

# February 2023 President's Report

## A Note From Dr. Airica Steed

The positive response to [Healthy Conversations](#), my listening sessions with the community and employees, continues to grow. These are warm, comfortable gatherings and a beautiful way for me to get to know our neighborhoods and more of our staff and to hear directly from them on what they most need from MetroHealth.

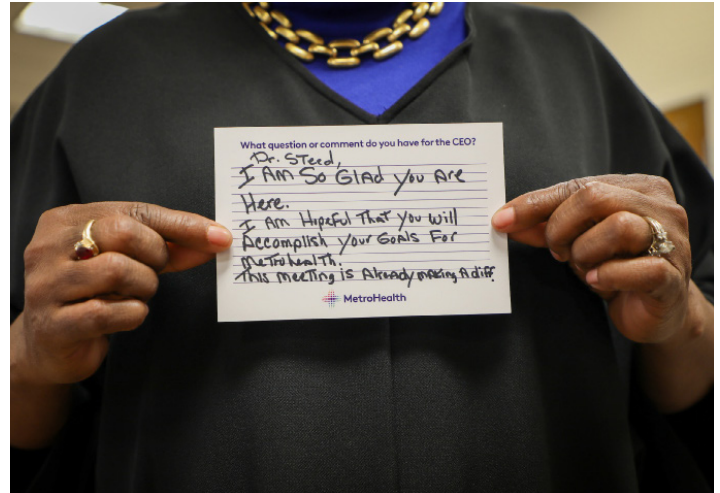
"This is wonderful," Emmanuel Vélez, president of the Hispanic Police Officers' Association, said after attending the Clark-Fulton session. "You can tell [Dr. Steed] has a heart for the community."

As of February 13, I have held four of these conversational community sessions in diverse communities including Beachwood, Clark-Fulton, Cleveland Heights and Buckeye, and have met with more than 200 community residents.

We are collecting their ideas and suggestions on how we can improve healthcare and the health of our communities so we can collaborate with them going forward. Those suggestions include improving access to primary and dental care, recruiting providers with diverse backgrounds, taking services to under-resourced communities and partnering with the community to address transportation, mental health, education, lead poisoning and other Social Drivers of Health.

In addition, the first Healthy Conversation listening session for employees was held on February 9, with a full house in attendance. I was able to update staff on the work we have started to address a number of their suggestions. I have also visited the various MetroHealth locations to meet with staff, including the County Jail.

Thirteen additional Healthy Conversation employee sessions are scheduled through the end of May at locations throughout the health



system as well as virtually. So far, more than 400 employees are registered for those.

Each Healthy Conversation – with the community and employees – has included time afterward for me to talk one-on-one with patients, community members and staff about their concerns, hear their suggestions and become even more responsive and work collaboratively going forward.

Three additional community Healthy Conversation listening sessions are scheduled in Parma (March 13), a virtual session (April 10) and an in-person/virtual session in Ohio City (April 17).

We will continue Healthy Conversations beyond the first 100 days, targeting specific populations including the Jewish and LGBTQ communities. We are leveraging Healthy Conversations to recruit potential members of our Community Advisory Councils. The strategic framework for the neighborhood-based Community Advisory Councils is currently being developed.

## Five Priorities

Each month, we will provide an update on the five priorities of Dr. Steed's vision for MetroHealth in

the areas of Clinical and Academic Excellence; Health Equity; Community Engagement; Innovation and Accelerating Growth.

### **Clinical and Academic Excellence**

The Institute of Patient Centered Excellence (IPCX) has been created and now includes all the System quality components including safety, quality analytics, quality assurance and accreditation, infection prevention, patient experience, and continuous quality improvement. We are currently interviewing for two leadership positions within IPCX: VP of the Institute of Patient-Centered Excellence and VP of Patient-Centered Continuous Improvement.

