

Ascension Mercy

FY23 Annual Hospital Community Benefits Plan Report



Ascension



The purpose of this report is to describe how the hospital meets the requirements outlined in the State of Illinois Community Benefits Act and Hospital Uninsured Patient Discount Act. This annual report of community benefits is public information, filed with the Attorney General and available to the public on request from the Attorney General.

Ascension Mercy

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Hospital EIN/Tax ID: 36-4195126

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Introduction

As one of the leading non-profit and Catholic health systems in the United States, Ascension is committed to delivering compassionate, personalized care to all, with special attention to persons living in poverty and those most vulnerable.

Ascension Mercy

As a Ministry of the Catholic Church, Ascension Mercy is a non-profit hospital that provides medical care to Aurora and the surrounding communities. Ascension Mercy is part of Ascension Illinois which operates 15 hospital campuses and 230 sites of care. The organization includes more than 600 providers as part of Ascension Medical Group, as well as 17,000 associates.

Ascension Mercy has been meeting the health & wellness needs of Kane County residents for more than 100 years. Founded by the Sisters of Mercy, this acute care hospital continues to carry out its mission in the communities it serves. Founded in 1911, Mercy is a faith-based, full-service hospital with a Level II Trauma Center, a Primary Stroke Center, and a state-of-the-art outpatient surgery center with minimally invasive robotics technology. We provide comprehensive care in a wide range of healthcare needs, including heart and vascular, behavioral health, digestive, orthopedics, women's health and more

For more information about Ascension Mercy, visit healthcare.ascension.org.

Ascension Mission Statement

Rooted in the loving ministry of Jesus as healer, we commit ourselves to serving all persons with special attention to those who are poor and vulnerable. Our Catholic health ministry is dedicated to spiritually centered, holistic care which sustains and improves the health of individuals and communities. We are advocates for a compassionate and just society through our actions and our words.

This statement was adopted on April 1, 2022.

Community Benefits Report

Community Benefits Provided

Below are the financial community benefits provided by the hospital during the fiscal year of July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023.

Total Financial Assistance (Emergency & Non-Emergency Care at cost)	\$5,878,616
Emergency Department Financial Assistance (at cost)	\$1,293,680
All other Community Benefits including: Government Sponsored Care, Language Assistance Services, Cash & In-Kind Donations, Health Professions Education, Research, Subsidized Health Services, Total Volunteer Services (employee & non-employee), other Government-Sponsored Program Services, Bad Debts, Other Community Benefits not detailed in the Annual Non-Profit Hospital Community Benefits Plan Report instructions.	\$25,878,733
Total Community Benefits for Ascension Mercy	\$31,757,349
<i>In addition to hospital community benefits, Ascension Illinois non-hospital entities provided \$321,475 in community benefits in the fiscal year.</i>	

Other Benefits:

Listed above are "Other Community Benefits." These are benefits not detailed in the Annual Non-Profit Hospital Community Benefits Plan Report instructions.

Other Community Benefits categories include Community Building Activities and Community Benefit Operations. The IRS 990 Schedule H instructions and the Catholic Health Association (CHA) publication, A Guide for Planning & Reporting Community Benefit, both identify these categories in their materials.

Listed below is the detail associated with these categories.

Community-Building Activities

Community-building activities improve the community's health and safety by addressing the root causes of health problems, such as poverty, homelessness and environmental hazards. These activities strengthen the community's capacity to promote the health and well-being of its residents by

offering the expertise and resources of the health care organization. Costs for these activities include cash and in-kind donations and expenses for the development of a variety of programs and partnerships. This category includes activities such as:

- Physical improvements and housing
- Economic development
- Community support
- Environmental improvements
- Community leadership development & training
- Coalition building
- Advocacy for community health improvement & safety
- Workforce development

Community-building is documented on Part II of the IRS 990 Schedule H.

Community Benefit Operations

Community benefit operations include costs associated with assigned staff and community health needs and/or assets assessments, as well as other costs associated with community benefit strategy and operations. This category includes items such as:

- Assigned staff
- Community health needs/health assets assessments
- Other resources

Community benefit operations are documents on Part 1 7a of the IRS 990 Schedule H.

