

UC San Diego Health

Implementation Strategy 2025-2027



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Executive Summary

This Community Benefit Implementation Strategy document is based on UC San Diego Health's 2025 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) and outlines UC San Diego Health's Community Benefit commitments to **Health Focus Areas** for a three-year span.

The Health Focus Areas were determined using the following criteria:

- Stakeholder input on assessing the needs of the community
- The health system's capacities to meet those needs
- The strength of the health system's partnerships in the community
- The alignment with institutional priorities around improving access to care, addressing health disparities and promoting health equity for all

The requirement to assess community needs and thereby plan and implement community-based and community-driven strategies, programs, services and commitments is an expression of UC San Diego Health's Vision to create a healthier world.

Community Benefit Health Focus Areas 2025:

1. **Health care access and experience:** Including, but not limited to, health care navigation, health services capacity-building, transportation, communication, respect and timeliness in health care delivery
2. **Social drivers of health:** Including, but not limited to, housing and homelessness, economic and food insecurity, workforce development and community safety
3. **Chronic diseases:** Including, but not limited to, asthma, blood pressure, cancer and diabetes
4. **Behavioral health:** Including, but not limited to, mental health and substance use disorders

The CHNA and Implementation Strategy are requirements of the state and federal governments. The 2025 CHNA and Implementation Strategy are posted on the [Community Benefit](#) page of the UC San Diego Health website. See below for UC San Diego Health's Community Benefit commitments for the next three years by Health Focus Area.

1. Health Care Access and Experience

Including but not limited to, health care navigation, health services capacity-building, transportation, communication, respect and timeliness in health care delivery.

Goal: Strategies, programs, services and commitments will expand health care access and enhance the health care experience, with an emphasis on addressing social drivers of health and health equity. UC San Diego Health prioritizes increasing access in under-resourced communities.

Anticipated impacts: Through the following partnerships and programs, UC San Diego Health will increase access to care, with a focus on primary care, specialty care and preventive care.

Evaluation: Strategies, programs, services and commitments will be evaluated through ongoing data collection and reporting.

Health Care Access & Experience: Strategies Programs Services Commitments

- **Financial assistance and subsidized health care:** UC San Diego Health will continue to provide financial assistance, based on eligibility criteria, for those who are at or below 400% of the federal poverty level. See UC San Diego Health's [Financial Assistance Policy](#).
- **Social work/case management support of patients:** UC San Diego Health is committed to continuing to ensure improved health for the most vulnerable patients with support in health care navigation and transportation, along with many other programs and services to increase access to health care.
- **211 San Diego and the San Diego Community Information Exchange (CIE):** UC San Diego Health will expand its partnership with 211 San Diego and the San Diego Community Information Exchange (CIE) to improve health outcomes. This pilot project will continue to implement a transportation initiative, which ensures low-income San Diegans can access needed health care.
- **Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) engagement:** UC San Diego Health will continue to be an active partner in Integrated Health Partners (IHP), building seamless pathways to increase access to care — including building cross-organization appointment capability and designing and improving clinically integrated systems of care coordination. Additionally, UC San Diego Health will continue to increase access

to primary and specialty care by deploying 1,100 residents and fellows annually, serving under-resourced communities in FQHCs, Veterans Affairs San Diego Health Care and others.

