



## Community benefit report 2016

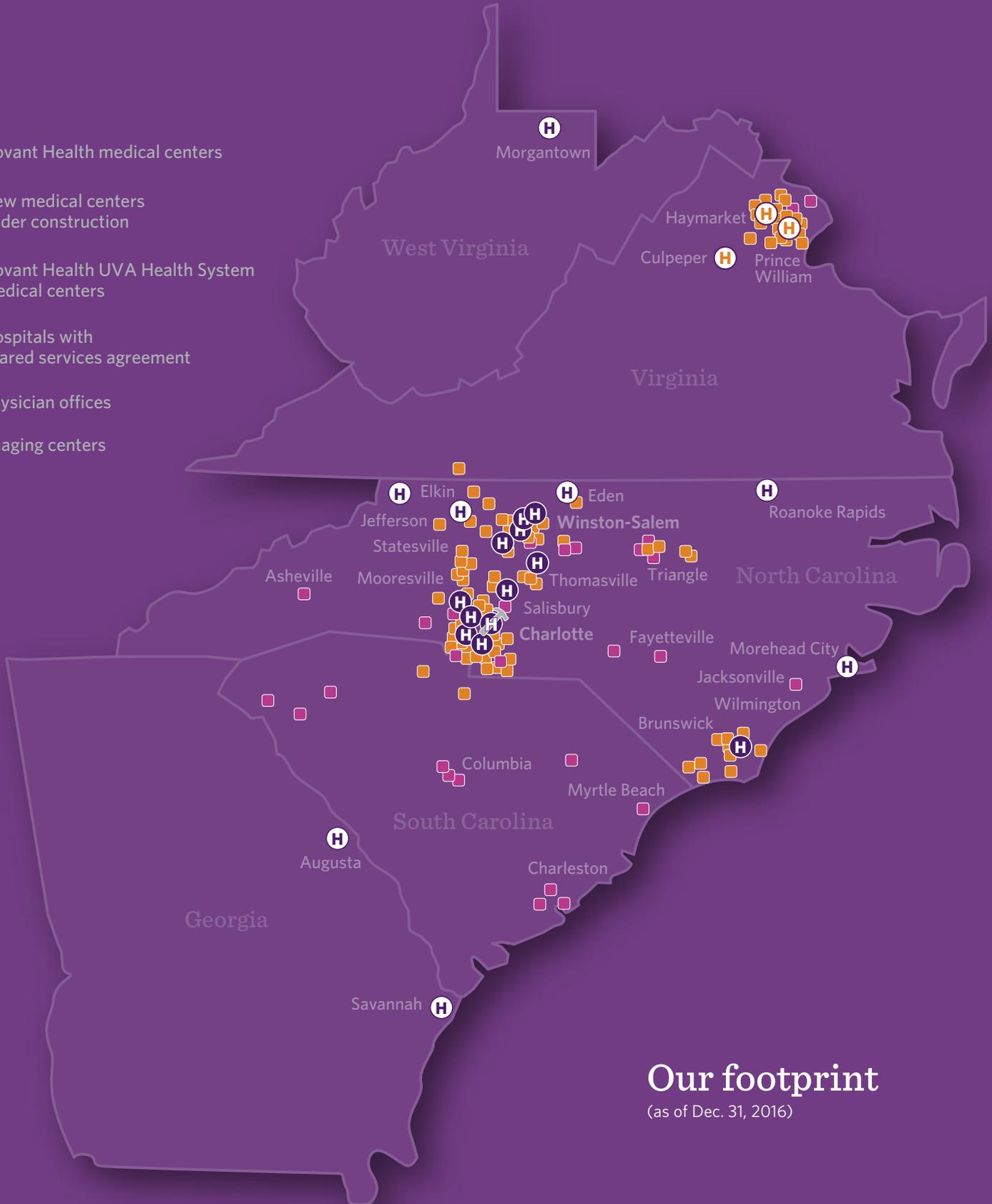
# Our mission

Novant Health exists to improve the health of communities, one person at a time.

# Our vision

We, the Novant Health team, will deliver the most remarkable patient experience, in every dimension, every time.

-  Novant Health medical centers
-  New medical centers under construction
-  Novant Health UVA Health System medical centers
-  Hospitals with shared services agreement
-  Physician offices
-  Imaging centers



## Our footprint

(as of Dec. 31, 2016)



# Why we give back

## Strengthening communities, changing lives

Barbara stood at a crossroads. Her cholesterol was high, her energy was low, and she was overweight. She knew she needed to make changes — or she would face a future of declining health. That's when she joined Novant Health's Weigh for You, a program focused on achieving and maintaining a healthy weight.