The System has also established its True North; every patient we touch will receive the highest quality, patient-centered, equitable, safe care and have the ultimate patient experience. System-wide composite goal metrics aimed at the True North have been created to eliminate hospital harm, improve our performance on CMS Universal Foundation ambulatory metrics, and improve the overall patient experience.

Leadership Listening Walk Rounds have been developed and will begin at the end of February as a collaboration between patient experience, DEI, patient safety, and employee engagement.

A request for proposal process has been completed to replace the current sundowning Safety Event Reporting System. Origami Risk has been selected as the new reporting system company and will include modules for patient safety, patient experience, and legal/risk.

In addition, the Care Management team has partnered with operations to develop a tumor bridge program. This program will support discharged patients through the diagnostic process and ensure their connection to needed specialties, freeing up hospital beds to focus on more clinical care. Positive impacts include patient satisfaction and patient throughput, and most importantly, providing a seamless transition from hospital to outpatient.

The Blue Ridge Institute for Medical Research



released the [2022 rankings](#) based on data from the NIH and has ranked the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (PM&R) at The MetroHealth System and Case Western Reserve University (CWRU) #1 in the nation in National Institutes of Health (NIH) funding among PM&R departments in U.S. medical schools.

### **Health Equity**

In our continued commitment to health equity, we are proactively engaging with the community and organizations to reduce health disparities among minority groups. This month, we conducted our initial public-facing kickoff event for [Minority Men's Health Fair](#), and secured a commitment from St. Luke's Foundation to partner with MetroHealth Systems to further health equity and eradicate disparities.

We were thrilled to announce a new scholarship program for four Lincoln-West School of Science and Health (LWSH) graduates per year, as well as an expansion of our internship program to include five paid summer internships for the Greater Cleveland Area United Negro College Fund (UNCF) scholarship awardees. We also recently participated as a signature sponsor for the UNCF Mayor's Luncheon.

In preparation for the near future, we have conducted the initial planning meeting for the March 20 Black Maternal and Infant Mortality

Event in partnership with Creating Healthier Communities (CHC) and the Black Birthing Initiative, which is a collaborative between Birthing Beautiful Communities, Village of Healing, and Pregnant with Possibilities. We have also conducted our initial strategic planning meeting for the MetroHealth-sponsored Cleveland Juneteenth Freedom Festival, taking place on June 17.

The Office of Opioid Safety, in partnership with the ADAMHS Board of Cuyahoga, placed a harm-reduction vending machine outside of the main campus emergency department. The vending machine has been used 102 times since going live in late November, 2022, with 85% of usage for naloxone products (Kloxxado or Narcan). In addition, the Office of Opioid Safety successfully relocated the Motivation and Engagement Clinic (MEC) to Recovery Resources.

### **Community Engagement**

This month, we met with Cleveland Public Library leadership to develop a partnership to bring Healthy Conversations and bi-monthly or quarterly health and wellness educational programming to the community. In addition, we met with leadership from the Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority to develop a similar partnership, as well as to potentially bring clinical services and support to larger housing developments.

MetroHealth's Institute for H.O.P.E. screened 100,000 patients for social needs on January 31, and recently opened a school health clinic in Cleveland Heights. In addition, the trauma recovery, school health, and faith-based teams supported John Adams High School students and staff after the shooting of a student.

### **Innovation**

Effective January 1, 2023, CMS activated our new Collaborative Care Partners LLC as an ACO REACH (Accountable Care Organization Realizing Equity, Access, and Community Health), which includes all MetroHealth providers, Spry Senior, and 18 other provider organizations.

This latest CMS value-based model is the

natural evolution of the System's 2021-2022 Direct Contracting Entity (DCE), continues to be a global full risk agreement with total care capitation, and adds new focuses on promoting health equity and addressing healthcare disparities for underserved communities.

The MetroHealth Virtual Admission/Discharge Nurse Program utilizes virtual nurses to complete an inpatient's admission and discharge process using unit-based technology, freeing up bedside nurses to focus on more clinical care. Positive impacts include patient and nurse satisfaction, and patient throughput.