- **East Campus Medical Center and El Centro Regional Medical Center:** UC San Diego Health acquired a full-service community care medical center (East Campus Medical Center) in late 2023 and will continue its growing partnership with El Centro Regional Medical Center and the Imperial Valley Healthcare District in Imperial County. Both efforts help meet the health care needs of the severely under-resourced communities of East San Diego and Imperial counties. UC San Diego Health will continue to deploy and improve capacity coordination throughout the health system to ensure access to care for all people, especially for vulnerable communities.
- **Programs for Active Living and Support (PALS) at our East Campus Medical Center:** PALS at UC San Diego Health East Campus will continue to offer a variety of free classes and support groups designed for seniors and individuals with physical disabilities. Open to patients and the general public, all programs are led by UC San Diego Health licensed therapists. PALS will continue to include the Adult Balance Class (ABC) and Senior Fitness Class to improve mobility and strength, the Aphasia Group and PALS Book Club to support communication and cognitive recovery in a social setting, emotional and peer support provided through the PALS Support Group, Comebackers Neuro Club and the Stroke Peer Visitor Program, helping participants connect, recover and thrive.
- **UC San Diego Student-Run Free Clinic:** The free clinic will continue to operate out of multiple community settings offering high-quality comprehensive primary care, 20 specialty services, restorative dentistry, mental health services, social services and more to uninsured community members.
- **Save Our Children's Sight:** The UC San Diego Health Shiley Eye Institute's EyeMobile program, equipped with three mobile eye care vehicles, will continue to provide vision exams and screenings to low-income children, adults and older adults. The program will address barriers such as transportation and limited access to specialists, helping to detect and address preventable vision problems early.
- UC San Diego Health is committed to pursuing the national certification from The Joint Commission — **Excellent Health Outcomes for All** — to ensure that we provide high-quality care for all our patient subpopulations.

- UC San Diego Health is working toward the **Age-Friendly Health System** designation, a cross-functional effort to design systems that meet the unique needs of older adults. Efforts include building health literacy systems for improved health literacy among older adults. UC San Diego Health's Division of Geriatrics, Gerontology & Palliative Care will continue to lead improvements in health care delivery for older adults in medication management, nutrition, telehealth and emergency care.
- UC San Diego Health's **Hospital-At-Home** program will continue to provide the east San Diego County older adult low-income population with home-based health care services.
- **Specialty care for underserved communities:** UC San Diego Health will continue to work toward meeting the demand for specialty care in San Diego County, while working with service providers and health systems countywide to build a more equitable network for the provision of specialty care.

Partnerships

211 San Diego; Access Inc.; Casa Familiar; Chicano Federation; Chula Vista Elementary School District; City of El Centro; El Centro Regional Medical Center; Family Health Centers of San Diego; Imperial Valley Healthcare District; Integrated Health Partners; International Rescue Committee; La Maestra Community Health Centers; Logan Heights CDC; MAAC; Neighborhood Healthcare; TrueCare (previously North County Health Services); Operation Samahan; San Diego American Indian Health Center; San Diego Unified School District; San Ysidro Health; San Ysidro School District; SAY San Diego, Somali Family Service of San Diego; United Women of East Africa; VA San Diego Healthcare System; Vista Community Clinic

2. Social Drivers of Health

Including, but not limited to, housing and homelessness, economic and food insecurity, workforce development and community safety.

Goal: Strategies, programs, services and commitments address social drivers of health, recognizing that prioritizing these drivers is the key to reducing health disparities and enhancing health equity.

Anticipated impacts: Through the following partnerships and programs, UC San Diego Health will increase and streamline access to community-based services that support individuals, families and communities in addressing social drivers of health.

Evaluation: Strategies, programs, services and commitments will be evaluated through ongoing data collection and reporting.

Social Drivers of Health: Strategies Programs Services Commitments

- **Social determinants of health (SDOH) screening:** UC San Diego Health will continue to screen patients for social determinants of health with active analysis of SDOH screening data and partnership-building to meet patients' health-related social needs.
- **Social work/case management support of patients:** UC San Diego Health is committed to continuing to ensure improved health for the most vulnerable patients with support in referral pathways to community services for social drivers of health, along with many other programs and services to increase access to health care. UC San Diego Health will continue to enhance connection opportunities for patients with health-related social needs to Enhanced Care Management supports offered out in the community through California's CalAIM Medi-Cal implementation.
- UC San Diego Health's partnership with **211 San Diego** will continue to ensure that patients with vulnerabilities can access needed services for health-related social needs through direct and streamlined referrals. Launching in late 2025, UC San Diego Health will have the capacity to refer patients with health-related social needs to 211 San Diego-contracted community-based organizations for follow-up, integrating a closed-loop functionality through San Diego Health's Epic electronic health record platform. With a network of 132 local partner organizations offering access to over 410 services, this collaborative effort supports health equity and patient-centered care across San Diego County.

