



Valley
Children's
HEALTHCARE



ANNUAL REPORT AND PLAN

for Community Benefit Fiscal Year 2023

(October 1, 2022 – September 30, 2023)

Submitted to:

California Department of Health Care Access and Information Healthcare Information Division
Accounting and Reporting Systems Section - Sacramento, California



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I. INTRODUCTION

More than 70 years ago, our five founding mothers had a dream to build a hospital in the Central Valley just for children. Valley Children's Healthcare (Valley Children's) has grown and flourished ever since, caring for generations of children since 1952.

Our Mission

The mission of Valley Children's is to provide high-quality, comprehensive healthcare services to children, regardless of their ability to pay, and to continuously improve the health and well-being of children.

Our Vision

Our vision is to provide the nation's best healthcare for kids and to become the nation's best children's hospital.

Our Values

The following values guide every decision and define our commitment and the action supporting it:

Excellence: We are dedicated, disciplined and demonstrate high standards as we strive to be the best. We take ownership and empower ourselves to deliver an exceptional experience, with every interaction, every time.

Compassionate Care: We are present in every interaction and respond to others with warmth and kindness.

Integrity: We are honest and ethical, demonstrate high standards of personal conduct, keep our word and take responsibility for our actions.

Innovation: We always look for ways to learn and make things better and are problem solvers.

Collaboration: We contribute to, support and respect decisions that are made by our teams and the organization. We build and promote positive working relationships and teamwork.

Stewardship: We are accountable for effectively managing our time and the organization's resources. We share resources to achieve the best outcome.

Commitment to the Community

Valley Children's is Central California's only high-quality, comprehensive healthcare network dedicated to children, from before birth to young adulthood, as well as to high-risk pregnant women. It plays a vital role in meeting the healthcare needs of some of our region's sickest and most medically vulnerable residents.

Valley Children's network offers highly specialized medical and surgical services to care for children with conditions ranging from the common to the highly complex at its 358-bed stand-alone children's hospital, that includes 28 regional neonatal intensive care unit beds. In addition, Valley Children's network includes specialty care centers, pediatric primary care practices and women's health services.

Valley Children's consistently ranks at the top of its peer group for quality patient outcomes as evidenced by the following:

- Recognition by The Leapfrog Group as one of the nation's Top Children's Hospitals for excellence in patient safety and quality
- Beacon Award for Excellence™ in critical care
- U.S. News and World Report recognition in 2023-2024 as one of the nation's best children's hospitals in seven specialties including Neonatology, Pediatric Diabetes & Endocrinology, Pediatric

While providing exceptional healthcare is the single greatest contribution Valley Children’s makes to children and their families, Valley Children’s also recognizes that it is uniquely positioned to support the needs of children in other ways. To help advance its community-based work, Valley Children’s launched The Guilds Center for Community Health in November 2019. The Center is the first of its kind in the Central Valley to bridge the exceptional care kids receive within our network and the health impacts our children experience where they live, learn and play. Valley Children’s recognizes that the health of our children is impacted by social determinants such as the physical environment, health behaviors and economic status. According to research, of all the factors that influence our health, only 20% are linked to the clinical care we receive – and 80% are related to the social determinants of health. The Guilds Center for Community Health is an investment in that 80%.

This Community Benefit Report summarizes the contributions provided by Valley Children’s to its community for fiscal year 2023 (October 1, 2022 through September 30, 2023).

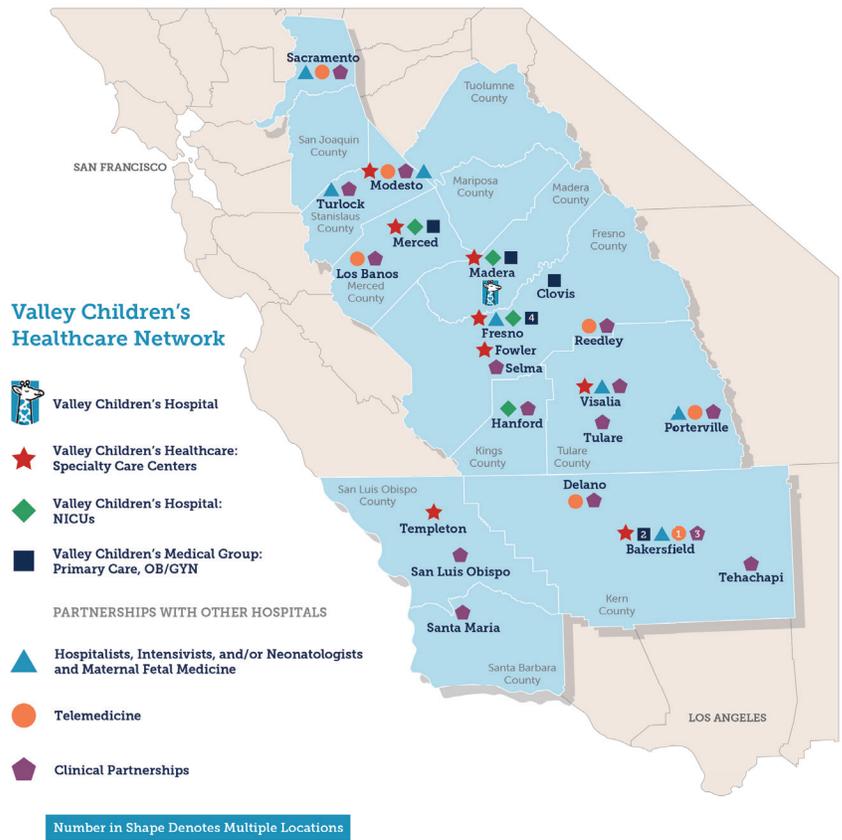
II. SERVICE AREA DEMOGRAPHICS AND PATIENT VOLUME

Service Area Demographics

Valley Children’s service area extends from Sacramento County in the north to Kern County in the south, and serves much of the Central Coast and eastern Sierra as well. The map below illustrates Valley Children’s service area, service locations and clinical partnerships.

