



CREATING **A HEALTHIER** HOUSTON



**MEMORIAL HERMANN COMMUNITY BENEFIT CORPORATION  
2017 ANNUAL REPORT**

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## Creating a Healthier Houston

**We live in a place known for having the most advanced health care in the world. Yet, countless individuals across Greater Houston continue to struggle with the scourge of chronic disease.**

Too many of our friends, family members and neighbors have preventable conditions which can cause debilitating and expensive complications. Our uninsured rate is among the highest in the country. Many seek care in emergency rooms for conditions better managed in a doctor’s office. Food insecurity is prevalent. Many neighborhoods lack safe places to exercise.

When it comes to determining an individual’s overall health, health care is only a small part of the equation. The bigger determinant is ZIP code.

To truly move the needle, we must reach beyond our medical institutions into the schools, neighborhoods and community centers where people live, work and play.

The Memorial Hermann Community Benefit Corporation has been doing this work for decades, collaborating with partners across the community to create a healthier environment for all, especially vulnerable populations. Together, working with businesses, schools, community-based organizations, and governmental and social service agencies throughout the metropolitan region, we are connecting individuals to nutritious foods, creating safe parks for children to play, and improving access to much-needed primary care and behavioral health services.

We have made tremendous strides toward addressing the underlying factors that cause disease, but more work needs to be done. No one organization can accomplish this feat on its own. This kind of transformation requires the brainpower of many organizations coming together, combining their collective expertise and skills, and collaborating on innovative strategies to achieve success.

We are heartened by the progress we’ve made in collaboration with community partners, and we are eager to see what more we can achieve by strengthening those relationships and expanding our efforts to focus on more of the social determinants that impact health status. Creating a healthier Houston will require a team effort from all stakeholders – business leaders, community leaders and governmental leaders.

Thank you for all that you do and we look forward to celebrating even more accomplishments in the future.

**CHUCK STOKES**  
*President and CEO*  
Memorial Hermann  
Health System



**DEBORAH CANNON**  
*Board Chair*  
Memorial Hermann  
Health System



# ABOUT US



# What is Community Benefit?

As one of the largest not-for-profit health systems in Southeast Texas, Memorial Hermann Health System has proudly worked for more than 110 years to improve the health of individuals and families in the Greater Houston community. Memorial Hermann annually contributes more than \$588 million in uncompensated care and community benefits. Through its subsidiary, the Memorial Hermann Community Benefit Corporation, Memorial Hermann implements programs to work with other healthcare providers, government agencies, business leaders and community stakeholders to increase access to health care and improve the overall health of the community.

Memorial Hermann's longstanding commitment includes serving the long-term needs of at-risk and underserved populations through innovative models of care delivery that increase access to care, provide social service support, create access to nutritious food and foster improved health through exercise. To address these needs, Memorial Hermann provides the following initiatives described in detail in this report:

## Memorial Hermann Community Benefit Mission

The mission of Memorial Hermann Community Benefit Corporation is to test and measure innovative solutions that advance the health of the community through collaboration with others, as well as the creation of signature, evidence-based ways to improve the communities where people live, work and play.

- **We collaborate** with others.
- **We embrace** innovative approaches.
- **We support** educational efforts focused on prevention and appropriate use of our community's healthcare resources.
- **We measure** the outcomes of each effort and only sustain and expand those with demonstrable outcomes.
- **We are committed** to engaging our employees, volunteers and medical staffs in our efforts.



**HEALTH CENTERS FOR SCHOOLS**, established in 1996, has 10 school-based health centers and offers access to primary medical, mental health and nutritional services to students at 72 schools across five school districts in the Greater Houston area.



**THE MOBILE DENTAL CLINIC**, established in 2000, has three dental vans and provides access to preventive and restorative dental services at the Health Centers for Schools sites and is accessible as a "dental home" for uninsured and underinsured students.



Serving the community since 2008, the **ER NAVIGATION** program places community health workers in Memorial Hermann Emergency Centers to help the uninsured – who disproportionately use emergency rooms for health care – navigate the complex health system, obtain a medical home, schedule appointments, secure needed social services and cope with future healthcare concerns.



**FOOD AS HEALTH** aims to alleviate the problem of food insecurity, which plagues one in five families in our community, through targeted food insecurity screening and partnerships that connect families with nutritious foods.



**EXERCISE IS MEDICINE**, a nationally recognized program, promotes the importance of regular exercise through education, resources and exercise prescriptions.



Through **COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**, including BUILD (Bold, Upstream, Integrated, Local, and Data-Driven) Health Challenge, the Episcopal Health Foundation's Texas Community Centered Health Homes Initiative and Pasadena Vibrant Community, among other collaborations, Memorial Hermann is working with established community organizations to impact the social determinants of health that influence a community's overall health status.



The **NURSE HEALTH LINE**, opened in 2014, provides access to experienced, bilingual nurse operators, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, for callers experiencing a medical concern who need guidance on when and where to go for help.



**NEIGHBORHOOD HEALTH CENTERS** are clinics open extended hours, strategically located near busy emergency centers and providing affordable, quality care to patients who may not have private insurance, but whose income makes them ineligible for public assistance programs.



Through the **CHILDHOOD OBESITY HEALTH INITIATIVE**, Memorial Hermann participates in local collaborations addressing the issue of childhood obesity, pilots healthy eating and physical activity at Health Centers for Schools sites and expands its partnership with Project Fit America, a national agency that works at the grassroots level with schools and front-line educators to create new opportunities for kids to be active, fit and healthy.



The **MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS CLINICS** provide psychiatric care for patients in an outpatient setting. The clinic is able to serve individuals experiencing a mental health crisis, as well as individuals who are unable to follow up with other outpatient providers to meet their mental health needs. The clinics, with three community locations, offer rapid access to psychiatric treatment and outpatient multidisciplinary services for patients in Harris and surrounding counties.



The **COMMUNITY PARTNERS** program supports federally qualified health centers (FQHCs), private not-for-profit clinics and other nonprofit agencies following an annual review of alignment with Memorial Hermann Community Benefit tenets: access, sustainability and measurement.

## Community Investment

**Memorial Hermann's commitment to and passion for improving residents' health and quality of life in the Greater Houston community is evident in its governance, administration, service delivery and employee engagement. Memorial Hermann's board of directors and executive staff lend their resources and vision to initiatives that are designed to improve the health and quality of life of every resident of the community, ensuring that the more than \$588 million in uncompensated care and community benefits is one part of Memorial Hermann's commitment to improving health access and quality of life for every Houstonian.**

## Responsive to the Community's Needs

**As required by the Affordable Care Act, Memorial Hermann conducts Community Health Needs Assessments (CHNAs) every three years for each of its licensed hospitals. The last assessment was conducted in 2016.**

These in-depth studies examine in detail the health needs of Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery and Brazoria counties, which comprise the majority of Memorial Hermann discharges. As part of the CHNA process, Memorial Hermann incorporates existing data on social, economic and health issues in the region with input from focus groups of community residents and service providers as well as interviews with key community stakeholders with special knowledge of public health on prioritizing community health needs and healthcare initiatives.

The focus group and interview discussions explored participants' perceptions of their communities, their top health concerns, perceptions of public health,

### In fiscal year 2016, community contributions were distributed to the following areas:



**FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS**  
**\$325,707,110**

Charity care at cost, the unreimbursed cost of Medicaid and means-tested government programs



**COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT SERVICES AND COMMUNITY BENEFIT OPERATIONS**  
**\$147,243,981**

Programs and initiatives developed to improve access to care



**SUBSIDIZED HEALTH SERVICES**  
**\$58,536,799**

Clinical services provided in response to community need despite financial loss incurred, including the Air Ambulance Program, End-Stage Renal Disease Program (ESRD), and obstetrics and delivery program



**HEALTH PROFESSIONS EDUCATION**  
**\$50,145,990**

Education and training of medical and allied health professionals, nurses, students, interns, residents and fellows



**RESEARCH**  
**\$5,437,441**

Research dollars serving the community



**CASH AND IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS FOR COMMUNITY BENEFIT**  
**\$1,732,601**

Community education and awareness initiatives and sponsorship of other organizations

prevention, and health care services, and suggestions for future programming and services to address these issues.

Based on the data gathered, the CHNA team prioritized the identified needs within the context of Memorial Hermann's overall strategic plan as approved by the Memorial Hermann Health System Board in June 2016:

- Improve access to health care, including transportation needs
- Promote healthier living, including chronic disease management
- Expand behavioral health services, including substance abuse and mental health

Following the assessment, Memorial Hermann hospitals – in coordination with the Memorial Hermann Community Benefit Corporation – developed an implementation plan with supporting objectives, implementation activities and metrics. These plans are monitored quarterly and updated annually.

A new Community Health Needs Assessment will be available in June 2019.

## Greater Houston – Our Community

**Memorial Hermann serves “Greater Houston,” a multi-county area along the Gulf Coast in Southeast Texas where several counties are without hospital district services. The fifth largest metropolitan area in the United States, the Greater Houston area is one of the fastest growing in the nation, with a population of more than 6.5 million. The population of the metropolitan area is centered in the city of Houston – a large economic and cultural center, with a population of 2.2 million.**

The rapid rise in population over the past five years has placed a tremendous burden on existing public health, social and healthcare infrastructure.

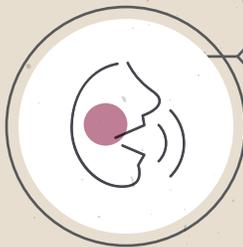
Health education, healthy foods, safe places to exercise, access to health care and behavioral health services are vital to improving the overall health of residents. In order to effect real change in the health of the community, Memorial Hermann is looking beyond the walls of its clinics and hospitals to address the social determinants of health at the grassroots level. These significant societal factors impact the major health needs and priorities of the Houston region and drive much of the community work in which Memorial Hermann is engaged.

