

**St. Joseph Medical Center**

A STEWARD FAMILY HOSPITAL



St. Joseph Medical Center  
Community Health Needs Assessment  
**2022**

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## About St. Joseph Medical Center

St. Joseph Medical Center (SJMC), founded in 1887, is a general acute care hospital providing comprehensive inpatient, outpatient and 24/7 emergency services in downtown Houston. Celebrated as Houston's first hospital, St. Joseph Medical Center has been providing a wide range of health care services to greater Houston area residents for more than 134 years.

St. Joseph Medical Center is physician-owned and -led with a mission to provide the highest quality care at a sustainable cost through personalized, ongoing medical services that positively impact patients' physical, emotional, and mental wellbeing. SJMC's services include a 24-hour Level III Trauma Center, behavioral medicine, cardiovascular surgery, three cancer centers, bariatric and general surgery, orthopedics, sports medicine, women's center with a Level III Neonatal ICU and much more.

In May 2021, St. Joseph Medical Center began a \$92 million renovation project which aims to streamline the structure of SJMC by reducing square footage for ease of navigation for both staff and patients. With the installation of cutting-edge diagnostic equipment, SJMC expects to be able to perform more innovative procedures and increase the overall capacity of its service lines, allowing it to support the expanding downtown community for generations to come as it has through the Spanish Flu, Hurricane Harvey, and COVID-19 pandemic.

St. Joseph Medical Center is part of Steward Health Care, the largest private, physician-led health care network in the United States. Headquartered in Dallas, Texas, Steward operates 39 hospitals in Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Utah.

Founded in 2010, Steward Health Care is the nation's largest accountable care organization (ACO), with more than 5,500 providers and 43,000 health care professionals who care for 12.3 million patients a year through its network of hospitals, urgent care centers, skilled nursing facilities, and behavioral health services. Steward received a perfect 100% quality rating by the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Service's (CMS) Medicare Shared Savings Program (MSSP) in 2020.