Today, Barbara is on a path to wellness. "I feel better, healthier, alert and awake," said the Clemmons, North Carolina, resident. "The best part is I've learned a new way of life."

Barbara is one of countless people touched by Novant Health's commitment to giving back. The health system offers weight loss classes to many at a discounted rate or no charge — just one example of the benefit the organization returns to the communities it serves.

As a not-for-profit healthcare system, we reach across regions, extending the blessing of good health

to people in need. Through our community benefit efforts last year, thousands of women in the North Carolina Triangle got screened for heart disease. Struggling coastal families received free baby care supplies at the Brunswick Community Baby Shower. Children at low-income schools got needed immunizations. Low-income families who struggle to pay for medical treatments received help paying for their healthcare. Where we saw needs, we took action.

And our commitment to leaving our communities better than we found them extends from the organization to individual team members, who donate time, talent and money to friends and neighbors in crisis.

Novant Health is proud to invest in the places we live and work. We believe we're only as strong as the communities we serve — and we believe every person deserves the chance to lead a healthy life. We give back a portion of what we've been given because we're here to make communities healthier, one person at a time.

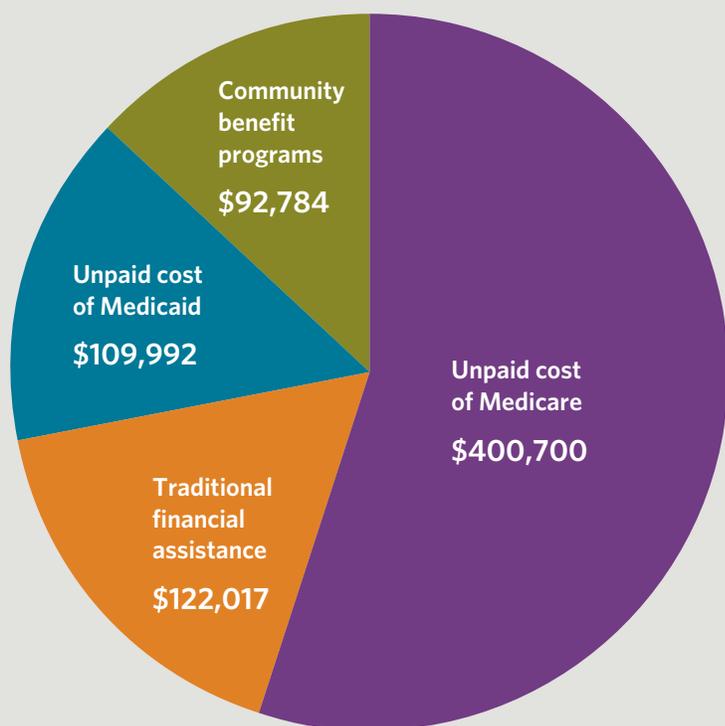
# What is community benefit?

Community benefit includes programs or activities that provide treatment or promote health and healing as a response to identified community needs — and meet at least one of these objectives:

- Improve access to healthcare services
- Enhance the health of the community
- Advance medical or health knowledge
- Relieve or reduce the burden on government to provide health services

Novant Health's community benefit includes hundreds of programs, such as unreimbursed health services to individuals with Medicaid and Medicare coverage; community health education; support groups; partnerships with other organizations to provide outreach services; community events and screenings; and participation in medical research and academic health programs.

## Investment in the community — by the numbers (in 000s)



In 2016, Novant Health provided more than **\$725.5 million** in community benefit,\* up from **\$706.3 million** in 2015.



In 2016, the unreimbursed costs to provide healthcare services to Medicare and Medicaid patients were about **\$400.7 million** and **\$109.9 million**, respectively.

\*The community benefit report prepared by Novant Health is a systemwide report that includes qualitative and quantitative information. Please note that the numeric data in this report are not based on the IRS Form 990, Schedule H criteria, but rather it has been prepared in accordance with the North Carolina Hospital Association reporting guidelines. It should not be relied upon as the organization's Form 990, Schedule H Community Benefit Report, its Community Health Needs Assessment or Community Benefit Implementation Strategy.