## Key Themes of the Community Health Needs Assessments

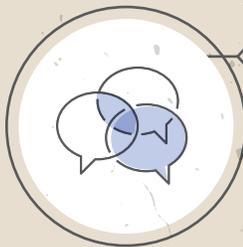
- **THE REGION IS DIVERSE IN ALL RESPECTS – AGE, ECONOMIC STATUS, RACE, ETHNICITY, LANGUAGE AND HEALTH NEEDS.** While Harris County and Houston face greater challenges in population health than the suburban and rural areas of the region, residents in the urban areas have more accessible social and healthcare resources and better public transportation.
- **RECENT POPULATION GROWTH HAS STRAINED EXISTING PUBLIC HEALTH, SOCIAL AND HEALTHCARE INFRASTRUCTURE.** Infrastructure that fails to keep up with demand leads to unmet need and fosters unhealthy habits in the community. Communities without easy access to healthy foods, safe roads, and affordable housing – and with fewer sidewalks and more violence – face barriers to pursuing healthier lifestyles.
- **POCKETS OF POVERTY EXIST ACROSS THE REGION, CREATING ECONOMIC CHALLENGES THAT IMPACT HEALTH.** Low-income residents and the elderly face greater barriers to accessing care and resources compared to their younger and higher-income neighbors. Strategies, such as using community health workers, can help disadvantaged residents more easily navigate an increasingly complex healthcare and public health system.
- **OBESITY AND CONCERNS ABOUT MAINTAINING A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE ARE EMERGING CHALLENGES FOR THE REGION.** Barriers included a lack of time for healthier lifestyle choices, cultural norms, food deserts, an inability to afford fresh fruits and vegetables, and limited access to sidewalks and recreational facilities.
- **BEHAVIORAL HEALTH IS A KEY CONCERN. STAKEHOLDERS HIGHLIGHTED SIGNIFICANT UNMET NEEDS FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES.** Key informants drew particular attention to the burden of mental illness on the incarcerated population.
- **TRANSPORTATION TO HEALTH SERVICES IS A SUBSTANTIAL CHALLENGE, ESPECIALLY FOR SENIORS AND LOWER-INCOME RESIDENTS.** Access to public transportation is limited in some areas.



**Houston is Diverse** A source of strength in a global economy, Houston prizes its racial and ethnic diversity.



More than **one-third** of Houston's residents speak languages other than English at home.

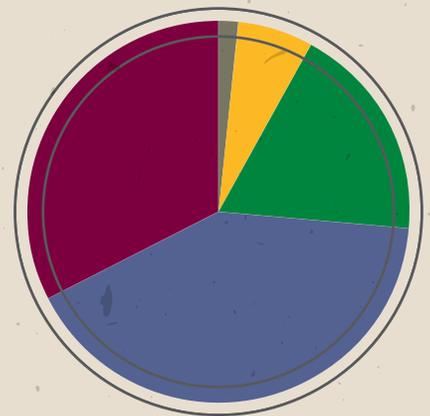


**145** languages are spoken in the community.

Houston's immigrant population grew **nearly twice the national rate** in recent years.



Harris County has **one of the largest refugee populations** in the United States.



- **41% Hispanic**
- **32.6% White**
- **18.5% African American**
- **6.3% Asian/Pacific Islander**
- **1.6% Other**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Community Health Needs Assessment, DSHS Annual Report of Community Benefits Plan



## Numbers to Know

### Social, economic and environmental factors contribute heavily to health outcomes.

**16%**

Individuals with lower incomes have higher rates of poor health behaviors and higher rates of most diseases. In 2016, more than **16 percent** of Harris County's residents lived below the poverty line. More than a quarter of the population does not have adequate access to enough healthy food.

**30%**

Education is one of the social factors that contribute to health. Only **30 percent** of the Harris County population, age 25 or older, has a bachelor's degree. Approximately 20 percent of people over the age of 25 do not have a high school diploma.

**29%**

Greater Houston is one of the hardest hit areas in the uninsured healthcare crisis, with **29 percent** of residents lacking insurance.

**7**

The rising rate of obesity looms over the Greater Houston area – easily the single biggest threat to the health of Houstonians – with **seven in 10** adults in Harris County reporting being overweight or obese.

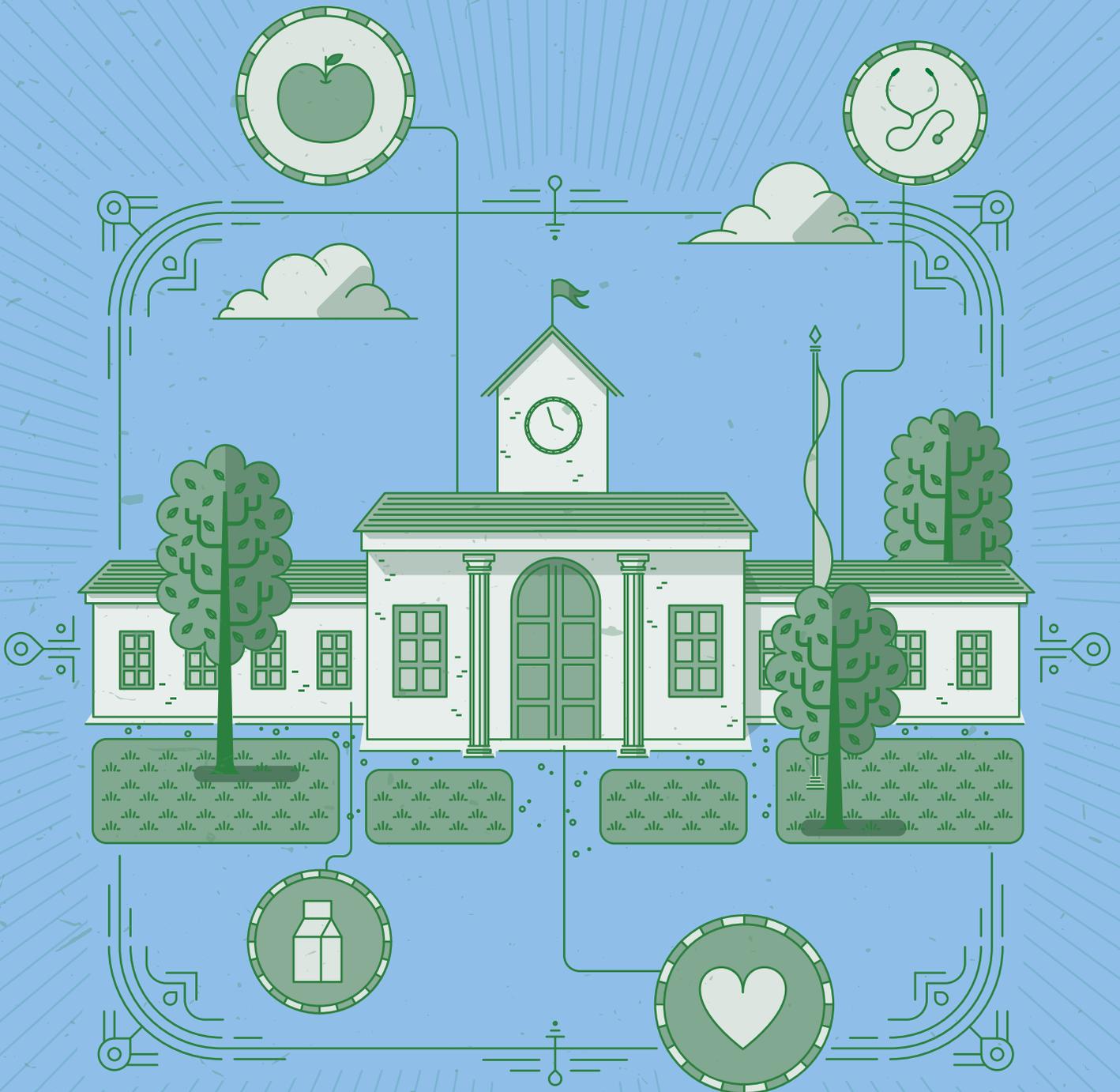
**8**

The **eight** most prevalent chronic diseases are overweight/obesity, diabetes, heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, cancer, heart failure and asthma.

**20%**

**Twenty percent** of the area's population self-reported experiencing five or more poor mental health days, underscoring the need for increased access to behavioral health.

# HEALTH CENTERS FOR SCHOOLS





**Our families love their children and want good things for them such as a better future than they, the parents, have had. We provide a road map to healthy living. Communities need champions: to guide children and families, to applaud the things they are doing right, and to teach them better habits to maximize their life.”**

— Margaret Vasquez,  
NP/Manager, WAVE Clinic

## Increasing Educational Success

Research shows that school-based health centers increase educational success by providing medical and mental health care that allows students to stay in school and learn. In addition to addressing health needs, including acute and chronic illness, school-based health centers also address broader social factors that influence health, wellbeing and preparedness to learn, such as hunger, lack of access to fresh fruits and vegetables, physical inactivity, an unsafe home environment, lack of access to adequate dental care and even homelessness. The primary goal of the Memorial Hermann Health Centers for Schools program is to keep children healthy and feeling well so that they stay in school and can perform well academically, creating a foundation for a brighter future.

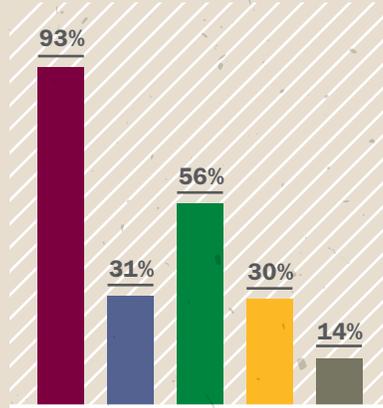


**Did you know?** All services received at Health Centers for Schools are free to families. The clinics operate year-round, even during the summer months when campuses are closed.