## Mission and Values

**St. Joseph Medical Center Mission Statement:** To deliver compassionate health care to the communities we serve.

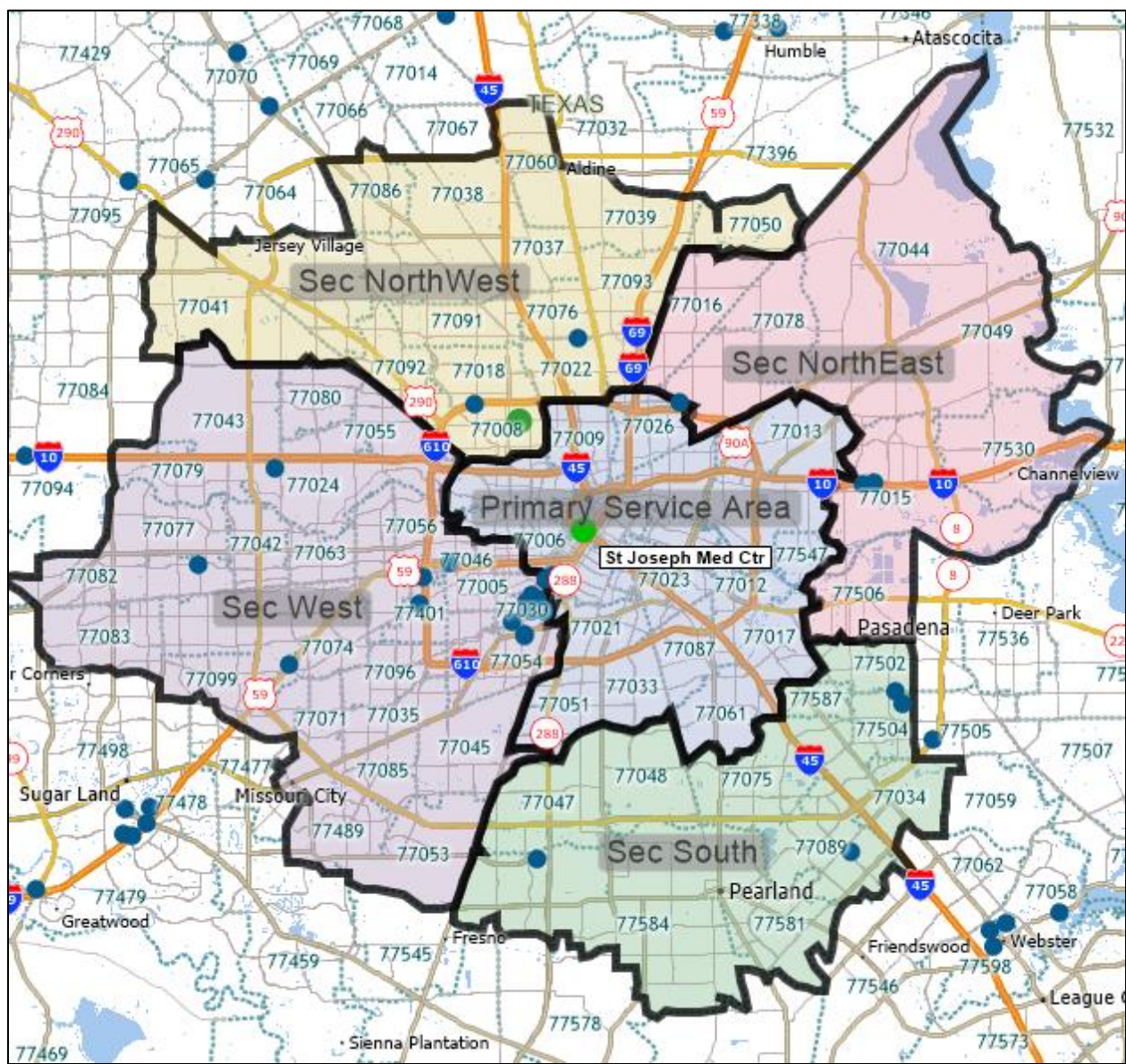
**Steward Health Care Shared Values:**

- We champion the best health care.
- We are hard-charging transformers.
- We are good Stewards.

## Population of Focus

The Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) contains nine Texas counties: Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery, and Waller. The Houston MSA had a population of 7,154,478 residents as of July 1, 2020 according to estimates by the U.S. Census Bureau<sup>1</sup>.

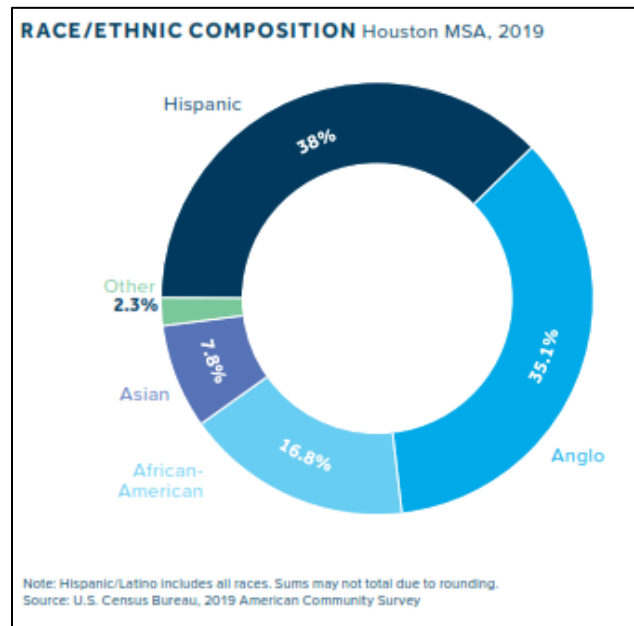
Although St. Joseph Medical Center is located within Harris County which has a population of 4,738,253 according to the U.S. Census Bureau<sup>1</sup>, the hospital's patient base extends to residents from the surrounding Houston MSA. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, St. Joseph Medical Center also accepted patients from health care facilities throughout the state of Texas.



