Forging partnerships, empowering communities

2019 community impact report
At Novant Health, we are passionate about our communities

When we talk about elevating our communities, we know that achieving this at its highest level takes more than one person or organization. Community engagement is a shared responsibility. Addressing social barriers to health thrives on strategic partnerships and community-driven solutions.

Novant Health has significantly invested in the communities we serve by offering quality healthcare services, products and community outreach programs to community members and businesses. As a not-for-profit organization that generates significant economic activity, we want to ensure our strategies are making a difference in the communities we serve.

In 2019, Novant Health made a strategic, long-term commitment to focus our community engagement programs and services toward achieving health equity — that is, improving health and upward mobility in all communities, especially those that need it most. Specifically, we are pursuing this through five strategic priorities: aligning our investments and activities in communities that need them most, understanding each community’s unique obstacles and assets, leveraging Novant Health’s position to cultivate effective partnerships, achieving sustainable outcomes and activating community engagement awareness throughout our organization.

So how are we delivering on these priorities? Let me share a few examples.

**We are investing in upward mobility initiatives to improve health.** We recognize that well-being starts at home — and in the Charlotte area, access to safe and affordable housing is a key concern. We recently committed $6 million to the Charlotte Housing Opportunity Investment Fund through Foundation for the Carolinas to address the affordable housing crisis, not only for our community, but also for our team members who live near our facilities and need access to affordable housing. We are diligently pursuing strategies to tackle the challenges surrounding social determinants of health in our communities, of which safe and affordable housing is often a key concern.

**We are pursuing nontraditional partnerships in healthcare.** In our Eastern market, Novant Health Brunswick Medical Center partners with the Brunswick County Sheriff’s Office on the Anchor Initiative, which allows individuals with substance use disorder to contact the sheriff’s office for help without fear of charges if referred by a social agency or self-referred. Brunswick Medical Center also hosts Project Search, which provides internship experience for students ages 18 to 21 with developmental disabilities through the hospital’s partnership with Brunswick Community College, Brunswick County Schools and the North Carolina Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services.

**We’re boosting access to care.** We know the power of medicine for treating and preventing illnesses — yet many people go without because they cannot afford to pay for medication. In Charlotte and Winston-Salem, Novant Health supports NC MedAssist, which helps fill this gap for people through individualized assistance and free pharmacy giveaway events. In 2019, NC MedAssist served more than 57,000 patients and provided more than $74 million of free prescription and over-the-counter medication.

**We’re launching new strategies to reach people.** One way is through Novant Health MyCommunity, an online platform that connects patients to free and reduced-cost social service resources — from housing to food to help with transit fares. Also, through ONE Charlotte Health Alliance, a community partnership, we have established a food pharmacy at the Movement Family Wellness Center powered by Novant Health to increase patients’ access to healthy foods.

Working together to make a real impact is what it takes to uplift our communities. At Novant Health, it is our privilege and commitment to develop innovative programs and provide quality care for all patients that help them get better and stay healthy. Through partnerships, we can make our communities stronger than ever.
What is community benefit?

It’s more than our responsibility — it’s our commitment

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 that address the most pressing health needs of the communities we serve, particularly among historically excluded groups. This includes unreimbursed health services to individuals with Medicaid and Medicare coverage; free community health education and screenings; support groups; investments in health-focused community groups; and participation in medical research and academic health programs.

In 2019, Novant Health reported $993,242,890 in total community benefit, including $152,294,573 in financial assistance to members in the communities we serve.
I t's not unusual for Sharette Blake’s medical clinic visits to include offers of job-search help, spiritual words of wisdom or even a bag of healthy eating staples before she heads out the door.

That's what happens during visits with teams at two Charlotte clinics focused on providing top-notch medical care to patients — regardless of whether they have insurance — as well as extra support to address social risk factors that affect health.

Having access to medical care was especially important to Blake since recovering from a stroke in 2017. However, since she was unemployed and without insurance, she wasn’t sure what to do. That's when Blake met the care teams and Jonathan Wilson, MD, at Movement Family Wellness Center powered by Novant Health, and later at Novant Health Michael Jordan Family Medical Clinic.

During her first visit, a social worker gave her a food bag with brown rice and canned chicken. Then during her appointment, she and Wilson connected right away over their faith, families and Blake’s health goals for the future. Everything about the experience was completely different from all other visits, she said.

“I remember going to my car and just sitting there for a minute and just smiling, because nothing like that had ever happened before,” Blake said. She experienced different emotions while attending the Michael Jordan clinic opening, tearing up when the basketball star did while describing his commitment to help improve healthcare access in communities that need it most. “This clinic,” Blake said, “is a beacon of light.”