Financial Assistance

As part of our faith-based mission, Ascension Illinois is dedicated to helping the most vulnerable and treating everyone with compassion, dignity and respect. Financial assistance reflects our commitment to and reverence for individual human dignity and the common good, our special concern for and solidarity with persons living in poverty and other vulnerable persons, and our commitment to distributive justice and stewardship.

A copy of our Financial Assistance Policy can be found here:

https://healthcare.ascension.org/-/media/healthcare/financial-assistance/illinois/fap/runningfile_ilchi_english_financial-assistance-policy.pdf

During the fiscal year, Ascension Mercy collected the following data on financial assistance applications:

<i>Facility Name</i>	<i>Approval and Denial Rates (Data for FY23)</i>	Number of Applications
Ascension Mercy	Total submitted (complete & incomplete)	162
	Approved	105
	Denied	57

<i>Facility Name</i>	<i>Financial Assistance Denial Reason (Data for time period of 7-1-22 thru 6-30-23)</i>	Total
Ascension Mercy	Missing Supporting Documents	50
	Over Income	3
	Incomplete Application	2
	Non-compliant with Medicaid	2

<i>Facility Name</i>	<i>Gender</i>	Total
Ascension Mercy	Female	49
	Male	48
	Not available	32
	Not Provided	33

<i>Facility Name</i>	<i>Preferred Language</i>	COUNTA of Last Name
Ascension Mercy	SPANISH	62
	NOT PROVIDED	57
	NOT AVAILABLE	32
	UKRAINIAN	0

ENGLISH	10
ROMANIAN	1
ARABIC/KURDISH	0
MONGOLIAN	0
MANDARIN CHINESE	0
FRENCH/ SWAHILI/LINGALA	0
FRENCH	0
ENGLISH/SPANISH	0

<i>Facility Name</i>	<i>Race</i>	Total
Ascension Mercy	Not Provided	99
	Not Available	33
	White	26
	Black or African American	2
	Asian Indian	1
	Other Pacific Islander	0
	Native Hawaiian	0
	Other Asian	0
	Filipino	0
	Chinese	0
	American Indian or Alaska Native	1

<i>Facility Name</i>	<i>Ethnicity</i>	Total
Ascension Mercy	Not Provided	67
	Not Available	33
	Hispanic-Latino/a-or Spanish origin	21
	Mexican-Mexican American-Chicano/a	22
	Another Hispanic-Latino/a or Spanish Origin	19
	Puerto Rican	0

Community Health Needs Assessments (CHNA)

Federal law requires tax-exempt hospitals to conduct periodic Community Health Needs Assessments (CHNAs) and adopt plans to meet assessed needs. In order to comply with federal tax-exemption requirements in the Affordable Care Act, a tax-exempt hospital facility must: 1) conduct a community health needs assessment every three years, 2) adopt an implementation strategy, and 3) report how identified needs not being addressed by the hospital are still being targeted by other community organizations.

Each Ascension Health hospital ministry follows the following guidelines for Community Health Needs Assessments (CHNAs):


- Each ministry will conduct a CHNA every three years by involving community partners and members representing diverse sectors within the community.
- There will be an annual review and update of the ministry’s CHNA Implementation Strategy highlighting the outcomes of community benefit programs that target prioritized needs.
- Monthly reporting of community benefit is required to local and system leadership.





Complete Community Health Needs Assessment reports for each hospital are made publicly available at: <https://healthcare.ascension.org/chna> and paper versions can be requested at Ascension Mercy’s Administration Office.

Prioritized Community Needs

Included in Code Section 501(r)(3) is the requirement that hospitals must provide a description of the process and criteria used to determine the most significant health needs of the community identified through the CHNA, along with a description of the process and criteria used to determine the prioritized needs to be addressed by the hospital. Accordingly, Ascension Mercy used a phased prioritization approach to identify the needs with the hospital community. The first step was to determine the broader set of identified needs. Through the CHNA assessment, identified needs were then narrowed to a set of significant needs which were determined most crucial for community stakeholders to address.

