



Christine Alexander-Rager, MD
President and CEO
The MetroHealth System
2500 MetroHealth Drive
Cleveland, Ohio 44109

March 2025

Report to the Board of Trustees

Trustees:

March is Women's History Month, and as we celebrate and honor the contributions of women in our society and throughout history, I want to take a moment to celebrate and honor the immeasurable contributions of women at MetroHealth.

Since our founding in 1837, women have played an oversized role in our survival and our success.

Today, 74% of MetroHealth caregivers are women; 64% of our leaders – managers and above – are women, and 58% of our providers are women.

Serena Williams once said, "Every woman's success should be an inspiration to another. We are strongest when we cheer each other on."

Thank you for joining me in thanking – and cheering on – all of MetroHealth's women.

Here are a few highlights since we last met:

- March 3-7 was **Employee Appreciation Week**. Our employee engagement team planned and executed a week of activities for MetroHealth caregivers, including chair massages, visits from therapy animals, wellness sessions, Arts in Health activities and much more. I had the pleasure of connecting one-on-one with our caregivers while helping distribute a special gift to our employees. Thank you to everyone who made this week so terrific for our colleagues.
- Earlier this month, we received notification from the Joint Commission that we achieved full accreditation for all three surveys recently conducted at MetroHealth – Hospital, Behavioral Health Care and Human Services, and Home Care. This accreditation is valid until December 21, 2027. I want to express my gratitude to everyone who worked to help MetroHealth meet and exceed these important regulatory standards.
- We got word earlier this month that the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (PM&R) at The MetroHealth System and Case Western Reserve University again ranks 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.
- I want to express my gratitude to **Natalie Joseph, MD**, for stepping in to fill the role of Interim Executive Director of the MetroHealth Cancer Institute. Dr. Joseph is an experienced physician leader with a deep passion for our mission, and she will ensure that we continue to deliver the best possible cancer care to our patients during this leadership transition. Dr. Joseph also serves as President of the Medical Staff, Director of the Division of Surgical Oncology, Director of the Center for Breast Health, and Associate Professor of Surgery at Case Western Reserve University.



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- One of my priorities is to keep you – and the entire MetroHealth community – updated and informed about any events I attend or travel I make. As stewards of our system’s resources, MetroHealth leaders must be transparent about where they go, why they are going, and how the trip/event benefits our system, our patients and/or our mission. Here are my updates from the past month:
 - o During the first week of March, I traveled to Washington, DC, with members of our Government Relations team. Together with other hospital leaders from the Front Line Hospital Alliance, we met with lawmakers on Capitol Hill to help them better understand the vital importance of Medicare, Medicaid, the 340B Drug Pricing Program and other federal programs to our patients and to our ability to fulfill our essential role in the community.
 - o On March 8, I had the honor of speaking at the annual Richmond Heights Women’s Empowerment Luncheon. I urged the women in attendance to reject the stereotypes we hold of ourselves as women and to make sure that we are all caretakers first of our own health and well-being. Thank you to **Romona Brazile, Dr. Connie Moreland, Dr. Lynn Milliner, the Rev. Tony Minor** and **Shalenah Williams** for giving up part of their Saturday to join me at the event.
 - o On March 11, I attended the Crain’s Cleveland Business Newsmakers of the Year event downtown. It was a good opportunity to meet and connect with community and business leaders.
 - o I participated in two wonderful events for the MetroHealth Foundation this month. On March 12-13, I made a quick trip to Florida to meet with System donors and potential donors. And on March 20, I had participated in the investiture ceremony celebrating **William W. Tse, MD**, as the first chairholder of the MetroHealth Professorship in Research. Congratulations, Dr. Tse!

I want to thank you again for your service to MetroHealth, to our caregivers, our patients and our community.

