

# Report to the Community

April-June 2022



## PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT: METROHEALTH OPPORTUNITY CENTER

Good health depends on so much more than medical care.

It depends on having the resources to live a healthy life – a job, a place to live, the wherewithal to manage finances, for example. The MetroHealth Opportunity Center at the Buckeye Health Center is designed to help members of the community do just that.

“The center embraces the use of collective partnerships,” says Marielee Santiago, Director, Transformative Knowledge & Education, Institute for H.O.P.E.™. “With our own resources and those of our partners, we’re helping members of our community empower themselves. It’s about giving them the opportunity. It’s about giving them hope.”

The center offers one-on-one financial coaching, including education to help clients manage debt, improve their credit scores and ultimately achieve economic stability. Why? MetroHealth data shows that patients experiencing severe financial challenges experience higher rates of depression, substance and alcohol abuse, pulmonary disease and heart failure.

Individuals can also access resources like computer training, utility assistance, legal services, educational opportunities and nutrition resources.

Through the Opportunity Center and its partners, members of the community can access more than 130 different resources that address the social factors that impact a person’s health, according to MarLa Bell, Manager, MetroHealth Opportunity Center.

With one stop, patients can see their doctor and meet with representatives from the Greater Cleveland Food Bank for food

assistance, CHN Housing Partners for help with housing and utilities, Goodwill Industries for vocational help and other community agencies for assistance.

MetroHealth Opportunity Coach Renee Harris, for example, recently helped a family with young children move forward with the home-buying process after almost walking away. In addition to

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offering much-needed emotional support, Harris helped the family secure help with closing costs and the down payment.

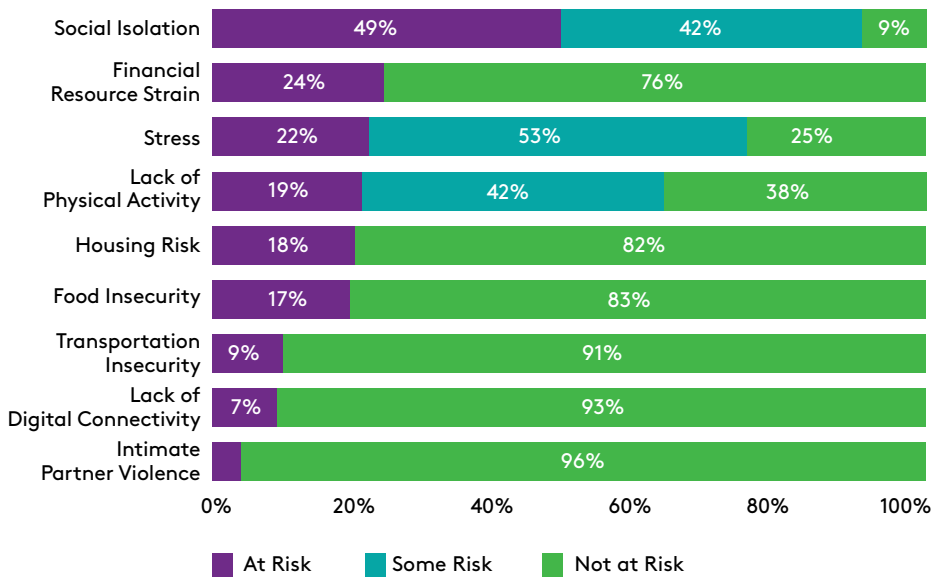
Another key resource has been Juan Silva, a MetroHealth Community Health Worker at the center. You’ll often find him sitting alongside clients, helping them apply for jobs or community assistance.

Also, working with students at Case Western Reserve University, Silva led the development of an exhaustive, yet easy-to-digest, guide that helps individuals navigate the digital world. It includes tips on using online banking, setting up an email account, accessing their medical records, logging on Zoom and more.

The Opportunity Center will soon expand its services to the Via Sana housing complex on MetroHealth’s campus in the Clark-Fulton neighborhood developed in partnership with The NRP Group. The center will offer job training, financial and digital literacy training and access to classes from Cuyahoga Community College.

## BY THE NUMBERS

From April 1, 2022 – June 30, 2022, we screened 6,325 patients for social determinants of health, bringing the total number screened to 78,473. With these responses, we're able to better assess the needs of our patients and connect them with the services they need to improve their overall health.



## UNITE OHIO SPOTLIGHT

In 2020, MetroHealth partnered with Unite Us to build Unite Ohio – a coordinated care network of health and social care providers designed to link individuals with resources they need to live healthier lives. Today, the network has expanded beyond Northeast Ohio to throughout the state. To learn more, visit [ohio.uniteus.com](http://ohio.uniteus.com).



\*Q2 of 2022

## FIGHTING HUNGER WITH HOPE

In partnership with the Greater Cleveland Food Bank, the MetroHealth Institute for H.O.P.E.™ is proud to distribute fresh produce and shelf-stable goods to families facing food insecurity. From April through June, MetroHealth distributed thousands of meals through its Food as Medicine and emergency food distributions programs.



## INSTITUTE FOR H.O.P.E.™ PROGRAM UPDATES

America's Essential Hospitals, whose more than 300 members care for low-income and other marginalized people, honored the MetroHealth School Health Program – part of the Institute for H.O.P.E.™ – with the prestigious Gage Award during its annual conference in June in Boston. The annual award recognizes "creative and successful programs that improve patient care and serve community needs." [CLICK HERE](#) to learn more.

As part of our efforts to combat the intense social isolation in our community, the Institute continues to expand its Calls for HOPE program. The innovative program pairs trained volunteers with patients, especially seniors, for weekly chats over the phone. Research continues to show the link between social isolation and chronic health conditions. In the second quarter alone, volunteers made 288 calls – about 3,615 minutes of call time – to at-risk individuals. For more information or to register as a volunteer, email [CallsforHOPE@metrohealth.org](mailto:CallsforHOPE@metrohealth.org).