Following the completion of the CHNA assessment, significant needs were further narrowed down to a set of prioritized needs that the hospital will address within the implementation strategy. To arrive at the prioritized needs, Ascension Mercy used the following process and criteria:

	<p>Scope of Problem:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How severe or prevalent is this issue in the community? • How many are impacted?
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	Disparities & Equity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there health disparities that exist? • Can we address those in an impactful way?
	Feasibility: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is our capacity to make progress (staffing resources, financial resources, other support, etc.)? • Are there known interventions that exist?
	Momentum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there community readiness and/or political will to address this issue?
	Alignment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do we have community partners that we can align with on this issue? • Do we need to build new relationships?

Preliminary community need prioritizations recommendations were presented to a group of internal and external stakeholders for their review. Recommendations were discussed and voted upon to determine the prioritized needs for the hospital community.

Following the completion of the current CHNA, Ascension Mercy has selected the prioritized needs outlined below for its Implementation Strategy. Ascension has defined “prioritized needs” as the significant needs which have been prioritized by the hospital to address through the three-year CHNA cycle:

- **Behavioral Health (*Mental & Behavioral Health*)-**
 - From the secondary data scoring results, Behavioral Health was identified as a top health need in Kane County. This health topic includes mental health, mental health disorders, and substance abuse. There are several indicators in these topic areas that raise concern for Kane County. Compared to other counties in Illinois, Kane County has higher rates of hospitalizations and ER visits due to adult alcohol use. Teen alcohol and marijuana use, although decreasing in recent years, is also higher than most other counties in Illinois. Additionally, Kane County has higher liquor store density than most Illinois and U.S. Counties. Mental Health and Mental Disorders was a top health need

from Community Survey, Focus Group, and Forces of Change Assessment participants (primary Data). Mental health care, mental health resources, and the availability of mental health providers were frequently cited as disproportionate to community need. Cost, availability of appointments, and navigation and/or knowledge about available services were all mentioned as barriers to care.

- **Access to Health Care Services (*Access to Care*) -**
 - From the secondary data scoring results, access to health services was identified to be a top health need in Kane County. Although Kane County's overall score in this area is relatively low, Kane County falls behind the State of Illinois and other counties for primary care provider rates, clinical care ranking, and adults with health insurance. Of note, the primary care provider rate is decreasing and the percentage of adults with health insurance is below both the Illinois state value and the Healthy People 2030 objective. Access to Health Services was a top health need identified from Community Survey, Focus Group, Forces of Change Assessment as well as Public Health System Assessment participants. Cost of care was a common barrier mentioned across these primary data sources. This included general cost to access care, lack of funds for purchasing needed medication as well as being uninsured or underinsured. Recent health facility closings and delays due to COVID-19 were also specifically mentioned as barriers to accessing care. The need for improved/increased culturally competent, accessible health care offered in languages that are spoken in the community was a theme that surfaced in the primary data as well. Cost and affordability were barriers.
- **Immunizations & Infectious Disease (*Communicable Diseases*) -**
 - From the secondary data scoring results, Immunizations & Infectious Diseases were identified to be a top health need in Kane County. The secondary data reveal that sexually transmitted infections (STIs), specifically syphilis and chlamydia, are on the rise in Kane County. Additionally, Kane county's vaccination rates for pneumonia among adults are among the worst in Illinois. Overcrowding in households, which has been shown to ease transmission of infectious diseases like COVID-19, is of concern in Kane County as well.
- **Nutrition, Exercise & Weight (*Diet & Exercise*) -**
 - From the secondary data scoring results, Exercise, Nutrition, & Weight was identified to be a top health need in Kane County. Access to grocery stores and healthy foods are important for decreasing risk of chronic diseases, such as obesity and heart disease, and also help improve mental health. Although the overall topic score for exercise, nutrition, and weight was low for Kane County, Kane County falls behind in some important indicators under this topic. Namely, Kane County is among the worst in Illinois and the U.S. for SNAP certified stores, children with access to grocery stores, and grocery store density. Existing and increasing food insecurity due to COVID-19, access to healthy foods, and poor nutrition were all nutritional themes from primary data. Obesity and its contribution to chronic disease among residents in Kane County was of concern

as well. Additionally, sedentary lifestyles and lack of exercise were also common points of discussion. The South Planning Area had a higher percentage of respondents who reported this food insecurity challenge (34.0%) compared to Kane County at 30.6%. The Northern and Central Planning Areas fell under the Kane County value at 27.2% and 27.0% respectively.

