

# ANNUAL REPORT AND PLAN

for Community Benefit Fiscal Year 2021

(October 1, 2020 - September 30, 2021)

#### 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

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, 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, and 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 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, the 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; a) Magnet® designation for nursing excellence; b) Beacon Award for Excellence™ in critical care, and; c) U.S. News and World Report recognition in 2021-2022 as one of the nation's best children's hospitals in seven specialties including Neonatology, Pediatric Diabetes & Endocrinology, Pediatric Gastroenterology & Gastrointestinal Surgery, Pediatric Neurology & Neurosurgery, Pediatric Orthopedics, Pediatric Pulmonology & Lung Surgery and Pediatric Urology.



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, as well. 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 these social determinants. 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 2021 (October 1, 2020, through September 30, 2021).

#### 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.

For purposes of this Community Benefit Report, Valley Children's service area is focused on those 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. According to

www.kidsdata.org, more than one-quarter of children living in these seven counties live in poverty, approximately three-quarters are an ethnicity other than Caucasian and close to one in five speaks a language other than English at home.

# Valley Children's Patient Volume

The table below lists Valley Children's patient volumes in 2021.

| Valley Children's Patient Volume in 2021   |         |  |
|--|---------|--|
| Inpatient Admissions   | 10,211  |  |
| Emergency Department Visits  | 73,945  |  |
| Hospital-Based Outpatient<br>Specialty Care Center,<br>Regional Specialty Care<br>Center and Primary Care<br>Center Visits | 265,080 |  |

Also, Medi-Cal covered 74.5% of Valley Children's total inpatient cases and 73.1% of Valley Children's total outpatient visits in 2021.





#### III. ASSESSING AND UNDERSTANDING COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS

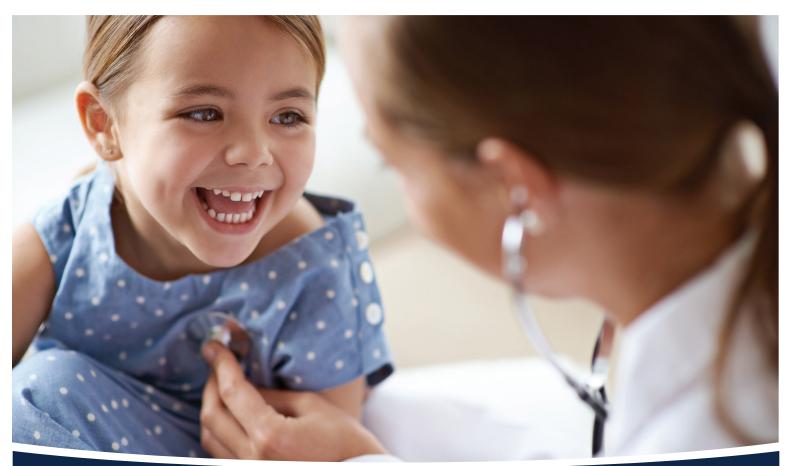
The community benefit activities summarized in this report are based on Valley Children's Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) completed in 2019 and its Implementation Strategy for 2020-2022, both of which were presented to and approved by the Valley Children's Hospital Board of Trustees on September 19, 2019. To see a copy of Valley Children's two most recent CHNA's and Implementation Strategies, log onto www.valleychildrens.org/about-us/community-benefit.

Valley Children's 2019 CHNA was based on a joint needs assessment for Fresno, Kings, Madera and Tulare counties and then separate needs assessments for Kern, Merced and Stanislaus counties.

For Fresno, Kings, Madera and Tulare counties, Valley Children's partnered with 14 hospitals to conduct an assessment of health needs for both children and adults. The CNHA was coordinated by the Hospital Council of Northern and Central California and included a thorough review of secondary data as well as significant community engagement through surveys, focus groups and key stakeholder interviews.

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

Additionally, Valley Children's staff engaged regularly with a host of community-based organizations and initiatives that kept us close to the issues impacting the health and well-being of children in the region. See pages 18-20 for a partial list of organizations and initiatives in which we were involved in 2021.





#### IV. ADDRESSING HEALTH PRIORITIES IN 2021

From high rates of obesity and child abuse to poor access to primary healthcare, children and their families throughout the seven-county region face many challenges in their efforts to live 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 at school and missed days at 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 2021, Valley Children's engaged in activities and programs that addressed the priority health needs identified in the 2020-2022 Implementation Strategy. Selected activities and programs that highlight Valley Children's commitment to the community are summarized below.

#### **Access to Care**

#### **Enrollment in Health Insurance**

Valley Children's identified and provided enrollment assistance to uninsured and under-insured patients who qualified for Medi-Cal, the 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.

