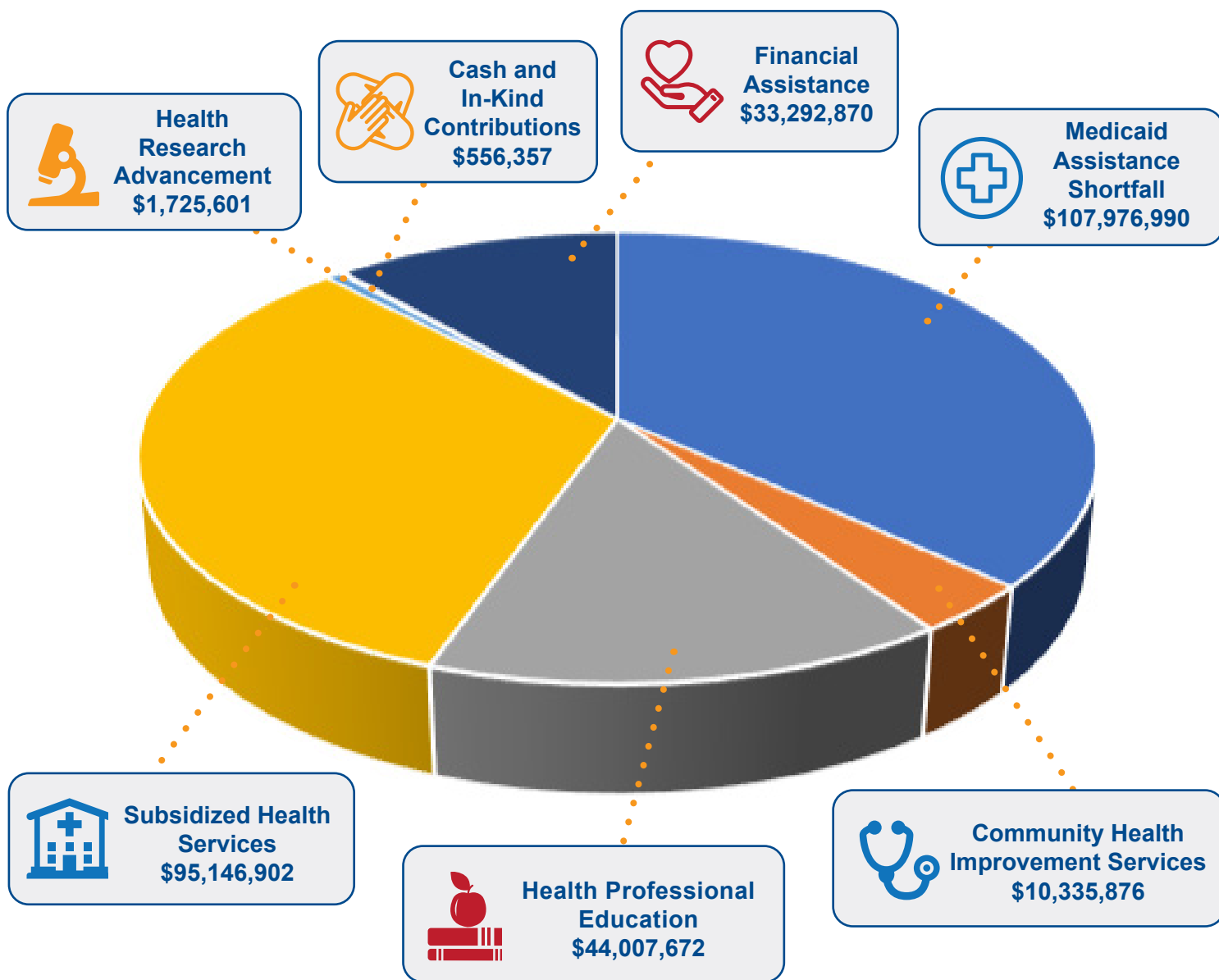


Atlantic Health System 2020 Community Benefit Report

2020 Total Community Benefit
\$293,042,268



Atlantic Health System

Morristown Medical Center | Overlook Medical Center | Chilton Medical Center | Newton Medical Center
Hackettstown Medical Center | Goryeb Children's Hospital | Atlantic Rehabilitation Institute
Atlantic Medical Group | Atlantic Visiting Nurse | Atlantic Mobile Health

Morris County Regional COVID-19 Vaccination Center

In 2020, as the coronavirus pandemic took hold, Atlantic Health System eagerly partnered with the State of New Jersey and Morris County to deliver testing and essential health care services to our communities. Once the first COVID-19 vaccines were approved near the end of the year, we were pleased to collaborate again to create the Morris County Regional COVID-19 Vaccination Center at Rockaway Townsquare Mall, in the former Sears building.



