



# 2022 Oregon Health & Science University Community Benefit Report Narrative

**Focusing on Fiscal Year 2022**  
**July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022**

Submitted to the State of Oregon  
on February 24, 2023



The pressing and vital needs of Oregonians are woven deeply throughout OHSU's pursuit of progress and innovation in health care, education and research.







As Oregon's only public academic health center, Oregon Health & Science University provides health care services and support across the entire state, as well as in Southwest Washington and portions of Idaho. The university's more than 200 outreach and service programs focus on improving the health and well-being of Oregonians and beyond through health care, research and education. OHSU helps meet the health workforce needs of communities throughout Oregon by educating health care professionals in medicine, dentistry, nursing, pharmacy and public health. The university also educates the next generation of researchers, who receive hands-on training while working with OHSU's world-renowned investigators. OHSU is also home to cutting-edge science that expands biomedical knowledge and develops new therapies and technologies that advance health care.

The pressing and vital needs of Oregonians are woven deeply throughout OHSU's pursuit of progress and innovation in health care, education and research.

As a public corporation of the State of Oregon, OHSU is unique among hospitals. In recognition of OHSU's statutorily directed missions, HB 3076 (2019) included updating community benefit reporting to clarify that "For the Oregon Health and Science University, its obligation to carry out the public purposes and missions specified in ORS 353.030" are part of its community benefit contribution." In this report, OHSU details its important work in service to the people of Oregon and in accordance with its statutory missions, while also seeking to align with the spirit of House Bill 3076, and detail how the work of its public missions aligns with OHSU's community needs health assessment.



Our initiatives span OHSU's multifaceted mission of health care, education and research, which bring vital health and education services to every county in Oregon through numerous collaborations.



## Assessing community health needs

OHSU is a member of the **Healthy Columbia Willamette Collaborative**, which includes 15 hospitals, four health departments and two coordinated care organizations in Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington counties of Oregon, and in Clark County of Washington state. The collaborative is a public-private partnership that aims to improve the health and well-being of the communities that are served by participating organizations. The collaborative conducts community assessments to align local efforts to improve community health — while focusing on marginalized and underserved communities — and to inform the community about investments of participating organizations. In September 2022, it issued a new community health needs assessment report to provide a roadmap for future collaborations and health improvement projects in the region, which has a total population of about 2.3 million and is about 73% white.

### The assessment focused on four areas of community health:



Access to affordable and safe housing



Social and economic opportunity



Access to culturally responsive health care



Creating strong social networks

### Its key findings include:

- People of color, LGBTQ community members and people with disabilities were less likely than white respondents to report feeling safe in their communities.
- Lack of access to internet limited educational and social engagement.
- People expressed a challenge finding employment where the salary compensates for the subsequent loss of government benefits.
- Nearly one-third of LGBTQ community members who responded, and about one-fifth of respondents who identified as being part of the LGBTQ community or living with a disability, reported being discriminated against in health care.
- LGBTQ community members and people with disabilities were twice as likely as respondents overall to report delaying health care due to fear or discomfort.

## Addressing community health needs

This report describes OHSU's major initiatives to meet community health needs, including the needs identified in the Healthy Columbia Willamette Collaborative's 2022 health needs assessment report. These initiatives span OHSU's multifaceted mission of health care, education and research, which bring vital health and education services to every county in Oregon through numerous collaborations. Many of these programs address multiple community health needs at once. For example, OHSU's Intercultural Psychiatric Program provides behavioral health care services to a racially and ethnically diverse group of more than 1,000 patients in the Portland area, specifically addressing language and cultural barriers through the use of 14 multilingual counselors and contracted interpreters. Similarly, many OHSU programs address social determinants of health at both individual and systemic levels. For example, OHSU's Northwest Native American Center of Excellence works to increase the number of American Indian/Alaska Native individuals in the health professions, which both improves access to education for individuals and seeks to impact health outcomes at the population level by increasing representation. Examples of interconnected OHSU activities that address vital community needs are organized in this narrative according to the major themes of the community's health need themes, as well as by OHSU's unique academic and research efforts, and its financial assistance services for patients.

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Access to affordable and safe housing



Supporting Oregonians experiencing homelessness

The network that focuses on meeting the needs of OHSU patients covered by Medicaid — known as OHSU Health Integrated Delivery System — is acting as the central benefit administrator of a new effort to provide short-term, transitional housing. The **Housing Benefit Program** launched in 2022 to help eligible members of Health Share of Oregon, the coordinated care organization that coordinates Medicaid benefits for residents of Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington counties. Out of recognition that experiencing homelessness adversely impacts human health, the Health Share’s collaborative-funded demonstration project provides up to 12 months of transitional housing and other support services for Health Share of Oregon members who are houseless or at risk for becoming houseless. The demonstration project is prioritizing helping people during times that are critical for their health, including when someone is transitioning from institutional or inpatient settings. This is a joint effort between numerous hospitals, health systems and nonprofits that serve the Portland metro area. Since January 2022, more than 300 people have been enrolled in the demonstration project, and more than 120 individuals were receiving transitional housing when this report was compiled in February 2023.

300	Individuals enrolled in Housing Benefit Program since January 2022
120+	Individuals receiving transitional housing as of February 2023

OHSU has two **community-based patient programs** — Care Transitions Innovation and New Directions — that pair nurses or social workers with eligible patients who either frequently come to the OHSU emergency department or are hospitalized at OHSU with complex chronic conditions and also experience houselessness, food insecurity or other barriers to care. To both help participating patients better manage their health and reduce health care costs, OHSU staff connect patients with primary care and other services. The programs are supported by internal OHSU funding and reimbursement from a Portland-area coordinated care organization, or CCO.

The OHSU School of Nursing is collaborating with Adventist Health Tillamook to bring health services directly to more Oregonians in Tillamook and Columbia counties who are experiencing homelessness or are otherwise unable to come to a clinic. With the support of a 2022 American Nurses Foundation grant, the two organizations are working together to expand the Tillamook hospital's **community-based nursing services**, which involve nurses helping patients manage chronic conditions like diabetes without the traditional structures of health care delivery. The team aims to build upon the success of OHSU's community-based programs and make the case for Medicaid and other health insurance payors to cover the cost of delivering this community-based care in Northwest Oregon.

With the support of a U.S. Department of Health & Human Services grant, the OHSU School of Nursing's Ashland-based **Street Nursing Team** seeks to meet the health needs of the growing number of Southern Oregonians who are experiencing homelessness — and better prepare nursing students to further help this patient population after they become working nurses. Small teams of students and faculty members visit encampments and other sites where Jackson County residents who are unhoused gather. Team members offer local residents foot soaks, hygiene supplies, clean socks, overdose prevention education and other services, while also helping coordinate virtual or in-person visits with other area health providers for more complex health issues. In the classroom, students learn about social challenges, such as housing insecurity impacting health outcomes, and how trauma-informed approaches make health care more accessible for many patients. During a six-month pilot that ended in June 2022, the team visited with 179 Ashland- and Medford-area residents experiencing homelessness. The team has since expanded, and hopes to have nearly 300 undergraduate and graduate nursing students conduct more than 1,000 visits with Jackson and Klamath county residents by the end of 2026.



OHSU health profession students organize an annual free health screening event, the **Health Care Equity Fair**, to improve health care access for Portland-area residents who are experiencing homelessness or have no or not enough health insurance. Typically held each fall in downtown Portland, the event offers free screenings and services related to eye health, wound care, blood pressure and diabetes management, and more. Student organizers invite community organizations to have booths at the fair and help connect participants with additional services related to housing, substance use disorder, reproductive health and more. The October 2022 event served hundreds of people.

In collaboration with the nonprofit Transitions Projects, the students who run the **Bridges Collaborative Care Clinic** offer free transitional medical, dental and social services to Portland residents experiencing homelessness. The nonprofit clinic was established in 2017 by medical, nursing, dental, pharmacy, public health and other students from OHSU, Portland State University and Oregon State University. More than 300 people have received care through the clinic since it opened.