For purposes of this Community Benefit Report, Valley Children’s service area is focused on the seven counties that collectively account for more than 90% of Valley Children’s inpatient and outpatient volume. Those counties are Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, Stanislaus and Tulare. Children in these counties face many challenges when it comes to living healthy productive lives. For example, according to www.kidsdata.org, as much as 30% of children living in these seven counties live in poverty, approximately 1 in 5 is food insecure and close to 50% of 5th graders are at an unhealthy weight.

With respect to Valley Children’s patient population, approximately 80% are an ethnicity other than Caucasian and more than 80% live in households with a language preference other than English.



Valley Children’s Patient Volume

The table below lists Valley Children’s patient volumes in 2023.

Valley Children’s Patient Volume in 2023	
Inpatient Admissions	9,923
Emergency Department Visits	85,161
Hospital-Based Outpatient Specialty Care Center, Regional Specialty Care Center and Primary Care Center Visits	270,366

Medi-Cal covered 74.2% of Valley Children’s total inpatient population and 73.6% of outpatient visits in 2023.

III. ASSESSING COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS

The community benefit activities summarized in this report are based on Valley Children’s Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) completed in 2022 and its Implementation Strategy for 2023 – 2025. Valley Children’s Healthcare Board of Trustees approved the most current CHNA on September 19, 2022, and the Implementation Strategy on November 17, 2022.

To see the 2019 and 2022 CHNAs and the associated Implementation Strategies, visit www.valleychildrens.org/about-us/community-benefit.

Valley Children’s 2022 CHNA was based on a joint needs assessment for Fresno, Kings, Madera and Tulare counties and separate needs assessments for Kern, Merced, and Stanislaus counties. For Fresno, Kings, Madera and Tulare counties, Valley Children’s partnered with area hospitals and public health departments to assess health needs for children and adults. The CHNA was coordinated by the Hospital Council of Northern and Central California and included a review of secondary data as well as significant community engagement of key stakeholders through surveys, focus groups and interviews.

To assess the needs of children and families in Kern, Merced and Stanislaus counties, Valley Children’s reviewed secondary data sources and worked with community partners to conduct one-on-one interviews with key stakeholders and focus groups with organizations representing low income, underserved communities.

Additionally, Valley Children’s staff engaged regularly with community-based organizations and participated in initiatives that kept us close to the issues impacting the health and well-being of children in the region. See pages 15-16 for a partial list of organizations and initiatives in which we were involved in 2023.

IV. ADDRESSING HEALTH PRIORITIES IN 2023

From high rates of obesity and child abuse to poor access to primary healthcare, children and their families throughout the seven-county service area face many challenges to living healthy and productive lives. The implications of these challenges are significant. For children and their families, it means high rates of chronic illness, frequent visits to hospital emergency rooms, missed days of school and missed days of work for parents or caregivers. For healthcare providers, it means carefully considering the many needs that exist, determining which needs are the most critical and which needs they are best equipped to address.

In 2023, Valley Children's engaged in activities and programs that addressed the priority health needs identified in the 2023-2025 Implementation Strategy. Valley Children's was committed to community benefit efforts that addressed: access to care, chronic disease prevention, maternal and infant health, mental health and violence and injury prevention. Selected activities and programs that highlight Valley Children's commitment to the community are summarized below.

Access to Care (including Preventive Care)

Access to Primary and Preventive Care for At-Risk Children

Pediatric physician residents participating in Valley Children's Pediatric Residency Program provided primary and preventive healthcare services to at-risk children in Fresno County as part of the Fresno County Superintendent of Schools' Mobile Health Unit (MHU). Designed to help ensure that children are healthy and ready to learn, the MHU visited 31 different schools in 2023, including many located in rural and low-income communities. As a part of those visits, 1,164 childhood vaccinations were administered, and 331 sports physicals were performed.

Affordable Broadband Internet Access

Access to affordable and reliable broadband internet service is critical to ensuring that everyone has access to quality health care including individuals living in areas where healthcare providers and services are in short supply.

In recognition of this reality, Valley Children's was actively involved in community-based efforts to improve access to broadband including serving as a member of the Fresno Coalition for Digital Inclusion (FCDI) Executive Policy Workgroup. Established in 2022, FCDI brings together institutions, local government/public agencies and community-based organizations to collaborate with a shared purpose toward equitable internet access. There are presently 29 organizations at the table representing the County and City of Fresno, K-12, higher education, healthcare, housing and community-based organizations. The coalition's work in 2023 included analysis of broadband access, gaps in Fresno County and advocacy to ensure that regulators and policy makers were using the most accurate data in identifying areas of greatest need.

Enrollment in Health Insurance

Valley Children's identified and provided enrollment assistance to uninsured and under-insured patients who qualified for Medi-Cal, California Children's Services Program or Valley Children's Financial Assistance Program. Once eligibility was determined, Valley Children's staff assisted the families with completing necessary applications and submitting them to the appropriate agencies.

