

# MetroHealth Annual Report 2024



# 2024

*At MetroHealth, everything we do begins and ends with one simple truth: **Our purpose is you.***



**Christine Alexander-Rager, MD**  
President and CEO  
The MetroHealth System

As we look back on 2024, we're proud to share a year filled with meaningful progress, heartfelt stories and bold steps forward — all driven by our commitment to the people and communities we serve.

This report reflects the many ways we've worked to bring that purpose to life.

From expanding access to care across Northeast Ohio to deepening our support for mothers and families through our maternal health programs, we've continued to grow in ways that matter most. We're also excited about the incredible work happening at the MetroHealth Rehabilitation Institute, where innovation and compassion come together to help patients reclaim their lives.

Our teams have been out in the community, listening, partnering and showing up where we're needed most..

None of this would be possible without the trust and support of people like you. Whether you're a patient, a team member, a partner or a neighbor, you are at the heart of our mission. Your stories inspire us. Your needs guide us. And your health and well-being remain our top priority.

With deep appreciation,

**Christine Alexander-Rager, MD**  
President and CEO  
The MetroHealth System



**E. Harry Walker, MD**  
Chair, Board of Trustees  
The MetroHealth System

**E. Harry Walker, MD**  
Chair  
MetroHealth Board of Trustees







# Maternal Health: Healthy Beginnings

For MetroHealth’s maternal health program, 2024 was a year of growth, innovation and leadership as the program further distinguished itself as one of the best in the nation.

- In December, **U.S. News & World Report** named **MetroHealth one of the best maternity hospitals** in the United States for 2024. The publication’s annual list of “bests” recognized MetroHealth as a High Performing Hospital for Maternity Care, its highest designation, in consideration of factors like lower rates of severe unexpected newborn complication, birthing-friendly practices and reporting on certain disparities.
- U.S. News noted MetroHealth’s exceptionally low cesarean-section rate, which means laboring patients have the best chance at avoiding delivery by C-section and the accompanying risk of complications. MetroHealth’s c-section rate is one of the lowest in the region and is consistently below statewide and national rates – a notable accomplishment given the hospital system’s large population of higher-risk patients.
- The state-of-the-art **Birthing Center marked its second successful year** of improving outcomes for patients, including some of our community’s most vulnerable and highest risk. In 2024, the Birthing Center maintained a pre-term birthrate of 14%, an improvement from the rate of 16% before the opening of

the Center in January 2023. The Center’s rate of first-time deliveries by C-section, at 24%, continues to be lower than state and national rates. The state-of-the-art NICU cared for 524 newborns who were premature or critically ill, achieving a 99% survival rate, up from 98.3% before the opening of the Birthing Center.

- In July, the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology launched a **new midwifery program** to serve patients seeking low-intervention care during pregnancy as well as ongoing gynecologic care through every stage of life.

MetroHealth’s team of Certified Nurse Midwives sees patients in outpatient appointments for pre-natal checkups and women’s wellness exams at Cleveland Heights Medical Center and Brooklyn Health Center. They provide inpatient care and attend births at MetroHealth’s new state-of-the-art Birthing Center on Main Campus.

Midwives are fully integrated into MetroHealth’s OB-GYN team and collaborate with our 25 generalist OB-GYN physicians and team of high-risk OB doctors in the Division of Maternal Fetal Medicine.

- In September, MetroHealth launched **the first placenta donation program in Northeast Ohio**, offering patients the option of donating their placentas to be used for lifesaving and life-improving therapies for others.

MetroHealth Labor and Delivery nurses spearheaded the initiative to offer the donation service – a process that carries no risk to the patient or newborn – through a partnership with Phoenix Donor Services. Phoenix recovers donated placentas and processes them into therapeutic medical products to help heal burns, injuries from trauma, diabetic ulcers and other wounds. Placental tissue also can be used in applications for plastic surgery, orthopedics, ophthalmology, gynecology and other subspecialties.