On Feb 9, MetroHealth hosted more than 40 innovation leaders from companies and organizations throughout the region that are part of the EDGE InnoQuest group, at the Glick Center. Dr. Steed and Julie Jacono presented on MetroHealth's Culture of Innovation. Leaders also toured the pediatrics unit, seeing first hand the intersection of design, technology and care delivery.

On January 23 and 24, MetroHealth and Lumina Imaging & Diagnostics, the spinoff company created by MetroHealth to disrupt elective imaging, hosted the leadership and design team from Siemens Healthineers. Over two days, teams discussed the future of MRI and CT elective imaging.

On Feb 2, MetroHealth achieved a milestone in our new Blood and Marrow Transplant program – our first patient successfully completed stem cell collection. Many MetroHealth teams contributed to this amazing milestone as the MetroHealth Cancer Care Institute continues to expand to ensure cutting edge care is available to all patients.

### **Accelerating Growth**

Three [Spry Senior](#) locations opened in 2022 in Solon (February 15), Strongsville (October 25) and Brook Park (December 29). There were 213 unique patients seen in 2022. The top three payors were Medicare Advantage (41%), Medicare FFS (24%) and Commercial (24%). In January 2023, the first full month with all



three centers open, we saw 121 unique patients and a 50% Medicare Advantage payor mix.

Key priority areas for 2023 include evaluating and updating our original proforma and break-even point, caring and attributing our Medicare FFS patients to MA and our ACO REACH plan, and panel growth across all three sites. From 2021 to 2022, there was a 19% growth of Medicare Wellness Visits for the System, including 65% growth in Medicare Wellness in senior care.

## Marketing Focus

With February being American Heart Awareness Month, we have initiated an awareness campaign around important heart health topics. We are leveraging various communications channels to disseminate information, including the following:

- Various social media posts, including videos featuring MetroHealth cardiologists
- [SimplyWell](#) blogs and e-newsletter
- Virtual Health Talk on February 28

The month's focus kicked off with an internal Go Red for Women story and encouragement

to wear red on February 3, which is Women's Heart Health Day, and a [video featuring Dr. Kondapaneni on social media](#).

## Internal Initiatives

Dr. Steed has emphasized that employee engagement and organizational culture are foundational to her vision of clinical excellence. In addition to Healthy Conversations, an "Ask the CEO" email (which has received 124 emails since the start of 2023), and a MIV communication called "Five Questions with Dr. Steed" that addresses employee question themes and action items.

In addition, we expanded the attendees of the regular leadership meeting and rebranded the group to "Partners in Excellence." The group meets every six weeks and includes more than 450 leaders at the manager level and above. It follows a new format that generates an upbeat, positive and engaging vibe, while discussing topics including employee recognition, celebrations of successes and educational opportunities.



The 2022 Employee Engagement Survey saw a significant increase in participation, up nine percentage points from 63% in 2021.

The results show that despite the extraordinary rate of change MetroHealth has experienced, our colleagues indicated an unrelenting pride in our mission, their personal connection with our work, and a commitment to the organization's success. Action planning to respond to the results will begin this month.

We have increased our focus on workplace safety, including investing in steering wheel locks for employees with Kia and Hyundai vehicles, which have increasingly been targeted for thefts. We have also implemented new patient-facing employee badges that only show first names, and we have increased police presence across System campuses.

The Medical Staff Office has been working on the FPPE/OPPE/Peer Review module, working directly with the IS team to build a crosswalk of provider performance to develop a scorecard for Chairpersons to complete OPPE evaluation. To date, the APP APRs reached 98% completion, and the Physician APRs reached 79% completion.

The MetroHealth System has had great success in adding to the team, with 36 offer letters extended to providers in January, 15 of which have been accepted to date. Dr. Roger Ove has been hired as Director of Radiation Oncology.