OHSU is also home to cutting-edge science that expands biomedical knowledge and develops new therapies and technologies that advance health care. The pressing and vital needs of Oregonians are woven deeply throughout OHSU's pursuit of progress and innovation in health care, education and research.



## Social and economic opportunity

### Supporting working Oregonians

The **Oregon Institute of Occupational Health Sciences** at OHSU promotes worker safety, health and well-being, and prevents disease and disability among working Oregonians through basic and applied research, outreach and education. It applies research discoveries, creates actionable strategies, and integrates workplace safety, health and well-being to support the whole health of workers. The institute also trains health and safety professionals, disseminates its research products, provides consultations, and offers occupational health and safety information through its resource center. The institute includes more than 80 scientists, research and outreach staff who explore the prevention of injury and disease and the promotion of health in the workforce. Its outreach team brings leading-edge research to practice in communities, organizations and workplaces throughout Oregon and the United States with a broad variety of multilingual resources.

The institute is home to the **Oregon Healthy Workforce Center**, one of 10 federally funded Total Worker Health Centers that conduct research, outreach and education to improve worker well-being. In September 2021, the center was awarded a grant from the NIH and the COVID-19 American Rescue Plan to expand its efforts. New projects supported by this funding are addressing health care worker burnout; examining how shift schedules affect firefighter health; and exploring chronic pain management among home care workers.



Its outreach team brings leading-edge research to practice in communities, organizations and workplaces throughout Oregon and the United States with a broad variety of multilingual resources.



Through a network of partnerships and collaborations, OHSU is enhancing community-based care, serving Oregon's most vulnerable citizens, increasing access to health care education, and bringing groundbreaking health research to rural communities.



## Access to culturally responsive health care

### Responding to COVID-19 and other health emergencies

As the COVID-19 pandemic evolves and the volume of patients with other infectious respiratory illnesses, such as RSV and the flu, increases, OHSU continues to offer a range of **vaccination and testing** options for Oregonians. Today, OHSU offers appointment-only vaccination for both COVID-19 and the flu at seven of its Portland-area outpatient pharmacies. COVID-19 testing is also available to patients through appointments at OHSU primary and immediate care clinics, as well as at OHSU outpatient pharmacies. To provide access to historically underserved Oregonians, OHSU also continues to partner with many Portland-area community organizations to organize pop-up vaccination events as needed, and without requiring an appointment. These community events specifically aim to welcome Black, Asian, Pacific Islander, Native American, Latino/a/x, immigrant, refugee and LGBTQ+ individuals and other marginalized communities, and are staffed by multilingual, paid volunteers who are racially and ethnically diverse and provide culturally responsive care. Since 2020, OHSU has collectively processed more than 246,000 tests; detected at least 26,000 COVID-19 cases; and facilitated more than 431,000 COVID-19 vaccine doses for community members and OHSU patients.

246,000	COVID-19 tests processed since 2020
26,000	Positive COVID-19 cases detected
431,000	COVID-19 vaccine doses administered

OHSU’s Office of Advanced Analytics, directed by Peter Graven, Ph.D., develops a regular **Oregon Hospital Forecast and Trends** brief that helps guide the state’s response to the ever-changing respiratory illness landscape, and allows health officials better prepare weeks before a surge of sick patients arrives in hospitals. The forecast began in early 2020 to help Oregon health institutions better prepare for future COVID-19 hospitalizations and infections, and has since evolved to also track and predict other respiratory illnesses like the flu and RSV, both of which caused a substantial rise in illness during the fall and winter of 2022 — as OHSU’s forecasts accurately predicted.

Since 2020, Dr. Graven and colleagues have compiled more than 100 forecasts, which are shared with state public health leaders, other Oregon health systems, local school districts, infectious disease analysts in Washington and California, and the public.

With the support of a Morris-Singer Foundation donation, OHSU established the **Connected Care Center hotline** in March 2020 in response to COVID-19. Since then, specially trained registered nurses have operated the hotline seven days a week to answer calls from the public about the novel coronavirus and connect callers with care whenever needed. During the simultaneous surge of COVID-19, flu and RSV cases in late 2022, the hotline’s compassionate nurses continued to help worried members of the public weather the relentless storm of health concerns. Its efforts later expanded to also help eligible patients schedule mpox vaccinations and outpatient COVID-19 therapies that require in-hospital infusions. Since 2020, the hotline has responded to more than 183,000 incoming calls from the public.

679	Mpox vaccinations administered at no cost to the public
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OHSU again stepped up in the spring of 2022, when an **mpox outbreak** began in Europe and subsequently spread to the United States. In response to rising concerns from community members — and particularly from men who have sex with men, who have been disproportionately impacted by the virus — OHSU vaccine researcher Mark Slifka, Ph.D., shared the expertise he gained while closely studying the United States’ 2003 mpox outbreak through news interviews and information posted on OHSU’s public website. OHSU clinicians have also cared for many patients with mpox, and partnered with state and local health leaders to offer effective therapies as well as evidence-based, culturally specific recommendations to prevent infection. To date, OHSU has given 679 mpox vaccinations to members of the public for free and without requiring insurance. Vaccinations have occurred at both outpatient OHSU clinics and at community vaccination events that were organized in collaboration with LGBTQ+ leaders, the OHSU Vaccine Equity Committee and the OHSU Transgender Health Program. OHSU also offers the antiviral tecovirimat, which has been designated an investigational drug for mpox, to patients who meet CDC criteria.



### Improving health care access for all

Through a network of partnerships and collaborations, OHSU is enhancing community-based care, serving Oregon's most vulnerable citizens, increasing access to health care education, and bringing groundbreaking health research to rural communities. OHSU's community service programs bring health and education services to every county in Oregon. In addition to geographic access, OHSU's public service mission includes serving as a safety net for people across Oregon. For more than a century, OHSU has provided a disproportionately large share, relative to its size and market presence, of health care to uninsured patients and those with public health insurance.



OHSU and its health system affiliates are committed to an Oregon-based approach to Oregon's health problems, delivering the highest standards of care to patients and the greatest value to the communities served.

OHSU Health is a **statewide, Portland-based health system** designed to reduce duplication of services, deliver greater value to patients, and ensure that more Oregonians have access to the services that OHSU uniquely provides. OHSU has services in Central Portland, at OHSU Hospital, OHSU Doernbecher Children's Hospital and OHSU's Marquam Hill and South Waterfront outpatient clinics.

Additionally, OHSU has outpatient clinics in Washington County, along with other services provided by Hillsboro Medical Center; and still other services in East Portland at the OHSU Family Medicine Richmond Clinic and provided by Adventist Health Portland. The system has the geographic reach required to expand the impact of Oregon's only public academic health center in the most densely populated area of the state. Unlike out-of-state mergers or acquisitions, OHSU and its health system affiliates are committed to an Oregon-based approach to Oregon's health problems, delivering the highest standards of care to patients and the greatest value to the communities served. The system allows all parties to share in a coordinated approach to clinical operations — utilizing health resources more efficiently than any of its individual parts could accomplish independently.

OHSU **provider relationship managers** travel around the state to meet with community physicians and hospitals on a regular basis. They share information on specialty care provided at OHSU for patient referrals, and also serve as a link to OHSU resources if more formal partnerships would be better for the community, such as sending OHSU health care providers to rural locations. In addition, both communities and hospitals approach OHSU for needs assessments on an ongoing basis.

OHSU's **Mission Control** command center uses deep-learning technology to oversee hospital operations and manage patient transfers. It enables OHSU staff to track in real time how many patients are nearing discharge and how many new patients are seeking hospital beds. As Mission Control's technology has grown and expanded during the pandemic, Oregon's ability to track hospital bed capacity has also substantially improved. This expanded tool, the Oregon Capacity System, provides real-time information about the capacity of most Oregon hospitals. This is done in collaboration with all health systems, hospitals, the Oregon Health Authority and the Oregon Association of Hospitals and Health Systems — to the benefit of all Oregonians. Combined with frequent meetings and specially trained staff, this approach allows the state's hospitals to collectively function more like one health system for the most acute patients in need of a higher level of care. As the number of COVID-19 cases has ebbed and flowed in Oregon, OHSU's advanced analytical tools have also helped inform decision making by the OHA and individual hospitals about where additional support is needed, allowing affected hospitals to pivot between providing emergency hospital care and scheduling more routine procedures. Such technology-driven, collaborative capacity management further grew in 2021, when OHSU and OHA founded the **Oregon Medical Coordination Center** to better serve Oregonians needing critical care.

