reduction.

Further supporting public health, Holy Cross Health hosted 57 vaccine events—administering COVID-19, Hepatitis C, Meningitis, Flu, and MPOX vaccines to 693 adults at community-based locations. These efforts build stronger immunity in the population while removing access barriers. Importantly, Holy Cross Health is addressing growing HIV diagnoses among older adults. With 55% of those living with HIV now over age 50, the organization is prioritizing tailored outreach and care for this aging demographic.

By meeting people where they are—at bars, colleges, community centers, and local health fairs—Holy Cross Health is breaking down stigma and increasing visibility. These interactions aren't just about services; they're about connection, trust, and redefining the model for equitable, accessible care.

### BEYOND CARE: BUILDING TRUST, UPLIFTING VOICES, AND ADVANCING EQUITY TOGETHER

The work we do at Community Health and Well-Being is not just about providing healthcare; it is about building trust, fostering inclusivity, and making a lasting impact on the community. The positive feedback and gratitude from the families we serve inspire us to continue our mission with dedication and passion.



Von Biggs, CHWB Community Coordinator

# INVESTING IN OUR COMMUNITIES

## Holy Cross Health FOCUS Program

The Holy Cross Health Frontlines of Communities in the United States (FOCUS) program is part of a national initiative spanning over 85 cities, aimed at reducing health disparities and improving access to care. This public health effort focuses on enhancing health equity by addressing blood-borne infections such as HIV and hepatitis C (HCV). In response to Florida's rising syphilis rates, the Governor's Office has also partnered with the program to combat the current syphilis epidemic.

**At Holy Cross Health, the FOCUS program emphasizes routine screening for these infectious diseases within the Emergency Department (ED). Its successful implementation has required close collaboration among ED clinicians, the Laboratory, Information and Technology Services, and the Community Health and Well-Being department. A FOCUS physician champion, along with program leaders and Community Health Workers (CHWs), ensures that individuals who test positive are promptly diagnosed and connected to appropriate care.**

The program also partners with the Florida Department of Health in Broward County, Holy Cross Medical Group physicians, and various community organizations to apply best practices for timely care and treatment. By aligning with public health guidelines from the CDC and the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, FOCUS helps identify undiagnosed cases and link patients to essential treatment and prevention services.

In addition to identifying new cases, the program also reconnects individuals who have fallen out of care, addressing social determinants of health and helping to remove barriers that prevent access to consistent treatment.

Given that South Florida has one of the highest rates of new infections in the country—and is currently experiencing a syphilis epidemic—the Holy Cross Health FOCUS program is poised to make a significant and lasting impact on public health in the region.

## GUIDED BY COMPASSION: HELPING JENNA NAVIGATE TOWARD HEALING & HOPE

When Jenna, a transgender woman, arrived at the Emergency Department concerned about possible STI exposure, she was anxious, uninsured, and spoke limited English. She was tested through the FOCUS program and discharged.

Later, her syphilis test came back positive. The FOCUS program leader, Jose Javier, reached out to ensure she received follow-up care—but she had not. Jenna explained she was unfamiliar with the healthcare system and had been turned away before due to lacking identification. With compassion and persistence, Jose guided Jenna to a local STD clinic, where she received the



Jose Javier, BA FOCUS leader

treatment she needed. He also connected her with a community-based organization that now provides her with ongoing support, resources, and a sense of safety and belonging.

# INVESTING IN OUR COMMUNITIES

## From Crisis to Connection: How Peer Support Is Transforming Opioid Response in the ER

Through membership in the United Way of Broward County's Commission on Behavioral Health & Drug Prevention, Holy Cross Health seized the opportunity to apply for a Broward County Department of Health grant aimed at addressing the opioid crisis. The resulting Peer Opioid Program, launched in the Emergency Room at Holy Cross Health in Fort Lauderdale, is designed to modernize response protocols for patients with opioid use disorder.

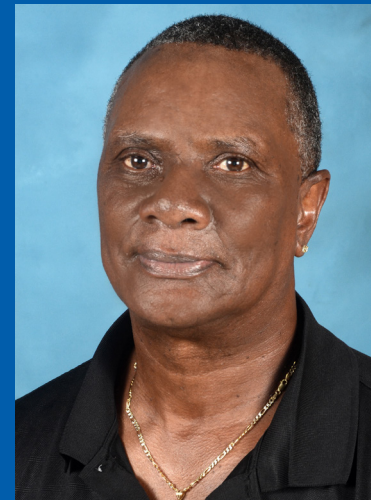
As a grant recipient, Holy Cross implemented national best practices—introducing universal screening, expanded naloxone access, referral pathways to treatment, and most notably, Peer Specialists. These non-clinical team members bring lived experience to the bedside, offering support, guidance, and crucial links to care and recovery services.

**Since its launch in April 2021, the program has reached over 1,500 individuals through screenings and peer-led intervention.**

**With approximately 70% accepting treatment referrals,** the program is making a meaningful impact in helping patients begin their recovery journeys from within the ER.

### Why do I love Being a Peer Specialist?

**Being able to give advice to those who are still searching for answers to their addiction. To continue to encourage and inspire with a message of hope from both book knowledge and my own personal life experience. But most of all letting them know that you can have a better way of life if you choose.**



Johnny Green  
CHWB Peer Specialist

# AWARDS AND ACCREDITATION



Holy Cross Health is dedicated to delivering remarkable care to our community.

Please see some of our accolades below.



FISCAL YEAR 2024

# Community Health & Well-Being Impact Report



A Member of Trinity Health