The System welcomed 45 RNs (42 experienced, three new graduates), 18 PCNAs, six LPNs, and 10 nurse interns. A new Nursing Professional Development Specialist joined the team to support Peri-Op and Procedures, and we also welcomed Cheryl Bradas, PhD, APRN-CNS, GCNS-BC, CNRN, CHPN as our System Nurse Scientist, who will lead and support nursing inquiry and research.

We will be launching an Advanced Practice Providers (APP) Onboarding and Transition to Practice/Fellowship Program, to be piloted in 2023 and rolled out System-wide in 2024.

## Money Matters

The two covenants for the Series 2017 bonds are Days Cash on Hand (DCOH) and Debt Service Coverage Ratio (DSCR). As of December 31, 2022, DCOH was 172 days, and DCSR was 6.08x, both above their compliance requirements of 75 days and 1.00x, respectively.

The stock market started on a positive note in 2023. In January, the System's unrestricted investments were up 2.3% compared to being down 5.7% in 2022.

MetroHealth's "For All of Us" campaign has reached nearly \$130.4 million, with \$104.7 million committed to program and endowment and \$25.7 million committed to capital. It is anticipated that the campaign will achieve its \$150 million goal by the end of 2023.

The MetroHealth Rehabilitation Institute recently received an in-kind donation from Honda of Middleburg Heights of a 2022 Honda CR-V to support our Driver Rehabilitation Program, which has been helping patients return to safe driving since 1990. The Honda will be outfitted with special controls to help patients get back on the road of freedom and independence.

Support from the community and our donors was strong at year-end, including transformational gifts totaling \$2.1 million from the Toby D. Lewis Trust, the Samuel H. and Maria Miller Foundation and the Robert R. Cull Trust.

## Grants, Awards & Recognitions

In honor of **Black History Month**, MetroHealth is showcasing its role as a trailblazer by showcasing pivotal points in the organization's history on social media and internal communication channels. That includes telling the stories of the hospital's first Black students to enroll in the nursing program, the first Black medical intern and several other



changemakers in the organization's history.

The **Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (PM&R)** at The MetroHealth System and Case Western Reserve University (CWRU) ranks No. 1 in the nation in National Institutes of Health (NIH) funding among PM&R departments in U.S. medical schools. The Blue Ridge Institute for Medical Research released the 2022 rankings based on data from the NIH.

**The MetroHealth System** earned a Silver Award in the 2022 Commuter Choice Awards, which recognizes organizations promoting sustainable commuting among their employees. The awards are presented by Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA). MetroHealth's Behavioral Health is part of a contract awarded to MetroHealth to expand services to children involved with the Department of Children and Family Services.

Several team members have attended or will attend WELLE training - Behavioral Safety Management for Health Care. MetroHealth's Beachwood Health Center is the first unit to have 100% of nurses certified.

MetroHealth System's President & CEO **Airica Steed, Ed.D, RN, MBA, FACHE**, received the 2022 Sharp Index Health Equity Leader Award. The award is in recognition of Dr. Steed's commitment to ensuring everyone has equal access to good health care and no one's life is ever cut short because of the color of their skin, their ZIP code, their gender, sexual orientation, the language that they speak, the country that they come from or any other demographic that has been used to make people feel "less than."

Dr. Steed also received the Making Black History Now Award, presented by Rhema Fellowship Church, and will be receiving the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion award from Chicago Health Executives Forum/American College of Healthcare Executives on February 23.

**Khalid Sossey-Alaoui, PhD**, Staff Scientist in the Division of Cancer Biology, MetroHealth



Department of Medicine and the Center for Cancer Research of the MetroHealth Research Institute, received the prestigious Metastatic Breast Cancer Translational Research Award for the project "Role of YB1 in Triple Negative Breast Cancer Metastasis."

This \$250,000, two-year award from METAvivor Research and Support Inc. will study mechanisms mediating "triple-negative" breast cancer. Metastatic breast cancer – cancer that spreads from the breast to other organs or tissue in the body – is the second leading cause of death in women in the United States. It accounts for more than 43,000 deaths and 281,000 new cases of invasive breast cancer annually.

