



Community report

Connections for care

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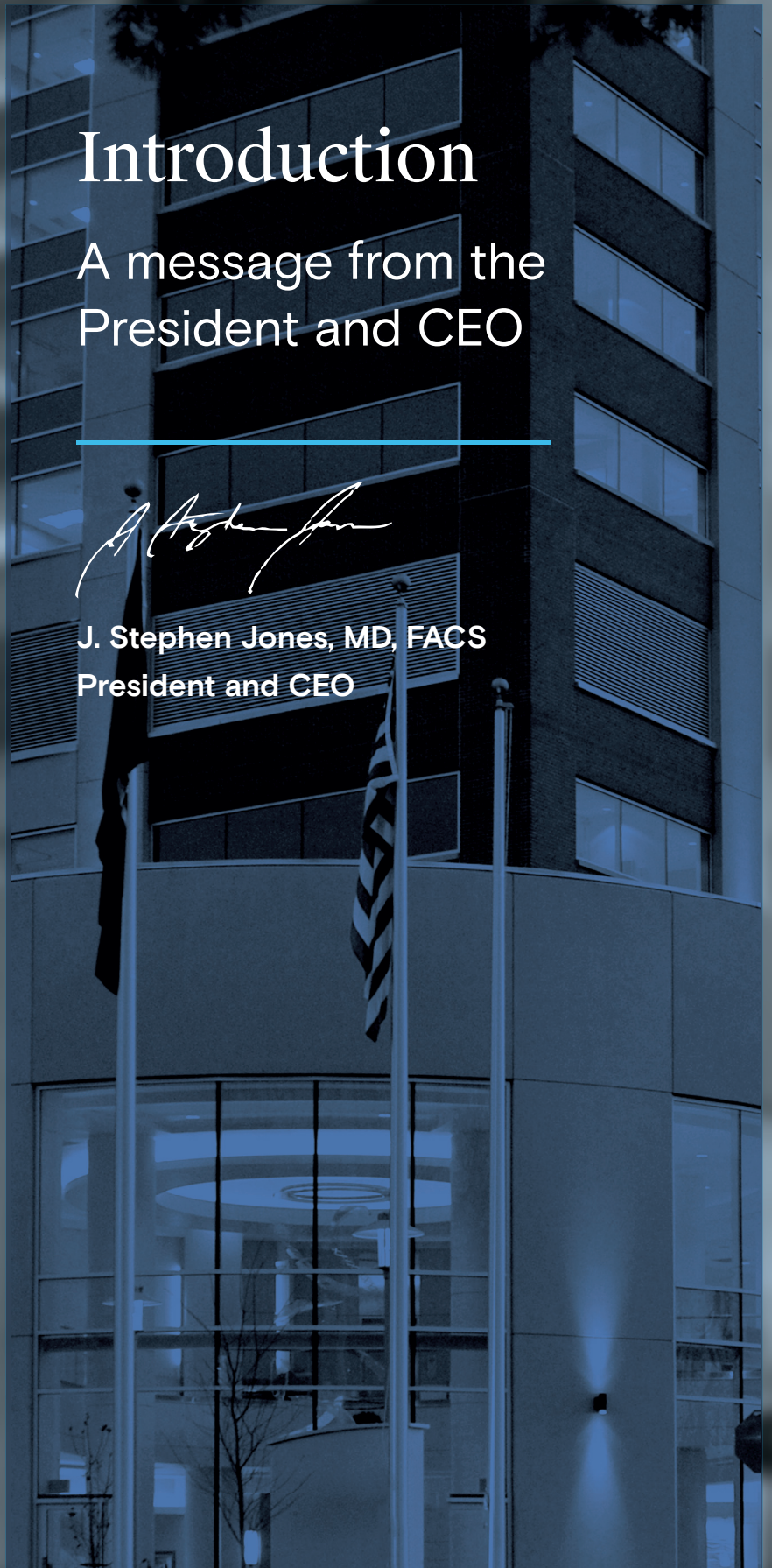
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Introduction

A message from the
President and CEO

A handwritten signature in white ink, appearing to read "J. Stephen Jones", is positioned above the printed name.

J. Stephen Jones, MD, FACS
President and CEO



To our community,

The impact of human connection on health cannot be overstated. Our relationships with our communities, families, friends and caregivers are vital predictors of overall health and longer life.

Inova's recently refreshed branding emphasizes the value we place on connection; the logo depicts two figures coming together, representing every step of the healthcare journey taken together – patient, caregiver, provider and team.

At Inova, our care reflects the importance of every individual's journey and the value of strong relationships between patients, team members and community partners. Examples of these efforts within this report include:

Meeting patients where they are by assessing and addressing social drivers of health. With expertise and compassion, we connect with our patients and our community to build trusted resource networks.

Ensuring all children and their families have access to a high-quality, supportive medical home by co-locating the Inova Cares Clinic for Children with the Inova Cares Clinic for Families in Alexandria, Fairfax, Manassas, Sterling and Herndon. Expanded services include a dedicated pediatrician and specially trained support teams – connecting parent and child on the journey to health and wellness.

Stories of enhancing healthcare access and equity through school partnerships, career opportunities and community engagement.

There are many other examples within these pages of Inova's partnerships and initiatives. As an anchor organization in Northern Virginia, we are committed to improving health equity within our walls and in our neighborhoods. The connections we foster with our patients and our partners give us the strength and motivation to provide world-class healthcare to each person in every community with a warm, human touch.

Sincerely,

J. Stephen Jones, MD, FACS
President and CEO



J. Stephen Jones, MD
President and CEO

“

**We are committed
to improving health
equity within our
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”

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'J. Stephen Jones', located below the quote on the right side of the page.

