

2019 Community Benefit Report
Kaiser Sunnyside Medical Center/Kaiser Westside Medical Center
Kaiser Foundation Hospitals
Supplemental Information to
Oregon’s Office of Health Policy and Research

Overview

Kaiser Permanente’s mission is: *“to provide high-quality, affordable health care services and improve the health of our members and the communities we serve.”* The Northwest Region of Kaiser Permanente (Kaiser Permanente Northwest, or KPNW) was founded in 1945 as part of Kaiser Foundation Hospitals and Kaiser Foundation Health Plan, Inc., which are separate corporations governed by an identical board of directors. KPNW is comprised of two affiliated entities:

- **Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of the Northwest (Health Plan)** is a tax-exempt subsidiary of Kaiser Foundation Health Plan, Inc., and provides comprehensive health care services for members. These services are provided in part through contracts with Northwest Permanente, P.C., Physicians and Surgeons and Permanente Dental Associates, P.C.
- **Kaiser Foundation Hospitals (KFH)** contracts with Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of the Northwest to provide inpatient hospital services for members of the health plan. Kaiser Sunnyside Medical Center and Kaiser Westside Medical Center are tax-exempt divisions of Kaiser Foundation Hospitals.

KPNW invested \$149.4 million to address community needs in 2019. Kaiser Foundation Hospitals provided \$71 million and Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of the Northwest provided \$78.4 million to our local communities.

1. Describe how the organization assesses the health care needs of the communities it serves.

As a nonprofit health care provider, Kaiser Permanente Northwest is dedicated to caring for the health needs of our communities and addressing the social and environmental factors that create barriers to health. In order to better understand the needs and resources of each community we serve, we regularly conduct a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). This process not only informs our community investments, helping us make long-term, sustainable change, but it also allows us to deepen the strong relationships we have with partner organizations and holds us accountable to our mission as we work together to improve community health. Our carefully selected investments, the dedication of our organizational resources, and our long-standing commitment to providing high-quality care and service are an investment in the total health of the communities where we all live, learn, work, and play.

KPNW conducts a CHNA every three years to inform its community investments and meet federal regulatory obligations. In 2019, KPNW completed a CHNA.¹ The three community

¹ <https://share.kaiserpermanente.org/article/community-health-needs-assessments/>

health needs KPNW is addressing are:

- **Access to healthcare** — Access to comprehensive, affordable, quality health care is an important factor in determining quality of life, which is influenced by physical, mental, and social well-being.
- **Mental health** — Mental health affects all areas of life, including a person's physical well-being and ability to work, perform well in school, and participate fully in family and community activities.
- **Economic opportunity** — Social and economic conditions, including income, education, food security, and safe and stable housing are strongly associated with a person's health.

Additionally, KPNW is a founding member of the Healthy Columbia Willamette Collaborative (HCWC), a regional group that includes four Portland metro-area county public health departments and fifteen hospitals and a Coordinated Care Organization (CCO), all participating in a community health assessment process. KPNW includes eleven counties in the needs assessment, including the four counties mentioned above. Participation in HCWC allows KPNW to contribute to and learn from a broader regional effort to improve community health and identify partners to collaborate on community health improvement planning.

2. Describe how the organization informs and educates patients and persons, who may be billed for patient care, about their eligibility for assistance under federal, state, or local government programs or under the organization's charity care policy.

KPNW has two programs for offering patients financial assistance: the Medical Financial Assistance (MFA) Program and the Charitable Care and Coverage Program. These programs help families and individuals who are unable to meet all or part of the cost of medical or dental care. KPNW also participates in Medicaid and contracts with state, local and managed care entities to provide medical, dental and pharmacy services. Each program has its own communication strategy to inform and educate patients who may qualify for these programs.