The new center improves statewide coordination for all pediatric patients, all adult patients with urgent and critical care needs, and interhospital transfers from critical access hospitals. Ultimately, the new center aims to increase equitable access to care across Oregon.

The **OHSU Physician Advice and Referral Service** provides the link for community physicians to connect with OHSU physicians for clinical advice and tertiary referrals. The service provides 24-hour, toll-free telephone access to OHSU's broad clinical expertise for patient care providers located anywhere in Oregon and beyond. The service responded to a total of nearly 46,000 inquiries from external clinicians in the 2022 calendar year, with the average call being answered within just 5 seconds.

Long before the pandemic made telemedicine commonplace, **OHSU telehealth services** have provided immediate access to OHSU adult and pediatric medical care in support of Oregon and Southwest Washington hospitals. Today that telemedicine network has expanded to include ICU consults, secure connections to outpatient clinics, transitional housing, skilled nursing homes, and even connecting directly with patients in their own homes. The services can range from routine checkups and immediate care, to post-operative follow-up care and critical care — which can involve OHSU specialists and ICU nurses remotely monitoring patients at a community hospital. In addition, advance telehealth technologies enable OHSU to provide hospital-level care to eligible patients in the comfort of their own homes and also make it possible to monitor formerly hospitalized patients after they've been discharged. All of this expands Oregonians' access to quality care and reduces wait times to access that care, regardless of where patients live. It also reduces costs and helps OHSU hospitals care for as many patients as possible, despite the severe resource constraints of the last few years. To date, OHSU's telehealth programs for acute care have served more than 4,000 patients and have saved an estimated \$15 million in transportation expenses alone.

An example of OHSU's telehealth services are those offered by the **OHSU Stroke Center**, which uses a streamlined transfer process to quickly work with local health care providers and help stroke patients access the treatment they need in the shortest possible time. In 2022, the Stroke Center provided 264 tele-stroke consults with local providers and administered blood clot-busting therapies to 72 patients via telemedicine. Another 129 tele-stroke patients were transferred to OHSU for more advanced care, resulting in 56 procedures to break up brain blood clots.

Through collaborations with programs serving low-income, uninsured and underinsured Oregonians, the **OHSU Casey Eye Institute Outreach Program** offers free vision screenings at an expanding network of community locations. The program's mobile ophthalmology clinic travels throughout Oregon and collaborates with other organizations serving people in need to identify common, treatable causes of blindness. Participants are examined at no cost and community groups assist with follow-up for individuals who need continued medical support. Since its inception in 2010, the Casey Outreach Program has provided services to more than 11,000 Oregonians who don't have other access to eye care and referred more than 3,000 of those patients for follow-up care. The program operates with the help of more than 70 Oregon social service agencies, programs and safety net clinics that serve low income, uninsured or underinsured members of the community. An extension of the program is the **Oregon Vision Health Network**, which aims to improve access to quality eye care for traditionally underserved communities such as agricultural workers. Through the network, OHSU is collaborating with community health clinics across Oregon and training participating clinics' community health workers to evaluate patients' need for glasses, as well as screen them for sight-threatening conditions. OHSU will also provide advanced eye imaging equipment for up to eight participating clinics, which will operate the equipment locally. OHSU ophthalmologists will remotely review the resulting scans to help diagnose and manage the treatment of eye conditions in clinic patients. OHSU will provide this service for free through 2025, thanks to the support of two generous private donations.

The **OHSU Russell Street Dental Clinic** provides quality, affordable dental care for Portland-area residents, and also specializes in meeting the dental needs of people living with HIV. While the clinic accepts insurance, it also offers a sliding scale fee structure for uninsured and underinsured residents with low incomes. Located in Northeast Portland, the clinic was established in the 1970s and was the only local clinic to provide dental care for people with HIV during the early days of the AIDS epidemic. U.S. Health Resources & Services Administration support enables the clinic's dentists — and the students of dentistry and dental hygiene they supervise — to offer some services free for people living with HIV, when those services aren't covered by insurance. In 2022, the clinic facilitated nearly 5,000 total appointments for more than 1,300 patients.



The **OHSU Partnership Project** provides services to people living with HIV. It does this with the support of a consortium of 13 public and private medical and social service agencies in the Portland metro area. The project focuses on ensuring people living with HIV have access to affirming, competent, and high-quality health care. The core values of all project programs are collaboration, community building and client-centered work.

#### The OHSU Partnership Program includes:



HIV case management, including nursing and medical case management



Culturally appropriate care navigation for refugees and immigrants living with HIV



Medical care navigation for persons living with HIV



Insurance enrollment assistance

The **OHSU Transgender Health Program** collaborates with local community members and providers across the state to improve patient access to respectful and evidence-based health care, regardless of gender identity. With one of the largest and most comprehensive transgender health programs in the United States, OHSU providers had nearly 11,000 visits and exams with adult and youth transgender patients in FY 2022. In addition to providing in-person care through OHSU's Portland-area clinics, the program serves gender-diverse patients statewide through its Transgender Health Virtual Consult Clinic, which, following a referral by their local primary care provider, connects patients with an OHSU provider for a consultation about hormone therapy and other gender care. The program's virtual grand rounds lecture series for health care professionals invites transgender and gender-diverse community members to share their unique experiences and perspectives as individuals who seek and receive gender-affirming care. OHSU in 2022 expanded its gender-affirming training opportunities for health profession students and fellows in pediatrics and adolescent psychiatry to also include graduate-level students of psychology, social work and public health.

The program's Community Advisory Board, which is made up of Oregonians who represent the transgender and non-binary community, helps guide its direction.

OHSU collaborates with providers across Oregon on the **IMPACT project** to improve care for hospitalized adults with substance use disorder. IMPACT, or Improving Addition Care Team, provides comprehensive inpatient addiction consultations, including care from addiction medicine physicians, social workers, and peers with lived experience in recovery, and provides connections to community addiction care. Studies show IMPACT is associated with reduced substance use severity, increased treatment engagement after hospital discharge, increased trust in health care providers, and improved provider understanding of how to treat addiction.

The **OHSU Oregon Poison Center** is a 24-hour regional poison emergency information and resource center for the public and health care professionals. The center serves Oregon, as well as Alaska and Guam. Its services save millions of dollars annually by keeping many people out of the hospital and helping those who are in the hospital to recover as quickly as possible. The center fielded more than 36,000 calls in 2022, with about half of those calls addressing accidental poisoning or toxic exposure in children and teens. In 2022, the Oregon Poison Center successfully managed 89% of the cases it received over the phone, preventing Oregonians from having to drive to the hospital and saving more than an estimated \$23 million in health care costs. The center closely works with public health partners at the Oregon Health Authority to actively help with surveillance monitoring and patient management regarding many emerging public health concerns, such as fentanyl and other opiates, cannabis, e-cigarettes, pesticides and blue-green algae. This work has been presented at national conferences, where the Oregon-based center's approaches to poison control and response serve as a model for other states.

Long before nationwide access to reproductive health care was splintered by a June 2022 ruling from the U.S. Supreme Court, OHSU has been a consistent provider of **comprehensive reproductive health services** and a leader in **educating the next generation of obstetrics and gynecologic professionals**. OHSU remains committed to offering both, as restricting access to reproductive health care and education disproportionately affects people who already experience barriers to health care, and thereby perpetuates multi-generational cycles of health inequity and adverse health outcomes. In response to the challenges of the nation's now-reshaped reproductive health landscape, OHSU launched a new Center for Reproductive Health Equity to advance reproductive health services, education and policy research.

