**2016 COMMUNITY BENEFITS SURVEY**

**Communications Toolkit**

**OVERVIEW**

Thank you for participating in the 2016 CHA Community Benefits Survey. It is more important than ever to ensure community and state leaders understand and appreciate the local impact of hospitals beyond caring for the injured and sick. Your hospital’s participation in this critically important initiative will improve the visibility of unique community health programs throughout the state and serve to greatly enhance statewide advocacy on behalf of Colorado hospitals.

This [toolkit](http://www.cha.com/Colorado-Hospitals/Community-Benefits.aspx) provides a variety of communication pieces to help your hospital promote its community benefits. The following tools are included:

* **Advocacy checklist** – which includes recommendations on how to communicate about your hospital’s community benefits to your local legislators and community
* **Customizable press release** – to be updated with your hospital’s community benefits information and distributed to your local media contacts
* **Customizable fact sheet** – to be used in media outreach or on your hospital’s website
* **Talking points** – to help your team communicate about community benefits to your employees, medical staff, community and board of trustees
* **Sample website copy** – to be posted on your hospital’s website
* **Sample social media posts** – to be used on your hospital’s social media pages

The toolkit also includes two PowerPoint files (available online and linked below):

* [**Customizable infographic**](http://www.cha.com/Colorado-Hospitals/Community-Benefits/2016-Community-Benefits-Survey-Inforgraphic.aspx) – to be displayed via your hospital’s social media pages or on your hospital’s website
* [**Customizable presentation**](http://www.cha.com/Colorado-Hospitals/Community-Benefits/2016-Community-Benefits-Survey-Presentation.aspx) – to be used for your board of trustees, medical staff, employees and community

**This** [**communications toolkit**](http://www.cha.com/Colorado-Hospitals/Community-Benefits.aspx) **is for use with your fiscal year 2015 data that was collected in 2016 for the final reports that hospital community benefits survey contacts were emailed in January 2017.** This toolkit will be updated each year and provided to participating CHA member hospitals and health systems at the conclusion of each annual survey.

Colorado hospitals and health systems are providing invaluable services to our communities each day. Please take action to ensure that patients, families, local officials, business leaders and other stakeholders know just how impactful those efforts are!

Questions? Contact the CHA Communications Team at 720.330.6073 or cha.communications@cha.com. **SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE**

[HOSPITAL LOGO]

Media Contacts:

[NAME]

[TITLE, ORGANIZATION]

[CONTACT INFO]

**[HOSPITAL NAME] Provides [More Than/Nearly] [TOTAL $] in Community Benefits to Improve Health of [TOWN/REGION]**

[LOCATION] – [DATE] – In 2015, [HOSPITAL NAME] provided [more than/nearly] [COMMUNITY BENEFITS $ TOTAL] in community benefits – programs and services provided by the hospital voluntarily to improve the overall quality of life in a community. This includes unpaid costs of patient care, free or low-cost immunizations, charitable contributions, family support services, health education and community building activities.

“At [HOSPITAL NAME], we take great pride in our role as a community health leader – but that job requires much more than just the routine care that we provide to all the patients at our hospital,” said [HOSPITAL CEO NAME], [TITLE]. “We are committed to providing voluntary health services to our community to help those who need it most by addressing the unique health needs of our community and to ensure that we are moving toward improved health and access to care.”

Highlights from the Colorado Hospital Association (CHA) Community Benefits Survey showed that [HOSPITAL NAME] provided:

* [More than/nearly] [$ UNPAID COSTS OF PATIENT CARE TOTAL] in unpaid costs of patient care (care for patients unable to pay for health care services)
* [More than/nearly] [TOTAL OF COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT SERVICES] in voluntary community benefits, including health screenings, education, free clinics and discounted services
* [More than/nearly] [TOTAL OTHER COMMUNITY BENEFITS] in charitable donations

The survey results were part of a statewide community benefits survey conducted by CHA to demonstrate the impact of Colorado hospitals and health systems beyond the traditional hospital care setting. The survey collected fiscal year 2015 data from 61 Colorado hospitals to quantify hospital contributions, such as unreimbursed costs, uncompensated care and other free, discounted and unique programs that are critical to the health of Colorado communities.

“Colorado hospitals and health systems are committed to their communities and to improving the health of Coloradans, which mean expanding care beyond the walls of the traditional health care setting,” said Steven J. Summer, CHA president and CEO. “Our survey quantifies the voluntary activities hospitals are providing to address the unique health care conditions and needs across our state. However, the peace of mind of knowing your hospital is there for you 24/7, 365 days a year, in good health and in bad, is immeasurable.”

[EXAMPLE OF HOSPITAL COMMUNITY BENEFITS PROGRAM]

Community benefits programs are designed to provide increased access to care and address population health inequalities for vulnerable patients. In order to be considered a community benefit, a program or service must respond to an identified community need and meet at least one of these criteria: improves access, enhances health, advanced medical or health knowledge or relieves or reduces the burden of government. By providing preventive health services and programs, Colorado hospitals and health systems are helping to reduce the need for more costly emergency treatment and acute care while also improving the health and wellbeing of entire populations.

