



A Note From Dr. Steed

Trustees,

It is hard to believe it has been six months since we started this journey together. Since then, I have had countless conversations with members of our community about what makes MetroHealth so special. Their answer? Our people and our commitment to community.

Every day, I have the privilege of witnessing the life-saving work of our more than 8,200 caregivers. I continue to be wowed by their innovative spirit, resilience and commitment to doing what is right for our patients and each other.

Take our pharmacy, which last year surpassed a major milestone by filling more than 1 million prescriptions for the first time in its history – an 18% increase over the prior year.

Our population health and value-based care efforts have been held up as national models for how to deliver quality care at a controlled cost.

MetroHealth is also home to countless world-class providers – not just among safety-net hospitals but any health care institution. The same could be said for our researchers whose discoveries are leading to new frontiers in medicine.

Our front-line caregivers are also inspiring. Every day, they care for people experiencing trauma, addiction, cancer, mental health crises and other health conditions.



Like all health care organizations emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic, we do face challenges. Our employees have not been shy about sharing those challenges and offering possible solutions.

Access continues to be an issue. Patients – many of whom are our own employees – wait weeks and even months for an appointment and are forced to choose to receive care elsewhere. Our Emergency Department should not be the only front door to our health system, but oftentimes our patients have no other choice.

Access to reliable transportation also remains a challenge for those we serve. No-show rates remain high for many clinics because patients do not have the means to travel to one of our sites, especially those beyond the neighborhoods where they live.

Coupled with concerns about access is having enough space to provide that care. Our physical footprint must

reflect the needs of the individuals we serve – now and in the future – as well as our employees. That includes optimizing space in The Glick Center, revisiting our approach to APEX, enhancing our ambulatory footprint and reevaluating our plans for existing legacy buildings.

We must also continue to strive toward being an A-grade, five-star quality organization because that is what our patients deserve. The quality of care we provide should be reflected in our grades and rankings by outside agencies and organizations, and we have significant work ahead of us on this front.

But again, we cannot ignore our people. Because without our caregivers, there is no mission – there is no MetroHealth.

Our workforce also must reflect the communities we serve, which is why I am so proud MetroHealth joined Cleveland Clinic, University Hospitals and several other health systems across the country in signing the Health Anchor Network’s “Impact Workforce Commitment,” which is a promise to align our hiring practices and workforce development programs with a commitment to equity and inclusion.

That is also why I have made employee engagement such an intentional focus since my arrival. Our employees should feel heard and valued and ultimately be rewarded for their contributions.

In the following pages, you will read about just some of that incredible work.

Speaking of people, as you know, we have searches underway several critical executive leadership roles: Chief Clinical & Academic Officer; Chief Financial Officer; Chief People Officer; and Senior Vice President, Facilities, Construction and Campus Transformation. The search committees, which include a diverse set of representatives from all corners of the organization, have been interviewing candidates. Second round interviews will include additional stakeholders, and I expect we will have additional updates in my next report.

Lastly, I just want to say thank you for your warm welcome over these last six months. It is an honor to lead this dynamic institution at such a pivotal time for our community, which already feels like home. I am excited for what we will accomplish together.

Best,

Airica Steed, Ed.D, RN, MBA, FACHE
President & CEO
The MetroHealth System



Tracking Our Progress

As part of my commitment to transparency, we will periodically share high-level updates about our performance in various goal areas across the organization.



Six Pillars

Each month, I provide updates from the five pillars for our vision for MetroHealth in the areas of Clinical and Academic Excellence; Health Equity; Community Engagement; Innovation and Accelerating Growth. Given its importance in achieving our priorities – as I outlined in my note above – I have added a sixth: People-First Culture.

This is only a sample of the incredible work taking place at MetroHealth every day.

Clinical & Academic Excellence

Life-Changing Treatment: Arvind Suguness, MD, and the MetroHealth pulmonology team performed the System’s first endobronchial valve procedure, bringing the potentially life-changing treatment for emphysema to a population at highest risk for the debilitating disease. After a year of planning and collaboration with multiple departments throughout the System,

including trauma surgery and anesthesiology, the team is identifying more patients who could benefit from the Zephyr valve therapy and scheduling them for the procedure.