Health equity connects us all at Inova

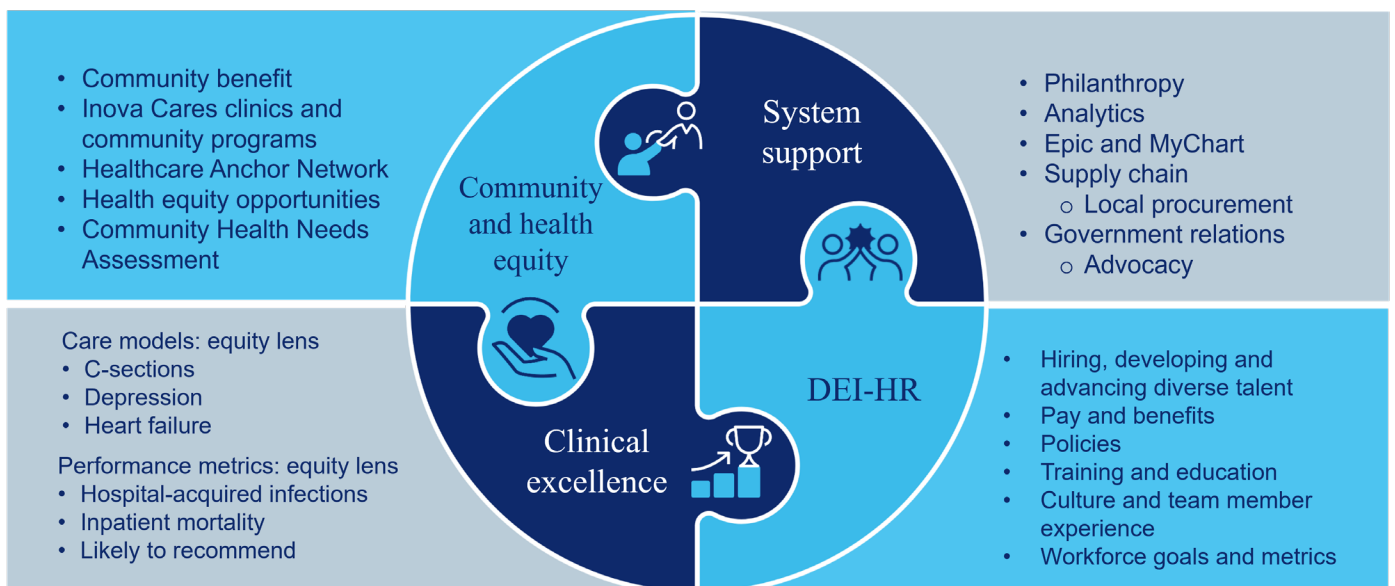
The discourse about equity versus equality has been an ongoing conversation, but envisioning what pursuing health equity looks like for an organization is a newer concept.

Inova's Community Health and Health Equity Division exists to promote health equity and improve access to care, but the pursuit of equity cannot be achieved by one aspect of a healthcare organization alone. Accordingly, Inova has engaged every part of the system in these efforts.

As you will read in this report, health equity and connection are integral to the work of all our teams including:

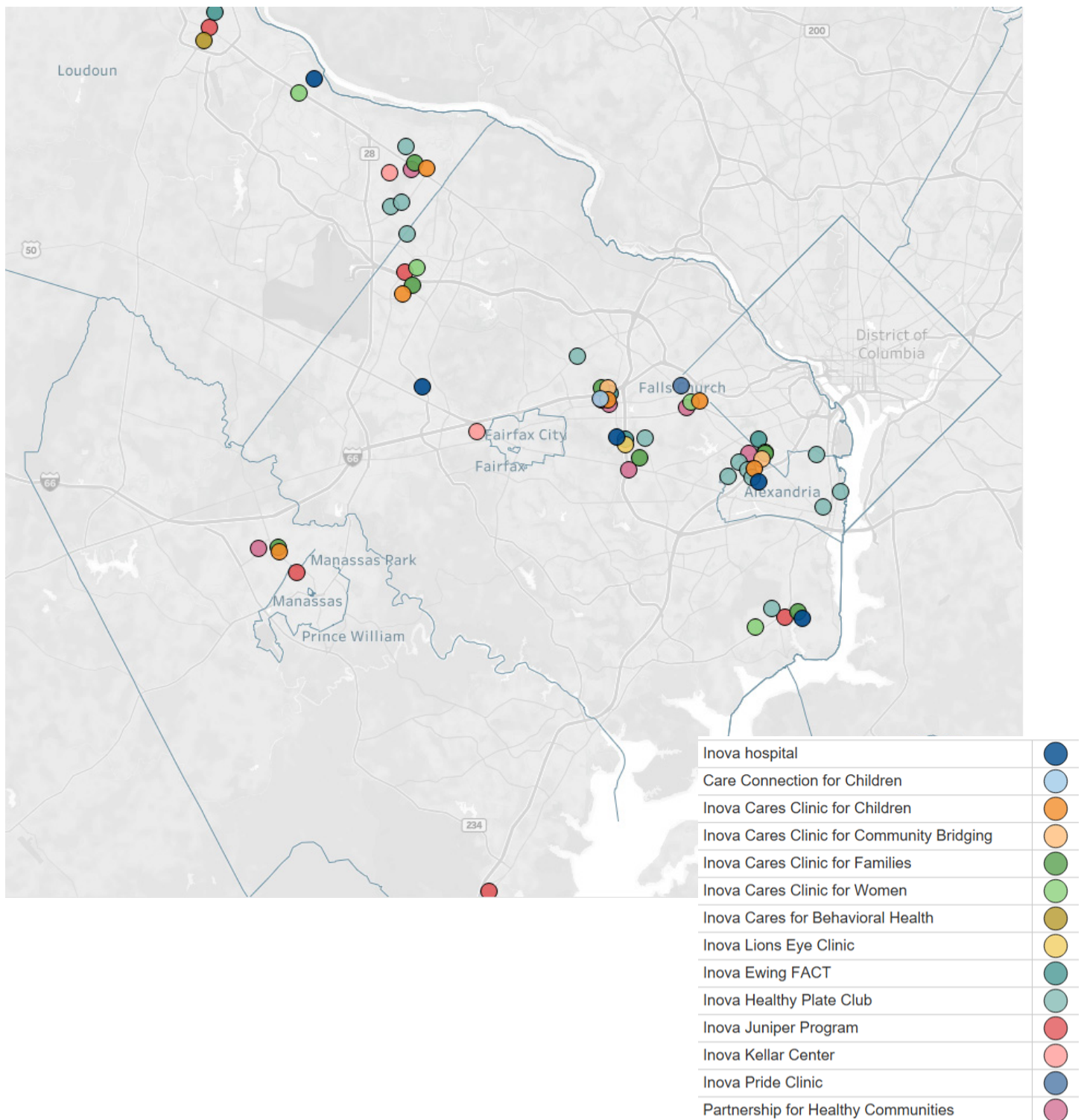
- Community health, creating and growing programs and services that meet patients and community members in their neighborhoods
- Philanthropy, aligning donors with opportunities to bolster Inova's connection with under-resourced communities and individuals
- Supply chain, buying local to build economies and support the economic stability of our communities
- Government relations, advocating for policies that improve health access and address disparities
- Human resources, ensuring we hire and develop diverse local talent that reflects the community we serve, and providing appropriate support and education for an inclusive workforce
- Clinical excellence, applying an equity lens to our quality metrics to identify and address health disparities

