



UNIVERSITY of MARYLAND  
CHARLES REGIONAL  
MEDICAL CENTER



COMMUNITY HEALTH  
Improvement | **20**  
Report | **18**



SUPPORTING  
OUR COMMUNITIES

## a message to **OUR COMMUNITY:**

Striving for wellness, no matter your present health, is a culture we promote in our community. Our mission at University of Maryland Charles Regional Medical Center (UM CRMC) involves providing excellent patient care as measured by our population's health. We take this mission seriously, and in the last few years we launched several new programs focusing on illness prevention and slowing chronic disease progression.

As your community healthcare provider, UM CRMC gives you resources and tools to help you manage your own health. Research shows increased use of effective preventive services results in less suffering from illnesses that may have been avoided by early detection and treatment. Preventive care involves a shift beyond treating the sick to maintaining wellness and good health. We will always be here for to help sick and injured patients, and our expanded circle of care aims also to keep you well!

Annual checkups are an important part of preventive care. These regular physician visits include a physical assessment and blood work once every year, even when you're not ill or injured. Other medical services categorized as preventive care are: immunizations, medication compliance, screening tests, and measures taken to prevent falls, injuries, and premature death. By taking advantage of routine preventive care, you can stay healthier and pay less for medical expenses.

While maintaining a highly skilled workforce at UM CRMC, we added several excellent physician partners to our University of Maryland Community Medical Group, including a primary care physician, endocrinologists, and surgeons. No matter your age, all adults should have a primary care doctor and all infants, children, and adolescents should have a pediatrician for ongoing care. Visit our website at [UMCharlesRegional.org](http://UMCharlesRegional.org) for help finding a community physician that can help meet your health needs.

Education is one of the keys to illness prevention. Our nurse navigator team provides one-on-one training for patients hospitalized with illnesses such as: congestive heart failure, diabetes, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). We also offer support groups for patients with lung disease (Better Breathers), heart disease (Healthier Hearts), diabetes, and stroke and brain injuries, and chronic disease management classes such as our Living Well program. These groups offer convenient opportunities to learn more about healthy living conditions and get support for self-management or caring for your loved ones.

To quote Benjamin Franklin, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." This could not be more true when it comes to your health. Staying active and maintaining a healthy weight is crucial in reducing risks of diabetes and other chronic illnesses. Avoiding smoking or secondhand smoke will help reduce chances of getting cancer or COPD. Smart food choices made to fuel our bodies vitally influence daily energy and overall health outcomes.

Improving community health is more complex and powerful than prescribing a pill. Through periodic community health needs assessments and participation in Partnerships for a Healthier Charles County, UM CRMC invests in the ongoing work of building a healthier community. Striving for wellness takes commitment from both the hospital and the community, and together we will make Charles County a healthy place to live.

Sincerely,



*Noel A. Cervino*

Noel A. Cervino  
President & CEO  
UM Charles Regional  
Medical Center



*Crystal N. Hunt*

Crystal Hunt  
Director, Marketing & Communications  
UM Charles Regional  
Medical Center

**UM CRMC** invests in the ongoing work of building a healthier community.

# COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT REPORT

## Partnerships for a Healthier Charles County

Just as the health of an individual is affected by the community, University of Maryland Charles Regional Medical Center (UM CRMC) believes a strong medical center serves the community most effectively by working in partnership with like-minded community organizations.

Partnerships for a Healthier Charles County (PHCC) was founded in part by UM CRMC in 1994 as a community health network of county agencies and community-based service organizations. Today, PHCC includes more than 30 non-profit organizations and relevant county agencies. PHCC's vision is to improve the health and quality of life for all Charles County citizens, with the goal of increasing life expectancy and health outcomes across all racial and ethnic groups.

PHCC operates under the assumption that its member organizations have overlapping areas of care and concern that are best served by its combined efforts. Compared to other Maryland hospitals, UM CRMC has one of the largest and most active community coalitions, serving as a model for other hospitals statewide who are seeking to build a cooperative local coalition to implement more effective population health management.