## Race and Ethnic Composition

Harris County is the most populous county within the state of Texas and the third most populous county in the nation<sup>2</sup>. The City of Houston is the fourth most populous city in the United States. Nearly one in four Houstonians was born outside of the United States. Top regions of birth for the Houston MSA's foreign-born are Latin America (62.4%); Asia (25.5%); Africa (6.9%); and Europe (4.0%)<sup>1</sup>.

The racial makeup of St. Joseph Medical Center reflects the racial population of Harris County.



### County Demographics —

	County	State
Population	4,713,325	28,995,881
% below 18 years of age	26.4%	25.5%
% 65 and older	10.9%	12.9%
% Non-Hispanic Black	18.8%	12.1%
% American Indian & Alaska Native	1.1%	1.0%
% Asian	7.3%	5.2%
% Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.1%
% Hispanic	43.7%	39.7%
% Non-Hispanic White	28.7%	41.2%
% not proficient in English	12%	7%
% Females	50.4%	50.3%
% Rural	1.2%	15.3%

Source: 2022 County Health Rankings, County Health Rankings & Roadmaps, a program of the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute

## Household Income and Poverty

The United States Census Bureau is responsible for a yearly report which calculates the nation's official poverty thresholds and the number of people in poverty nationwide. As of July 1, 2021 the Census Bureau reported that 11.4% of Americans are living in poverty.<sup>3</sup> This number is calculated by using a set of money income thresholds that vary by family size and composition to determine who is in poverty. If a family's total income is less than the family's threshold, then that family and every individual in it is considered in poverty. The poverty rate for Harris County is higher than the national rate at 15.9%.<sup>3</sup>

The United Way of Greater Houston also calculates the number of Greater Houston Area Families that qualify as ALICE – Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed. This number represents those who are working but are unable to afford the basic necessities of housing, food, childcare, health care, and transportation. In 2020, the United Way of Greater Houston reported that 33% of Greater Houston Area Families qualified as ALICE.<sup>4</sup> These numbers were calculated before the COVID-19 pandemic which has impacted the income levels of households nationwide.

Socioeconomic status is the strongest indicator for access to health care. Residents of impoverished communities are at an increased risk for mental illness, chronic diseases, high mortality, and lower life expectancy.<sup>5</sup> Persons with low incomes are more likely to be uninsured or have little access to quality health care. They are less likely to seek health care, and when they do seek health care, it is more likely to be for an emergency.<sup>5</sup>

## Health Status of Harris County

Harris County is ranked among the healthiest counties in Texas, listed in the top 75% – 100%.<sup>6</sup>

Health Behaviors		
	Harris County	State of Texas
<b>Premature Death</b>	6,400	6,600
<b>Adult Smoking</b>	16%	14%
<b>Adult Obesity</b>	30%	31%
<b>Physical Inactivity</b>	22%	23%
<b>Excessive Alcohol</b>	16%	19%
<b>Diabetes Prevalence</b>	10%	10%
<b>Heart Disease Death Rate</b>	303 per 100,00	173.9 per 100,000

Source: 2022 County Health Rankings, County Health Rankings & Roadmaps, a program of the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute and CDC/National Center for Health Statistics



## Community Health Needs Assessment

St. Joseph Medical Center's mission and the guiding philosophy of our community initiatives is to establish a program that improves the status of our community and provides access to comprehensive, high quality, and compassionate health services in the Houston community. The hospital will accomplish this by:

- Assessing and addressing the unmet health needs of our community
- Partnering with local community-based organizations to better target groups experiencing health inequities and disparities
- Participating on local action committees/task forces
- Providing accessible, high quality care and services to all those in our community
- Collaborating with staff, providers, and community representatives to deliver meaningful programs that address local and state health priorities and issues
- Encouraging the community to engage in healthy lifestyles, be active participants in their health care, and educate themselves of the risks associated with unhealthy behaviors and poor lifestyle choices.