With the donor-supported ACT Fund, OHSU is also training out-of-state OB/GYN residents who can no longer be trained in abortion services through their home residency programs because this essential health care has been banned in the states where their programs are based.

As a result of donations raised through the Knight Cancer Challenge, the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute is committed to investing \$1 million annually over 10 years through the **Knight Community Partnership Program**, which provides funding for projects aimed at addressing the cancer needs of communities across Oregon. By providing funding, training and technical assistance, the program supports community organizations in identifying and addressing their most pressing cancer-related needs. Since its inception in 2014, the Community Partnership Program has distributed more than \$6.4 million to support projects across Oregon, including \$4.8 million in grant awards to 183 community-based projects across the state. Grants fund the work of a variety of organizations, including health care, education and nonprofits. The top three cancer types addressed to date are colorectal, breast and gynecologic, and 40% of the projects address cancer issues that are exclusive to rural communities. The 153 projects that have been completed thus far have reached more than 100,000 Oregonians. In 2022, the program awarded more than \$334,000 to 13 projects that focus on issues across the cancer continuum — ranging from prevention to screening and early detection to survivorship — and serve people throughout their lifespan.

\$6.4M	Distributed to support cancer needs across Oregon
183	Community-based projects across the state
40%	Of projects address cancer issues exclusive to rural communities

Supporting rural Oregonians

The **Office of Rural Health** at OHSU seeks to improve the quality, availability and accessibility of health care for rural Oregonians. It offers assistance to rural hospitals, clinics and communities to strengthen the rural and frontier health care delivery system. Its services include provider recruitment and retention, data analysis, policy development and advocacy.

The Oregon Legislature mandates the office to “coordinate statewide efforts for providing health care in rural areas” and “develop enabling legislation to facilitate further development of rural health care delivery systems.” Founded in 1979, the office is supported by the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy, the State of Oregon and OHSU.

OHSU is helping **expand access to dental care** across Oregon, including in rural areas where there are fewer dental health professionals. An OHSU School of Dentistry-led pilot project and training program that concluded in September 2021 found dental hygienists in rural Oregon safely provided interim dental care and improved children’s oral health with the support of offsite dentists, who remotely discussed cases with participating hygienists through video and phone calls. The pilot’s successful result led to the passage of Oregon House Bill 2627 in 2021, which now enables dental hygienists to provide temporary restorations and other services for certain children and adults who don’t have routine access to dental care due to age, illness, disability or other challenges.

The **Oregon Rural Practice-based Research Network** is a statewide network of more than 400 primary care practices, others in public health, health insurance payors, and community services. It coordinates clinical research and helps participating practices transform how they operate, while also extending the benefits of medical research to rural and under-resourced communities, connecting community primary care clinicians with each other, and including the voice of practicing clinicians in medical research decisions. Through regionally based research coordinators, clinicians and their practices participate in pragmatic clinical trials and implement research and quality improvement initiatives. The network is nationally recognized for its success in working with rural primary care practitioners and their communities to improve health outcomes and equity through dialogue, research, coaching and education. The network’s 2022 projects included:

- Partnering with Medicaid health plans, health systems, clinics and others to screen more than 25,000 patients for unmet social needs and working with local groups to address those needs.
- Administering the Eastern Oregon Coordinate Care Organization’s community grants program, which awarded \$1.4 million to 20 organizations to increase access to healthy vegetables and detox services, community health worker training, and more.
- Publishing results from a study that found numerous challenges in accessing both VA and non-VA primary care among rural veterans Oregon, Washington and Idaho.





The **Oregon Clinical and Translational Research Institute's Community Research Hub** aims to improve Oregon's health by supporting community-engaged research. It connects and supports researchers, community members and local organizations to facilitate and strengthen research that addresses community needs. Headquartered in Bend, the hub includes a team of five community research liaisons who live across the state and support their local community members and organizations through regional research coalitions. For researchers and other academic collaborators, the team provides: connections to a network of community partners; expertise and guidance in community-engaged research; regional knowledge and on-the-ground project facilitation and data collection. Some examples of this work are:

- **Wildfire smoke and health:** As a result of community concerns about the health impacts of wildfire smoke exposure, the Community Research Hub worked with Oregon State University and Klamath County residents to evaluate the composition and impact of wildfire smoke on pregnant individuals. The findings will be used to create recommendations to minimize wildfire smoke exposure.
- **Social isolation and loneliness in older adults:** At the request of the Central Oregon Council on Aging, the Community Research Hub evaluated a new virtual support program designed to address the increased isolation acutely experienced by older adults during the COVID-19 pandemic. A survey of 102 older adults that evaluated their experiences with social isolation and loneliness informed the local community's efforts to address this important issue.

### Sharing health and scientific information

OHSU provides public programming and events throughout the year. Most are free of charge and all bring public health education to the community.

OHSU partners with the American Heart Association to **support Oregonians experiencing heart failure**. The two organizations have created a public campaign to increase education, resources and support for those living with heart failure in Oregon and Southwest Washington. The collaborative effort includes a website with heart failure resources, educational seminars, and heart failure education handouts for patients.


Home to one of the United States' largest and most celebrated groups of brain care and research experts, the **OHSU Brain Institute** presents a variety of outreach events to share OHSU's neuroscience expertise with the public, including:

- **The Brain Fair @ OMSI**, a free, all-day event at the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry, where OHSU neuroscientists engage with learners of all ages. About 1,000 people visit the fair's more than 20 interactive tables.
- **OHSU's Brain Awareness Season**, which every spring brings thousands of participants together to discuss the latest brain science. The season's lecture series features speakers from both OHSU and around the world, and engages a broad spectrum of society, including scientists, clinicians, policy makers, advocacy group leaders, teachers, students and the general public. In 2022, three virtual lectures were attended by 500 live viewers.

The **Oregon National Primate Research Center** at OHSU — one of seven NIH-funded national primate research centers that help advance human health by serving as a resource for biomedical research that requires nonhuman primate models of human disease — provides many educational opportunities for students and the general public. When COVID-19 conditions allow, the center invites members of the public to tour the facility and meet with its in-house researchers. A pre-recorded video tour is also available online year-round. Twice a year, the center also hosts a Science Café lecture series for the public, with each series featuring the center's leading scientists.

Since 1981, the **OHSU Marquam Hill Lecture Series** has featured OHSU faculty and their innovative and cutting-edge biomedical research and clinical advances that are changing treatment and approaches to disease and prevention. In 2022, about 100 people attended a hybrid virtual and in-person talk on gun violence prevention research. The series has enhanced public understanding of research, education and clinical care during the past four decades, hosting more than 200 lectures that were attended by more than 10,000 people.



An aerial photograph of a dense evergreen forest, likely a spruce or fir forest, with a white rectangular text box overlaid on the left side. The trees are a deep green color, and the canopy is thick and textured. The text box is positioned in the upper left quadrant of the image.

To overcome our  
most significant health  
challenges, OHSU is building  
stronger and healthier  
communities together.



## Creating strong social networks

### Supporting Oregon's children

**OHSU Doernbecher Children's Hospital** takes care to children all over Oregon with **traveling subspecialty pediatric clinics**. For families who live outside the Portland metropolitan area, these clinics offer specialized medical care without leaving home. As a result, a total of about 6,500 youth received care in cardiology, endocrinology, gastroenterology, nephrology, urology and plastic surgery in 2022. These traveling subspecialty clinic visits occurred across the state, including in Bend, Coos Bay, Corvallis, The Dalles, Eugene, Klamath Falls, Medford, Pendleton and Salem, as well as in Vancouver, Washington.

The **Pediatric and Neonatal Doernbecher Transport** team stabilizes and monitors young patients while they are en route to OHSU's emergency department or intensive care units. The team serves Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Northern California, and is available to transport from other states if needed. It is the largest and busiest pediatric and neonatal transport program in Oregon.

The **Novel Interventions in Children's Healthcare** program helps families stressed by socioeconomic, health and other challenges manage their child's complex and chronic health condition. Trained interventionists work with families to solve myriad issues that prevent a child from following medical instructions. Specifically designed for families with limited resources or who have experienced social challenges such as homelessness or unemployment, it is Oregon's first intensive intervention program that focuses on children.

