



**PennState Health**



# 2025 COMMUNITY BENEFIT REPORT

## HEALTH EQUITY *IN ACTION*

### FOCUSING ON

MENTAL HEALTH

HEALTH EQUITY

WELLNESS AND  
DISEASE PREVENTION



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# 2025 Community Benefit Report

## Leadership Message

### Building Healthier Communities Together

Far too many people in our region experience food insecurity, chronic disease and mental health challenges. Our 2025 Community Benefit Report, titled “Health Equity in Action,” demonstrates how Penn State Health is addressing the root causes of health inequity and empowering healthy actions that create lasting change.



Penn State Health is a leader in patient-centered clinical care, medical education and breakthrough research. As our health system continues to grow, we remain committed to improving the health and well-being of the people in the communities we serve.

Through our community health initiatives, we are expanding Penn State Health’s mission far beyond our hospital walls. Working side by side with our community partners, we help transform corner stores into community health hubs with nutritious food and free health screenings. Our doctors, nurses, other employees and medical students volunteer at free primary health care clinics. We equip law enforcement with tools to compassionately support people living with mental illness. We provide free nutrition education and create opportunities for physical activity that also strengthen community connections.

This year, Penn State Health completed its fifth Community Health Needs Assessment to identify and prioritize the most pressing health needs in our service area and developed a new implementation strategy to address them. We also completed the third year of our 2022–2025 Implementation Strategy, demonstrating positive community impact as a result of focused, measurable actions.

In fiscal year 2024, Penn State Health invested more than **\$205.8 million** in community benefit programs, a 21% increase over the previous year. These investments supported innovative community health initiatives, health professions education, subsidized health services, financial assistance and uncompensated hospital care for Medicaid-insured patients. Each dollar made care more accessible in central Pennsylvania and the Berks Region.

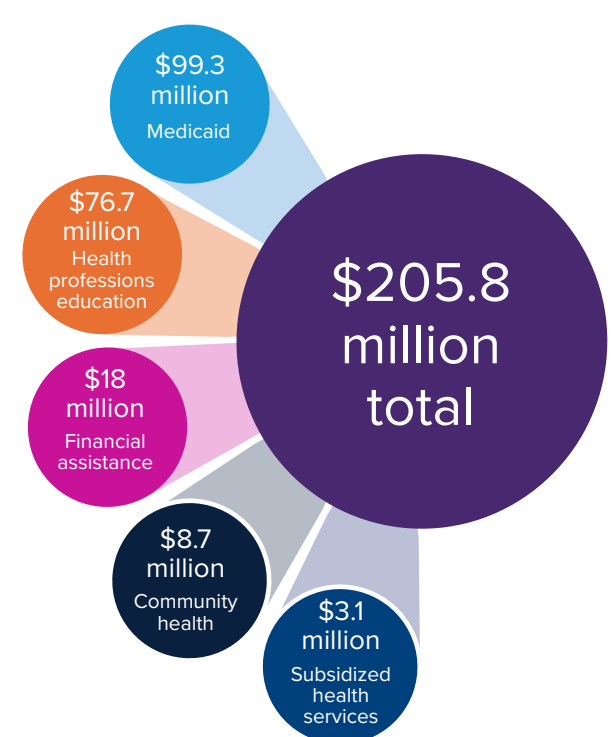
In fiscal year 2025, our employees served nearly **1.3 million people** through our community health programs, up from last year’s record 1 million. These significant increases show that our commitment to improving community health continues to grow stronger each year.

I am proud of what Penn State Health has accomplished and even more excited for the work ahead. Thank you to the Penn State Health family and all our community partners for your continued support. Together, we are building stronger, healthier communities where everyone has the opportunity to thrive and live their healthiest life.

Sincerely,  
**Michael Kupferman, MD**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Penn State Health

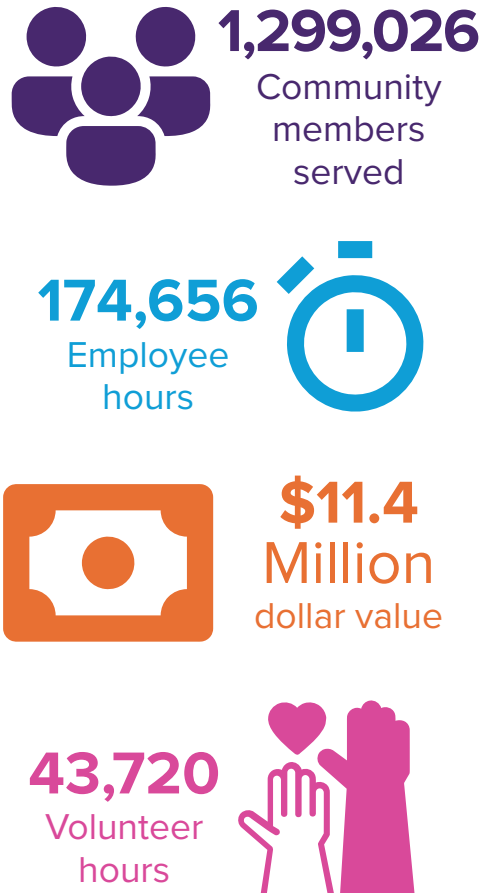
# Community Impact

## Penn State Health Fiscal year 2024 Total Community Benefit

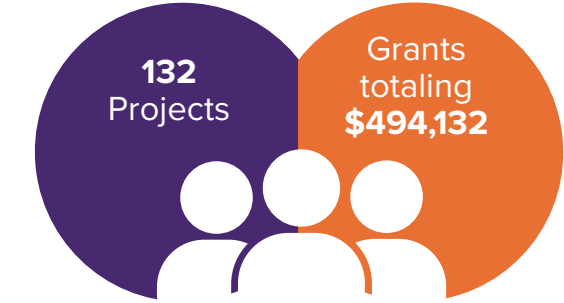


Compared to Fiscal Year 2023  
Total Community Benefit:  
\$166 million

## Fiscal Year 2025 Community Benefit Inventory for Social Accountability (CBISA) Totals

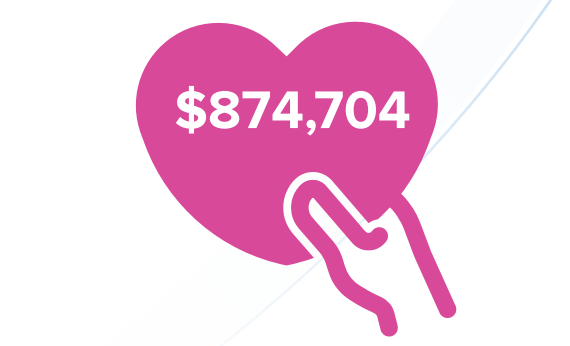


## Community Relations Grants



During the past 10 years, Penn State Health funded **132 projects** with community grants totaling **\$494,132**.