# A new cycle, a new call to action

2016 marked the start of a new three-year community benefit cycle for most Novant Health facilities. Throughout the year, each hospital worked diligently with community partners to collect data and feedback in an effort to discover the greatest health needs.

The data have been summarized in the 2016-2018 Novant Health community health needs assessments. Each report can be found online at [NovantHealth.org/communitybenefit](http://NovantHealth.org/communitybenefit).

As a system, the shared health issues of greatest priority across our footprint included:

1. Diabetes
2. Obesity
3. Other chronic diseases (and the impact of smoking)
4. Mental health and substance abuse
5. Maternal and infant health
6. Caring for an aging population

Community benefit implementation plans have been approved by each facility's board of trustees to track the outcomes of our various programs developed to address the priority areas.

Tracking the impact and outcomes of community benefit activities allows us to make strategic, data-driven choices in how to best serve the needs of vulnerable populations across our system.

Each of us hopes, in some way, to leave the world a little better than we found it. At Novant Health, we are grateful for the opportunity to invest in the health and well-being of the communities we serve. We do it not only because it's part of our social responsibility as a tax-exempt healthcare system; we do it, simply, because we believe it's the right thing to do.



# Addressing the pressing healthcare needs of our communities

We take our mission beyond our facilities: This includes community health education and support groups, as well as partnering with local organizations to provide outreach services and host community events and screenings. The screenings help people to know exactly what conditions they are at risk for, how to avoid associated risks and how to improve their overall health.

Here's a look at how we're working to improve the health of the communities we serve.

## 1 Diabetes

In 2016, we provided over **6,000** individuals with free hemoglobin A1C tests, which measure the risk for diabetes by gauging average blood glucose levels over the past few months. In the greater Charlotte market alone, Novant Health community outreach teams screened over **2,300** people at faith-based organizations, healthcare expos, blood drives and other community events.

In addition, **581** people participated in diabetes health education classes sponsored by Novant Health. Participants received information about how to live a healthier lifestyle, and more than half of the group participated in diabetes support groups to share about their care experiences and learn best practices to manage diabetes at home.

### Why it's important

Diabetes is the nation's seventh-leading cause of death and contributes to heart disease and stroke — the foremost leading and fifth leading causes of death, respectively.<sup>1</sup> It is a leading cause of kidney failure, nontraumatic lower-limb amputations and blindness in adults.<sup>2</sup>

The number of Americans with diagnosed diabetes has increased almost fourfold, from **5.5 million** in 1980 to **22 million** in 2014.<sup>3</sup> An additional **8.1 million** Americans are estimated to have diabetes but are not yet diagnosed.<sup>4</sup>

Lifestyle changes such as weight loss, increased physical activity and following a healthy diet can substantially reduce the risk of developing type 2 diabetes and significantly improve one's quality of life.

The nation's economic costs associated with treating diabetes are considerable.

**41%** How much the direct medical costs and lost productivity costs attributable to diabetes rose between 2007 and 2012.<sup>2</sup>

**2.3x** How much higher direct medical costs were in 2012, among people diagnosed with diabetes, than people without diabetes, after adjusting for population age and sex differences.<sup>2</sup>

**\$245 billion**

The economic burden of diagnosed cases (in 2012). That includes **\$176 billion** in direct medical costs and **\$69 billion** in indirect costs, such as disability, work loss and premature death.<sup>2</sup>

**\$322 billion**

Cost estimates that include undiagnosed cases, prediabetes and all types of diagnosed diabetes are far higher, exceeding this number in 2012.<sup>5</sup>

## 2 Obesity

Obesity is often one of the common factors in preventable disease. Research has shown that people who are obese have higher rates of heart disease, diabetes, some types of cancers and other illnesses. Many people struggle with making healthier lifestyle choices, but the benefits and rewards can be life-changing and long-lasting. We are leading efforts in our communities to promote active living, healthy eating and weight control.

In 2016, Novant Health reached **8,393** individuals through its nutrition and weight management programs, screenings, support groups and services designed to help address adult and childhood obesity.

### Getting 'Fit for Motion' at a young age

To help curtail habits of physical inactivity and obesity early on, Novant Health Rowan Medical Center took an innovative approach to engaging area youth. Val Velte, a registered nurse and community health program manager, partnered with Rowan-Salisbury Schools to implement a motivating eight-week, health-and-wellness program for third-graders called Fit for Motion. The Novant Health community health team partnered with the school's physical education teachers through weekly lessons and activities to empower them to implement the Fit for Motion curriculum in their own classrooms throughout the school year.



