



# Detailed Initiatives in Support of WakeMed’s Community Health Needs Assessment Implementation Plan 2020–2023

Wake County’s 2019 Community Health Needs Assessment was developed as a collaborative effort between the residents of Wake County and the following community partners:

- WakeMed Health & Hospitals
- Duke Raleigh Hospital
- UNC Rex Healthcare
- Wake County Human Services
- Advance Community Health
- United Way of the Greater Triangle
- Wake County Medical Society Community Health Foundation

Throughout the research and information-gathering process, five key opportunities were identified as critical to improving the health and well-being of our community:

- Access to Care
- Employment
- Mental Health & Substance Use Disorders
- Housing & Homelessness
- Transportation Options & Transit

As such, WakeMed is engaged in many initiatives and strategies outlined herein to address these findings. Priorities among these initiatives can change based on findings of effectiveness and availability of resources, but these efforts are planned for the Fiscal 2020-2023 horizon.

The 2019 CHNA will be used on an ongoing basis to help WakeMed prioritize approaches to improving the health of our community. WakeMed will initiate some efforts on its own, for others it will seek to collaborate with community agencies and other providers.

WakeMed’s mission is to improve the health and well-being of our community with outstanding and compassionate care to all. This mission and our focus on putting our patients and families first guides all WakeMed strategies, goals and initiatives.



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## ACCESS TO CARE

Ensuring all members of our growing community have access to the healthcare services they need is critical to maintaining the health of Wake County. As such, WakeMed is focused on improving access to care through continued growth and expansion, as well as the development of innovative models of care delivery.

### Growing Services, Specialties & Capacity

The Triangle area is one of the fastest-growing regions in the country. To keep pace with the growing demand for healthcare services here in Wake County, WakeMed continues to add new services, specialties and providers. In the coming year, we expect to improve access by increasing WakeMed's capacity to care for more patients than ever by:

- Hiring ~80 new physicians and advanced practice providers
- Opening new outpatient physician practice sites
- Adding 40 new beds at WakeMed Cary Hospital
- Expanding the Emergency Department at WakeMed North Hospital.
- Opening a new Children's Inpatient Rehab Unit in the Children's Hospital
- Continuing to grow our community-based behavioral health network to better serve the needs of patients who have behavioral health needs aside from medical care.
- Launching dozens of new programs and services throughout the community, including (but not limited to): Patient navigator programs; wound care services in Cary; ECMO (advanced life support for heart and/or lung failure); coordination with Duke Health for smoking cessation and lung cancer screening, breast health, other cardiovascular and oncology services, and expanded inpatient and surgery capabilities at North.
- Continuing WakeMed's ongoing performance improvement efforts known as the Wake Way to Excellence, which allows us to enhance efficiency and streamline operations so we can improve throughput and capacity to improve access and outcomes for our patients.

### WakeMed Community Case Management

WakeMed has collaborated to use data and analytics to identify and engage the highest risk, highest utilizing uninsured and behavioral health patients in short term intensive case management. The team supports transitions of care from the hospital to a medical home for primary care, specialists as needed, and behavioral health providers. Additionally, this team supports patients with transition housing, referral to long term housing, and engagement with entitlement and support services. The Community Case Management team works collaboratively with Alliance Health and their network providers in Wake County, UNC Wakebrook, Wake County Social Services, MedAssist, Alliance Medical Ministries, Urban Ministries, Catholic Charities, and other various support agencies.

### Transitional Health Program

WakeMed's Transitional Health program is designed to improve outcomes for high-risk patients by extending clinical care into the community and to the home through home visits and mobile healthcare services. The program coordinates follow-up care for patients in their homes and then works with other WakeMed partners and community practices to transition patients to a medical home for ongoing care.

### WakeMed Virtual Urgent Care

In an effort to bring convenient healthcare services to both adults and children, WakeMed recently launched a new online Virtual Urgent Care service. This allows patients to access high-quality urgent care services 24/7, from anywhere in North Carolina from the convenience of their computer or smart phone. This service makes it easier for residents in rural communities who may lack access to urgent care services get the care they need. It's also designed to provide an alternate option to using the emergency department when patients have no other option for care – improving access for those who really do need emergency-level care. Finally, through a partnership with RelyMD, this service is available at no charge at certain homeless shelters.

### WakeMed App

Similarly, WakeMed recently launched the WakeMed All Access App – which makes it easy for patients and the community to access WakeMed services, schedule their appointments, communicate with their healthcare team and find their way to and from (and within) our facilities.