Ascension Mercy understands the importance of all the health needs of the community and is committed to playing an active role in improving the health of the people in the communities it serves. For the purposes of this implementation strategy, Ascension Mercy has chosen to focus its efforts on the priorities listed above.

Acute Community Concern Acknowledgement

A CHNA and Implementation Strategies (IS) offer a construct for identifying and addressing needs within the community(s) it serves. However, unforeseen events or situations, which may be severe and sudden, may affect a community. At Ascension, this is referred to as an acute community concern. This could describe anything from a health crisis (e.g., COVID-19), water poisoning, environmental events (e.g., hurricane, flood) or other event that suddenly impacts a community. In which case, if adjustments to an IS are necessary, the hospital will develop documentation, in the form of a SBAR (Situation-Background-Assessment-Response) evaluation summary, to notify key internal and external stakeholders of those possible adjustments.

Written Comments

This annual report has been made available to the public and is open for public comment. Questions or comments about this implementation strategy can be submitted via the email:

ilarl.communitybenefit@ascension.org

Community Implementation Strategies

These strategies and action plans represent where the hospital will focus its community efforts over the next three years, July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2024. While these remain a priority, the hospital will continue to offer additional programs and services to meet the needs of the community, with special attention to those who are poor and vulnerable.

Behavioral Health Strategy:

1. Provide access to Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU) services to Mercy community residents.
2. Continue offering Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training for Mercy community residents.

Ascension Mercy's Role:

Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU) Services

Mercy will begin providing CSU services. The CSU is an observation unit containing 6-pods for people who are experiencing a mental health crisis whose needs cannot be met safely in a residential service setting.

Mental Health First Aid

Saint Joseph Elgin and its community partners will continue to offer Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training to the community. MHFA trainings aim to reduce the stigma associated with mental illness and improve the coordination of mental health care. MHFA trains community residents and first responders to recognize, respond, and seek assistance for signs of mental illness and substance abuse.

Key Collaborators Or Resources:

Kane Health Counts Executive Committee • Kane Health Counts Behavioral Health Action Team • Mercy Behavioral Health Services • Fox Valley River Initiative • Community-Based Organizations • Local Physicians • Faith Institutions • School Districts • City of Aurora First Responders

Anticipated Impact:

• Increased access to substance use disorder services • Increased mental health education for professionals and community members • Increased knowledge of substance use disorder services and mental health education

Measured Impact:

Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU):

• Total Number of Assessments Conducted • Total Number of Individuals Served • Total Payor Mix Percentage • Report REaL (Race, Ethnicity and Language) data

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Trainings • Total Number of Participants Completing MHFA Training • Increased Knowledge for > 80% of Participants • Total Number of MHFA Workshops • Report REaL (Race, Ethnicity and Language) data

Next Steps:

Establish Mercy CSU services committee • Establish Mercy CSU services timeline • Identify potential community partners for CSU referrals • Identify target audiences for trainings including virtual and hybrid offerings • Establish MHFA calendar of trainings including dates, times, locations • Promote availability of training within target audiences • Monitor work, evaluate progress and report outcomes

Access to Care Strategy:

1. Continue offering the Dispensary of Hope program to Mercy community residents in need of medication assistance.
2. Continue offering Diabetes Prevention Program education Mercy community residents at risk for Type 2 diabetes or with pre-diabetes.
3. Continue to provide assistance for individuals identified as potentially eligible for public health insurance coverage by facilitating their application for government-sponsored healthcare coverage.

Ascension Mercy's Role:
Dispensary of Hope Program

This program delivers critical medicine-free of cost- to individuals who need it most but cannot afford it. This is a free pharmacy program for low income or uninsured individuals.

A-List Diabetes Prevention Program

Mercy will continue to offer the Prevent T2 Diabetes program to the community. This program offers education on prevention skills for those at risk for Type 2 diabetes.

Public Health Insurance Assistance Enrollment Services

Mercy will continue to provide assistance for public healthcare coverage enrollment.

