

# Care Beyond Our Walls

## Sharp HealthCare Community Benefit

Fiscal Year 2023



At Sharp HealthCare, the San Diego community defines our purpose and commitment to be the best place to work, the best place to practice medicine and the best place to receive care.

This commitment shines through Sharp team members, who go above and beyond to provide an extraordinary standard of care through The Sharp Experience, which focuses on the most basic and critical element of the health care equation: people.

The *Sharp HealthCare Community Benefit Plan and Report*, Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 reflects our promise to the community and represents more than \$570

million in community benefit programs and services. This amounts to more than \$1.5 million each day, and \$1 out of every \$8 of our net revenue spent in direct support of the community.

Sharp's community benefit contribution is represented not only by uncompensated care dollars, but also by tens of thousands of hours devoted by Sharp team members to programs and services beyond our medical facilities. These efforts include free health screenings, transportation resources, training and career pathway programs for students, and education and support to community members.

As we look ahead to future milestones and challenges in health care, we will continue to provide care and programs that set standards, exceed expectations, and preserve the health and well-being of our community.

Enclosed is a summary of Sharp's community efforts in FY 2023 and the positive impact on members of our community. We also invite you to view the full report and learn more about Sharp's community involvement at [sharp.com/community](https://sharp.com/community).

In good health,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Howard". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Chris Howard  
President and CEO, Sharp HealthCare

The SHARP logo, consisting of the word "SHARP" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. Above the letters "A" and "R" is a horizontal orange bar.

## FY 2023 Total Unreimbursed Community Benefit

**\$570,261,806**

Medical Care Services	\$561,298,820
Other Benefits for Vulnerable Populations	\$4,218,242
Other Benefits for the Broader Community	\$1,886,145
Health Research, Education and Training Programs	\$2,858,599



### Medical Care Services

Sharp recognizes the financial stress that medical care costs can bring to our patients. We are dedicated to ensuring access to care for those who face financial hardship or lack adequate health care coverage. Through personalized education and enrollment assistance, our Patient Access Services team empowers uninsured and underinsured patients with health insurance options while maintaining their dignity throughout the process.

Sharp covers the unreimbursed costs of public programs such as Medi-Cal and Medicare. Under these programs, the cost of providing services to patients exceeds reimbursement received. In fact, we are the largest Medi-Cal provider in San Diego County. Unreimbursed costs also include charity care and the unpaid costs for patients presumed eligible for Sharp financial assistance, had they enrolled. In FY 2023, our uncompensated medical care services totaled more than \$561 million.



## Other Benefits for Vulnerable Populations

San Diego's vulnerable community members are of utmost concern to Sharp. In FY 2023, the value of our unreimbursed programs and services for older adults and individuals experiencing homelessness or other socioeconomic hardship surpassed \$4.2 million.

Sharp provided critical screenings and flu vaccinations to older adults throughout San Diego. We also offered education on topics such as Alzheimer's disease and dementia, nutrition, fall prevention, and advance care planning to older adults and their caregivers. Telephone reassurance and safety check calls also helped promote the well-being of isolated or homebound older adults and people with disabilities.

We collaborated with community clinics and social service organizations to address patients' socioeconomic needs and connect them to food assistance, housing, transportation, and other health and social service providers. Sharp also made financial donations to support the invaluable work of these organizations and clinics. And our team members volunteered their time at local nonprofit organizations to provide meal services and food drive support to people in need.



## Other Benefits for the Broader Community

In FY 2023, Sharp devoted more than \$1.8 million to programs and services that address chronic health conditions and support the broader community.

We provided education, screening and support programs for a range of health needs, including cancer, maternal and prenatal health, unintentional injury, heart disease, stroke, obesity, diabetes, behavioral health, and substance use disorders. Sharp also provided financial assistance to community organizations that address health equity and improve the health and well-being of San Diegans. Further, Sharp leaders and team members dedicated their time to community boards, organizations, committees and coalitions.



## Health Research, Education and Training Programs

In FY 2023, Sharp contributed more than \$2.8 million to education and development programs for students working toward a career in health care, as well as experienced health care professionals.

Team members supervised, trained and mentored nursing, medical, pharmacy, behavioral health, and allied health students. In FY 2023, these experiences were provided to more than 2,700 students from colleges and universities located in San Diego as well as throughout California and the nation. In addition, Sharp delivered classroom guest lectures to enhance academic learning in a variety of health-related disciplines.

