

Silver Cross Hospital Community Benefit Report Fiscal Year 2023



Giving Back to Our Community

Introduction:

Our Tradition of Caring for the Community

Our History

Generation after generation, families have depended upon Silver Cross Hospital for exceptional, personalized healthcare. Our commitment goes back to Thanksgiving Day in 1895 when the Will County Union of King's Daughters and Sons opened the doors to a 33-bed, not-for-profit and non-denominational hospital in Joliet. They named it Silver Cross after their emblem – the Maltese cross, and they made a promise to provide care of the highest quality delivered in a compassionate manner to all who come through our doors.

Well over 127 years later, Silver Cross remains true to that promise, evolving into a 348 bed regional medical center that, to this day, remains an independent hospital. We serve the residents of Will County and the southwest suburbs of Chicago with services typically not found in a community hospital setting, including sophisticated heart and lung procedures, robotic-assisted surgeries and Will County's first and only 24-bed neonatal intensive care unit – named the Amy, Matthew and Jay Vana Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Silver Cross.

Silver Cross has a long-standing tradition of caring for the community and meeting the needs of our patients by treating them the way they should be treated. At Silver Cross, we recognize each of our patients as individuals with their own sets of wants and concerns. And, we have made it our goal to address them all. It's what we call the Silver Cross Experience.

Silver Cross continues to provide safe, exceptional care. In Fiscal Year 2023, Silver Cross earned a 100 Top Hospitals ranking for the 11th time and its 18th Straight A for Safety by the Leapfrog Group.

In the following pages, you will see how Silver Cross is living our promise to treat all patients the way they should be treated while providing added benefit to the communities we serve.



Mission *(see Silver Cross Hospital Values Statement Attachment #1)*

Our mission is to improve the health of those we serve and advance wellness in our community.

Vision

We, the Silver Cross Family, are known for our culture of excellence and will deliver an unrivaled healthcare experience for patients, their families and the communities we serve.

Core Values

We, as members of Silver Cross Hospital team, are dedicated to meeting the needs of the people we serve by living our Core Values of:

Safety — do no harm

Inclusiveness — work collaboratively and transparently

Leadership — take initiative, demonstrate professionalism and be accountable

Virtue — demonstrate integrity and ethical behaviors

Excellence — achieve distinction for high reliability in quality and service

Respect — honor the feelings, traditions, and rights of others.

Standards of Conduct

1. Promote quality health care and ethical behavior
2. Ensure compliance with the law
3. Demonstrate respect, fairness, and courtesy in the workplace
4. Understand, avoid and disclose conflicts of interest
5. Maintain confidentiality of information
6. Ensure safety and security

Seven Behaviors

1. Speak up for patient safety
2. Always introduce yourself
3. Wear your name badge appropriately
4. Always give explanation of processes
5. Escort patients and visitors
6. Keep the environment clean and safe
7. Always greet patients, visitors, physicians and colleagues



