



community benefit report

At HSS, we understand that **education** about musculoskeletal health is a powerful tool for **empowering communities** to learn more about their bodies and **lead healthier lives.**

A Commitment to Healthy Communities



Hospital for Special Surgery (HSS) has long been dedicated to serving our patients and our neighbors in surrounding communities. Ever since our inception, we have remained committed to advancing public health, even in the face of key challenges posed by the ever-changing healthcare environment. We provide quality care, innovative musculoskeletal health education, and programs designed to have a lasting positive impact. By also driving cutting-edge research and investing in the training of future healthcare leaders, we continue to be a cornerstone of health throughout our region.



HSS contributes to community wellness through a variety of efforts, including partnerships with local organizations, public health agencies, and academic institutions. Our researchers engage in groundbreaking studies that enhance musculoskeletal health, while our educational initiatives equip healthcare professionals with knowledge to address community health needs effectively. Virtual platforms have allowed us to extend the benefits of HSS's expertise to a global audience, enhancing health education and wellness far beyond our physical locations.

This report highlights our community education, outreach, and support efforts addressing social determinants of health. We work to understand the factors that affect the health and well-being of residents in the communities we serve — what symptoms they are living with, their access to health care, where and how they live, and their level of healthcare knowledge — to assess and meet community health needs in ways that are responsive and effective. Our efforts target diverse groups from all walks of life, including older adults, children and families, and individuals with chronic conditions such as lupus and arthritis, with the goal of improving overall well-being.

Our success is not achieved alone, however. We extend our gratitude to the many organizations and individuals who partner with us. Their expertise and commitment are invaluable to our efforts and to the mission of HSS.



Our Partners

HSS works with more than **100 community partners** to provide impactful and diverse education, outreach, support, and exercise programs. Our partners include:

- **Community-based organizations** such as senior centers, schools, health associations, and foundations
- **Clinical/academic partnerships** such as colleges, universities, and healthcare organizations
- **Government/public partners** such as elected officials and local and state agencies

About HSS

Founded in 1863, Hospital for Special Surgery (HSS) is the oldest orthopedic hospital in the United States, providing specialized care to over 200,000 patients annually and performing more than 40,000 orthopedic surgeries each year.

- Consistently ranked #1 in the nation for orthopedics and #3 for rheumatology by U.S. News & World Report.
- Ranked nationally as a best children's hospital for orthopedics by U.S. News & World Report.
- Renowned for nursing excellence, HSS was the first hospital in New York City to receive Magnet® recognition by the American Nurses Credentialing Center — the most prestigious distinction a healthcare organization can receive for nursing excellence and quality patient outcomes — and the first in the state to earn it five consecutive times.
- Recognized as a Leader in LGBTQ+ Healthcare Equality by the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Foundation, the largest national lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) civil rights organization in the US.



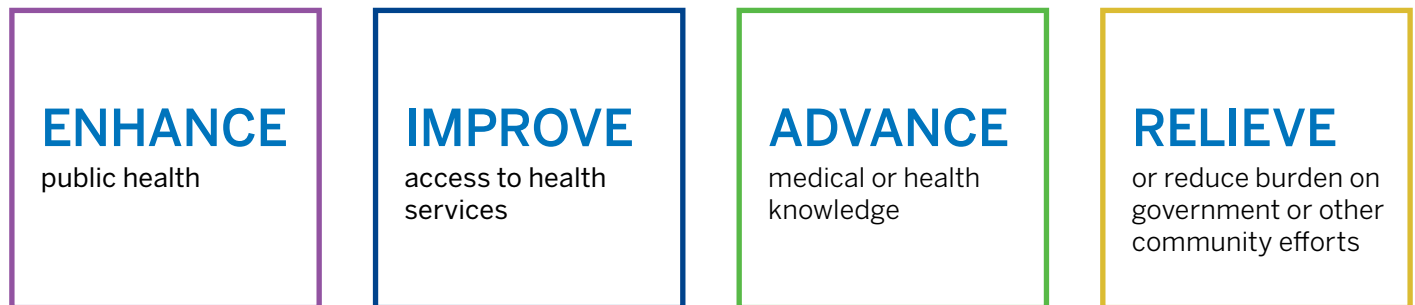
The programs HSS provides to our community are just as diverse as the communities we serve. We consider factors such as age, gender, socioeconomic factors, and ethnicity to tailor our programs to the needs of our communities. While programs vary, they all share the goal of enhancing the health of communities and the public through education, services, and resources we leverage through our partners.