With deep appreciation,

Christine Alexander-Rager, MD

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January 2025 Financial Update:

- January 2025 had an Earnings Before Interest, Depreciation & Amortization (EBIDA) of \$6.2M which was slightly ahead of prior year at \$5.9M but below the budgeted EBIDA by (\$2.5M).
- January discharges, emergency visits and retail pharmacy volumes exceeded budget. However, due to flu season, medical discharges exceeded budget while surgical discharges continued their trend of lagging behind budgeted volumes. Overall, this service mix shift led to below budget inpatient revenue, driving most of the below budgeted EBIDA for the month.
- Total clinic visits were unfavorable for the month, with higher than budget telehealth visits but below budget in person visits.
- Total operating expenses for the month were favorable \$1.0M as Salaries, Wages and Employee benefit costs were favorable \$5.7M. The associated system FTEs were favorable to budget by 6.8%.

Continued Focus Areas:

- MetroWAY Forward Transformation
- Targeted approaches to hiring.
- Contract/premium labor focused mitigation.
- Strategic program expansion and growth.

- The Joint Commission informed us we have met all regulatory requirements and have achieved full hospital accreditation. This accreditation is valid through December 21, 2027.
- The Joint Commission made a five-day unannounced survey in December. This survey occurs every three years.
- All locations (except FQHC sites and Dental) are included in the survey.
- Surveyors ensured we are achieving Joint Commission Standards and CMS Conditions of Participation Standards.



Expanding Access - Pharmacy

- In late February, our award-winning Pharmacy Services team opened a new retail location at our Brooklyn Health Center.
- The site – [our 12th retail pharmacy overall](#) – is the latest example of how MetroHealth is stepping up to fill the gaps left by the recent closures of three national-chain retail pharmacies in the area.
- More than 55% of patients' new prescriptions are being filled at MetroHealth pharmacies. That's up from just 6% about 10 years ago.
- About 65% of the patients at MetroHealth clinic locations with an on-site pharmacy get their prescriptions filled there. And more than 80% of the patients who get their initial prescription filled at MetroHealth return for refills.
- [Becker's Hospital Review](#) recently highlighted this work in an interview with Ryan Mezinger, Senior Vice President, Chief Pharmacy Officer.
- **Coming in 2026:** 24/7 drive-thru pharmacy at our new Outpatient Health Center on Main Campus.



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, according to the recently released rankings from The Blue Ridge Institute for Medical Research.



Kevin Kilgore, PhD, Professor of Orthopedics and PM&R, is ranked #1 in NIH funding among investigators in PM&R Departments in U.S. Medical Schools. In 2024, he was awarded more than \$8 million in NIH funding.



Employee Engagement

- National Employee Appreciation Day was celebrated on Friday, March 7. Various activities and services were offered throughout the week in partnership with departments and groups across the organization including Arts in Health, Employee Assistance Program (EAP), Wellness, Volunteer Services, and Employee Business Resource Groups to honor our staff. Employees were thrilled to engage with Dr. Alexander while she passed out Appreciation Day gifts at The Glick Center during lunch hour on Friday.

Talent Acquisition

- Partnered with Marketing to launch a Search Engine Marketing (SEM) campaign to recruit Radiologic Technologists, including MRI and CT.
- Produced a "Day in the Life" video featuring Dining Services, which will be used as a recruiting tool. [Click here](#) to watch the video or scan the QR code.



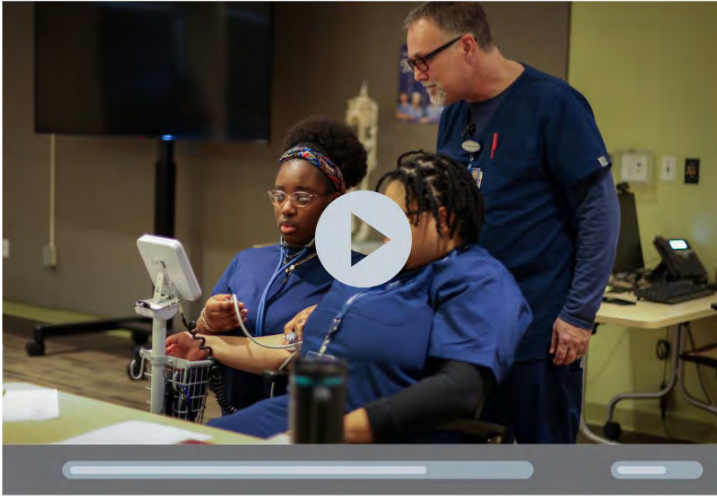
- 2025 is off to a strong start for the Philanthropy Team – fundraising is tracking **10% ahead** of this time last year.
- has awarded \$500,000 in support of the **The Mt. Sinai Health Foundation** Nurse-Family Partnership program. Mt. Sinai is a long-standing and valued partner, contributing close to \$2 million to MetroHealth since 2002.
- **Experian** committed a \$200,000 gift to our School Health Program.
- **The American Cancer Society** made a \$25,000 transportation gift to support mammogram screenings.
- **David Stepnick, MD**, Interim Executive Vice President, Chief Physician Executive and Clinical Officer at The MetroHealth System, and **Chris Hess**, Vice President, Global Public Affairs at Eaton Corporation, were elected to The MetroHealth Foundation Board of Directors.