Top-Ranked Maternity Care: MetroHealth once again has been named among the best maternity hospitals in the United States by Newsweek. The designation, part of the prestigious hospital ratings list for 2023, is presented by Newsweek and Statista Inc., the world-leading statistics portal and industry ranking provider. MetroHealth’s commitment to providing outstanding pregnancy care for its community goes back more than 90 years, with the delivery of more than 160,000 babies since its now-retired labor and delivery suites were opened in 1974.

We renewed that commitment in January of 2023, with the opening of a new Birthing Center and Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) to expectant mothers and their families. We welcome you to take a [virtual tour](#) of the new Birthing Center and hear from our amazing team.

Guardian Health Network: MetroHealth is now a partner of the Guardian Research Network (GRN). GRN is a nationwide health system research consortium focused on advancing technology to accelerate cures for life-threatening diseases such as cancer. With the expertise of our clinical scientists, research team and new partners, MetroHealth will increase participation through clinical trials driven by data, optimize therapeutic and diagnostic studies, and employ real world data to improve patient access to precision medicines in underserved communities. This relationship will open doors to new research opportunities and contribute to the continued growth of MetroHealth's robust translational research efforts.

New VP/Surgical & Perioperative Services: As part of our efforts to drive continuous improvement and elevate the quality of care we provide, we have appointed Katrina L. Conine, RN, as Vice President, Surgical & Perioperative Services. She is an accomplished health care leader and surgical/procedural/ancillary service line expert with over 30 years of solid and diverse experiences spanning several environments.

Health Equity

Minority Men's Health Fair: This year's MetroHealth Minority Men's Health Fair was an extraordinary success, as several hundred men from our community accepted the invitation to prioritize their own health and wellness. The health fair, which took place Thursday, April 27, was hosted at three MetroHealth locations: Main Campus, Cleveland Heights Medical Center and Ohio City Health Center. The event offered education and more than 30 free screenings for health issues prevalent in minority men, including prostate cancer, diabetes, high blood pressure, skin cancer, mental health concerns and other conditions. Though the health fair was geared toward men of color, all were welcome. Among the many sponsors who helped make this year's Minority Men's Health Fair a success were First Energy Foundation, Saint Luke's Foundation and KeyBank. They were joined by dozens of community partners who set up tables to offer health-related education and services. In addition, several hundred volunteers from MetroHealth and the community made the event possible.

AHA: Accelerating Health Equity: Several MetroHealth representatives were on hand for this conference in Minneapolis that explored how health systems are working to advance health equity and eliminate health disparities. Presenters from MetroHealth included Natalie Harper, Linda Jackson, Megan Simpson and Alan Nevel.

Minority Women's Health Expo: Building upon the success of the Minority Men's Health Fair, MetroHealth



will for the first time host a Minority Women's Health Expo on September 30 at the Huntington Convention Center of Cleveland. This is more than a health fair. We want women to feel informed, empowered and confident that they have a partner in care with MetroHealth. Our goal is to create a day for women in our community to focus on their health – physically and mentally – together with their girlfriends, sisters, aunts, mothers. This effort is a direct response to Cleveland being named the least livable city for Black women.

DEI Partnership: Diversity, equity and inclusion have been ingrained in the culture of The MetroHealth System since its founding almost two centuries ago. These values inform the way MetroHealth serves its community and operates as an employer. Now, through a partnership with Rali, an innovative learning and behavior change platform, the hospital system will share its DEI expertise throughout the health care industry. Beginning in August, the unique content that MetroHealth has developed around creating a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion will be available on Rali's Change Experience Platform

Equity In All We Do: In 2021, MetroHealth launched an immersive employee education effort designed to explore how, without even realizing it, the human brain naturally holds stereotypes and biases. We are

committed to ensuring questions and concerns rooted in historical disparities are met by our caregivers with compassion, patience and flexibility so we can meet the needs of each person. To date, 97% of participants indicated the training helps them understand we all have biases.