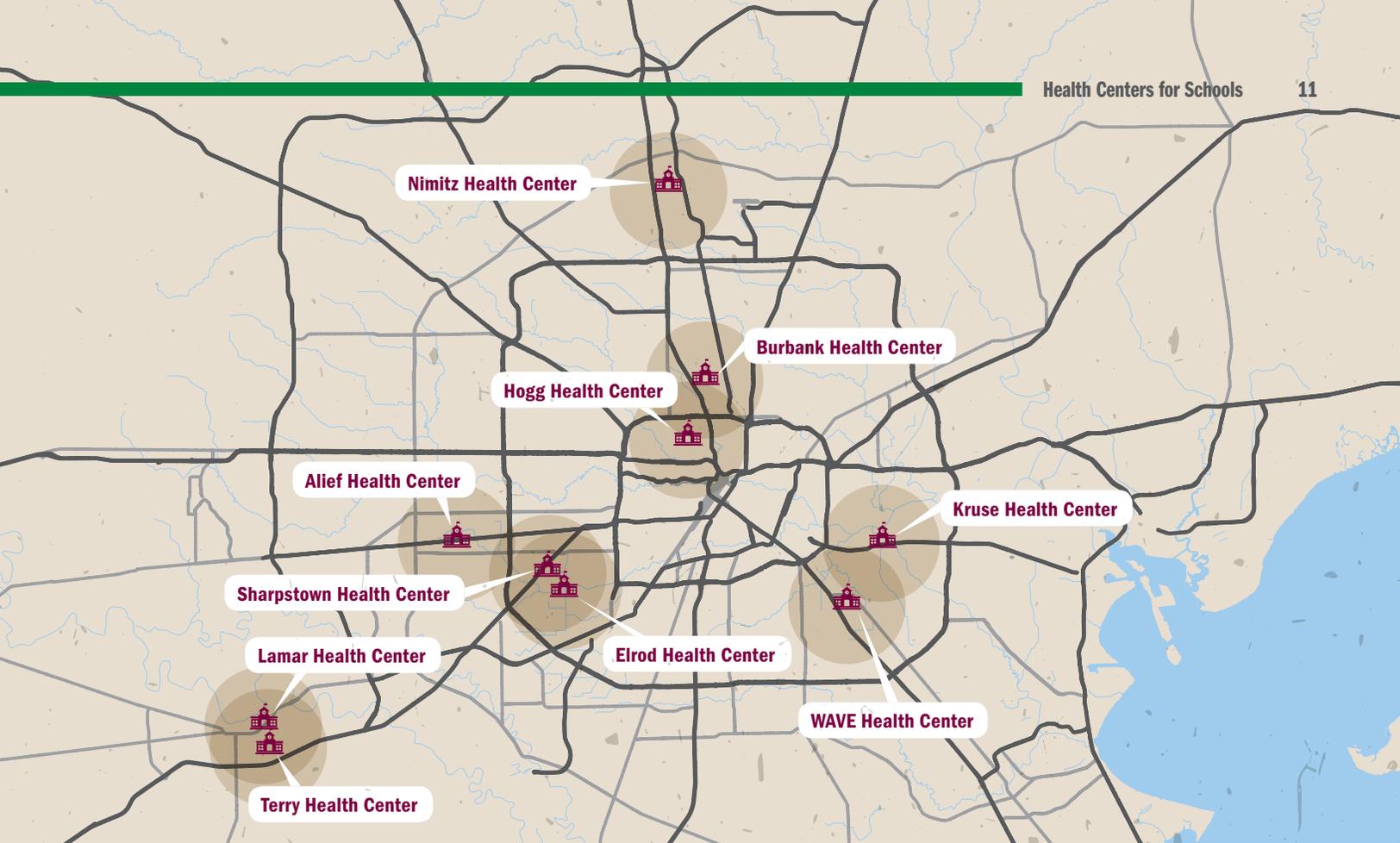
For more than 20 years, Memorial Hermann Health Centers for Schools has provided a stable medical home for uninsured and underinsured children from pre-kindergarten through 12th grade. Primary medical care, nutrition counseling, mental health services and dental care are provided free of charge for children who may or may not have insurance, and may experience other barriers, including low income, lack of knowledge about available health care, lack of transportation and parents’ inability to take time away from low-paying hourly jobs. Insurance does not equate to healthcare access. Parents are often unable to take off work, may lack transportation or may be facing other challenges that push health care down on the list of priorities.

Memorial Hermann operates 10 school-based clinics and three mobile dental vans onsite at 10 campuses in five school districts across the region: Houston ISD, Pasadena ISD, Lamar Consolidated ISD, Alief ISD and Aldine ISD.

### Of the students served:



- **93%** are on the free/reduced lunch program, a nationally accepted indicator of poverty.
- **31%** have limited English proficiency.
- **56%** are without any kind of health insurance coverage.
- **30%** have some form of Medicaid.
- **14%** are children who will not otherwise obtain health care due to access issues.



The clinics utilize the “feeder pattern” model, which means services are available to students who attend the campus where the clinic is located as well as the schools that feed into that campus. This allows Memorial Hermann to serve students in 72 schools across the region and ensures that students receive continuity of care throughout their educational careers. They are funded by Memorial Hermann in collaboration with school districts, local foundations, and state and federal grants. School-based health centers are immediately accessible to children, do not require transportation, do not require parents to miss work and do not present a financial obstacle to families.

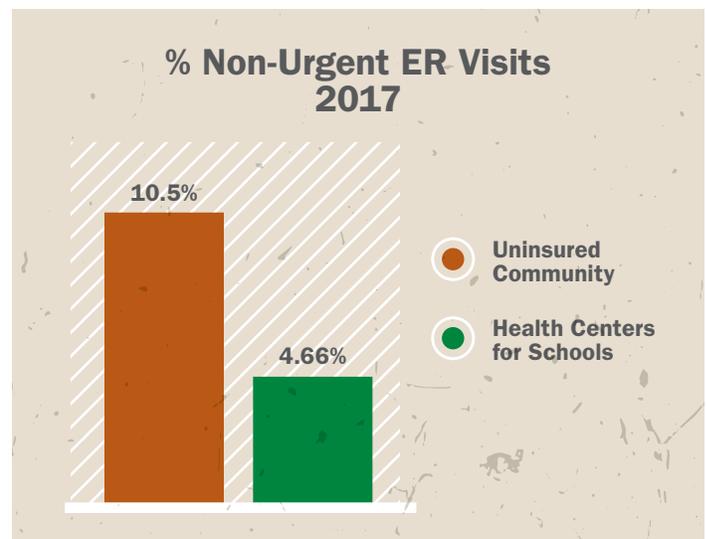
Each Memorial Hermann Health Centers for Schools’ clinic is staffed by a nurse practitioner/physician assistant, licensed clinical social worker (LCSW), licensed vocational nurse (LVN) and a receptionist, with medical oversight provided by a Memorial Hermann affiliated physician. Two dietitians and certified community health workers rotate among the clinics. Services offered include sick and injury care, general and sports physicals, immunizations, chronic care (asthma, obesity, cholesterol management), mental health therapy, social service referrals, health education, nutritional guidance and other specific care to meet students’ needs. The practitioners dispense medication for families who cannot afford a trip to the pharmacy. Clinics are open Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., 12 months a year.

### Outcomes

By providing improved access to health care to at-risk children across the region, Memorial Hermann Health Centers for Schools

has demonstrated success in creating healthier outcomes for kids, including improvements in their physical health, their mental wellbeing and even their attendance rate at school.

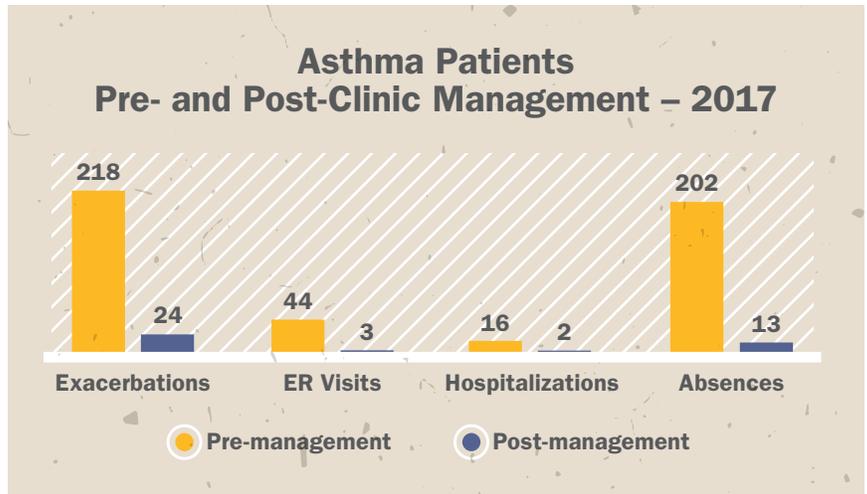
One of the most telling results is the percentage of children seeking primary care in the emergency room. Children who are seen in Memorial Hermann’s school-based clinics have a 4.7 percent rate of seeking non-urgent care in the ER. That is dramatically lower than the rate for the uninsured community as a whole and demonstrates the benefits of providing primary care access to uninsured and underserved children in a community hub like a school.





**Helping ADHD children to thrive academically and socially is the most rewarding thing I do.”**

— Danuta Blicharski, MD, Medical Director



Asthma patients who receive care through Memorial Hermann’s school-based clinics have a much lower rate of negative outcomes post-management. Their rates of exacerbations, ER visits, hospitalizations and absences are dramatically decreased after they receive proper education about how to best manage their condition.

### It Takes a Team to Help a Child Succeed

Lisandro’s kindergarten teacher was the first to notice his restless behavior and short attention span as possible signs of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Lisandro had struggled throughout pre-kindergarten and kindergarten and lagged behind his peers in achieving some of his milestones. He didn’t know his numbers or letters and couldn’t write his name. “It wasn’t that he was misbehaving in class, he just couldn’t comprehend what the teacher was telling him,” his mother, Laura Villasana, said.

When the teacher referred Lisandro for ADHD testing at his school-based clinic, Laura was initially hesitant. “It was hard,” she said. “In our culture, ADHD is not something that anyone talks about, but the staff at Memorial Hermann Hogg Clinic were so patient with us and answered every single one of our questions. I knew that they wanted to do what’s best for my son.”

Not long after Lisandro began receiving treatment under the guidance of Dr. Danuta Blicharski, pediatrician and medical director at the Hogg Clinic, Laura noticed a marked improvement in her son. “He brought home a sheet of paper with his name written so clearly,” she said. “It meant the world to me.”

Not only did Lisandro get the help he needed, but the clinic staff also realized that two of Lisandro’s brothers also showed signs of ADHD – even though their symptoms were dramatically different than their younger brother’s. “My oldest son was doing well in school but he could never sit still, and my other boy was an average student, but he had a problem controlling himself in

the classroom,” Laura said. Both boys began getting treatment for ADHD and immediately began thriving academically. Lazaro, 10, now ranks among the top of his fifth-grade class with an A average, and Leandro, 9, earns all A’s and B’s and reads at a level well beyond his grade. Both are in the gifted-and-talented program.