Transportation

Given the Central Valley's largely rural landscape and high concentration of poverty, transportation has long been a challenge for many families. Valley Children's continued to work with the community to improve public transportation and access to care. Valley Children's Social Work Department assisted families with transportation by providing gas cards, taxi vouchers, Amtrak tickets and bus tokens. Valley Children's also subsidized bus and other public transit services from the City of Fresno and Kings County.

Expanded Access to Pediatric Primary and Specialty Care

Valley Children's made cash contributions for the purchase of capital-related items to be used to increase access to healthcare services for children throughout the region.

Chronic Disease Prevention (including Obesity, Nutrition and Physical Activity)

Adaptive Sports Program

Valley Children's Adaptive Sports Program provided free recreational and athletic experiences for children, adolescents and young adults with disabilities, regardless of whether they have been or are currently patients at Valley Children's. The program is the only one of its kind in Central California, designed for individuals with physical impairments and conditions ranging from cerebral palsy, spinal cord injuries and amputations. Disabled youth, up to age 21, were especially encouraged to attend. In 2023, about 70 children participated in a variety of activities including wheelchair basketball, wheelchair tennis, wheelchair soccer, canoeing/kayaking, rock climbing, track and field and snow and water skiing.

Blue Zones Project Bakersfield

In 2023, Valley Children's provided financial support for the Blue Zones Bakersfield initiative, supported its advocacy efforts and participated on the initiative's Steering Committee and School Wellness Committee.

Valley Children's Healthcare, through its Guilds Center for Community Health, joined Adventist Health and other stakeholders to launch the Blue Zones Project Bakersfield. Based on the national Blue Zones Project model, the Bakersfield Project is a well-being improvement initiative designed to make healthier choices easier by encouraging changes that lead to healthier options. When individuals and organizations participate, their small changes contribute to huge benefits: lowered healthcare costs, improved productivity and higher quality of life.

Blue Zones Bakersfield supported interventions and initiatives that empower people, incentivize places to enhance the ways they promote health and wellness, and implement policy that transforms the environment. Blue Zones supported community walking groups, hosting cooking demonstrations and is working on a comprehensive grass roots engagement strategy neighborhood by neighborhood. Blue Zones worked with schools, worksites, grocery stores, restaurants and faith-based organizations to implement practices that make it easier for individuals to make healthy choices. Blue Zones supported policy changes that reduce tobacco use, increase the availability of healthy foods and promote changes to the built environment that make it easier and safer for residents to take advantage of amenities such as parks, sidewalks, bike paths, and public transportation.

Food for Families

Valley Children's dietary department provided meal coupons to breastfeeding moms whose infants were at Valley Children's. Additionally, Valley Children's social work team provided patients' families who were not prepared for a long stay at the hospital with meal coupons when the need was determined. The social work team also worked closely with the California Children's Services program to provide food for eligible families.

Food Security - Central California Food Bank Partnership

In March 2022, Valley Children's entered a three-year partnership with the Central California Food Bank to support access to healthy and nutritious food for children and families across our service area.

Through the partnership, Valley Children's has committed funding more than three years that supports the following interventions: a) Food distributions to up to 70 families with children being served by Valley Children's Home Care. Qualifying families receive one food box per month, b) Food distributions for up to 100 families each year through a monthly food distribution at West Fresno Middle School, and c) Support for the First Fruits Market at City Center in Fresno that is available to low-income families with children to access nutritious food, free of charge, in a setting much like any neighborhood grocery store.

Regarding the food distribution to Valley Children’s Home Care patients, Home Care staff distributed 8,492 pounds of food (the equivalent of 7,076 meals) to 35 families including 90 children in the partnership’s first year.

Regarding the food distribution at West Fresno Middle School, 23,055 pounds of food were distributed (the equivalent of 19,213 meals) to 377 families including 1,382 children in the first year of the partnership.

Food Security - Merced Partnership

In Merced County, Valley Children’s Olivewood Pediatrics Practice partnered with Community Initiatives for Collective Impact and the Merced County Food Bank to help needy families access food at local grocery stores. Through the partnership, Valley Children’s providers screen all children enrolled in Medi-Cal and their families for food insecurity and if a family screens positive for food insecurity, the providers will give the family a coupon that can be used at any grocery store that accepts food coupons to help with the purchase of nutritional staples such as fruits, vegetables and dairy products.

Help Me Grow

Help Me Grow is a system used throughout the United States to help children reach their optimal development by kindergarten. Help Me Grow programs include a centralized intake and referral process, community outreach to promote early intervention systems, targeted outreach to childcare and child health providers, and the collection and analysis of data to improve the system.

In spring 2023, Valley Children’s, in partnership with First 5 Fresno, First 5 Kern and First 5 Merced, engaged the services of a consultant to conduct a study regarding a potential regional Help Me Grow initiative. The goal of this study was to evaluate the benefits of, and develop a plan for the creation of a regional initiative that promotes collaboration, capacity building, enhanced screening levels and improved systems of care for all children. The study, which was completed in November 2023, concluded that there was justification for and support of a regional initiative and provided a blueprint for creating a Central Valley Help Me Grow program. Valley Children’s is currently facilitating work towards creating that program.

Epilepsy Support Program

Valley Children’s Epilepsy Program continued its community-based outreach work in 2023 by providing the following education and training to key stakeholders.