“Our nurses work hard to provide our patients with everything they need for the most positive labor and delivery experience possible,” said Kimberly Green, MSN, RN, Vice President, Women and Children Services. “Offering the option to donate placentas, and to gain the good feeling that comes from making that meaningful gesture, is another way they contribute to that goal.”

# Story of *hope*

## Reem Ali

Reem Ali had just transferred her medical care from MetroHealth to a hospital closer to home when she found out she was pregnant for the third time.

Reem has asthma and a history of gestational diabetes, which turned into Type 2 diabetes – factors that made her first two pregnancies high risk. So, she didn’t think twice about returning to MetroHealth and Kelly Gibson, MD, for her prenatal care and delivery.

When an ultrasound revealed Reem was carrying twins, she and her husband Baker Mayoof were surprised and excited about having a large family. The news also meant Reem’s pregnancy had become even higher risk.

Reem had told Dr. Gibson she was OK with a C-section. But since her two previous pregnancies were vaginal, Dr. Gibson said they would wait and see.

“I was kind of scared,” Reem said. “I had always heard that having twins meant a C-section. I didn’t want to have a C-section, but I thought it would be better”

Ultimately, the planned mode of delivery is the patient’s decision, but Dr. Gibson told Reem she was a good candidate for a vaginal delivery. MetroHealth’s C-section rate is one of the lowest in the region and significantly lower than the state and national rates.

“I trusted her words,” Reem said.

Dr. Gibson induced labor the day after Reem’s 38-week ultrasound.

Just three hours after labor was induced, Reem felt like she needed to push. Sultan was born just over an hour later, weighing 5 lbs. 13 oz. Abdullah was born 10 minutes later, weighing 6 lbs., 6 oz. No C-section needed.

Reem’s recovery was tough; not only was she recovering from the effects of the preeclampsia that had developed during labor, but her pelvis also was recovering from the trauma of carrying two heavy babies.

A C-section would have made that recovery even harder.





CLINICAL SPOTLIGHT

Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation:  
From Research To Real Life

In 2024, MetroHealth’s nationally recognized Rehabilitation Institute continued to expand its services to meet the needs of our patients throughout the region. Also, the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (PM&R) at MetroHealth and Case Western Reserve University (CWRU) earned national recognition for its research and patient care. The highlights:

- With the addition of the **Bedford Medical Offices** and the **Broadway Health Center**, outpatient physical therapy is available at a dozen MetroHealth locations. Several, including Bedford, offer therapies for both adult and pediatric patients.
- The Rehabilitation Institute was issued **CARF accreditation** for its Inpatient Rehabilitation Facility (children/adolescents and adults) and its Comprehensive Vocational Evaluation services through March 2027. MetroHealth’s inpatient programs include physical, occupational and speech therapy; art and music therapy; and specialty physician care. At the region’s only hospital-based CARF-accredited Comprehensive Vocational Evaluation Program, counselors assist patients with the transition from rehabilitation to community reintegration. The Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) is an independent, nonprofit accreditor of health and human services.
- **U.S. News & World Report** ranked MetroHealth 49th out of more than 1,000 hospitals as one of the best in the state and nation for the care of patients recovering from complex conditions such as stroke, traumatic brain injury and traumatic spinal cord injury.
- **Newsweek** named MetroHealth on its list of Best Physical Rehabilitation Centers, which includes the top 300 inpatient physical rehabilitation facilities in the U.S. Two programs received special mention: the Center for Brain Injury Rehabilitation and the Center for Stroke Rehabilitation

- MetroHealth is one of only 15 rehabilitation centers in the country (and one of two in Ohio) named a **Rehabilitation Innovation Center by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** (CMS). The designation, by the Department of Health and Human Services, recognizes providing inpatient care for individuals with highly complex medical conditions; conducting multidisciplinary rehabilitation research; and recognition for excellence in education. The designation recognizes rehabilitation facilities that are leaders in medical research and treatment of complex cases, and that drive innovative research.
- For the second time in three years, the Department of PM&R at MetroHealth and CWRU ranked **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 2024 rankings based on NIH funding to individual researchers and academic institutions.