An enormous undertaking, Atlantic Health System quickly redirected hospital resources to establish the clinic and identified team leads from 14-plus internal departments, including patient registration, clinical services, operations, human resources, information technologies, facilities and security, communications and marketing, accounting and legal. The initial project team leaders included a vice president, two directors, and two managers.

Logistics to put the mega site together quickly included developing procedures and clinical policy, coordinating site preparation; securing sufficient personal protective equipment and other supplies; receiving, inspecting and storing the supplied vaccines; staffing the facility; patient screening and observation; creating vaccine cards; replenishing medical supplies; furnishing the site and supplying acrylic shielding for staff; providing resources for patients with special needs, translation services and ADA accommodations; and setting up and managing computer equipment, ensuring safe, secure WiFi; and many more processes and materials; all throughout the Christmas holiday season and year-end at a shopping mall.

In just 26 long and intense days, Atlantic Health System – in partnership with Morris County, the State of New Jersey, the New Jersey Army National Guard, the Medical Reserve Corps, the Morris County Sheriff's Office and other agencies – started to vaccinate those eligible in Morris County. The vaccination mega center's official opening to the public was January 8, 2021. Governor Phil Murphy, joined by NJ Health Commissioner Judith Persichilli and local leaders from the county and legislature, along with Atlantic Health System President and CEO Brian Gragnolati, toured the center on its opening day.

Peaking at 4,600 administered inoculations daily, the Morris County Regional COVID-19 Vaccination Center culminated in a total of 340,000 vaccinations administered to the greater Morris County area before delivering its final shot on July 16, 2021.

Messaging around testing and vaccination included our #CaringTogether campaign to provide frequent health updates and education for the community and organizing communications to support the breadth and urgency of pandemic messaging. In addition to the vaccination mega center, Atlantic Health System opened nearly a dozen vaccine clinics.

Since the Atlantic Health System vaccination program began December 2020, more than 80% of the doses delivered by the health system have been to members of the community, after the state expanded eligibility beyond frontline caregivers.

Behavioral Health Programs and Community Outreach/Support Programs and Collaboration

Behavioral Health

Atlantic Behavioral Health provides different methods and practices to the community to assist individuals with stress relief. Team members assessed stress/anxiety, discussed results and solutions for reducing stress and handling “brain fog”, provided handouts, and made referrals, if necessary.



A new program, launched in September 2020 via phone and Zoom, the Atlantic COVID Recovery Center Support Group, provides emotional support for individuals struggling with the aftereffects of COVID-19 illness. While a team of Atlantic Health System physicians help patients navigate the physical healing process, this support group, made up of others who have had COVID, provides support on how to manage the emotional and psychological challenges that accompany this novel virus.

In addition, a Grief and Loss Support Group was opened to the community via Zoom for those who lost a loved one recently and are having difficulty coping. Social workers allow group members to express their feelings of grief and loss; guide them through the grief process; connect with others going through the same experience; and provide resources for personal, one-on-one behavioral health support.

Community Health

The Community Health department has deepened strategic alignment with key departments and service lines across the system to coordinate health education programming and outreach, participate in internal interdisciplinary health committees and community health coalitions, address health priorities identified in the Community Health Needs Assessment, and maximize impact and outcomes through our Community Health Improvement Plan.



Community Health routinely spotlights Atlantic Health System clinicians as subject matter experts in education lectures, overseeing promotion, outreach and marketing, standardizing health education collateral, and measuring attitude, knowledge and behavior change through program evaluation survey tools. By partnering with local organizations, Community Health provides preventative health services to individuals and families in vulnerable communities. This may include screenings, health awareness programs and nutrition education – all of which are tailored to the culturally-specific health issues affecting the population.

The department developed a best-practice model for virtual community education via Zoom and online registration, serving as the guide point for other departments unfamiliar with Zoom, developing an internal workflow to ensure consistency when delivering community programming and offering personalized support for community

members navigating new technology through the Community Health line, department email address, and secure contact form on its Community Health website. Methods by which community members receive key updates and important health programming, include a weekly email, monthly digital/print Community Health events publication, and broad platforms such as Atlantic Health System's e-news and social media, and through an extensive network of community partner organizations. Community Health programs include virtual classes and programs held monthly in health, nutrition, exercise, life enrichment, integrated wellness, and support groups.

