

CASE STUDY BRIEF

# Living the Mission at ProMedica:

Innovative Approaches to Improving Community Health



**This case study brief is a summary of the complete case study with the same title.**

**To access the complete case study, [click here](#).**



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## A Profile of ProMedica

**P**roMedica is a locally-owned, non-profit health system that serves 27 counties in northwest Ohio and southeast Michigan. A network of hospitals, physicians, healthcare professionals, researchers, and specialty clinics and facilities, it offers a full range of diagnostic, medical, and surgical specialties in areas such as emergency medicine and trauma, heart and vascular, oncology, orthopedics, neurology, women's services, and children's services:

- 14 hospitals
- 323,000 lives covered by owned health plan
- Six ambulatory surgery centers
- 8,200 births
- 2,348 licensed inpatient beds
- 90,000+ inpatient discharges
- 71,000+ surgeries
- 350,000+ ER visits
- 198,000+ home care visits
- 400,000+ rehabilitation therapy encounters.

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### ProMedica Case in Brief

**The Issue:** Roughly 10 years ago, evidence became increasingly clear that a community was struggling to achieve improved health outcomes for its citizens, and particularly for the most fragile in the community. With this in mind, ProMedica, based in Toledo, Ohio, began to evaluate new and non-traditional approaches to enhancing care and improving health and well-being not only for individuals, but for the community as well.

**The Decision:** The system leadership and its board made a sustained commitment to improve health outcomes over time by addressing the social determinants of health, which are estimated to be responsible for up to 80 percent of a person's health and well-being. As part of this, the organization made a commitment to serve as a regional anchor institution, with a focus on economic development and health inequities. In addition, it identified national opportunities to move the conversation forward regarding social determinants.

#### Actions Taken:

- Change care delivery model to include social determinants by screening all patients for 10 social determinants, such as hunger, housing, and education.
- Connect patients with resources, either through ProMedica's direct programs or its partners.
- Create resources: food pharmacy, Ebeid Institute of Population Health (which includes Market on the Green, a job training program, and diet/cooking and financial planning education), and economic/real estate development programs; use community organizations as partners when possible.
- Establish new ProMedica National Center for Social Determinants Research and the Ebeid Neighborhood Program; expand offerings at ProMedica Ebeid Institute for Population Health.
- Continue to find opportunities to further economic development in the Toledo region.
- Commit to an "impact investment" involving making a \$10 million loan to a community developing financing institute, and partner with Local Initiative Support Corporation (LISC) to create a loan pool to serve distressed neighborhoods.
- Establish The Root Cause Coalition, a national network to address issues related to social determinants of health.

### **Results to Date:**

- An increase in primary care usage, driving patients to the right place for care at the right time, which has an impact on cost.
- A related reduction of 4 percent in ER use for patients who screen positive for food insecurity and are connected to the needed services, and a 53 percent reduction in hospital readmission rates.
- A 30 percent decrease in costs per member per month for patients who screen positive and receive access to resources; and a 30 percent increase in costs per member per month for those who screen positive and are not connected with resources.
- The Root Cause Coalition membership has grown nationally including hospitals, health systems, national health insurance companies, and non-profit organizations focused on specific issues related to social determinants. The organization focuses on advocacy, education, and research.
- Since 2015, ProMedica has screened more than 3,000 pregnant women for social and economic needs, through the Hospital Council's Pathway HUB. Data shows that when a high-risk pregnant woman is identified and connected with the right services, she has a 90 percent chance of having a healthy birth.
- 359,133 ambulatory patients and 203,585 hospital patients have been screened for food insecurity; 29,808 people (9,766 households) visited ProMedica food clinics, 1,024 ProMedica employees received assistance with food, 1,341 meals were provided at hospital discharge, and 315,816 pounds of food were packaged and distributed through food banks.
- Out of 343 individuals screened through the Financial Opportunity Center, a partnership with LISC, 203 engaged in financial counseling, 184 received free tax preparation, 13 percent improved their credit scores (an average 69-point increase), and 25 percent realized increase in net income.
- 2,840 patients were screened in 2017 for social determinants; needs were identified in 59 percent of patients screened. Top needs were behavioral health, financial strain, food insecurity, and education.

**How much does it cost?** ProMedica spends less than 1 percent of total annual revenue to address social determinants of health.

### **Lessons Learned:**

- “Throw out the old tapes” and try something new and bold.
- Get beyond the critics by keeping an eye on the long-term vision and choosing strategies with short-term and long-term returns that will help attain that vision.
- Remain mindful of resources, but change expectations (e.g., don't expect a quick ROI, because if you do, that influences your decisions).
- Engage partners to delineate roles and do more together by leveraging resources.
- Make sure the right leaders are in place, throughout the organization and community, to implement the vision.

### **Next Steps:**

- Continue to build social determinant improvement goals into the strategic plan.
- Further integrate social determinant screening and intervention into acute care and private practices.
- Improve the screening and measuring process to better connect activities to address social determinants with patient outcomes and ROI.
- Continue to be the leader in social determinants both regionally and nationally.
- Launch Ebeid Neighborhood Promise in two community neighborhoods focusing on neighborhood revitalization.
- Establish a national center for social determinants of health research and education.
- Continue to expand The Root Cause Coalition nationally.
- Identify strategies to improve the ability to track health and cost outcomes, including consistent social determinants definitions and metrics.