The **OHSU Doernbecher Injury Prevention Program** is an industry-leading and comprehensive injury prevention program dedicated to keeping kids safe. It offers education and resource support to families and staff throughout the OHSU Health system and the broader community. It strives to ensure children, families and health care providers have access to injury prevention educational information and resources. The program provides services through OHSU Doernbecher Children's Hospital's inpatient injury control program, along with two safety resource centers, the Tom Sargent Safety Resource Center at OHSU Doernbecher and the Braner Family Safety Resource Center at Hillsboro Medical Center. In FY 2022, the program provided both virtual and in-person educational services to families across Oregon and Southwestern Washington state. The program's health educators worked with more than 4,970 patients; inspected 2,383 car seats; and provided the following resources to caregivers: 583 new car seats, 406 portable cribs, and more than 500 home safety items. These items are offered free or at a low cost to help caregivers have the resources they need to provide children a safer environment.



Throughout Oregon, an estimated 20% of children ages 6 to 9 experience untreated tooth decay. Significantly more children in Oregon's southeastern counties, where there are fewer dentists per capita, have cavities than the rest of the state. The **OHSU School of Dentistry's D.M.D. Program** educates dental students about the widening gap between the oral health of insured and uninsured people, and provides strategies to address these disparities. In 2022, the school provided dental care for more than 1,800 pediatric patients during a total of more than 4,800 visits. Pediatric patients account for nearly 14% of the school's total patient population, and about 75% of OHSU's pediatric patients are covered by a Medicaid dental plan from Oregon or Washington state.

1,800	Uninsured children received dental care through OHSU in 2022
14%	Of patients are children
4,800+	Patients treated



Oregon requires proof of a vision screening before children enter public preschool or kindergarten. Since 2003, the **OHSU Casey Eye Institute's Elks Preschool Vision Screening Program** has offered free screenings in public classrooms and libraries across the state, with support from the Oregon State Elks Association. Performed by OHSU staff and supported by volunteers, the screenings focus on detecting and treating vision disorders while the visual system is developing. Many vision disorders, such as near-sightedness, or amblyopia, can be successfully treated and even reversed if detected early enough. When a vision problem is identified, the program refers children to a local provider for a complete, dilated eye exam. The program specifically serves children enrolled in Head Start and are least likely to see an eye doctor. The program also offers bilingual educational resources to help children and their families protect their eye health. So far during the 2021-22 school year, the program has completed nearly 4,000 screenings and has facilitated follow-up care for 785 children whose initial screening results indicated further investigation with a vision provider was needed.

Faculty and residents of the OHSU Department of Family Medicine staff the **Benson Wellness Center** where they blend community health and resident education, encouraging the development of future health care professionals. Benson Polytechnic High School is a highly diverse magnet school that draws students from all Portland neighborhoods. About 64% of students are economically disadvantaged and would have difficulty accessing routine health care without this school-based wellness center. The center, which is temporarily operating out of Marshall High School while Benson Polytechnic is being remodeled, also provides learning opportunities for students enrolled in the school's Health Science Pathway.

### Supporting Oregonians with disabilities

The **Oregon Office on Disability and Health** promotes the health and wellness of Oregonians with disabilities through public health surveillance, health promotion, training, education, community engagement activities, information sharing, and policy development and recommendations. It aims to promote and maximize health, prevent chronic disease, improve access to health care, and increase the quality of life among the approximately 900,000 Oregonians with disabilities. This is done through community outreach programs that are designed to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities, family members and caregivers of people with disabilities, educators, and health care professionals. The office serves all 36 Oregon counties.

The **OHSU University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities** is one of 67 national centers that share a common vision in which all Americans — including those with disabilities — participate fully in their communities. The center is part of the OHSU Institute on Development and Disabilities, within the OHSU pediatrics department. Independence, productivity and community inclusion are key components of this vision. To build communities' capacity to sustain all their citizens, the center works with people with disabilities, members of their families, state and local government agencies, and community providers in projects that provide training, technical assistance, service, research and information sharing. The center's advisory council, which consists of Oregonians with disabilities, is closely involved in research and clinical activities, and provides information about the needs of various disability communities. The center also helps health professional better meet the health needs of people with disabilities by facilitating various disability awareness training opportunities for Oregon providers, as well as for students enrolled in OHSU's medical, dental, physician assistant and nursing degree programs.

A collaboration between the Oregon Office on Disability and Health, the OHSU University Center for Excellence in Development Disabilities and the Oregon Self-Advocacy Coalition led to the development of "Taking Charge of My Healthcare," an **online resource for people with disabilities**. The toolkit aims to help individuals advocate for their own health and well-being. Available on OHSU's website, it offers resources and tips related to partnering with physicians, medication management, mental and oral health, how to help clinicians accommodate one's needs, and more.

The **OHSU Institute on Development and Disability** is dedicated to improving the lives of people with disabilities and their families. Its five centers work together to improve service, provide education and training, enhance communities, and develop research projects for people with suspected or known disabilities and special health needs in Oregon and beyond.

The institute also partners with many community organizations to determine the needs and resources required to encourage healthy living for youth and adults with disabilities who reside in those communities. This happens through state-sponsored needs assessments, community education events, screening events, and other efforts designed to better understand and enhance the capacity of local communities.

As the first state-funded organization to provide care for children and individuals with disabilities, the OHSU Institute on Development and Disability's **Child Development and Rehabilitation Center** provides care in permanent clinics located in the Portland area and Eugene, as well as through clinical outreach teams in Medford, Bend, Hermiston, Redmond and Klamath Falls. Many of the center's clinical services, including those for patients with Down and Rett syndromes, are not available anywhere else in Oregon. The center provided about 32,000 exams and other clinical encounters for 10,000 patients in 2022.

32,000	Exams provided by OHSU Institute on Development and Disability
10,000	Patients seen in 2022

Also part of the OHSU Institute on Development and Disability is the **Oregon Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Needs**, which is Oregon's Title V public health agency for children and youth with special health care needs. Title V is a large federal block grant program that focuses on maternal and child health. This center seeks to improve the health, development, and well-being of Oregon's children and youth, and operates in concert with the Oregon Health Authority's Maternal and Child Health section. The center partners with county public health agencies, community-based organizations, families and health care providers statewide to serve thousands of children and youth with special health care needs. Its CaCoon nurse home-visiting program helps families coordinate care through complex systems. The center addresses social determinants of health by facilitating family-centered, community-based teams that build family agency and resilience. It leads health system improvement through education, collaboration, surveillance and policy work, and is a nationally recognized leader in incorporating equity and anti-racism into Title V work. Center staff represent the interests of this vulnerable population on state and local boards, councils, advisory committees, and work groups.

In 2021-22, the center contracted with 27 Oregon counties, directly impacting the lives of hundreds of children and families, even as much of it was done virtually, due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. It has also led distance-based learning collaboratives for dozens of health professionals across Oregon, developing local and regional expertise and leadership capacity in cross-sector care coordination for children and youth with special health care needs.

Part of a nationwide HRSA-funded initiative, the **Oregon Family-to-Family Health Information Center** is housed within the OHSU Oregon Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Needs. The Family-to-Family Health Information Center is staffed by parents of children with a variety of special health needs, disabilities, and developmental and behavioral health conditions. Each year, staff travel throughout the state teaching parents of children and youth with disabilities how to access services and supports for their children. This kind of personalized support is hard to find, as evidenced by the kinds of comments and concerns the center hears from families in rural Oregon. The center is an important partner in health care for an often-neglected audience: families of children experiencing special health needs.

Behavioral health services for Oregonians

A collaborative effort between OHSU, Legacy Health, Kaiser Permanente and Adventist, the **Unity Center for Behavioral Health** is a 24-hour behavioral and mental health emergency services center and inpatient mental health care facility for adults, as well as adolescents ages 9 to 17. The center provides immediate psychiatric care and a path to recovery for individuals experiencing a mental health crisis. Its services include crisis counseling, intervention and stabilization; inpatient care; medication management; social work and case management; and family and peer support. It is a first-of-its-kind facility in the Pacific Northwest.