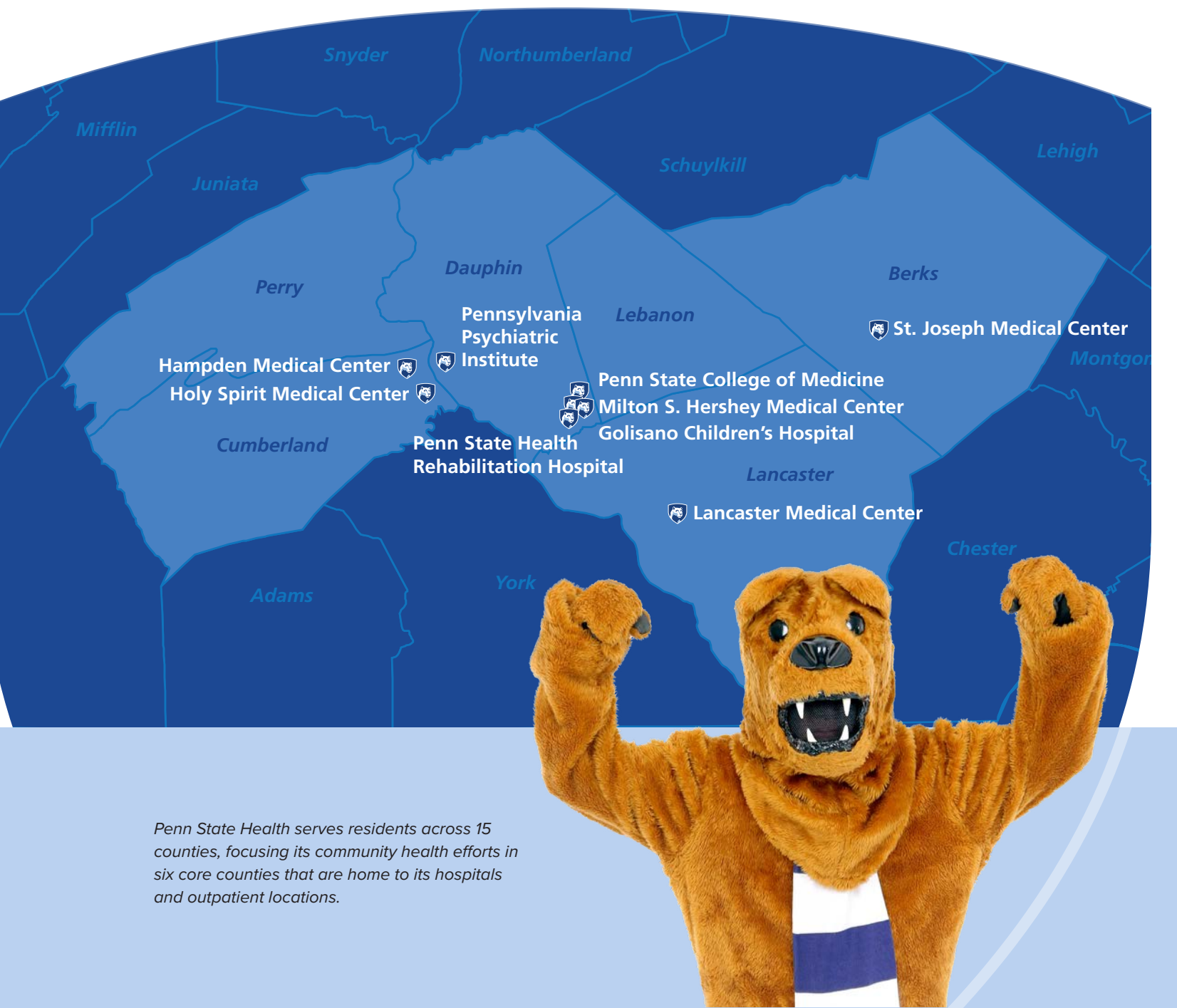
## Charitable Purpose Sponsorships



In fiscal year 2025, Penn State Health donated **\$874,704** in charitable purpose sponsorships and contributions to nonprofit organizations.



