



2021 Kaiser Permanente

Community Health Snapshot



Our commitment to community health

In 2021, the second year of a global pandemic, our commitment to community health continued to play an important role in helping individuals, families, and entire communities as they face ongoing health, economic, and social justice challenges.

While COVID-19 vaccination rates increased throughout the year, our communities endured virus surges and outbreaks that disproportionately impacted people of color. During each phase of the pandemic, we rapidly evolved to meet changing community and social health needs, keeping equity at the core of our response.

Looking back at our work over the year, we are proud of what we accomplished. When the COVID-19 vaccine became available to the public, we designed, built, and adjusted outreach campaigns to increase vaccination rates. We also helped ensure fair and equitable administration of vaccinations in communities most affected by COVID-19.

Our Vaccine Equity Toolkit shared our approach and best practices with other care delivery organizations, health plans, and state and local governments. The toolkit continues to help

deepen our existing partnerships and supports ongoing opportunities for mutual learning.

Now in 2022, it's crucial that we lend our voice and our support to improving our nation's public health infrastructure and demonstrate the value of public-private partnerships in confronting our collective challenges so that we're better prepared for the next crisis.

As the health effects and economic toll of the COVID-19 pandemic continue, our accelerated efforts broaden the scope of our care and services to address all factors that affect people's health. Having a safe place to live, enough money to pay the bills, access to healthy meals, and meaningful social connections is essential to total health. Our mission, values, and commitment to health compel us to do all we can to improve the health of our communities.



Bechara Choucair, MD
Senior Vice President and
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Community health investment

As one of the nation's largest nonprofit integrated health care organizations, we are driven by our mission to improve the health of our members and the communities we serve. We believe that being healthy isn't just a result of high-quality medical care. Through our resources, reach, and partnerships, we address unmet social needs and community factors that impact health. Equity and inclusion are at the core of our work.

Economic opportunity

How much money a person can earn or save determines how well the person can manage unexpected expenses or a sudden loss of steady income, and whether it's possible to take a break from work, recover from illness, or take time off to support a family member in need.

Financial inequality and financial insecurity have direct consequences on health, particularly mental health and chronic stress. And we know that people with low incomes are more likely to face food insecurity and housing insecurity, which bring their own health-related consequences. Studies are also beginning to



demonstrate connections between poverty and cognitive development.

In 2021, we increased our focus on building equitable economic opportunities in our communities. We remain steadfastly committed to leveraging our relationships with vendors and suppliers to create more opportunities for women- and minority-owned businesses, and in doing so contribute to healthy, equitable, and sustainable economies. We are a member of the Billion Dollar Roundtable, which recognizes corporations that spend at least \$1 billion with minority- and woman-owned suppliers, and we

increase our spending with small suppliers and businesses owned by women, people of color, and other underrepresented groups each year. In 2021, we reached \$2.9 billion in diverse spending.

We invested in businesses whose missions and business practices align with our own to enhance inclusiveness in local economies. Since the start of the pandemic, we have focused on providing relief to entrepreneurs of color, helping to protect their businesses and preserve the jobs they provide in the community.

We consulted with expert small-business-serving organizations across the country to understand what was needed and provided support to groups, such as Local Initiatives Support Corporation and Pacific Community Ventures, which improve small businesses' access to capital and offer one-to-one support and advice. And we worked with and provided funding to organizations, such as the National Association for Latino Community Asset Builders, National Coalition for Asian Pacific American Community Development, Prosperity Now, and the Alliance of African American CDFI (community development financial institutions) CEOs, whose members are reaching the most vulnerable entrepreneurs in our communities.

Since June 2020 our efforts have helped more than 18,000 entrepreneurs — 78% of whom are people of color — connect to capital,

technical training, and financial coaching. With these business supports, those entrepreneurs helped retain or create over 14,000 jobs in our communities between 2020 and 2021.

Finally, we believe that building and supporting a more stable, diverse public health and clinical workforce is a critical piece of how we can create economic opportunity for communities of color and be better prepared to meet the needs of our communities. We are working to empower people from all backgrounds to achieve academically and gain the skills needed to improve their access to quality, well-paying jobs.