“Treating their ADHD has really made a difference,” Laura said. “I can’t say enough good things about Dr. B and the clinic as a whole. It’s so obvious that they really care about my kids and my family. When it comes to making sure my kids are doing well in school, we really are a team.”





## Mental Health

**Mental illnesses can severely impair a child's ability to cope in school and in daily life, and the high rate of uninsured children in the Greater Houston area results in many untreated mental health illnesses. More than 300,000 children and youth in Harris County are estimated to suffer from mental health and substance use disorders every year, according to a 2017 report by The Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute. Among these are 65,000 children with severe emotional disturbances, many of whom live in poverty.**

Mental health services are offered through the Health Centers for Schools clinics where licensed clinical social workers provide students with the tools to improve their functioning at home, school and with peers, in collaboration with parents and school staff. Therapy for anxiety, depression and conduct are among the predominant services offered, but a diverse range of services and treatment is available.

Social workers work hand-in-hand with teachers to determine how to best serve students with mental issues so they don't disrupt classes and continue to get the most out of their school experience. Since the social workers are onsite, continuity of care is provided for students as they age.

### Outcomes

Addressing mental health needs of children – from anxiety to depression to behavioral problems – fosters a healthy sense of emotional wellbeing in children and allows them to better focus on their education and academics. Children who received mental health therapy had fewer unexcused absences, fewer suspensions and improved grades following treatment.

## Mobile Dental

**Despite improvements in oral health status in the United States, profound disparities remain among certain population groups. Oral health is directly related to well-being and quality of life. Diet, nutrition, sleep, psychological status, social interaction, school and work are affected by impaired oral and craniofacial health. Unlike medical care, where treatment can be sought at emergency centers, no such safety net exists for dental services.**



**Did you know?** Uninsured children are more than four times as likely as insured children to have an unmet dental need.

Serving the Greater Houston community since 2000, three 40-foot mobile dental vans, staffed with a dentist and one to two dental assistants, provide access to preventive and restorative dental services at the Health Centers for Schools sites and are available as a dental home for uninsured and underinsured students.

The primary goal of the program is to provide children in need with regular dental care. Exams, X-rays, cleanings, sealants, fillings, extractions and some cosmetic procedures are provided at no cost to the student. A secondary goal is to educate children and families on proper dental care at home, including making healthy food choices.

The dental vans rotate among the Health Centers for Schools clinics at three-month intervals. The mobile environment requires a close working relationship between the stationary school-based clinic and the dental clinic. Serving as an anchor, the school-based clinic staff schedules patients and contacts the clinic when emergencies arise while the van is off-site.



**Oral health is integral to general health and quality of life, psychologically influencing how these children grow, look, speak, chew, taste food and socialize, as well as affecting their feelings of social wellbeing. Our Program raises their confidence and self-esteem, promoting the expression of healthier behavior.”**

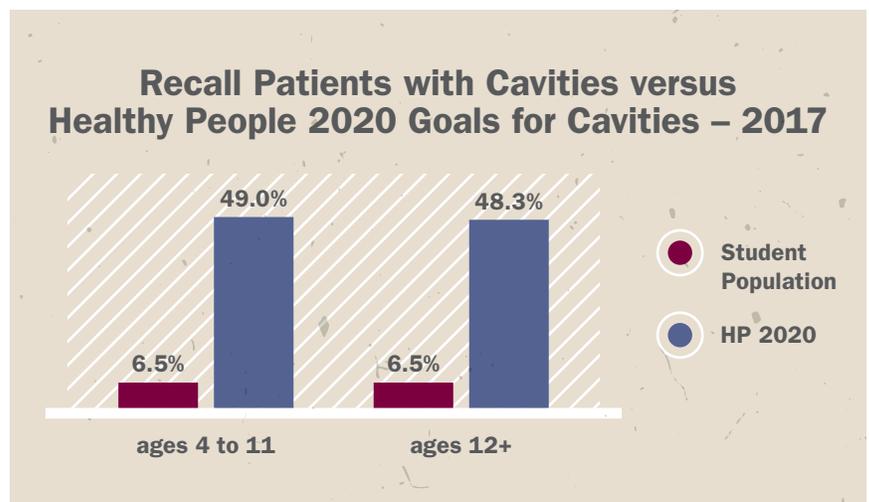
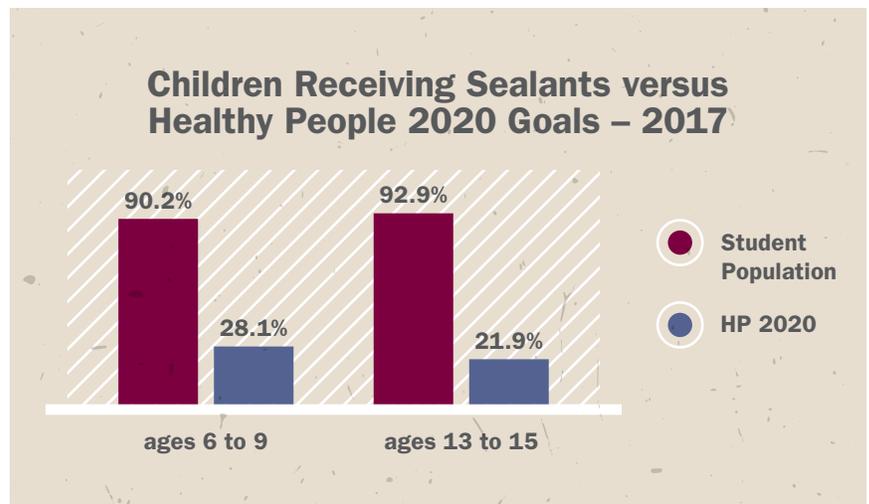
— Dr. Mahasti Chalajour, DDS, Memorial Hermann Mobile Dental Van Program dentist

Dental clinic staff diagnose dental problems, conduct cleanings, treat cavities, perform other restorative work and provide oral health education for each patient. Professionals and educators, the staff also serves as the van drivers, cleaners and clerks. They have received the Texas Dental Association’s Certificate of Merit Award for their efforts.

### Outcomes

Maintaining a healthy mouth, teeth and gums can benefit a child’s overall health and wellbeing throughout their lifetimes. By providing regular dental care to children who may not otherwise receive it, Memorial Hermann’s Mobile Dental Program is demonstrating measureable successes in improving their oral health, and giving at-risk children a healthy jumpstart for the rest of their lives.

To measure success, the Program compares its outcomes to the Healthy People 2020 Objectives. The Program aims to complete all diagnosed dental work within the month and screen children for cavities every six months. At-risk patients are scheduled for appointments every three months, which has contributed to the program’s remarkable results. These outcomes are significant, given that more than half of patients are diagnosed with cavities at their visit to the dental van, and one in five children are found to have five or more cavities.



## Nutrition

For families living in poverty, food insecurity is often an underlying cause of obesity. When food is available in these communities, the most affordable options are often not the healthiest choices. Houston area “food deserts,” where healthy fruits and vegetables are scarce, exacerbate the problem. Poor nutrition, when combined with physical inactivity, is associated with many chronic conditions such as high blood pressure, diabetes and asthma.



**Did you know?** More than one in four children in Southeast Texas faces the threat of hunger every day. About one in five households reports having some type of food insecurity – either not enough food in their fridge and pantry, or inconsistent access to high-quality nutritious food, such as fresh fruits and vegetables.

*Source: Houston Food Bank*

To combat this epidemic, nutrition counseling and education is offered by registered dietitians through the Health Centers for Schools clinics.

The Healthy Eating and Lifestyles Program (HELP) is designed to educate children and their families on the importance of proper nutrition and exercise. Any child diagnosed as overweight/obese – in body mass index (BMI) percentile 85 or higher – is referred to HELP.

After meeting with the student and his or her parents and reviewing the medical information, the dietitian will suggest healthy food choices, create meal plans, set weight loss goals and discuss how to read food labels and other topics related to nutrition. The goal is to provide children and their parents with a better understanding of how proper nutrition can improve the child’s health and school performance. Quarterly dietitian visits continue for as long as the family remains engaged.

In addition, Memorial Hermann teamed up with international retailer Target® and with Wholesome Wave, a national nonprofit dedicated to making fruits and vegetables more affordable for low-income communities, to give families better access to fresh fruits and vegetables. Through the FVRx prescription produce program, nurse practitioners, dietitians and social workers with the school-based clinics identified 300 families in need, and over a period of six months, provided vouchers for free fruits and vegetables when families attended nutrition and cooking demonstration classes held in partnership with the Houston Food Bank and area farmers markets.

## Outcomes

Establishing healthy eating habits at a young age is vitally important to ensuring a healthier lifestyle for years to come. With children developing chronic diseases, such as Type 2 diabetes and high blood pressure, at increasingly younger ages, the risks are increasing that they will suffer costly and debilitating medical conditions later in life. Providing families with access to fresh fruits and vegetables – and educating them on the importance of a healthy diet – helps children shed extra weight and curb the onset of chronic disease, while preparing them to embrace healthier habits that they can maintain for the rest of their lives.

“

**I may not see substantial weight loss results or perfectly balanced diets but our families truly amaze me with whatever little effort they are able to make to better their diets and physical fitness, despite the numerous financial, emotional, social and environmental barriers they face. These families inspire me to continue to help future families that need my services.”**

— Mehreen Ansari,  
Health Centers for  
Schools Dietitian



## H.A.P.P.Y. Boot Camp Testimonial

Before enrolling in the H.A.P.P.Y. Boot Camp, Michael, 13, was convinced that he didn't like vegetables. But after spending a weeklong session surrounded by peers learning about the importance of exercise and eating a balanced diet, the Nimitz High School student had a different outlook. "I learned to make better food choices and eat the proper serving size," he said. "I choose my food carefully. I read food labels and try to make sure that everything is low in calories, saturated fat, cholesterol and sodium."

As it turns out, Michael actually likes carrots. And he's choosing to eat more lean protein like chicken that has been baked or broiled instead of fried. "I still eat at fast food restaurants, but when I do, I get the healthier option," he said. For Michael, the H.A.P.P.Y. Boot Camp provided a welcoming space to open up and learn to cope with stress, anger and sadness. He especially enjoyed the group counseling sessions where he learned to feel better about himself.

