



Maryland
Hospital Association

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HOSPITALS' COMMUNITY BENEFITS CONTRIBUTION INCREASES TO \$1.6 BILLION

Elkridge, Md. – Maryland's hospitals provided approximately [\\$1.6 billion in community benefits](#) in the past year, the state's Health Services Cost Review Commission (HSCRC) reported recently. Community benefits go beyond traditional care provided in the emergency department, operating room, or in a hospital bed – they are planned and organized activities of not-for-profit hospitals to meet identified needs in their area. According to HSCRC, that \$1.6 billion represents 10 percent of all hospital operating expenses statewide.

This total is a slight increase from the previous year, which matched a record \$1.5 billion in community benefits. However, this year's total is notable because charity care, a component of community benefits, dropped by about \$56 million, to \$428 million, as more Marylanders began to receive health coverage under the Affordable Care Act. The fact that the total *increased* is an indication of hospitals' continuing investment in the health of their communities.

Community benefits include:

- Health services for vulnerable or underserved people
- Financial or in-kind support of public health programs, such as management of chronic diseases like asthma and diabetes
- Donations of funds, property, or other resources that contribute to a community priority, such as obesity, substance abuse, or health care services for the homeless
- Health care cost containment activities, like free health education programs that can help people manage their conditions without the need for more costly services
- Health screening and prevention services

“These contributions are at the essence of what hospitals mean to the communities they serve, and hospitals are redefining ‘community benefits’ in real time,” said Carmela Coyle, President & CEO of the Maryland Hospital Association. “With an emphasis on proactive, community-based care, you’re seeing greater investments in screenings, chronic disease management, mobile clinics, and other mission-driven, innovative programs – all designed to help people stay healthy *before* they need hospital care.”

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About the Maryland Hospital Association

The Maryland Hospital Association is the advocate for Maryland hospitals, health systems, and their patients before legislative and regulatory bodies. Its membership is composed of community and teaching hospitals, health systems, specialty hospitals, veterans' hospitals, and long-term care facilities. For more information, visit www.mhaonline.org.