Our initiatives are designed to promote:

- Access to care
- Health education and prevention
- Reduction of health disparities
- Community partnership building
- Research and innovation
- Education of the leaders of tomorrow

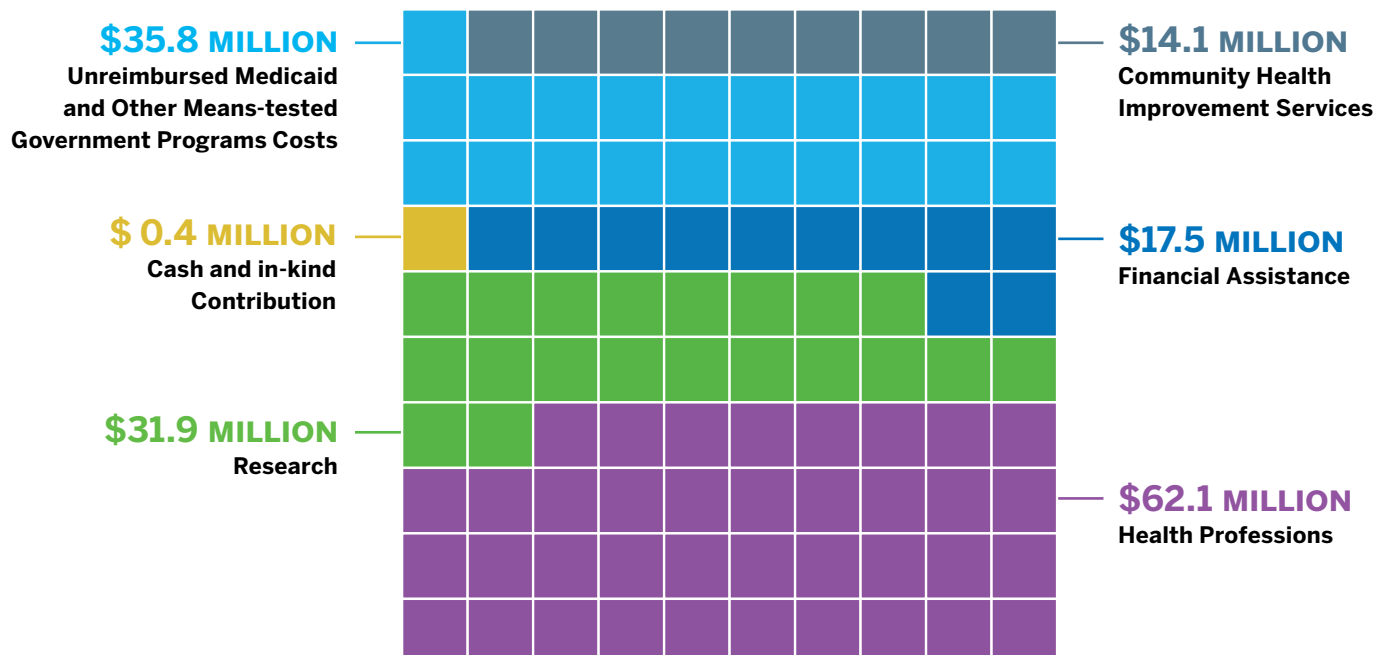
What is Community Benefit?