# The Communities We Serve

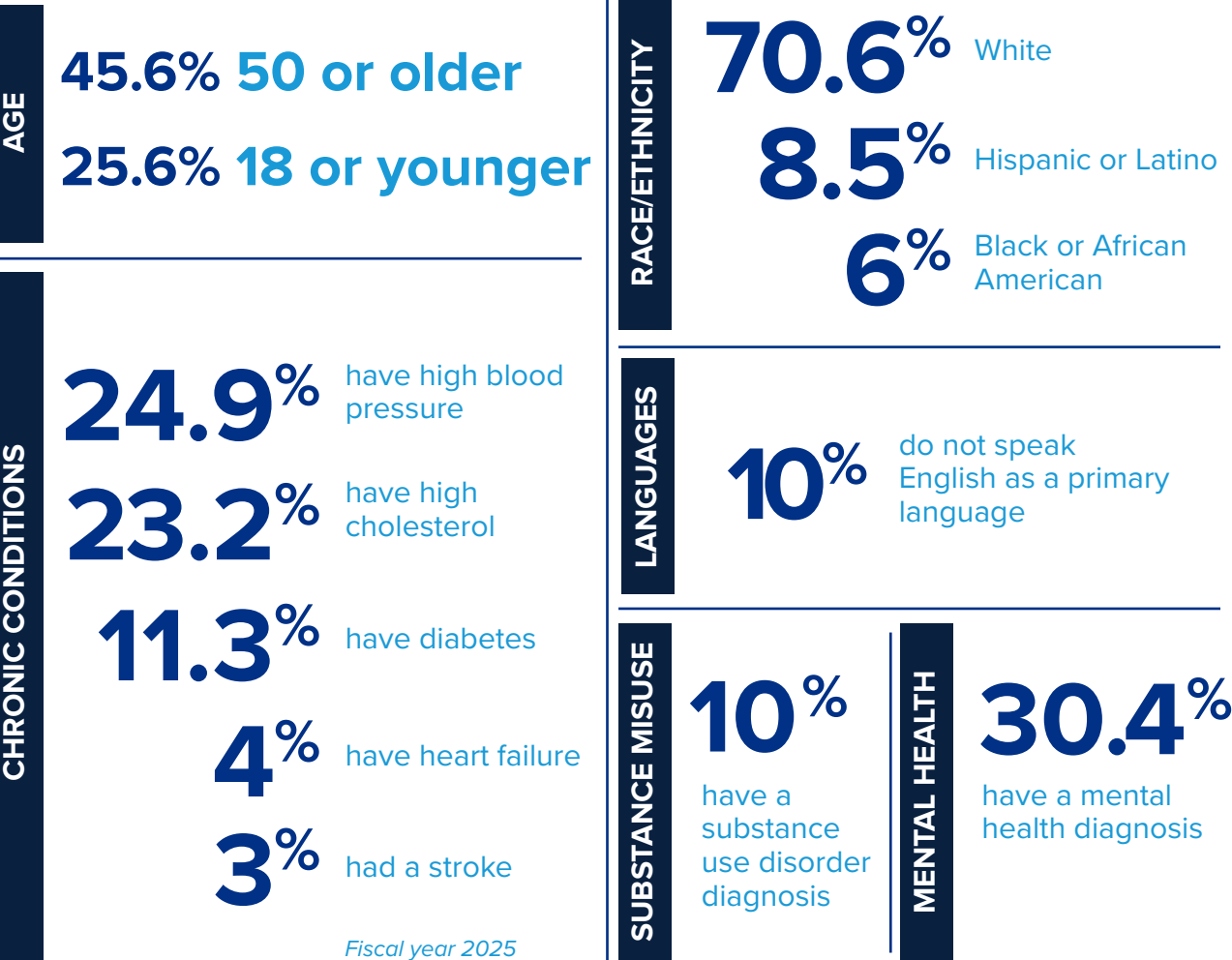


Penn State Health serves residents across 15 counties, focusing its community health efforts in six core counties that are home to its hospitals and outpatient locations.

# The Patients We Serve

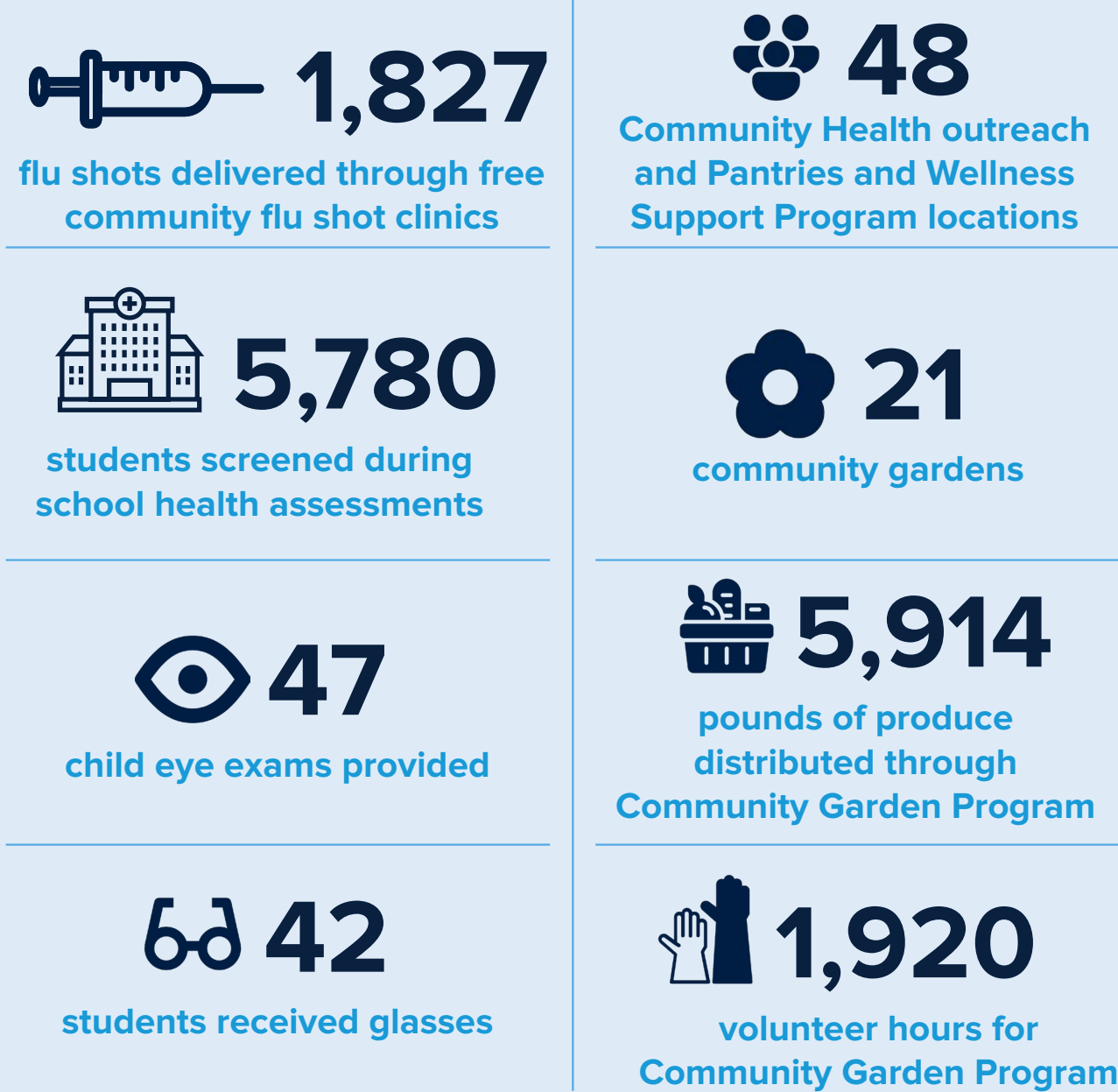


Joel Keke of Harrisburg gets a flu shot from Julie Groh, a community health nurse with Penn State Health, during his visit to the Beacon Clinic.