"Now if I get bullied about my size back at school, I just ignore them because I know what they are saying is not true, so I don't let it bother me anymore," Michael said. His advice to other kids trying to lose weight? Have fun while exercising, eat properly, keep a positive attitude and never give up.

## Physical Activity

**When children are active and healthy, their emotional wellbeing is improved and they are able to perform better at school.**

Memorial Hermann Health Centers for Schools have long collaborated with several community leaders to create new opportunities in several area elementary schools for kids to be active, fit and healthy. These unique collaborations include the Houston Food Bank's Scholarship Pantry at Sharpstown High School, the BUILD Health Challenge food prescription (FVRx) program in North Pasadena, and Project Fit America's program, which provides elementary schools with indoor and outdoor fitness equipment and a curriculum designed to enhance existing physical education programs.

Project Fit America (PFA) works with schools to fully train the teaching staff and integrate the program into the school curriculum. At the end of the program, the school is able to run PFA without any outside intervention, with PFA then operating as a permanent program in each school.

In addition to their efforts with community partners, the school-based centers have also implemented signature programming such as the H.A.P.P.Y (Healthy Attitudes Promote Positive Youth) Boot Camp where students with risk factors participate in a one-week camp to exercise, learn about nutrition and build self-esteem; and the Fitness Funatics Summer School Camp where students attending summer school are provided an hour-long class of movement, music, motivation and meditation.

## Outcomes

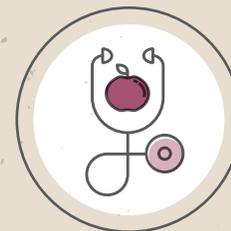
Memorial Hermann's efforts to promote physical activity among children have made a measurable difference in the lives of these students in terms of improved mental outlook and weight reduction through exercise, better food choices and eating habits.

### About H.A.P.P.Y. (Healthy Attitudes Promote Positive Youth) Boot Camp

**Each camp lasts one week with 25 campers attending from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. daily. During that time, kids are engaged in:**



One hour of **exercise** with personal trainers



Participation in a **medical evaluation** and **nutrition consultation**



**Counseling** in separate boy and girl group sessions that promote a healthy lifestyle and self-esteem

ACCESS  
TO CARE





**Community Health Workers help a diverse, uninsured and underinsured community to overcome socioeconomic and environmental barriers to care, improve health outcomes by serving as a bridge to access complex healthcare systems and community resources, advocate to ensure clients receive appropriate and culturally competent services, provide health education, and assist with service coordination.”**

— Zeida Estrada,  
ER Navigation  
Team Lead

## Directing Patients to Appropriate Care

**The emergency room is never the ideal location to administer primary care. When underserved patients seek out treatment in an Emergency Center, they often fail to receive the appropriate and comprehensive care they need while simultaneously contributing to the skyrocketing costs of health care.**

Still, nearly half of all emergency room visits in Harris County are related to a condition that is not emergent and would be better suited for treatment in a primary care setting, according to the most recent Harris County Emergency Department Use Study.

Overuse of emergency rooms occurs in part because patients do not have the knowledge to assess their symptoms and select the appropriate location for treatment.

Memorial Hermann has launched several initiatives to help direct patients to appropriate primary care resources in the community in an effort to improve the overall health of underserved patients and reduce costs associated with unnecessary utilization of Emergency Centers.

## ER Navigation

**In 2008, Memorial Hermann launched the ER Navigation program as a natural response to the community need of educating patients on how to navigate through existing resources, increasing access and using healthcare resources appropriately to reduce healthcare costs. In the decade since, the program has been expanded to nine Memorial Hermann Emergency Centers.**

The ER Navigation program places a community health worker (CHW), or “navigator,” onsite in Emergency Centers to educate patients on the importance of identifying and using a consistent medical home rather than relying on emergency rooms for their primary care. Patients eligible for the program are ages 18 months to 65 years and are uninsured, on Medicaid or self-pay. Certified CHW training covers the navigator role, barriers to care, communicating with patients, supporting the emotional needs of patients and privacy concerns.

CHWs offer a vital service – working with patients to identify clinics that are the best fit according to patient location, income, language, work hours and bus routes – and they also work to address issues that may lower the priority of health care for many, such as the need for food stamps, rental support and assistance with utilities. Every year, navigators help direct more than 16,000 patients to more than 100 safety net clinics throughout the community.

In 2017, ER Navigation expanded its breadth of service to educate on primary care physician usage and expectations; provide health literacy and diabetes prevention classes; and work with high utilizers on key social issues impacting their health.



## Outcomes

With the uninsured rate remaining stubbornly high in the Greater Houston area and across the state, it's critically important to identify effective and sustainable solutions for helping medically underserved populations receive the care they need in the right environment.

Data from Memorial Hermann's ER Navigation program demonstrates that navigators can be effective in reducing Emergency Center utilizations for primary care conditions among vulnerable populations by empowering patients to take responsibility for their health care. Patients who were seen by a navigator in a Memorial Hermann Emergency Center experienced a 76 percent reduction in return visits compared to those who did not receive navigation assistance from community health workers.

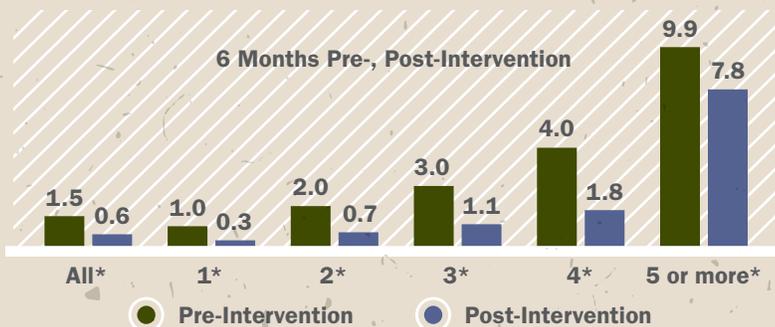
## What do ER navigators do?

Certified community health workers are stationed in Emergency Departments across the Greater Houston area to help the uninsured and underinsured who disproportionately use ERs for health care:

- **Navigate** the complex health system.
- **Obtain** a medical home.
- **Schedule** appointments.
- **Secure** needed social services.
- **Cope** with healthcare concerns.



**Mean Visits to MH EDs by Navigated Patients Pre- vs. Post-Intervention**



\*Mean differences significant at alpha <0.001.

## Nurse Health Line Facts



Free



Available to anyone in Harris County or surrounding counties



Accessible 24/7



Bilingual Registered Nurses (English/Spanish)



Confidential

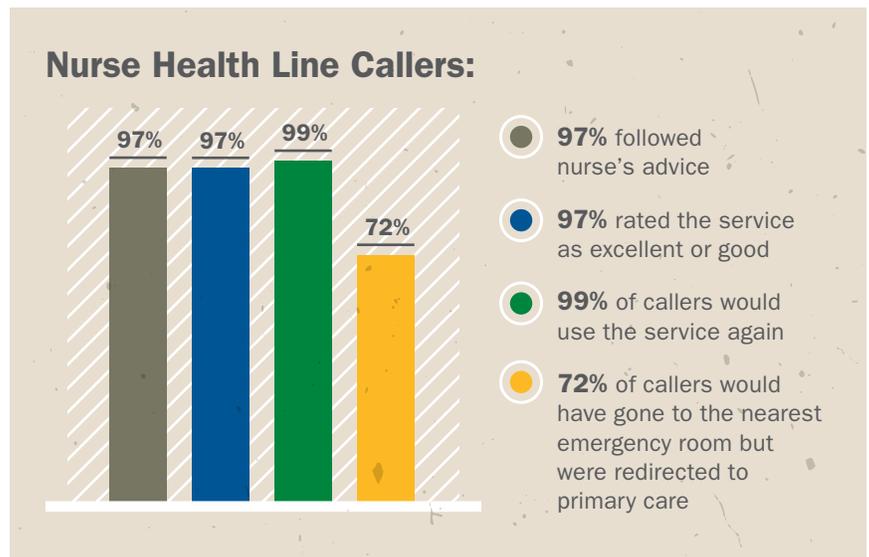
Call 713.338.7979  
or 1.855.577.7979

## Nurse Health Line

Memorial Hermann established the Nurse Health Line in 2014. This free telephone service was created for Greater Houston residents who are experiencing a health concern and are unsure of what to do or where to go. Experienced bilingual nurses use their training and expertise to conduct assessments by phone, and are available to answer calls 24 hours a day, seven days a week, for any resident living in Harris or surrounding counties. Experienced nurse operators help callers decide when and where to go for medical care. The operators are not charged with diagnosing or treating patients but rather with helping callers make decisions that will support a positive outcome.

While a large percentage of callers are uninsured or on Medicaid, others have insurance but are simply looking for guidance on what level of care is needed, such as a physician’s office, an urgent care clinic or an emergency room. If callers do not have a primary physician, operators can recommend clinics or after-hour facilities. They also assist with community resource referrals and transportation needs. Callers receive healthcare advice and education through the use of nationally recognized standardized protocols.

### Outcomes



## Neighborhood Health Centers

### Northeast and Northwest

A lack of availability of primary care services, difficulty accessing primary care and “lack of coverage/financial hardship” are leading barriers to primary and preventive care for low-income residents in the community. An estimated one-third of Harris County residents rely on safety net clinics.

Recognizing the need to help bridge the gap for individuals and families without private health insurance, Memorial Hermann Northeast and Northwest Neighborhood Health Centers provide uninsured, Medicaid and Medicare populations with preventive, acute and chronic care, seven days a week, with extended weekday hours, at affordable charges.

Patients use the services of Neighborhood Health Centers for a variety of reasons: lower costs than emergency room visits, urgent care centers and not-for profit community clinics; location and hours; and quality of care provided. Of the patients seen each year, 70 percent consider Neighborhood Health Centers as their home for medical treatment, preventive care and medical education. Patients also rely on the Centers for annual health physicals, sports physicals, wellness exams and immunizations. Patients with chronic conditions represent the most neglected area of care among underinsured populations. At Neighborhood Health Centers these patients are monitored for hypertension, diabetes and other conditions to prevent frequent ER visits and exacerbated and debilitating conditions.