**About [HOSPITAL]**

[HOSPITAL BOILERPLATE]

**About the Colorado Hospital Association**

The Colorado Hospital Association (CHA) is the leading voice of Colorado’s hospital and health system community. Representing more than 100 member hospitals and health systems throughout the state, CHA serves as a trusted, credible and reliable resource on health issues, hospital data and trends for its members, media, policymakers and the general public. Through CHA, Colorado’s hospitals and health systems work together in their shared commitment to improve health and health care in Colorado. Learn more at [www.cha.com](http://www.cha.com).

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**SAMPLE FACT SHEET**

Each day, Colorado hospitals voluntarily provide programs and services beyond simply caring for the sick and injured through routine patient care. These community benefits are made available at low or no cost to members of the community with the goal of saving and improving lives.

* [HOSPITAL] served [more than/nearly] [# SERVED] community members with voluntary community benefits programs in 2015, including [LIST OF SERVICES]. More than 1 million Coloradans are served every year through voluntary community benefits.
* [HOSPITAL] provided [more than/nearly] [$ TOTAL] in community benefits in 2015, including [$ UNPAID COSTS OF PATIENT CARE] in unpaid costs of patient care, [$ VOLUNTARY BENEFITS] in voluntary community benefits and [$ CHARITABLE DONATIONS] in charitable donations. Colorado hospitals as a whole provided more than $2.2 billion in community benefits in 2015.
* [More than/nearly] [# OF EMPLOYEES] are employed by [HOSPITAL], as doctors, nurses, support staff, contractors and more. Colorado hospitals employ more than 75,000 people around the state.
* In order to be considered a community benefit, the program or service must respond to an identified community need and meet at least one of the following criteria:
	+ Improves access
	+ Enhances health
	+ Advances medical or health knowledge
	+ Relieves or reduces the burden of government
* [HOSPITAL] provides a variety of types of community benefits, including [LIST OF SERVICES, LIKE LOW-COST IMMUNIZATIONS, CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS, FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES, HEALTH EDUCATION, ETC.].

**TALKING POINTS**

In addition to delivering lifesaving patient care, Colorado hospitals and health systems provide essential benefits that enrich lives and improve the overall health and wellbeing of their communities. Hospitals are driving change by expanding care beyond the walls of the traditional health care setting to play a broader role in managing the health needs of patients and communities. The most recent community benefits survey by the Colorado Hospital Association, representing 61 hospitals and fiscal year 2015 data, highlights the following:

**Community Benefits:**

* [HOSPITAL NAME] provided [$ TOTAL] in community benefits in 2015, and Colorado hospitals as a whole provided more than **$2.2 billion** in total community benefits that year.
* Community benefits are those voluntary programs and services provided by a hospital which improve the overall quality of life in a community.
* [HOSPITAL NAME] provided [$ TOTAL] in unpaid costs of patient care in 2015, which is care provided at a free or reduced rate for those who are unable to pay. Statewide, Colorado hospitals combined provided more than $1.9 billion in unpaid costs of patient care in 2015.
* [HOSPITAL NAME] provided [$ TOTAL] in voluntary community benefits programs in 2015, such as [EXAMPLES OF COMMUNITY BENEFITS SERVICES]. Combined, Colorado hospitals serve more than **1 million people** every year through community benefits such as free or low-cost immunizations, charitable contributions, family support services, health education and community building activities provided voluntarily at a cost of **$299 million**.
* In order to be considered a community benefit, the program or service must respond to an identified community need and meet at least one of the following criteria:
	+ Improves access
	+ Enhances health
	+ Advances medical or health knowledge
	+ Relieves or reduces the burden of government

**Social/Public Health Impact:**

* Colorado hospitals are trusted local resources that are integral to our communities. In addition to caring for the sick and injured, they address the unique health needs of our populations by voluntarily providing health improvement services and programs.
* Colorado hospitals provide many voluntary, free or low-cost services and programs to community members who need it most including children, the elderly and the sick.
* Colorado hospitals provide high-quality training and education for medical professionals; ensuring populations have access to the best possible health care providers and support staff. This is especially important in rural areas where it can be challenging to attract and retain certain resources and specialists.
* Hospitals are community conveners that bring public health stakeholders and other community leaders together to pool resources and collaboratively address health challenges and opportunities for improvement.

**Patient Care:**

* Colorado hospitals and health systems are committed to caring for all patients, regardless of their ability to pay, even though the burden of charity care has been great. As a result of the Affordable Care Act and patients’ expanded access to health care coverage, total uncompensated care provided by hospitals statewide and across the country has begun to lower.
* A reduction in charity care and bad debt for hospitals means these funds can be reallocated to other important community programs and services.