As an Anchor Institution, our health equity efforts directly connect to and support our mission to provide world-class healthcare to each person in every community we have the privilege to serve. Equity is foundational to the culture of Inova.



From a foundational level, equity is woven into all aspects of Inova culture

Inova Community Health and Health Equity locations



Care Connection for Children	Inova.org/CCC
<i>Available to individuals in Arlington, Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Fredericksburg, Manassas, Loudoun, Prince William, Spotsylvania or Stafford</i>	
Care Connection for Children works closely with families to coordinate care for children and youth with disabilities.	
Inova Cares Clinic for Children	Inova.org/ICCC
<i>Located in Falls Church with co-locations with Inova Cares Clinic for Families in Alexandria, Fairfax, Herndon, Manassas and Sterling</i>	
ICCC provides comprehensive pediatric services for children with Medicaid or without insurance.	
Inova Cares Clinic for Community Bridging	Inova.org/ICCCB
<i>Locations in Alexandria, Fairfax and Leesburg</i>	
Inova Cares Clinic for Community Bridging clinically supports patients being discharged from an Inova hospital or Inova emergency room who do not have a medical home or cannot get an appointment with their primary care provider within 72 hours following a hospital admission.	
Inova Cares Clinic for Families	Inova.org/ICCF
<i>Locations in Alexandria, Annandale, Fairfax, Herndon, Manassas, Mount Vernon and Sterling, serving individuals across Northern Virginia</i>	
ICCF provides primary care services for patients of all ages, regardless of immigration status, who qualify for Medicaid, FAMIS or Inova's financial assistance program or who are uninsured.	
Inova Cares Clinic for Women	Inova.org/ICCW
<i>Locations in Alexandria, Falls Church, Herndon, Lansdowne and Mount Vernon, serving individuals across Northern Virginia</i>	
ICCW provides outpatient OB-GYN services for uninsured or low-income individuals.	
Inova Cares Clinic for Behavioral Health	Inova.org/ICCBH
<i>Located in Leesburg, serving individuals across Northern Virginia</i>	
Inova Cares Clinic for Behavioral Health provides adult mental health counseling services for individuals who are approved or eligible for Inova financial assistance or are covered by Virginia Medicaid plans.	
Inova Lions Eye Clinic	Inova.org/ILEC
<i>Located in Annandale, serving patients through referral</i>	
The Inova Lions Eye Clinic provides free eye care to uninsured adult patients who are at or below 400% of the federal poverty level.	
Inova Ewing Forensic Assessment and Consultation Teams (FACT)	Inova.org/FACT
<i>Serving individuals across Northern Virginia</i>	
FACT provides acute and nonacute forensic exams for victims of sexual assault, intimate partner violence, strangulation, human trafficking and child abuse.	
Inova Healthy Plate Club	Inova.org/HealthyPlateClub
<i>Available to students in Title I schools in Alexandria, Fairfax, Loudoun and Prince William counties</i>	
Inova Healthy Plate Club runs programs based in school, community and virtual settings to improve students' understanding of nutrition and promote healthy behaviors.	
Inova Juniper Program	Inova.org/Juniper
<i>Locations in Dumfries, Fairfax, Herndon, Leesburg, Manassas and Mount Vernon, serving individuals across Northern Virginia</i>	
Inova Juniper Program provides primary medical care and mental health, substance abuse and case management services to individuals living with HIV.	
Inova Kellar Center	Inova.org/Kellar
<i>Locations in Fairfax and Sterling, serving individuals across Northern Virginia</i>	
The Inova Kellar Center provides behavioral health services and substance use disorder treatment programs for children, adolescents and their families.	
Inova Medical House Calls	Inova.org/MedicalHouseCalls
<i>Services areas across Northern Virginia</i>	
The Inova Medical House Calls program brings primary care to homebound patients who are 65 years of age or older.	
Inova Pride Clinic	Inova.org/PrideClinic
<i>Located in Falls Church, serving individuals across Northern Virginia</i>	
The Inova Pride Clinic provides primary care tailored to the unique needs of LGBTQ+ people ages 12 years and older.	
Partnership for Healthier Communities	Inova.org/PHC
<i>Locations in Alexandria, Annandale, Fairfax, Falls Church, Manassas and Sterling, serving individuals across Northern Virginia</i>	
Partnership for Healthier Communities provides application and enrollment assistance for programs like Medicaid and Inova's financial assistance program to uninsured children and adults in Virginia.	

Connecting the community to essential healthcare

Women's services expand in Loudoun County

To ensure that all women in Loudoun County have access to high-quality prenatal and gynecologic care, Inova has expanded services and renamed the OB-GYN clinic at Inova Loudoun Hospital to Inova Cares Clinic for Women (ICCW).

The clinic was established in 2008 as a partnership between Inova Loudoun Hospital and the Loudoun County Health Department to improve birth outcomes and reduce neonatal intensive care unit (ICU) stays among uninsured and low-income women. In 2023, ICCW – Lansdowne added gynecologic services for patients, including those referred from the emergency room, and family planning. Colposcopies and well-women services will be available in 2024.