Key Collaborators Or Resources:

Kane Health Counts Executive Committee • Kane Health Counts Access to Health Care Action Team • Kane County Health Department • Mercy Pharmacy Services • Mercy Outpatient Pharmacy • Mercy Center for Diabetic Wellness • Local Physicians • Federally Qualified Health Centers • Community-Based Organizations • Faith Institutions

Anticipated Impact:

• Increased access to medications • Increased access to diabetes prevention education services and resources • Increased enrollment of eligible individuals for public healthcare coverage

Measured Impact:

Dispensary of Hope • Total Number of Individuals Served • Total Number of Prescriptions Filled • Report REaL (Race, Ethnicity and Language) data

Diabetes Prevention Program • Total Number of Individuals Served • Total Number of Participants with 5-7% Weight Loss • Percent of Participants Who Complete 150 Minutes of Weekly Exercise • Report REaL (Race, Ethnicity and Language) data

Public Health Insurance Assistance Enrollment Services • Total Number of Individuals Enrolled

Next Steps:

- Identify community partners for Dispensary of Hope program referrals • Increase use of Social Media to help promote Dispensary of Hope program • Identify target audiences for DPP workshops including virtual and hybrid • Promote availability of DPP program to target audiences • Identify locations, events, organizations to host PHI assistance enrollment services • Monitor work, evaluate progress, report outcomes

Immunizations & Infectious Disease Strategy:

1. Offer access to immunization services for Mercy community residents.
2. Establish support for partnerships, programs, events, projects and initiatives that address immunizations and infectious disease within the Mercy community.

Ascension Mercy's Role:

Vax Support Services

Mercy will provide leadership, advocacy and in-kind vaccinator support services for vaccination clinics in the community.

Flu Fighter Program

Mercy will provide influenza vaccination clinics that are accessible for poor and vulnerable individuals in the most underserved communities. The Flu Fighter program offers influenza vaccination clinics that are accessible in the community.

Key Collaborators Or Resources:

- Kane Health Counts Executive Committee • Kane Health Counts Immunization & Infectious Disease Action Team • Kane County Health Department • Mercy Community Health Services • Community-Based Organizations • Food Pantries: Aurora Interfaith Food Pantry, Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry and Salvation Army • Faith Institutions • Fox Valley Health & Faith Network

Anticipated Impact:

- Increased access to immunization services • Increased number of vaccines administered to poor and vulnerable individuals • Prevention of infectious disease • Improved health status

Measured Impact:

- Total number of Influenza Vaccines Administered • Total number of Vaccination Clinics Offered • Total number of Vaccine Types Administered • Report REaL (Race, Ethnicity and Language) data

Next Steps:

1. Establish a Health Flu Vaccination Committee. 2. Identify target audiences for Flu Vaccination Clinics in the community. 3. Identify Community Partners to host Flu Vaccination Clinics (health fairs, faith institutions, food pantries, social service organizations, schools) 4. Identify internal resources for supporting community requests 5. Establish Mercy Flu Vaccination Clinics calendar of events. 6. Monitor work, evaluate progress and report outcomes

Nutrition, Exercise & Weight Strategy:

1. Increase opportunities for community members in the Mercy community to access Nutrition, Exercise & Weight resources.
2. Establish support for partnerships, programs, events, projects and initiatives that address Nutrition, Exercise & Weight resources.

Ascension Mercy's Role:**Backpack Program**

Mercy will partner with Northern Illinois Food Bank (NIFB) to provide food access for children and families in the Mercy community and school districts. This program provides backpacks filled with food for children & families to have access to food during the weekends.

Aurora Farmers Markets

Mercy will partner with the City of Aurora to increase access to fresh produce targeting SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) recipients.

Meals on Wheels

Mercy will extend Meals on Wheels services to individuals who are homebound or who cannot afford the cost of meal delivery. This program targets seniors and poor and vulnerable individuals in the most underserved communities in need of meals that are delivered to their homes.

Blessing Box Micro-Pantry

Mercy will continue providing food access to community members through the micro pantry.

Access Fox Fitness Program

Mercy will partner with Fox Valley Park District to offer Fox Fitness scholarship memberships to youth and adults. This program provides access to the Copley Fitness Facility for youth and adults who are unable to afford membership dues. This program also provides fitness education, nutrition education and health screenings. The program requires maintaining active membership status and recording minutes of weekly exercise activity.