**Economic Impact:**

* Colorado hospitals and health systems invest in their local communities in ways beyond helping to restore and support good health.
* Hospitals are major drivers of economic activity; providing jobs, contributing to charitable causes and reducing overall community health costs.
* [More than/nearly] [TOTAL # EMPLOYEES] are employed by [HOSPITAL NAME], and **75,000** people are employed by hospitals statewide.
* In 2015, [HOSPITAL NAME] gave [$ DONATION TOTAL] through charitable and in-kind donations in our community, and Colorado hospitals gave more than **$ 108 million**.
* By providing much-needed preventative health services and programs, Colorado hospitals are helping to reduce the need for more costly emergency treatment and acute care.
* In many communities, especially in Colorado’s rural areas, hospitals and health systems are the largest employers, providing stability and economic benefits for their communities.

**SAMPLE WEBSITE COPY**

**Community Benefits**

[HOSPITAL NAME] is committed to the health of the [TOWN/REGION] community. The hospital provides a number of services outside of the traditional hospital setting, called community benefits, in order to improve the health of the community we serve.

Community benefits programs are designed to provide increased access to care and address population health inequalities for vulnerable patients. [HOSPITAL NAME] provides a variety of services, including: [LIST OF COMMUNITY BENEFITS EXAMPLES, SUCH AS IMMUNIZATIONS, NONBILLED AND REDUCED-FEE CLINICS, IN-HOME SERVICES AND FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES].

Statewide, Colorado hospitals provided more than $2.2 billion in community benefits in 2015, including more than $1.9 billion in unpaid costs of patient care, $299 million in voluntary community benefits and $108 million in charitable donations. For more statewide impact, visit [www.cha.com](http://www.cha.com).

Learn more about [HOSPITAL NAME]’s community benefits impact here:

[POST INFOGRAPHIC]

**SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS**

Facebook

* Colorado hospitals and health systems annually provide more than $2.2 billion in voluntary programs and services at low or no cost to improve your health. [HOSPITAL NAME] has been involved in helping our community by [LIST ACTIVITIES]. Let’s build a stronger, healthier community together!
* Did you know we provide [LIST OF COMMUNITY BENEFITS SERVICES] at low or no cost to all community members to help keep [TOWN/REGION] healthy and strong? Learn more at [WEBSITE].
* [HOSPITAL NAME] is committed to the health of our community! That’s why we provided [more than/nearly] [$ TOTAL] in community benefits services in 2015! [POST INFOGRAPHIC]

Twitter

* How are we improving the health of our patients and community? Visit [WEBSITE] to learn more.
* We provided [more than/nearly] [$ TOTAL] in community benefits services in 2015. Learn more: [INFOGRAPHIC].
* Did you know that we provide [LIST 1-2 COMM BENEFITS SERVICES]? It’s just part of our voluntary commitment to our community.

**ADVOCACY CHECKLIST**

Colorado hospitals and health systems are providing invaluable services to our communities each day. It is imperative that patients, families, local officials, business leaders and other stakeholders are constantly aware of how these efforts continue to positively impact and shape your community!

Please use this checklist to engage and educate the media and state leaders on the benefits your hospital provides in your community, beyond routine patient care.

Community Leaders and Elected Officials:

* Call, write, email or meet with your [federal](http://www.cha.com/Policy-Advocacy/Federal-Policy-Issues/Colorado-Congressional-Delegation.aspx) and [state](http://www.leg.state.co.us/clics/cslFrontPages.nsf/HomeSplash?OpenForm) legislators to discuss the value of your hospital in terms of essential health services, jobs, economic activity, community benefits and uncompensated care. It’s helpful to prepare and share the following information:
	+ The critical role your hospital serves for vulnerable populations.
	+ The size and scope of the Medicaid and uninsured population your hospital serves and how protecting the [Hospital Provider Fee](http://www.cha.com/Colorado-Hospitals/Colorado-Hospital-Provider-Fee.aspx) can result in more patients getting the care they need, when and where they need it.
	+ How the continued elimination of hospital funding, at the federal or state level jeopardized patient access to care. Be specific about the impact that funding cuts have on your services, jobs or community investments.
* Invite elected officials to tour your hospital, to attend a hospital event or to observe a board meeting when you present the[customizable community benefits presentation](http://www.cha.com/Colorado-Hospitals/Community-Benefits/2016-Community-Benefits-Survey-Presentation.aspx).
* Share the [customizable infographic](http://www.cha.com/Colorado-Hospitals/Community-Benefits/2016-Community-Benefits-Survey-Inforgraphic.aspx) to show how your facility’s health care initiatives extend beyond the traditional hospital care setting to include prevention and wellness activities and other community benefits aimed at improving overall health.

Media:

* Issue a customized version of the community benefits news release to demonstrate your hospital’s impact on your community.
* Inform local media about how your hospital is investing in the community – whether it be improved services, facility renovations to improve quality or efficiency, prevention and wellness efforts, etc.
* Highlight performance improvement initiatives that your hospital is pursuing to increase quality and safety for patients.