The PHCC steering committee is made up of representatives from UM CRMC and three other local entities: the Charles County Department of Health, Charles County Public Schools and the College of Southern Maryland. Approximately 75 people meet face to face each quarter for round-table discussions, question and answer time and ongoing planning and problem-solving.

UM CRMC completed a comprehensive Community Health Needs Assessment in FY 2018 in partnership with the Charles County Department of Health. The Charles County Health Improvement Plan was developed under the leadership of UM CRMC through the PHCC team members. To put the Health Improvement Plan into action, PHCC created three implementation teams — the Access to Health Care Team, the Behavioral Health Team, and the Chronic Disease Prevention Team. Each of the three PHCC teams was tasked with the development of a three-year action plan that articulated clear strategies, activities and tracking measures for project implementation.

### Access to Health Care Team

This implementation team targets barriers to health care access, with the goals of increasing primary care and specialty physicians in Charles County and improving social determinants of health such as transportation and health literacy. Partner organizations include the Department of Social Services, the Charles County Department of Health, the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, the Tri-County Council, the Maryland Insurance Administration, Health Partners, Inc., and Greater Baden Medical Services, a federally qualified health center.



### Behavioral Health Team

Focusing on mental health and substance use services, the objectives of this team include increasing access to and treatment for behavioral health issues, reducing stigma for mental health, reducing underage drinking, increasing treatment for drug dependency and addressing use and overdose. Partners include a broad cross section of mental health and substance use community organizations and local and state agencies.

### Chronic Disease Prevention Team

Goals for this team include reducing the death rate and prevalence of diabetes, reducing heart disease deaths and increasing the percentage of adults and children with a healthy BMI in Charles County. Community education and collaboration with area physicians and community and governmental agencies are key strategies in pursuing these goals.

This report focuses on the findings of the 2018 Charles County Health Needs Assessment, the resulting Health Improvement Action Plans that were developed and the objectives that will be pursued from FY 2019-2021.



## Chronic Disease Self-Management Classes

To improve the lives of those living with one or more chronic illnesses, UM CRMC offers free Chronic Disease Self-Management Classes to the community. The free six-week workshop entitled “Living Well with Chronic Disease” meets once a week for two-and-a-half hours and is facilitated by trained instructors. The workshop is an evidence based program from Stanford University.

Subjects covered include: techniques to manage frustration, fatigue, pain and isolation; appropriate exercise for maintaining and improving strength, flexibility and endurance; appropriate use of medications; communicating effectively with family, friends, and health professionals; nutrition, decision-making and how to evaluate new treatments.

By giving people the tools to better manage their conditions, they can explore healthy ways to live, despite their health issues. Participants see they are not alone in their struggle and learn from each other. It’s a humbling experience to see them graduate after six weeks.

The class is designed to enhance medical treatment and disease-specific education such as Better Breathers, cardiac rehabilitation, or diabetes instruction. In addition, many people have more than one chronic condition. The program is helpful especially for these people, as it gives them the skills to coordinate all the things needed to manage their health, and keep active.

## Stroke Awareness

UM CRMC is designated as a Primary Stroke Center by Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems (MIEMSS). The concept behind a Primary Stroke Center includes a heightened state of readiness for stroke patients, making sure hospital-wide mechanisms are in place to rapidly identify and intervene in acute stroke and a multi-disciplinary team who can deliver rapid and sophisticated care.

The key features of a Primary Stroke Center are that medical staff stabilize and treat acute stroke patients, provide initial acute care and either admit patients or transfer them to a comprehensive stroke center as needed.

Stroke is one of the nation’s leading causes of disability and is the nation’s fifth cause of death behind heart disease and all cancers combined. Identifying when you or someone you know is having a stroke and immediately getting emergency care by calling 911 are critical steps in saving a life and preventing a disability. Rapid care can save lives and reduce the long-term effects of stroke.