The goals established through the community health needs assessment will help to address the health priorities of the Houston community. St. Joseph Medical Center aims to provide culturally sensitive, health care services to the patients it serves in their preferred language.

To complete the goals created through the 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment, St. Joseph Medical Center will target populations in its primary service area and the surrounding communities to address health disparities specific to disadvantaged populations in the SJMC service area.

The results of the assessment concluded that the following issues were among the most prevalent health and wellness concerns within St. Joseph Medical Center's primary service area:

- Chronic Disease Management
  - Cardiovascular Disease
  - Stroke
  - Cancer
  - Diabetes
  - Chronic Lower Respiratory Diseases
- Mental Health
- Language Barriers

## Priority 1: Chronic Disease Management

Chronic diseases are a public health concern within all of the communities that make up the hospital's service area. The COVID-19 pandemic caused a disruption in routine and nonemergency medical care. Delayed or avoided medical care might increase morbidity and mortality associated with both chronic and acute health conditions. Research has shown that as many as 4 in 10 adults reported avoiding getting medical care due to concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>7</sup>

St. Joseph Medical Center will continue to focus on the most prevalent chronic diseases in the hospital's service area and promote the importance of routine screenings and education for the following conditions: cardiovascular diseases, stroke, cancer, diabetes, and chronic lower respiratory diseases.

### Cardiovascular Diseases

Cardiovascular diseases (CVDs) are the leading cause of death locally, in Texas, nationally and globally, taking an estimated 17.9 million lives each year.<sup>2,8,9</sup> Cardiovascular diseases can lead to disability, serious illness, and decreased quality of life.<sup>5</sup>

From 2013 – 2017, the percentage of Texas adults diagnosed with CVD increased slightly from 7.2% in 2013 to 7.8% in 2017, while the percentage decreased for Harris County adults from a high of 8.5% in 2014 to 5.7% in 2017.<sup>2</sup>

In Harris County, the leading cause of CVD hospitalizations is high blood pressure. In 2013, 17% of hospital visits in the county were associated with this diagnosis, increasing steadily to 19.7% in 2017.<sup>2</sup> Nearly half of adults in the United States (47%) have hypertension, defined as a systolic blood pressure greater than 130 mmHg or a diastolic blood pressure greater than 80 mmHg or are taking medication for hypertension.<sup>10</sup> Approximately only a quarter of adults with hypertension have achieved control of their condition with lifestyle changes and medication.<sup>2</sup>

### Stroke

Stroke is reported as the fifth leading cause of death in the United States. In 2018, one in every six deaths from cardiovascular disease was due to stroke. Stroke is also the leading cause of serious long-term disability.<sup>11</sup> In Harris County, the percentage of hospital visits with a diagnosis of stroke more than doubled from 0.4% in 2013 to 1.1% in 2017.<sup>2</sup>

As with cardiovascular diseases, high blood pressure is the most important treatable risk factor for stroke. When strokes do occur, immediate medical attention is crucial to both survival and minimizing long-term effects. Currently, only one in three Americans can recognize the signs and symptoms of strokes. Recent public health efforts have aimed to increase recognition of warning



signs of a stroke. The most well-known initiative is F.A.S.T., an acronym that encourages the public to understand the warning signs of stroke which are FACE, ARMS, SPEECH, and TIME.<sup>12</sup>

## Cancer

Cancer is the second leading cause of death in the United States. In 2020, there were 602,350 cancer deaths; 284,619 were among females and 317,731 among males.<sup>13</sup> According to the American Cancer Society, the state of Texas is estimated to have 139,320 new cancer cases in 2022 with an estimated 43,490 deaths.<sup>14</sup>