Connecting women to these vital healthcare services reduces inequities, improves outcomes for mothers and newborns, and enhances the lives of families throughout the community.



Inova and Loudoun County leaders celebrate ICCW – Lansdowne on March 8

Healthcare access improves in Mount Vernon

The Inova Cares Clinic for Families (ICCF) and the Inova Juniper Program (IJP) opened their Mount Vernon location in October. ICCF – Mount Vernon connects families who are uninsured or underinsured with comprehensive primary healthcare services including physicals, nurse case management, wellness education and counseling, psychosocial support, and care coordination. IJP – Mount Vernon provides comprehensive HIV care including primary medical care, mental health, substance use, and case management services.

Inova's Mount Vernon Community Health Needs Assessment clearly identified healthcare access as a top unmet need in the Mount Vernon area. ICCF and IJP – Mount Vernon create medical homes in the community to improve access, address healthcare needs and foster long-term wellbeing.

The clinic was made possible through a generous investment from the James M. Cox Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Cox Communications, as well as other donors and grants.



Inova and local leaders cut the ribbon at IJP/ICCF – Mount Vernon on Oct. 18

Access to pediatric care increases for families

To ensure all children and their families have access to a high-quality, supportive medical home, Inova expanded pediatric services in 2023. There is now an Inova Cares Clinic for Children (ICCC) at the ICCF locations in Alexandria, Fairfax, Manassas, Sterling and Herndon. These expanded services include a dedicated pediatrician and a specially trained support team.

ICCC offers comprehensive pediatric services for children on Medicaid or without insurance. Spaces are designed to encourage connection and foster conversations among parents, caregivers and providers. At the Manassas location, a generous donation from UnitedHealthcare® Community Plan of Virginia helped make the space more child friendly, with books, wall murals and activities about building resilience.



Meeting patients where they are

Assessing and addressing social drivers of health (SDOH)

As the COVID-19 pandemic exposed profound inequities within our nation's healthcare system, Inova was leveraging 30 years of work with communities to better assess and address the drivers that lead to health disparities. Over the past two years, Inova has moved forward on the journey to recognize and meaningfully address SDOH and mitigate their impact on individual patients and the wellbeing of our communities. 2023's progress is shown in the timeline below.

January

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services releases enhanced guidance to advance health equity by collecting and addressing SDOH.

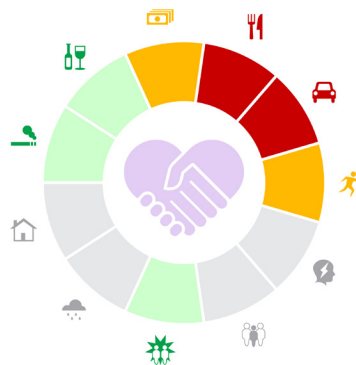


The Joint Commission releases new requirements to reduce healthcare disparities.



January–March

Inova continues efforts to ensure universal SDOH assessment. Screening questions are now available for patients to respond to during any healthcare visit through the patient portal, MyChart.



April

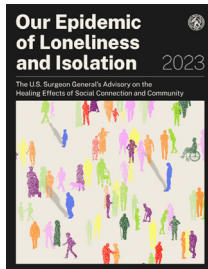
Inova implements new processes to ensure depression risk is assessed at every patient encounter.

All Inova clinicians receive access to the Unite Us platform, so referrals for social needs can be made directly to community partners.



May

The Office of the Surgeon General releases a report recognizing loneliness and isolation as social drivers that threaten individual and societal health.



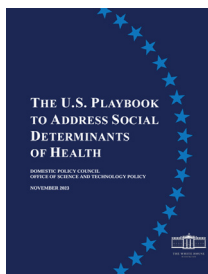
July–September

Inova supports discussion sessions with community partners to increase referrals for SDOH and strengthen the Unite Us network of partners across Northern Virginia.



November

The U.S. Playbook to Address Social Determinants of Health is published with the goal of “enabling every American to lead a full and healthy life within their community.”



November

New workflows are established for all Inova hospitals to ensure that critical SDOH are assessed in the emergency room and during hospital stays.



Building a culture of inclusion

Inova's diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) journey moves forward

Inova launched the next phase of our DEI journey with the introduction of five learning modules for all team members. This foundational education will help advance our culture of inclusion and belonging, so all team members can bring their best selves to work and provide the best care to our patients.

Inclusion is fundamental to Inova's values and care imperatives – how we care for one another and for patients. Education is just one more step in the DEI journey.

A cross-functional team, alongside Inova's human resources and DEI leaders, designed the learning modules specifically for the Inova system, soliciting feedback and leveraging diverse voices to ensure the material is relatable and relevant. Learning is available in different formats, including live, instructor-led sessions and self-paced eLearning modules, to accommodate a variety of learning styles. The material is practical and includes actionable strategies that team members and leaders can implement immediately.

The goal of the learning modules is to create a shared starting point – to meet team members where they are on their DEI journey with education and understanding. Offering broad, foundational education that touches on a range of instrumental topics helps us level set and brings everyone onto the same page. This important education, as part of our system DEI journey, will foster conversations and actions that deepen the connections among team members, patients and the community.