The **OHSU Avel Gordly Center for Healing** is one of a few practices in the Pacific Northwest that focuses on culturally sensitive care for African and African-American communities.

The center employs trauma-informed counseling practices and strives to remove the stigma associated with mental illness for underserved communities. It also provides training for other health care and social service providers about sensitive and culturally responsive treatment for African-Americans.

The **OHSU Intercultural Psychiatric Program** serves about 1,100 Portland-area residents of racially and ethnically diverse backgrounds, with many being refugees. Its patients include about 200 survivors of torture from Iraq, Iran, Somalia, Ethiopia, Bosnia, Syria and elsewhere. The program's 14 multilingual counselors and contracted interpreters provide support and treatment for a wide range of mental health issues, ranging from dementia to depression to post-traumatic stress disorder. Established in 1977, it is the longest-running program of its kind and is partly supported by the United Nations.

The **OHSU Department of Psychiatry's clinical services** include tele-psychiatry for patients who live in rural or remote areas, as well as outpatient, in-person psychiatry clinics for adults and children who are closer to Portland. In addition, the department offers a hotline to help primary care providers meet their adult and pediatric patients' psychiatric needs.



OHSU is proud to **train the next generation of mental health providers** through a doctoral program in clinical psychology; an adult psychiatry residency program; and fellowship programs in addiction psychiatry, child and adolescent psychiatry, consultation liaison psychiatry, forensic psychiatry and geriatric psychiatry. The majority of Oregon's psychiatric workforce graduated or received training from OHSU.

OHSU's pivotal academic programs are essential for and central to Oregon's efforts to grow the state's health care and scientific workforces.





## Oregon's only academic health center



As Oregon's only academic health center and a public corporation of the State of Oregon, OHSU has both a unique role in the state and a statutory obligation to the people of Oregon. OHSU was established to serve the people of the State of Oregon by providing education in health, science, engineering and their management for students of the state and region. OHSU's public purpose and mission as directed by ORS 353.010 is to:

- Provide high quality educational programs appropriate for a health and science university;
- Conduct research in health care, engineering, biomedical sciences and general sciences;
- Engage in the provision of inpatient and outpatient clinical care and health care delivery systems throughout the state;
- Provide outreach programs in education, research and health care;
- Serve as a local, regional and statewide resource for health care providers; and
- Continue a commitment to provide health care to the underserved patient population of Oregon.

In addition to OHSU's work to support the Community Health Needs Assessment, OHSU's 19,000 members are proud of the work they do every day to improve the health and well-being of Oregonians through the institution's public missions.



## Academic and workforce-enhancing activities

OHSU's pivotal academic programs are essential for and central to Oregon's efforts to grow the state's health care and scientific workforces. As the state's only academic health center, OHSU is home to **Oregon's only dental school, only M.D. degree program and its only doctorate-level nursing programs**. During the 2021-22 academic year alone, OHSU conferred a total of 1,162 degrees, including: 380 bachelor's degrees in nursing, 149 doctorates of medicine, 93 doctorates of pharmacy, 74 master's degrees in public health, 71 doctorates of dental medicine, 59 doctorates of nursing practice and 40 master's degrees in physician assistant studies. The public health degrees are awarded in partnership with Portland State University through the OHSU-PSU School of Public Health, and doctorates of pharmacy are given in partnership with Oregon State University through the OSU/OHSU College of Pharmacy. OHSU also supports the education of affiliated health workers through two programs based at Oregon Tech: Last academic year, the OHSU/Oregon Tech Paramedic Program granted 24 associate degrees, and the Oregon Tech/OHSU Medical Laboratory Science program granted 35 bachelor's degrees.

Further, OHSU is home to the **vast majority of Oregon's graduate medical education programs**, where physicians who have recently earned medical degrees receive hands-on training in their medical specialty, under the supervision of more experienced physicians. Indeed, OHSU is in the top 5% of all health institutions nationwide for the number of residency and fellowship programs it offers. More than 900 physicians-in-training work at OHSU through 94 different residency and fellowship programs for a variety of specialties, ranging from pediatrics to cardiovascular disease. Knowing physicians are more likely to settle and work in the communities and states in which they complete their residencies and fellowships, OHSU is partnering with other hospitals throughout Oregon to **expand residency programs and positions statewide**. Early successes include the creation of three new residency programs at Hillsboro Medical Center, which is already training residents through its internal medicine, family medicine, and transitional year residency programs. A new joint OHSU-St. Charles Health family medicine residency program that will be co-located in Portland and Madras expects to welcome its first group of residents in summer 2024. And OHSU and Sky Lakes Medical Center successfully applied for U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services funding to expand the hospitals' joint Klamath Falls family medicine residency program by about one resident per year, beginning in summer 2023.



Because **state support and tuition do not fully cover OHSU's educational expenses**, the university makes up the financial difference itself. For example, it costs an estimated \$125,000 annually to train each medical student, with most expenses stemming from the need for highly trained faculty and staff and appropriate clinical learning environments at OHSU and elsewhere around the state. Revenue generated from tuition and state appropriations currently cover only about 60% of the cost to educate each medical student, with the difference being funded from the reallocation of other revenue generated at OHSU.

One way OHSU strives to make its educational programs financially accessible is through its **Tuition Promise**. Since it was first implemented in the 2014-15 academic year, the Tuition Promise has meant OHSU doesn't increase tuition for its students who are in the middle of a degree program. Through this approach, tuition rates are "locked in" upon enrollment, and returning students continue to pay the same tuition every year, and throughout the normal timeline of their given degree.

OHSU provides many **grants and scholarships** for students to help reduce the costs associated with their higher education in high-tuition health science fields.

To address health access issues as well as the health disparities that are more pronounced in rural and underserved Oregon communities, the **Scholars for a Healthy Oregon Initiative** offers scholarships that cover full tuition and fees for medical, dental, physician assistant and advanced practice nursing students who are Oregon residents or have Oregon heritage. In exchange, scholarship recipients agree to practice in a rural or underserved Oregon community for the same number of years they received the scholarship, plus one more year. Since the state-funded scholarship program was established in 2014 by the Oregon Legislature, it has supported the education of 168 OHSU students, who have gone on to provide more than 662 combined years of service to rural and underserved Oregon communities after graduation.

OHSU's medical and dental schools work with providers at clinics and hospitals all over Oregon to provide valuable **training opportunities for dental, medical and physician assistant students, as well as for physicians-in-training**, who are also known as residents and fellows. To better equip future clinicians to meet the unique health needs of rural residents, OHSU's M.D. Program requires its students complete a minimum of a four-week rotation in a rural Oregon community, and OHSU's D.M.D. program requires its students participate in community-based dental rotations for a total of nine weeks. The two programs' combined community rotation sites include: Albany, Baker City, Burns, Enterprise, Heppner, John Day, Klamath Falls, Ontario, Pendleton and Warm Springs. These community-based rotations help create a steady stream of health professionals with a greater awareness, willingness and desire to practice in the state's rural and underserved communities.

The OHSU School of Medicine and the University of California, Davis, co-lead the **California-Oregon Medical Partnership to Address Disparities in Rural Education and Health** partnership. Supported by the American Medical Association and running through 2024, this project seeks to expand access to quality health care in underserved communities by addressing health care workforce shortages in Oregon and Northern California. The partnership has organized a network of hands-on learning experiences in rural, tribal and urban underserved communities for M.D. students and medical residents from OHSU and UC-Davis. Ultimately, the effort seeks to convince its participants to become working health professionals in the underserved communities where the partnership facilitates learning opportunities.