**Did you know?** The providers at each Neighborhood Health Center see between 500 and 600 patients a month and provide a wide range of services, including wound treatment, STD screenings, preventive care, sports physicals, immunizations, urgent care, and treatment for illnesses such as influenza or strep throat. The Centers also provide much-needed management of chronic illnesses such as asthma, diabetes and high blood pressure.

## Community Partners

**As a leader in health and wellness for more than 110 years, Memorial Hermann recognizes that there are many organizations doing tremendous work for the underserved, often with limited resources. These organizations provide a high level of expertise, fluidity and depth of service in working with their particular populations and communities. By actively partnering with these organizations, Memorial Hermann furthers its vision of 100 percent access to basic care and improving the health and enriching the lives of adults and children residing in Southeast Texas.**

To amplify their collective impact on a community, Community Benefit programs are collaborative in nature, providing and receiving community funding and in-kind services. Prospective financial partners submit grant applications on an annual basis and are carefully selected based on their shared values and measurable impact on the community. Memorial Hermann provides program support and in-kind support for these organizations, each of whom is a proven leader committed to resolving the most pressing social issues in the Greater Houston community.

## BUILD Health Challenge

The BUILD Health Challenge is a nationally renowned program that strengthens partnerships between community-based organizations, health systems, local health departments, and others, to tackle the underlying social, physical, and economic factors affecting health. Building Health and Safety (BHAS) is a dynamic partnership between Memorial Hermann, Avenue CDC, and the COH Health Department that catalyzes multi-sector efforts to move resources, attention, and action upstream, and create opportunities that improve health, lowers costs, and promotes health equity in the Near Northside. BUILD stands for Bold, Upstream, Integrated, Local, and Data-Driven.

## Children At Risk

Memorial Hermann is supporting a research study on recess policies and implementation in the Greater Houston area, including the development of a report highlighting the state of recess in Houston, recess best practices, and recommendations for recess policies that school districts can implement.

## E.C.H.O. (Epiphany Community Health Outreach)

Memorial Hermann supports this social service agency that provides health and social services to new immigrants and refugees, primarily living in the Southwest area.

## Episcopal Health Foundation's Community Centered Health Homes (CCHH) Initiative

Memorial Hermann has been granted an Implementation Grant with Episcopal Health Foundation to launch the **Community Centered Health Home** at Memorial Hermann Health Centers for Schools - Burbank Clinic focused on *"providing awareness and access to safe, sustainable, culturally appropriate physical activities that excite the Burbank community."* In this community-centered work, in which current partners are the YMCA, Houston Parks Department, Avenue CDC and Burbank Middle School, Memorial Hermann is working through the process of deliberately informing, planning, executing and applying the Prevention Institute's Community-Centered Health Home Principles and Practices to create positive change in community determinants of health.

## Healthy Living Matters, The Clinton Health Matters, Pasadena Vibrant Communities, Cities Changing Diabetes

Memorial Hermann has partnered with each of these collaboratives to increase access to healthy foods, curb obesity and use policy action to enact system and environmental change.



**It really does ‘take a village.’ It is very rewarding to know that by working together with our community partners, we can harness the amazing collective energy, talent and resources of several organizations to improve the health of those who need it most.”**

— Carol Paret, Senior Vice President and Chief Community Health Officer

## **Houston Food Bank**

Memorial Herman partners with the Houston Food Bank, the largest food bank in the United States, to address areas with high levels of food insecurity, through a variety of programming and collaborative efforts. Memorial Hermann was the first health system in Houston to ask the U.S. Department of Agriculture-approved questions – and encourage other health entities to join the Clinton Health Matters Initiative, where members screen for food insecurity and share data to inform programming.

## **Interfaith Community Clinic**

Memorial Hermann supports this private not-for-profit volunteer-based health care clinic. Its mission is to provide medical care, dental care, and social service referrals for indigent persons not eligible for other programs and have nowhere else to turn. Since the clinic opened in 1996, Memorial Hermann has supported it with both operational funds and provision of diagnostic services.

## **Project Fit America (PFA)**

One of Memorial Hermann’s collaborative programs designed to enhance schools’ physical activity programming, PFA facilitates the installation of exercise equipment on school campuses and provides a curriculum designed to help the physical education (PE) teachers create exercise routines that teach students how to have fun with exercise as well as maintain and improve their personal fitness levels. The program is located at three Health Centers for Schools’ sites.

## **Spring Branch Community Health Center (SBCHC)**

Memorial Hermann supports this federally qualified health center serving the uninsured and underinsured populations in Spring Branch and West Houston areas. Using the primary care model, SBCHC offers an integrated and comprehensive service delivery system, serving as a medical home for all who seek it.

## **TOMAGWA Ministries, Inc.**

Memorial Hermann supports this private, not-for-profit clinic in the service of primary care and education to the working poor not qualifying for public assistance and not earning enough to pay for doctor visits in the Tomball, Magnolia, and Waller areas.

## **YMCA**

Memorial Hermann partners with the YMCA to bring its evidence-based, year-long Healthy Weight and Your Child program to school-based clinics’ families with a child in the 95th percentile for BMI.

# FOOD AS HEALTH



## Food Insecurity is Prevalent

Percentage of patients who screened positive for food insecurity:

**27%** in emergency rooms

**30%** in school-based clinics

**15%** in neighborhood clinics

## Access to Healthy Food

**Food insecurity is a particularly difficult problem in the Greater Houston area, where approximately one out of every five families does not have access to enough high-quality, nutritious food.**

Food insecurity – defined as not having enough food in the fridge and pantry, or inconsistent access to high-quality nutritious food, such as fresh fruits and vegetables – has been directly linked to distressing health outcomes, including chronic diseases such as diabetes and obesity for people who are forced to rely on cheaper, less healthy dietary choices. Untreated, these conditions over time can lead to costly and debilitating medical conditions and increased hospital admissions, according to a report from the American Hospital Association.

Memorial Hermann is tackling the problem of food insecurity through an initiative called “Food as Health.” In 2015, an initiative to screen patients for food insecurity was incorporated across the System.

Memorial Hermann Health Centers for Schools have been a collaborative partner with the Houston Food Bank’s Scholarship Pantry at Sharpstown High School, the BUILD Health Challenge food prescription (FVRx) program in North Pasadena, and Wholesome Wave’s Fruit and Vegetable Prescription Program throughout the Houston region. Each venture includes nutritional guidance by registered dietitians and measurable outcome data on changed behavior patterns to support the work.



## Food Insecurity

**In 2015, Memorial Hermann launched an initiative to screen patients for food insecurity. Using food insecurity screening questions from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, patients are asked to respond to the following:**

*In the last 12 months, I worried whether my food would run out before I got money to buy more.*

*In the last 12 months, the food I bought just didn't last and I didn't have money to get more.*

Nearly 55,000 patients have been screened, and nearly one in every five has screened positive for food insecurity.

Addressing food insecurity is a critical component to tackling the social determinants of health. To get a full picture of patients' health, it's necessary to know when they may opt for cheaper, unhealthy food choices – or if they might skimp on their prescriptions or other medical care – in order to avoid going hungry.

Patients who screen positive for food insecurity receive support in applying for benefits, a referral to the Houston Food Bank, and guidance on questions to ask for an appropriate food pantry referral.



**Connecting Patients to Food:** When patients screen positive for food insecurity, Memorial Hermann urges them to work with the Houston Food Bank. Food assistance can be located at [houstonfoodbank.org](http://houstonfoodbank.org) or by calling **832.369.9390**.

## Mapping Food Deserts

**In collaboration with the Clinton Foundation, Memorial Hermann is working to identify areas within Greater Houston where food deserts are prevalent. Food deserts are often clustered in low-income areas, forcing residents to rely on stores that sell heavily processed foods with unhealthy levels of sugar, fat and salt.**

By mapping food deserts in our region, Memorial Hermann, in collaboration with the Clinton Foundation, hopes to better understand the impediments to healthy living and determine any correlation between food insecurity and a lack of local options for healthy food choices. Compiling the data also allows Memorial Hermann and the Clinton Foundation to develop appropriate interventions to address the problem at a hyper-local level.



**What is a Food Desert?** Neighborhoods devoid of fresh fruit, vegetables, and other healthful whole foods, usually in impoverished areas. This is largely due to a lack of grocery stores, farmers markets, and healthy food providers.

*Source: American Nutrition Association*

“

**Everyone knows that daily consumption of fruits and vegetables is essential to good health, but tens of millions of Americans have to rely on cheaper options, and over time, the public health results have proven catastrophic. Doctors can recommend eating more fruits and vegetables, but if patients can't afford them, they can't buy them. No child should ever say, 'I don't eat fruits and vegetables because my parents can't afford them.'”**

— Michael Nischan, CEO of Wholesome Wave

## Produce Prescriptions

**As part of its ongoing efforts to tackle the stubborn problem of food insecurity in Greater Houston, Memorial Hermann has given hundreds of eligible families vouchers to buy fresh fruits and vegetables thanks to an innovative new partnership between the health system, Target® and Wholesome Wave.**



**Did you know?** Nine percent of Houston's high school students reported going at least seven days without eating fresh fruit, according to the results of a community-wide survey published last year.

In an effort to change these statistics, Memorial Hermann teamed up with Wholesome Wave, a national nonprofit dedicated to making fruits and vegetables more affordable for

low-income communities. The organization started its produce-prescription program, FVRx, in a pediatric clinic in a low-income community in Los Angeles. Thanks to a grant underwritten by Target, Wholesome Wave expanded the successful initiative to Houston, where Memorial Hermann was selected as the sole grant recipient.

Nurse practitioners, dietitians and social workers at Memorial Hermann Health Centers for Schools identified approximately 300 families in need and provided them with vouchers that could be redeemed for free fruits and vegetables at any Target or at participating farmers markets. The program, executed out of the school-based clinics, targeted families who have a child with a BMI in the 85th percentile or higher, or a diet-related condition, or those have been identified as food insecure

In addition, Memorial Hermann had previously collaborated with the BUILD Health Challenge in North Pasadena, a large effort to reduce food insecurity within identified ZIP codes. Among their many efforts, Memorial Hermann supported a food prescription program where eligible patients received coupons for nutritious choices.

## Creating Healthier Families, One Carrot at a Time

When 12-year-old Natalie decided she wanted to play volleyball for her middle school, she was required to undergo a physical to make sure she was healthy enough for sports. But her routine checkup uncovered a troubling problem. Natalie's blood pressure was dangerously high and her elevated blood sugar levels meant she had undiagnosed Type 2 diabetes.