#### **Mobile Health Unit**

In 2021, pediatric physician residents participating in Valley Children's Pediatric Residency Program once again provided primary and preventative 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 17 different schools regularly in 2021, including many located in rural and low-income communities, and as a part of those visits, administered 415 vaccinations to children ages 0-18.

#### **Basic Needs**

#### **Food for Families**

Valley Children's dietary department provided meal coupons to breastfeeding moms whose infants were at Valley Children's. Additionally, through a program called Meals of the Heart, which is sponsored by Ronald McDonald Charities of Central California, Valley Children's social work team provided patients' families with meal coupons when they arrived and were not prepared for a long stay at the hospital. The social work team also worked closely with the California Children's Services program to provide food for eligible families.

#### **Food Insecurity**

In 2021, Valley Children's and the Guilds Center for Community Health continued its partnership with Vallarta Supermarkets and the Kids Eat Smart campaign, which promotes access to healthy foods. A cornerstone of Kids Eat Smart is creating opportunities for children to develop healthy eating habits and creating environments that increase access to healthy food. To date, more than 15,000 pieces of fruit have been distributed to children at Vallarta Supermarkets in the cities of Fresno, Tulare, Visalia and Porterville. In addition, the Guilds Center for Community Health secured funding from Save Mart and Rite Aid for expansion of this program into additional communities.

In 2021, amidst the COVID-19 pandemic and as food insecurity persisted at elevated levels, Valley Children's continued its Prescription for Food Program at its Merced Olivewood Pediatrics practice. With funding from the Central California Alliance for Health, Valley Children's primary care providers in Merced screened



children for food insecurity using a simple survey developed by the American Academy of Pediatrics. A family was determined to be food insecure if, during the last 12 months, they worried about not having enough money to buy food or they ran out of food and did not have enough money to buy more. For children and families found to be food insecure, our providers handed the families a "Prescription for Food" voucher, which entitled them to receive a 30-pound box of nutritious and healthy foods from the Merced County Food Bank on a monthly basis for 12 months.

Valley Children's providers at Olivewood Pediatrics screened a total of 1,630 patients, 359 of which were determined to be food insecure. Data shows that approximately 26% of Medi-Cal patients at our Merced County practice are food insecure. Over the course of this program, and based on food redemption numbers reported by the Merced County Food Bank, more than 3,000 individuals (our patients plus their family members) received free food thanks to the program.

#### **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.

#### **Chronic Disease Prevention**

High rates of childhood obesity continue to create significant challenges for children and their families throughout Valley Children's service area. To help reverse this trend, Valley Children's focused its efforts in 2021 on two significant areas: food insecurity and school policies around student health and wellness.

#### **Schools for Thriving and Healthy Students**

In July 2021, Valley Children's concluded Phase I of its Schools for Thriving and Healthy Students initiative. The purpose of the initiative was to engage school leaders across Fresno and Madera counties and to increase the knowledge and skills needed to effectively develop and implement local school wellness policies. A total of 19 school districts in the two counties participated in the initiative.

Specific goals of the initiative were to a) increase knowledge of the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child framework; b) increase the number of school districts adopting Local School Wellness Policies that incorporate evidence-based practices; and c) institute a regular, ongoing process by which the participating districts monitor their performance, share practices and develop accountability for comprehensive and ongoing implementation of their wellness policies.

Key outcomes from Phase I include six of the participating school districts updating their local school district wellness policies using evidence-based practices, an increased understanding amongst school district leadership of the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child framework, and agreement by the school districts to implement Phase II of Schools for Healthy and Thriving Students, which began in Fall 2021.

Phase I of the initiative was funded by Valley Children's in partnership with the Public Health Institute's Center for Wellness and Nutrition, the Fresno County Superintendent of Schools and the Madera County Superintendent of Schools.



#### **Infant Health**

In 2021, Valley Children's participated in several initiatives supporting the healthy development of young children both during pregnancy and into the first 3 to 5 years of life. Examples include the following.

#### **Cradle to Career**

Both Fresno and Stanislaus counties have launched formal Cradle to Career initiatives for the purpose of convening public and private sector stakeholders to work together to improve outcomes for children in their communities, from pre-conception to college and/or vocational training. In 2021, Valley Children's continued to participate in and help fund both initiatives and has been a strong voice for the inclusion of outcomes and indicators focused on child health and wellness.

#### March of Dimes

Valley Children's partnered closely with the March of Dimes to advocate for public policy positions that promote healthy pregnancies and healthy babies. A major accomplishment in 2021 was enactment of The California Momnibus bill that increased funding for the training of nurse midwives, added doula care as a covered benefit under Medi-Cal, and strengthened California's Fetal and Infant Mortality Review process. Valley Children's Director of Community and Government Relations continued to chair the March of Dimes of California's Advocacy and Government Affairs Committee.