The **Northwest Native American Center of Excellence** is an example of how OHSU seeks to address the health care needs of all Oregonians by increasing the diversity of the health professional workforce. Launched in 2017, the center is expanding health care professional training for American Indians and Alaska Natives. A collaboration between OHSU, the Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board, and the Pacific Northwest's 43 federally recognized tribes, the center is supported by more than \$12 million in federal, state and private funding. The center's best-known initiative is the **Wy'east Post-Baccalaureate Pathway**, a rigorous 10-month program that was originally designed to prepare citizens of federally recognized tribes for medical school. Now, Wy'east is expanding to the OHSU nursing and dental schools. The center's efforts are also increasing Native representation at OHSU. The university is now home to 12 faculty members who identify as Native, making OHSU home to one of the largest groups of Native faculty in the country. The OHSU School of Medicine also currently has 61 Native learners, 16 of whom are participating in the Wy'east medical pathway. To date, 42 Wy'east students have completed the pathway, with 28 of those students enrolling in medical school.

12	OHSU faculty members who identify as Native
61	Native learners in OHSU School of Medicine
42	Students who have completed the Wy'east pathway

The **OHSU School of Nursing** provides nursing education through five physical campuses located across Oregon in Ashland, Klamath Falls, La Grande, Monmouth and Portland, as well as through remote distance learning. The school has long addressed the need to improve the health of communities across the state through access to skilled and compassionate nurses. It has been nationally recognized for programs focusing on social determinants of health, health disparities and care for vulnerable populations, as well as rural and community-based practice. Additionally, through the **Oregon Consortium for Nursing Education**, students in nursing programs at 11 community college campuses enroll in a seamless curriculum that leads to a bachelor's of science degree in nursing from OHSU without leaving their home communities. The school also leads the **Interprofessional Care Access Network**, which helps students studying a variety of health care professions work together to understand and tackle social issues that influence health. Through the network, OHSU nursing, medical, dental, public health and pharmacology students form interprofessional teams to help individuals and families in underserved Oregon communities address barriers related to social determinants of health.



The OHSU School of Nursing has been nationally recognized for programs focusing on social determinants of health, health disparities and care for vulnerable populations, as well as rural and community-based practice.

OHSU's **Campus for Rural Health** offers students and physicians-in-training from the university's dental medical and nursing schools, as well as from the OSU/OHSU College of Pharmacy, an interprofessional educational experience that integrates participants into rural communities and encourages them to ultimately stay and work in those communities upon graduation. Learners collaboratively work with community organizations on projects that address local health needs. A recent survey of participants found 86% were better prepared to care for rural patients and 56% were more likely to work in a rural area as a result of their experience. Since 2015, more than 1,100 students have visited Campus for Rural Health sites in Klamath Falls, Northeast Oregon and the South Coast.

86%	Of participants were better prepared to care for rural patients
56%	Of students were more likely to work in a rural area
1,100	Students have visited Campus for Rural Health sites

To improve health care for rural and urban underserved communities, the **Oregon Area Health Education Centers**, or Oregon AHEC, coordinates, facilitates and supports regional workforce education and training programs across the state. Supported by the U.S. Health Resource & Services Administration with matching funds from OHSU and the State of Oregon, Oregon AHEC is part of a national network of similar centers. Oregon AHEC's efforts range from STEM educational opportunities for high school students to continuing education for working health professionals. Located across Oregon, each of the centers' five regional offices are dedicated to working with local health care systems and providers, community leaders, schools and residents to identify and meet local needs. The Oregon AHEC Scholars Program better prepares current health profession students for future practice in underserved areas by providing two years of supplemental training that expands upon the curriculum of medical, dental, pharmacological, advance nursing practice and other health degree programs at OHSU, Oregon State University, Pacific University, and Western University of Health Sciences.



A federal grant is also enabling Oregon AHEC to expand simulation’s use in education across the state, including establishing new simulation centers for health profession programs at Chemeketa, Yamhill and Central Oregon community colleges, and updating the simulation center at the OHSU School of Nursing’s La Grande campus. During the 2021-22 academic year, Oregon AHEC provided STEM education opportunities for 2,354 high school and undergraduate students; provided continuing education for 5,547 working health professionals; facilitated rural and urban clinical training opportunities for 221 OHSU M.D. students; and provided training for 189 AHEC Scholars.

2,354	Students received STEM education through
5,547	Working health professionals received continuing education
221	OHSU M.D. students received rural and urban clinical training
189	AHEC Scholars students received training

The **OHSU Office of Science Education Opportunities** provides a single point of entry for kindergarten through grade 16 teachers and students, as well as the public, to access relevant experiences and information in the health sciences. The office collaborates with OHSU departments and community partners to deliver quality education programming and connect students and teachers with health science professionals in the OHSU workplace and in the classroom. Many pathways for young, well-prepared students to access biomedical and science education are vital to meeting the need for health and science workers. OHSU encourages faculty, staff and students to serve by sharing their expertise and mentoring the next generation of health science professionals.

The **Knight Scholars Program** aims to increase the number and diversity of students who pursue careers in cancer research through paid summer internships for high school students.

Knight Scholars participants come from communities that are underrepresented in cancer research, and hail from Woodburn, Culver, Madras, Klamath Falls and Northeastern Oregon, as well as from two Portland metro area schools. The program again welcomed students for in-person experiences in summer 2022, after two years of virtual internships due to the pandemic. In 2022, a total of 26 scholars received hands-on training in OHSU laboratories and/or clinical settings.

OHSU’s schools and programs provide countless **educational opportunities for working health professionals** that enable physicians, physician assistants, dentists, nurses and others to stay up to date on the best health care practices. Each year, the OHSU School of Medicine provides accreditation to more than 200 continuing education activities that are designed to help physicians and other health professionals improve their practice for the betterment of their patients’ health. OHSU continuing education has also contributed to Oregon’s pandemic response, as the OHSU School of Dentistry’s continuing education office to date has trained 781 dentists in administering COVID-19 vaccinations. Both schools offer continuing education opportunities that focus on health equity and social determinants of health. For example, the dental school’s cultural competency course aims to help dental professionals reduce barriers that prevent many marginalized community members from accessing dental care. In 2022, the dental school began offering a new course focusing on how to make dental care more accessible for people living with disabilities. In 2022, more than 76,700 health professionals and more than 2,500 dental professionals received continuing education through OHSU’s medical and dental schools.

OHSU’s schools and programs provide countless educational opportunities for working health professionals that enable physicians, physician assistants, dentists, nurses and others to stay up to date on the best health care practices.

Part of the Oregon Rural Practice-based Research Network, the **Oregon ECHO Network** is a tele-mentoring program that helps primary care physicians across Oregon better treat chronic and complex illnesses from their local clinics, and prevents patients from needing to leave their hometowns in order to receive care. ECHO offers primary care clinicians with specialists from OHSU and beyond for a series of live video teleconference calls related to topics ranging from psychiatric medication management to integrating community health workers and peer mentors into clinical settings. Since its inception in 2018, ECHO programs have engaged 3,533 unique participants from every Oregon county. More than 900 providers have participated in addiction medicine ECHO sessions, which helps reduce overdose-related deaths by increasing the number of buprenorphine-trained providers.