DEI learning modules



Leading Inclusively, designed specifically for Inova leaders, helps them become role models for inclusive behavior



Embracing Differences explores how a person's cultural lens impacts roles and relationships in the workplace



Owning Impact deepens understanding of unconscious messaging and teaches intervention strategies for DEI missteps



Mitigating Bias examines how to reduce and challenge bias without creating conflict



Engaging Allyship builds belonging and support among team members

A call for connection

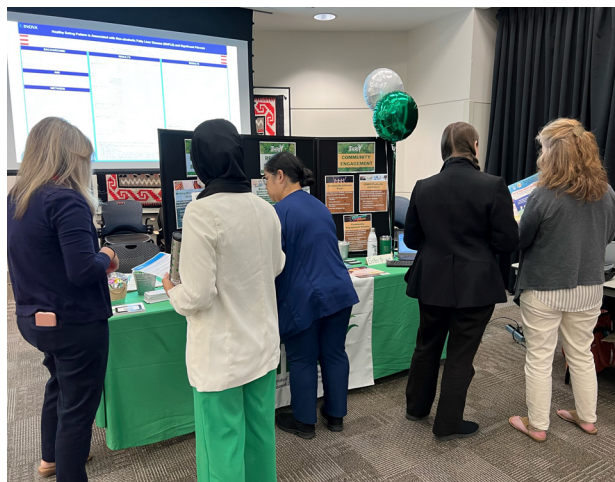
Equity, disparities and storytelling

Inova and iTHRIV's Second Annual Research Day, held in May, was an opportunity for all Inova service lines to highlight research efforts, share challenges and opportunities, and connect with one another. Keynote speaker Randy Jones, PhD, RN, FAAN, of the University of Virginia, discussed overcoming barriers and increasing diversity in clinical trial recruitment, one of the key themes of the day. Through both virtual and in-person presentations, team members provided research highlights while also sharing barriers and successes in community engagement for diverse recruitment.

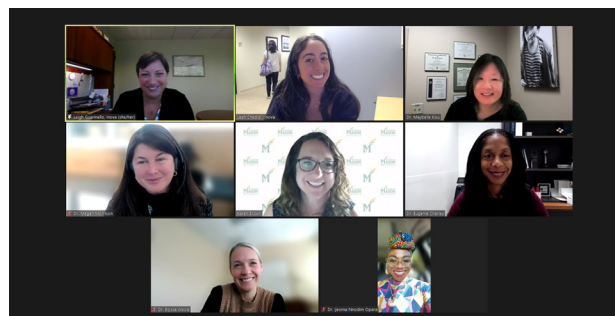
During the midday session, numerous research posters and abstracts were shared, and a mini-community studio was held by Inova's diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility in research (DEIA-R) working group to gather participant insights into diverse, equitable and inclusive research.

In October, the **Fifth Annual Healthcare Disparities Conference** championed "A Call for Connection: Cultural Humility and Allyship." Keynote speaker Ijeoma Nnodim Opara, MD, FAAP, FAIM, of Wayne State University, shared a rousing call for cultural humility, coliberation and health justice. The day included vignettes and storytelling regarding creating brave spaces to address micro- and macroaggressions and addressing healthcare barriers by reframing the patient experience through the lens of SDOH.

Partners included Inova, iTHRIV, George Mason University, the Northern Virginia Area Health Education Center, the University of Virginia and Carilion Clinic.



The DEIA-R working group is a team-member-led group advancing DEIA initiatives across Inova. The group is a progression of Inova's clinical trials diversity and inclusion working group, which was formed in 2021. The DEIA-R working group's mission is to advance world-class healthcare delivery through directing patient-centered research toward health equity.



The conference planning committee and speakers celebrate another successful event.

Inova awards \$1.2 million in health equity support to local nonprofits

Every year, Inova strengthens its connection to the community by partnering with local nonprofit organizations to support programs that address identified health equity needs. In 2023, 23 local nonprofits received a total of \$1.2 million in funding and support.



Act for Alexandria will support families facing economic crisis, provide young people with viable employment opportunities, and amplify community voices and community decision making.



Adaptive Fitness Legion will provide people living with physical disabilities access to affordable, safe and effective adaptive workout programs including free gym hours, equipment, trainers and group fitness programs held both in person and online.



Cornerstones will connect culturally diverse and socioeconomically challenged community members to healthcare, mental health and dental services with the support of a navigator.



The Culmore Clinic will provide monthly dental exams, cleanings, X-rays and fillings for low-income, uninsured and underinsured patients.



The Growth and Healing HUB will provide bilingual behavioral health outreach and services to Hispanic/Latino youth and families in the Richmond Highway corridor.



The Hamkae Center will offer Health Together Projects, linguistically and culturally appropriate community healthcare outreach events for Asian Americans. Events include referrals to affordable health resources, assistance with citizenship applications and small business counseling.



The House will address hunger and food insecurity in children and families in low-income, overcrowded and unsafe neighborhoods through the HANGRY Truck, Mobile Food Market and Street Kitchen.



Housing Alexandria will plant and maintain two community gardens for residents, provide produce to approximately 240 households and provide education on healthy eating.



The LAZERA Ministries Community Mental Health Collective will facilitate Thoughtful Thursdays, a program that promotes restorative healing practices; UBUNTU ASA, a program to mitigate young people's exposure to trauma; and Keeping It Real, a monthly meeting for Black women to interact on health, finances, relationships and other topics.



Loudoun Cares will connect residents in need with local nonprofits and agencies that can assist with a variety of health and human services.



Loudoun Child Advocacy Center will provide a safe space for child victims of abuse and assault.



The Loudoun Education Foundation will support pathways to healthcare careers for diverse students from low-income households and populations underrepresented in science, technology, engineering and math career fields through the two-day BLOOM event for middle school students and high school students enrolled in the Health and Medical Sciences Academy.



Loudoun Free Clinic will provide a preventive healthcare home for low-income, uninsured and underinsured residents of Loudoun County.



The Main Street Child Development Center will support early intervention mental health and special education services and counseling for children, regardless of their financial circumstances.



Northern Virginia Dental Clinic will provide access to low-income, uninsured and underserved residents throughout Northern Virginia for comprehensive oral health care services, emergency dental care, and oral health education and instruction.



Northern Virginia Family Service will provide programs that empower individuals and families to improve their quality of life and to promote community cooperation and support in responding to family needs.



NOVA ScriptsCentral will help underserved communities access quality healthcare and medication.



SafeSpot Children's Advocacy Center will provide a safe environment and free support services for child abuse survivors and their families as they navigate the investigation and aftermath of abuse.



Shelter House will provide 24/7 emergency shelter through the Loudoun Homeless Service Center for individuals and families experiencing homelessness, a drop-in shelter and hypothermia shelter for adults, and referrals to community resources for clothing, food and healthcare.



The Shepherd's Center of Fairfax-Burke will provide free transportation to doctor, dentist and healthcare appointments for seniors.