Fiscal year 2025

# Advancing Community Health



Fiscal year 2025

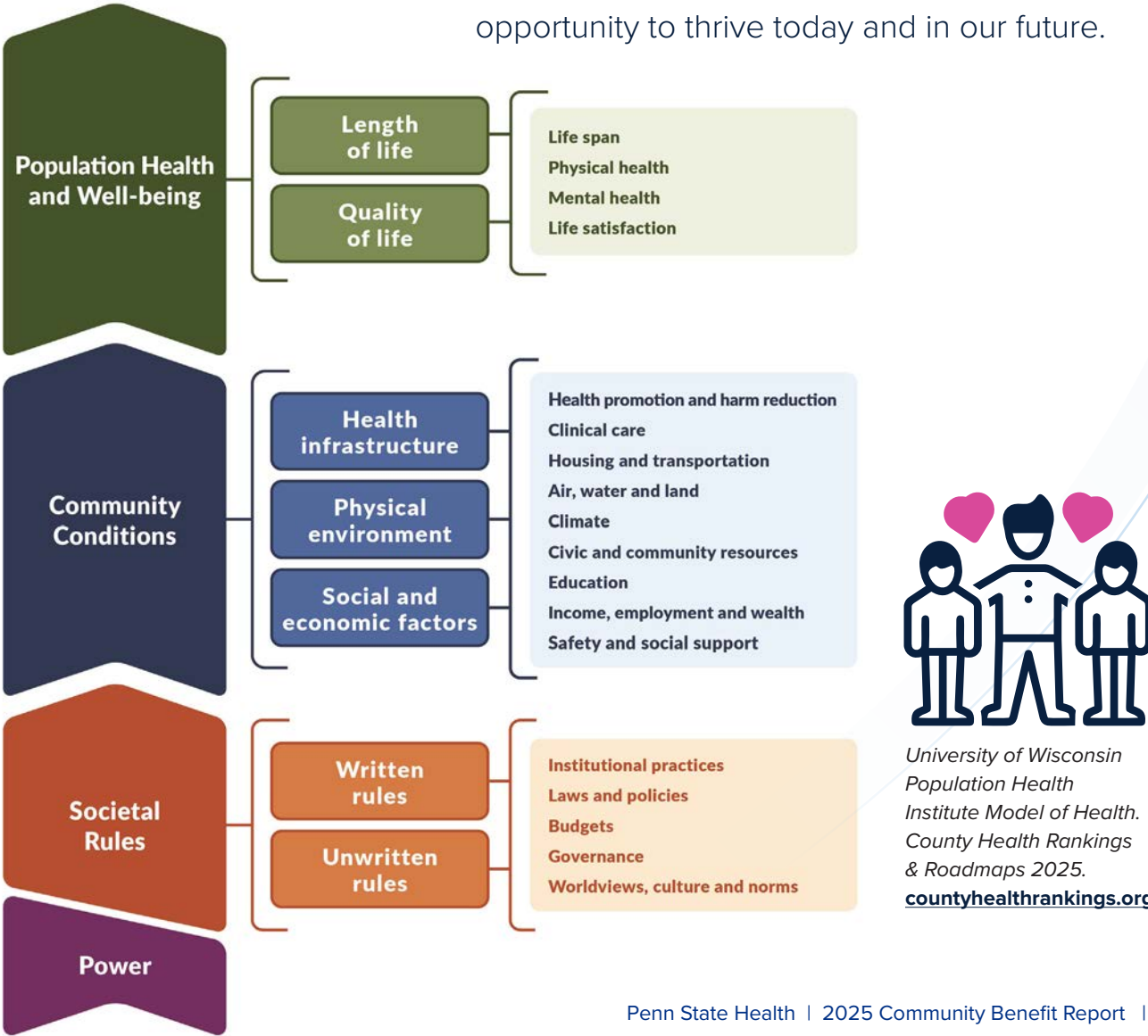
# Improving Health Outcomes Through Health Equity

### What is health equity?

Health equity is the state in which everyone has a fair and just opportunity to attain their highest level of health.

### What shapes health equity?

Food resources, safe housing, quality medical care, jobs that pay a living wage and well-resourced schools are among the factors, often called the social determinants of health, that shape a healthy community. We can work across our differences and build solidarity by understanding the root causes of our problems and addressing them together. We can change the rules to allow every community the opportunity to thrive today and in our future.







# A beacon of hope and healing

Tanya Myers, left, of Hummelstown, is seen by Dr. Madison Kist, a resident physician, and Dr. Matthew Helm, a Penn State Health dermatologist, at Beacon Clinic.

After her husband died, Jeanette Van Deusen, 52, returned to her central Pennsylvania hometown to be near family. However, she wasn't able to find a job that provided insurance and couldn't afford to see a doctor or refill her prescriptions.

Her cousin recommended Beacon Clinic, a free primary health care clinic in Harrisburg's Uptown neighborhood. There, doctors got Van Deusen back on medication for her high blood pressure and gave her a cuff to monitor her readings between checkups.

Penn State Health doctors and nurses volunteer at the clinic alongside Penn State College of Medicine students and residents who gain experience caring for diverse populations. Several Penn State Health employees and retirees also support the clinic as volunteers or board members.

"I'm so grateful I found this clinic," Van Deusen says. "They helped me stay on my medication and directed me to other resources I didn't even know I needed. They open so many doors for you."

With blue and green walls and a fridge full of healthy snacks, Beacon Clinic is a welcoming place. In addition to primary and preventive care, it offers dermatology specialty clinics.

"Wait times at dermatology offices can be months long, so our Beacon Clinic patients are grateful that we can help them so quickly," says **Dr. Matthew Helm**, a Penn State Health dermatologist and 2020 graduate of the residency program.

**Dr. Leesha Helm**, a family medicine physician at **Penn State Health Medical Group – Nyes Road** in Harrisburg and associate medical director at Beacon Clinic, began volunteering at the clinic as a resident at Penn State Health Milton S. Hershey Medical Center, graduating from the program in 2019.

"I quickly learned that patients and their families needed something that would ultimately impact all of their health outcomes – sustainable access to nutrition and food," she says.