- The MetroHealth Foundation was hosted by [Linda Bluso](#) and [Rob Durham](#) at a donor reception in Longboat Key, Florida. Our guests learned more about the critical role MetroHealth plays in our community.
- We are preparing to launch the [For All of Us](#) Campaign Impact Communications Plan to publicly thank donors for their commitment to and support of the programs and services that have advanced the health and well-being of MetroHealth patients.
- To date, close to \$30,000 has been raised for the upcoming MetroHealth [Resiliency Run](#) on June 7 at the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo. Funds raised will benefit trauma and burn survivors who come to MetroHealth for critical care needs, as well as other healthcare needs.



Video Storytelling



Medical Assisting Training Program

The paid-to-learn program consists of classroom instruction, clinical lab training, hands-on experiential learning in the clinical setting and a guided practicum. Trainees rotate through several MetroHealth primary and specialty care clinics to learn from our experts. Click to watch or scan the QR code.



Media Highlights

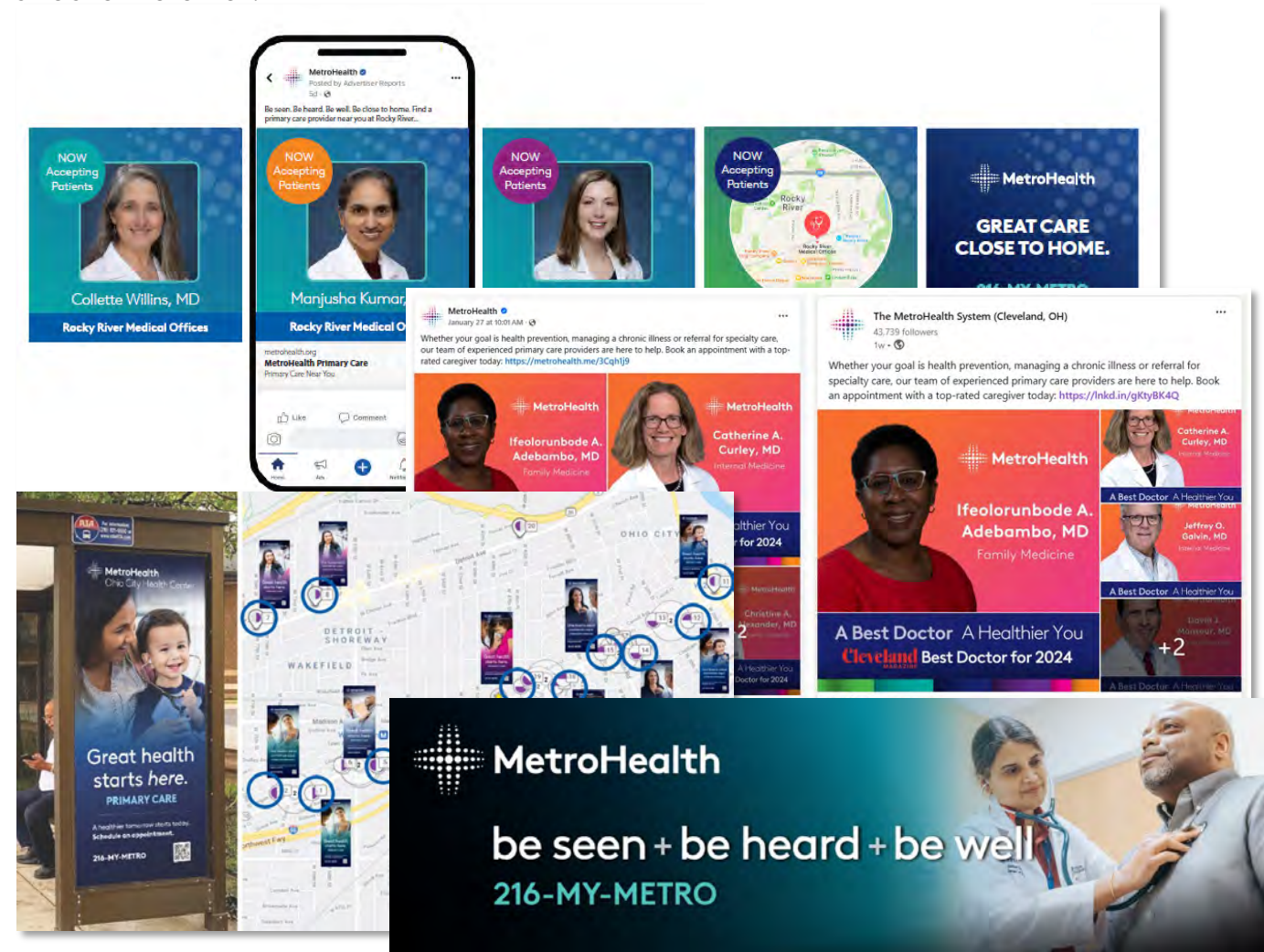
- [How MetroHealth is expanding access in a pharmacy desert](#) – Becker's Hospital Review
- [How MetroHealth is redefining women's role in cardiology](#) – Becker's Hospital Review
- [MetroHealth CMIO on Enterprise Imaging Integration Overhaul](#) – Health System CIO
- MetroHealth mentioned in Cleveland.com story, ["Hospitals unite for Rare Disease Day event."](#)
- MetroHealth mentioned in Cleveland Jewish News story, ["Students showcase skills at CLC's 'Accelerate' pitch competition."](#)
- MetroHealth mentioned in News-Herald story, ["Richmond Heights to host third annual Women's Empowerment Event"](#)