Community benefit includes programs or activities that are created to meet an identified community health need. These programs must seek to achieve one of the following objectives:



COMMUNITY INVESTMENT BY THE NUMBERS

\$161.8 MILLION SPENT ON COMMUNITY BENEFITS AND SERVICES IN 2023*



*As reported in the Hospital's 2023 IRS Form 990 filing.

Creating Programs to Benefit the Community



At HSS, we understand that education about musculoskeletal health is a powerful tool for empowering communities to learn more about their bodies and lead healthier lives. As part of our dedication to public health, we offer a variety of programs, support, and outreach, including:

- Accessible, evidence-based health education programs that address the diverse needs of the populations we serve.
- Support and education for older individuals and those living with chronic illnesses such as lupus, scleroderma, arthritis, and osteoporosis.
- Community outreach to help children and families eat better, promote bone and joint health in older Asian individuals, and provide musculoskeletal screenings to young athletes, among other initiatives.

By providing individuals with the knowledge and resources to manage their health, we not only promote wellness, but also help prevent and manage chronic conditions.

While our primary service area encompasses the five boroughs of New York City and we have secondary service areas in Hudson Valley, Long Island, Northern and Central New Jersey, Connecticut, and Palm Beach and Naples, Florida, we have expanded our reach far beyond these regions. Through our successful in-person outreach, hybrid offerings of support and education programs, and virtual and on-demand educational offerings, millions of people worldwide have been able to access our programming — allowing them to engage with health information at their own pace and on their own terms.

Community Benefit and Services Committee

In 2015, HSS established the Community Benefit and Services Committee (CBSC), bringing together board members and community leaders to identify gaps in community outreach. The committee has been instrumental in unifying HSS's community benefit efforts, ensuring a collective impact while prioritizing underserved populations. Central to the CBSC's mission is a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, which recognizes the importance of addressing health disparities and ensuring that our initiatives are accessible and responsive to the diverse needs of the communities we serve.

Assessing and Evaluating Community Health Needs

To maintain quality improvement, HSS evaluates our community programming on an ongoing basis. We conduct qualitative and quantitative evaluations for all of our programs to assess participant engagement, knowledge acquisition, and skills gained. We collect and analyze data from participants to ensure that our programs and processes meet their needs in the best way possible. The results are tracked on dashboards to help us monitor each program's reach and impact.



Community Health Needs Assessment

The health and needs of communities are regularly in flux. To stay abreast of the changing musculoskeletal health needs of our diverse communities, HSS performs a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) every three years and conducts ongoing program evaluations.

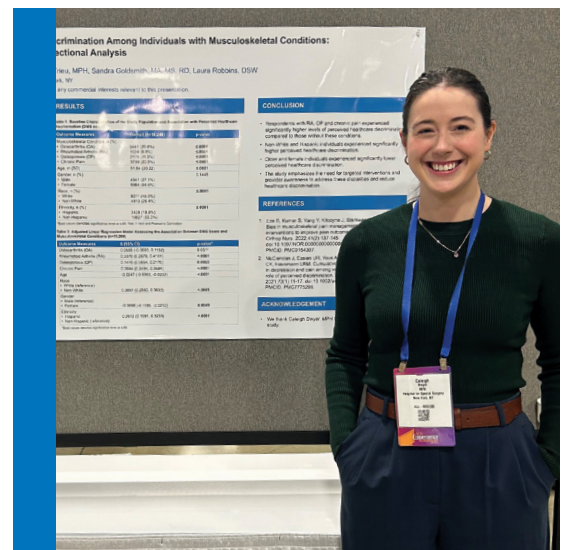
The CHNA involves the collection of survey data from patients and community members and the conducting of interviews with program participants and community organizations. The results guide the development and implementation of community health programs.

Our CHNA approach is methodical and collaborative:

- 1. Gather Data:** Collect and analyze data from community surveys, partner interviews, and various governmental systems to highlight community health needs.
- 2. Collect Input:** Establish a collaborative environment to obtain community input from HSS stakeholders, community partners, and health agencies serving diverse populations.
- 3. Prioritize Health Needs:** Identify and prioritize health needs through community forums.
- 4. Execute Action Plan:** Develop and implement an action plan to address identified health needs and disparities.

