

Community Health: programs with results

It's difficult to pick up a newspaper or turn on a TV without reading or hearing about the "crisis" in health care. Rising costs, declining reimbursements and an increasing number of uninsured or underinsured citizens mean that hospitals must find innovative ways of caring for those who are at greatest risk -- the poor and underserved -- while keeping a close eye on costs.

As staff of SJHS look for ways to cut costs, many may question the value of various community-based initiatives. Where, many employees ask, is the payoff?

Simply put, the payoff comes in the form of a healthier community. Here are just a few examples of positive outcomes that have resulted from SJHS' community outreach activities:

- Violence prevention, abstinence, pregnancy prevention and mentoring programs at Ronald McNair Technical Middle School have resulted in a 72% reduction in violent episodes and a 60% reduction in teen pregnancy among students.
- Of the students who suffered a full-blown asthma attack and were treated at on-site school-based health centers, 77.5% were returned to class instead of to the hospital emergency room. This resulted in a cost savings of \$1500 per student.
- Open Arms provided grief support for more than 100 families.
- SJHS joined other health providers to form the Voices of Detroit Initiative to increase access to health care for uninsured and medically underserved residents.
- SJHS Parish Nurse Program was expanded to include more than 30 parishes in three counties.
- SJHS collaborated with other companies last year to distribute 192,000 test kits for colorectal cancer. More than 3,700 responses were received and evaluated at SJH&MC.

"Each of these endeavors underscores the value and importance of St. John Health System's community health initiatives," says Cynthia Taueg, Vice President of Urban and Community Health. "They are part of a critical safety net in our communities and further proof of St. John's commitment to the many diverse people we serve. These kinds of results show that our community health programs are a great investment in the health and well-being of our community members."

For a free report on Community Health initiatives throughout SJHS, call St. John HealthLine at 1-888-757-5463.

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