Promoting health equity and access

The Movement clinic, which opened late 2018, provides preventive and primary care in addition to behavioral health services. Novant Health’s partner is Movement Foundation, the nonprofit investment arm of Movement Mortgage. Also located along the same Freedom Drive corridor in Charlotte is the Michael Jordan Family Medical Clinic.

Seeing the person behind the patient

At Novant Health, we know our mission is about more than improving people’s health. Increasingly, it’s clear that our practice of seeing the person behind the patient is more important than ever. Our overall goal is to identify and reduce healthcare disparities and improve the well-being of populations across our footprint. Our community partnerships are key to our mission of achieving health equity in all communities, delivering the most remarkable patient experience and improving the health of our communities, one person at a time.

These days, with Blake launching a new career as a long-haul truck driver, her talks with Wilson include sleeping well, eating well and getting exercise while on the road. With her children now grown, Blake said, “I just want to have adventures at this point in my life.”

Wilson said the “special sauce” to these connections is believing in the inherent dignity of each patient, which pushes care teams to put themselves in their patient’s shoes and allows for empathic and compassionate care.

“Sharette is a mom. She's a truck driver. She's a community activist,” Wilson said. “I want her to be the best she can of those things. And as a family doctor, my hope is to foster her health so she is able to pursue her goals.”

Through these clinics focused on health equity and access, “we want to eliminate a lot of these steps from receiving care,” Wilson said. “If you qualify for financial assistance, you can get six months of any care within Novant Health. That can be going to orthopedics or going to see a neurologist or cardiologist, which is exceptional.”

A look into our community: Farm to Preschool program at Head Start

For many reasons, gardening is the perfect activity for children. Gardening provides plenty of exercise in the outdoors, teaches children where vegetables and fruits come from and how they grow, limits screen time and encourages healthy eating habits.

All of these positives explain why Head Start’s Farm to Preschool program — part of Salisbury-Rowan Community Action Agency — is a big hit among participating children and families. Novant Health is among the community partners that helped launch the program in 2019, providing a $3,000 contribution to Salisbury-Rowan Community Action Agency for garden boxes, plants and other supplies. That contribution helped 152 children and families boost their gardening skills, increase their knowledge of a balanced diet and engage with each other in a new experience.

At Novant Health, we know that connecting with nature plays an influential role in our health — from boosting our physical activity to reducing stress levels. We also know that access to fresh fruits and vegetables is a critical component of nutrition and healthy brain development. By partnering with other community organizations to engage families in an outdoor learning environment, we are investing in improving the health of our communities.
Novant Health community health workers improve the health of our communities, one person at a time

When Sonae Pittman (left, with daughter Dassia at right) first saw the single family home with the huge backyard and wooden deck, located at the end of a quiet street in Charlotte, she thought, “I could see myself being here.” Gloria Council (center), the Novant Health community health worker paired with Pittman, agreed.

Council’s work involves promoting the health and wellness of patients. To do this, Council must address the health disparities and socioeconomic drivers of disease affecting her clients. Council and Pittman first met in early 2019 following Pittman’s stay at Novant Health. Pittman was successful in addressing health disparities and socioeconomic needs, like food security, financial stability and education that are so closely linked to health. Strategic partnerships with organizations like BFA are another way we continue our commitment of improving the health and upward mobility of all communities we serve.

A look into our community: Brunswick Family Assistance

Novant Health launched the community health workers program in 2019 through joint funding from The Duke Endowment. Our community health workers collaborate with a variety of community partners across the state to connect patients to important health and social resources.

Three community health workers are based in Mecklenburg, Rowan and Forsyth counties. A fourth one, based at the Mecklenburg County Community Resource Center, works to connect clients to the right health, wellness and social service programs available on-site at the center.

Once a client enrols, they commit to a 90-day program, which includes a comprehensive health screening on the first day. Then clients receive help with dental, vision and medical appointments, and medication management.

“If you could see what I went through — from the first day, me and Miss Gloria just clicked,” Pittman said. “God sent my help through Miss Gloria.”

Eventually, clients are encouraged to make their own appointments, with the community health worker there as backup if they need it.

“I just needed somebody to believe in me”

Once Council learned about Pittman’s housing dilemma, she hit the web to hunt down possible solutions. When she came upon that house with the huge wooden deck, Pittman was cautious. Council, however, went all in on the enthusiasm: “I’m claiming it for you. This house is for you.”

Turns out everything came together for Pittman and her daughters to move in just before Thanksgiving. To celebrate, Council arranged to drop off an entire sack of food and toiletries — on the move — heading to a location to drop off or pick up food deliveries for residents in underserved areas.

The truck belongs to Brunswick Family Assistance (BFA), a 35-year-old nonprofit that provides community members in need with free food, emergency assistance, and access to educational and skills development programs. Many of the individuals served by BFA are also patients at Novant Health, whether in the hospital or in our surrounding medical offices.