Helm spearheaded Food as Medicine, an initiative that improves food access and food security through education and an on-site food pantry.

Beacon Clinic also helps patients enroll in health insurance, including Medicaid, and connects them with transportation and housing.

"We aim to have holistic appointments so that by the time patients walk out of here, we've addressed multiple social determinants of health to promote their well-being," says clinical director Olivia Alcaraz.



Dr. Bernadatte Gilbert, left, and Dr. Leesha Helm in the Healthy Cupboard at Beacon Clinic.

## BEACON CLINIC

2,598

people reached through Penn State Health programming

253

employee hours contributed

104

student hours contributed



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WATCH THIS  
VIDEO ABOUT  
BEACON CLINIC





# Turning corner stores into health hubs

Angela Shuman, a community health nurse at Penn State Health, checks Felix Rivera's blood pressure during a Healthy Corner Store Initiative event in Reading.

When Milagrosa Oquendo Santiago arrives outside New Heightz Grocery Store in Reading on a July day, she and Angie Shuman, Penn State Health community health nurse, hug and chat like old friends.

“We’re like family,” says Santiago, 61. “Angie is like a big sister to me.”

Shuman checks Santiago’s blood pressure at New Heightz every month. When her numbers are high, Shuman gently reminds Santiago to take her hypertension medication. She also offers visitors a water bottle, cooling towel, sunscreen and first aid kit.

Next, Santiago heads to a table where The Food Trust, a national nonprofit, is sharing healthy eating tips, nutritious snacks and coupons for fresh produce at New Heightz or other locations such as grocery stores, farmers markets or public housing sites. Santiago plans to buy bananas to share with her sister, who also stops by for blood pressure checks with Shuman.

“Angie has helped a lot of people,” says Santiago. “She looks out for everybody over here.”

The Healthy Corner Store Initiative meets people at convenience stores and bodegas in Philadelphia; Camden, New Jersey; Baltimore; Wichita, Kansas; and Reading. In areas with high food insecurity and low food access, many families don’t live near a store that sells fresh produce.

The Food Trust helps store owners turn their shops into healthy community hubs with nutrition education and foods like fruits and vegetables, whole grains and low-fat dairy products. They provide stores with training, equipment and marketing materials to help them promote healthy options.

In Reading, that mission gained momentum when Jennifer Stoltzfoos, a Food Trust program manager, connected with Shuman. They realized they were serving many of the same communities and could do more together. Now, monthly store events offer food education and free health checks in one place.

“Food is medicine,” says Stoltzfoos. “We can talk about nutrition and provide people with incentives, but tying it directly to some real numbers helps people kickstart those changes.” Eating well can improve blood pressure and other health markers.

While The Food Trust covers nutrition, Shuman talks with people about other healthy habits, such as exercise, and connects them with health care providers and food, housing and transportation – often called social determinants of health.

“I try to provide individualized care for each person,” she says. “This event incorporates all three of the top-priority community health needs that Penn State Health focuses on: mental well-being, food and nutrition security, and physical well-being.”



Moises Abreu, right, owner of New Heightz Grocery Store in Reading, gives residents fruits and vegetables purchased with vouchers provided by The Food Trust.

## HEALTHY CORNER STORE INITIATIVE

389

people served with education and outreach

33

people whose blood pressure significantly decreased

2,180

blood pressure measurements taken by Penn State Health nurses at all locations

Fiscal year 2025



CLICK OR SCAN TO READ MORE





ON THE FRONT LINES OF CARE:

Penn State Health trains police to support people with mental illness

Terry Brosche, a Penn State Health simulation educator, trains Pennsylvania State Police cadets on how to handle mental health and addiction calls.

Pennsylvania State Trooper Chase Kraichely was driving near Bethlehem when he noticed a truck by the roadside. A man was standing nearby, peering over a bridge.

Kraichely pulled over and calmly introduced himself.

“He told me he had recently made a mistake and was thinking of taking his life by jumping off the bridge,” Kraichely recalls.

Kraichely thought back to his training, including the “Keystone Model of Crisis Management” workshop developed by Penn State Health and the Pennsylvania State Police Academy that combines mental health education with real-world crisis simulations.

Kraichely called for emergency medical services and suggested a local hospital with behavioral health services. The man chose to go there and was doing better when Kraichely later followed up.

The American Psychological Association reports about 20% of police calls involve a mental health or substance use crisis.

“Mental health has been a huge focus of our training,” says Pennsylvania State Police Sergeant Logan Brouse. “Having the skills to deal with mental health calls effectively helps everybody.”

The training can improve care for people with mental illness, reduce use-of-force incidents, support officer safety and strengthen relations between police and communities.


In the class, actors – “standardized patients” – depict people with mental health challenges, such as a nonverbal child shrieking with panic or an older man wandering a store, confused. After each scene, mental health experts from Penn State Health and Penn State College of Medicine share tips with cadets, such as softening their tone of voice, avoiding flashing lights and supporting a person experiencing delusions without challenging them.

Cadets then join the actors to defuse the situations.

“They learn what to say and do to help someone in crisis deal with their situation in the moment and access resources to continue their healing,” says Terry Brosche, a Penn State Health simulation educator and nurse.

The goal, says Ruth Moore, Pennsylvania Psychiatric Institute community relations director, is to equip cadets with skills to de-escalate and stabilize mental health situations and connect people with treatment. She teaches a “Mental Health Signs and Symptoms” class that enhances the State Police training.

“We give the cadets strategies, including questions to ask and body language to look for,” Moore says.

[CLICK OR SCAN TO READ MORE](#)



Corporal Shawn Barry takes part in a domestic incident simulation during the crisis management workshop at the Pennsylvania State Police Academy.

MENTAL HEALTH TRAINING

138

PA State Police Academy cadets took part in

3

Mental health simulation trainings

363

PA State Police troopers took part in

8

"Mental Health Signs and Symptoms" trainings

Fiscal year 2025





WALK THIS WAY:

Penn State Health’s prescription for movement and connection

Henry Graul of Shillington, left, talks with Dr. Christopher Kosenske of Penn State Health Downtown Campus during a Walk With a Doc at City Park in Reading.

“I usually walk alone,” says 69-year-old Henry Graul, watching his three granddaughters race ahead on the trail at City Park in Reading. “But here I get to be around people and talk, which is nice.”