Community Engagement

Community Advisory Councils: Caring starts with listening and understanding the needs and experiences of our community is essential in improving access to care. Building on the success of the Healthy Conversation listening and engagement sessions in the community, these councils will provide an ongoing mechanism to partner with residents to identify opportunities and implement solutions to improve the health and wealth of communities in Greater Cleveland. We have met with key internal and external stakeholders in finalizing the structure and design of the councils which will include neighborhood-level and resident-led Community Action Councils and a Community Advisory Steering Council consisting of community organizations, MetroHealth staff and community residents.

We will officially kick off the Community Advisory Councils this summer in an inclusive manner and bring together community leaders, residents and MetroHealth representatives for training, goal setting and final details before launching the Community Action Councils later this year.

Opportunity for All: Next month, MetroHealth will once again host its Transgender Job Fair. The event will take place June 24 at Studio West 117 in Lakewood. In addition to hiring organizations, several workforce development organizations will be there with training opportunities. We expect a wide range of attendees, seeking everything from new professional positions to an entry-level opportunities. Employers attending are well aware of the challenges transgender people experience when job hunting and expressed a willingness to work with them.

Going Green: MetroHealth is a sponsor of an innovative program with the City of Cleveland Heights that allows residents to exchange old gas-powered lawnmowers with electric ones. At MetroHealth, we are focused on building healthier and more equitable communities, and this partnership with the City of Cleveland Heights is just another example of that enduring commitment. Our work must extend beyond the walls of our hospitals and clinics if we truly want to improve the health and well-being of the communities we serve. That includes doing everything we can to combat environmental harm and the negative health effects that accompany it.



A Staff that Cares: What started as a team-building exercise for staff in the Burn Unit resulted in colleagues raising thousands of dollars for a local nonprofit with a similar mission of caring for the community. John Hiller, BSN, RN, a Nurse Manager for the Burn Unit Intensive Care Unit, sought a fun way to engage his team when the idea of a fundraiser for Providence House came up. The team raised more than \$8,000 in funds and several boxes of clothing and toys for Providence House

Community Matters: The MetroHealth Opportunity Center – part of the Institute for H.O.P.E.™ in Collaboration with the Mexican Consulate and support from the ODH OHIZ grant, celebrated El Dia del Nino, “Children’s Day” A holiday observed in some Latin American Countries. Offerings included: Financial literacy and social drivers of health screenings. Also, the Opportunity Center, in collaboration with Ward 14 Councilwoman Jasmin Santana, celebrated a Mother’s Day Paint & Snacks event. The purpose of this Art painting activity event was to provide an intervention of reducing stress among women who attended the International Women’s Day event on March 9.

Innovation

A Strategic Partnership: Lumina Imaging, a network of consumer-centric imaging centers, and Siemens Healthineers, a global leader in medical technology, have formed a long-term strategic Value Partnership that will help scale Lumina’s innovative model across the country. MetroHealth created Lumina to answer this simple question: Why are MRI and CT scans so expensive and difficult to schedule? Lumina offers hospital-quality imaging services with an exceptional consumer experience at a fraction of the cost of those offered in hospital settings. This Value Partnership will provide the technology backbone that will allow Lumina to scale its operating model and brand through both corporate-owned sites and franchise sites with health systems throughout Ohio and beyond looking to offer new options for outpatient imaging in their markets.

Digital Pain Management Solutions: MetroHealth and Fern Health announced a strategic partnership to develop and deploy a comprehensive digital pain management program to be used as a resource for patients as a complement to traditional pain management plans prescribed by providers across the pain management continuum. Under the agreement, MetroHealth will provide clinical and operational subject matter expertise to support Fern Health's development of virtual pain management programs that are fully integrated with provider electronic health records and clinical workflows to support providers and patients between clinical visits. MetroHealth also will study the effectiveness of these programs within a patient/provider setting. MetroHealth and Fern Health will partner to build the necessary infrastructure to deploy and scale these programs within a clinical setting, including the necessary business and reimbursement pathways to sustain the programs.