MetroHealth Research Institute encompasses the clinical operations of PM&R and the MetroHealth Center for Rehabilitation Research (MCRR). In 2024, MCRR secured nearly \$14 million in new grants, including more than \$3 million from the NIH. MCRR now has over \$90 million in extramural research funding (total value of active grants through the life of the grants, direct and indirect). These grants are vital to ensuring the continuation of innovative research, which is an essential part of advancing patient care.

- **Richard Wilson, MD**, was named Chair of the Department of PM&R in April 2024. Dr. Wilson, who completed his residency at MetroHealth and joined the staff 2006, also is Co-Director of MCRR and Professor of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at CWRU.

His research expertise is in percutaneous peripheral nerve stimulation for the treatment of chronic pain. He serves on the Board of Trustees of the Association of Academic Physiatrists and as Deputy Editor of *PM&R*, the official scientific journal of the American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation.

“The physicians, nurses, therapists, psychologists and researchers in the Department of PM&R are passionate about improving the lives of those with disabilities,” said Dr. Wilson. “I am excited to continue the mission and to reach new levels of success.”



Carlen Morris

In October 2023, Carlen Morris was a senior at Trinity High School. He was just weeks away from starting his final season as a star player on the Trojans basketball team when he sustained a severe spinal cord injury. Doctors told him he would be permanently paralyzed.

“I was told that I actually wouldn’t have the ability to walk again or have any control of my body,” he said.

After a few weeks in the hospital, Carlen arrived at the MetroHealth Rehabilitation Institute. He couldn’t walk or move on his own.

Two months later, he had made significant progress with his inpatient physical and occupational therapy. Still, he required the use of a power wheelchair. He couldn’t get in and out of bed without assistance. He was unable to grasp a pen and move his arm to write.

When he started working with outpatient therapists at MetroHealth, he shared a big goal with them: to walk across the stage at his high school graduation ceremony, which was less than six months away.

For three hours, twice a week, he worked hard.

With graduation fast approaching, a few of Carlen’s friends from school started showing up to lend a hand during his therapy sessions.

In early May 2024, Carlen attended his senior prom, a member of the Prom Court. Three weeks later, he walked the stage at graduation to receive his high school diploma.

Carlen continues coming to MetroHealth for physical and occupational therapy.

“Watching Carlen progress has been amazing,” said physical therapist Darcy Kosmerl.





# Made For This MISSION

## Training the Next Generation of Medical Assistants

In early 2023, MetroHealth launched an innovative program to address a pressing staffing need at the health system and to remove barriers that prevent far too many people from pursuing careers in healthcare.

Since its launch, MetroHealth’s 10-month Medical Assisting Training Program has graduated more than two dozen qualified Medical Assistants (MAs) – the majority of whom now work at the health system. These caregivers carry out mission-critical work, including assisting providers with exams, administering certain medications, maintaining patient records, preparing exam rooms and more.

Trainees in the program attend classes Monday-Friday at MetroHealth Parma Medical Center. Topics include anatomy and physiology, as well as hands-on training for clinical procedures. They also rotate through MetroHealth primary and specialty care clinics to learn from our in-house experts.



Dawnyell Smiley, CCMA

Trainees are also paid MetroHealth’s minimum wage with full-time hours, plus the option to enroll in benefits.

“They don’t have to go into debt with student loans. That makes it a great selling point and a great opportunity for internal and external candidates,” said Lynnae Lockett, MSN, RN, Director, Medical Assisting Training Program.

Madison Prince described being accepted into the training program as “a pivotal step” in her life. She had held several jobs in the past but was looking for something more fulfilling. She found that and more in her role as an MA at MetroHealth.

“Once I became a Medical Assistant, I had the foundation I needed to continue my education and pursue nursing,” she said. “I have never truly been excited in school. However, when it came to this program, I was presented with endless opportunities through The MetroHealth System that made me want to excel in this career.”

Dawnyell Smiley, CCMA, is another graduate. She had her Community Health Worker certification and felt having clinical experience as an MA would be beneficial, too.

