

Project H.E.A.L.

HEALTH, EDUCATION, ACCESS, LINK

FY 2025 SUMMARY

July 1st, 2024 – June 30th, 2025



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ABOUT PROJECT H.E.A.L.

Project H.E.A.L. (Health, Education, Access, Link) is a health care outreach program that offers free health screenings and basic care at various locations across Central Minnesota for those who face barriers to accessing equitable health care. We also provide support to community and CentraCare partners providing community health and chronic disease education initiatives.

We are a volunteer-led program funded through donations made to the CentraCare Foundation. We serve as a conduit in our community for providing equitable healthcare services, and we work to provide hope and support for underserved individuals.

Health: Helping individuals overcome barriers to receiving equitable healthcare

Education: Support for community health and chronic disease initiatives

Access: Community access points and wellness events providing free health services and community events across Central MN

Link: Partnering with internal and community partners to help connect individuals to holistic health care and social services

Project H.E.A.L. started over 25 years ago as a partnership between the St. Cloud Hospital parish nurses and the Place of Hope shelter in St. Cloud to offer free health care to uninsured individuals. Since then, project H.E.A.L. has been evolving to help meet the needs of our communities, and we're developing strategies to bring in more visibility, volunteer opportunities, and funding to the program.

OUR MISSION

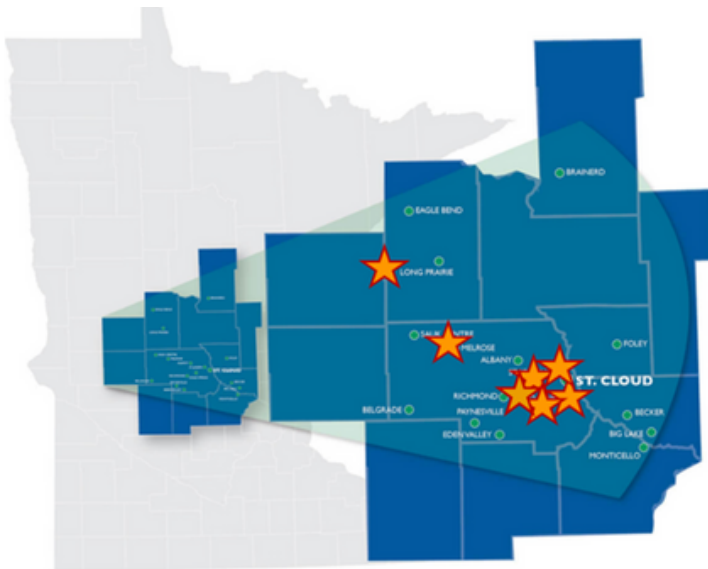
The mission of Project H.E.A.L. is to help all underserved and underinsured individuals in Central Minnesota overcome barriers to receiving equitable health care.



COMMUNITY ACCESS POINTS

Project H.E.A.L. offers free health services and wellness events at various locations across Central Minnesota. At these access points we offer services such as basic health screenings and assessments, vaccinations, care coordination, prescriptions and medication coverage, connections to community resources, and chronic disease education.

We also work to break down the barriers that our patients face by providing services like care coordination, insurance help, help with referrals and scheduling appts, transportation resources, and help with medication coverage. All project H.E.A.L. services are completely free, and there are no criteria that need to be met to be seen.



LOCATIONS

- Place of Hope Shelter in St. Cloud
- Lincoln Center Shelter in St. Cloud
- Mosque Wellness Event in St. Cloud
- Archangel Recovery and Reintegration Ministry (ARRM) in St. Cloud
- Compassionate Hope Family Center shelter in St. Cloud
- Melrose
- Long Prairie

COMMUNITY WELLNESS EVENTS

Project H.E.A.L. also participates in community events, where we provide basic health assessments and health education. In FY2025, Project H.E.A.L. participated in various community events, like Project Connect, Hooyo Hour, the CAIRO health fair, Juneteenth, and Arrive Ministries health series.



FY 2025 OUTCOMES

- There were approximately **980** patient encounters between all Project H.E.A.L. events, including provider-led clinics, nurse-led services, and wellness events.
- There were **79** direct connections made to primary care appointments for patients.
- Approximately **50** CentraCare team members, including staff and volunteers, participated in Project H.E.A.L. events.
- Community Health Nurses under CentraCare's Community Health Improvement team provided nursing services and chronic disease education at approximately **45** Project H.E.A.L. events.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Project H.E.A.L. also works to address social drivers of health by providing support and funding for community health and chronic disease initiatives. This work is made possible through dedicated internal and community partners, including the CentraCare Community Health Improvement Team, CentraCare Coordinated Care Clinic, CentraCare Community Paramedics, St. Cloud Hospital Emergency Department, the CentraCare Foundation, local shelters, local public health, Mid-MN Legal Aid, and Faith and Justice. Some of our community partnership initiatives include:

Project H.E.A.L. acts as a supporting partner and resource for the Faith and Justice Hispanic clinics in St. Cloud and Long Prairie. We help them to obtain supplies and help to cover medication costs for patients that can't qualify for health insurance. We provide medication assistance to an average of 9 patients per month. In return, Faith and Justice volunteers at our Melrose Project H.E.A.L. clinic each month to help better connect our Hispanic patients to services.