Accelerating Growth

START: We recently implemented a new triage process in our Emergency Department so we can more quickly evaluate patients and reduce waiting room times, which will ultimately allow us to serve more patients. The new process is called START (Simply Triage and Rapid Treatment).

New Infusion Center: A new ambulatory outpatient infusion center will open next month on the second floor of the Gannon building in the vacated endoscopy area. This new space will allow us to run up to 17 chairs and isolate patients who are immunocompromised. This will reduce wait times and streamline the referral and scheduling processes.

Helping Those With Substance Abuse Disorder: With its move to a new space at Recovery Resources in Old Brooklyn, the MetroHealth Motivation and Engagement Clinic (MEC) has made it easier for patients who struggle with opioid addiction to connect with the ongoing services they need to begin and continue their recovery journey.

The MEC was established in 2021 by the MetroHealth Office of Opioid Safety as a streamlined, easily accessible location for patients to receive care in one place, often during the same visit. Those services can include Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) for opioid use disorder, group or individual therapy, naloxone and referrals to other rehab programs based on assessment. With the move to Old Brooklyn, the MEC now also offers testing for HIV and Hepatitis C, which occur at higher rates among people who inject drugs.



People-First Culture

Metro's Got Talent: We already know our colleagues are great health care professionals. The Metro's Got Talent Showcase on May 10 – presented as part of our Hospital Week festivities – proved that many of them have dynamic skills outside of work, too. From singing and dancing to guitar playing, juggling and a comedy routine, 17 performers and/or acts put on a two-hour show at The Glick Center. The crowd cheered, clapped and pumped up their colleagues who braved the stage to share their talents with the MetroHealth community. Maurice Salmon, Laboratory Technologist, took home first prize for his rendition of Prince's "Purple Rain."

Driving Engagement and Process Improvement: Earlier this month, an interdisciplinary group of MetroHealth caregivers came together to identify root causes of admission and discharge delays, which lead to boarding in the Emergency Department. Deemed the Health Care Hackathon, the 42 caregivers in attendance – all of whom were nominated by leadership – represented a wide range of departments at Main Campus, including physicians, nurses, transporters, social workers, radiologists, pharmacists, environmental service aides and more. Later this month, the teams will work on solutions for the top identified problems, leveraging input from their departments and colleagues. They will then present their top solutions to a panel of hospital leaders.

Health Care Hotline: To best care for the individuals we serve, we must first take care of ourselves. That's why introduced the MetroHealth Employee Health Care Hotline, which will allow employees and their families to more quickly access the care they need. Employees interested in scheduling with a MetroHealth provider can call 216-778-8818, and one of our customer care representatives will assist you in obtaining a timely appointment. Representatives are available from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday-Friday.

New Employee Business Resource Group: As part of our efforts to expand upon inclusivity in the workplace, MetroHealth recently launched a new Employee Business Resource Group (EBRG) for current and future employees with disabilities. This EBRG intends to provide resources and community for employees with disabilities while promoting an overall safer and healthier work environment. The group also aims to support inclusive hiring efforts and employee retention. The group is co-chaired by Deirdre Solymosi, Workforce Development Advisor, and Blake Perkins, Physical Therapist. Brian Rentschler, Senior Vice President – Hospital Operations, is the executive sponsor of the group. MetroHealth has over a dozen EBRGs.

Money Matters

Financial Update: The biggest challenges to MetroHealth and the entire health care industry are continued labor shortages and inflation in the cost of goods and services.

Last year, the System posted a modest operating margin but non-operating activity, including investment losses, pushed MetroHealth to record an overall loss for 2022. We see these trends continuing into 2023 and are developing plans to address them. Despite these challenges, MetroHealth remains financially strong, especially compared to other safety-net providers throughout the country.

MetroHealth has employed and continues to employ strategies to manage our risks and ensure the success of the System into the future. A newly created Capital Committee has been tasked with developing a 3-year capital spending plan and prioritizing the funding of capital requests to ensure resources are well managed and spent most effectively.

We also have enacted monthly operational review sessions. In these meetings system leaders review current operational results and improvement plans. Divisional leaders have created action plans designed to improve our EBIDA and those plans are monitored for achievement during these sessions.



