



## Hospitals Serving Their Communities

### Background

The numbers are staggering. Every day, more than 41,000 patients receive care in a Wisconsin hospital—every day of the week, every hour of the day and night. Of those patients, nearly 700 receive their care free of charge. In 2008, Wisconsin hospitals provided more than \$215 million in charity care to nearly 250,000 individuals.

The depth of giving, the breadth of caring and the lengths that hospitals will go to increase access to health care can only be explained by one word: *Mission*. Hospitals embrace that mission with programs and services focused on meeting the health care needs of the community, both inside and outside the walls of the hospital. Hospitals provide millions of dollars in free care to the uninsured and those who cannot pay for their care. Millions of additional dollars are used to provide community education programs designed to address chronic health problems or to provide health screenings. Hospitals assist public health departments, community health centers, local advocacy groups, and shelters by providing services and programs that address social and health issues.

Since 2006, WHA has annually quantified the value of hospital community benefits. The most recent findings include:

<b>2009 Community Benefits Report</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Charity Care at Cost	\$215,533,007
Medicaid Shortfalls	\$755,178,265
Losses on Other Public Programs	\$52,829,680
Subsidized Health Services	\$95,483,555
Nursing Home Losses	\$7,578,475
Other	\$286,026,030
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,412,629,012</b>

### Key Points

- In 2009, Wisconsin hospitals projected providing uncompensated health care services to 1,092,291 patients.
- Every day 41,000 patients receive care in a Wisconsin hospital. Nearly 700 of those patients receive their care free of charge.
- Wisconsin hospitals participate in or sponsor nearly 60 free community clinics across the state. Many are jointly operated with other sponsors that often include the public health department, a medical clinic, and other social service agencies or religious organizations.
- Volunteers at Wisconsin hospitals donate millions of hours and dollars to their community hospitals. In 2009, the Partners of WHA organization, the statewide organization of hospital volunteers representing some 11,000 volunteers, documented their contributions:
  - **Logging some 1.3 million volunteer hours in 2009!** With the value of one hour of volunteer service calculated at \$20.25 per hour, **this is a \$25.5 million contribution.**
  - **Raising and donating over \$2.1 million** to community hospitals.
  - Awarding **\$450,000 in academic scholarships** to students interested in health careers.
- Wisconsin hospitals are economic engines in their communities, generating some \$22 billion annually in economic activity and employing 100,000 people in communities throughout the state (2008 data).