

# Community Benefit Implementation Strategy

2018-2021 COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT



Virginia Mason

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# Introduction



Virginia Mason Health System, founded in 1920, is a nonprofit organization offering a system of integrated health services, including:

- A large multispecialty group practice of more than 500 physicians offering both primary and specialty care
- An acute-care hospital on Seattle's First Hill, which is licensed for 336 beds
- Benaroya Research Institute at Virginia Mason, which is internationally recognized for its breakthrough autoimmune disease research
- A network of nine regional medical centers located throughout the Greater Puget Sound area
- Bailey-Boushay House, which is the first skilled-nursing and outpatient chronic care management program in the United States designed and built specifically to meet the needs of people with HIV/AIDS and other chronic or terminal illnesses
- And Virginia Mason Memorial, a 226-bed hospital serving Yakima Valley in central Washington, which provides both primary care and specialty services

Virginia Mason believes it is important to contribute to the communities where patients and staff members work and live. The organization acts on that belief by contributing time, energy and funding to efforts that

benefit the community in the areas of improving health, providing free and subsidized care, and supporting health professionals' education and research.

The Affordable Care Act requires that nonprofit hospitals and health systems plan their community benefit strategies in response to identified community needs. Virginia Mason's 2019 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) — incorporates public health data and input from those representing the broad interests of the community — and serves as a guideline to help the organization achieve three basic goals:

- Improve the community's health status and overall quality of life
- Reduce health disparities within the community
- Increase access to preventive services

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Virginia Mason believes it is important to contribute to the communities where patients and staff members work and live.

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# Introduction *(continued)*



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This implementation strategy addresses Virginia Mason’s commitment to priority health needs identified in its 2019 CHNA.

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For the past six years, Virginia Mason has partnered with other King County hospitals and Public Health – Seattle & King County to form Hospitals for a Healthier Community. This hospital collaborative produces a CHNA every three years, and members are developing programs and initiatives to address a number of the health issues identified.

In accordance with IRS guidelines, members of Hospitals for a Healthier Community, including Virginia Mason, have adopted the collaborative CHNA as their individual CHNA.

Since three of Virginia Mason’s regional medical centers are located outside of King County (Bainbridge Island in Kitsap County as well as Lynnwood and Edmonds Family Medicine in Snohomish County), Virginia Mason has supplemented the King County CHNA with information about community health needs in parts of Kitsap and Snohomish counties near those medical centers.

This implementation strategy addresses Virginia Mason’s commitment to priority health needs identified in its 2019 CHNA. The work outlined in this strategy is in addition to Virginia Mason’s existing, foundational community benefit work.

# Defining the Community

In 2019, Virginia Mason has served nearly 205,000 individuals in its hospital and medical centers. Virginia Mason's CHNA service area encompasses the communities where its facilities are located and where 74 percent of its patients reside: King County, the southwest region of Snohomish County and Bainbridge Island in Kitsap County.

## Virginia Mason Facilities

- Bailey-Boushay House
- Bainbridge Island Medical Center (Kitsap County)
- Bellevue Medical Center
- Edmonds Family Medicine (Snohomish County)
- Federal Way Medical Center
- Issaquah Medical Center
- Kirkland Medical Center
- Lynnwood Medical Center (Snohomish County)
- Seattle Hospital and Medical Center
- University Village Medical Center

## Residence of Patients, 2019

- Seattle: 55,806
- Eastside: 37,082
- South King County: 24,957
- SW Snohomish/NW King: 26,530 (Snohomish County: 36,199)
- Bainbridge Island: 7,631
- Other Washington: 37,795
- Other Northwest: 3,313
- Other unknown: 1,770



# Identified Health Needs



By analyzing data on Hospitals for a Healthier Community's (HHC) identified health needs with input from community organizations about assets, resources, and opportunities related to those needs and combining it with health data from our Kitsap and Snohomish county supplement, we created the following list of identified health needs:

## **Access to Care and Transportation**

Despite an abundance of health care resources in King County, access to health care remains the biggest need among Puget Sound-area residents. Specifically, lack of mental health services, language barriers, system navigation, transportation and location of facilities, wait times and hours of operation, access to specialty care services, and inability to pay.

## **Housing and Homelessness**

Stable and safe housing plays a crucial role in maintaining a sense of community connection and overall quality of life. King County has continued struggling to develop sufficient resources to meet the needs of our growing homeless population.