In 2021, we launched our national Health Equity Scholars Program, which provides first-year college students financial support for learning and living expenses. We also partnered with the American Public Health Association to launch a program that provides one-year, full-time, competitively paid fellowships for graduates with a master's degree in public health.

Each of these programs prioritizes people of color and students from underserved communities. And, these programs complement our continued support of Futuro Health, a nonprofit we established with the Service Employees International Union-United Healthcare Workers West to address the nation's allied health worker shortage.

Housing for health

Chronic homelessness can have devastating effects on a person's long-term health — a troubling reality for far too many people.

In 2021, we continued to lead efforts to end homelessness and preserve affordable housing by making strategic impact investments, shaping policy, and catalyzing innovative partnerships.



To respond to increased vulnerability to COVID-19 among people experiencing homelessness in California, we partnered with the University of California, San Francisco Benioff Homeless and Housing Initiative and the National Health Care for the Homeless Council to develop the Antigen Testing in Congregate Shelters:

Process Outline and Implementation Playbook. The playbook provides key considerations to successfully implement a frequent antigen testing program in homeless shelter settings. Over 440 individuals representing local health departments, homeless health care clinics, and other homeless service providers and public health agencies across hundreds of communities accessed the playbook in 2021.

The health consequences of chronic homelessness led us to partner in January of 2019 with Community Solutions, a nonprofit working to end homelessness, to support communities across the nation with evidence-based, data-driven approaches to reducing and ending chronic homelessness, especially among veterans. Since then, we have seen measurable progress through our partnership with Community Solutions and local public and private sector partners in 30 communities. Of those communities, 3 have achieved functional zero, meaning they have ended homelessness for a specific population, and 8 are sustaining population-level reductions.

In October 2020, we also followed through on a pledge to invest \$25 million to help California combat homelessness. The funding supported Enterprise Community Partners, a national affordable housing nonprofit, in its work with the state to provide operating subsidies, wraparound services, and technical assistance for 22 Project Homekey properties. Project Homekey is a program in California to purchase buildings, such as hotels, motels, and vacant apartment buildings, and convert them into permanent, long-term housing for people without housing.

Overall, Project Homekey created 6,000 interim and permanent supportive housing units,

housing over 8,200 individuals experiencing homelessness. Our investment in Enterprise Community Partners and Project Homekey builds on our ongoing commitment to strengthen systems to end chronic homelessness and efforts to drive bold, meaningful impact across communities.

In February of 2021, our Thriving Communities Fund invested \$50 million in the SDS Supportive Housing Fund — a real estate fund managed by Los Angeles-based SDS Capital Group — to help address homelessness. The SDS Supportive Housing Fund is financing up to 1,800 units of permanent supportive housing.

We also made progress in creating more affordable housing across the nation through strategic partnerships and investments. As of December 2021, our Thriving Communities social impact investment fund, which launched in 2018, had allowed us to produce or preserve over 7,000 affordable housing units by creating or contributing to a handful of funds, with over 3,100 of those units built in 2021.

In our effort to tell powerful stories that can lead to system and policy change, we supported the August 2021 launch of Season 2 of “The Way Home,” a short-form documentary series that examines the homelessness crisis in California and beyond. The films tell human stories that illuminate the complex factors that led to an epidemic of homelessness across the nation, while lifting up potential solutions to the crisis. Our screening campaign, including 4 large, virtual events and 42 smaller screening events in schools and other community organizations, reached over 3,000 attendees in 2021.



Thriving schools



Our Thriving Schools initiative supports K-12 school systems in being equitable, healthy, and vibrant places for all. Through the initiative, we partner with schools and districts across the country, helping to ensure that teachers, staff, and students have the support they need to thrive — in learning and in health.

In 2021, we continued to strengthen our Thriving Schools strategy, launching an enhanced Thriving Schools website with a library of credible resources to support schools and districts in their efforts to foster health.

Alongside our partners at Alliance for a Healthier Generation, we developed and launched the Thriving Schools Integrated Assessment, or TSIA — a no-cost, evidence-informed tool to help schools and districts identify opportunities for promoting student achievement and supporting the well-being of students, staff, and teachers amid the COVID-19 pandemic. We

also strengthened our National Healthy Schools Collaborative by expanding core partnerships with numerous national organizations, including the American Academy of Pediatrics, the National Education Association, Action for Healthy Kids, Healthy Schools Campaign, and Child Trends.