“I’m loving every minute of it and gaining knowledge,” Dawnyell said of her work as an MA. “I felt very prepared coming out on the floor. I felt confident in my role as a Medical Assistant.”

Lynnae is proud to see what her former students have accomplished.

“I still get messages or I go into the clinics and I see them, and they’re loving what they’re doing,” she said. “Just knowing that what we’re putting out into the clinics is a representation of MetroHealth.”

## Expanding Access Strengthening Our Commitment to the Community

In 2024, we expanded our presence in several communities — each one a step toward better access, stronger connections and healthier lives. These new locations reflect our promise to meet people where they are and care for them where and how it matters most.



### MetroHealth Family Dentistry

Opened in September 2024, MetroHealth Family Dentistry in Middleburg Heights offers pediatric and general dentistry. The new clinic has nine working operatories (workspaces that include a dental chair, cabinets, sink and treatment equipment).



### Cleveland Metropolitan School District

The MetroHealth School Health Program partnered with the Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD) to open three new in-school wellness centers at Mound Elementary School, Glenville High School and Clara E Westropp Elementary School. The opening of these new wellness centers coincided with the 10-year anniversary of the collaboration between MetroHealth and CMSD to provide school-based healthcare services.



### Cleveland State University

MetroHealth assumed operations of the on-campus clinic at Cleveland State University. At the clinic, MetroHealth caregivers treat minor illnesses and injuries that don’t require a visit to the Emergency Department. The team also provides immunizations, routine health screenings, pregnancy tests and more.



### Opportunity Center at Via Sana

The MetroHealth Institute for H.O.P.E. opened the Opportunity Center at Via Sana to connect residents with essential resources for health and well-being. In addition to financial literacy workshops and other personal development programs, the Center serves as a meeting space for local organizations and is a permanent home for the Tri-C Access Center.



# Community Engagement

## Partnerships To Build A Healthier Community

Community is at the heart of everything we do. In 2024, MetroHealth was proud to partner with organizations across the Greater Cleveland to improve the health and well-being of the communities we serve.



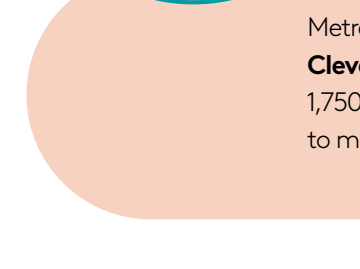
In April, hundreds of individuals from all corners of our community joined us for our **Men’s Health Fair** at Cleveland Heights Medical Center and Cuyahoga Community College’s Metropolitan Campus. The event offered education and more than 30 free screenings for health issues prevalent in minority men, including prostate cancer, diabetes, high blood pressure, skin cancer, mental health concerns and other conditions



MetroHealth was proud to join dozens of community partners for Cleveland Mayor Justin Bibb’s **Back to School Fest** in August. Caregivers from the MetroHealth School Health Program and Pediatrics were in attendance with giveaways and information on how we can help students stay healthy all year long.



MetroHealth was proud to host the **Cleveland Puerto Rican Parade and Expo** on our Main Campus in Cleveland’s Clark-Fulton neighborhood. More than 22,000 community members attended the August event, which was hosted by Cleveland’s Hispanic Police Officers’ Association.



MetroHealth was proud to be the presenting sponsor for the City of Cleveland Community Relations Board’s **Hispanic Heritage Month** celebration in September. MetroHealth’s Main Campus is in the heart of one of Ohio’s most dynamic Spanish-speaking neighborhoods.

MetroHealth once again partnered with the **Greater Cleveland Food Bank** in advance of Thanksgiving to distribute 1,750 turkeys at our Main Campus and Buckeye Health Center to members of our community.



## Training And Discovery

# SHAPING THE FUTURE OF MEDICINE

In 2024, MetroHealth championed its commitment to research, training, and education. Through bold research, hands-on training and a spirit of compassion, we’re shaping a future where innovation and humanity walk hand in hand.