Community Service Plan and Program Quality

CHNA results are used to develop a three-year Community Service Plan (CSP), which HSS submits to New York State. The CSP aligns with New York State's Health Prevention Agenda and features musculoskeletal and wellness-focused programs from various HSS departments. These programs are designed to meet the specific needs of our communities and promote health equity.



Keeping the Community in Motion

HSS's community programs promote health education, support, and outreach services, with the goal of enhancing the mobility and quality of life of our community.

Scan code for more information about HSS community programs.



Education to Improve Public and Patient Health

Education with Experts
bit.ly/hss-eduwithexperts

Move Better Feel Better
hss.edu/anywhere

Community Education & Outreach Video Playlist
bit.ly/ceo-video-playlist

Focusing on Musculoskeletal Health

Exercise Classes
hss.edu/community-education

Lectures & Workshops
hss.edu/community-education

Encouraging Safe Exercise

HSS Injury Prevention Programs
hss.edu/InjuryPreventionPrograms

Pre-Season Football Medical Screening
hss.edu/psal

Assisting with Access to Care

VOICES Medicaid Education Program
hss.edu/voices-managed-care

Support for People with Chronic Musculoskeletal Conditions

Living with RA: Lecture, Lunch & Conversation
hss.edu/RAGroup

The Early RA Support and Education Program
hss.edu/EarlyRA

Latinx RA Support and Education Program
hss.edu/inflammatory-arthritis-latinx-community.asp

The Myositis Support and Education Group
hss.edu/myositis-group

The Scleroderma, Vasculitis, and Myositis Center Education and Support Forum
hss.edu/scleroderma-vasculitis-center

Caring for Children and Families

Leon Root, MD Pediatric Outreach Program
hss.edu/pop

SNEAKER® (Super Nutrition Education for All Kids to Eat Right)
hss.edu/sneaker

Improving Health Among Older Adults

Greenberg Academy of Successful Aging
hss.edu/community-education

VOICES 60+ Senior Advocacy Program
hss.edu/voices60

Helping People with Lupus

Charla de Lupus (Lupus Chat)®
hss.edu/CharladeLupus

LupusLine®
hss.edu/LupusLine

The SLE Workshop
hss.edu/SLEWorkshop

Reaching the Asian-American Community

HSS Asian Community Bone Health Initiative
hss.edu/hss-asian-community-bone-health-initiative

LANtern® (Lupus Asian Network)
hss.edu/LANtern

Research, Innovation, and Translational Impact



Research plays a crucial role in advancing our understanding and management of musculoskeletal diseases. The HSS Research Institute features more than 300 investigators dedicated to identifying the mechanisms underlying these conditions and developing effective diagnostic, treatment, and prevention strategies. The wide range of research projects they are pursuing may revolutionize clinical practice and transform how health care is provided worldwide to people with orthopedic and rheumatologic conditions.

Bridging the Gap: Translational Research at HSS

Translational research, also known as “bench-to-bedside” research, bridges the gap between fundamental scientific discoveries and their practical application for improving patients’ lives. At HSS, we translate basic science findings into new approaches for preventing and treating musculoskeletal conditions. Many of our physicians are actively involved in clinical research, ensuring a seamless integration of cutting-edge discoveries into patient care. Their commitment forms the very core of our research mission and fosters the development of innovative and evidence-based treatments.





Benefits of Research for the Community

At HSS, our research drives the future of musculoskeletal care, contributing to healthier communities locally and globally. These discoveries not only improve clinical care, but also guide the development of community programs to enhance patient outcomes and reduce health disparities.

For over a decade, we have used the Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) model, a collaborative approach that engages community members and researchers as equal partners in the research process. By emphasizing shared decision-making and mutual benefit, CBPR ensures that research addresses community needs and leads to practical, culturally relevant solutions. This model fosters trust and equity, helping us create interventions that promote musculoskeletal health and long-term wellness and extending the impact of our research beyond the clinic and into the community.



