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Wisconsin Hospitals Provide $2.2 Billion in Community Benefits in New Report

Wisconsin hospitals and health systems provided $2.2 billion in community benefits in 2024, according to a new report released Dec. 10 by the Wisconsin Hospital Association (WHA). The comprehensive report demonstrates how hospitals serve as more than health care providers—they are community anchors, economic engines and trusted partners in building healthier, more resilient communities across the state.

"Wisconsin's hospitals and health systems have always been there—24 hours a day, seven days a week – to deliver high-quality, accessible health care. But their commitment goes far beyond the bedside," said WHA President and CEO Kyle O'Brien. "These contributions reflect hospitals' deep-rooted dedication to the people they serve, from charity care and subsidized services to investments in behavioral health and population health initiatives—services that shape the social and economic conditions that impact health outcomes."

The $2.2 billion in community benefits includes charity care for patients who cannot pay, subsidized services that operate at a loss, health professions education and critical investments addressing social determinants of health. Hospitals are stepping up where other systems fall short, expanding behavioral health services, supporting substance-use recovery efforts and delivering occupational health programs.

The WHA 2025 Community Benefits Report also highlights the financial pressures hospitals face. In fiscal year 2024, one in four Wisconsin hospitals reported operating with negative margins due to rising costs, workforce shortages and inadequate Medicaid reimbursement, which resulted in $1.3 billion in losses.

Nearly all Wisconsin hospitals are non-profit, tax-exempt organizations that reinvest revenues into community needs instead of distributing profits to shareholders.

WHA's report follows new national analysis by Ernst & Young for the American Hospital Association (AHA) that shows nonprofit hospitals and health systems delivered more than $11 in benefits to their communities for every dollar of federal tax exemption received in 2022, the most recent year for which comprehensive data was available. The analysis reveals that while the estimated federal tax revenue forgone by nonprofit hospitals was $13.2 billion, they simultaneously provided $149 billion in benefits to their communities—an increase from prior-year analyses that estimated community benefits were 10 times greater than federal tax revenue forgone.

The 2025 Community Benefits Report also features regional stories showcasing how hospitals across Wisconsin are making a difference in their communities. An interactive version is available at www.wha.org/communitybenefits.

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EDUCATION EVENTS

Dec. 16, 2025

Common Hospital Deficiencies

Jan. 14, 2026
Caring for Wisconsin's Caregivers Well-Being First Champion Challenge for Credentialing Kickoff

Jan. 28, 2026
2026 WHA Health Care Leadership Academy