SAFETY Habits

1. Support Each Other
2. Ask Questions
3. Focus on the Details
4. Explain Clearly

Defining Who We Serve

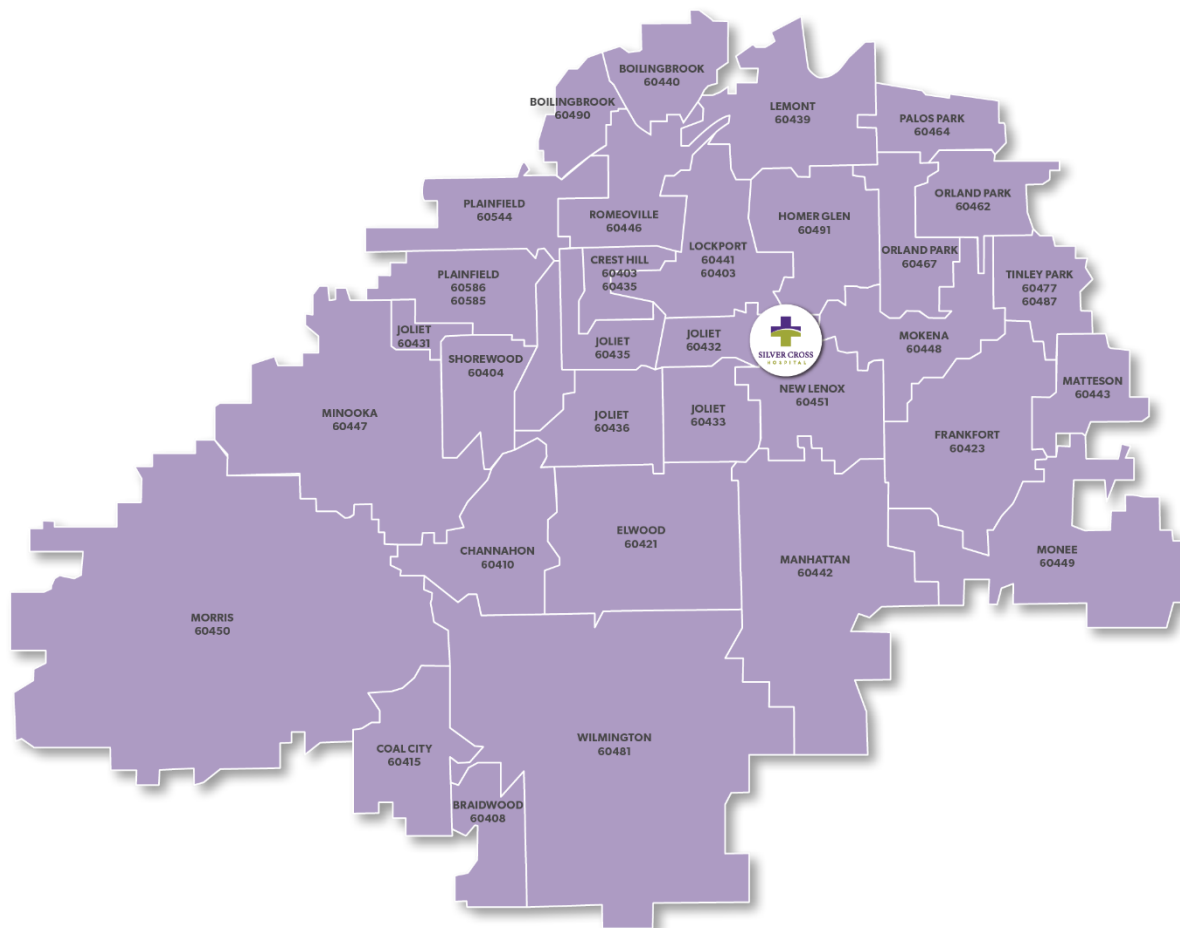
Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA): Community Definition and Population Served

Silver Cross Hospital's Primary Service Area (PSA), as defined for the purposes of the Community Health Needs Assessment, is defined as the following residential ZIP Codes in portions of Will and southwestern Cook counties, Illinois:

60403; 60421; 60423; 60432; 60433; 60435; 60436; 60439; 60441; 60442; 60448; 60451; 60467; and 60491.

Silver Cross' Secondary Service Area (SSA) includes: 60440; 60446; 60490; 60544; 60586; 60404; 60410; 60431; 60447; 60450; 60408; 60416; 60481; 60487, 60443; 60449; 60462; 60464; and 60477.

Our service area is composed of widely diverse cross-sections of the population. Large sections of our community are more established suburban areas and are rapidly growing. There are also segments that are becoming more racially and ethnically diverse and that are more densely populated. Median incomes range broadly throughout the community – with distinct pockets that have very low incomes, and with other areas that are significantly more affluent. Other sections of the community could be considered more rural in nature and are much smaller in terms of population size but growing and are less ethnically and racially diverse. A geographic description is illustrated in the following map.



Defining How Much We Provide

Financial Assistance Program

Silver Cross Hospital has a policy and defined guidelines for identifying and assisting low-income, uninsured individuals who reside in our community, and who do not have the ability to pay full charges, and for providing financial assistance to patients who have exhausted their insurance benefits.