## Corporate and Community Health Services

WakeMed provides an array of corporate and community health services to over 25,000 community members annually to improve the health of our community. Services include flu shots, cholesterol and glucose screenings, blood pressure checks, stroke risk assessments, height and weight assessments, health coaching, nutrition counseling and hundreds of educational seminars and health fair booths to educate our community about the importance of prevention.

## Mobile Wellness

WakeMed has invested in a 37-foot mobile truck which allows us to bring needed medical services to the community. The flexibility of this mobile health program allows us to provide better access to care for our citizens while offering a range of services to meet our community's diverse health care needs. The service line has been operational for one year and has provided services to over 3,500 people. Services have included medical physicals, vascular screenings, cholesterol and glucose screenings, blood pressure checks, flu shots, prostate screenings, nutrition services and various educational services.

## Providing Support to Community Organizations

WakeMed partners with a wide variety of community-based organizations to help improve access to healthcare.

- **Advance Community Health and NeighborHealth**

WakeMed partners with our local Federally Qualified Health Clinics (FQHC) to provide health services to vulnerable populations.

- **Safe Kids Wake County**

Safe Kids Wake County is composed of area organizations, businesses, and individuals interested and committed to child safety. WakeMed provides in-kind support for staff, various resources and takes a leadership role for the Safe Kids collaborative as part of our Level 1 Trauma program.

- **Debnam Clinic**

WakeMed contracts with the Debnam Clinic in order to provide medical care to the underserved in communities within Southeast Raleigh and other parts of Wake County. The clinic provides follow up appointments for patients discharged from acute care or the emergency department and seeks to establish a medical home for patients who have been unable to find access to primary care. The clinic also helps WakeMed ensure appropriate aftercare for patients discharged from the hospital.

- **Interfaith Food Shuttle**

The Food Shuttle recovers and distributes over 6 million pounds of food per year, and teaches skills for self-sufficiency including culinary job skills, shopping and cooking healthy on a budget, and how to grow food. WakeMed continues to provide annual support for the Interfaith Food Shuttle through food donations, monetary support and board representation.

- **Tammy Lynn Center & Hilltop Home**

WakeMed physicians are serving as medical directors for these two community-based organizations serving children and adults with special needs. The Hilltop Home is an intermediate care facility that supports children with severe/profound developmental disabilities and medical fragility. The Tammy Lynn Center helps children and adults with developmental disabilities by empowering families and enriching the lives of children and adults through education, community and support services. Both agencies offer residential and outpatient services.

- **Urban Ministries of Wake County, Open Door Clinic**

WakeMed provided initial seed money to help develop a new facility, and continues to support the organization through collaborative approaches to care, volunteers and annual financial support. In fact, WakeMed's financial support made it possible for Urban Ministries to hire their first medical director and other vital clinical staff for their Open Door Clinic. Our continued commitment to Urban Ministries includes the provision of an embedded case manager to help coordinate care for patients.

- **Alliance Medical Ministry**

WakeMed provides significant funding and in-kind support to the Ministry, which provides affordable, primary medical care to low income, uninsured working families in Wake County. The comprehensive care provided includes acute and chronic medical care, urgent care appointments, preventive medicine and health education, monthly screening eye exams for diabetic patients, all necessary lab work, free or reduced priced medications, monthly ENT and GYN clinics, bilingual services, and 24-hour coordination of care including a bilingual after-hours answering service.

- **SAFEChild Child Advocacy Center**

The SAFEChild Advocacy Center is where children who have been sexually or physically abused come to talk with caring professionals who help them with physical and psychological healing, and help them navigate the legal system that involves police, district attorneys and courts. All the services that the young victims and their families need are housed under one roof. WakeMed is one of the many collaborating partners and WakeMed's pediatricians provide examinations and care at the Center three days a week. In addition to provider support, WakeMed makes an annual contribution to the organization.

- **Solace Center**

InterAct's Solace Center helps victims of sexual abuse with necessary exams and evaluation, and many WakeMed nurses are Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) certified. InterAct is a private, non-profit, agency that provides safety, support, and awareness to victims and survivors of domestic violence and rape/sexual assault. InterAct fulfills this mission through the support of its volunteers and community. The program also helps patients connect with a variety of support services within the community. WakeMed provides financial and in-kind support to InterAct for the Solace Center and many other programs.

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## EMPLOYMENT

As one of the largest private employers in Wake County, WakeMed employs more than 9,500 professionals in health careers and support services fields such as IT, hospitality, environmental services, engineering, finance, risk management and pastoral care with an annual payroll of \$836,470,150 (FY 2019).