- The program provided training to 541 staff across 8 school districts on seizure preparedness and safety and provided 100 comfort care backpacks to schools for students with epilepsy.
- The program facilitated 25 separate support groups that reached 26 teens and 52 parents.
- The program’s social media videos on seizure rescue medication were viewed more than 68,000 times and were used in school trainings nationally providing instruction to school staff on how to administer emergency seizure rescue medications.
- The program participated in numerous community events through which it was able to provide education and promote awareness regarding epilepsy to more than 3,800 individuals.
- The program’s leadership was also active in public policy at a state and federal level including providing important education and information to the Congressional Epilepsy Caucus and serving on the Epilepsy Alliance America Board of Directors.

Schools for Thriving and Healthy Students

Valley Children’s and the Guilds Center for Community Health, in partnership with the Center for Wellness and Nutrition and No Kid Hungry, completed Phase II of Schools for Healthy and Thriving Students, which supported school districts in their efforts to update and fully leverage school wellness policies, including policies addressing physical activity and nutrition.

The framework for the work was the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC) model, a student-centered tool for addressing health in schools. Of the 17 participating school districts, 4 updated their school district wellness policies and 14 updated a WSCC related policy.

Maternal and Infant Health

Clinical Partnership Program

Valley Children’s Clinical Partnership program brings together institutions focused on enhancing neonatal and pediatric care, regardless of whether the ill or injured child becomes a Valley Children’s patient. This effort helped prevent children from being transferred or referred unnecessarily to Valley Children’s, and helped to quickly identify when a child needed advanced pediatric care. With improved communication and tools, the program decreased stress for patients and families and increased provider confidence in providing pediatric care, while enhancing performance at Valley Children’s and the partnering provider.

The goals of our Clinical Partnership included:

- Improved quality and confidence in providing pediatric care
- More care delivered closer to home
- Enhanced, coordinated care
- Improved access to Valley Children’s hospitalists, specialists, resources, nursing and ancillary clinical expertise

In 2023, Valley Children’s supported 17 inpatient clinical partners and, as a part of that support, convened 22 training and education events that drew more than 750 attendees. The average investment of time for each hospital partner was more than 300 hours annually.

Diaper Donation

According to research results released by the National Diaper Bank Network in June 2023, nearly half (47%) of U.S. families with young children struggle to afford diapers. And, based on that same research, a lack of adequate diapers “is associated with physical, emotional and economic hardship for children and families.” Across our service area, where as much as 30% of children are living in poverty, there is a clear link between family income and a family’s inability to cover basic needs for their children, including diapers. In recognition of this reality, Valley Children’s donated 24,656 diapers to Saint Rest Baptist Church in Fresno to distribute to families in need.

Safe Sleep for Infants

Valley Children’s co-leads the Central Valley Safe Sleep Coalition, in conjunction with First 5 Fresno County. The Safe Sleep Coalition is a 9-county collaborative focused on providing culturally appropriate risk reduction education and resources on safe infant sleep.

In September 2023, the Coalition held its first learning collaborative geared toward safe sleep education for childcare center providers, licensed and unlicensed in-home childcare providers, and any friends, family or neighbors who provide care to infants under the age of 1 year. The first collaborative hosted more than 200 learners from all nine Central Valley counties and was simultaneously translated into Spanish to provide more equitable access to this critical information.

Mental Health

Mental health is one of the most pressing needs facing children in California. Children living in Valley Children’s service area are particularly underserved due to the geography, provider shortages and limited community-based services. In 2023, Valley Children’s demonstrated its commitment to meeting the mental health needs of children in a number of ways, including those listed below.

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

Valley Children's Olivewood Pediatrics Practice in Merced received close to \$622,000 in grant funding from the California Department of Health Care Services to address ACEs through the PRACTICE grant. The awarding was done in partnership with the Office of the California Surgeon General, the Population Health Innovation Lab and the UCLA-UCSF ACEs Aware Family Resilience Network, also known as UCANN. The goals of the grant focused on strengthening partnerships between practices, community-based organizations (CBOs) and managed Medi-Cal health plans, as well as developing new and sustainable services and workforce expansion.

Valley Children's Olivewood Pediatrics partnered with ACE Overcomers to hire a care navigator. Care navigation services were provided to patients from Olivewood Pediatrics and ACE Overcomers who either screened positive for risk of toxic stress or had an identified social need, such as transportation assistance.

The care navigator, in conjunction with ACE Overcomers and Valley Children's, did extensive outreach to various clinics and practices regarding the importance of screening and referral.

The PRACTICE grant also included work with the California Consortium for Prevention and Intervention (CalCPI) to develop social-emotional learning training modules for teachers, administrators, school staff, service providers, parents and educational stakeholders across Merced County. The modules were geared toward early elementary (TK-2nd grade), late elementary (3rd-5th grade), middle school (6th-8th grade), high school (9th-12th grade), peer interventionists, and community health workers and were easily accessible to rural communities of Merced County. The collaboration with CPI also resulted in additional support of foster youth through collaborative work with Court Appointed Special Advocates of Merced County.

Through the grant, Valley Children's helped to identify patients and families at risk for poor health outcomes because of ACEs and toxic stress; educate providers, staff and community members around ACEs and toxic stress and how to intervene; connect families to needed resources; and build resilience to break the cycle.