The Stroke Comeback Center will ensure equitable and unrestricted access to programs that help stroke and brain injury survivors with language, cognitive and physical deficiencies.



United Community will promote healthy nutrition, physical activity and social-emotional wellbeing for kindergarten and elementary school children in the Creekside Village and Sacramento Community Centers.



Virginia Health Care Foundation will increase access to primary healthcare for uninsured Virginians and Virginians in underserved areas.

Steve Motew, MD, Toni Ardabell, and Karen Berube recognize the many partner organizations funded this year through Inova's health equity opportunities



Building lasting community connections through school partnerships

Dream B!G career exploration

Dream B!G, an equity-focused initiative for students to explore healthcare career paths, blossomed in 2023 to include 10 events throughout Northern Virginia that reached more than 800 students. The “day in the life” model piques high school students’ curiosity about healthcare jobs as they get an up-close look at hospital roles. At a recent Dream B!G day in the life event, “eye-opening,” “engaging” and “amazing” were just some of the words the students used to describe their experience. Engaging students at Title I schools and partnering on events with school equity programs round out the programming Dream B!G provides to students as they explore future career opportunities.



SOS program recognized for workplace inclusion

Inova was one of three local employers to receive the Full Accessibility and Inclusion: Moving Toward Equity Award from the Loudoun County Disability Services Board. The award recognized Inova Loudoun Hospital’s SOS program and its commitment to connecting with high school seniors who have learning disabilities and offering opportunities to develop skills in an inclusive work environment. The award was presented in October as part of Disability Employment Awareness Month in Loudoun County.

Start on Success (SOS)

When Loudoun County Public Schools (LCPS) first explored bringing the SOS model to Loudoun County, they reached out to Inova because of our long-standing partnership. The conversation began with a mutually beneficial proposition – students get the opportunity to experience paid healthcare-related jobs and build work-based skills, while Inova gets the opportunity to develop the next generation of the hospital workforce.

The SOS program provides high school seniors with educational disabilities the skills and experiences to succeed in the workplace. In Loudoun County, the cohort of SOS students takes a career and technical education course in the first semester of the year to set them up for success. From January through May, students spend three hours each day participating in a paid internship onsite at Inova Loudoun Hospital. The students are mentored by Inova team members in areas such as supply management, supply chain and food services. The program launched its first cohort during the 2022 – 2023 school year, and its second cohort will begin work in January 2024. Stefani was one of the first graduates of the Loudoun SOS program. Read her story on page 19.

Job for a Day

In November, more than 70 LCPS juniors and seniors participated in Job for a Day at Inova Loudoun Hospital, connecting with team members to learn about different departments and career options. Inova Loudoun Hospital has participated in the program, which was created by the Loudoun School-Business Partnership Executive Council, for 21 years.

Although LCPS partners with many businesses in the county, Inova is always the most popular choice and offers the program for two days to accommodate all the students who want to take part. The sign-up process is like buying the most sought-after concert tickets. In 2023, Inova “sold out” in just 22 minutes.

Nearly all hospital departments participate including physical medicine and rehabilitation, progressive care, wound care, surgical trauma ICU, imaging, chaplaincy, oncology, clinical mentors, pediatric emergency room, pediatric ICU, materials, labor and delivery, Inova Schar Heart and Vascular, government and community relations, community health, public relations, lab, and respiratory therapy. The hospital strives to connect students with a variety of departments, so they understand there are many options available for them at all levels of healthcare. Students don’t always get their first choice, but they often discover a love in an area they never thought would interest them.

“I love seeing the students’ faces light up and hearing about their experiences at the end of the day. I want them to know that Inova is a great place to work, and that every job is important – from the bedside to the administrative side and everything in between.”

- Adele Tierney, Manager, Program Administration, Mobile Health Services, Inova Loudoun Hospital



Mobile health clinic partnership



Students and partners celebrate the launch of the mobile health clinic partnership

As the days grew shorter in late 2022, Clark Bowers, Director of Student Services at LCPS, shared a drawing on a napkin, now framed, of his vision to bring healthcare to community schools. Inova and LCPS teams met for months to work out the complexities of implementing an onsite mobile health resource and appropriate staffing for uninsured students in need of school physicals and wellness checks. The George Washington University School of Nursing, Inova’s nurses, a bus driver and LCPS team members joined the effort, and in June, Inova’s mobile health services bus became home to the LCPS Mobile Health Clinic.

In 2023, nearly 250 students received clinical services at rotating evening and weekend mobile clinics at all LCPS community schools. In addition, team members from ICCF partnered to connect students and caregivers with local medical homes, providing comprehensive care for the entire family.

Building a local workforce: stories from the team

As an Anchor Institution, Inova is committed to hiring locally, preparing community members for careers in healthcare and maintaining a workforce that reflects the community we serve. Our connections with community organizations, faith-based partners and local schools enhance our ability to hire individuals with a passion for our work and a commitment to our community.

Dream B!G career development program: Kaylia's story

In partnership with community-based partners, the Dream B!G career development program's four-week course helps adults hone their job-seeking skills and apply for careers at Inova. The program creates equity opportunities and a workforce that reflects Inova's community.

After a successful pilot at the end of 2022, the program launched its first cohort in May 2023 in partnership with the Capital Youth Empowerment Program in Alexandria. Kaylia was part of that group. She had prior experience working in medical billing and coding and wanted to return to the healthcare field. The Capital Youth Empowerment Program helped her attend the program at Inova Alexandria Hospital, providing transportation support so she could commute from her home in Triangle, VA.

Over the four sessions, Kaylia and her fellow students learned about workplace culture, gained resume-building tips and practiced mock interviews with Inova team members. At the end of the program, Kaylia was hired as a patient access associate II in the Inova Brock Family Antenatal Testing Center at Inova Alexandria Hospital. She works with team members to ensure the office runs smoothly, checking patients in and out, scheduling appointments, and helping clinical staff with reports and documentation.

Kaylia said the Dream B!G course increased her confidence, and she has since referred several of her friends to the program.