- **UC San Diego Health Center for Community Health**'s health equity-focused, community-driven health initiatives focus on addressing chronic diseases using a community-led transformation model. The Center's ¡Más Fresco! **More Fresh, ¡Más Fresco! Plus**, the **Nutrition Pantry Program** and the **Good Food Finder** will continue to support CalFresh participants' access to fresh produce and support pantries in offering trauma-informed, dignity-centered services.
- The **Resource Access Program (RAP)** in San Diego is a strategic initiative by the San Diego Fire-Rescue Department aimed at assisting individuals who frequently utilize emergency services due to complex health and social issues, such as chronic homelessness and mental illness. The program has been recognized as a best-practice model and serves a significant number of vulnerable populations in the community. UC San Diego Health will continue to work in partnership with San Diego Fire-Rescue to meet the needs of these community residents in RAP.
- **Healthcare Anchor Network (HAN):** UC San Diego Health will continue its commitment to addressing factors negatively impacting health outcomes, including investment and development in workforce pathway-building. Examples include training and education programs for food and nutrition roles to pursue higher-wage, skilled sterile processing and distribution roles, with more training programs under development. Additional HAN activities include the continued development and commitment to equitable contracting in the community through training and support.
- **Junior Psych Academy:** UC San Diego Health will continue its partnership with local middle and high schools in under-resourced communities to encourage young people to explore professional pathways to psychiatry. The academy is a program of California's Department of Health Care Access and Information called the Health Professions Pathways Program.
- **Expansion of psychiatry training:** UC San Diego Health is committed to expanding psychiatry training in partnership with the local California State Universities and community colleges, focused on building professional pathways for historically marginalized students. UC San Diego Health additionally trains psychiatry workers throughout San Diego County and will implement a new psychiatry residency program in partnership with Imperial County to fill the gap in mental health support in the significantly under-resourced region.

- **UC San Diego Basic Needs Center:** UC San Diego Health partners with UC San Diego to ensure student social determinants of health needs are met. Data shows that 22% of UC San Diego students describe their daily situation as food-insecure, which is an indication that wraparound basic-needs programs and services need to be robust and comprehensive.
- The **Trauma Prevention and Outreach Program** at UC San Diego Health will continue the following trauma prevention programs out in communities, as needed: 1) Fall prevention, 2) Driver safety, 3) Pedestrian safety, 4) Gun safety, 5) Burn prevention. Additionally, the **UC San Diego Health Division of Trauma, Surgical Critical Care, Burns & Acute Care Surgery** will continue working with the County of San Diego Office of Violence Prevention (OVP) to design and develop violence prevention programs throughout San Diego County, including, but not limited to, gang violence prevention and rapid response programs.
- **Stop the Bleed Program:** The UC San Diego Health Stop the Bleed team will continue coordination with regional law enforcement agencies to train members of the public in how to recognize and stop life-threatening bleeding with direct pressure, tourniquets and wound packing.

Partnerships

211 San Diego; African Coalition Workforce; Allianz Health Clinic; American Indian Health Center; Baker Elementary School (National City); Casa Familiar (San Ysidro); Chapultepec (Ensenada); City of San Diego; Colonos de la Divina Providencia (Tijuana, Laureles Canyon); Comité Organizador Latino de City Heights (COLCH); Community Stations (UC San Diego Design Lab); County of San Diego; El Hongo; Embajadores de Jesús (Tijuana, Alacrán Canyon); Eréndira; Family Health Centers of San Diego; First Lutheran Church (downtown San Diego); Flying Samaritans – UC San Diego chapter (Baja California clinics); Golden Avenue Elementary School (Lemon Grove); Groundwork San Diego (Encanto); Haitian Bridge Alliance; Imperial County; Indian Health Council; JVS, Bay Area; KIN – CommUNITY Incubator Network; La Maestra Community Health Centers; La Misión; multiple grassroots organizations across San Diego County focused on food systems and heart health (KIN is led by UC San Diego Center for Community Health); Neighborhood Healthcare; Olivewood Gardens; Learning Center; others serving refugee and immigrant communities; Pacific Beach United Methodist Church; Planned Parenthood of the Pacific Southwest; regional law enforcement; San Diego Community College District; San Diego Refugee Communities Coalition; San Diego State University; San Diego Unified