#### **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 2021, Valley Children's demonstrated its commitment to meeting the mental health needs of children in a number of ways, including those listed below.

#### **Community-Based Education and Outreach**

Valley Children's staff provided teen suicide prevention education to students and staff at area high schools. In addition, Valley Children's staff either led or participated in a number of community-based initiatives, including serving as members of the Fresno Suicide Prevention Collaborative and the Madera County Suicide Education and Awareness Collaborative, as well as chairing Community Conversations, a community-wide partnership addressing issues of mental health, homelessness and their impact on families.

Valley Children's also provided education and resources for community stakeholders, including continuing medical education for community-based providers in collaboration with the American Academy of Pediatrics California Chapter 1 Mental Health Access Task Force.

In response to the challenges that COVID-19 and distance learning have created for children, Valley Children's mental health providers hosted two separate Facebook Live events during which they discussed issues specific to COVID-19 and students' social and emotional well-being.

Additionally, Valley Children's launched an initiative called 360me 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 both our children's physical health and their mental health. 360me intentionally looks to help stakeholders recognize and understand the many connections between mental and physical wellness and to reduce the stigma society incorrectly associates with mental health.

At the state level, Valley Children's Senior Vice President and Chief Community Impact Officer chaired California's Mental Health Services Oversight & Accountability Commission and a number of Valley Children's staff successfully advocated for continued Medi-Cal coverage for postpartum depression.



#### **Regional Capacity**

In September 2019, Valley Children's announced a partnership with Universal Health Services (UHS), one of the nation's largest and most respected providers of hospital and healthcare services. Under the partnership, UHS will construct, own and operate an 81,600-square-foot, 128-bed behavioral health hospital for children and adults immediately adjacent to the Valley Children's campus in Madera. The facility will include a 24-bed inpatient unit for children and adolescents, ages 5-17, representing a 49% increase in available beds for kids from Kern to San Joaquin counties. The hospital is expected to open in 2022.

#### **Violence and Injury Prevention**

Through its Injury Prevention Program, Valley Children's is proud to be a leader in supporting pediatric injury prevention efforts throughout Central California and is committed to providing resources towards these efforts.

In 2021, our program recorded 500 contacts with community members during 17 virtual community-based teaching events covering the following topics: ATV safety, car safety, car seat and child passenger safety, carbon monoxide poison prevention, concussions, fire prevention, Halloween safety, home safety, lead poison prevention, overuse injuries, poison prevention, railroad safety, safe sleep, snake bites, teen driving, toy safety, vaping, vehicular heat stroke prevention and water safety.

Additionally, Valley Children's created professionally produced videos focused on many of the topics listed above, and posted the videos on social media sites and forwarded them to school districts and community-based organizations throughout our service area. With respect to social media, Valley Children's recorded almost 37,820 views of its injury prevention material.

Valley Children's Guilds Center for Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment works closely with law enforcement, Child Protective Services and district attorneys' offices in their investigative efforts of child maltreatment. Collaborative efforts include case consultation and monthly SCAN (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 Central Valley.

For prevention education, the Center continued to collaborate in 2021 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 (SART), victim advocacy groups and county public health departments.

## Valley Children's Response to COVID-19

Since the start of COVID-19, Valley Children's has recognized that it has a critical role to play not only in meeting the health needs of its patients and its workforce, but also in helping the broader community meet the challenges created by the pandemic. Examples of the support that Valley Children's provided to its community partners in 2021 include the following:

- COVID-19 Test Sample Processing: Valley Children's processed more than 17,000 COVID-19 testing samples for six different community-based providers, including both hospitals and federally qualified health centers that lacked adequate laboratory capacity of their own.
- Financial Support for Community-Based Organizations Serving Children and Families: Valley Children's provided critical financial support to those organizations working hard to address a variety of needs and challenges that children and families were facing due to the pandemic including inadequate access to healthy foods and an increase in child trauma.



- **Support for Schools:** Valley Children's provided resources and education to schools and to parents to ensure that they can best meet the physical, social and emotional needs of children during this crisis. Support included the following:
  - Developed a guide and training for schools and other agencies on how to detect child abuse in a virtual environment. More than 1,200 teachers, social workers, school psychologists and education staff participated in the trainings. Based on surveys administered after the trainings, participants consistently reported an improved ability to identify child abuse in the virtual setting and a high likelihood of implementing some of the tools provided during the training.
  - Hosted Facebook Live events in both Spanish and English to help children and families on a variety of topics specific to COVID-19
  - Maintained a webpage, in both Spanish and English, full of resources for schools, families and the community at large and a dedicated email address for school leaders to reach out to Valley Children's for information and guidance (schoolhealth@valleychildrens.org)
  - Participated in the California School Nurse Organization Central Valley Section's quarterly meetings during which Valley Children's physicians and staff provided important education on a variety of issues specific to recognizing and addressing the impact of COVID-19 on children
- Support for other Key Stakeholders: Valley Children's published its "State of Our Children" briefings regarding COVID-19 and its impact on children. These briefings were distributed to key decision makers across our region including elected officials, county public health directors, county superintendents of schools, school nurses and others. Additionally, Valley Children's hosted a virtual forum with elected officials to make sure they had the information they needed to speak confidently about COVID-19 and children.
- Vaccinations: Valley Children's provided significant community support with respect to COVID-19 vaccinations, including serving as a storage and distribution location for vaccinations and also administering more than 37,000 doses (since the start of the pandemic through December 31, 2021) to Valley Children's staff and physicians, their family members and community members.