The perfect fit: Octavio's story



Octavio is the first face most people see when they walk into the Inova Cares Clinic for Community Bridging in Leesburg. A member of the local community, Octavio is a patient access associate who manages the front desk. Octavio connects patients with the resources they need as they move from hospital care to receiving care in the community. He also supports the Inova Cares Clinic for Behavioral Health.

Octavio was an architect in his native country, Mexico, before moving to the U.S. with his family. In the U.S., he worked in the restaurant business until a knee injury meant he could no longer be on his feet for hours. Octavio is a congregant at St. Gabriel's/San. Gabriel Episcopal Church where Father Daniel Vélez Rivera, a well-respected community stakeholder and partner, is pastor. When the position became available at the Inova Cares Clinic for Community Bridging, Father

Daniel was quick to recommend Octavio. Fluent in Spanish, having worked with Loudoun Hunger Relief during the pandemic and with many years of customer service experience, Octavio was the perfect fit.

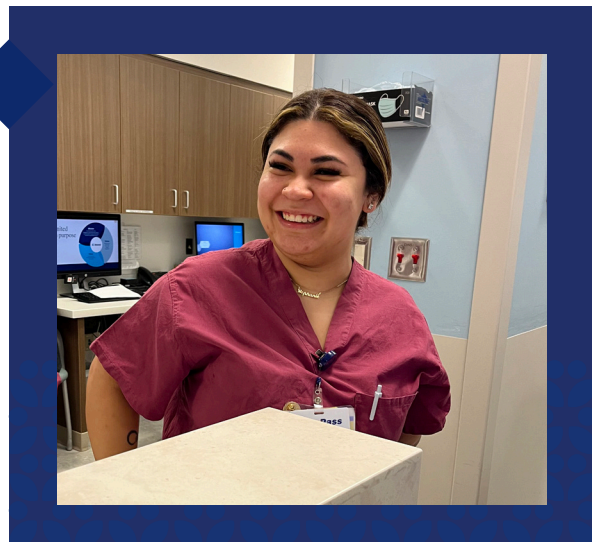
Octavio is passionate about the community he serves; he truly exemplifies the value of hiring locally and investing in our community members.

Pursuing her dream: Stefani's story

As part of the first SOS cohort of high school students at Inova Loudoun Hospital, Stefani initially interned with the sterile processing team, cleaning, storing and distributing medical supplies. But she soon realized she wanted more patient contact to fulfill her dream of becoming a bedside nurse. Stefani transferred to Inova Schar Heart and Vascular to intern with the nursing team, supporting patients before and after their cardiac procedures.

Her colleagues were struck by her strong work ethic and desire to learn, and when her internship ended in May, Stefani was hired as a clinical technician at Inova Schar Heart and Vascular. Stefani has embraced this role, seeking out opportunities to help her team and grow her skills. Her work eases the load on the busy nursing team, so they can focus on direct patient care.

Buoyed by her work experience at Inova, Stefani recently enrolled in the nursing program at Northern Virginia Community College – taking a big step forward toward her vision to become a nurse. The SOS program gives students like Stefani a path to pursue their career goals, and Inova is proud to be a part of that journey.



Inova launches comprehensive depression screening

America is experiencing an epidemic of loneliness and social isolation that can lead individuals to experience mental health concerns. Routine screening helps healthcare providers identify patients with anxiety and depression. While most primary care providers conduct an annual depression screening, not all patients see one every year. Recognizing that these patients could fall through the cracks, Inova implemented a new, comprehensive approach – conducting annual depression screening for every patient who sees an Inova provider at an outpatient site, regardless of whether the provider is a primary care provider or a specialist.

Depression screening is a part of a self-administered questionnaire in MyChart, Inova's online patient portal. Patients answer two questions as part of the electronic check-in process (see sidebar). If a patient does not check in via MyChart, the provider's office conducts the screening in person.

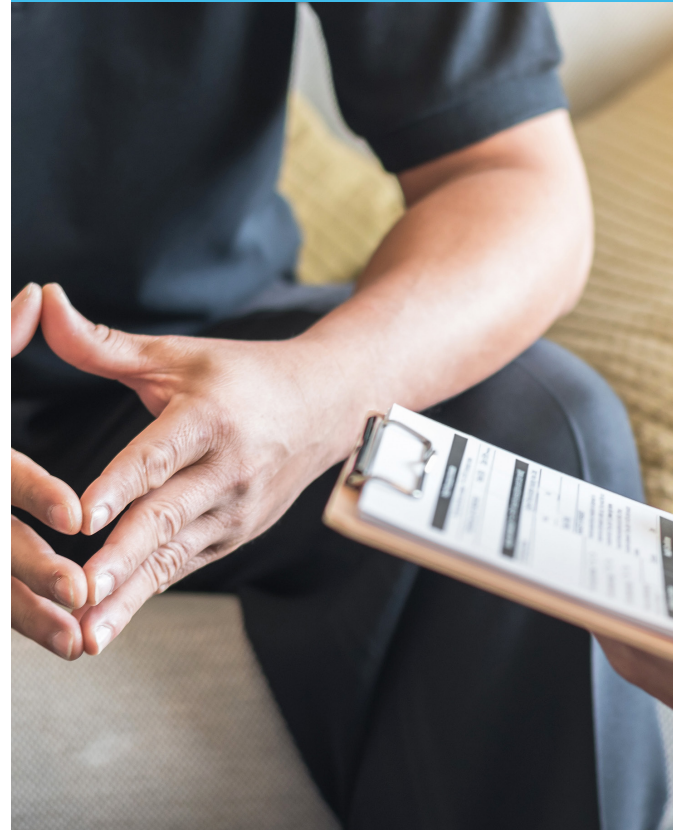
If patients screen positive based on the initial two questions, they answer seven additional questions including one about self-harm. If the screening shows any signs of depression, the patient is referred to mental health resources. Those identified as severely depressed, with thoughts of self-harm, are immediately connected with an on-call behavioral health therapist.

Depression screening was introduced in the spring of 2023. Within the first six months, Inova screened 290,000 people. About 58,000 of those screenings took place at specialty sites. More than 500 patients screened in specialty clinics said they had thoughts of hurting themselves and were referred to the resources and the help they needed.