Health Priorities Implemented Across the System

Collaborating with the Planning department, service line leadership, and local clinical leads, the Community Health department coordinated and implemented Atlantic Health System's 2020 Community Health Improvement Plan for all five medical centers, drawing upon strategies and interventions to address health priorities identified in the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) process. The Community Health team serves a key role in the Community Health Committees of the Community Advisory Boards at each medical center, guiding the Committees' involvement in community health improvement activities, including providing grant funding to local community organizations who are addressing key health priorities and social determinants of health through their work.



Community Health and Care Coordination collaborated with the Cancer Care service line to secure a grant through ScreenNJ to support colorectal and lung cancer initiatives, particularly for uninsured and underserved community members, with five health educators who have completed Certified Tobacco Treatment Specialist (CTTS) training to expand tobacco cessation classes across our communities, refer participants to lung cancer screenings as appropriate, spearhead outreach and referral initiatives for cessation programs, and maintain outcome tracking for the grant.

COVID-19 Community Support Line

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit New Jersey, Atlantic Health System stood up innovative solutions to support our community through our patient care. One of the responses implemented in a four-day turnaround was the COVID-19 Community Support Hotline, staffed by a team of nurses and aimed at triaging patients who had questions about coronavirus or who believed they were symptomatic. Clinical, technical, and project teams from Integrated Care, Care Coordination, Atlantic Medical Group, Information Services and Support (ISS), Epic, Telehealth and others collaborated to develop a process for assessing patients in the community and connecting them with appropriate resources based

on their needs. The nurse hotline was made available seven days a week for any member of the community.

This process brought up several challenges, each of which was resolved with teamwork and some creative thinking from various teams.

Atlantic Health System clinical team leads developed a screening questionnaire to help identify patients who are high-risk and needed to speak with a doctor or visit the Emergency Department. Because the coronavirus was so new and so little was known about it, public health guidance was constantly changing, and the questionnaire required frequent revisiting to determine if it needed to be modified. Under the leadership of Jan Schwarz-Miller, MD, senior vice president, chief medical and academic officer for Atlantic Health System, medical leadership continually revised the triage protocol, based on CDC recommendations.

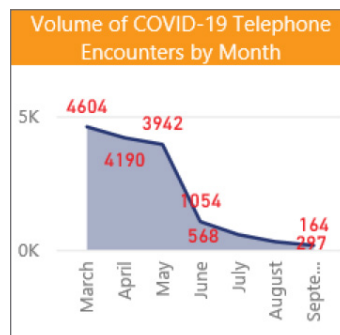
ISS and Epic teams worked with our clinical teams to support the documentation build in Epic, our electronic medical record software, so our nurses and providers could document their assessment of patients and community members. The Epic team overcame barriers to implementation and prioritized expediting access, training and template development to allow for clinical documentation.

Staffing Was Ramped Up Rapidly

Care Coordination nurses staffed the hotline initially, first receiving specialized training in clinical assessment of COVID-19 symptoms, along with training on the call center software. As call volumes increased, it became obvious that more staffing support would be necessary. Redeployed and per diem nurses, as well as nurses "on loan" from various departments throughout Atlantic Medical Group and Atlantic Health System all stepped in to get trained in a matter of days. Because staffing was needed in such a short time, Human Resources had to get involved to quickly set up a process for these nurses to be onboarded in a different role. Many of these employees did not have their own laptops, so the ISS team provided the equipment and set it up for remote access, while the Epic and Telecommunication teams quickly developed training on call center software and documentation in Epic for the nurses staffing the line.

Nurses were able to triage patients' questions and concerns about COVID-19, such as how to isolate themselves and limit their risk of exposure to others. Hotline staff also assessed patients to provide them with a plan of care to manage their condition or symptoms. If a patient was considered appropriate for further assessment, nurses referred patients to an on-call Atlantic Medical Group (AMG) physician who could follow up with the patient with a telephonic visit. Thirty AMG primary care and specialist physicians provided support while also supporting their practice clinical needs. As the program evolved, Atlantic Health System was able to layer in additional functionality including telehealth virtual visits for patients requiring escalation.

As COVID-19 reached its peak and more response became necessary, the hotline developed additional menu options to provide physician support, behavioral health and social support, and community resource connections. A Physician Line was dedicated to providers who were seeking more information on coronavirus and access to testing. Social workers and behavioral health clinicians handled calls from those in the community who were seeking social support or connection to community resources as they dealt with



loneliness, grief, anxiety, and other stress that developed as a result of isolation, job or housing loss, or losing a loved one.