Natalie's mother immediately scheduled an appointment with the Lamar Health Center, a clinic that's part of Memorial Hermann Health Centers for Schools. Not only did Natalie get the help she needed to manage her diabetes and blood pressure, she was also enrolled in a new program with Wholesome Wave designed to provide families across the Greater Houston area with free access to fresh produce.

"We're a working class family and we have a lot of bills to pay, so this program was really attractive to me because it could help me afford to buy healthy fruits and vegetables for my children," Natalie's mother, Monica Gonzales, said. "I had never really purchased these items before because I didn't grow up eating them, but I quickly found out that my children actually love broccoli and cauliflower!"

In addition to receiving the vouchers, program participants attended healthy cooking demonstrations hosted by the Houston Food Bank and received a bilingual cookbook with recipes incorporating fresh produce.

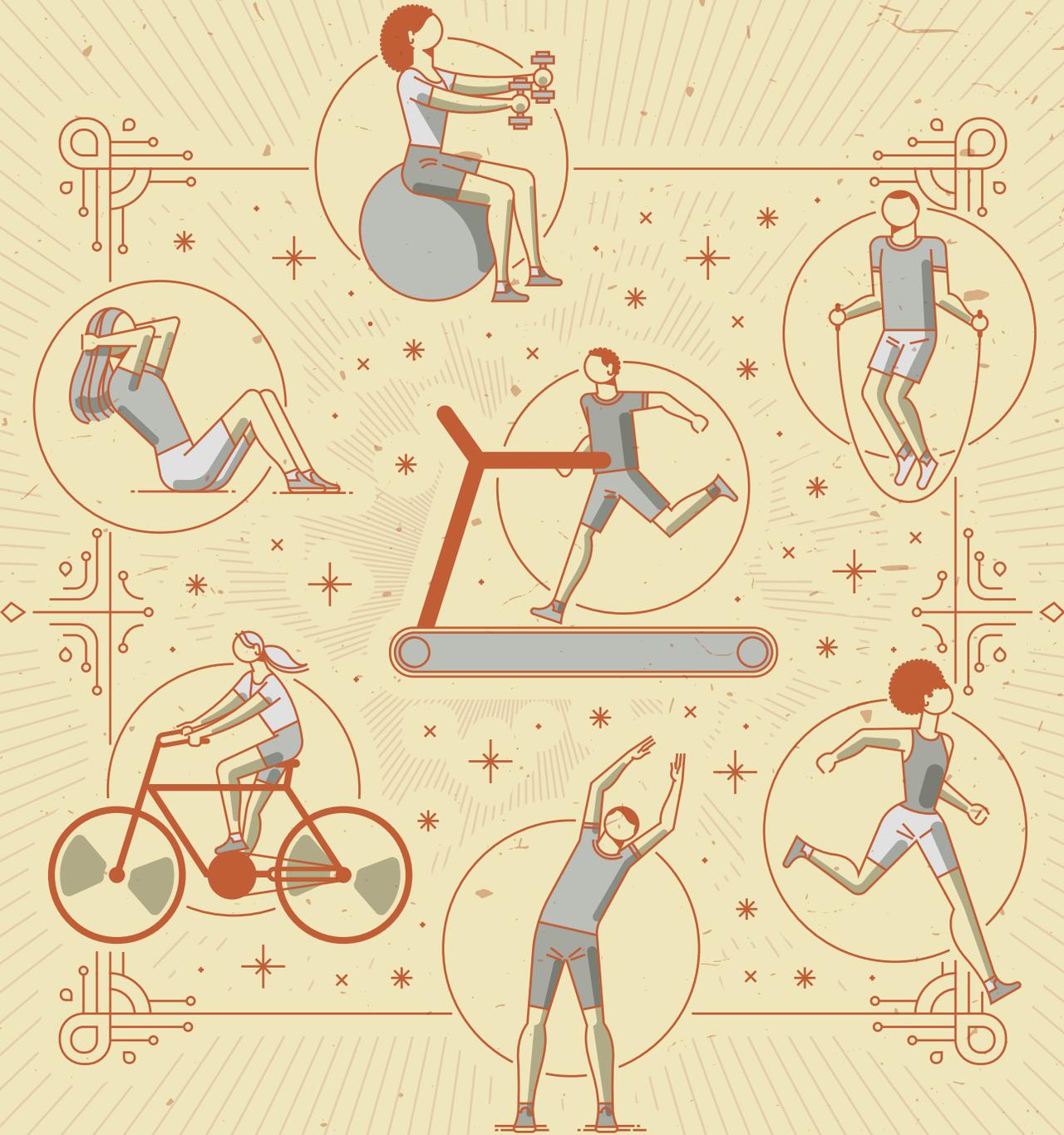
Being able to have fresh produce at their fingertips has not only helped improve Natalie's overall health, but it has also benefited

her three siblings and her parents. Natalie's mother said that all six of them have changed their diets to incorporate healthier options like carrots, tomatoes and squash – even the toddler!

"We're all trying new foods we've never had before and we're discovering how delicious fresh fruits and vegetables can be," she said. "I realized how important it was to expose my kids to these new options and I learned that they actually like eating them."



# EXERCISE IS MEDICINE





## How much should I exercise?

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that adults get at least 150 minutes every week, or 2.5 hours, of moderate intensity exercise such as:



Walking briskly



Water aerobics



Bicycling slower than 10 mph



Tennis



General gardening



Ballroom dancing

## Exercise is Not an Option

Physical inactivity is a fast-growing public health problem and contributes to a variety of chronic diseases and health complications, including obesity, diabetes and cancer. In addition to improving patients' overall health and improving their emotional wellbeing, increasing physical activity has proven effective in the treatment and prevention of chronic diseases. Even with all the benefits of physical activity, in the United States and many other countries, levels of inactivity are alarming. The country is now facing what is referred to as an "inactivity epidemic" with tremendous costs.

Exercise is not an option; it is a quality of life. The benefits of exercise are priceless rewards for the best health and wellness.

Memorial Hermann is bringing this national "Exercise is Medicine" program to Greater Houston, providing education on the benefits and accessibility of regular exercise, resources on addressing and combating chronic diseases and health complications, and exercise prescriptions to improve the health and wellbeing of the community.



**Did you know?** Regular physical activity can reduce the risk of developing chronic conditions, including:

- Heart disease
- Type 2 diabetes
- Osteoporosis
- Cancer
- High blood pressure
- Obesity

## Exercise Prescriptions

Healthcare professionals provide their patients with an exercise prescription as a first step in promoting exercise is medicine. Using the results from the Physical Activity Vital Sign (PAVS) assessment, healthcare providers can provide patients with a specially tailored exercise prescription to help improve their health and wellness.

Two Memorial Hermann Neighborhood Health Centers – Northwest and Northeast – and Memorial Hermann Medical Group practices have implemented the program.

Exercising with a passion to be healthier and a commitment to maintain or reach that healthy goal of only 2.5 hours or 150 minutes per week has been proven to prevent, treat and stop the progression of heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, stroke and Alzheimer's disease while improving emotional wellbeing.

## Activating Park Features

Promoting physical activity begins with ensuring that patients have a safe and accessible place to work out.

Memorial Hermann has been collaborating with partners across the region to activate existing park features and promote safe and engaging opportunities for people to exercise and get fit within their own neighborhoods and communities.

As part of the BUILD Health Challenge (Bold, Upstream, Integrated, Local, and Data-Driven), Memorial Hermann is collaborating with the City of Houston Parks and Recreation Department, the Houston Food Bank and Wesley Community Center to bring the StepHealthy Program twice a month to two local parks: Castillo and Moody parks in the Near Northside.

Attendees are encouraged to participate in a guided walk through the park and take a Zumba class taught by Memorial Hermann coaches. The program comes with an incentive. Food from the Houston Food Bank and Wesley Community Center is distributed upon completion.

Additionally, Memorial Hermann has been working through the Prevention Institute's Community Centered Home Model, funded by Episcopal Health, alongside the YMCA, Avenue CDC, the Houston Parks, Burbank Middle School and Memorial Hermann Health Centers for Schools-Burbank Clinic to activate Northline's Clark Park while engaging the Burbank Community in socially and physical engaging activities.

## Memorial Hermann Promotes Physical Fitness Through a Variety of Programs



**SOCCER FOR SUCCESS**, a free after-school program that uses soccer as a tool to combat childhood obesity and promote healthy lifestyles.



**COMMUNITY WALKING GROUP**, promoting social engagement and physical activity.



**YMCA'S HEALTHY WEIGHT AND YOUR CHILD**, which empowers children to reach a healthy weight and live a healthier lifestyle.

**PATHWAY TO CLARK PARK**, aimed at decorating – and revitalizing sidewalks from Burbank Middle School to Clark Park, using tactical urbanism concepts.



## America's Children are Moving Less

**22%** of children 6 to 19 years old received 60 minutes of exercise, five days a week

**52%** of high school students attended PE classes in a week

**30%** of high school students attended PE classes daily

*Source: U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

## Childhood Physical Activity

**Fostering a lifelong passion for physical activity starts at a young age. Memorial Hermann has been actively working with the region's youth to implement a number of fun and engaging programs that get kids moving, and encourage them to embrace healthier lifestyles that benefit them for the rest of their lives.**

Memorial Hermann is expanding the H.A.P.P.Y (Healthy Attitudes Promote Positive Youth) Boot Camps, where at-risk students participate in a one-week camp to exercise, learn about nutrition and build self-esteem. Each camp enrolls 15 to 24 children each summer.