Key Collaborators Or Resources:

Kane Health Counts Executive Committee • Kane Health Counts Nutrition, Exercise & Weight (N.E.W) Action Team • Kane County Health Department • Mercy Community Health Services • Mercy Center

for Diabetic Wellness • Mercy Volunteer Services • Mercy Food and Nutrition Services • Local Physicians • Federally Qualified Health Centers • Community-Based Organizations • Northern Illinois Food Bank • School District 131 and School District 129 • Food Pantries: Aurora Interfaith Food Pantry, Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry and Salvation Army • City of Aurora

Anticipated Impact:

• Increased access to healthy food • Reduce food insecurity • Increased physical activity

Measured Impact:

Backpack Program • Total Number of Families Served • Total Pounds of Food Provided

Mercy Farmers Markets: • Total Number Served • Total LINK Card Users Served • Total Number LINK-SNAP Benefits Spent • Total Number Nutrition, Exercise & Weight Education Toolkits

Blessing Box Micro-Pantry • Total Number of Meals Provided • Total Pounds of Food Provided

Access Fox Fitness Program • Total Number of Individuals Served • Percent of Participants Who Complete 150 Minutes of Weekly Exercise • Report REAL (Race, Ethnicity and Language) data

Next Steps:

1. Establish a Food Access Committee.
2. Identify target individuals/families for the school backpack program.
3. Establish a Calendar of Events for Farmers Markets activities and health education topics.
4. Establish food-drive event dates and potential community partners to support micro-pantry
5. Establish Access Fox Fitness program eligibility and promote the program throughout the community
6. Monitor work, evaluate progress and report outcomes

Complete Implementation Strategy reports for each hospital are made publicly available at: <https://healthcare.ascension.org/chna> and paper versions can be requested at Ascension Mercy's Administration Office.

Community Implementation Strategy & Health Equity Progress

During the fiscal year, the following was progress achieved on its implementation strategies or other activities the hospital is undertaking to address health equity, reduce health disparities and improve community health. Please note this list is not intended to be comprehensive of all activities the hospital is undertaking, but to highlight initiatives of interest.

Community Need:	Strategy & Progress
Behavioral Health	<p>Strategy: Crisis Stabilization Unit & Mental Health First Aid Training</p> <p>Progress: During the tax year, the Crisis Stabilization Unit opened and has assisted 63 persons. Work continues by the identified committee to promote and coordinate referrals. During FY23, promotion of the availability of the Mental Health First Aid Training continued but yielded no trainings.</p>
Access to Health Services	<p>Strategy: Dispensary of Hope Program, Diabetes Prevention, Public Health Insurance Assistance</p> <p>Progress: During the tax year, community partners were identified to promote the Dispensary of Hope Program to provide free or discounted prescriptions. In FY23, 55 patients & 127 prescriptions were filled. The Diabetes Prevention Program was sunset during the tax year due to financial recovery efforts and the closure of the hospital's Center for Diabetic Wellness. Patients and community members were referred to local community diabetes education programs.</p>
Immunizations & Infectious Disease	<p>Strategy: Vax Support, Flu Fighter Program</p> <p>Progress: During the tax year, 500 persons were provided with free flu vaccines at 18 community clinics that were provided by the hospital to underserved communities. There were no additional requests for vaccine support during the tax year.</p>
Nutrition, Exercise & Weight	<p>Strategy: Backpack Program, Aurora Farmers Markets, Blessing Box Micro Pantry, Access Fox Fitness Program, Meals on Wheels</p> <p>Progress: During the tax year, the backpack program served 501 children and their families with 600 pounds of food. Three hundred-thirteen persons were assisted with free produce at the Aurora's Farmers Markets. The Mercy Blessing Box Micro Pantry provided 2,004 meals in FY23. One hundred fifteen persons were provided access to park programs through the Access Fox Fitness Program in FY23. The Meals on Wheels</p>