Novant Health Brunswick Medical Center team members supported BFA in various ways in 2019:

- Participated in the assistance program’s toys for tots program, collecting over 100 toys for families, and the Angel Tree program, providing gifts, clothing and other items for 14 children and adults.
- Donated over 1,000 items to BFA’s food pantry.
- Volunteered in December at the warehouse where 55 leadership team members, managers and assistant managers sorted toys and food donations.
- Participated in the high school graduation rate and increase the skill level of our communities. Senior Academy has had a 93% to 99% success rate — helping to increase mobility among high school students in our communities. Senior Academy has had a 93% to 99% success rate — helping to increase the high school graduation rate and increase the skill level of our workforce. By creating a forum where students can have meaningful collaborations with team members, teens can dream big about what they can do in their future.

Introducing teens to hospital careers

What happens when 70 high school students from local schools spend a day at Novant Health Forsyth Medical Center to shadow team members? They get an up-close look at the many roles that make the hospital go.

Behind the Scenes, a meet-the-team event provided by Novant Health and the Winston-Salem Chamber, showcased nearly a dozen hospital careers. The event is part of the chamber’s Senior Academy, a dropout prevention and career readiness program for seniors from at-risk neighborhoods.

Novant Health hosts one of the academy’s learning experiences at Forsyth Medical Center, where students learn about healthcare careers in support services. The day included a panel discussion with Novant Health speakers from different careers and a tour with stops in plant engineering, food and nutrition services, public safety, patient transport, guest services and more. Students learned about different nonclinical roles at the hospital and asked questions along the way.

Collaborations like this help Novant Health encourage upward mobility among high school students in our communities. Senior Academy has had a 93% to 99% success rate — helping to increase the high school graduation rate and increase the skill level of our workforce. By creating a forum where students can have meaningful collaborations with team members, teens can dream big about what they can do in their future.
That was before Loman completed Project Cornerstone, a residential program for men in long-term recovery following substance use disorder. Project Cornerstone participants live at Samaritan Ministries in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, while overcoming substance use disorder, developing job and life skills and working toward becoming independent.

These days, other happenings in Loman’s life are a lot different, too. Family members who avoided him now expect him to be around. He’s enrolled in Liberty University to become a psychologist and is committed to seeing his studies through. And guests at Project Cornerstone and Samaritan Ministries now look up to him, as he has returned to lead classes on the history of Alcoholics Anonymous.

“I give credit completely to Project Cornerstone,” said Loman, whose 14 months in the program ended November 2019 — when he began his peer support specialist job.

“I received a second chance here. After I left, it just carried on.”

Understanding the impact of social factors on mental and physical health, Novant Health partners with Samaritan Ministries to address substance use disorder recovery and eliminate barriers to permanent housing and employment. In addition to Project Cornerstone, Samaritan Ministries also provides temporary shelter for homeless men and runs a soup kitchen serving sit-down meals to people who need them.

Men in Project Cornerstone work with a counselor on job skills, healthcare issues and employment and housing leads. A major part of Project Cornerstone is attending regular classes, held inside a conference room with a coffee station and the serenity prayer embedded in a photo collage of program participants. Here, they discuss recovery issues and life scenarios they will experience once they leave the program. During a recent class discussion, called Trusting God’s Timing, they offered encouragement to a man planning to take a test for his commercial driver’s license.

“As long as you keep your trust in God, you will prevail,” one man said. Plus, “you’ve got your support system,” another said, referring to the people in class. “And it’s a good one.”

Loman first joined Project Cornerstone in 2016 but stayed only three months. “I wasn’t ready,” he said. Things were different when he rejoined October 2018. In the hospitality room, Loman led evening devotions for guests of Project Cornerstone, as well as those staying in the emergency shelter. He volunteered at events like the Tour de Llama cycling fundraiser for Samaritan Ministries. “It’s a good opportunity to build your social skills,” he said. “I really didn’t know how to talk to anyone unless I was drunk.”

Things have changed.

“David’s really been one of the best examples of how recovery is a process,” said Sonjia Kurosky, executive director of Samaritan Ministries. “He has just kept moving forward.”

Now, with an apartment, a good career and aspirations for his future, Loman feels grateful every day and wants to spread the word about Project Cornerstone.

“I used my time wisely while I was here,” he said. “Once others get here, if they take advantage of all we have to offer, they’re not in a bad situation anymore.”