It was reported in 2020 that cancer deaths have decreased by 27 over the last 20 years from 196.5 to 144.1 deaths per 100,000.<sup>13</sup> The steady decline is attributed to reductions in smoking, early detection, treatment, and prevention. Currently, the four most common types of cancers are five most common cancers: lung, colorectal, pancreatic, breast (females), and prostate.<sup>13</sup>

In Harris County, certain geographical areas see high rates of cancer diagnoses compared to other parts of the county. Areas that see higher rates of cancer diagnoses include Deer Park/Channelview, Pasadena/La Porte and Eldridge/Cinco Ranch.<sup>2</sup> Nationwide, a substantial disparity exists in cancer prevention bases on race, ethnicity, income, and residence in an urban or rural county.<sup>15</sup>

## Diabetes

Diabetes is the eighth leading cause of death in the United States and the sixth leading cause of death in Harris County.<sup>16, 2</sup> Over 1.4 million Americans are diagnosed with diabetes each year. In 2019, 96 million Americans age 18 and older were diagnosed with prediabetes.<sup>17</sup>

Diabetes can be delayed or controlled with diet and exercise which can help prevent complications from diabetes such as damage to heart and blood vessels, kidneys, eyes, nerves, and feet.<sup>18</sup> Poor blood sugar control has also been linked to the risk of developing Alzheimer's disease and dementia later in life. By being aware of blood sugar levels, weight, cholesterol, and blood pressure numbers and working to manage diabetes, patients can postpone problems caused by diabetes or avoid them altogether.<sup>18</sup>

## Chronic Lower Respiratory Diseases

Chronic Lower Respiratory Diseases are the sixth most common cause of death in the United States and includes chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), chronic bronchitis, emphysema, and asthma.<sup>19</sup> The contributing risk factors for chronic lower respiratory diseases are tobacco smoke, air pollution, and occupational chemicals or dusts. Although chronic lower

respiratory diseases cannot be cured, they can be treated and mitigated by reducing the number of exposures to risk factors.<sup>20</sup>

In Harris County, 3% of hospitalization in 2017 were associated with COPD. About half of COPD cases are attributed to lifelong cigarette smoking, meaning they are largely preventable through smoking cessation. The growing popularity of electronic cigarettes and vaping has contributed to an increase in hospitalizations due to severe pulmonary lung disease.<sup>2</sup>

## Priority 2: Mental Health

Mental health encompasses a person's emotional, psychological, and social well-being. Mental and physical health are equally important components of overall health. Depression has been shown to increase the risk for many physical health problems including diabetes, heart disease, and stroke. Similarly, the presence of chronic conditions can increase the risk for mental illness.<sup>21</sup>

Approximately 145,000 adults in Harris County have a serious mental illness such as depression, schizophrenia, bipolar, and schizoaffective disorders. Economic circumstances also have a role in mental health, with 70% of Harris County residents who earn less than \$25,000 reporting that they experienced 5+ days of mental health challenges within a 30-day period. Over 20% of Harris County residents are uninsured, with little or no access to mental health services.<sup>2</sup>

In 2022, St. Joseph Medical Center opened a dedicated area for behavioral and mental health patients in the emergency department to offer more specialized psychiatric care to patients in need. This new space features eight psychiatric safe rooms within the hospital's main emergency department.

In addition to the new behavioral health emergency rooms, St. Joseph Medical Center has a dedicated Center for Behavioral Health and medical-psychiatry unit to better serve patients. Additionally, St. Joseph Medical Center offers an inpatient detox program at their Center for Behavioral Health in partnership with Matthew's Hope.

## Priority 3: Language Barriers

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, more than 350 languages are spoken at homes in the United States.<sup>22</sup> In Houston, at least 145 languages are spoken at home, and more than 37% of the metro area population ages 5 and over speak a language other than English at home.<sup>22</sup> By offering medical care in a patient's preferred language, health care organizations can benefit by having increased quality of care, improved patient safety outcomes, and lower utilization of costly

medical procedures.<sup>23</sup> In addition to translated materials, medical interpreters are a valuable resource to provide effective communication between health care providers and patients.