Graul is participating in Walk With a Doc, one of two free walking programs Penn State Health offers to get community members moving their bodies while building connections with people.

The other program, StoryWalk, lets families enjoy nature and reading together. In partnership with Dauphin County Parks & Recreation, these self-guided walks feature children’s books displayed on signs at Detweiler Park in Dauphin and Lykens Glen Park near Elizabethville.

Both programs aim to address serious physical activity challenges in the six counties Penn State Health serves through its community health efforts. About 1 in 4 people surveyed in its Community Health Needs Assessment report that they don’t exercise. This rate rises to 32% of people with disabilities and 31% of single parents.

Walk With a Doc is simple: a health care provider leads a brief talk about a health-related topic, then a walk and conversation. On this breezy May afternoon, **Dr. Chris Kosenske**, a dentist at **Penn State Health Downtown Campus** in Reading, discusses dental health as participants stroll and chat.

Kosenske talks with Graul’s granddaughters about sugary drinks while the group pauses to watch turtles at the pond.

“With every doctor, you learn something new,” says David Keel, 55, who’s been walking with the program since 2018. “I enjoy getting out and walking, and even making friends.”

Beyond physical benefits, these walks combat growing social isolation by creating natural opportunities for connection.

While Walk With a Doc brings health care outdoors, StoryWalk makes reading a nature adventure.

“These StoryWalks appeal to all different types of kids,” explains Rachael Benion of Carlisle, leading her five children through “Doe’s Dandelions,” written by Laura Renauld and illustrated by Jennie Poh. “You get the ones who love to read outside touching grass and the outdoorsy kids interested in books.”

Both programs prove that the best medicine may not come in a prescription bottle, but from connection with others, movement in nature and learning with new friends or your family.



Ridley, River and Rhys Benion of Carlisle look at a StoryWalk sign.

STORYWALKS  
>11,000  
participants in Dauphin County

WALK WITH A DOC  
>200  
participants in Reading and Dauphin County events

ALL PENN STATE  
HEALTH PHYSICAL  
ACTIVITY PROGRAMS  
89,074  
participants reported in  
Community Benefit Inventory  
for Social Accountability

Fiscal year 2025



CLICK OR SCAN  
TO READ MORE



FIND A WALK WITH  
A DOC NEAR YOU



VIEW STORYWALKS  
IN DAUPHIN COUNTY





A FRESH START:

# Veggie Rx program offers a recipe for wellness

Cheryl Reed-Rhine of Elizabethville, a Veggie Rx program participant, shops for fresh produce at a farmers market.

On a sunny August morning, Cheryl Reed-Rhine of Elizabethville browses mountains of fresh produce at Crossroads Market in Gratz. “I’m trying to use all fresh things because it’s summer,” she says, a statement that reflects a profound shift in her habits.

The catalyst for this change? A free, six-week course called Veggie Rx. A collaboration between Penn State Health and Penn State College of Medicine, the program is designed to empower people to improve their health through food.

Veggie Rx operates on a simple yet powerful idea: food as medicine. The program combines practical nutrition education with vouchers to purchase fresh produce. This two-pronged approach is delivered directly within communities that need it most.

By partnering with local health centers and housing authorities, Veggie Rx reaches people who are food insecure or managing diet-related chronic illnesses like Type 2 diabetes and hypertension.

“Health isn’t just about individual choices or medications. People need access to healthy food and the skills to prepare it,” explains Dr. Susan Veldheer, an associate professor of family and community medicine and public health sciences at Penn State College of Medicine. She is conducting a National Institutes for Health clinical trial on Veggie Rx’s effectiveness.


Veggie Rx also equips participants with the tools to build new habits. The curriculum covers everything from cooking techniques to the emotional side of eating.

For Reed-Rhine, some of the biggest revelations were in the fine print. “Before I took the class, I didn’t read food labels a whole lot,” she admits. Now she knows how to decipher nutrition labels and choose the proper portion sizes for proteins and vegetables.

The combination of food access and education is yielding life-changing results. Back in her kitchen, Reed-Rhine puts her new knowledge into practice by meal prepping for the week.

Her consistent effort has led to a 20-pound weight loss and lowered her A1c, a key measure of blood sugar, from 8.7 to 5.4, moving from diabetic to prediabetic range.

Ultimately, the Veggie Rx program is about empowerment. It gives people the resources, knowledge and confidence to reclaim their health, one fresh meal at a time.

[CLICK OR SCAN TO READ MORE](#)



Veggie Rx expanded to

9

community sites in

4

counties during  
fiscal year 2025



# Driving Measurable Change



## United Way Access to Care Community Health Workers:

- Assisted 212 community members
- Made 173 health care referrals
- Helped 96 people establish a new medical home



## Our Community Health nurses:

- Checked blood pressure twice or more for 718 individuals.
- On average, participants saw a 3.0-point drop in systolic and a 1.4-point drop in diastolic pressure (statistically significant).
- Gave A1c tests to 278 individuals. Less than half had an optimal blood sugar level.



## Nutrition and food access points

**112** across our service area – up from 90 in fiscal year 2024.

## Community health education

**675** evaluation surveys completed after Penn State Health community health education sessions.

**98%** reported learning something new.

## Trauma-Informed Care training

**934** pre-surveys and **695** post-surveys showed a statistically significant increase in participants' knowledge and understanding of trauma.

## Social needs screening

Penn State Health screened about **47,000** patients for social needs, helping many secure vital support with transportation, housing, medication, food and clothing.

*Fiscal year 2025*



# Boosting a Healthy Community

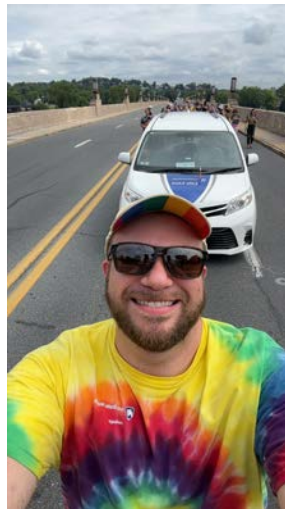
Here's a snapshot of the 259 programs included in our Community Benefit Inventory for Social Accountability.



Christine Wiercinski, Autism Services, Education, Resources and Training Collaborative (ASERT) community engagement manager, makes friends with some Susquehanna Service Dogs at the Community Supports Expo in New Cumberland.