From The MetroHealth Foundation

More Help for Patients: Chip and Karen Chaikin recently made another major contribution to the Anita Chaikin Band Aid Fund, which assists eligible patients on a case-by-case basis with immediate basic needs (food, transportation, housing, etc.). The Band Aid Fund is administered through the Institute for H.O.P.E.™

Donor Survey: The Foundation's first-ever donor survey is being conducted this month. The results of the survey, which is going out to more than 4,000 donors, will help the Philanthropy staff become more efficient and effective in supporting patients, programs, caregivers and our generous donors.

Giving Newsletter: MetroHealth's Giving Newsletter – which chronicles and celebrates the life-changing impact of philanthropy on MetroHealth's patients, caregivers and community – is back in print. The first issue in more than two years is in the mail and features coverage of The MetroHealth Rehabilitation Institute, Dr. Steed's community listening tour and examples of how individual and corporate giving can improve digital equity, EID and employee well-being.

Marketing Focus

Health Tips in Your Inbox: In January, MetroHealth relaunched its SimplyWell e-newsletter, which is sent to more than 230,000 individuals each month. Each issue includes an intro from Dr. Steed and six articles focused on helping our patients along their journey to good health. Through April, the newsletter boasts a strong 35% open rate.

Improving Children's Health: Starting June 12, in partnership with the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo, the MetroHealth children's health team and other caregivers will be on site at the zoo for Free Mondays with a suite of activities and educational opportunities. The goal of the partnership is to educate families about children's health and resources available at MetroHealth.

Grants, Awards & Recognition

We are thrilled to announce our talented staff has received several recognitions and awards.

At this year's **Nursing Excellence Awards** celebration during National Nurses Week, we honored several MetroHealth nurses for their tireless contributions, hard work and commitment to the individuals we serve. They are:

Outstanding Achievement in Career Excellence: **Lori Domonkos**, BSN, RN, CMSRN, Parma Inpatient Unit
Outstanding Achievement in Interprofessional Collaboration: Kelley Tomaro, BSN, RN, OCN, and Megan Berghaus, BSN, RN, OCN, both with the Oncology Clinic

Outstanding Achievement in Nursing Leadership: **Daniel Seabold**, MBA, BSN, RN, CNOR, Main Campus OR

Outstanding Achievement in Nursing Quality: **Micaela McSpadden**, MSN, RN, CNOR, CNE, Clinical Quality & Evidence-Based Practice Specialist

Friend of Nursing: **Lisa Eulinberg**, MSW, LSW, Cancer Center Social Work Coordinator

Outstanding Achievement in Nursing Education & Professional Practice: **Kimberly Seiler**, MSN, RN, CPN. Please note: Kimberly Seiler was a beloved member of the MetroHealth nursing community for years. She passed away earlier this month. Her nurse colleagues presented her with the Outstanding Achievement in Nursing Education & Professional Practice Award prior to her death.

Recent recipients of the DAISY Award for Extraordinary Nurses are **Caryn Spanos**, RN, BSN, and **Clairissa**



Rodriguez, RN, MSN, CCRN. Spanos was nominated by a grateful patient who credits her for pushing her to continue to cancer treatment. "I honestly believe I am alive today because of Caryn. My family considers Caryn 'family.' We are forever grateful to MetroHealth," the nominator wrote. As for Rodriguez, she was recognized by a patient in the burn unit for making it possible to visit with her children. This simple gesture made the patient's hospital stay so much better and Clarissa's "care, concern and action showed a multitude of compassion and love, and I will remember her for the rest of my life and be forever grateful."

In recognition of its sustainability efforts in 2022, MetroHealth has received the **Partner for Change Award** from Practice Greenhealth. This award recognizes organizations for their commitment to improving their environmental performance and efforts to build sustainability and resiliency into the operations and culture of their institutions.