## Reaching the Community

UM CRMC provides stroke education throughout the year at health fairs and community events. Our stroke education focuses on the importance of recognizing the signs and symptoms of stroke. Members of our stroke team were also honored for receiving the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association’s Get With the Guidelines® Stroke Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award for the fifth year in a row, and also received the Target: Stroke Honor Roll Elite designation. The award recognizes the hospital’s commitment to ongoing quality improvement in providing the most appropriate stroke treatment based on the latest scientific evidence.



Our stroke education focuses on the **importance of recognizing** the signs and symptoms of stroke.

## Center for Diabetes Education

In September 2016, UM CRMC launched The Center for Diabetes Education, a nationally accredited program that meets all standards and guidelines set by the American Association for Diabetes Educators for quality and education. The mission is to teach, train and empower patients with self-management skills necessary to improve their quality of life and better prevent, delay, or manage diabetes and its complications. UM CRMC recognizes that diabetes is a chronic disease that is best managed by the individual and assist participants in translating diabetes knowledge into improved self-care activities.

The program is for adults with type 1, type 2 or gestational diabetes, which can occur during pregnancy. Participants start with a one-hour in-person assessment in a private setting.

Each class is small and includes five to 15 people on average. There are four group sessions with meetings held once every other week. Participants can bring a friend, partner, or caregiver.

Participants learn nutritional guidelines and helpful tips to improve their blood sugar and manage their diabetes. Discussions center on how they can overcome the challenges of living with diabetes and help reduce their frustrations.

Research shows that by attending diabetes education classes, people have lowered their A1C by half a point. In the pilot program at UM CRMC, program participants found they lowered their Hemoglobin A1C (three-month blood sugar number) by nearly a full point, which was much more than the national average of .08.

Since opening the Center, the team has cared for over 500 patients, with approximately 1,400 patient visits. The diabetes classes are offered in the morning, afternoon and evenings. Check the website, [www.UMCharlesregional.org/DiabetesEducation](http://www.UMCharlesregional.org/DiabetesEducation) for more information.

## Improving Patient Access to Care: Mobile Integrated Health Care Team

A unique collaboration of the Charles County Department of Emergency Medical Services (EMS), Charles County Department of Health, and UM CRMC has brought outreach services to people who most need access to the right health care provider at the right time since August 2017. The collaboration is funded through a grant from the Maryland Community Health Resources Commission and UM CRMC to support the effort.

The Mobile Integrated Health (MIH) Care Team consists of a local EMS paramedic, nurse practitioner, and community health worker.

The three-person team follows up on physician recommendations made during hospital stays, visit recently discharged patients at home to check for any issues that could lead to further health problems, and find ways to solve any other health care issues presented in a patient’s home.

The MIH Care Program helps provide capacity for relieving potentially avoidable use of the local emergency department and emergency medical services. MIH will also link individuals to community services and resources at home to help manage chronic conditions, such as diabetes.

This program aims to assist community members to utilize prevention and disease management resources to stay healthier and stay out of the hospital. The Charles County MIH program began bridging the gap of social determinants of health and delivering tailored healthcare to its target community in 2017. Of the first 24 patients that met program criteria, the MIH program achieved a 74 percent reduction in emergency department visits and an 84 percent reduction in inpatient hospital admissions. The MIH team is empowering their patients' independence and freedom through wellness and improved healthcare.



## Expanding Behavioral Health

### Drug Takeback Program

Maryland's first comprehensive Drug Take-Back Program was approved in August 2016 in Charles County. The program, funded by a \$20,000 state grant, involves a partnership with Charles County Government, local pharmacies, the State of Maryland and UM CRMC. The community program is designed to prevent the stockpiling of medications, including ointments, patches, needles, and capsules in the home with the goal of keeping children and water systems safe and to avoid drugs getting into the hands of addicts.

### Community Conversation

Depression and anxiety are the most common mental health issues in the United States. More than 40 million adults are affected by anxiety disorders and each year, more than 16 million adults are affected by clinical depression. In Maryland, one in five children between the ages of 13 and 18 lives with a mental health condition.