RISE, our Resilience in School Environments initiative, continued to support school staff, teachers, districts, and the community in addressing the underlying factors of stress in schools and develop strategies and practices that foster more positive school environments. To encourage COVID-19 vaccination among children and families, we produced informational education materials, webinars, and videos featuring our doctors, clinicians, and members.

Our combined Educational Theatre, RISE, TSIA, and COVID-19-related resources reached over 12,000 educators and schools from 2018 to 2021.

CityHealth



CityHealth, Kaiser Permanente's collaboration with the de Beaumont Foundation, advances a package of tried and proven policy solutions that will help millions of people live longer, better lives in vibrant, prosperous communities. CityHealth's policy recommendations are based on evidence and supported by experts, and have a track record of bipartisan support.

In its annual policy assessment, CityHealth rates the nation's 40 largest cities on the number and

strength of policies that have lasting impacts on quality of life. In the 2021 ratings, 4 cities served by Kaiser Permanente earned gold medals for overall policy work, with San Jose, California, earning a new silver medal for its inclusionary zoning policy to increase affordable housing. In 2017, when CityHealth began the annual policy assessment, only about half of the nation's largest cities earned a medal for overall policy work. In 2021, over 90% of cities included in the ratings earned an overall medal, with more than

44 million people benefiting from policies that promote health.

In response to the evolving challenges cities face, CityHealth released an updated package of 12 policy solutions in 2021, setting a new standard to which cities can aspire. The updated policy package includes new and revised recommendations for affordable housing trusts; Complete Streets (street planning, design, and maintenance); earned sick leave; eco-friendly purchasing; flavored tobacco restrictions; green space; healthy food purchasing; healthy

rental housing; high-quality, accessible pre-K; legal support for renters; safer alcohol sales; and smoke-free indoor air. In 2022, CityHealth will release its initial policy assessment on the updated policy menu and expand to include 75 cities.

To support all cities in establishing health-promoting policies, CityHealth released a report in 2021 about safer alcohol sales and shared funding strategies and a self-assessment framework for city pre-K leaders.

Medicaid, Charitable Health Coverage, Medical Financial Assistance, and safety net

Through our Medicaid, Charitable Health Coverage, and Medical Financial Assistance programs, we deliver high-quality care and coverage, and we improve health care access for people with limited incomes and resources.

In 2021, we served nearly 1.3 million Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program participants.

In addition to providing quality care and coverage for Medicaid members, we support the nation's social safety net — which is made up of various programs to protect and help people with low incomes — through grantmaking. In 2021, we founded the Virtual Care Innovation Network, a community health collaboration, and awarded over \$2 million to



safety net organizations to help advance virtual care delivery. These grants support safety net organizations in building their virtual care capacity and help ensure that people who rely on community-based health care centers can continue to access telehealth for high-quality care.

We also provided health care coverage through our Charitable Health Coverage programs in 2021 to nearly 14,000 people with low incomes who don't have access to other public or private health coverage. And we provided more than \$463 million in medical financial assistance to patients in need in 2021.



Environmental stewardship



In 2021, we extended our climate leadership by engaging in strategic partnerships, sharing our voice in top-tier media, and participating in coalition events.

After becoming the first health care organization in the United States to achieve carbon neutral status in 2020, we turned our focus in 2021 to reducing emissions from our broader supply chain investments and pursuing a science-based target for additional emissions reductions.

