

Please note that all references in this document to "Steward" shall be deemed to mean "Lifespan" which has acquired the hospital operations from Steward as of October 1, 2024.

MORTON HOSPITAL

2024 Community Benefits

Implementation Strategy



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About Morton Hospital –

Morton Hospital is a 144-bed acute care community hospital serving patients and families in southeastern Massachusetts. In addition to a compassionate and skilled team of caregivers who treat patients like family, the hospital provides comprehensive health care services including state-of-the-art imaging services, emergency care, orthopedics and rehabilitation services, and a variety of surgical services including general, breast, vascular, podiatric and weight loss surgery.

Morton Hospital has earned several achievements in quality and safety, including being designated as a Blue Cross Blue Shield Blue Distinction® Center+ for Knee and Hip Replacement. Many of the hospital's programs are nationally accredited, including Center for Weight Control accreditation by MBSAQIP®, Sleep Center accreditation by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine, and various imaging program accreditations from the American College of Radiology. The hospital also received multiple Community Choice Awards in 2023, including being voted "Best Place to Work," "Best Podiatry Clinic" and "Best Weight Loss Center" for the Massachusetts Metro South Region. Additional information is available at www.Mortonhospital.org



Community Benefits Mission Statement

Morton Hospital is dedicated to serving the health care needs of our community by:

- Providing accessible, quality health care services to all within our culturally diverse community, including the poor, vulnerable and disadvantaged, regardless of their ability to pay.
- Providing preventive health, education, and wellness services
- Working in collaboration with our community to identify and respond to unmet needs.
- Educating community members around prevention and disease management, particularly for chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, cancer, and substance use disorder.
- Addressing the social determinants or root causes of health disparities, including substance addiction, poverty, unemployment, housing, homelessness, domestic violence, sexual abuse, and behavioral/mental health issues.
- Recommending to Senior Leadership and to the hospital Board of Directors the adoption of programs and services to address identified, prioritized, and unmet health care needs in the community.

Community Benefits Statement of Purpose

Morton Hospital, in voluntary compliance with the Massachusetts Office of the Attorney General's Guidelines for Non-profit Hospitals, is committed to serving our community and, as such, outlines the following aims for our community benefits for the 2024 calendar year:

- Improve the overall health status of people in our service area through the lens of health equity.
- Provide accessible, high-quality care and services to all those in our community, regardless of their ability to pay.
- Collaborate with staff, providers, and community representatives to deliver meaningful programs that address statewide health priorities and local health issues.
- Identify and prioritize unmet needs and select those that can most effectively be addressed with available resources.
- Contribute to the well-being of our community through outreach efforts including, but not limited to, reducing barriers to accessing health care, preventive health education, screening, managing chronic health conditions, wellness programs, and community-building.
- Regularly evaluate our community benefits programs.

Community Health Needs Assessment

2024 Year of the Triennial Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) *Health Equity Blueprint for Morton Hospital's Community Benefits Program (2025-2027)*

While the 2024 Community Health Benefits Implementation Strategy is based on the 2021 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) in compliance with the Attorney General's Office (AGO) guidelines to conduct regular assessments on community health status, Morton Hospital will simultaneously conduct a CHNA in 2024. The goal of the 2024 assessment will be to identify still unmet and emergent community health needs, vulnerable, underserved populations, and gaps in existing community health services.

Targeted Underserved Populations

In 2024, Morton Hospital will focus programs and initiatives on individuals and families who are most vulnerable due to:

- poverty
- homelessness
- trauma
- substance addiction
- behavioral/mental health disease
- chronic disease (i.e., diabetes, cancer, heart disease, substance use disorder)
- obesity/poor nutrition
- lack of access to health care
- lack of health insurance/under-insured/cost of health care
- Limited English Proficiency (LEP)/language barriers
- race
- ethnicity
- sexual orientation/gender identity/LGBTQ+
- age
- post-traumatic stress, prior military service

Data indicates that race, ethnicity, cultural diversity, and limited-English proficiency underlie health disparities. Additionally, in 2024, Morton will continue to address The Joint Commission's national patient safety goals to reduce health care disparities for patients as a quality and safety priority (LD.04.03.08).