### Did you know?



More than two-thirds of U.S. adults are overweight or obese.<sup>6</sup>

In North Carolina alone, about 30 percent of adults are obese.<sup>7</sup>

While obesity rates remain high nationwide, research has shown that some groups are more affected than others. Specifically, non-Hispanic blacks have the highest age-adjusted rates of obesity (48.1 percent) followed by Hispanics (42.5 percent), non-Hispanic whites (34.5 percent), and non-Hispanic Asians (11.7 percent). Obesity is higher among middle-age adults ages 40 to 59 years (40.2 percent) and older adults ages 60 and over (37.0 percent) than among younger adults ages 20 to 39 (32.3 percent).<sup>6</sup>

Children are impacted, too. About 9 percent of children ages 2 to 5 are obese compared with 17.5 percent of 6- to 11-year-olds and 20.5 percent of 12- to 19-year-olds. Childhood obesity is also more prevalent among Hispanic and black youth.<sup>6</sup>

## 3

## Other chronic disease (and the impact of smoking)

Chronic diseases and conditions — such as heart disease, stroke, cancer, type 2 diabetes, obesity and arthritis — are among the most common, costly and preventable of all health problems, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Nearly half of U.S. adults (47 percent) have at least one of the following major risk factors for heart disease or stroke: uncontrolled high blood pressure, uncontrolled high LDL cholesterol or are current smokers.<sup>8</sup>

In 2016, Novant Health provided:

**6,662**

individuals received free heart health education and/or blood pressure screenings

**4,468**

individuals were educated on stroke or screened for conditions like peripheral arterial disease, which can increase risk of heart disease and stroke

**13,793**

individuals received cancer education — topics included cancer wellness and prevention, and information related to preventing and treating common cancers (namely breast, colorectal, lung and prostate cancer)



**1,327**

women received free mammography screenings or clinical breast exams

**149**

individuals signed “no smoking pledges” or received smoking cessation resources from certified smoking cessation leaders at Novant Health

### Spotlighting the Solomon House

The Solomon House is a prime example of how we are leading the industry in addressing issues related to chronic disease through our outreach services. A department of Novant Health Huntersville Medical Center, the Solomon House offers free health education, crisis assistance and referrals to community resources, such as hospital services, free community clinics and social service agencies, for those who might not have full access to healthcare in the Lake Norman area.

In 2016, **2,777** individuals were served through the Solomon House’s services. Eighty-five percent of those served were minorities of lower socioeconomic status, many of whom were identified as having food insecurities (79 percent) or were in need of healthcare services (12 percent).

## 4

## Mental health and substance abuse

Mental health is an issue that has been an increasing concern across our region. Novant Health has pledged to address mental health issues in our communities by developing several programs to help improve behavioral health outcomes and educate the community-at-large. We believe that, as a good corporate citizen, we must continue to work closely with local and state agencies and organizations to help people to get better and get back to living life fully.

For example, in an effort to take this commitment one step further, Novant Health Forsyth Medical Center established a community grant initiative in 2016. The grant will provide over **\$100,000** in funding over the course of two years for three community nonprofits that provide behavioral health services in Forsyth County, North Carolina. In addition, Novant Health chaplains and community outreach therapists provide multiple programs and support groups on topics such as grief counseling, caregiver support, depression, stress management and emotional well-being.



### Why it's important

Mental illness can damage careers, disrupt families and change lives. Depression, anxiety disorders, frequent mental distress, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia and other mental illnesses exact an immense toll on the people they affect.



And mental illness strikes many of us.

1 in 5 adults in the U.S, or **almost 4 million,** experience mental illness in any given year, according to the National Alliance on Mental Illness.<sup>9</sup>



And we know that mental health affects a person's entire well-being. Mental disorders, especially depression, are strongly related to the occurrence, successful treatment, and course of many chronic diseases including diabetes, cancer, cardiovascular disease, asthma and obesity, according to the CDC. And mental illness also is associated with many risk behaviors for chronic disease, such as, physical inactivity, smoking, excessive drinking, and insufficient sleep. The good news is that the mind-body connection goes both ways. Growing evidence suggests that positive mental health is associated with improved health outcomes, according to the CDC.