Educating Tomorrow's Leaders



HSS is committed to educating the next generation of healthcare professionals. Our programs help faculty, residents, and fellows understand the needs and concerns of the communities we serve, with an emphasis on improving cultural competency and reducing racial disparities.

Our initiatives include programs such as the Hope Medical Scholars, which introduces underrepresented high school students to the medical field; partnerships with organizations like The Perry Initiative, which exposes young women to the fields of orthopedics and engineering; and outreach endeavors that bring trainees into the community so they can gain a better understanding of public health issues and expand their communication and patient care skills.

Enhancing Communication with Older Adult Patients for Improved Care Outcomes

Effective communication is crucial for optimizing treatment compliance and health outcomes. Older adults often feel stigmatized and may hesitate to advocate for themselves in healthcare settings. To address this, HSS created in-person training programs and an online module through HSS eAcademy® to help residents and physicians connect better with older patients. The online program, “Enhancing Communication Skills with Older Adult Patients,” is available to all physicians and addresses how to optimize clinic visits, manage noncompliance and cognitive decline, and communicate effectively with older adults. Led by a social worker, the in-person training was shown to enhance third-year residents' knowledge and sensitivity to aging issues.

Pediatric Outreach Program (POP)

The Leon Root, MD, Pediatric Outreach Program (POP) aims to prevent injuries in young athletes by offering them injury prevention screenings at no cost. HSS residents have an opportunity to learn about community musculoskeletal health needs by conducting POP screenings on-site at schools and community-based organizations with HSS orthopedic surgeons, physical therapists, and nurses. During the evaluation, the team assesses students for bone, muscle, and joint issues related to sports participation; checks vital signs and vision; and analyzes movement patterns through exercises like squats and jumps. Students and coaches also learn about injury prevention. Depending on the findings, students may be referred to HSS for additional musculoskeletal evaluation.



Scholarly Activities

HSS encourages residents and fellows to participate in academic conferences and present new research findings with their peers. In doing so, they share their knowledge from their experiences at HSS with doctors from other states and countries and glean new insights into musculoskeletal health needs and practices from other physicians. Such knowledge exchange benefits our communities, as well as other physicians who learn from HSS staff.

Advanced Orthopedic Triage Certification (AOTC)

In collaboration with the Department of Rehabilitation, the Education Institute developed and launched the Advanced Orthopedic Triage Certification (AOTC) program. This 100% virtual certification pathway equips HSS-affiliated rehabilitation professionals nationwide with advanced orthopedic triage skills. Delivered via HSS eAcademy, the program includes didactic modules with CEUs, a comprehensive written exam, and a practical video-based exam reviewed by HSS experts.

The AOTC program benefits diverse audiences, including research groups studying its impact on clinicians, students, and HSS Rehab staff through required onboarding and residency programs, and external practitioners in the HSS Rehab National Network. By setting a new standard for orthopedic triage education, AOTC reinforces HSS's commitment to shaping the future of rehabilitation care.

Nursing Research and Education Day

In collaboration with the Nursing Professional Development team, the Education Institute developed the annual Nursing Research and Education Day to spark curiosity in the research process and foster multidisciplinary collaboration among registered nurses, nurse practitioners, and student nurses from HSS and beyond. The event highlights original research, evidence-based practices, and quality improvement initiatives, emphasizing the pivotal role of nursing innovation in advancing healthcare.

The Hospital for Special Surgery maintains an unwavering commitment to promoting community health and well-being through a multifaceted approach. By engaging in innovative educational, outreach, support, and research programs, we address health disparities and empower individuals to lead healthier lives. Our partnerships with local organizations, public health agencies, and academic institutions amplify our impact, enabling us to reach diverse populations even more effectively.

HSS remains dedicated to implementing lasting, positive change in public health for individuals of all backgrounds. Together with our partners, we look forward to creating a healthier, more equitable future for the communities we touch.

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