Improving Equity through Community Partnerships

An integrated, systemwide framework for dismantling systemic inequities and promoting health beyond our walls
Our Vision

Sentara Cares is focused on improving the health and well-being of all individuals and the quality of life enjoyed by everyone in the communities we serve. We believe in catalytic philanthropy — creating transformative and equitable change beyond simply making financial donations.

Sherry Norquist MSN, RN-ACM
As the director of Sentara Cares, Sherry leads Sentara’s efforts to align and integrate Sentara Healthcare’s 130-year commitment to our communities by nurturing strong partnerships, overseeing grant opportunities, and driving awareness and engagement.
Our Integrated Network

Howard Kern
President & CEO
Sentara Board of Directors

Iris Lundy
MHL, BSN, RN
Director of Health Equity

Dana Beckton
VP & Chief Diversity Officer

Sentara Community Advancement Committee
Grantees
Community Leaders

Employee Match
Employee Selections
HOPE Fund

~30K Team Members

Sentara Cares

Sentara Leadership
Health Equity Leaders
Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Leaders
Community Partners

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Our Purpose

Building Trust and Hope through Impact

Sentara embraces the essential principle of mutuality when forging successful community partnerships — a process which always begins with careful and genuine listening. We learn about the needs in our communities through active dialog with our partners and then plan together to create true, positive community impact.
80% of Health Outcomes Stem from the Social Determinants of Health

OUR FOCUS

80%

SOCIOECONOMIC FACTORS
- Education
- Employment Status & Income
- Family & Social Support

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT
- Stable & Affordable Housing
- Community Safety
- Access to Reliable Transportation

HEALTHY BEHAVIORS
- Access to Healthy Foods
- Substance Use
- Access to Services

HEALTHCARE SERVICES

20%

OUR WORK

ADDRESSING SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH FACTORS TO ADVANCE HEALTH EQUITY

COMMMITTING TO ACTIVE PARTNERSHIPS AND CATALYTIC PHILANTHROPY

We inspire, empower and support our community
Sentara’s 5 Focus Areas: Social Determinants of Health

Community engagement initiatives extend beyond basic healthcare services to address systemic health-related issues and disparities in the communities we serve.
Partnering to Fight Hunger: “We Care” Program with the Federation of Virginia Food Banks
Sentara has been a long-standing partner with food banks and relief organizations operating within the markets we serve:

• Healthy food Rx initiatives to support chronic disease management and curb readmissions
• Community garden initiatives (Healthy Harvest Community Harden, Halifax)
• Optima Family Care Plan HealthySavings® program (monthly discounts on healthy food for plan members)
• Financial contributions
• Food drives
• Volunteer events
However, the COVID-19 pandemic allowed us to broaden our lens and reexamine the scope of impact we could help to create.
We didn’t want to just get more money into the hands of food banks, we wanted to better understand the entire statewide food support network, tap partners throughout that network, and develop a scalable solution to meet unprecedented demand.
We also wanted our commitment to serve as a catalyst for other partners to come on board.
The result: Roughly 200,000, 20-pound, five-day supply food boxes distributed so far
“As a human crisis, not just a healthcare crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought renewed attention to the broader Social Determinants of Health — food security chief among them. No one should have to worry about where their next meal will come from, and the ‘We Care’ initiative is a poignant reminder that there’s help and there’s hope.”

– The Honorable Ralph S. Northam, Governor of Virginia
Sentara Cares

What’s Next: Enhancing Partnership and Building Capacity

- Strengthening SDOH Referral Network
- Learning from Partners and Expanding Knowledge
- Connecting Partners through a Joint School of Public Health
- Supporting Grassroots Efforts through Healthier Communities Fund Grants
Questions?