Project H.E.A.L. partners with CentraCare's Community Health Improvement nurses and CentraCare clinics to provide chronic disease education tools like at-home blood pressure machines for underinsured individuals. To date, we have distributed approximately 115 at-home blood pressure machines through education outreach and partnerships with clinics.

Project H.E.A.L. partners with the St. Cloud Hospital ETC on a pediatric fever initiative providing pediatric fever education and thermometers to families presenting to the ETC when their child has a fever. We've provided fever education to approximately 100 families since starting this initiative in fall of 2024. Preliminary data collected by the St. Cloud Hospital ETC from October 2024 to January 2025 showed a promising 31% decrease in repeat ED visits within 14 days for children under age 18 presenting with fever, compared to the same period in the previous year.

OUR AMAZING TEAM MEMBERS AND VOLUNTEERS

Project H.E.A.L. is a success because of the vision of a handful of people and the dedication of its volunteers. Volunteers play many different roles at Project H.E.A.L. outreach events- we have providers, nurses, nursing assistants, community paramedics, pre-med students, and interested community members that help out at our events.

Further, Project H.E.A.L. moved under CentraCare's Community Health Improvement (CHI) team in fiscal year 2025. This change provides a better alignment to our Health Equity & Community Health Improvement efforts and provides us with increased access to community resources and support. The CHI team has Community Health Nurses that provide nursing support and chronic disease education at several Project H.E.A.L. access points, providing an invaluable service of improving health literacy.



In FY2025 we also introduced a 0.6 FTE Community Paramedic position that is funded by Project H.E.A.L. The Community Paramedic in this role, Carmen Carlson, works to provide follow-up and care coordination services to patients seen at Project H.E.A.L. access points and assists our homeless and under-connected patients with navigating the health system and getting connected to primary care.

VOLUNTEER TESTIMONY

Volunteering with Project H.E.A.L. at the homeless shelters has been a humbling and eye-opening experience. It challenged me to think outside the box to help provide care and resources that many of us take for granted. Simple necessities like an ice pack for an injured arm become incredibly difficult to access when someone is experiencing homelessness. That realization alone shifted my perspective in a profound way.

One experience that left a lasting impact on me was helping a young man who was battling addiction. His only mode of transportation—a bike—had been stolen. He was planning to skip his appointment with addiction services, so I helped him with transportation to his appointment. I recently found out he's been sober for over 90 days. It's deeply rewarding to know that a small act of kindness can contribute to someone's journey toward recovery.

Project H.E.A.L. brings care directly to the community, breaking down barriers and helping people feel seen, supported, and empowered. It's an honor to be part of a team that is making such a meaningful impact."

—Shannon Krumvieda, RN, MSN, CEN

EXCITING NEWS AND EVENTS FROM THIS YEAR



St. Cloud State University and the City of St. Cloud hosted the annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. community celebration on January 25th. Each year, the MLK group chooses a service project to honor Dr. King's legacy, and this year they chose to highlight Project H.E.A.L. and the work we do to help people overcome barriers to receiving equitable health care. In addition to Project H.E.A.L. having the opportunity to present at the event, attendees were encouraged to donate essential supplies for our unhoused patients.

The event also honored Carmen Carlson, the Community Paramedic under Project H.E.A.L., with the prestigious MLK Celebration Humanitarian Award in recognition of her outstanding efforts and dedication to serving our underserved and unhoused patients.

LOOKING AHEAD TO FY 2026

Project H.E.A.L. has been evolving to help meet the needs of our communities, and we're developing strategies to bring more visibility, volunteer opportunities, and funding to the program. Our goal is to expand our service area to serve all regions of CentraCare and connect with more rural communities. Additional areas of opportunity for fiscal year 2026 include:

- Ongoing efforts included in our Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) work
- Visibility and ease of access for volunteer involvement
- Integration into EPIC for improved continuity of care and documentation
- Anticipated partnership with the new medical school
- Development of a new Project H.E.A.L. clinic in partnership with the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University at the new Eastside Community Outpost at Salem Lutheran Church in Saint Cloud

HOW TO SUPPORT PROJECT H.E.A.L.

There are a couple of ways that you can support Project H.E.A.L.:

- Volunteer at free Project H.E.A.L. clinics and wellness events across Central Minnesota to make a difference and help patients access equitable healthcare. To learn how to get started volunteering, visit CentraCare's volunteer website at:

<https://www.centracare.com/volunteer/>

- Donate to the CentraCare Foundation to help us continue to improve the health of our underserved communities in Central Minnesota. To donate, use the following link or QR code:

<https://give.centracare.com/campaign/652269/donate>



THANK YOU!

Thank you to all our partners, stakeholders, and volunteers for your continued support and contributions to Project H.E.A.L. Through Project H.E.A.L. outreach services, we are providing improved access and connection to appropriate healthcare services and helping people equitably reach their healthcare goals. We are seeing a positive impact from our efforts, and many individuals with barriers to accessing traditional healthcare services are greatly benefiting from these free healthcare services offered in Central Minnesota.

For more information about Project H.E.A.L., visit our website at:

<https://www.centracare.com/services/project-h-e-a-l/>

Questions or comments can be emailed to:

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