One of WakeMed's strategic plan goals is to maintain an Extraordinary Team – which allows us to provide access to a variety of careers, career advancement opportunities and a good living wage right here in Wake County.

We are committed to training our own employees, providing opportunities for continued growth, education and advancement. We're also focused on developing the healthcare workforce of the future, equipping students with the skills and knowledge to secure employment in Wake County.

### Employee Training Programs

- **Nursing Education**

WakeMed's Nursing Education department provides 285 ongoing clinical training and education classes for our team of 3,600 nurses throughout the system. In FY19 Nursing Education provided 81,305 hours of education and training.

- **Wake AHEC**

As the site for Wake Area Health Education Center (AHEC), WakeMed provides a wide variety of continuing educational experiences for employees and healthcare workers throughout the region. Wake AHEC is affiliated with the North Carolina Area Health Education Centers Program at the University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill School of Medicine.

- **WakeMed Simulation Center**

The WakeMed Medical Simulation Center is designed to facilitate realistic multi-disciplinary clinical training and education using patient simulators, educational gaming and other technologies. Physicians, nurses, respiratory therapists and first responders benefit from this unique learning environment. In FY19, the Center provided training for more than 6,000 participants.

- **WakeMed Foundation Skills Scholarship/Grant Funding**

The WakeMed Foundation awards and administers scholarships and grants to fund continuing education opportunities and programs to help employees grow their skills to further WakeMed's mission. Since its inception, this program has provided more than \$500,000 to support advanced training and certification programs for employees.

- **Clinical Education Partnerships**

As a major medical teaching institution, WakeMed's primary clinical education partnerships are with UNC, Campbell, and Duke but we also work with other medical education programs across the state. Annually, over 200 UNC students, 300 UNC residents, 32 Campbell PA students, 73 Campbell medical students, and 46 Duke residents complete a rotation at WakeMed each year. WakeMed offers residency teaching programs in emergency medicine, internal medicine, obstetrics & gynecology, orthopaedics, otolaryngology, pediatrics, general surgery and urology. Over 200 providers hold faculty appointments with one of the local university medical training programs. On the nursing side, WakeMed places approximately 1,800 nursing students per year for rotations at WakeMed.

- **Clinical Residency Programs**

- WakeMed offers several residency programs for nurses, pharmacists and surgical physician assistants. WakeMed's Clinical Nurse Residency is a one-year program that offers clinical and educational activities to facilitate professional development and personal growth for the new nurse graduate. WakeMed is proud to report an average one-year post-hire retention rate of 90 percent (national average ranges from 35-65 percent). In FY19, WakeMed hired 153 nurse residents.
- WakeMed offers a variety of Pharmacy Residency programs through partnerships with the University of North Carolina Eshelman School of Pharmacy and Campbell University College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences.
- In addition, our Surgical Physician Assistant Residency Program is dedicated to the future of medicine by creating proficient and dedicated surgical physician assistants.

- **Wake Technical Community College**

WakeMed partners with Wake Tech and other community colleges to provide clinical experiences for students in health sciences course of study including nursing, laboratory technicians, imaging, medical assistants and more.

- **Wake Early College of Health & Sciences**

A first of its kind in the nation, the Wake Early College of Health and Sciences (WECHS) is a magnet school and partnership of the Wake County Public School System, Wake Technical Community College (Wake Tech) and WakeMed Health & Hospitals. Students participate in an academic program that fulfills North Carolina high school graduation requirements and allows them to complete college coursework as part of their high school career. Participating students can graduate in either four or five years and to earn an AS or an AAS degree, which is transferable to four-year institutions. In addition to classroom instruction, students will participate in job shadowing and internships at WakeMed.

- **Employee Tuition Reimbursement**

To encourage employees to pursue advanced degrees and specialty training, all WakeMed employees are eligible to apply for tuition and specialty certification reimbursement after they have completed 12 months of employment at WakeMed. In FY2018, WakeMed provided more than \$860,000 in funding to thousands of employees.

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## MENTAL HEALTH/SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS

Like most health systems across the country, WakeMed has seen a steady increase in the demand for behavioral health services. As such, we have continued to invest significant time, energy and resources to increase the capacity and breadth of services needed to support patients suffering from behavioral health conditions. Many of these strategies rely on the strong partnerships we've built with community-based organizations and our peer healthcare organizations throughout Wake County.

