

INDEPENDENT HEALTH'S  
**2022 COMMUNITY BENEFIT REPORT**



Independent  
 Health®

## Community Benefit Report

If there is one thing Independent Health is, it's committed. To the community, its members and associates. Throughout 2022 we continued to help those in need by supporting a wide variety of activities and initiatives to strive to meet the evolving challenges and needs of our community. Beyond our corporate giving, we pair our associates and resources to work side-by-side with other community organizations to address important issues and help individuals successfully overcome obstacles toward a brighter future.

Our best selves begin with the foundation of good health, and by fulfilling our mission we are creating opportunities for healthier lives across the eight counties of Western New York. Through numerous contributions and community partnerships, we were able to provide more than \$28 million in 2022 to improve the health and overall well-being of our region, including significant support for underserved and at-risk populations.



### **BUFFALO TRAGEDY RESPONSE**

May 14, 2023, marked the one-year anniversary of a racially-motivated, tragic act of violence that occurred at a Tops Friendly Markets grocery store on Jefferson Avenue in Buffalo. In the aftermath of an event that forever changed each of us and our city, Independent Health and Independent Health Foundation provided needed support to those impacted, from the families and loved ones of the victims, to the surrounding neighborhood.

Independent Health joined other local organizations in contributing to the Buffalo Together Community Response Fund, coordinated by the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo and United Way of Buffalo & Erie County, to work to address both the immediate needs in our community and long-term community rebuilding and systemic issues that have marginalized communities of color.

Associates of Independent Health and Independent Health Foundation also contributed to an internal collection for urgently-needed items to be provided to *Soccer for Success* and *Good for the Neighborhood* families living near the Jefferson Avenue Tops location. RedShirt volunteers gave their time to assist with the collection, sorting and delivery of items, which included various toiletries, hair care items, paper towels and shelf stable food, as well as baby products, including diapers and formula.

In addition, Independent Health welcomed community members who wished to donate essential non-food items to aid the residents of the Jefferson Avenue neighborhood to do so at any of its three Medicare Information Centers located in Amherst, Depew and Orchard Park. In collaboration with Back to Basics Ministries, more than 3,000 essential non-food items, including toiletries, paper towels, reusable bags, diapers, laundry detergent, and other personal care items, were gathered and delivered to residents of the Jefferson Avenue neighborhood to provide relief and respite.

### **BLIZZARD OF 2022**

Following the devastating blizzard that took place in our area this past December, Independent Health assisted in providing support to local organizations serving East Buffalo in need of resources.

Through an effort lead by Peacemakers, Independent Health was able to provide tote bags utilized as part of a food giveaway to the surrounding community, in addition to First Night Buffalo Party Packs and monetary support.





In addition, Independent Health helped King Center Charter School in East Buffalo purchase various basic supplies for area families who were not near a supermarket or convenience store, including non-perishable food, personal hygiene items and diapers.

### **DIVERSE SPENDING INITIATIVE**

Our diverse spending initiative not only aligns with our organizational diversity, inclusion and belonging efforts, but also with the region-wide Buffalo Purchasing Initiative effort to increase diversity, equity, and inclusion access and participation in local supply chains. We have been successful in steadily increasing the company's utilization of local minority- and women-owned businesses in our procurement process. The benefits of inclusive procurement include both increasing economic opportunity for minority-owned businesses and improved economic growth for the region. In addition, through the creation of an internal Diversity Ambassadors Program, we have been able to identify associates and frequent purchasers for the company who can promote and further research the purchasing of items from local diverse vendors.

### **FOOD FIRST**

Food First, a program launched by Independent Health in partnership with Foodsmart, is designed to establish long-term food security solutions through free support from registered dietitians, easy online ordering and food delivery to bring healthier options within reach.

MediSource and MediSource Connect Medicaid members living in certain neighborhoods in Buffalo affected by rising rates of food and nutrition insecurity are eligible for the program, with Villa Maria College being one example of where this program is offered. Lack of access to healthy foods can contribute to social, emotional and behavioral issues, which can impact academic success. This program helps to supplement access to the on-campus food pantry and dining stipend offered by the college per student per semester.

Enrolled members are offered free access to Walmart+ or Instacart Express delivery for one year, paid for by Independent Health, to eliminate grocery delivery fees and improve access to proper nutrition. Additionally, members who participate in Food First can use their SNAP benefits online through Foodsmart, where accepted.

### **TIFFT NATURE PRESERVE**

As a way to encourage outdoor physical activity in a unique space, Independent Health sponsors free, guided wellness walks at Tiff Nature Preserve once weekly in the morning. Led by a knowledgeable volunteer, the routes vary each week, with the walk being offered year-round.

Situated on Buffalo's Outer Harbor, Tiff Nature Preserve is a 264-acre nature refuge dedicated to conservation and environmental education.



# Community Benefit Impact for 2022

Independent Health’s Community Investment Total for 2022:  
**\$28,201,335**

Independent Health’s community programs, initiatives and partnerships for 2022: **\$25,516,253.32**

Direct and Associated Expenditures: **\$6,195,042**  
 (program total minus HCRA & GME)

A Few Examples of Direct and Associated Expenditures:

HEALTHeNet	\$36,000
Corporate Sponsorship Program	\$1,226,617
Independent Health Foundation	\$2,705,131
Dress Down Day Program	\$16,113
United Way Program	\$71,555*

Mandated Government Expenses:\*

HCRA	\$17,735,509
GME	\$1,585,702

\*Health Care Reform Act (HCRA) and Covered Lives Assessment (GME):  
 New York State’s Health Care financing laws that fund a multitude of health care initiatives as part of public goods pool.



Independent Health’s in-kind and indirect expenditures for 2022: **\$2,777,550**

A few examples of In-kind and Indirect Expenditures:

- Associates **on-work time** **\$2,625,675 (in-kind)**  
 Work done in support of Community Benefit programs, initiatives and partnerships.
- Associate Volunteerism **\$49,565 (in-kind)**  
 269 associates volunteered 807 hours at \$61.42 per hour [# of hours x \$61.42].
- Giveaways, IT Donations **\$30,020 (in-kind)**  
 Example: 76 workstations, 49 laptops, 98 monitors donated to Mission Ignite (formerly Computers for Children)