## **Access to Affordable and Healthy Food**

In many King County communities, problems with access to food are compounded by low wages, unaffordable housing, and the increasing

costs of other basic needs such as childcare, transportation, and health care. Food insecurity cannot be separated from systemic problems of poverty, transportation and housing.

## **Access to Vaccinations and Screenings**

Based on research from Public Health – Seattle & King County, many King County-area residents — especially people who live in underserved areas — do not always have convenient access to basic vaccinations, like flu shots, and health screenings, like lead testing.

## **Firearm Violence Prevention**

Gun violence is a public health issue across the country. In King County, more people are killed by firearms than by car crashes, with an annual financial cost of nearly \$200 million in medical charges and lost productivity. From 2012 to 2016, 747 King County residents died by firearms, representing more than 30,500 years of potential life lost.

# Priority Health Needs



The following criteria were used to prioritize health needs identified in the CHNA:

- **Impact:** How does the health need affect the community?
- **Trend:** Has the health need improved, remained stable or worsened?
- **Resources:** Availability of Virginia Mason expertise and resources to address the need, as well as availability of resources in the community to address what Virginia Mason cannot address.

Needs not addressed by Virginia Mason programs are addressed through assets and resources listed in the 2019 CHNA. Virginia Mason is committing community benefit resources and programs to address the following priority health needs:



ACCESS TO CARE,  
TRANSPORTATION AND  
AFFORDABLE/HEALTHY FOOD



HOUSING  
AND HOMELESSNESS



FIREARM VIOLENCE  
PREVENTION

# CHNA to Implementation Strategy



## COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT

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- Every three years
- Prioritized significant health needs
- Public health and community input

## CHNA IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

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- Three year community benefit action plan:
- Programs addressing priority health needs
  - Evaluation of programs
  - Public comment welcome to help guide future strategies

## CHNA PRIORITIES

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- Access to care, transportation and affordable/healthy food
- Housing and homelessness
- Firearm violence prevention



# Access to Care, Transportation and Affordable/Healthy Food



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**Goal:** Provide assistance to the uninsured or underinsured, provide clinical preventive services.

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## Strategies

Virginia Mason is committing the following programs and resources to address access to care:

- Provide financial assistance and specialty care medical assistance through Project Access Northwest.
- Provide financial assistance to Edward Thomas House Medical Respite.
- Continue partnership between Graduate Medical Education (GME) residents and Public Health – Seattle & King County. This includes providing medical residents to the Eastgate Public Health Center in Bellevue.
- Provide free flu shots to clients of Mary's Place, which provides safe, inclusive shelter and services that support women, children and families on their journey out of homelessness.
- Provide financial assistance to Refugees Northwest for their free bus ticket program so clients in need can get to and from their medical and child care appointments.
- Food and Nutrition Services to provide surplus foodstuff to Food in Motion/Operation Sack Lunch (OSL), which distributes food to five

kitchens in the Seattle area. OSL then prepares, packages and delivers prepared food to Puget Sound-area shelters, housing organizations, youth programs and outside meal sites.

- Support the First Hill Farmers Market.
- Provide financial assistance to Public Health – Seattle King County's Fresh Bucks program, which provides SNAP/EBT (Food Stamp) recipients and other eligible Seattle residents with easier access to fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Support the outpatient program at Bailey-Boushay House for people living with HIV/AIDS.
- Provide financial assistance to patients with incomes at or below 300 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.

## Expected Outcomes

- Increase access to preventive, specialty and respite care for uninsured and underinsured people within our service area.
- Increase availability for patients accessing community clinics.
- Reduce disparities of care within Virginia Mason Health System.
- Reduce risk of flu and other preventable diseases within vulnerable communities.

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# Access to Care, Transportation and Affordable/Healthy Food *(continued)*



## 2019 Outcomes

Virginia Mason executed the following programs and allocated resources to address access to care:

- Provided financial assistance and specialty care medical assistance through Project Access Northwest (PANW). In addition to providing specialty care to more than 50 patients, Virginia Mason provided financial assistance.
- Virginia Mason provided financial assistance to Edward Thomas House Medical Respite and helped promote it through internal and external communication efforts.
- Partnership between Graduate Medical Education (GME) residents and Public Health – Seattle & King County. This included providing medical residents to the Eastgate Public Health Center in Bellevue. Virginia Mason provided 12 to 15 medical residents to this clinic weekly, increasing access to care for this vulnerable population.
- Virginia Mason provided free flu shots to women at two different Mary's Place homeless day shelters.
- Provided financial assistance to support King County Medical Society and Public Health – Seattle & King County in hosting a series of free lead testing events for school-age children throughout the Greater Seattle area. Virginia Mason hosted two of the testing events at its Federal Way and University Village medical centers. Almost 230 children were tested.
- Provided financial assistance to Refugees Northwest to assist refugee families with transportation to and from medical and child care appointments.
- Supported the First Hill Farmers Market between May and September so people who live and work in and near the First Hill neighborhood, which is considered a food desert, can have convenient access to fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Made a three-year financial commitment in support of Fresh Bucks, which is the Food Stamp supplement program managed by Public Health – Seattle & King County, to help ensure that people throughout King County – especially those in food deserts – have convenient and affordable access to fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Supported the outpatient program at Bailey-Boushay House, which cares for almost 400 people living with HIV/AIDS through hot meals, showers, laundry facilities and medication management services. Registered Nurses also care for patients with infections, wounds and minor illnesses. Those with mental illnesses can see a psychiatrist. And chemical dependency services are provided to people who are unable to succeed in traditional abstinence-based programs. This is a \$1.2 million annual commitment for Virginia Mason.
- Provided \$4.5 million in financial assistance to patients with incomes at or below 300 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.

# Housing and Homelessness



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**Goal:** Assist people who are without a home and/or in need of affordable housing so they can get back on their feet and not have homelessness or unstable housing remain a health disparity.

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## Strategies

- Support various Seattle-area nonprofits whose mission is in alignment with our goal (e.g., Solid Ground, Plymouth Housing, etc.).
- Support Bailey-Boushay House's daily homeless shelter and related support programs, which serve 50 people (outpatients) everyday who are living with HIV/AIDS.

## Expected Outcomes

- Help increase access to affordable housing for people within our service area.
- Help reduce the risk of homelessness within vulnerable communities in our service area.
- Demand for Bailey-Boushay House's daily homeless shelter and related support services, which serve 50 people (outpatients) everyday who are living with HIV/AIDS, to remain high.

## 2019 Outcomes

- Supported the American Red Cross' smoke alarm giveaway and installation program with financial assistance.
- Supported Seattle-based nonprofit, Solid Ground, and their mission (to end poverty and undo racism and other oppressions that are root causes of poverty) through financial support of their annual Building Community Luncheon.
- Supported Seattle-based nonprofit, Plymouth Housing, and their mission (to eliminate homelessness and address its causes by preserving, developing, and operating safe, quality, supportive housing and by providing adults experiencing homelessness with opportunities to stabilize and improve their lives) through financial support of their annual Seattle Dances fundraising event.
- Supported Bailey-Boushay House's daily homeless shelter and related support services, which serve 50 people (outpatients) everyday who are living with HIV/AIDS. The homeless shelter also allows outpatients who live in their cars to safely spend the night in Bailey-Boushay's secure parking lot. Hot meals, showers, laundry facilities and medication management services have also been provided to outpatients throughout the year.

# Firearm Violence Prevention

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**Goal:** Help reduce the alarming number of firearm-related injuries and deaths in Washington state as a way to help decrease the devastating health effects of this national epidemic.

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## Strategies

- Support Seattle-based nonprofits that have a mission to make meaningful, quantifiable differences on firearm violence prevention in Washington state.
- Support related advocacy efforts at the state legislature level.

## Expected Outcomes

- Partner with the Firearm Tragedy Prevention Program at Seattle Children's to host a safe gun storage giveaway event.
- Establish a relationship with the Alliance for Gun Responsibility and begin to discuss how Virginia Mason can support their work going forward. Their mission is to end the gun violence crisis in our community and promote a culture of gun ownership that balances rights with responsibilities.

## 2019 Outcomes

- Virginia Mason provided financial support for a safe firearm storage giveaway event — in partnership with the Firearm Tragedy Prevention Program at Seattle Children's — inside the Coastal Farm & Ranch in Yakima. More than 300 lock boxes, 50 trigger locks and 600 cable locks were distributed during the three-hour event.
- Virginia Mason team members attended the 7th annual Alliance for Gun Responsibility luncheon in Seattle. Discussions with their strategic engagement director about future financial support subsequently ensued and are ongoing.



## Community Benefit Feedback and Questions

The Virginia Mason Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) is posted at [VirginiaMason.org/CommunityBenefit](https://virginiamason.org/CommunityBenefit). Copies are also available through Virginia Mason Legal Services at 206-515-5801.

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Virginia Mason