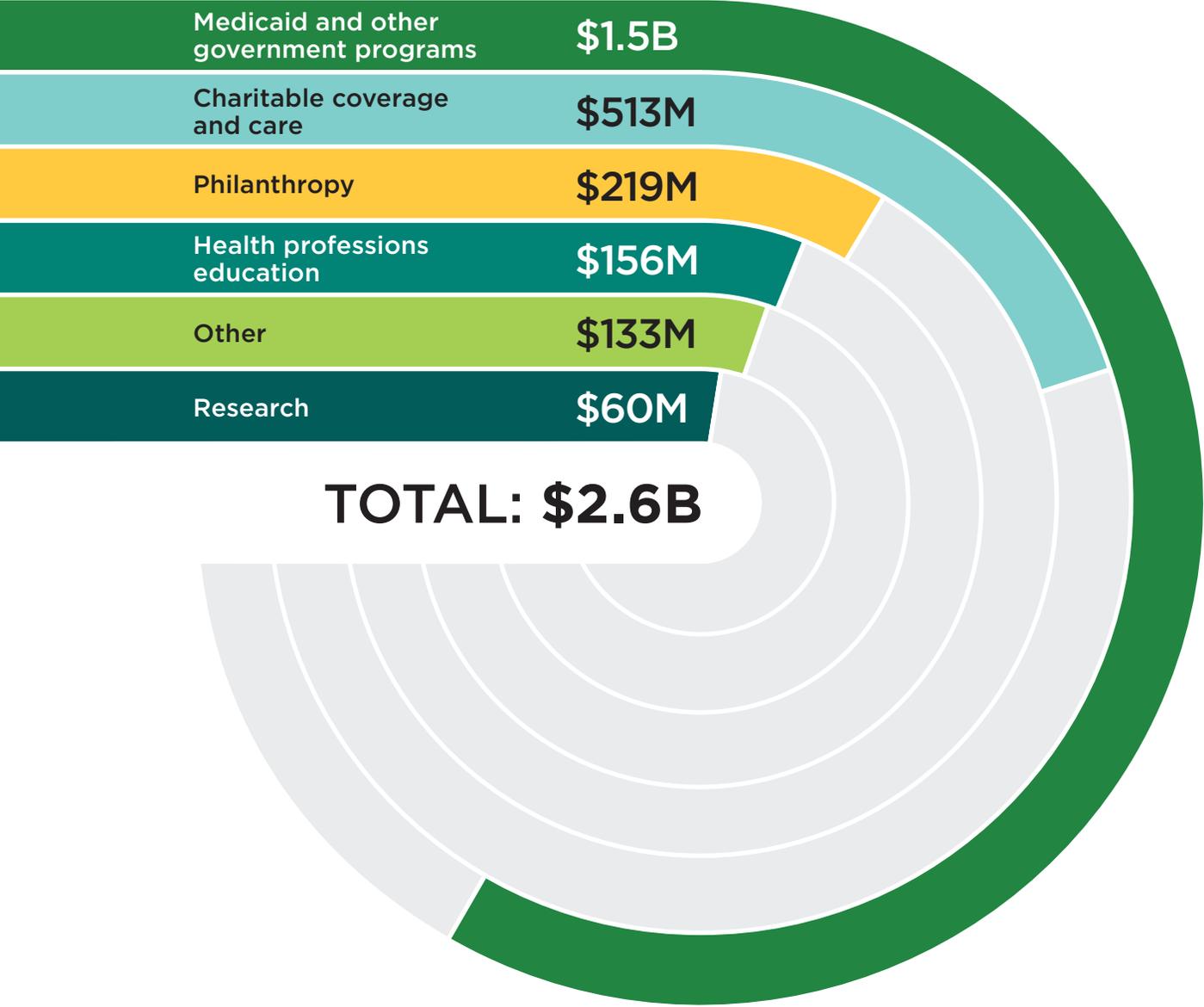
We are meeting our goal of having all new major construction projects achieve LEED, or Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, certification from the U.S. Green Building Council. In November 2021, the council

identified Kaiser Permanente as the top health care organization in the world for our number of LEED-certified buildings, with a total of 66. We're also number one in the U.S. in terms of LEED-certified health care square footage, with 6.9 million square feet.

We joined the National Academy of Medicine's Action Collaborative on Decarbonizing the U.S. Health Sector (Climate Collaborative), a public-private partnership that includes health and hospital systems, biopharmaceutical and medical device companies, nonprofits, and the federal government, among others. Participants in Climate Collaborative align around collective goals and actions for addressing the carbon impact of the health care industry.



Total Community Health investment





Member-focused social health initiatives

Everyone needs a safe place to live, healthy food, enough money to pay the bills, and strong social connections. It's called social health — the ability to meet your basic needs — and it's essential to total health. Our member-focused social health initiatives complement our broader work to build healthier communities by addressing social factors at an individual level.