Thousands Received Important Guidance

From March through May, our COVID-19 hotline received more than 10,000 phone calls and handled almost 8,000 of them, with a peak of 25 to 30 nurses and five physicians staffing the line at a time. More than 4,000 patients with COVID-19 symptoms were provided guidance, directed to the appropriate level of care, and prevented from spreading COVID-19 in the community. The call center was open for 12 hours a day, seven days a week during the pandemic's peak, continuing to receive calls on weekends through the month of June. As our state's health care systems worked collectively to flatten the curve, calls decreased significantly but nurses from the Care Coordination team still staff the hotline Monday through Friday from 9:00am to 1:00pm, keeping a pulse on the status of the pandemic in our region. According to Maureen Sweeney-McDonough, director of Care Coordination, "We were fortunate to have a Care Coordination team under Integrated Care in existence that was able to mobilize immediately to support the many challenges the COVID-19 pandemic posed."

The overall goal of the hotline was met – to treat in place wherever appropriate and to direct patients to the right site of care, facilitating a decompressed and operational health care system.

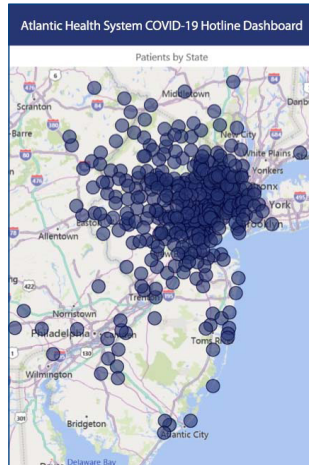
COVID-19 Testing Tent at 475 South Street

While the health care community in the region was figuring out how to cope with a paralyzing number of COVID-19 cases, several Atlantic Health System departments brainstormed how best to react – and do so quickly.

Within days of the first discussion of how to test large numbers of potentially positive patients, a drive-through testing tent was erected in the parking lot of 475 South Street, Morristown, site of Atlantic Health System's corporate office.

Just a short time later, that single-lane operation expanded to two lanes and was equipped with electricity, network capability, portable heaters and specimen refrigerators and freezers.

"The tent exemplifies what Atlantic Health System is all about – caring for our patients and caregivers," said president and CEO Brian Gragnolati. "We identified a serious issue and quickly addressed it to provide excellent service and timely test results. In the end, thousands of families had the answers they needed, and our team stayed safe. I am incredibly proud of the coordination and teamwork behind this achievement."



Over the next 14 weeks, Atlantic Health System caregivers performed tests in rain, snow, wind and blazing heat, testing 12,161 patients for COVID-19, including clearing 5,563 patients for surgeries and procedures.

Team members from Facilities, Information Services and Support, Protection and Security Services, Corporate Health, Integrated Care, the Atlantic Health System Innovation Center, Atlantic Consolidated Lab and Atlantic Medical Group worked together in the tent like a well-oiled machine.

"It was an extraordinary effort," said Robert Peake, vice president, Facilities Management and Real Estate. "The greatest cooperative effort in the shortest timeframe at Atlantic that I can remember ... a great success."

Simplifying a Stressful Time for Patients

Atlantic Health System caregivers and security officers, led by Kevin Dunn, security manager, directed traffic in and out of the tent in a well-organized process. Upon arrival at the tent, patients displayed their identification through a closed window, then slightly lowered them when instructed so that a sample could be collected. The whole process took mere minutes.

Perhaps best of all, according to Scott Lauter, MD, chief medical officer for Atlantic Medical Group (AMG), prearranged appointments meant that our testers never ran out of kits, unlike drive-up testing sites elsewhere that generated long lines and frustration.

"They had it down to precise clockwork," said Lauter, adding that many of the same team members returned to staff the tent day after day, solving issues together and continually streamlining the process. "It was a real team effort. I was really proud of the team."

Overseeing much of the day-to-day operation was Amanda Tempe, director, AMG Practice Operations, and Maureen Sweeney-McDonough, director, Care Coordination.

"There was a need for testing, and we had the answer," Tempe said. Having orders for tests entered in Epic ahead of time by the medical staff and physicians from Atlantic Medical Group and Primary Care Partners, and later all medical staff, made things even easier, with all required data immediately available to testers. "It was an amazing amount of teamwork. We learned how to do it and do it well," she emphasized.

Perhaps the greatest flattery is imitation. Representatives from testing sites in Morris and Union counties visited the tent, and the Atlantic Health System team happily shared best practices and contact information, so the dialogue could continue and benefit patients across New Jersey, said Chris Herzog, chief operating officer for AMG.

"We were privileged to help," Herzog said. "There was a lot of camaraderie. It's one of those things I'm very proud of and will always remember."

For more information on Atlantic Health System's Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) and Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), visit: atlantichealth.org/CHNA