Despite the challenges presented by COVID-19, Valley Children's managed to continue to make significant contributions to the health and well-being of children through its community benefit program.

## **Availability of Resources**

Availability of healthcare resources within Valley Children's service area varies by type of resource and location, however it is generally recognized that a vast majority of the region is medically underserved.

According to data published by the federal Health Resources and Services Administration, significant portions of Valley Children's seven-county region were designated as Health Professional Shortage Areas for primary care (including pediatrics) and mental health in 2020. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's and the University of Wisconsin's 2020 County Health Rankings & Roadmaps program confirms the California Department of Health Care Access and Information's findings in noting that Valley Children's service area has some of the lowest provider-to-population ratios for primary care physicians, mental health providers and dentists.

Unfortunately, the situation is not much better with respect to the supply of registered nurses. According to a report titled "Regional Forecast of the Registered Nurse," published by the Healthforce Center at the University of California at San Francisco in 2018, the Central Valley (inclusive of Valley Children's sevencounty service area) has some of the lowest registered nurse-to-population ratios in California.



#### V. COMMUNITY BENEFIT PROGRAM SUMMARY

In 2021, Valley Children's provided the following community benefit activities and programs within its service area.

#### A. COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT SERVICES

#### **Community Health Education**

#### **Injury Prevention Program**

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 towards these efforts. Safe Kids Central California is a coalition of 30 agencies made up of healthcare, law enforcement, social services, education, media and more who are dedicated to preventing unintentional injury in children. 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 who 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.

In 2021, Valley Children's Injury Prevention Program recorded 500 contacts with community members during 17 virtual community-based teaching events covering the following topics: ATV safety, car safety, car seat and child passenger safety, carbon monoxide poison prevention, concussions, fire prevention, Halloween safety, home safety, lead posion prevention, overuse injuries, poison prevention, railroad safety, safe sleep, snake bites, teen driving, toy safety, vaping, vehicular heat stroke prevention and water safety.



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#### Mental Health

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#### **Community-Based Education and Outreach**

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Valley Children's also provided education and resources for community stakeholders, including continuing medical education for community-based providers in collaboration with the American Academy of Pediatrics California Chapter 1 Mental Health Access Task Force.

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#### Safe Sleep for Infants

In 2021, the Guilds Center for Community Health launched the Central Valley Safe Sleep Coalition which now includes more than 50 members in seven counties across the Central Valley. The Coalition - currently co-chaired by Valley Children's and First 5 Fresno – has a vision of zero infant deaths due to unsafe sleep by ensuring that every parent and caregiver of an infant has access to culturally appropriate risk-reduction education and resources on infant sleep.



#### **Community-Based Clinical Services**

Valley Children's provided the following community-based clinical services to help address the healthcare needs of children and their families at home, at school and in the community.

#### Access to Primary and Preventive Care for At-Risk Children

In 2021, pediatric physician residents participating in Valley Children's Pediatric Residency Program once again provided primary and preventative 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 17 different school regularly in 2021, including many located in rural and low-income communities, and as a part of those visits, administered 415 vaccinations to children ages 0-18.

#### **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, child-friendly 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, clinical research and academic training. In addition, the Center prides itself on working collaboratively with prevention and intervention groups throughout the state to ensure that 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 prevention.

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 available seven days a week, 24 hours a day, for emergency coverage. The Center includes an inpatient component that evaluates approximately 100 children annually in the pediatric emergency department, acute-care floors and pediatric intensive care unit. 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.

The Center works closely with law enforcement, Child Protective Services and District Attorneys' Offices in their investigative efforts of child maltreatment. Collaborative efforts include case consultation and monthly SCAN (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 Central Valley.

For prevention education, the Center continued to collaborate in 2021 with internal and external partners to provide education to a total of 2,262 parents, caregivers, healthcare personnel, teachers, mandated reporters and others. 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 (SART), victim advocacy groups and county public health departments.

