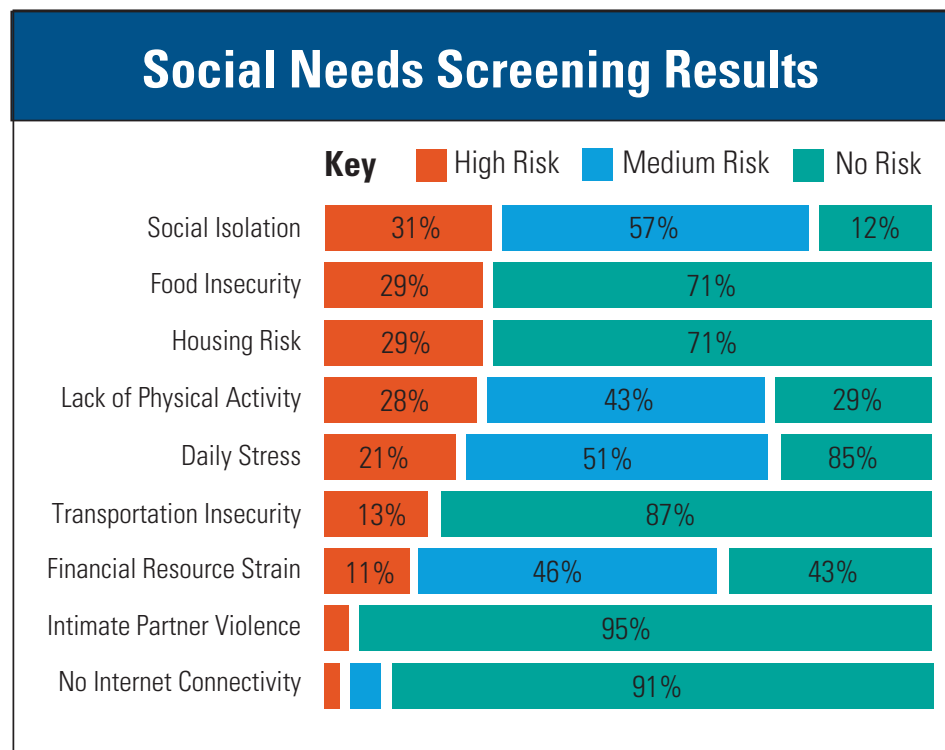


## Health Opportunity Partnership Empowerment

The **Institute for H.O.P.E.™** is a catalyst of change for our health, neighborhoods, economy and future.

From October 1, 2020 – December 31, 2020, we screened 9,576 patients for social determinants of health, bringing our total to 31,210. With these responses, we're able to better assess the needs of our patients and connect them with the services that they need to improve their overall health.



In 2020, MetroHealth partnered with Unite Us to build Unite Ohio – a coordinated care network of health and social care providers.

### Unite Ohio at a glance:

Launched on September 22, 2020

- 53** Community Organizations in the network
- 383** registered users to make referrals
- 428** unique individuals served
- 998** referrals created
- 165** referrals resolved & **390** referrals receiving on-going assistance

**To learn more:** [ohio.uniteus.com](http://ohio.uniteus.com)

## Program Spotlight: Calls for HOPE

A casual phone call can do more than lift people's spirits. It can improve their health, too.

That's the basis of **Calls for HOPE**, an innovative pilot program at MetroHealth designed to combat the intense social isolation experienced by many of our patients, especially as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to limit in-person interactions. The program – made possible with support from Cigna and Baldwin Wallace University's Jacket Philanthropy Program – pairs trained MetroHealth volunteers with patients for weekly chats over the phone.

Think small talk with a purpose – an opportunity for human connection that otherwise wouldn't be available. Conversation might focus on the weather, hobbies, plans for the week, recipes – anything that might get the patient talking.

"Kindness and compassion can be good medicine," says Rosemary Frech, Community Health Advocacy Initiative Manager at the **Institute for H.O.P.E.™** "What we're trying to do is test one strategy that could buffer some of the isolation and loneliness our patients feel."

Loneliness, of course, is associated with higher rates of depression, anxiety and suicide. Also, research shows that loneliness among heart failure patients was associated with an almost four-fold increased risk of death and higher rates of hospitalization.

Patient participants include individuals managing chronic illness or injury, those living alone and individuals experiencing life changes that present new challenges for socializing. Volunteers are trained to keep things positive, report concerning behavior and steer the patient toward other healthy outlets for socialization.



*Calls for HOPE volunteer Xiomara Merced*

One of those volunteers is Xiomara Merced, a MetroHealth employee who jumped at the opportunity to give back at a time when volunteer opportunities had been limited because of the pandemic.

"I always try to think about my family when making these calls," she said. "Interaction is so important in our lives, and so many are lacking it right now because of the pandemic."

Currently, the Calls for HOPE program involves a small group of patients and volunteers, but plans are underway to expand its reach to offer more patients a needed dose of human connection.

*If you are interested in volunteering with future phases of Calls for HOPE, please email [CallsforHOPE@metrohealth.org](mailto:CallsforHOPE@metrohealth.org) with your contact information. Please put volunteer in the subject line.*



David and Frances Brain  
**CENTER FOR  
COMMUNITY  
ENGAGEMENT**