School District; San Ysidro Health; Santa Monica Community College; SHARE Initiative partners (Conrad Prebys Foundation and UC San Diego Health); Somali Family Service of San Diego; Survivors of Torture International; Tecate (Eye Clinic); TrueCare (formerly North County Health Services); UC San Diego Center for Community Health – partner organizations; UC San Diego Student-Run Free Clinic; UC San Diego Student-Run Free Clinic Project – community sites; Vista Community Clinic

3. Chronic Diseases

Including, but not limited to, asthma, blood pressure, cancer and diabetes.

Goal: Strategies, programs, services and commitments expand access to chronic disease-related services, prevention, education and treatment, with an emphasis on addressing social drivers of health and health equity. UC San Diego Health prioritizes increasing access in under-resourced and historically marginalized communities.

Anticipated impacts: Through the following partnerships and programs, UC San Diego Health will increase and streamline access to services and education for individuals, families and communities, with an emphasis on at-risk communities and populations.

Evaluation: Strategies, programs, services and commitments will be evaluated through ongoing data collection and reporting.

Chronic Diseases: **Strategies Programs Services Commitments**

- **Social work/case management support of patients:** UC San Diego Health is committed to continuing to ensure improved health for the most vulnerable patients with support in referral pathways for chronic diseases, along with many other programs and services to increase access to health care.
- **UC San Diego Health Center for Community Health**'s health equity-focused, community-driven health initiatives focus on addressing chronic diseases using a community-led transformation model. The Center will continue promoting child and family health through the **San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative, HEALthy 4 You** and the **San Diego Human Milk Access Network** while contributing to broader systems work through the **County CommUNITY Incubator Network**. The training and resource center will continue building regional public health capacity and community-engaged research, ensuring that evidence-based solutions reflect the community's health priorities.
- UC San Diego Health's **General Mobile Clinic** will deliver health services — including diabetes, blood pressure and lipid panel screening — in under-resourced neighborhoods. The program aims to provide care in community settings, integrate cross-disciplinary services and mobilize responsive care based on evolving community needs. Collaboration with the community will also mean using the clinic to expand access to HIV prevention, education and workforce development.

Additionally, the **Mammography Mobile Clinic** will deliver routine screening mammograms and breast health education to communities that face health care access barriers.

- In 2025, UC San Diego Health is launching the Joint Commission's **Healthcare Excellence for All** certification process, which will align health care equity efforts with chronic disease focus areas: blood pressure, diabetes and heart failure.
- **Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) engagement:** UC San Diego Health is an active partner in Integrated Health Partners (IHP), building seamless pathways to increase access to care and designing clinically integrated systems of care coordination, which support chronic disease treatment and management. Additionally, UC San Diego Health will continue to deploy 1,100 residents and fellows annually, serving marginalized populations and communities in FQHCs, Veterans Affairs San Diego Health Care and more, increasing access to chronic disease treatment and management.
- **Moores Cancer Center at UC San Diego Health** will continue to provide key technical assistance with area FQHCs on grant procurement and grant funding implementation for all aspects of cancer care, including prevention, treatment, training and measurement.
- **Moores Cancer Center at UC San Diego Health Community Outreach and Education** team will continue to build and implement strategies to address populations at increased risk of cancer for a variety of reasons, including age, geography, social determinants of health, veteran status, insurance status, etc. Additionally, ongoing cancer education will continue to include screenings, classes, health fairs, presentations, seminars, webinars and workgroup leadership across the region: HPV Workgroup, Cervical Cancer Workgroup, Colorectal Cancer Workgroup and Cancer Health Equity Collaborative.
- UC San Diego Health's **Quality Incentive Pool Program** will continue to improve care for chronic diseases with a focus on the Medi-Cal population.
- **The Owen Clinic at UC San Diego Health** will continue to provide comprehensive HIV care to those who are HIV positive, regardless of their insurance status. Services include HIV/AIDS treatment, case management, financial assistance, mental health services, nutrition counseling and drug and alcohol counseling. The Owen Clinic specializes in providing services to the LGBTQ+ community.