Behavioral Health School Liaison

Through funding from the Fresno County Superintendent of Schools, Valley Children's hired an on-site behavioral health school liaison. The liaison collaborated with area school districts to ensure that children presenting to our emergency department and inpatient units with mental health needs received appropriate resources and support when they returned to school. The partnership ended in May 2023.

Youth Health Ambassadors

In May 2023, the United States Department of Health and Human Services announced the Child and Youth Resilience Challenge. In response, Valley Children's provided in-kind support to the Fresno Community Health Improvement Partnership (FCHIP) and their Youth Leadership Council in the application and planning of a novel curriculum by and for young adolescents built around stress busters – ways to manage day-to-day stress and counter toxic stress. The curriculum, titled "Youth Health Ambassadors" is a pilot program that includes education and community outreach to build resilience, and was one of 14 finalists selected from more than 500 applications from across the U.S.

Community-Based Collaboration and Education

In September 2022, Valley Children's Healthcare was selected to participate with 15 other children's hospitals in a national collaborative aimed at preventing youth suicide through improved hospital screening, internal systems of care and regional community collaborations aimed at reducing youth suicide to ZERO. As the collaborative leaders, Cardinal Health Foundation and the Zero Suicide Initiative have said, "zero suicide is the only goal to strive towards." Regional collaboratives in which Valley Children's participated included the Fresno Suicide Prevention Collaborative and the Madera County Suicide Education and Awareness Collaborative that addressed issues of mental health, homelessness and the impact on families.

Additionally, Valley Children's continued to support 360me, an initiative that is designed to provide families, schools and communities with tools and resources to make sure we are doing all that we can to safeguard our children's physical and mental health. 360me intentionally helps stakeholders recognize and understand the many connections between mental and physical wellness and to reduce the stigma society incorrectly associates with mental health.

Violence and Injury Prevention

Child Abuse Prevention

Valley Children's Guilds Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Center's mission is to provide comprehensive services to children, dependent adults and their families through a multidisciplinary, trauma-informed program, and to meet the physical and emotional needs of victims with abuse considerations.

The Center is recognized in Central California and around the state as a leader in advocacy, injury prevention and academic training. The Center prides itself on working collaboratively with prevention and intervention groups throughout the state to ensure they are addressing child maltreatment to the best of their ability. The Center is currently a member of the Child Advocacy Centers of California, Central California Coalition of Child Abuse Prevention Councils and the Ray E. Helfer Society for child abuse pediatrics.

The Guilds Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Center includes the Child Advocacy Clinic, which operates five days a week and sees approximately 900 children each year. The Center's providers are also available seven days a week, 24 hours a day for emergency coverage. The Center includes an inpatient component that evaluates an additional 100 children annually in the pediatric emergency department, acute-care and pediatric intensive care units. In addition to the medical services offered, the Center has a team of social workers and a licensed mental health clinician that provide psycho-social assessment, linkages to community services and trauma therapy.

In 2023, the Center worked closely with law enforcement, Child Protective Services and district attorneys' offices in their investigative efforts of child maltreatment. Collaborative efforts included case consultation and monthly Suspect Child Abuse and Neglect meetings facilitated by our Child Advocacy Clinic in an effort to track, monitor and advocate for the health and safety of at-risk children throughout the Valley.

For prevention education, the Center continued to collaborate with internal and external partners to provide education to parents, caregivers, healthcare personnel, teachers and mandated reporters. These partners included Valley Children's Trauma Department's Injury Prevention Team and Emergency Department, Safe Kids Central California, Child Abuse Prevention Councils of California, Child Protective Services, District Attorney's Offices, local law enforcement agencies, Sexual Assault Response Teams, victim advocacy groups and county public health departments.

Injury Prevention Program

Unintentional injury is the number one killer of children across the United States and around the world. Safe Kids Central California is one of 400 coalitions that are part of Safe Kids Worldwide, an extensive network of coalitions and partners in the United States and around the world to reduce injuries from motor vehicle, sports, drownings, falls, burns, poisonings and more. As the lead agency for Safe Kids Central California, Valley Children's is proud to be a leader in supporting pediatric injury prevention efforts throughout Central California and is committed to providing resources toward these efforts. Safe Kids Central California is a coalition of 30 agencies made up of healthcare, law enforcement, social services, education, media and other organizations that are dedicated to preventing unintentional injury in children.

In 2023, Valley Children's Injury Prevention Program recorded 3,577 contacts with community members during 16 community-based teaching events on the following topics: ATV safety, carbon monoxide poisoning prevention, child passenger safety, concussions, gun storage safety, Halloween safety, home safety, poison prevention, railroad safety, safe infant sleep, teen driving, toy safety, vehicle safety, vehicular heat stroke prevention and water safety.

In order to ensure that children were safe at home, Valley Children's distributed the following safety equipment to families in 2023.

- 795 bicycle helmets
- 26 gun safety locks
- 105 car seats as a result of 188 car seats checked at 5 separate car seat check events

Disaster Preparedness

Valley Children's donated space to the California Department of Public Health to store pharmaceuticals to be used in regional disasters or medical emergencies.

Poison Control

The Central California Poison Control Center is located on the Valley Children's campus and received a donation of office space in 2023 from Valley Children's.

The Center answers calls 24 hours a day, seven days a week and provides expert advice and information regarding exposure to potentially harmful substances.

V. OTHER COMMUNITY BENEFIT SERVICES

Valley Children's provided community benefit services in addition to those programs focused on addressing the priority health needs.