At St. Joseph Medical Center, staff and physicians have access to dual handset interpreter phones which are available in each patient room. These dual handset phones have Qualified Telephonic Medical Interpreters available in over 250 languages 24 hours a day. Remote Video Medical Interpreters are available via iPads in over 39 languages in addition to American Sign Language.

The Houston MSA is home to the nation's fourth-largest Hispanic/Latino Population at more than 2.7 million.<sup>1</sup> For the hospital's Spanish-speaking preferred patients, St. Joseph Medical Center offers a team of nationally certified medical interpreters that are available for in-person interpretations in addition to the dual handset phones and the Remote Video Medical Interpreters.

Additionally, St. Joseph Medical Center opened the Latino Health Center of Excellence in 2021 to better serve the growing population of Hispanic patients at the hospital. The medical-surgical/telemetry unit offers culturally responsive care to non-acute patients who identify as Spanish-speaking preferred. In addition to the medical interpreter team, dual handset phones and Remote Video Medical Interpreters, many of the staff members on the unit are bilingual which helps to break down the language barrier and allow for clear communication that empowers patients to better understand and participate in their plan of care.

## Community Health Needs Assessment Goals

### Goals to Target Chronic Disease Management

1. Increase the hospital's participation at community health fairs, screening events and health and wellness events to share health education and resources.
2. Improve cardiovascular health literacy in the communities by offering:
  - a. Early Heart Attack Care Education
  - b. High Blood Pressure Education
  - c. Hands Only CPR Education
  - d. AED Instructions for Use and Demonstration
  - e. Risk Factor Modification Education
3. Provide at least three educational sessions on topics related to chronic disease throughout the year (virtually or in-person).
4. Increase the number of AEDs in the community by donating an AED to a local organization and providing training to staff members.

5. Focus on the importance of maintaining a healthy blood pressure to prevent cardiovascular diseases and stroke. Offer education on controlling high blood pressure and lifestyle choices which can benefit overall health and wellbeing.
6. Participate in community-based cancer awareness campaigns and events, such as National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, Colon Cancer Awareness Month and Lung Cancer Awareness Month.
7. Provide information regarding smoking cessation and information on the harmful side effects of smoking and vaping to hospital employees and community partners including local schools.
8. Increase awareness and utilization of the hospital's weight loss surgery and obesity medicine program through promotions in the community.
9. Offer free health education in hospital's community newsletter and on hospital's social media pages. Promote the importance of regular health screenings and early detection.

### Goals to Target Mental Health

1. Schedule mental health seminars at local schools and business with our behavioral health staff members to encourage more discussion around mental health and the stigma that surrounds mental health.
2. Work with Houston Police Department on training opportunities and seminars within the hospital's behavioral health emergency department. Increase the hospital's participation at community health fairs, screening events and health and wellness events to share health education and resources.

### Goals to Language Barriers

1. Provide translated and culturally specific disease prevention and educational outreach for heart disease, COPD, diabetes, cancer, and stroke.
2. Increase the knowledge of the hospital's Interpreter Services and Latino Health Center of Excellence through social media and business to business interactions.
3. Provide information about our Interpreter Services to physicians in the community so their patient population is aware of the hospital's efforts to create language concordance to promote better outcomes of care.

## Conclusion

This Community Health Needs Assessment provides an overview of the current health needs in St. Joseph Medical Center's primary service area. This report will serve as a guide to the hospital's community outreach programs as well as internal opportunities for our employees' health and wellness.

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused a disruption in the public's journey to regular health screenings and wellness visits along with exacerbating the mental health and financial strain of families nationwide.

With this Community Health Needs Assessment plan, St. Joseph Medical Center has the opportunity to help the Houston community find stability in the "new normal" of the world as we continue to navigate through the pandemic and refocus on their health and well-being.

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