Connecting members to community resources



To understand and address members' social health needs, we routinely screen them for social factors influencing their health. We connect members who want support with daily essentials to community resources that can help such as healthy meals, transportation, organizations that can help with paying utility bills, and more. The technology that our care and service teams use to find local services and connect members to programs also allows

them to track whether members receive the support they need. To offer additional ways for people to receive support with social factors influencing their health, in 2021, we added an online community resource directory on kp.org. This self-service directory allows people to find local assistance on their own, if they prefer not to go through their care team or a phone line specialist.



Food for Life



Our Food for Life initiatives are transforming the economic, social, and policy environments connected to food security. In 2021, we reached the milestone of helping 95,000 people apply for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, through a texting-based outreach campaign. And, recognizing that healthy meals can support people with chronic conditions after hospital discharge, we enrolled 2,100 members in our medically tailored meals program in 2021, which provided more than 116,000 meals to members

and their households with chronic conditions recently discharged from hospitals. In 2021, we registered 23,000 eligible members in the Healthy Savings coupon program, which offers discounts on a range of healthy food items at over 3,000 retail locations. Additionally, our no-cost COVID-19 meals program supported members who were in isolation or were quarantined due to COVID-19. More than 2,400 members and families participated in 2021.

Housing assistance for our members



To help patients experiencing homelessness and their families secure permanent housing and improve their mental and physical health, we launched Project HOME in 2021. The pilot project provides navigation, assistance, and tenancy-sustaining services to a segment of our unhoused patient population through strategic partnerships with community-based organizations. We also began to support our members by developing medical-legal

partnerships, in which legal services are built into care delivery. Through the Health, Housing, and Justice: Medical-Legal Partnership Initiative, we are building capacity in the legal services sector and increasing access to legal services to prevent individuals and families from losing their homes. In 2021, more than 100 of our front-line staff members were trained by legal aid partners to assess, resolve, and escalate members' legal needs.



Social isolation



In 2021 we also launched a campaign pilot to address social isolation. The multifaceted health communications campaign was designed to decrease social isolation and loneliness among older adults by offering them stories and tips

for healthy living, and simple ways to connect with others either virtually or in person, including volunteering, and cooking and crafting classes. In 2021, more than 22,000 people accessed these resources by visiting the campaign website.

Read more about our work

Equity and COVID-19 response

- [Supporting equitable COVID-19 vaccine education](#)
- [Vaccine Equity Toolkit will help address equitable access](#)
- [Countering the surge in Asian American discrimination](#)
- [Systemic racism and trauma spur action for healing](#)

Economic opportunity

- [Furthering equity among Latino communities](#)
- [Using our purchasing power for a more equitable society](#)
- [Supporting small businesses owned by people of color](#)

Housing for health

- [A place to call home](#)
- [They're building affordable housing for the homeless — without government help](#) (Los Angeles Times)
- [The Way Home season 2: Homeless in a pandemic](#)

Thriving Schools

- [Truth Initiative and Kaiser Permanente launch new vaping prevention curriculum](#)
- [Integrated health resource supports schools' emerging needs](#)
- [Thriving Schools website](#)

CityHealth

- [About CityHealth](#)
- [CityHealth 2.0 policy package](#)

Medicaid, Charitable Health Coverage, Medical Financial Assistance, and Safety Net

- [Kaiser Permanente Medicaid fact sheets](#)
- [Supporting access to telehealth for our vulnerable populations](#)
- [Charitable Health Coverage Program](#)
- [Subsidized care and coverage](#)

Environmental stewardship

- [Look to nature this Earth Day](#)
- [How hospitals can help patients and the planet](#) (The New York Times)
- [Climate change is in our lane](#) (op-ed in MedPage Today)

Social health

- [Outreach campaign helps 70,000 people apply for SNAP](#)
- [Food for Life: Health care's role in improving health through food assistance benefits](#) (Health Affairs blog)
- [Social health resources on kp.org](#)

Additional reading

- [Taking action to fight COVID-19](#)
- [Service leaders honored for improving community health](#)
- [Community drivers of health: Policy paper series \(transportation, food security, housing\)](#)



Leadership

Greg A. Adams

Chair and Chief Executive Officer
Kaiser Foundation Health Plan, Inc.
Kaiser Foundation Hospitals

Bechara Choucair, MD

Senior Vice President and Chief Health Officer
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