In response to the challenges created by COVID-19, the Center developed a guide and training for schools and other agencies on how to detect child abuse in a virtual environment. More than 1,200 teachers, social workers, school psychologists and education staff participated in the trainings. Based on surveys administered after the trainings, participants consistently reported an improved ability to identify child abuse in the virtual setting and a high likelihood of implementing some of the tools provided during the training.



#### **Healthcare Support Services**

#### **Enrollment in Health Insurance**

Valley Children's identified and provided enrollment assistance to uninsured and under-insured patients who qualified for Medi-Cal, the 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.

#### **Food for Families**

Valley Children's dietary department provided meal coupons to breastfeeding moms whose infants were at Valley Children's. Additionally, through a program called Meals of the Heart, which is sponsored by Ronald McDonald Charities of Central California, Valley Children's social work team provided patients' families with meal coupons when they arrived and were not prepared for a long stay at the hospital. The social work team also worked closely with the California Children's Services program to provide food for eligible families.

#### **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.

#### Social and Environmental Improvement Activities

Valley Children's supported a number of programs and activities to improve the capacity of communities to promote health and wellness among children.

#### **Food Insecurity**

In 2021, Valley Children's and the Guilds Center for Community Health continued its partnership with Vallarta Supermarkets and the Kids Eat Smart campaign, which promotes access to healthy foods. A cornerstone of Kids Eat Smart is creating opportunities for children to develop healthy eating habits and

creating environments that increase access to healthy food. To date, more than 15,000 pieces of fruit have been distributed to children at Vallarta Supermarkets in Fresno, Tulare, Visalia and Porterville. In addition, the Guilds Center for Community Health secured funding from Save Mart and Rite Aid for expansion of this program into additional communities.

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of nutritious and healthy foods from the Merced County Food Bank on a monthly basis for 12 months.

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#### **Schools for Thriving and Healthy Students**

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Specific goals of the initiative were to a) increase knowledge of the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child framework; b) increase the number of school districts adopting Local School Wellness Policies that incorporate evidence-based practices; and c) institute a regular, ongoing process by which the participating districts monitor their performance, share practices and develop accountability for comprehensive and ongoing implementation of their wellness policies.

Key outcomes from Phase I include six of the participating school districts updating their local school district wellness policies using evidence-based practices, an increased understanding amongst school district leadership of the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child framework, and agreement by the school districts to implement Phase II of Schools for Healthy and Thriving Students, which began in Fall 2021.

Phase I of the initiative was funded by Valley Children's in partnership with the Public Health Institute's Center for Wellness and Nutrition, the Fresno County Superintendent of Schools and the Madera County Superintendent of Schools.

#### **B. 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 2021 included the following:

#### **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 helps prevent children from being transferred or referred unnecessarily to Valley Children's, and helps identify as soon as possible when a child needs advanced pediatric care. With improved communication and tools, we decrease stress for patients and families and increase provider confidence in providing pediatric care, while enhancing performance at both Valley Children's and the partnering provider. The goals of our Clinical Partnership include providing:

- 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 and nursing and ancillary clinical expertise

In 2021, Valley Children's supported 17 inpatient clinical partners and, as a part of that support, convened a



total of 33 training and education events that drew more than 1,300 attendees.

Despite the challenges created by the pandemic in meeting the needs of our clinical partners, Valley Children's remained fully committed to this program in 2021, investing considerable support and resources in our partnering facilities whose feedback continued to be positive relative to our efforts.

#### **Continuing Physician Medical Education**

In 2021, Valley Children's hosted 15 separate continuing medical education virtual sessions for community-based physicians with a combined attendance of more than 1,100. Pediatric subspecialty physicians from Valley Children's served as featured faculty, providing community-based physicians with critical guidance on a variety of medical conditions as they present in children including constipation, COVID-19, epilepsy, heart murmurs, multi-system inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C), non-accidental trauma, recurring wheezing in preschool-aged children and spinal conditions. The virtual format allowed for significantly higher participation when compared to 2020, with total participation topping out at just under 400.

#### **Nursing and Other Health Professions Education**

Valley Children's partners closely 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 2021, Valley Children's hosted 494 nursing students for close to 29,000 nursing instruction hours. Valley Children's also hosted 186 non-nursing students, representing 13 different clinical disciplines, for more than 18,000 hours of clinical instruction.

#### Valley Children's Pediatric Residency Program

When a child is ill or injured, only the best pediatric medical care will do. As the region's leader in pediatric care, Valley Children's has remained committed for decades to ensuring high-quality pediatric medical education and resident training for healthcare professionals throughout Central California. To maintain this standard of excellence, we continuously look for ways to expand our training opportunities and to use the latest technology to improve clinical outcomes and promote best practices.