Health Professions Education

Valley Children's is committed to promoting an adequate supply of highly trained professionals to meet our region's demand for pediatric healthcare services. Activities supported by Valley Children's in 2023 included the following:

Pediatric Physician Training

Valley Children's Pediatric Residency Program, affiliated with the Stanford University School of Medicine, provides general and advanced clinical pediatric training in a fast-paced, tertiary care environment, with a focus on quality and patient safety, inter-professional education and scholarship and community partnerships. The residents rotate through Valley Children's main teaching hospital, a 358-bed, state-of-the-art hospital, and Lucile Salter Packard Children's Hospital at Stanford. They work closely with physicians, nurses, pharmacists, administrators and other healthcare professionals, including our partners in local hospitals and medical groups.

Physicians tend to practice where they learn. In June 2023, the program graduated its fourth class of 11 pediatricians, retaining 27% of the graduates across Valley Children's service area. The program plays a critical role meeting the pediatric physician needs of the Central Valley where, according to a report from the Healthforce Center at the University of California at San Francisco, there are 10.1 pediatricians per 100,000 population compared to 19.6 in the greater Bay Area.

In 2023, Valley Children's provided training to 287 physician residents and fellows, including 41 pediatric physician residents enrolled in Valley Children's Pediatric Residency Program. Residents received training in a variety of disciplines including general pediatrics, cardiology, emergency medicine, family medicine, pediatric surgery and orthopedic surgery. Additionally, Valley Children's provided training to 85 medical students representing 17 different medical schools.

Continuing Medical Education

In 2023, Valley Children's hosted 9 separate continuing medical education sessions for community-based physicians with a combined attendance of 569 providers. Pediatric subspecialty physicians from Valley Children's served as featured faculty, providing community-based physicians with critical guidance on abnormal head shapes, audiology, cardiac syncope and sudden death, chronic vomiting, diagnosis and management of common pediatric behavioral and developmental issues, menstrual bleeding, non-mendelian inheritance, orthognathic surgery, precocious puberty and seizures.

In support of the Fresno County Superintendent of Schools' lecture series for school nurses, Valley Children's physicians and physician residents presented at six different seminars that addressed a variety of issues including implications of long COVID, issues specific to LGBTQ students, adrenal insufficiency, how to identify health disparities in students, the opioid crisis and managing seizures.

Nursing and Other Health Professions Students

Valley Children's partnered with health professions education programs throughout the state and around the country to provide students with a variety of educational opportunities to observe or participate in the care of pediatric patients. In 2023, Valley Children's provided 41,540 hours of clinical instruction for 686 nursing students from nine different nursing programs. Valley Children's also hosted 234 non-nursing students, representing 14 different clinical disciplines, for 24,212 hours of clinical instruction.

Pharmacist Training

Valley Children's supported a pharmacy residency program in 2023 that provided training to eight residents and two fellows.

School Health Personnel

Valley Children's clinical education team partnered with the California School Nurse Organization, Central Valley Section, as well as with individual school districts to provide education to school health personnel on a number of important topics related to student health and wellness.

In total, Valley Children's presented at 10 separate events on topics that included caring for children with autism and sensory needs, common cardiac conditions in children and special considerations for school aged children, common dermatology conditions including infectious diseases that might require student exclusions or referrals, common gastroenterology conditions and special considerations for school aged children, common genetic disorders, diabetes management and treatment, common ophthalmology conditions and special considerations for school aged children eating disorders, gastrostomy tube and tracheostomy tube training, juvenile arthritis and mental health.

Research

The research program at Valley Children's consists of both national multi-center clinical trials and locally generated, physician-initiated research studies. Our focus is to participate in studies that are tailored to meet the varying needs of our patient population. More than 240 studies are available to children and their families. See below for examples of some of the research in which Valley Children's was involved in 2023.

Valley Children's oncology research program is a member of the Children's Oncology Group, an international network of clinical trials, which is federally funded by the National Cancer Institute. Physicians have access to more than 100 studies to treat a variety of types of cancer, and to find treatments that are more effective for the children we care for. In 2023, our providers, including oncologists and surgeons, continued to work together to improve surgical outcomes for children, adolescents and young adults with cancer through a multi-institutional collaborative investigation. Our site contributed valuable data to review surgical outcomes, treatments options and advance evidence-based medicine in areas of rare renal tumors, adrenocortical

carcinoma and other solid tumor treatment management. Additionally, our interprofessional research team worked on a qualitative research project to identify and eliminate barriers including health literacy, comprehension of types of research projects and modalities of clinical trial information, and its impact on clinical trial enrollment for Valley Children's patients and families.

Valley Children's Hematology Treatment Center participated in various national and regional collaborative programs to improve the care of children and young adults with bleeding and clotting disorders. The goals of these programs are to gain a better understanding of the issues affecting patients and families, including the development of inhibitors, increase knowledge of the genetics and natural history of blood disorders, study treatment and develop standards of care and increase community support and education.

Other examples include:

- A study to explore families' perspectives on care and communication for inpatients when language barriers exist, the results of which will be used to improve communication for families who have language barriers.
- A study to evaluate the validity of genetic and biochemical disease predictors in pediatric patients with inflammation of the kidney. The purpose of this study is to determine how genes and biomarkers affect IgAN and Henoch-Schönlein Purpura. This will substantially advance our understanding of the pathogenesis of kidney failure with a long-term potential for improving therapy options.
- A study to determine if there was a correlation between the cystic fibrosis (CF) medication, Trikafta, and improvement in bone density, while evaluating other factors including physical activity and calcium supplementation. Data indicated that those meeting physical activity recommendations had the closest correlation with improvement in their DEXA bone density scores. As CF care improves and life expectancy increases, bone health and long-term quality of life need further considerations and research.