**10.3% adults**  
ages 18 to 25

experienced a major depressive episode in 2015, **up from 8.3 percent** in 2011.<sup>10</sup>



**12.5% adolescents**

experience a major depressive episode in 2015, **up from 8.2 percent** in 2011.<sup>10</sup>

Depression is the most common mental disorder. By the year 2020, depression may be the second-leading cause of disability throughout the world, second only to coronary artery disease. Depression is becoming especially widespread among younger Americans, according to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. And depression is even more widespread among adolescents.

Many people do not seek treatment for mental illness, often because of the stigma attached to those conditions that doesn't exist for other diseases. The result: Too many people won't reach out for help until they're in a crisis.

## 5

## Maternal and infant health

Infant mortality is a major health issue in North Carolina. In fact, Forsyth County has the third highest infant mortality rate — 6.4 per 1,000 births — of the five most populated counties in the state, according to the Forsyth County Infant Mortality Reduction Coalition.<sup>11</sup> As the only birthing center in the county, Novant Health Forsyth Medical Center has dedicated considerable resources around the development of Forsyth Connects, derived from the nationally recognized Family Connects program aimed at helping to provide added support to newborns and their families.

Through the program, registered nurses schedule home visits with every new mother. The nurses provide clinical follow-up and also provide community referrals based on the needs of mom and baby. As of December 2016, the program has had an average of **68 percent home visit acceptance rate**.

Across the Novant Health system, various classes are provided at all of our facilities to expectant mothers and families. These classes include breastfeeding education, childbirth preparation, infant care, sibling and family preparation, and infant CPR.

### Connecting new moms to community resources

While mothers and families are offered educational services at our facilities, a team member at Novant Health Brunswick Medical Center took efforts one step further by organizing the hospital's annual community baby shower. Lauren Haigler, a certified nursing assistant, would see mothers leave the hospital with their newborns every day knowing not every mother had all the essentials — diapers, wipes, formula, baby clothes and/or car seats — waiting for them at home. Inspired by a similar program in a neighboring county, Lauren began organizing a similar event for local mothers. The event draws sponsorships from local businesses, civic organizations and government agencies. In 2016, more than **150 people** attended the shower held in Shallotte, North Carolina, and Lauren and her team gave away over **300 baby outfits**, more than **500 diapers**, **200 toys and books**, **150 toiletry items** and more.



### Why it's important

While leveling off recently, the rate of pregnancy-related deaths in the U.S. has been climbing over the last 25 years, according to the CDC. Among the causes: infections, flu, bleeding, blood clots, diabetes and high blood pressure. Heart conditions cause 1 in 4 pregnancy-related deaths. Smoking, excessive body weight and other factors also contribute to poor maternal health or pregnancy-related deaths.

The five leading causes of infant death are **birth defects, preterm birth or low birth weight, maternal complications of pregnancy, sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), and unintentional injuries**, according to the CDC. Pre-term birth puts babies at high risk for serious conditions, such as cerebral palsy.<sup>12</sup>

The U.S. infant death rate has been falling since 2005, the CDC says, but remains a concern: For every

# 1,000

infants born, six die before their first birthday. The death rate for black infants is double that for white infants.<sup>12</sup>

An emphasis on maternal care — including smoking cessation efforts, nutrition and exercise programs, control of blood pressure and other risk factors — improves the likelihood of a full-term birth. Educating pregnant women on the importance of regular checkups, the risks of alcohol consumption and the need for prenatal vitamins can pay off in health dividends not only for the baby, but for his or her mother.

## 6

## Caring for an aging population

Novant Health provides ongoing outreach services to the aging population across our footprint. Health educators, nurses and physicians deliver relevant education and screenings on topics including osteoporosis, senior wellness and nutrition, fall prevention and geriatric behavioral health. We interacted with more than **4,165** seniors in 2016 through these screenings and education services.

### Making the connection

For example, a special program at Novant Health Thomasville Medical Center called ConnectionLink was designed specifically to send speakers and screening services to key locations, such as retirement homes, assisted living facilities, faith-based organizations and senior centers across the Davidson County community. In 2016, **1,672** seniors were reached through the ConnectionLink program.

In addition, team members from the consumer health library at Novant Health Matthews Medical Center have been instrumental in setting up ongoing talks and screening services at local senior centers to provide information on various topics related to aging well. In 2016, they launched a new series called “The Amazing Human Body,” at which different physicians were invited to educate seniors on the anatomy, function and health of different body systems. Over the course of the yearlong series, **471** seniors participated.