Valley Children's Pediatric Residency Program, affiliated with Stanford University School of Medicine, provides an in-depth education focused on 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 – the 358-bed, state-of-the-art Valley Children's 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. We graduated our second class of 13 pediatricians in June of 2021, retaining 45% of our graduates within the Valley Children's network. Our new graduates now serve in the Central Valley and help bring healthcare closer to home for our community. Valley Children's Pediatric Residency Program prepares healthcare professionals for an exciting career in medicine, academics, advocacy and leadership, demonstrating the advantages of practicing in the Central Valley.

In 2021, Valley Children's provided training to 38 pediatric physician residents enrolled in Valley Children's Pediatric Residency Program, 212 outside physician residents from 18 other programs and 44 medical students from 17 different medical schools. Residents received training in a number of different disciplines including general pediatrics, cardiology, emergency medicine, family medicine, pediatric surgery and orthopaedic surgery.

Pediatric physician residents participating in Valley Children's Pediatric Residency Program also supported



the education of school nurses by participating in the Fresno County Superintendent of Schools' annual education series for school nurses.

#### **Pharmacist Training**

Valley Children's supported a pharmacy residency program in 2021 that provided training to eight residents and two fellows

#### C. 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 230 studies are available to children and their families. Studies include Phase II through Phase IV clinical research, as well as social and behavioral research. Highlights of some of Valley Children's research include the following.

With the continuance of the COVID-19 pandemic, Valley Children's initiated a multitude of research related to the treatment of COVID-19, along with the diagnosis and treatment of post-COVID multi-system inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C). Several studies examined the characterization of MIS-C, as well as long-term outcomes. Valley Children's joined several national longitudinal COVID-19 registries. Other physicians examined the effects of the pandemic on families, such as the risk of abuse during quarantine, and the pandemic's influence on hospital encounters of medically complex patients. Another study examined knowledge and perceptions regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and acceptability of COVID-19 vaccine in pediatric rheumatology patients.

Valley Children's genetics team participated in Project Baby Bear, which was funded by the State of California to provide Rapid Whole Genome Sequencing for infants enrolled in Medi-Cal. The project helped physicians identify the exact cause of rare, genetic diseases in an average of three days, instead of the four to six weeks standard genetic testing offers. Analysis showed the project resulted in faster diagnoses, better health outcomes, reduced suffering and a decreased cost of care for children with genetic disorders. As a result of Project Baby Bear, California now includes Rapid Whole Genome Sequencing for infants as a covered benefit under Medi-Cal.

Due to the prevalence of Valley fever in our service area, Valley Children's pediatric infectious disease physicians participated in studies that examine treatment outcomes, seeking to learn why some patients develop more severe disease than others.

#### D. CASH AND IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS

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. As mentioned, Valley Children's directed much of its financial support to organizations providing services to children and families adversely impacted by the pandemic, including food banks throughout the region, Catholic Charities, Court Appointed Special Advocate agencies throughout the region, the Community Action Partnership of Madera County, the Marjaree Mason Center in Fresno, Garden Pathways in Bakersfield, the Center for Human Services in Stanislaus County and others.

Valley Children's also provided a variety of in-kind support in 2021 including the following:



#### **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.

#### **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.

#### Mental Health Services Oversight & Accountability Commission

Valley Children's Senior Vice President and Chief Community Impact Officer chaired California's Mental Health Services Oversight & Accountability Commission, helping to shape California's support for the mental health needs of both children and adults.

#### **Poison Control**

The Central California Poison Control Center is located on the Valley Children's campus and received a donation of office space in 2021 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.

In addition to medical advice, the Center also assists physicians in complying with mandatory reporting requirements for pesticide exposures, provides case data, and collect and reports information on the health issues related to pesticide exposure in California. Lastly, the Center has been expressly responsive to the growing and largely underserved Latinx population by developing specialized teaching tools and program interventions in Spanish, and providing customized trainings for community health workers in Spanish.

#### **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 make it possible for the RMH to offer services to families whose children are hospitalized or receiving treatment, including:

- 18 bedrooms with a private bathroom
- Three wings equipped with a laundry room, kitchen 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

#### **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 the following:

#### **Child Maltreatment**

- 1. Central California Coalition of Child Abuse Prevention Councils
- 2. Children's Advocacy Centers of California
- 3. County Child Abuse Prevention Councils, Fresno and Madera counties



- 4. County Pediatric Death Review and Child Maltreatment Teams, Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera and Merced counties
- 5. Fresno County Human Trafficking Task Force
- 6. Growing Healthy Families Madera County Child Abuse Prevention Workgroup
- 7. Madera County Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) Multi-Disciplinary Team
- 8. Madera County Out of Home Youth Advisory Board
- 9. Sexual Assault Response Teams, Fresno, Kings, Madera and Merced counties
- 10. Suspected Child Abuse & Neglect (SCAN) Team, Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera and Merced counties
- 11. Tulare County Commercially Sexually Exploited Children Review Team