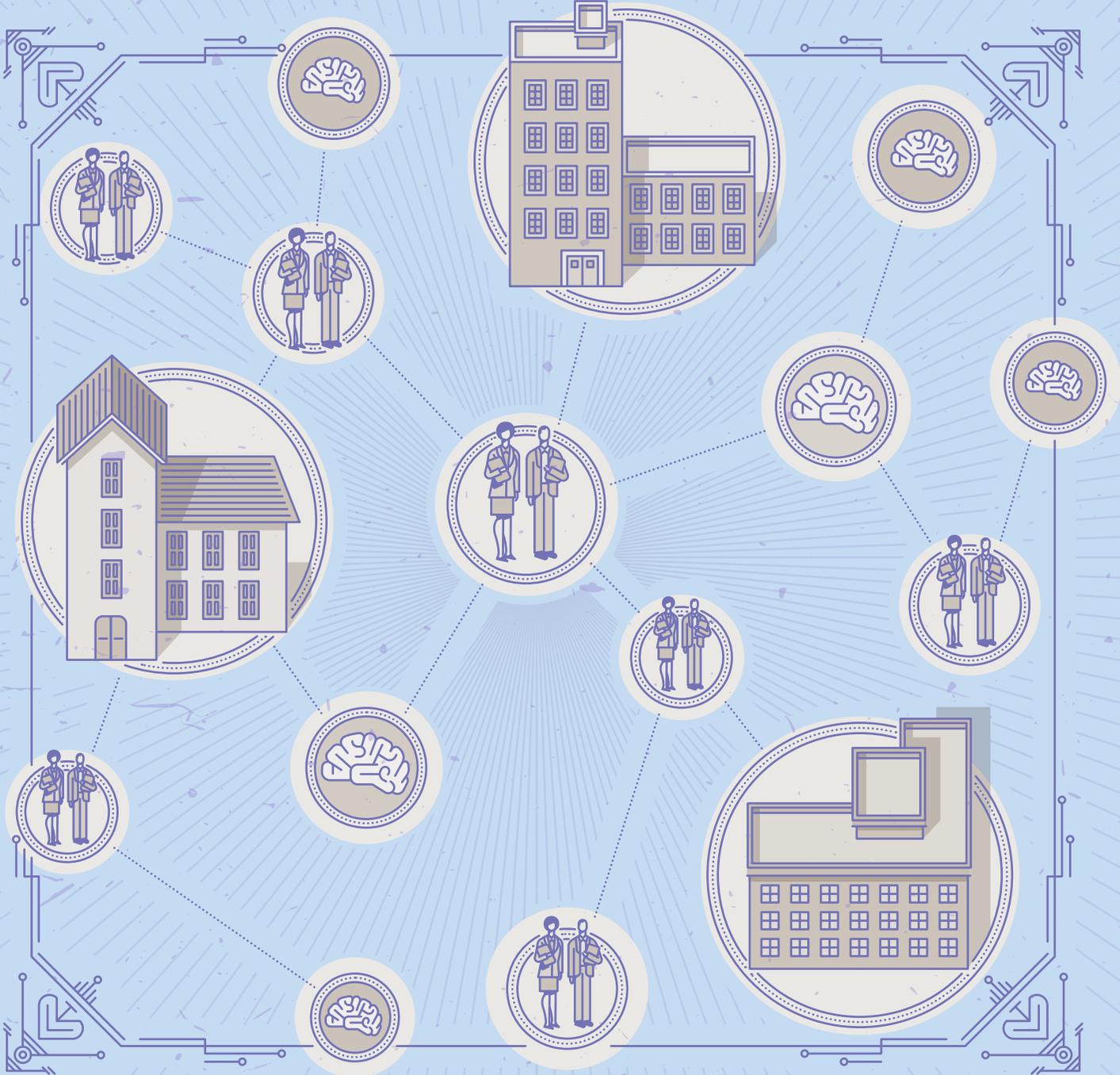
In addition, Memorial Hermann launched the Fitness FUN-atics Summer School Camp two years ago after the Hogg Middle School principal requested that the school-based clinics support her efforts to build self-esteem among children struggling with academic challenges. The goal: give hope to children discouraged by having to attend summer school.

The hour-long class for summer school students that focused on movement, music, motivation and meditation was created to add fun, active engagement and excitement to the daily curriculum, using physical activity/exercise and ball games. The program was designed to incorporate a physical education class into the summer school daily curriculum to teach students how to manage their health and wellness while having fun, using physical activity. The classes also aim to teach students mindfulness exercises to calm themselves in stressful situations.

Since the inception of the program, more than 200 students have been reached.



# MENTAL HEALTH





## Continuum of Care

**Memorial Hermann Behavioral Health Services has grown to provide a continuum of mental health care across the Greater Houston community. For patients accessing emergency rooms for their mental health needs or exhibiting mental health concerns in the acute care setting, the mobile Psych Response Team provides mental health evaluation, consults with medical teams, and directs patients to the most appropriate community care site. The team works 24/7 partnering with more than 200 mental health community treatment providers across five counties. The Psych Response Team serves all Memorial Hermann patients identified as needing psychiatric services, regardless of their funding source to ensure mental health care for all populations.**

In 2013, the Psych Response Case Management Program began services to individuals with chronic mental illness and, at the end of 2017, provided services to 434 unique patients with 6,403 mental health care encounters. Three Mental Health Crisis Clinics in diverse areas of Greater Houston have opened and are physician-led “Urgent Care” outpatient mental health clinics serving individuals in crisis. By the end of 2017, their encounters totaled 19,653.

The aim of these programs is to increase behavioral health access and services to accelerate patients’ mental health connections, reduce recidivism and improve compliance at the earliest touch point possible.

## Behavioral Health Services promotes wellness:

In 2017, Behavioral Health Services connected with System partners to embed a behavioral health clinician in two primary and two specialty care clinics. This “behavioral health care manager” provides support to the medical team as a mental health expert and assists with medication consultation with psychiatry, as well as provides onsite psychotherapy and symptom monitoring for patients. Additionally, Behavioral Health Services supports the Memorial Hermann Heart & Vascular Institute and the Oncology Service Line to educate and support the behavioral health needs for patients across these entities. The collaborations allow for specialized treatment planning, as well as resource connection for some of the most vulnerable populations in our communities.

### Reduced ER Stays

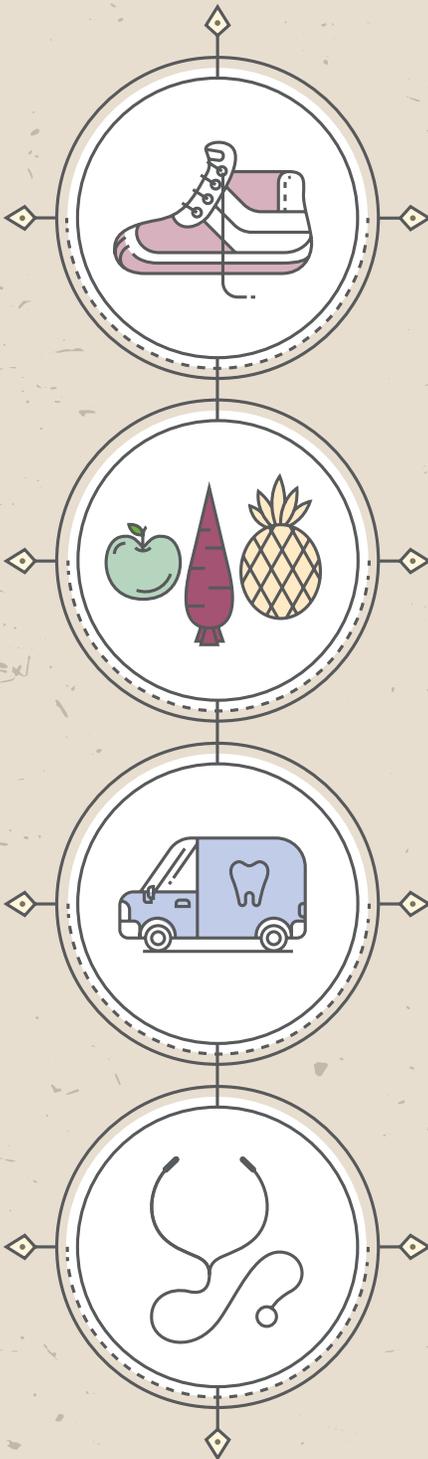
**Through appropriate referral and placement, the Psych Response Team has reduced emergency room average length of stay for psychiatric patients needing an inpatient psychiatric bed from 72 hours in 2002 to less than 12 hours today.**



**71%** **The Case Management Program has reduced client ER/Hospital recidivism by 71% six months post intervention (since program inception 2013-2017).**



**Did you know?** Since 2000, more than 71,500 patients have been screened and 52,000 have been moved out of the ER and/or away from acute care hospitalization to more appropriate behavioral health settings.



## Thank you

**None of this would be possible without the help of our contributing partners. We would like to extend a special thank you to all of the organizations throughout the community that work together to help make Houston a healthier place to live, work and play.**

Aldine Independent School District

Alief Independent School District

Avenue CDC

Avenue 360

Children at Risk

Clinton Foundation

Epiphany Community Health Outreach Services (ECHOS)

The George Foundation

Houston Food Bank

Healthy Living Matters

Houston Parks & Recreation

Houston Parks Board

Houston Health Department

Houston Independent School District

Interfaith Community Clinic

Lamar Consolidated Independent School District

Pasadena Independent School District

Pasadena Vibrant Communities

Project Fit America

Spring Branch Community Health Center

Department of State Health Services, School Health Program

TOMAGWA Ministries, Inc.

The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston School of Public Health

YMCA



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## Memorial Hermann Health System

**One of the largest not-for-profit health systems in the nation, Memorial Hermann Health System is an integrated system with an exceptional medical staff and more than 26,000 employees. The System serves Southeast Texas and the Greater Houston community with more than 300 care delivery sites, including 19\* hospitals, the country's busiest Level I trauma center, an academic medical center affiliated with McGovern Medical School at UTHealth, and numerous specialty programs and services.**

Memorial Hermann has been a trusted healthcare resource for more than a century. As Houston's only full-service, clinically integrated health system, Memorial Hermann continues to identify and meet our region's healthcare needs.\*

Among its diverse portfolio is Memorial Hermann Life Flight®, the largest and busiest air ambulance service in the United States. The Memorial Hermann Physician Network, MHMD, is one of the largest, most advanced and fully integrated physician organizations in the country. Memorial Hermann Accountable Care Organization operates a care delivery model that generates better outcomes at a lower cost to consumers, and residents of the Greater Houston area have broader access to health insurance through the Memorial Hermann Health Insurance Company.

### Our Vision

**Memorial Hermann will be a preeminent integrated health system in the U.S. by advancing the health of those we serve.**

\* Memorial Hermann Health System owns and operates 15 hospitals and has joint ventures with four other hospital facilities.





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