Cash and In-Kind Contributions

Cash Donations and Sponsorships

Valley Children's participated as a financial sponsor of community-based organizations whose purpose aligns closely with Valley Children's mission and community benefit priorities.

In-Kind Donations

Ronald McDonald House - Valley Children's owns the land on which the Ronald McDonald House (RMH) of Central California is located and leases the land to the RMH for \$1 per year. The lease arrangement helps the RMH offer services to families whose children are hospitalized or receiving treatment, including:

- 18 guest suites featuring two queen beds, satellite television, WIFI and a private bathroom
- Three wings equipped with shared spaces including a kitchen, laundry room and dining area
- Fully stocked pantry and private refrigerators for each room
- Home-cooked meals
- Playroom for siblings
- Large communal living area with small reading room
- Outdoor dining and play area
- Toddler beds available for each room if indicated for siblings

Leadership in Community Health

The Valley Children's team is active throughout our service area working to address a number of issues critical to child health and wellness. Members of the hospital's leadership team and clinical staff support many healthcare related initiatives through an in-kind donation of time and resources, including:

Child Maltreatment

- Central California Coalition of Child Abuse Prevention Councils
- Children's Advocacy Centers of California
- County Child Abuse Prevention Councils, Fresno and Madera counties
- County Pediatric Death Review and Child Maltreatment Teams, Fresno, Kern, Kings Madera and Merced counties
- Fresno County Human Trafficking Task Force
- Madera County Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) Multi-Disciplinary Team
- Sexual Assault Response Teams, Fresno, Kings, Madera and Merced counties
- Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect Team, Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera and Merced counties
- Tulare County Commercially Sexually Exploited Children Review Team
- Live Well Madera County Steering Committee

Community Health Improvement

- California School Nurse Organization – Central Valley Section
- Clovis Unified School District Healthy Start Collaborative
- Cradle to Career, Fresno County
- Cradle to Career, Stanislaus County
- Fresno County Community Health Improvement Partnership including the Youth Leadership Council and Project HOPE
- Fresno Unified School District Health and Human Services Subcommittee

Developmental Disabilities

- Help Me Grow Regional Initiative
- March of Dimes California Advocacy and Government Affairs Committee

Mental Health

- California Children's Hospital Association Behavioral Health Work Group
- Central California Perinatal Mental Health Collaborative
- Clovis Unified School District Comprehensive Wellness Committee
- Fresno County Community Conversations on Mental Health
- Fresno County Department of Behavioral Health Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee
- Fresno County 5150 Task Force
- Fresno County Rape Crisis Services, Resource Center for Survivors
- Fresno County Suicide Prevention Collaborative
- Fresno County Survivors of Suicide Loss
- Fresno County Trauma and Resiliency Network

- Hospital Council of Northern and Central California’s 5150 Work Group
- Kern County Trauma Informed Care Collaborative
- Kings County ACEs Network of Care
- Madera County Department of Behavioral Health Cultural Competency Advisory Committee
- Madera County Suicide Prevention Collaborative
- Merced County Trauma and Resilience Network

Unintentional Injury

- California Coalition for Children’s Safety and Health Advisory Board
- California Injury and Violence Prevention Committee
- California Unintentional Injury Prevention Strategic Plan Project
- Central Valley Safe Sleep Coalition
- Fresno Unified School District Stop the Bleed Program
- Regional Trauma Audit Committee – Unintentional Injury Subcommittee
- Safe Kids California
- Safe Kids Central California
- Safe Storage Coalition for Firearms Safety, Fresno County

Community Benefit Operations

Reported costs include:

- Community benefit staff salary, benefits and expenses
- Administrative support for community benefit
- Community benefit consultants



VI. FINANCIAL SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY BENEFIT

Valley Children's financial summary of community benefit for FY23 (October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023) is summarized in the table below. Valley Children's provides financial assistance and community benefit services, programs and activities that serve children and their families. The costs of providing these services are not fully reimbursed. Valley Children's community benefit costs comply with Internal Revenue Service instructions for Form 990 Schedule H.

Community Benefit Categories	Net Benefit
Charity care ¹	\$92,423
Unpaid costs of Medi-Cal ²	\$48,371,425
Education and research ³	\$13,942,928
Other for the broader community ⁴	\$3,373,925
Total quantifiable community benefit prior to unpaid cost of Medicare	\$65,780,701
Unpaid costs of Medicare	\$111,059
Total quantifiable community benefit	\$65,891,760

¹Charity Care - In keeping with its Mission, Valley Children's continues to accept all patients, regardless of their ability to pay. This amount represents costs associated with patients who meet certain criteria under the organization's charity care policy without charge, or at amounts less than its established rates in relation to the cost of these services. Charity care includes indigent and free care, which is based on the patient's inability to pay for services.

²Unpaid costs of Medi-Cal were \$211,856,828 in fiscal year 2023. Valley Children's spent \$38,061,845 in fiscal year 2023 to secure federal funding of \$201,547,248 to help fund the cost of care beyond that covered by Medi-Cal. This net funding has been offset against the total unpaid costs of Medi-Cal to arrive at the reported net amount of \$48,371,425.

³Costs related to the medical and health professions education programs and research that the hospital supports.