Becker's Hospital Review has named MetroHealth's **David Fiser** to its 2023 edition of its "CIOs to Know" list. Fiser joined MetroHealth in 2018 as Vice President and CIO and was recently promoted to Senior Vice President. Among his many accomplishments, Fiser led a team of nearly 200 information technology professionals amid the opening of two new hospitals: The Glick Center and Cleveland Heights Behavioral Hospital. Other accomplishments include ongoing cybersecurity enhancements, complex data center migrations and upgrades to our electronic medical records system.

The Office of Patient Safety's **Stacey Booker**, MS,

RN, Director Patient Safety and High Reliability, and **Rachael Partridge**, MS, PMP, Patient Safety Coordinator, TeamSTEPPS, were tapped to lead an American Hospital Association webinar. Stacey and Rachael discussed how MetroHealth – a long-standing champion and national model for TeamSTEPPS – combined a renewed focus on core organizational values with intentional investment in individual caregivers to ignite change during and after the pandemic.

Denise Dewald, MD, in the Department of Pulmonary, Critical Care, and Sleep Medicine was awarded a \$100,000 Junior Faculty Grant by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine (AASM) Foundation, entitled “Swallowing in Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA) & Positive Airway Pressure Intolerance.

David Cunningham, PhD, and **Jayme Knutson, PhD**, Staff Scientists in the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (PM&R) and the MetroHealth Center for Rehabilitation Research, were awarded a 5-year \$3.4 million NIH grant entitled “tDCS during contralaterally controlled FES for upper extremity hemiplegia.” The proposed project investigates a strategy to incorporate noninvasive brain stimulation called transcranial direct current stimulation (tDCS) with an electrical stimulation technique called contralaterally controlled functional electrical stimulation (CCFES) in order to improve post-stroke upper-limb motor recovery.

Tina Vrabec, PhD, Staff Scientist in the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, has been awarded her fourth concurrent NIH award. The four-year, \$3.5 million grant is titled “Bioelectric Monitoring and neuromodulation of the heart.”

A MetroHealth, Metro West Community Development Organization and LAND studio-led public art project intended to bring a sense of place and cultural pride to the Clark-Fulton neighborhood has been awarded the **NAIOP Award of Excellence for the 2022 Public Art Project of the Year** by the Commercial Real Estate Development Association, Northern Ohio Chapter. The project engaged local artists to create murals and other artwork celebrating the culture and heritage of the people who live in the Clark-Fulton neighborhood. Coordinators from MetroHealth, Metro West and LAND studio sought input from residents and business owners throughout the planning process. The resulting artwork includes nine murals, wayfinding kits designed for use by residents and businesses and a series of pole banners positioned in high-visibility locations and community gathering spaces.

MetroHealth President & CEO **Airica Steed**, Ed.D, RN, MBA, FACHE, has been named to Becker’s Hospital Review’s 2023 “Women hospital presidents and CEOs



to know” list. The presidents and CEOs featured on this list are responsible for growing their hospitals, fostering positive workforce cultures, expanding services and facilities, increasing provider and patient satisfaction levels, and more. This list honors female hospital executives for their dedication to bettering their hospitals for patients and providers alike.

Dr. Steed also received the **Trailblazer Leadership Award** from the Cuyahoga Democratic Women’s Caucus in acknowledgment of her being the first female, first Black person and first nurse appointed as CEO of MetroHealth.

Media Highlights

MetroHealth’s Karen Cook joined ideastream’s The Sound of Ideas to discuss the epidemic of loneliness. You can [listen here](#).

[MetroHealth CEO shares harrowing story of surviving preeclampsia](#) – News 5 Cleveland

[New MetroHealth CEO pushes for equitable care for everyone](#) – News 5 Cleveland

[MetroHealth warns of the danger of loneliness and isolation](#) – 19 News

MetroHealth President & CEO Dr. Airica Steed featured in Becker’s Hospital Review story, [“MetroHealth’s CEO on rising into leadership”](#)

MetroHealth researchers featured in ideastream story, [“Want to help people make their doctor’s appointments? AI and a phone call can help”](#)

[New MetroHealth program to help vulnerable get blood and marrow transplants](#) – ideastream

[Cancer survivor says Minority Men’s Health Fair saved his life](#) – Spectrum News