**Fourteen current and former members of MetroHealth's staff** have written chapters for the 5th edition of Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrics, the publishing house Elsevier's definitive textbook and reference for professionals in a range of fields, including medicine, health care, education, social service and public policy.

One of the textbook's five editors is Terry Stancin, PhD, former MetroHealth Chief of Psychology, Director of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Psychology and Vice-Chair for Research in Psychiatry. Chapter authors from MetroHealth include psychologists Lisa Ramirez, PhD, Associate Director of Pediatric Psychiatry; Melissa Armstrong-Brine, PhD, Clinical Psychologist and Director of MetroHealth Autism Assessment Clinic (MAAC), who contributed to two chapters; Kathryn Mancini, PhD; Marsheena

Murray, PhD; Brittany Myers, PhD; Leslie Speer, PhD, (formerly of MetroHealth); Dr. Stancin; Jessica VanOrmer Simpson, PhD, (former fellow at MetroHealth); physicians Irene Dietz, MD, Pediatrics; Raman Marwaha, MD, Child Psychiatry; Laura Mintz, MD, Internal Medicine-Pediatrics; Robert Needleman, MD, Pediatrics; Margaret Stager, MD, Pediatrics; and Katie Davis, MSN, RN, PHNA-BC, Executive Director, Center for Community and Corporate Health.

**Adam Perzynski, Ph.D.**, Staff Scientist in the Division of General Internal Medicine and the MetroHealth Population Health Research Institute, is the recipient of a \$3.1 million NIH R01 award entitled “Digital Twin Neighborhoods for Research on Place-Based Health Inequalities in mid-Life.”

The overall objective of this collaborative project with the Cleveland Clinic (Jarrod Dalton, PhD) is to empower community members and organizations, local health systems and population health and political leaders to use evidence from place-based research to inform, prioritize, evaluate and implement health-promoting strategies that close health disparities.

We are pleased to share that **Ajasha Long, PhD**, Correctional Psychologist, Department of Correctional Medicine, has been recognized by peers in the Cleveland Psychological Association with an Early Career Achievement Award.

The Early Career Achievement Award is a peer-selected, peer-reviewed award presented to a psychologist who demonstrates expertise, leadership, professionalism and a unique contribution to the field.

**Kathleen Alto, PhD**, presented on the Psychologist’s Role in Medicated Assisted Treatment at the Cleveland Psychological Association.

**Lori-Anne Schulte-Laird**, lead APRN in Behavioral Health, recently obtained her Doctorate in Nursing

**Austin Heil, RN**, is a recent recipient of the DAISY Award for Extraordinary Nurses. He was nominated by a nurse who floated to his unit.

As any nurse knows, floating to another area can be stressful. Austin jumped in to help his coworker with a patient before they could even finish their request for assistance. Not only that, but Austin also checked on and provided care to his coworker’s other patients. Austin’s nominator described him as “selfless” and an “all-star”.

## Spotlight on MetroHealth

MetroHealth President & CEO Dr. Airica Steed was quoted in Becker’s Hospital Review story, [“Championing teams, empowering physicians: Four health care execs’ advice”](#)

Robert Needleman, PhD, Pediatric Physician at MetroHealth, was covered by ideastream for his nonprofit “Reach Out and Read”: [This MetroHealth pediatrician founded a nonprofit in the trunk of his car to help improve kids’ health](#)

*Psychiatric News* covered the opening of our Behavioral Health Hospital: [Cleveland’s Safety Net Hospital Builds 112-Bed Psychiatric Facility](#)

MetroHealth’s Thomas L. Steinemann, MD, [was quoted as a thought-leader in a New York Times story](#) about a recall on eye drops

Channel 3 News/WKYC featured the new Birthing Center on a recent Good Company episode: [A New Birthing Center for Families](#)

James Misak, MD, wrote a letter to the editor that was posted to Cleveland.com: [MetroHealth’s Institute for H.O.P.E. striving to address factors creating health disparities](#)