- **The Network for Advancing Behavioral Health (NABH)**

This collaborative is a high-performance, multi-disciplinary network of outpatient and community-based organizations. NABH has developed a common screening and assessment tool that mitigates social and medical obstacles to access care/treatment and is committed to improving the patient experience and enhancing care coordination for individuals with behavioral health needs. The NABH is in the process of developing a transitional care specialist team to provide greater support to our patients, a Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) team and a peer support connect network. The NABH members are Monarch, YES (Yelverton's Enrichment Services), Carolina Outreach, Carolina Partners in Mental Healthcare, PLLC, RHA Health Services, TelePsych Supports and SouthLight Healthcare.

- **The Connected Community**

Connected Community is a network of community-based organizations aimed at reducing insecurities of daily living, such as hunger, lack of housing and lack of transportation for individuals who have behavioral health and substance use issues. Currently we have 10 organizations that make up the Connected Community including: NC Med Assist, Green Chair, Step Up Ministry, The Center for Volunteer Caregiving, Haven House Services, CASA, Healing Transitions, Meals on Wheels Wake County, Fredrick Edgerton Foundation and Food Bank of Central and Eastern NC.

- **Triangle Behavioral Inpatient Network**

As part of the umbrella behavioral health program developed by WakeMed, leaders are now in the process of establishing a Triangle Behavioral Inpatient Network. The Council consists of eight inpatient partners with a total of 808 inpatient behavioral health beds. The partners of the Council will work together to streamline the process of admissions for patients waiting for inpatient care.

- Behavioral Health Crisis and Consultation Liaison Service**  
 WakeMed has developed a Mental Health Crisis team of 40-plus clinicians who work closely with patients being seen in WakeMed's emergency departments. This team works closely with case managers and social workers from a variety of local mental health organizations in the community to identify appropriate resources when acute medical care is not the primary need. In addition, WakeMed has established an inpatient consultation liaison service that offers psychiatric consultative care to inpatients and observation patients at the Raleigh Campus who are either admitted for medical problems but have significant psychiatric co-morbidities, or who are awaiting bed availability and transfer to an appropriate psychiatric facility.
- Telepsychology Service**  
 This innovative service allows WakeMed to offer expert behavioral health care at all seven of our Emergency Departments throughout the region, around-the-clock, through one-on-one virtual technology.
- Pediatric Primary Care Mental Health Services**  
 At our pediatric primary care practice in Raleigh, patients have access to the Project Launch Program that offers Triple P parenting, in-house counseling sessions, assessment, and mental health referrals. The practice is staffed with a social worker who is a certified Anger Management Specialist. WakeMed's new Pediatric Primary Care office in Clayton provides patients access to a licensed pediatric psychologist and other mental health coaches via telehealth in patient rooms.
- Behavioral Health Services for Pediatric Weight Management Patients**  
 WakeMed Children's has embedded behavioral health services in this practice to ensure patients receive behavioral health support services as part of the weight management program.
- Opioid Epidemic/Narcan Rescue Kits**  
 Through a grant provided by the WakeMed Foundation, WakeMed provides patients a Naloxone Rescue kit to opioid overdose patients seen in any of our seven emergency departments. It contains a scannable barcode and link with step-by-step instructions on reviving an overdose victim and two nasal atomizers of Naloxone at time of discharge. As these patients are at the highest risk of death at day two of discharge after an opioid overdose, WakeMed is currently working to establish a follow-up process using our behavioral health and peer counselor team to connect with patients after discharge.
- Ongoing Opioid Reduction Efforts**  
 At every opportunity, WakeMed is committed to fighting the opioid epidemic. Systemwide efforts to reduce opioid use have resulted in a 30% reduction in opioid use in WakeMed Emergency Departments since 2017. Total Dilaudid use has decreased from nearly 2,000 doses per month in 2016 to virtually none over the past few months. Through WakeMed's accountable care organization (ACO), WakeMed Key Community Care has seen similar results in the outpatient setting. Focused efforts around opioid use for back pain and post-surgical pain continue with our ERAS protocols and other condition-specific initiatives.
- Non-Pharmacologic Modalities Group**  
 WakeMed established the Non-Pharmacologic Modalities Group, a sub-group of the WakeMed Pain Collaborative, to explore ways WakeMed can provide alternatives to opioid prescriptions for pain management. Through the Collaborative, clinical staff receive training in integrative modalities to improve the patient experience related to pain management and comfort. The Collaborative also hosts monthly healing energy clinics for the community.

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## HOUSING & HOMELESSNESS

While it is outside WakeMed's resources and expertise to develop housing options, we are actively engaged in supporting our community's homeless population. With regard to their health and well-being, we're focusing on social determinants of health to explore innovative ways to improve access to care for patients in Wake County who are dealing with housing insecurity.

- Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH) Program**  
 WakeMed Health & Hospitals hired 17 team members including a peer specialist to work with 80 patients in a state funded PATH program. Patients receive care for identified substance use disorders and are referred to community providers as necessary. The program targets individuals living on the streets and in the woods specifically within Raleigh. The PATH Team is co-located at the Oak City Outreach Center and works side by side with all homeless programs in Wake County including Advance Health Care, Wake County Health Department, Wake County Social Services, Catholic Charities, and RelyMD.

- **Behavioral Health and Medical Respite**

WakeMed has a Medical Respite and Behavioral Health Respite program for patients with medical needs and housing insecurity that provides up to 21 days of respite care in the community. This allows for crisis stabilization to prevent re-admissions to the hospital. Patients from both the PATH and CCM program use these respite services.

- **Healing Transitions**

WakeMed provided initial seed monies for Healing Transitions which provides a men's and women's campus for people struggling with addiction, especially those who are homeless, uninsured and underserved. Healing Transitions believes in services on demand and strives to meet the unique needs of their clients. WakeMed collaborates to provide services including flu shots, health education, case management and various medical support as needed.

- **Oak City Outreach Center**

WakeMed's Community Case Management team, COPD program, CHF clinic and community practices work with Oak City Outreach Center to meet patient needs. WakeMed connects homeless patients from Healing Transitions, the Wilmington Street Shelter and Oak City Cares with RelyMD for free telehealth services. Patients can be safely triaged by Emergency Room providers to determine if they can be treated via telemedicine or if they need to go to the emergency room. This program ensures our most vulnerable patients receive the right care at the right time and in the right setting. Services have expanded to include pharmacy support and transportation of patients.

- **Homeless Grand Rounds**

WakeMed leads a Homeless Grand Rounds Lecture Series throughout the year - offering health education to hundreds of our community's homeless residents in area shelters. Programming is led by WakeMed physicians and clinicians and includes additional services such as flu vaccines on a seasonal basis.

- **Community Population Health**

The WakeMed Community Population Health initiative is a community-wide effort focused on caring for our most vulnerable neighbors – those who have complex physical, behavioral and social needs that can often complicate their medical care and put them at a higher risk for bad health outcomes. By providing one-on-one care, collaborating with safety net providers, providing education, and offering access to a Mobile Medication Program, we aim to improve the health and quality of life for underserved members of the community.

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## TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS & TRANSIT

WakeMed supports patients and their need for reliable transportation in order to access high-quality health services and/or to maintain compliance with their plan of care. In addition, WakeMed supports enhanced transportation and transit options for our patients, visitors and employees. As an active member in a regional transportation advocacy organization, WakeMed lends our healthcare knowledge and expertise in transportation discussions throughout the community. We continue to explore innovative options to enhance/improve transportation and transit options for our patients and the community at large.

- **New Bern Avenue Corridor Alliance (NCABA)**

WakeMed is a founding partner of the New Bern Avenue Corridor Alliance (NBACA). NBACA was established to encourage the City of Raleigh to implement infrastructure enhancements outlined in the New Bern Avenue Corridor Study. Most recently, NBACA has been monitoring and engaging in the implementation of Wake County's first Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system. As a member of NBACA, WakeMed believes BRT will enhance access to healthcare services for patients and provide another transportation option for our employees working on the Raleigh Campus. Additionally, BRT provides enhanced access to education, cultural and entertainment, and economic opportunities for our community.

- **Ride Health Program**

WakeMed is able to offer an Uber-like service for patients who need transportation assistance both to and from the hospital. The Ride Health program offers patients an app for pick up and drop off predictability. It supports patients who need to return to appointments but would not have access to other transportation. Further it promotes timely discharge for patients back to their homes when no other transportation options are available.

- **Support for Patient & Family Transportation**

Multiple departments within the WakeMed system assist with transportation in the form of vouchers with local taxi and transportation services for various patient populations. WakeMed occasionally encounters patients who are ready to be discharged home, but who lack social support structures and/or financial resources to arrange for transportation. WakeMed maintains a fund to subsidize bus and taxi services to provide this transportation including Uber and bus passes for patients.

- **Drone Program**

WakeMed is the first and only health system in the country currently using drones to transport lab specimens from outlying facilities to its main campus for processing. In partnership with NCDOT, UPS and Matternet, this program is designed to improve the speed of deliveries at a lower cost, enhance access to care and create healthier communities.

- **Regional Transportation Alliance**

WakeMed participates in this organization in an effort to partner with other local entities to address transportation challenges that impact Wake County and may affect patients' ability to access the health care services they need.