Medical Financial Assistance Program

The Medical Financial Assistance program (MFA) provides financial assistance for qualifying patients who need help paying for emergency or medically necessary care they receive in a KPNW facility or from a KPNW provider. The program is designed to assist as many patients as reasonably possible and is generally available to people in greatest financial need, including those experiencing unusual or unfortunate circumstances, regardless of whether the patient has health coverage or is uninsured.

KPNW has Financial Counselors in the region to determine patient eligibility and assist with MFA applications as well as applications for other Federal, State and local programs designed to support patients with an inability to pay for medically necessary care.

Patients seeking financial counseling can:

- Apply online at www.KP.org/mfa/nw
- Pick up a MFA application at any Registration or Membership Services desk

- Visit our website www.kp.org/mfa/nw to download and print an application
- Call Membership Services (503-813-2000, or 1-800-813-2000, or TTY: 711. Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 6 p.m.)
- Stop by the Financial Counseling office at one of the following locations:
 - Sunnyside Medical Center
 - Westside Medical Center
 - Cascade Park Medical Office
 - East Interstate Medical Office
 - Longview-Kelso Medical Office
 - Rockwood Medical Office

KPNW also has a Dental Financial Assistance program that operates similarly to the Medical Financial Assistance program. The Dental Care Program provides financial assistance to help pay dental expenses for patients, both member and nonmembers, who meet qualifying guidelines for services obtained at any KPNW dental offices.

In addition to the traditional MFA for insured and uninsured, KPNW has developed several Community Medical Financial Assistance (CMFA) programs in collaboration with community-based organizations to provide an additional access point for low income uninsured patients to receive charity care services at KPNW facilities or from Permanente providers. Patients are referred to the community MFA programs by one of the community-based organizations.

Charitable Health Coverage

The Northwest Charitable Health Coverage program is the Child Health Program Plus (CHPP). CHPP is available to children of low income families who reside and attend school in Portland and Salem metropolitan school districts and who do not have access to health insurance. CHPP provides comprehensive medical, dental and prescription coverage to children enrolled in kindergarten through 12th grade.

Participating school districts partner with KPNW to develop relationships with uninsured children at schools within these districts and also provide staff support to ensure that children are and remain enrolled in available health care programs until the child is eligible under another program or product or the child graduates from high school. These school districts also provide language and enrollment support for families who are non-English speaking or speak English as a second language.

Medicaid

Medicaid eligibility is determined by each State. As Medicaid beneficiaries enroll through their state or county rather than enrolling directly into coverage offered by Health Plan, the enrollment process can take prospective members many steps to get to a KPNW medical center's door. In response to the complex enrollment process, regional and national program managers developed new communication tools and resources to support Medicaid members through a guided enrollment experience.

3. Describe the community the organization serves, taking into account the geographic area and the demographic constituents it services.

KPNW provides hospital services from two hospital facilities, Kaiser Sunnyside Medical Center (KSMC) and Kaiser Westside Medical Center (KWMC). As an integrated health care delivery system, KPNW also provides high-quality primary, specialty, dental care and

community benefit support to geographic areas outside our hospital service area. KPNW has identified communities served in terms of a *primary* and *secondary* geography to assess need for both our hospital service areas and other communities where we also have an impact on health.

The KPNW region includes 14 counties in six service areas across two states, listed from North to South:

- Longview: Cowlitz, Wahkiakum and part of Columbia counties
- Clark service area: Clark and Skamania counties
- West: Washington, and parts of Columbia and Yamhill counties
- East: Multnomah, Clackamas counties
- Mid-Valley: Marion, Polk, Benton, Linn, and part of Yamhill counties
- South Valley: Lane County

Race and Ethnicity — The total population of the region is 3,386,009.² About 75% of region's population are white, 5% are Asian, 2% are Black/African American, 12% Hispanic, and less than 1% are Native American/Alaska Native. The East service area has the largest population (936,028), followed by West (857,049), and Mid Valley (648,006). The East Service has the largest population of Black/African Americans (41,477, 4%), Native Americans (8,051, 1%), and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (5,331, 1%). The West Service area has the largest nonwhite (164,070, 19%), largest Asian (67,515, 8%), and multiple race (39,946, 5%) populations. Mid Valley has the largest Hispanic population (119,680, 18%).