⁴Includes non-billed activities, such as health education, community health improvement, health support services, community benefit operations, cash and in-kind donations.

VII. COMMUNITY BENEFIT PLAN FISCAL YEAR 2024

The 2022 CHNA served as a resource document for the review of health needs based on the primary and secondary data collected across Valley Children's seven county service area. In addition to the collection and analysis of data, the 2022 CHNA included a process by which community-based stakeholders were asked to help identify the most pressing unmet needs of children and pregnant women in the region. Using the data collected and the community's input regarding priority needs, Valley Children's will address the following needs as detailed in the FY23-FY25 Implementation Strategy:

- Access to healthcare
- Chronic diseases
- Maternal and infant health
- Mental health
- Violence and injury prevention

Access to Healthcare

Goal: Increase access to healthcare and preventive care services in the community.

Strategies

1. Provide financial assistance through free and discounted care and government health programs for low-income patients, consistent with the hospital's financial assistance policy.
2. Provide transportation services to help children and their families access healthcare services, routine appointments and diagnostic tests.
3. Provide education to community providers including school nurses, primary care providers and others on key issues impacting child health and wellness.
4. Provide education and preventive healthcare services to at-risk children in Fresno County through the Fresno County Superintendent of Schools' Mobile Health Unit (MHU).
5. Provide donations and in-kind support to nonprofit community organizations that address access to healthcare and preventive care services.

Chronic Diseases

Goal: Reduce the impact of chronic diseases on the health and wellbeing of children.

Strategies

1. Screen children/families for food insecurity through our partnership in Merced County.
2. Facilitate access to healthy food through our partnership with the Central California Food Bank that includes food distributions to Valley Children's Home Care patients and families, sponsorship of a food distribution at West Fresno Elementary and Middle Schools and support for the First Fruits Market at City Center in Central Fresno. Support the United Way of Merced County's Partners for Healthy Foods Access Program.
3. Promote healthy eating and healthy snacks.
4. Explore installation of playground equipment to increase outside activity among school-age children.
5. Provide donations and in-kind support to nonprofit community organizations dedicated to addressing chronic diseases and obesity, nutrition and physical activity.

Maternal and Infant Health

Goals: Improve health of newborns and young children through education, screening and treatment.

Strategies

1. Facilitate the Central Valley Safe Sleep Coalition to reduce the number of infant deaths from unsafe sleep.
2. Through our regional Help Me Grow work, promote developmental and social-emotional screening for infants and toddlers.
3. Provide donations and in-kind support to nonprofit community organizations that address maternal and infant health.

Mental Health

Goal: Improve the mental health of children and their families.

Strategies

1. Participate in community initiatives to reduce the incidence of suicide.
2. Conduct screening for ACEs in primary care setting and work to strengthen partnerships among clinics, community-based organizations, and Medi-Cal managed care plans to identify and fill gaps in services needed to respond effectively to ACEs and toxic stress in the community.
3. Through 360me, provide families, schools and communities with tools and resources to safeguard children's physical and mental health. Help stakeholders recognize and understand the many connections between mental and physical wellness and reduce the stigma society incorrectly associates with mental health.
4. Provide donations and in-kind support to nonprofit community organizations that address access to mental healthcare and supportive services.

Violence and Injury Prevention

Goal: Improve the health of children through violence and injury prevention.

Strategies

1. As part of the Safe Kids Coalition, implement evidence-based programs, such as car-seat checkups, safety workshops and sports clinics, that help parents and caregivers prevent childhood injuries.
2. Provide education and outreach messages to focus on safety and injury prevention.
3. Work with law enforcement, Child Protective Services and district attorneys' offices in their investigative efforts of child maltreatment and collaborate on case consultations and monthly suspect child abuse and neglect meetings facilitated by the Child Advocacy Clinic to track, monitor and advocate for the health and safety of at-risk children throughout the Central Valley.
4. Provide donations and in-kind support to nonprofit community organizations dedicated to addressing violence and injury prevention.

Evaluation of Impact

Valley Children's will monitor and evaluate the programs and activities outlined above. The hospital has a system that tracks the implementation of the strategies. The reporting process includes the collection and documentation of tracking measures, such as the number of people reached/served and collaborative efforts to address health needs. An evaluation of the impact of the hospital's actions to address these significant health needs will be reported in the next scheduled Community Health Needs Assessment.

Fostering Community Partnerships

Valley Children's is committed to fostering partnerships with community-based organizations, community clinics, government agencies, schools and school districts, the faith community, public health and public safety agencies. The organization's community benefit plan includes maintaining current partnerships and exploring opportunities to engage with new partners.

Significant Needs the Hospital Does Not Intend to Address

Knowing that there are not sufficient resources to address all the community health needs, Valley Children's chooses to concentrate on those health needs that can most effectively be addressed given the organization's areas of focus and expertise. Valley Children's will not directly address the remaining health needs identified in the CHNA, including economic insecurity, housing and homelessness and substance use. It is important to note that this plan is not exhaustive of everything Valley Children's does to enhance the health of the communities we serve. Valley Children's will continue to look for opportunities to address community needs where it can appropriately contribute to addressing those needs, either directly or in collaboration with others.





VIII. CONTACT INFORMATION

Address of Hospital Campus

Valley Children's Hospital
9300 Valley Children's Place
Madera, CA 93636

Web Address

valleychildrens.org

Community Benefit Contact

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**Valley
Children's**
HEALTHCARE