Sunny Goodyear, right, injury prevention and outreach coordinator at Penn State Health Holy Spirit Medical Center, helps a student apply a tourniquet during a Stop the Bleed training in New Cumberland.



Brad Mikitko of Penn State Health's LGBTQ+ Business Employee Resource Group leads fellow members in the Central PA Pride Parade in Harrisburg.



Staff members from Penn State Health Medical Group – Andrews Patel Hematology/Oncology in Camp Hill donated 200 bras to the Community CARES shelter in Carlisle as part of the Brem Foundation to Defeat Breast Cancer's Re-Bra initiative.



Volunteers from Penn State Health clean Linda House, a YWCA of Greater Harrisburg shelter in Perry County that supports women and children affected by domestic violence and sexual assault, on the United Way Day of Caring.



Penn State Cancer Institute staff teach community members about colon health in a walk-through model of the human colon during a Walk With a Doc event in Harrisburg.



Staff members from Penn State Health Medical Group – Nyes Road prepare to collect unused medications from community members on National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day in April 2025.



Noah McClymont plays a round of sled hockey during Penn State Health RecFest 2025, a celebration of inclusive sports and recreation hosted by Penn State Health Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation in partnership with Penn State Health Rehabilitation Hospital.



Life Lion flight paramedic Tom Buck talks with homeschool students during their field trip to the Life Lion Hangar in Hershey.



Community members shop for fresh produce at RDG Fresh Market at Penn State Health Downtown Campus in Reading. The market, a partnership with United Way of Berks County, also features weekly nutrition education provided by The Food Trust.



# Our Progress in Advancing Health Equity



### NOV 2022

Penn State Health convenes a team of individuals from throughout the health system to advance a systemwide health equity program. Six priority areas were identified to be addressed. The health system also begins work on the American Hospital Association's Health Equity Roadmap.

### APRIL 2023

Penn State Health completes the American Hospital Association Health Equity Transformation Assessment for its five adult acute care hospitals and Pennsylvania Psychiatric Institute.

### NOV 2023

Penn State Health initiates a written health equity plan, in line with Joint Commission and Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services requirements.

### JULY 2024

Penn State Health continues to expand its health equity efforts with culturally appropriate language materials and resources, including stroke and maternal health.

### MAY 2025

The health system enhances its reporting of health equity metrics by using PRAPARE, a national standardized patient risk assessment tool, to better identify disparities and guide interventions.

### SEPT 2025

Penn State Health's Community Health Needs Assessment prioritizes health equity by providing culturally relevant, trauma-informed education and resources on mental health and substance use, with a focus on communities disproportionately affected by these challenges.

### FEB 2023

The health system boards were advised of Penn State Health's foundation for implementing its Health Equity Program.

### JULY 2023

Stroke was prioritized as the focal point for addressing health equity disparities, to be reviewed on an annual basis.

### APRIL 2024

Penn State Health completes the American Hospital Association's Institute for Health Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Survey.

### SEPT 2024

The Health Equity program collaborates with Penn State College of Medicine's Health Systems Science Office on a conceptual framework to increase engagement with Women's Health.

### AUG 2025

Health Equity programming builds the workforce's capacity to improve population health by expanding cultural competency training and ensuring care that is responsive to diverse communities' needs.

### OCT 2025

Health Equity leads Equitable Care Subcommittee for Penn State Health's integration of Epic as its electronic health records and revenue cycle management system. Penn State Health and Penn State College of Medicine unify Offices of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging into new Office of Health Advancement and Community Engagement.





# About Penn State Health

Penn State Health is a multi-hospital health system serving patients and communities across 15 counties in central Pennsylvania. It employs more than 19,600 people systemwide.

The system includes Penn State Health Milton S. Hershey Medical Center, Penn State Health Golisano Children’s Hospital and Penn State Cancer Institute based in Hershey; Penn State Health Hampden Medical Center in Enola; Penn State Health Holy Spirit Medical Center in Camp Hill; Penn State Health Lancaster Medical Center in Lancaster; Penn State Health St. Joseph Medical Center in Reading; Pennsylvania Psychiatric Institute, a specialty provider of inpatient and outpatient behavioral health services in Harrisburg; and 2,418 physicians and direct care providers at 186 outpatient practices. Additionally, the system jointly operates various health care providers, including Penn State Health Rehabilitation Hospital, Hershey Outpatient Surgery Center, Hershey Endoscopy Center, Lancaster Orthopedic Group and the Surgery Center of Lancaster.

In 2017, Penn State Health partnered with Highmark Health to facilitate the creation of a value-based, community care network in the region.

Penn State Health shares an integrated strategic plan and operations with Penn State College of Medicine, the University’s medical school.

### Our Mission

- Continually improve the health and well-being of the people of Pennsylvania and beyond
- Provide excellent, compassionate, culturally responsive and equitable care
- Educate and train health care professionals
- Advance evidence-based medical innovation through research and discovery

### Our Vision

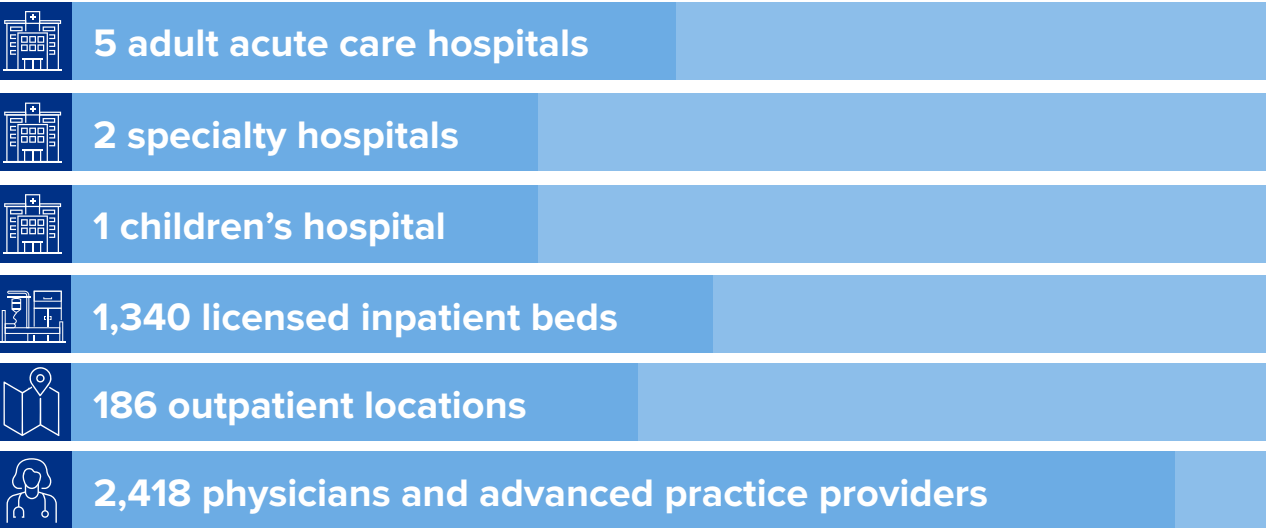
- To be Pennsylvania’s most trusted health care organization