In our community interactions, we track health disparities based on racial, ethnic, and cultural differences and are committed to addressing these disparities and creating health equity in our communities. This commitment is woven throughout the Community Benefit portfolio and is a key principle that guides and shapes strategies and approaches for implementation. This places issues of disparities, equity, and diversity at the core of the organization, and helps provide direction to where we can have the greatest impact. Given the high proportion of communities of color that still struggle with access to health care and the high levels of poverty that exist within these communities, we understand that the needs for medical and dental care are pressing among these communities. We actively address these needs through initiatives such as the Safety Net Partnership strategy to strengthen the system of community clinics to improve diabetes management and provide preventative oral health care in communities of color with significant disparities.

² Totals and percentages calculated based on KPNW service area in Oregon and Southwest Washington using CHNA.org/KP.

4. Describe how the organization’s community building activities promote the health of the communities the organization serves.

Note: The organization reported all activities offered to the community as community health improvement activities, rather than making a distinction between community health and community-building activities.

Some of our community health improvement activities directly address the social determinants of health. Please read the response to question five for more details about the rest of our community health improvement activities.

Community Assistance Program — The Community Assistance program known as C3CAP is a partnership between the non-profit Project Access Now and KPNW. C3CAP was created to address barriers to discharging certain underserved patients from a hospital or clinic. These barriers are typically the result of a lack of a safe discharge plan due to some patients not having access to transportation, lodging or support combined with KP’s inability to directly intercede due to Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services compliance issues. Project Access Now can provide non-medical services to help these patients safely transition while avoiding any compliance issues.

Environmental Stewardship — KPNW contributes to community building through its commitment to protecting and improving the natural environment as a key component of our mission to improve healthcare quality and affordability. To fulfill this commitment, KPNW maintains a governance structure for environmental stewardship that enables the organization to continuously improve its environmental performance. This structure includes clearly defined roles, responsibilities, plans and routines, and has resulted in five organization-wide focus areas that have been selected based on their ability to have the most impact on the environmental forces that shape environmental- and human-health:

- Finding safe alternatives to harmful industrial chemicals
- Responding to climate change
- Promoting sustainable farming and food choices
- Reducing, reusing, and recycling to eliminate waste
- Conserving water

In each of these focus areas, KPNW has established ambitious goals, implemented initiatives, achieved measurable improvements, and regularly reported progress to our Board of Directors, our staff, and the communities we serve. KPNW is currently focusing on energy and water reduction.

Westside Medical Center is a LEED Gold certified building with more than 100 green initiatives. The facility uses 6.5 million fewer gallons over the course of a year than a traditional health facility. It uses 27 percent less energy overall. It uses materials free of dioxins, lead, cadmium and mercury throughout the facility.

5. If the organization is part of an affiliated health system, describe the respective roles of the organization and its affiliates in promoting the health of the communities served as well as any community benefit provided on behalf of the hospital.

As noted in Sections 1 and 3 above, KPNW is comprised of the affiliated entities of Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of the Northwest and Kaiser Foundation Hospitals and serves a 14-county region in Oregon and southwest Washington. The two entities share a centralized Community Benefit Department, the costs of which are allocated between the two entities. This structure promotes a single, comprehensive, region-wide approach to Community Benefit. Combining the resources enables Community Benefit to develop regional implementation strategies and address the prioritized community health needs with broad reaching initiatives. A holistic approach also helps to address social and environmental factors that influence individual health outcomes, and to identify and target health disparities at local and regional levels, in close partnership with local community and hospital leaders.

Please go to the online version of our 2019 Community Health Snapshot for highlights from the last year:

<https://about.kaiserpermanente.org/content/dam/internet/kp/comms/community-health/northwest/KPNW-CH-Snapshot.pdf>