Marketing – Primary Care Campaign



Marketing and Communications efforts have already launched and will continue throughout the year. Through a mix of owned, earned, and paid media channels, both internally and externally, we will promote the importance of primary care and the availability of primary care in key communities highlighting the exceptional care we offer.

- Paid Media
 - Paid digital advertising campaigns
 - Paid search engine marketing
 - Geotargeted paid social media
 - Outdoor advertising and signage
 - Fox 8 MetroHealth Minute segment in development
 - Broadcast and streaming commercials in development
- Be SimplyWell
 - [Virtual Health Talk presented by Alisa Loo, MD](#)
 - Newsletter and blogs
- Targeted Email Outreach
- Updated Web Content
- Internal and External Communications
- Local, regional and national media pitching of providers as clinical experts on a variety of topics



Awards, Recognition & Other News

- **Agnieszka Ardelt, MD, PhD, MBA, FAHA**, has been elected as President-elect of the Council of Chairs. She will join Aparna Roy, MD, MPH, MBA, President, and Gregory Heintschel, DDS, MBA, Past President, to form the Council's executive leadership team. Dr. Ardelt – Chair of the Department of Neurology – assumed her position as President-elect on March 1 and will assume the position of President on July 1, 2026.
- **Carie M. Twichell, CAA**, who has been appointed as Program Director for the Master of Science in Anesthesia Program at the Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine.
- Recent DAISY Award winners include **Rosanne Stokes, RN**, and **Kristen Starling, RN**. DAISY Awards recognize nurses who go above and beyond to care for our patients, their colleagues and this community.
- MetroHealth is being honored by the Association of periOperative Registered Nurses (AORN) with the designation as a **Center of Excellence in Surgical Safety: Prevention of RSI**. MetroHealth is the first hospital in Ohio to earn the recognition, established in early 2022 to highlight hospital systems that have adopted new practices in their continued safe care of the surgical patient.



Agnieszka Ardelt, MD, PhD



Carie M. Twichell, CAA



Rosanne Stokes, RN



Kristen Starling, RN