### The growing need

There will be an estimated 89 million Americans who are over the age of 65 by 2050, more than double the number of older adults nationwide in 2010, according to the CDC.<sup>13</sup>

The rapid aging of the U.S. population is being driven by two realities: Americans are living longer lives than in previous decades and, given the post-World War II baby boom, there are proportionately more older adults than in previous generations.<sup>13</sup>

And while America continues to age, healthcare systems across the country — including Novant Health — recognize the importance of collaborating with community agencies to meet the growing needs and demands of a rapidly aging population. Nationally, there continues to be a higher prevalence of frequent mental distress among the aging population, a higher prevalence of food insecurity and a lower percentage of quality nursing home beds across the nation.<sup>13</sup>

**“The physician was inspirational in stressing the importance of taking care of yourself and how it impacts overall health.” – Amazing Human Body participant**





# Financial assistance

## **Financial assistance**

Novant Health medical centers provide free or discounted care to patients who are unable to pay some or all of their bills. In 2016, Novant Health provided over \$122 million in financial assistance.

## **Discount for the uninsured**

Our financial assistance program covers about 90 percent of all uninsured patients. For the other 10 percent who do not qualify because their incomes are above the guidelines, we offer a discount on their bill that is similar to a managed care contract discount.

## **Catastrophic settlement**

Novant Health has a benefit for eligible patients whose balance is determined to be excessive, even if they have health insurance. Some patients struggle to pay the larger amounts. With this program, a Novant Health financial

counselor evaluates a patient's individual situation to determine if he or she qualifies for a discount on the remaining balance or a full write-off.

## **Flexible payment plan**

Novant Health also offers flexible payment plans for patients. The financial counselors can establish a routine payment schedule for patients, with terms extending up to five years. Our counselors take many factors into consideration when setting up a patient's payment plan, such as the amount of the balance and a person's overall financial status. No interest is charged for payment plans.

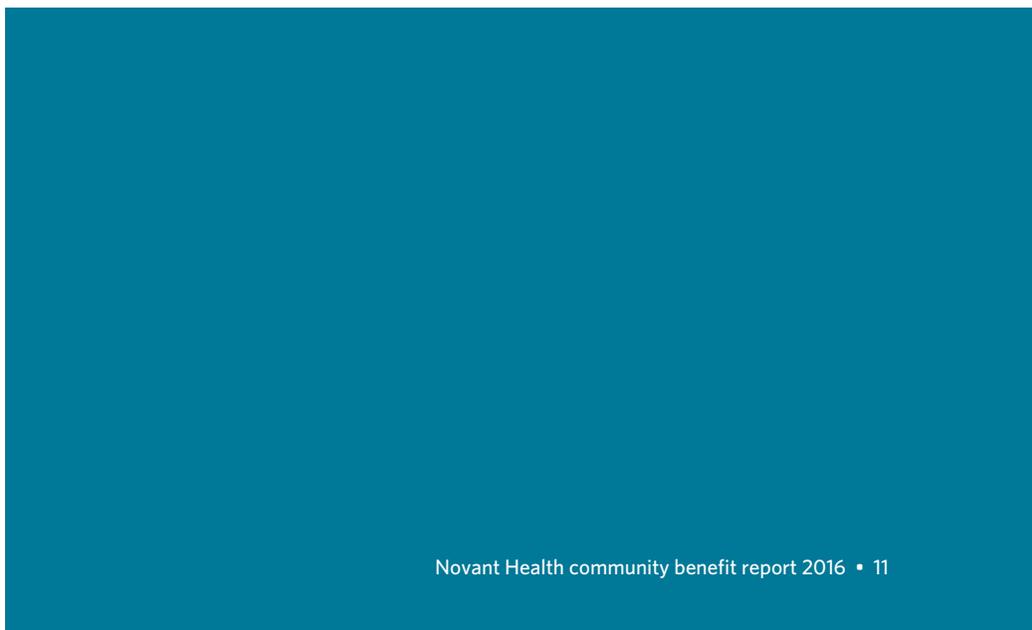
## **Who qualifies for financial assistance?**

Patients whose household income is at or below 300 percent of the federal poverty level may be eligible to receive financial assistance.



>6,000

people received  
free diabetes  
screenings in 2016





8,393

individuals reached through our nutrition and weight management programs, screenings, support groups and services designed to help address adult and childhood obesity





To learn more about how Novant Health is involved  
in your community, visit [NovantHealth.org](http://NovantHealth.org).