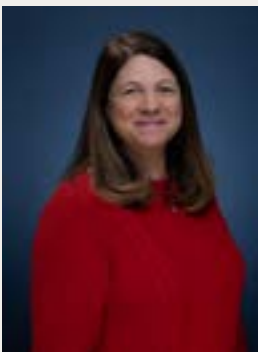
### Research Highlights



Kim Anderson-Erisman, PhD

- The **Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (PM&R)** at MetroHealth and Case Western Reserve University (CWRU) ranked No. 1 in the nation in National Institutes of Health funding among PM&R departments in U.S. medical schools. This is the second time in three years the Department of PM&R earned the top spot in the Blue Ridge Institute for Medical Research’s annual rankings.
- **Kim Anderson-Erisman, PhD**, research faculty in the Department of PM&R and the Center for Rehabilitation Research at MetroHealth – was elected to the National Academy of Medicine. Election to the Academy is considered one of the highest honors in the fields of health and medicine and recognizes individuals who have demonstrated outstanding professional achievement and commitment to service.

### Education and Training Highlights



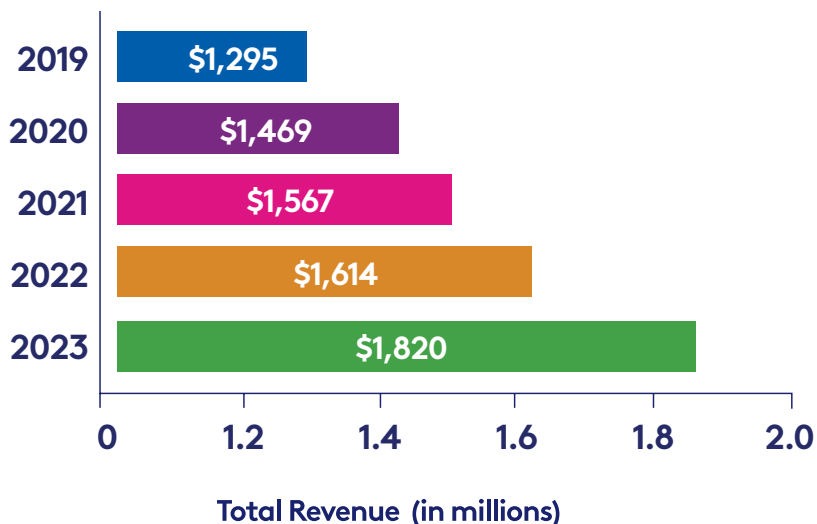
Marcie Becker

- MetroHealth’s **Graduate Medical Education** program received the highest level of accreditation status from the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) following a 10-year site visit. This is our 17th consecutive year at this status without any citations or areas for improvement.
- Residents and fellows in MetroHealth contributed to 148 peer-reviewed publications, 151 platform presentations, 290 posters/abstracts and 158 quality-improvement projects.
- **Marcie Becker**, Director, Graduate Medical Education – received ACGME’s 2025 GME Institutional Coordinator Award. The award recognizes notable designated institutional officials, program directors, coordinators and residents and fellows for their outstanding work and contributions to graduate medical education.

# BY THE NUMBERS

## FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

**\$1.97 billion in revenue**



## 2024 COMMUNITY BENEFIT



Uncompensated Care: **\$139.3 million**  
Medicaid Shortfall: **\$74.5 million**  
Medical Education: **\$77.1 million**  
Research: **\$8.1 million**  
Outreach Programs: **\$7.1 million**  
Total Community Benefit: **\$306.1 million**

## STATISTICAL HIGHLIGHTS



**Babies Delivered: 2,316**



**Metro Life Flight  
Trauma Cases: 5,524**  
Helicopter: 1,915\*  
Ground: 3,609

\*includes ProMedica flights



**Patient Visits: 1,564,503**

Inpatient: 26,561

Outpatient: 1,385,675

Emergency  
Department: 152,267

## OUR STAFF

Total Employees:

**8,987**



**Physicians: 727**



**Nurses: 2,433**

Registered Nurses: 2,122  
Advanced Practice Nurses: 311



**Residents/Fellows: 479**



**All other employees: 5,348**