

The Important Role of Community Hospitals

Historically, hospitals focused on providing inpatient care to acutely ill patients. Now, hospitals are expected to take broader responsibility for the overall health of the communities they operate in, and for keeping patients healthy and out of the hospital.

Non-profit hospitals are exempt from paying taxes, saving large hospitals millions of dollars in federal, state, and local taxes every year. In exchange, non-profit hospitals are required by law to invest in “**community benefits**”—programs designed to improve health and wellness in the communities they serve.

Common Community Benefits:

- ◆ Cover medical costs for the uninsured and underinsured, often referred to as charity care.
- ◇ Partner with community groups to advocate for policy changes that improve health outcomes and reduce healthcare spending.
- ◆ Upstream health investments that prioritize prevention.
 - Support programs that encourage healthy behaviors and lifestyles.
 - Support community coalitions to reduce youth violence or substance abuse.
 - Support efforts to help people with chronic conditions like asthma, diabetes, or mental illness manage their symptoms and avoid their triggers.
 - Support community efforts that address poverty, homelessness, and other drivers of poor health.
 - Invest in interventions that address community needs such as housing, nutrition support, care coordination, and community outreach.

THE ISSUE:



Current mandates do not provide clearly defined standards or expectations.



Hospitals are not required to measure and report changes in health outcomes over time.



State and federal regulators provide little to no oversight.

THE SOLUTION:



Support transparency, and oversight – Require clear and consistent reporting of community benefits.



Support dedicated community benefit spending – Fund upstream, preventive health solutions

At Fresno Building Healthy Communities our mission is to foster and encourage thriving communities where all children and families can live healthy, safe, and productive lives. We believe in healthcare for all and encourage you to reach out to your elected officials to enact changes in how Non-Profit Hospitals operate. Ask your representative to support dedicated community benefit spending, transparency, and oversight.



Please visit [Care4Fresno.org](https://www.Care4Fresno.org) to learn more

*All source material can be found at [Care4Fresno.org](https://www.Care4Fresno.org)