Partnerships

Alliance Healthcare Foundation; Alzheimer's Association – San Diego/Imperial counties chapter; American Cancer Society – San Diego chapter; American Heart Association – San Diego; Borrego Health; Cancer; Resource Center of San Diego; City of San Diego Public Health Department; Clinicas de Salud del Pueblo; Colonias de la Frontera; Community Health Systems, Inc.; community-based organizations; County of San Diego Aging & Independence Services; Diabetes Foundation of San Diego; Family Health Centers of San Diego; Father Joe's Villages Village Health Center; FQHCs; Imperial Beach Community Clinic; Indian Health Council; Innercare (formerly San Diego Inner City Health Center); Integrated Health Partners; La Maestra Community Health Centers; Moores Cancer Center at UC San Diego Health; Multiple Sclerosis Society – San Diego chapter; National Kidney Foundation – San Diego; Neighborhood Healthcare; TrueCare (formerly North County Health Services); Olivewood Gardens & Learning Center; Operation Samahan (Opsam Health); Rady Children's Hospital; San Diego American Indian Health Center; San Diego Blood Bank; San Diego County Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention Program; San Diego Family Care; San Diego Lung Cancer Initiative; San Ysidro Health; Santa Barbara Neighborhood Clinics; Sharp HealthCare; St. Vincent de Paul; Village – Village Health Center; Stand Up To Cancer – local research partnerships; Susan G. Komen San Diego; Urban League of San Diego; Vista Community Clinic; YMCA of San Diego County

4. Behavioral Health

Mental health and substance use disorders.

Goal: Strategies, programs, services and commitments expand access to behavioral health-related services, prevention, education and treatment, with an emphasis on addressing social drivers of health and health equity. UC San Diego Health prioritizes increasing access in under-resourced communities.

Anticipated impacts: Through the following partnerships and programs, UC San Diego Health will increase and streamline access to services and education for individuals, families and communities, with an emphasis on at-risk communities and populations.

Evaluation: Strategies, programs, services and commitments will be evaluated through ongoing data collection and reporting.

Behavioral Health: Strategies Programs Services Commitments

- **Social work/case management support of patients:** UC San Diego Health will continue to ensure improved health for the most vulnerable patients with support in referral pathways for behavioral health diagnoses, along with many other programs and services to increase access to health care.
- **Transitions support team:** Recognizing the need for a tailored approach to serious mental illness and substance use, the City of San Diego will continue to partner with UC San Diego Health to meet the specific needs of the unhoused population by providing behavioral health treatment — including medically assisted treatment (MAT) — in nontraditional settings like shelters, homeless services organizations and encampments.
- **FQHC engagement:** UC San Diego Health faculty will continue to be co-located at three FQHCs, increasing access and providing ongoing behavioral health care in marginalized communities.
- **Crisis/trauma services:** UC San Diego Health will continue to be the sole psychiatric services provider for **regional crises organizations**, for victims of trauma and torture, and for transitional youth who are victims of abuse and trauma. Additionally, UC San Diego's Student Health Service, integrated into UC San Diego Health, will move student services into the **Triton Health and Wellness** building, expanding access to behavioral health care for students. The **Triton Core** program will enhance its ability

to provide crisis care for students, getting them the appropriate and timely care they need. Triton Health and Wellness and Triton Core will also continue to provide referrals for chronic, complex psychiatric treatment, including longer-term treatment.