As a trusted community resource and partner, University of Maryland Medical System brings together professionals and experts around mental health issues to offer a conference, Not All Wounds are Visible: A Community Conversation. Sessions focusing on the role of substance abuse and women and children's mental health enables the community to gain valuable insight into a variety of topics, including available tools and resources. Additionally, presenters sharing personal stories of struggles and triumph provide hope for others managing similar challenges. Offered in both the spring and the fall, the conferences are live-streamed from the University of Baltimore Campus Center with several University of Maryland Medical System affiliates hosting satellite viewings in their communities.

### Telemedicine Program

In partnership with Qler Solutions, UM Charles Regional began offering telemedicine services in fall 2017, with board-certified psychiatrists providing behavioral healthcare 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to patients. In the hospital emergency department setting, telemedicine allows services expanded access to care, reduced wait time for specialist care and accelerated treatment for patients.



## COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The University of Maryland Charles County Regional Medical Center (UM CRMC) conducted a major study of the health needs in the county and surrounding areas in 2018. Called the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA), it provides a snapshot of the county's health by identifying the gaps in care for the community, as well as providing a benchmark of progress toward the goals set in the Health Improvement Plan for the UM CRMC service area.

Community input is a significant and important part of the CHNA process. The assessment used four different sources of data. Input was collected from 846 Charles County residents who completed a 27-question online survey, 1,317 respondents who completed a short four-question paper survey and 128 people who participated in five focus groups with community leaders, citizens and stakeholders. A quantitative data analysis of secondary published data was completed.

Data from this CHNA process are then used to develop the next Charles County Health Improvement Plan and subsequent Team Action Plans. They provide the county with measurable outcomes and benchmarks for program implementation.

### CHNA IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The findings are used to address gaps in care and add resources that will lead to better community health. The top three priorities in 2018 were:

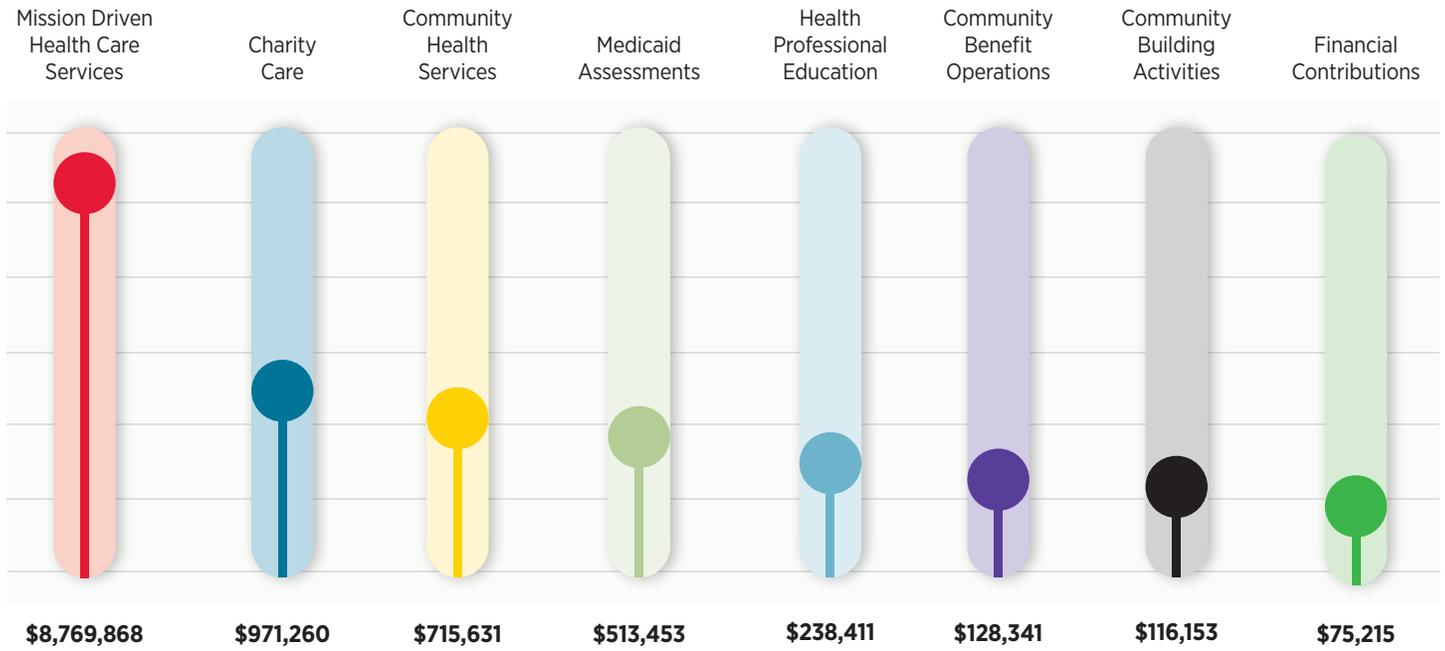
1. Chronic Disease Prevention & Management
2. Access to Health Care
3. Behavioral Health