Depression screening questions

How often, over the past two months, have you experienced:

- Little interest or pleasure in doing things?
- Feeling down, depressed or hopeless?



A pediatric cardiologist was seeing a 14-year-old boy with heart block and a pacemaker whose family recently moved to Virginia from out of state. On the depression screening, he reported thoughts of hurting himself. After asking if it was okay to talk in front of his mom, they discussed his needs and made referrals for support. The family expressed gratitude for being asked the question. They had been trying to get connected with local resources but did not know where to start.

Creativity and connection help abuse survivors heal

When an Inova Ewing FACT patient received a small fleece blanket to provide comfort during her exam following a traumatic experience, she was so moved by the impact it made on her recovery she wanted to do something special in return. The patient came back to FACT a year later and donated a box of blankets to help other patients with the healing process.

This generous gesture gave forensic nurse examiner Caitlin Yerkes, MPH, BSN, RN, SANE-A, SANE-P, an idea. Yerkes, who belongs to the DC Modern Quilt Guild, wondered if the group could make quilts to donate to abuse survivors. Members enthusiastically took up the cause as one of their charity initiatives, sewing quilts in all shapes and sizes. Later, Arlington Quilters Unlimited joined in, and today, the department receives donated quilts from 10 different local quilt guilds, as well as from individuals.

“We can now offer quilts in a variety of designs and colors to every patient, which literally provide warmth during what can be a long time on the exam table,” said Yerkes. “Patients are incredibly moved by the time and energy that people have spent creating these unique works of art. It’s a beautiful thing to witness and a wonderful way to form a connection between patients and the community.”



The Charles B. and Betty G. Ewing Forensic Assessment and Consultation Teams (FACT) provides specialized forensic medical evaluation services for children and adults. All services are provided free of charge to patients. The program is made possible through a generous donation from the Ewing Family Foundation. Over the past decade, the Ewings' generosity has enabled FACT to recruit an exceptional team of forensic nurses and physicians and expand these life-changing services across Inova and the Northern Virginia community.

Transformational gift connects underserved communities to cardiac care

In May, Inova received a \$75 million gift from Dwight and Martha Schar to accelerate innovative cardiovascular care in Northern Virginia. One of the areas of focus will be launching initiatives that benefit underrepresented communities at high risk for heart disease including women and Black and Latino populations.

Heart disease is the number one cause of death in the U.S., with African Americans 30% more likely to die from the condition than their White counterparts. A complex mix of social barriers drives this disparity including lack of access to high-quality heart and vascular programs, as well as increased risk factors such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol and diabetes.

The Schars are longtime supporters of Inova. Their gift is one of the largest to advance heart health in the U.S. and allows Inova to push the boundaries of medical research, innovation and patient care. The funds will be used to grow specialty services; expand outreach, prevention and early diagnosis; recruit and retain top care team talent; and promote health equity across the Northern Virginia region.



African Americans are **30% more likely** to die from heart disease than non-Hispanic White people.

African American adults are **30% percent more likely** to have high blood pressure but are less likely than non-Hispanic Whites to have their blood pressure under control.

African American women are nearly **50% more likely** to have high blood pressure than non-Hispanic White women.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health



Dr. J. Stephen Jones, Christopher O'Connor, MD, and Sage Bolte, PhD, with Dwight and Martha Schar at the announcement of their \$75M gift to transform cardiovascular care at Inova and in our community

Saving lives with cancer screening and community connections

Despite significant advancements in treatment, cancer is still the second leading cause of death in the U.S. Prevention and early detection save lives. However, under-resourced communities often face barriers to these vital prevention and early detection services.

To address this need and meet people where they are, the Inova Saville Cancer Screening and Prevention Center holds free quarterly community screening days and an annual cancer prevention health fair. Participants can access provider-recommended cancer screenings such as mammograms, skin cancer checks, colonoscopies and pap smears. They also attend a wellness seminar focused on nutrition and mental health resources led by Saville's registered dietitian and behavioral health therapist.

Events are coordinated in partnership with trusted community-based organizations including Neuva Vida, Colorectal Cancer Alliance, Filipino American Cancer Care, and the Ethiopian Community Support and Advocacy Center.

In its first year of focused outreach, more than 100 people participated in the community screening days. Nearly 75% identified as Hispanic or Latino, 13% as Black or African American, and 9% as Asian, and all were uninsured. To better serve these communities, the Inova Saville Center increased the number of interpreters at the screenings and hired a community health worker to assist with financial aid to ensure access to care for the nearly one-quarter of participants who required a diagnostic follow-up appointment.

Inova is able to strengthen and expand access to these critically needed resources through the generous support of Inova Health Foundation and corporate and community donors.



In 2023, Saville's outreach provided:

- 93 mammograms
- 190 colon cancer screening kits
- 38 pap smears
- 88 skin checks



Inova in the community

Inova knows that connecting to the communities we serve helps us provide the best care for our patients. Every year, Inova teams attend events across the region, offering resources and health screenings, engaging with our neighbors and advocating for the needs of residents.

In 2023, our teams took part in more than 100 events and provided lifesaving health checks, including blood pressure, cholesterol and heart rhythm, for hundreds of community members.



Inova team members provided information and blood pressure screenings at London Towne Elementary School



Inova injury and prevention team and ICCF supported Supervisor Dan Storck's back to school event in Lorton



Inova Community Health and Health Equity and Inova Schar Heart and Vascular attended the Gum Springs community's 190th anniversary celebration on Juneteenth, providing heart health screenings and other resources



ICCF, Inova Schar Heart and Vascular and Inova Well supported Bethlehem Baptist Church's community health fair in Gum Springs with health screenings and community resources



Inova's medical residents joined University of Virginia medical students and Inova Well at Hunter Woods Elementary School to help children better understand what to expect when they go to the doctor



Inova's neurosciences team provided stroke safety information alongside three other Inova teams at a health and wellness fair in Woodbridge

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*Lists as of February 2024

Notes

Notes

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