#### **Childhood Obesity Prevention**

- 1. Fresno County Food Security Network
- 2. Live Well Madera County Obesity and Diabetes Workgroup

#### **Community Health Improvement**

- 1. California School Nurse Organization Central Valley Section
- 2. Cradle to Career Fresno County
- 3. Cradle to Career Stanislaus County
- 4. Fresno County Community Health Improvement Partnership
- 5. Fresno Food Policy Council
- 6. Fresno Unified School District School Health Advisory Committee
- 7. Merced County Healthcare Consortium

#### **Developmental Disabilities**

- 1. Bi-Annual Babies First Coordinating Council
- 2. California Breast Feeding Coalition Communication Committee
- 3. Fresno Babies First Breastfeeding Task Force
- 4. Fresno County Office of Education Teen Parent Support Collaborative
- 5. Help Me Grow, Fresno County
- 6. Madera County Breast Feeding Coalition
- 7. Madera County Office of Education Pregnant or Parenting Teen Youth Conference
- 8. March of Dimes California Advocacy and Government Affairs Committee
- 9. Preterm Birth Collective Impact Initiative, Fresno County
- 10. Teen Parent Support Program, First 5 Fresno County

#### **Mental Health**

- 1. California Children's Hospital Association Behavioral Health Work Group
- 2. Central California Perinatal Mental Health Collaborative
- 3. Clovis Unified School District Comprehensive Wellness Committee
- 4. Community Conversations on Mental Health, Fresno County
- 5. Fresno County 5150 Task Force
- 6. Fresno County Suicide Prevention Collaborative
- 7. Fresno County Trauma and Resiliency Network
- 8. Kings County ACEs Network of Care
- 9. Madera County Suicide Prevention Collaborative



- 10. Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission, California
- 11. Merced County Trauma and Resilience Network
- 12. National Alliance on Mental Illness, Fresno County
- 13. Resource Center for Survivors, Fresno County Rape Crisis Services
- 14. Survivors of Suicide Loss, Fresno County
- 15. Trauma Informed Kern County

#### **Unintentional Injury**

- 1. California Unintentional Injury Prevention Strategic Plan Project
- 2. Central Valley Safe Sleep Coalition
- 3. Children in Autonomous Vehicles Consortium
- 4. Regional Safe Sleep Task Force
- 5. Regional Trauma Audit Committee-Unintentional Injury Subcommittee
- 6. Safe Kids California
- 7. Safe Kids Central California
- 8. Safe Kids Worldwide Network Advisory Council
- 9. Safe Storage Coalition for Firearm Safety, Fresno County
- 10. Water Safety Council of Fresno County

#### Other

- 1. ABC30 Fresno Community Advisory Committee
- 2. California Department of Public Health, Office of Health Equity Advisory Committee
- 3. Kings County Multi-Disciplinary Team
- 4. Madera County Interagency Council for Children
- 5. Mariposa County Interagency Team Member
- 6. Roman Catholic Diocese of Fresno, Health Ministry Office

#### E. COMMUNITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES

#### **Advocacy**

One of the ways we care for children is by advocating to help improve pediatric healthcare, on a local, state and national level. Examples of our advocacy work include the following:

#### **Child Abuse Prevention**

Valley Children's continued to advocate for policies that protect children from child abuse including our successful support of state legislation that strengthened protections for children from abusive parents in school settings.

#### **Child Development**

Fresno and Stanislaus counties have launched formal Cradle to Career initiatives for the purpose of convening public and private sector stakeholders to work together to improve outcomes for children in their communities, from pre-conception to college and/or vocational training. In 2021, Valley Children's continued to participate in both initiatives and has been a strong voice for the inclusion of outcomes and indicators focused on child health and wellness.



#### Maternal and Infant Health

Valley Children's partnered closely with the March of Dimes to advocate for public policy positions that promote healthy pregnancies and healthy babies. A major accomplishment in 2021 was enactment of The California Momnibus bill that increased the training of nurse midwives, added doula care as a covered benefit under Medi-Cal, and strengthened California's Fetal and Infant Mortality Review process.

Also, Valley Children's Director of Community and Government Relations continued to chair the March of Dimes of California's Advocacy and Government Affairs Committee.

#### **Unintentional Injury Prevention**

Valley Children's continued to advocate for policies that protect children from unintentional injury including our successful efforts to defeat state legislation that would have allowed children to treat stops signs as yield signs while approaching an intersection on their bicycles.