	<p>program provided 628 meals in collaboration with the Main Baptist Church Feed Thy Neighbor Program. collaboration with the Main Baptist Church Feed Thy Neighbor Program.</p>
<p>Community Support (Investing)</p>	<p>Strategy: Standardization of Community Investment Alignment Progress: Guidelines for community investment criteria to guide outgoing contributions to the community were established across Ascension hospitals late in the fiscal year that became effective July 1, 2023. A system-wide goal of 90% of all community investments must align with at least two of six criteria points including: Strategic Priority, Community Health Needs Assessments, Social Determinants of Health, Identified health disparities within the community, health equity improvement and Laudato Si’ environmental improvements.</p>
<p>Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI)</p>	<p>Strategy: ABIDE Framework Progress: At Ascension, the ABIDE (Appreciation - Belongingness - Inclusivity - Diversity - Equity) framework is used to help uncover what we need to review, dismantle, or rebuild in our policies, practices and ways of working so that we can eliminate what contributes to or perpetuates disparities, and inequities, including systemic racism. This work is ongoing and begins with leadership commitment through words and actions.</p> <p>The Ascension Illinois ABIDE Engagement Committee was formed, including representatives from each hospital and major operational function. This Committee met monthly throughout FY23 and engaged in group activities and training to support members’ work as ambassadors for ABIDE in their respective roles.</p> <p>During FY23, established ABIDE ministry councils at the hospital level ensured integration and alignment with the Ascension Illinois ABIDE Engagement Committee and with Ascension national strategic direction, our Mission and Values and our Essential Behaviors within our organizations.</p> <p>Each hospital ABIDE council focuses on cultural/workforce related initiatives, patient/consumer related initiatives, supplier/partner diversity related initiatives and community related initiatives.</p> <p>Strategy: Cultural Trainings Progress: In FY23, Ascension developed and implemented the</p>

	<p>training module: ABIDE in Action Exploring Equitable Interactions in Healthcare. Over 400 leaders at Ascension have taken this training. Additionally, there is a training module on implicit bias and ABIDE that is required for new hire and annual training for all Ascension associates.</p>
<p>Diverse & Local Purchasing</p>	<p>Strategy: Diverse Procurement Spend Progress: Ascension has set guidelines toward measurable success of supplier diversity. Specific numeric goals are currently being evaluated for FY24.</p> <p>Ascension guidelines are still being adopted, but include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintaining a portfolio of contract categories/areas for diverse-owned suppliers consideration Engaging the Senior Manager, Diversity and Sustainability as soon as a business need for contracting in said portfolio is identified to provide sufficient time to identify potential opportunities for diverse-owned suppliers to participate in the process. 2. Identifying suppliers to include in the sourcing process and to evaluate diverse-owned suppliers where possible. 3. Ensuring diverse-owned supplier classifications (i.e., minority, women, veteran or small) are flagged appropriately in the contract management system. 4. Consistent monitoring of metrics and analytics to evaluate and assess the effectiveness of the program and compliance with this policy. 5. Include diverse-owned suppliers who can meet The Resource Group requirements in procurement opportunities. 6. Participate in outreach events for diverse-owned suppliers to inform them of contracting opportunities available for them to participate in the procurement of products and services by The Resource Group. <p>Ascension Illinois has worked with the local community organization, West Side United, to increase opportunities for diverse suppliers in the community. West Side United connects diverse suppliers on the west-side of Chicago with healthcare organizations for service procurement.</p>
<p>Diverse & Local Hiring</p>	<p>Strategy: SOAR (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations and Recommendations)</p>

	<p>Ascension Illinois' Associate Engagement Survey surrounds the ABIDE hallmarks. Our SOAR action planning focuses on efforts for improvement in each of the ABIDE hallmarks. The Associate Engagement Survey and the SOAR process is conducted and performed annually with evaluation and modified throughout the year. This process is guided by Executive and Senior Leadership with implementation and evaluation by Department Leaders.</p> <p>Strategy: Workforce Development A new sub-department within Human Resources was created in FY23 to improve workforce development in the communities we serve through partnerships, pipeline creation and other methodologies. Additionally, organization-wide the VOCARE program was introduced as an internal mobility and career development program for entry level associates.</p>
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Appendix

Hospital Net Patient Revenue Report

Ascension Illinois	
Net Revenue	
For the Twelve Months Ended June 30, 2023	
	Mercy
Net Patient Service Revenue	\$177,335,556
Add Back Charity	\$35,785,194
AG Reported Net Patient Service Revenue	\$213,120,750