‘I received a second chance here’ at Samaritan Ministries

When David Loman’s employer gave him a key to his job as a peer support specialist with a veterans organization, the gesture carried a larger symbolism for him. There was a time in his life, he said, when a business wouldn’t have entrusted him with access around expensive computer equipment. >>

Interpersonal, household and community dynamics strongly influence substance use disorder and recovery. In 2019, Novant Health contributed $10,000 to Samaritan Ministries’ Project Cornerstone program. During that time:

14 men participated in the program
8 completed the program
Of those who completed the program:
63% increased or maintained their income
75% moved to permanent housing
Firsthand look at Prince William Area Free Clinic: ‘I knew the clinic was going to keep helping me get healthy’

If not for the Prince William Area Free Clinic, Carolyn Greene said she wouldn’t have learned about her health issues. Seeing a doctor wasn’t a high priority for the school cafeteria worker, due to finances. “I had no insurance and no money to see a doctor,” Greene said. After Greene started feeling ill — “I kept passing out and feeling real weak” — a friend told her about the free clinic. The mission of Prince William Area Free Clinic is to provide primary adult and pediatric medical care, acute dental care, case management, and health and nutrition education to low-income, uninsured residents of the greater Prince William area, which includes Prince William County, city of Manassas and City of Manassas Park. Novant Health UVA Health System Medical Group, as well as community agencies in the Prince William County area of Virginia, partner with the clinic to support patients in their overall health and well-being. Greene learned she was severely anemic and had high blood pressure. Following a hospital stay for blood transfusions, the clinic continued monitoring her health and providing access to medications. Later, Greene received more unexpected news: a diagnosis of diabetes. Still, Greene felt confident about what was to come. “I felt good because I knew the clinic was going to keep helping me get healthy.” In September 2019, Greene attended her first diabetic education class at the free clinic. As she walked out the door with a box of salad, she looked over her shoulder and said, “I love you guys.”

Firsthand look at Levine Senior Center: Learning lifestyle changes for healthy living

Just how much does the Levine Senior Center mean to Lynne Martin? “If I hadn’t found the center and Novant Health,” Martin said, “I probably would have packed up and gone back to Michigan.” Longing to be closer to her family, Martin moved to Matthews, North Carolina, in 2017, but she didn’t expect her lifestyle change would leave her feeling homesick and isolated. “After I moved here, I had a couple bouts with depression. The seminars at the center helped me through those times.”

The center and Novant Health Matthews Medical Center partner to provide health and wellness programming, flu shots and health screenings for center members from Mecklenburg and Union counties. These initiatives reach people who can’t afford vital health screenings otherwise. The monthly classes are among Martin’s favorite activities, where she learns about nutrition, physical therapies for seniors, drug interactions and neurology issues. By promoting health and behavior changes among center attendees, Novant Health is improving access to care for our senior population. Martin describes the partnership as setting her up “for my success at living a vibrant, active life.” “I have learned so much about my health,” she added, “and how I can change my lifestyle to stay as healthy as possible.”

A look into our community: Communities in Schools Safe Journey Program

Graduation day in June 2019 was especially rewarding for Kevin, a teen parent dealing with an unexpected hardship during that school year. After assuming sudden, full-time caretaking responsibilities for his son, Kevin faced the prospect of dropping out of high school, since he had no child care options. His Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools counselor had a better idea — and referred Kevin to the Safe Journey program for teen parents through Communities In Schools. The case-management parenting program provides free support for teen parents and their children from birth to age 5. Support for the program comes from community partners, including Smart Start of Mecklenburg County, Elevation Church and Novant Health.

Through the Safe Journey program, Novant Health is investing in the long-term health of young parents. HealthyPeople.gov indicates that teen pregnancy and teen parenthood are significant risk factors for premature death. Teenage women are more likely to report suffering from at least one chronic health condition — such as asthma, diabetes or heart disease — compared to graduates. Ultimately, finishing more years of high school, and especially earning a high school diploma, decreases the risk of premature death.

Novant Health UVA Health System provided $15,000 for primary healthcare at the free clinic in 2019. Here are some examples of how the clinic helped community residents.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>1,507 patients with primary care</th>
<th>9,470 patient labs</th>
<th>1,193 radiology referrals</th>
<th>201 dental visits</th>
<th>20,220 months of prescriptions</th>
<th>18 bilingual diabetic education classes</th>
<th>123 patients with transportation assistance</th>
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In the U.S., 80% of adults over age 65 have at least one chronic condition. Falls are the most common cause of nonfatal trauma-related hospital admissions among older adults. 169 seniors learned exercise options at Senior Fitness Day 162 seniors attended a fall prevention symposium 75 seniors attended classes on brain and gut health 96 TO 100% the average high school graduation rate for Safe Journey students since 2010 94 teen parents and their children were served with full-time comprehensive case management during the 2018-2019 school year
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President and CEO

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Executive vice president and chief diversity, inclusion and equity officer

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The community impact 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.
To learn more about how Novant Health is involved in your community, visit NovantHealth.org.