Sharp hosted and participated in conferences and trainings to support continuing education for community health professionals. Through our Outcomes Research Institute, Sharp facilitated research studies to identify and share best practices in health care with the broader health and research communities.

# Dedicated to Improving the Heart Health of San Diegans

Every three years, the San Diego Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) identifies priority health needs in San Diego and provides critical insight into the community benefit programs Sharp develops and sustains to address them. Based on the results of the 2022 CHNA, Sharp launched a multiyear call to action aimed at improving the cardiovascular health of people throughout the county.



“It was important to specifically target a community need — namely, cardiovascular health — and be able to see tangible evidence of improvement when we look back at our efforts,” says Jason Broad, vice president of performance at Sharp HealthCare Regional Hospitals. “With a focus on underserved communities, we partnered with local organizations and harnessed the power of our workforce to impact the health and wellness of San Diegans.”

According to Jason, the efforts have created access to healthy and nutritious food, preventive medical care and health screenings. Moving forward, efforts to increase access to green spaces and recreational activities will also be included.

These programs are offered alongside endeavors championed by Sharp Lends a Hand, Sharp’s employee volunteer program, and incorporate activities to address cardiovascular health in San Diego County with an emphasis on nutrition security. Through the support of Sharp team members and their families and friends, more than 17,700 units — nearly 16,000 pounds of food and 1,700 volunteer hours — were provided during food drives and events, surpassing the 2023 goal by more than 10,000 units.

Nicole Witt, DNP-FNP, manager of the Quality Improvement and Patient Safety Department at Sharp Chula Vista Medical Center, volunteered at a community event that included blood pressure screenings, food distribution and health education. There, she witnessed the significant effects of Sharp’s outreach.

“It was a family event, and we had people of all ages come to the Sharp booth,” Nicole recalls. “Kids wanted to try ‘the heart machine that squeezes your arm’ and encouraged their guardians to participate. I was able to provide education to entire families on their blood pressure and heart-healthy practices in an easy-to-understand way, and they were excited to learn how to stay healthy as a family.”

Jason says that such interactions — and their positive influence on the health and wellness of community members for generations to come — embody Sharp HealthCare’s Community Pillar, one of seven Pillars of Excellence in support of Sharp’s vision to transform the health care experience.

# Addressing a Vital Need for San Diego's Youngest Residents

The Jacobs & Cushman San Diego Food Bank estimates an infant will require about 50 diaper changes a week, or 2,600 changes per year. A year's supply of diapers can cost up to \$1,000. For parents living in poverty, the expense can be so overwhelming that they make the difficult choice to extend the time between changes or reuse diapers.



Without an adequate supply of diapers, parents face additional challenges. Babies in soiled diapers are often fussy, which can increase parents' stress. Parents' guilt about not being able to afford diapers can affect parent-child bonding. And most child care providers require parents to provide a supply of diapers each week, leaving some unable to enroll their children in care.

The Food Bank started its Diaper Bank Program to address this significant need, and Sharp HealthCare is proud to act as a partner. In 2023, Sharp Chula Vista Medical Center and Sharp Mary Birch Hospital for Women & Newborns served as diaper distributors for the program. Together, the hospitals gave 24,081 diapers and 348 packs of wipes to 386 families in need.

According to Rhaelynne Scherr, MSW, LCSW, lead social worker at Sharp Chula Vista, parents are very appreciative of the diapers. While they are primarily grateful due to the significant saved expense, some parents have not yet purchased diapers or do not understand how many diapers an infant needs or how sizing works.

"There are many instances in which a baby is delivered preterm, and the parents are not prepared for the delivery," Rhaelynne says. "They express how helpful it is to not have to worry about the immediacy of attempting to find a way to purchase diapers, especially when they have so many other baby items to obtain."

The memory of one parent with a surprise delivery continues to touch Rhaelynne. A teen, unaware she was pregnant, came to the hospital with extreme stomach pains. Soon after, she gave birth. While she had loving support from her family members, they acknowledged they could not afford to purchase diapers regularly.

Rhaelynne says the family was so appreciative of the diapers and wipes they received.

"It's heartwarming to take off the burden of some of the simplest, yet costly, baby needs so the family feels less worried and stressed and can enjoy the first moments of their baby's life."