Building on our initiatives to embrace cultural diversity and inclusion, Morton Hospital will continue to promote person-centered, culturally competent care. This encompasses welcoming all and taking the extra time to engage patients while applying active listening skills. It may extend to learning more about a patient's culture to be able to connect. We will continue to ask our employees to increase their efforts, to "walk in our patients' shoes," to be able to support and care for them with even greater empathy and compassion. Steward Health Care is committed to learning new approaches in delivering care and to creating an environment of

inclusion for all races, ages, religions, disabilities, ethnicities, sexual orientations, and gender identities.

Community Benefits Plan

Morton Hospital will align its community benefits priorities and goals with guidance provided by the Massachusetts Attorney General’s Office and the Department of Public Health. Our success in addressing community health issues present in the Morton Hospital service area will come from coordinated regional strategies with public health and population health management agencies, community partners, community coalitions. Morton Hospital will identify opportunities for innovative community-clinical linkages, as well as community-wide strategies, that will create self-sustaining community supported health equity programs.

The 2024 Implementation Strategy/Plan will focus on the following priority issues:

Priority Issue	Sub-Categories
Behavioral Health	Mental Health, Substance Use Disorder, Trauma
Wellness & Chronic Disease	Unhealthy behaviors, Health Outcomes, Prevention
Health Access and Equity	Underserved populations, Obstacles to Care, Health Literacy, Cultural Competency
Education & Employment	Unemployment, Workforce Development, Continuing Education/Skill Building

2024 Implementation Strategy operational framework outlined below:

- 1. Behavioral Health – Mental Health and Substance/Opioid Use Disorder/Trauma:** Assess and refer individuals to treatment/community services when they are at risk for substance use disorder and mental/behavioral health conditions; provide behavioral health patient navigation and outpatient programming support.
- 2. Chronic Disease Management and Support:** Screen at-risk and provide referrals for education, treatment and/or disease management programs for at-risk population; offer hospital programs and services aimed at supporting some of our community’s most prevalent health issues, including diabetes and obesity.
- 3. Health-related Social Needs (HRSN):** Implement TJC national patient safety goals to reduce health care disparities for patients as a quality and safety priority; reduce barriers to health care caused by poverty, unemployment and lack of transportation and other HRSN; support access to healthy food sources associated with positive health status.
- 4. Improve Access to Care/Health Equity:** Provide advocacy and assistance in enrolling in state/federal health insurance plans; continue efforts to link patients with a primary care provider prior to being discharged from the hospital; increase efforts to serve the unique needs and challenges faced by persons of limited-English proficiency, at-risk veterans, the elderly, and other target populations.

5. **Health Promotion and Disease Prevention for Vulnerable Populations:** Provide target populations with health education about high-risk, chronic health issues/disease.
6. **Education & Employment** – Offer programs to develop the skills for a local workforce in our schools and universities, as well as our employees, through nursing and clinical preceptor programs, residency programs, health career day programs and continuing education programs. Maintain a robust hiring program by hosting regular hiring events and participating in community job fairs with a focus on decreasing unemployment and maintaining a diverse workforce.
7. **Community Capacity Building and Support** - Provide in-kind donations and volunteer support to organizations seeking to improve the health and well-being of target populations.
8. **Conduct the 2024 Community Health Needs Assessment** - will provide the Health Equity Blueprint for the Community Benefits Program (2025-2027).

Community Benefits Advisory Committee (CBAC) -

“The interconnectedness between homelessness, mental health, and substance use disorder was a top issue among key informants. Providers noted that these issues need to be tackled simultaneously for maximum impact “(Source: 2021 CHNA).

Community Benefits at all Steward Hospitals incorporate the input and perspectives of a variety of community stakeholders through a regional Community Benefits Advisory Committee (CBAC). As we continue to strive to be the premier regional choice for health care services in an evolving health care landscape, Steward is committed to making significant investments on social determinants of health. It is well documented that race, ethnicity, and socio-economic factors are primary indicators of health status. Steward Health recognizes we must collaborate with community partners to address these factors such as social and physical environments, housing, mental health, substance addiction, and trauma/chronic stress all of which place the communities we serve at greater risk for poor health outcomes. Community Health Benefits program impact is reported annually to the MA Attorney’s General Office.

Leadership:

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