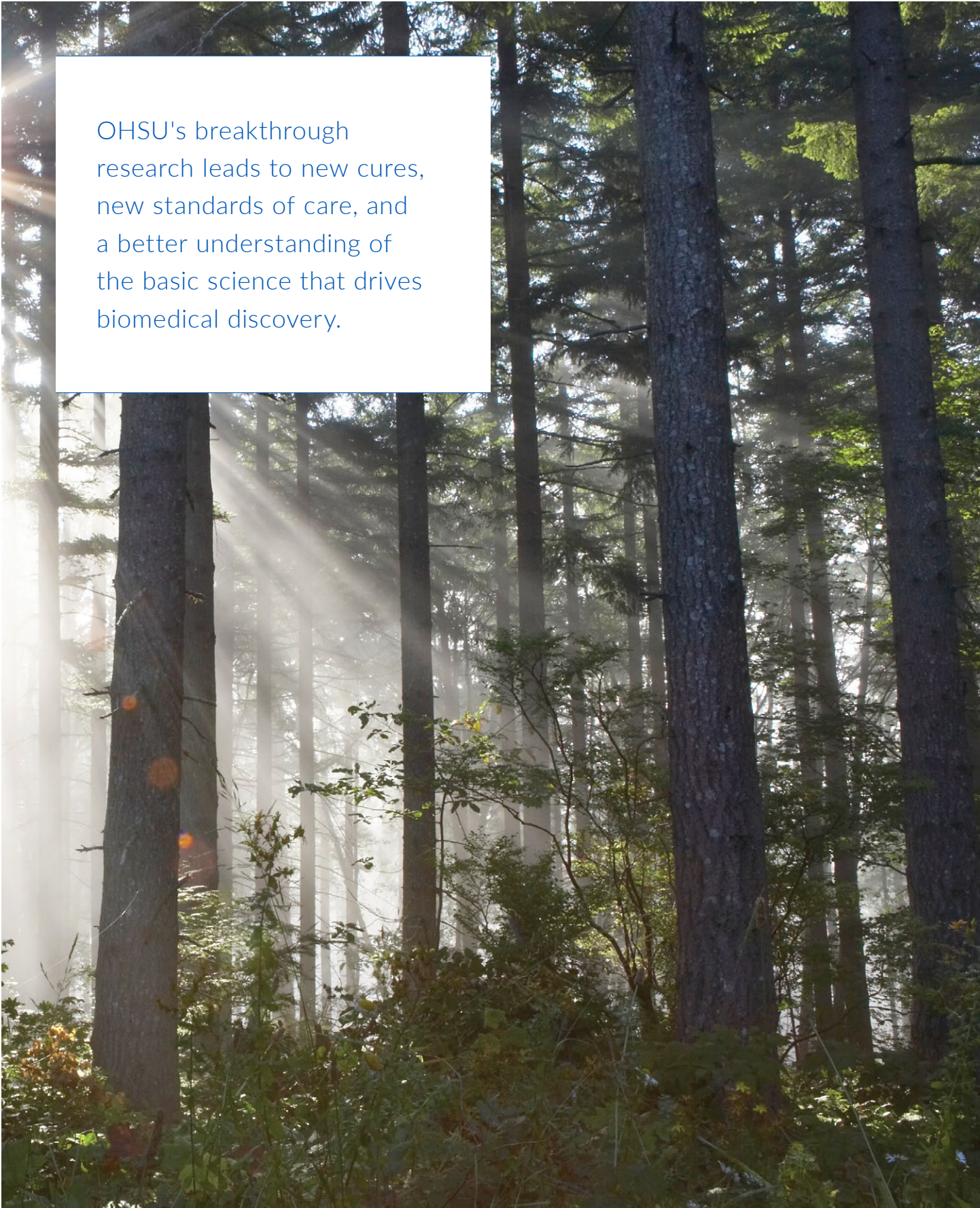
3,533	ECHO program participants from every Oregon county since 2018
900+	Providers have participated in addiction medicine ECHO sessions

Educational opportunities that the Oregon ECHO Network offered in 2022 included:

- Beginning a five-year project to address health inequities and improve access to quality health care in six rural Oregon counties (Hood River, Wasco, Gilliam, Sherman, Baker and Umatilla) with the support of a U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration grant
- Held a 13-week long COVID-19 diagnosis and treatment series led by OHSU Long COVID-19 Program providers

The **OHSU Center for Ethics in Health Care** helps Oregon and Northwest health care workers of all disciplines both understand health ethics, palliative care, professionalism, health literacy and compassionate serious illness communications skills, and also incorporate them into their respective practices. It promotes collaborative learning to improve the quality of care in communities large and small. In addition to hosting a two-day, statewide virtual bioethics conference with about 250 attendees, the center also hosted 15 interactive bioethics seminars for health care professionals across Oregon state in 2022.





OHSU's breakthrough research leads to new cures, new standards of care, and a better understanding of the basic science that drives biomedical discovery.



## Life-changing scientific research

OHSU's breakthrough research leads to new cures, new standards of care, and a better understanding of the basic science that drives biomedical discovery. Scientists and clinician-scientists conduct life-changing research that explores everything from the life's basic building blocks to clinical trials evaluating experimental treatments for disease, as well as large-scale data analysis to assess societal trends in health and well-being.

The **Oregon Clinical and Translational Research Institute** at OHSU supports advancing research ideas so they can make an impact by providing training, funding and infrastructure during this years-long process. In 2022, OHSU researchers, initially funded by the institute's Biomedical Innovation Program, teamed up with the semiconductor company Analog Devices, Inc., to develop a smartwatch that will act as an early detection system for teenagers experiencing suicidality. Also in 2022, novel clips that aide in spinal surgery received FDA approval. The project received funding for development beginning in 2013. OHSU Technology Transfer, part of the university's research infrastructure, provides support through the regulatory and legal processes for these research endeavors.

The **OHSU Knight Cancer Institute** is well-known for its ability to turn discoveries into cancer treatments — such as Gleevec, which allows patients with a once-devastating form of leukemia to now expect a normal life span. The institute's efforts to develop targeted therapy and early detection methods include a 2022 study that showed it's possible to track the evolution of someone's cancer quickly and closely enough to detect resistance as it arises, and enable interventions when cancer is most treatable. Another 2022 study revealed a genetic risk for acute myeloid leukemia; the data supports the need for routine screening for inherited genes in all patients at risk for AML.

Established in 2019, the **OHSU Center for ADHD Research** is quickly distinguishing itself as a leader in better understanding Attention Deficit-Hyperactivity Disorder, and the center's researchers are eager to find ways to reduce its often-associated mental health and neurodevelopmental conditions. For example, an OHSU pilot study of pregnant mothers whose children were expected to be at risk for ADHD discovered a new blood marker that is now predicting the condition in offspring five years later. And center researchers reported in May 2022 that half of affected children in their study who consumed high-dose vitamin and mineral nutritional supplements experienced notable clinical improvements.



**Population-level research** at OHSU includes research on health disparities, the impacts of race on health, and gun violence as a public health issue. In April 2022, OHSU investigators found that race and ethnicity impact how children access asthma care, with Black youth being more likely to receive care in emergency departments. A new associate dean for research who joined the **OHSU-PSU School of Public Health** in September 2021 brings expertise in the social determinants of health, as well as a commitment to deepen the school's anti-racism work. And the developing Gun Violence Prevention Research Center, which is also based in the joint public health school, is collecting and analyzing data to help develop solutions to the gun violence epidemic. Researchers at the School of Public Health have also conducted and led systematic reviews used to develop clinical practice guidelines by the American College of Physicians, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, the American Pain Society, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and more.

OHSU provides financial support for basic science and clinical research not covered fully by federal grants. Internal OHSU research support helps pay for costs associated with recruitment, core lab support and bridge funding. The university also covers pilot and seed funding for early-stage research, as well as institutional cost-share commitments that are sometimes required by grant-sponsoring agencies. OHSU attempts to quantify internally funded indirect costs, such as administration and space, that support research at OHSU.



## Financial assistance for patients

OHSU Healthcare and the OHSU Practice Plan meet community obligations to provide financial assistance in a fair, consistent and objective manner.

OHSU informs patients and families of the availability of financial assistance through signage and a brochure about billing, collections and financial assistance that is available in waiting areas in all settings of clinical care, including inpatient and outpatient settings and in the emergency department. OHSU also details what is available through a financial assistance public website. Additionally, OHSU informs all patients of its financial assistance program during the registration process for care and also has posted notices throughout its hospitals.

Requests for financial assistance may be made at any point before, during or after care is provided. Patients who contact OHSU's billing customer service and express concerns about paying their bill are provided information about and access to the financial assistance program. OHSU Healthcare/OHSU Practice Plan offers an application process for determining initial interest in, and qualification for, financial assistance. OHSU does not discriminate for any reason, including on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, handicap or national origin.

OHSU follows state laws regarding financial assistance and screens all patients to see if they qualify before referring to an outside collection agency. A patient is eligible for financial assistance consideration based upon the results of the financial screening process and meeting certain income eligibility criteria as established by the Federal Poverty Guidelines.