### VI. FINANCIAL SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY BENEFIT

# Economic value and categorization of community benefit provided in FY2021 (October 1, 2020, through September 30, 2021)

|    | Categories  | Net Benefit  |
|----|---|--------------|
| 1. | Charity care <sup>1</sup>   | \$266,418    |
| 2. | Unpaid costs of Medi-Cal <sup>2</sup>                                 | \$64,846,689 |
| 3. | Education and research <sup>3</sup>                                   | \$11,569,390 |
| 4. | Other for the broader community <sup>4</sup>                          | \$3,130,209  |
|    | Total quantifiable community benefit prior to unpaid cost of Medicare | \$79,812,706 |
| 5. | Unpaid costs of Medicare  | \$112,657    |
|    | Total quantifiable community benefit                                  | \$79,925,363 |

<sup>1</sup>Charity 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.

<sup>2</sup>Unpaid costs of Medi-Cal, net of disproportionate share funds received, were \$121,351,704 in fiscal year 2021. Valley Children's recognized net revenue from the Hospital Fee Program in the amount of \$56,505,015 in fiscal year 2021 and therefore has reported a net amount of \$64,846,689 in unpaid costs of Medi-Cal.

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

<sup>4</sup>Includes 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 2022

#### Significant Needs Valley Children's Intends to Address

Based on the results of the CHNA completed in 2019, Valley Children's prioritized the following list of health needs to address through its Implementation Strategy/Community Benefit plan in 2022:

- Access to care
- Basic needs
- Chronic disease prevention
- Infant health
- Mental health
- Violence and injury prevention

#### Access to Care (including community capacity, primary care and transportation)

Valley Children's will address access to healthcare by taking the following actions:

- Participate in community partnerships that enhance the ability of stakeholders to meet the healthcare needs of children in Central California.
- Support development and/or implementation of health professions education programs for physicians and non-physician providers.
- Promote health careers in pediatric care by participating in health career fairs and by offering observation and mentoring activities at Valley Children's.
- Provide education to school nurses, primary care physicians, hospitals and others to advance their clinical knowledge.
- Advance community providers' capacity to address the medical needs of children through Valley Children's Clinical Partnership Program.
- Recruit and place pediatricians in underserved communities.
- Participate in community initiatives that expand access to primary care.
- Provide health insurance enrollment assistance to families with children not enrolled in health insurance.
- Provide financial support for transportation services for needy families.

#### **Basic Needs (including food insecurity and literacy)**

Valley Children's will address basic needs by taking the following actions:

- Provide meals to Valley Children's families and increase food access for eligible families.
- Lead or participate in community-based initiatives that address the root causes of food insecurity and/or increase access to food for our most needy populations.
- Support policy and systems changes that address the root causes of food insecurity and/or increase access to food for our most needy populations.
- Increase access to age-appropriate books for children of all ages.



#### **Chronic Disease Prevention (including obesity, and Type II diabetes)**

Valley Children's will address chronic disease prevention by taking the following actions:

- Provide education to primary care providers and community-based organizations regarding childhood obesity and diabetes prevention and management.
- Support policy and systems changes that address the root causes of chronic disease in children with a focus on obesity and diabetes.

#### Infant Health (including developmental disabilities, pre-term birth and infant mortality)

Valley Children's will address infant health by taking the following actions:

- Participate in community coalitions focused on improving identification and treatment of infants with developmental delays.
- Participate in community coalitions focused on improving birth outcomes.
- Support policy and systems changes that improve the health and wellbeing of pregnant women and infants.

#### **Mental Health**

Valley Children's will address mental health by taking the following actions:

- Advocate for county-led Mental Health Services Act initiatives that increase access to services for children and adolescents.
- Provide education to community stakeholders on issues impacting pediatric mental health.
- Support policy and systems changes that help prevent childhood trauma and that ensure mental health services are available for children and families when needed.

#### **Violence and Injury Prevention (including child maltreatment)**

Valley Children's will address violence and injury prevention by taking the following actions:

- Participate in local and regional collaboratives focused on prevention and system integration.
- Provide education and technical assistance to community providers and organizations regarding prevention and child maltreatment, including promotion of best practices.
- Participate in coalitions that promote childhood injury prevention.
- Provide professional development for community providers and organizations to increase their capacity to provide education and/or training on pediatric injury prevention issues.
- Support policy and systems changes that help prevent injury to children.

#### Significant Needs Valley Children's Does Not Intend to Address

Taking existing hospital and community resources into consideration, Valley Children's will not directly address the remaining health needs identified in the CHNA including:

- Climate and health/environmental pollution
- Communicable diseases
- Dental health
- Economic security
- Education



- Housing and homelessness
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Substance use

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. It is also 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.

#### **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. Our community benefit plan includes maintaining current partnerships and exploring opportunities to engage with new partners.





# VIII. CONTACT INFORMATION

#### **Address of Hospital Campus**

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

#### Web Address

#### **Community Benefit Contact**

Tim Curley, Director Community and Government Relations 559-353-8610 tcurley@valleychildrens.org