- **Prevention, education and screening:** UC San Diego Health will continue to provide early screening and prevention of emergent psychotic diseases as part of cognitive assessment and risk evaluation program. UC San Diego is continuing to provide transitional-age youth psychiatric services, including preventative care in partnership with the region's only child and adolescent residential program. UC San Diego Health is committed to ongoing community engagement and education on the importance of mental health and wellness.
- UC San Diego Health's **East Campus Medical Center** will offer behavioral health programs in the region for Medi-Cal beneficiaries, including college students, those diagnosed with mood disorders, those experiencing trauma and those experiencing early onset age-related mental health issues. These services have previously been unavailable in eastern San Diego County.
- The **Central San Diego Behavioral Health Hub** will support and stabilize those with behavioral health needs, i.e. inpatient, outpatient and step-down treatments, in under-resourced communities.
- UC San Diego Health will continue to operate and staff **clinical and training programs** in partnership with safety net behavioral health and substance-use treatment community-based organizations (CBOs).
- UC San Diego Health Department of Psychiatry will continue to partner with **Father Joe's Villages** to provide behavioral health services to people experiencing homelessness. Many of the Father Joe's Village Health Center providers also work at UC San Diego Health and offer services for patients in the hospital.
- Focused services for **Emergency Department frequent users** (100+ visits annually) will continue to focus on treatment care plan, including navigation and case management, for unhoused patients' behavioral health service needs.
- The **UC San Diego Student-Run Free Clinic** will continue to operate at First Lutheran Church, Lemon Grove Middle School and Pacific Beach United Methodist Church, offering high-quality comprehensive primary care and 20 specialty services, including mental health services, to uninsured community members.

- UC San Diego Health's **Hospital-At-Home** program will provide low-income older adults in San Diego County with home-based behavioral health management services.
- UC San Diego Health will continue to engage in the planning, implementation and service provision of San Diego's new behavioral health emergency **988 line**.

Partnerships

Alpha Project; Alta California Regional Center; Borrego Health; Center for Community Solutions; City of San Diego; City of San Diego Behavioral Health Services; Clinicas de Salud del Pueblo; Comité Organizador Latino de City Heights (COLCH); Community Health Systems, Inc.; Community Research Foundation; County of San Diego Behavioral Health Services; Crisis House; Episcopal Community Services; Family Health Centers of San Diego; Father Joe's Villages; Father Joe's Villages Village Health Center; Generate Hope; Halcyon Crisis Center (Telecare); Home Start, Inc.; Housing Matters San Diego; Imperial Beach Community Clinic; Indian Health Council; Inland Regional Center; Innercare (formerly San Diego Inner City Health Center); Interfaith Community Services; Jewish Family Service of San Diego; La Maestra Community Health Centers; McAllister Institute; Mental Health Systems, Inc.; Neighborhood Healthcare; TrueCare (formerly North County Health Services); New Directions Institute; North Coastal Regional Center; Olivewood Gardens & Learning Center; Operation Samahan (Opsam Health); PATH (People Assisting The Homeless); Project One For All; San Diego American Indian Health Center; San Diego County Office of Education; San Diego Family Care; San Diego Housing Commission; San Diego Reentry Roundtable; San Diego Regional Center; San Diego Rescue Mission San Diego Youth Services; San Ysidro Health; Santa Barbara Neighborhood Clinics; Scripps Hospital; South Central Los Angeles Regional Center; St. Vincent de Paul Village – Village Health Center; Streetwyze; Survivors of Torture, International; The Downtown San Diego Partnership Homeless Task Force; The Jacobs & Cushman San Diego Food Bank; The Salvation Army – San Diego; Veterans Administration San Diego Healthcare System; Veterans Village of San Diego; Vista Balboa Crisis Center; Vista Community Clinic; Wolomi

CHNA Needs Best Addressed by Other Entities

UC San Diego Health is dedicated to improving the lives of the people we serve in our community. While all of the needs identified by the CHNA are of critical importance, for the purposes of this Implementation Strategy, based on our expertise and available resources, we chose to focus on those needs that are most likely to create sustainable and meaningful change with long-term impacts.

While we did not focus on children/youth well-being and older adult health as Health Focus Areas in the 2025 Implementation Strategy, many of the programs described in this report are tailored for these subpopulations and address their distinct needs. The strategies, programs, services and commitments in the above sections address social drivers of health for families and communities; enhance access for older adults, especially Medicare and Medi-Cal recipients; and focus on the health, well-being and safety of youth. Additionally, UC San Diego Health has an ongoing partnership with Rady Children's Health to care for children and youth. UC San Diego Health will continue to seek collaborations with organizations that focus specifically on the well-being of children and the support of older adults.