As a not-for-profit organization, Sharp HealthCare places great value on the health and wellness of the San Diego community. Sharp’s mission is to improve the health of our community with a commitment to excellence in all that we do.

Our more than 20,000 affiliated physicians, nurses, staff and volunteers are dedicated to providing the extraordinary level of care called The Sharp Experience.

As a reflection of Sharp’s charitable mission, the organization contributed more than $462 million in unreimbursed community benefit in fiscal year 2019 — the difference between the cost of services provided and reimbursement received. Sharp provided free care to more than 1,700 inpatients and more than 26,300 outpatients. Sharp also performed more than 870 free surgeries with 63% of those surgeries requiring extended stays in Sharp hospitals. One of every $8 of Sharp’s net revenue was spent in direct support of our community.

This summary features a snapshot of community benefit programs provided by Sharp in fiscal year 2019, as well as stories from community members that highlight the impact of these programs. To view the entire Sharp HealthCare Community Benefit Plan and Report, Fiscal Year 2019, or to learn more about Sharp’s community involvement, visit sharp.com/community.
The Impact of Sharp: Stories From Our Community

Protecting Seniors From Falls

There are many things at Sharp Coronado Hospital that remind Sue Cargill of treasured times. From the patients receiving excellent care, which remind her of when she worked as a nurse, to the sense of community, similar to the warmth of the small Illinois town where she and her husband, Lee, were raised, Sharp Coronado offers much to make them feel at home.

“Sharp Coronado Hospital is a big part of our community,” Sue says. “Actually, it’s more like a family.”

Sue takes her role as a Sharp Coronado family member very seriously. She serves as a hospital volunteer and as a member of the Sharp Coronado Patient and Family Advisory Council — which engages the hospital’s patients and their families in building a culture of patient-centered care. Sue has also been participating in the many community health classes offered by the hospital since she and Lee moved to Coronado in 1979.

Sue enjoys qi gong movement classes and gardening classes in the hospital’s organic garden. However, one of her favorite classes is one she helped develop.

Sharp Coronado has always welcomed and valued community feedback, so when Sue recommended a workshop to educate older adults about fall prevention, the team was quick to respond.

“As you get older, your balance is different,” Sue says. As avid bicyclists around Coronado, Sue admits that she and Lee have both experienced a fall or two. The Fall Prevention Workshop educates community members about common causes of falls, ways to prevent falls and strategies to avoid injury during a fall, all of which they certainly appreciate and use during their regular bike trips and other daily activities.

“These classes provide a true patient-centered service for attendees, and Lee and I benefit beyond just the information that is shared,” Sue says. “We also value the personal connections we make and the warm attention we always receive.”

Creating a Path to Health Care Careers

Vallarie Basa remembers the exact moment she knew that health care was the career path for her.

There were lots of clues growing up, from the time she was a little girl tending to the cuts and scratches of her young cousins, to her teen years when she helped care for her uncle during his cancer treatments.

At Granite Hills High School, Vallarie participated in an honors-level science program for students interested in health care careers. One of the requirements was to complete an internship. Vallarie
was accepted into the Healthcare Exploration Summer Institute (HESI), a selective, intensive internship program at Sharp Grossmont Hospital.

Vallarie can talk for hours about her great experiences in the HESI program, including presentations from expert speakers, reviews of medical case studies and rotations through several hospital departments. “I learned about jobs I never even knew existed and could ask questions about the different paths professionals took to get to their positions,” she says.

However, the most powerful moments were with the people she met, including a concerned father whose infant needed a blood draw.

“The baby’s father was really worried,” Vallarie recalls. “I shared that I was a student, but I could explain what was going on and told him that his baby was in good hands. He said that it made him feel good to know that people like me would be future health care providers.”

It was this encounter that made Vallarie certain she was right where she was supposed to be.

Vallarie carried that moment with her as she graduated high school, went on to mentor the next class of HESI participants and became a certified nursing assistant. Today, she is applying to nursing schools and working at Sharp Grossmont Hospital as a patient attendant.

“When I walk into Sharp Grossmont, I feel like I am the person I am meant to be,” Vallarie says. “And it all started with the HESI program.”

Healthy Steps for a Healthy Life

Bill and Isobel Chisum like to keep moving. In fact, the retired couple in their early 80s exercises every day while also managing a busy schedule of volunteering, travel, socializing and worshipping at their church.

The active couple needs no incentive to join an exercise class. However, when Isobel was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2006, days before boarding a previously planned cruise, they never expected to find a class they’d still love more than a decade later.

“After receiving Isobel’s diagnosis, we decided to keep our plans to go on the cruise to help take our minds off of what was to come,” Bill says. “We heard there would be a breast cancer lecture on the cruise, and though it wasn’t what we wanted to hear about at that time, we attended and met the speaker who changed our attitude tremendously.”

The speaker was Sherry Lebed, co-founder of a therapeutic exercise program called Healthy Steps, which happened to be launching at Sharp Memorial Hospital for cancer patients and their loved ones. She encouraged Bill and Isobel to join the class, and 14 years later, they continue to go.

“Because of the class, we just feel so good, so healthy!” says Isobel, now fully in remission. “Not only is it great exercise, but we’ve also met some great instructors and community members over the years.”

Bill and Isobel credit the connections they’ve made for benefiting them almost as much as the exercise. “It’s important to have contact with others, and the social opportunities Healthy Steps offers are invaluable — we even stay in touch with the other participants outside of class,” Bill says.

The Chisums are grateful for Sherry’s encouragement to join Healthy Steps at Sharp Memorial. “It couldn’t have been better meeting her on that trip,” Bill says. “The classes we’re still attending have provided us with some very positive experiences.”
Other Benefits for the Broader Community, including participation in community health fairs and events; the provision of critical health education and support groups, preventive health screenings and flu vaccinations; as well as financial and in-kind support to community organizations that improve the health and wellness of the San Diego community. In addition, Sharp leaders participated in numerous community organizations, committees and coalitions to improve the health of San Diegans. Sharp also collaborated with local schools to provide students with experiences to develop and support interest in health care careers.

Health Research, Education and Training Programs, including supervision of residents and interns; sponsorship of health-related programs, classes and professors at local colleges and universities; and education and training programs for medical, nursing and other community health care professionals. Sharp also facilitated interdisciplinary research on health care practices in order to identify and promote quality patient care across the health care community through its Outcomes Research Institute.

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