### Our Values

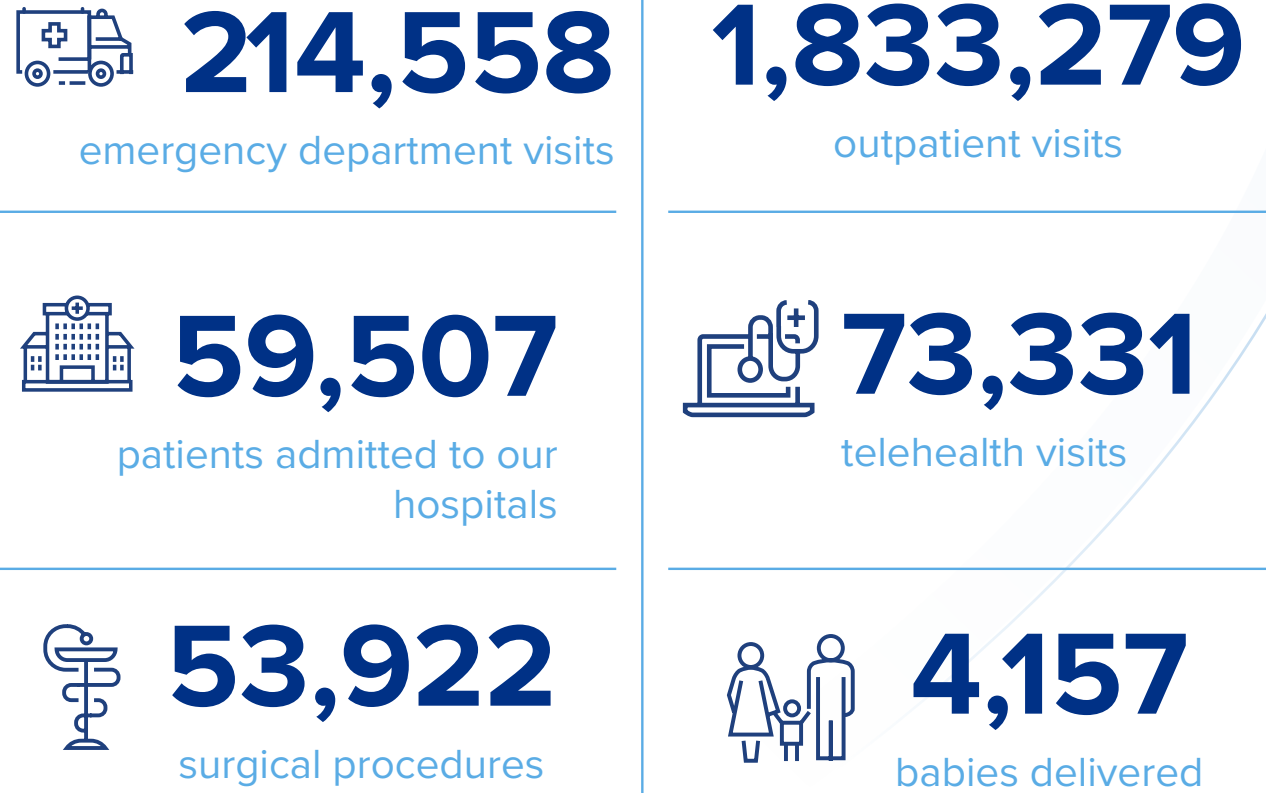
Penn State Health recognizes its employees for fulfilling the RITE values of the organization:

- Respect
- Integrity
- Teamwork
- Excellence

# Penn State Health at a Glance



## FISCAL YEAR 2025





# Thank You To Our Partners

The important work we do every day in our communities wouldn't be possible without the generous support of our partners who share Penn State Health's mission to continually improve the health and well-being of the people of Pennsylvania and beyond. Together, we're making our communities healthier and stronger by addressing the needs of the most vulnerable in our region.

Our partnerships with local, community-based organizations allow us to make a real and lasting impact, and philanthropic support from many individuals, organizations and corporations in our region powers our progress.

This report highlights some key initiatives made possible by collaborators such as Beacon Clinic, Pennsylvania State Police, The Food Trust, New Heightz Grocery Store and Dauphin County Parks & Recreation, and with financial support from The GIANT Company, Highmark Blue Shield, the Lawrence & Julia Hoverter Charitable Foundation and PNC. We are grateful to all who help make this vital work possible.



**CLICK OR SCAN**

For a list of our supporters and partners, see our Community Health Needs Assessment and Implementation Strategy.



Alyssa Kipp of Penn State Health Lancaster Medical Center pedals toward the finish line at the United Way of Lancaster County 2025 Trike Race.



Life Lion chief pilot Bruce Kimmel and flight paramedic Clay Wood answer questions about the Life Lion Air Medical program from firefighters and emergency medical technicians in training at the Schumaker Public Safety Training Center at HACC.





*Laurie Crawford, program manager of community gardens and food access at Penn State College of Medicine, right rear, and Erika Mollo, nutrition education program coordinator, right front, offer health foods to Moira Spots and her daughters, Kaia and Finley, at the Farmer's Market in Hershey.*



## SHARE YOUR IDEAS

Help us make our communities healthier.

Share your feedback on Penn State Health's 2024 Community Health Needs Assessment and our plans to improve the health of our communities.

Click or scan below to join the conversation.



**PennState Health**

[pennstatehealth.org](https://pennstatehealth.org)