Looking back and looking ahead, UM CRMC continues to gather useful quantitative and qualitative health information from the community that empowers the medical center and its community partners in promoting a healthier Charles County. Meeting community health needs can be something of a moving target, but staying informed and responsive to changing trends keeps the hospital in tune with the needs of its service area.

To read the entire CHNA report, visit [www.UMCharlesRegional.org](http://www.UMCharlesRegional.org) and click on the Community tab at the top of the page. The CHNA is listed on the right drop down menu.



# COMMUNITY BENEFITS FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS for Fiscal Year 2018



**\$11,528,332** TOTAL COMMUNITY BENEFIT



## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE POLICY

If you cannot pay for all or part of your care from our hospital, you may be able to get **free** or **lower cost** services.

### PLEASE NOTE:

1. We treat all patients needing emergency care, no matter what they are able to pay.
2. Services provided by physicians or other providers may not be covered by the hospital Financial Assistance Policy. You can call 301-609-4400 if you have questions.

### How the Process Works

When you become a patient, we ask if you have any health insurance. We will not charge you more for hospital services than we charge people with health insurance. The hospital will:

1. Give you information about our financial assistance policy or
2. Offer you help with a counselor who will assist you with the application.

### How We Review Your Application

The hospital will look at your ability to pay for care. We look at your income and family size.

You may receive free or lower costs of care if:

1. Your income or your family's total income is low for the area where you live, or
2. Your income falls below the federal poverty level if you had to pay for the full cost of your hospital care, minus any health insurance payments.

**PLEASE NOTE:** If you are able to get financial help, we will tell you how much you can get. If you are not able to get financial help, we will tell you why not.



UM CRMC provides stroke education throughout the year at health fairs and community events. In May 2016, UM CRMC held "Striking Out Stroke," an awareness event at Regency Furniture Stadium, home to the Southern Maryland Blue Crabs.

### How to Apply for Financial Help

1. Fill out a **Financial Assistance Application Form**.
2. Give us all of your information to help us understand your financial situation.
3. Turn the application form in to us.

**PLEASE NOTE:** The hospital must screen patients for Medicaid before giving financial help.

### Other Helpful Information

1. You can get a **free copy** of our Financial Assistance Policy and Application Form:
  - *Online* at ([UMCharlesRegional.org/FinancialAssistance](http://UMCharlesRegional.org/FinancialAssistance))
  - *In person* at the Call Center at:  
5 Garrett Avenue  
La Plata, MD 20646
  - *By mail:* call 301-609-4400 to request a copy
2. You can call the **Financial Assistance Office** if you have questions or need help applying. You can also call if you need help in another language. Call: 301-609-4400.



UNIVERSITY of MARYLAND  
CHARLES REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

5 Garrett Avenue  
La Plata, MD 20646  
301-609-4000