Silver Cross Hospital provides quality healthcare and services to all individuals, regardless of race, creed, sex, national origin, income level, sexual orientation, handicap or age.

In accordance with our mission, we care for the sick that are medically or financially indigent patients who cannot pay for part or all the care they receive.

Silver Cross Hospital provides charity care assistance to patients who maintain a household income up to 400% above the federal poverty level (see *Charity Care Policy Attachment #2*). In addition, the hospital provides a 65% discount off hospital charges to all uninsured patients (see *Self-Pay Discount Program Policy Attachment #3*).



Patient eligibility of assistance is based on completion of the Determination of Eligibility Application Form or proof of family income. Silver Cross accepts all applications for determination. Eligibility is examined on a case-by-case basis. We have bilingual financial counselors available to help patients obtain and apply for government assistance programs, such as Medicare, Medicaid, All Kids, FamilyCare, and Get Covered Illinois.

Financial Assistance	Complete and Incomplete Applications Submitted Including Presumptive Eligibility	Patients Approved	Patients Denied
Financial Assistance Applications Submitted	1,447	1,387	60

The only reasons for denial for the fiscal year included:

1. Incomplete documentation to determine eligibility
2. Over income for charity guidelines

Race/ethnicity/sex/preferred language information is currently provided by the patient as part of the financial assistance application process. The distribution of the information for this fiscal year is as follows:

Race	% of Total Charity Care Applicants
White	70.12%
Other	12.57%
Black	11.91%
Unknown	4.08%
One or More	0.77%
Asian Indian	0.39%
Other Asian	0.11%
American Indian/Alaskan	0.06%
Total	100.00%

Preferred Language	% of Total Charity Care Applicants
Unknown/Unwilling to Answer	57.83%
English	36.39%
Spanish	2.42%
Polish	0.06%
Total	100.00%

Ethnicity	% of Total Charity Care Applicants
Non-Hispanic	77.51%
Hispanic	17.70%
Unknown	4.80%
Total	100.00%

Gender	% of Total Charity Care Applicants
Female	59.70%
Male	40.30%
Total	100.00%

Notice of the hospital's financial assistance policy is clearly posted and available in the Emergency Department in English and Spanish, at all registration areas, in the Patient Handbook and on the hospital's website (www.silvercross.org).

Defining How Much We Provide

Community Benefits Data Summary

Silver Cross Hospital is dedicated to caring for and serving our community that extends far beyond the walls of our organization.

In Fiscal Year 2023 (Oct. 1, 2022 – Sept. 30, 2023), Silver Cross provided over **\$61 million** in charity care and other community benefits. The numbers reported below are reported at cost:

Community Benefit

Charity Care (at cost)	\$2,506,000
Government sponsored Indigent Healthcare (unreimbursed Medicaid at cost)	\$12,867,000

Subtotal Uncompensated Care (Charity Care & Medicaid) \$15,373,000

Additional Community Benefits

Language Assistance	\$145,105
Donations	\$291,160
Volunteer Services	\$2,280,702
Education	\$766,561
Government-sponsored program services (unreimbursed Medicare at cost)	\$37,030,000
Subsidized Health Services	\$1,049,036
**Bad Debts (at cost)	\$4,289,000
Other Community Benefits	\$115,910

Total Community Benefit \$ 61,340,474

Of Note:

****14.16%** of bad debt patients are uninsured = **\$1,331,212**(at cost)

Reporting at cost gives a more accurate picture of true community benefit. Therefore, Silver Cross Hospital has chosen to present the data in this fashion.

Defining How Much We Provide Uninsured in Will County

According to the Will County Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) and Strategic Plan 2023, lack of health insurance is a key driver of health status:

- 5.9% of Will County residents are uninsured.
 - A larger percentage reside in zip codes 60432, 60433 and 60484, in the Joliet area, as well as parts of Eastern Will County.
- 7% of males and 4.8% of females are uninsured.
- By age group, 2.3% of those under 18 years of age, 85% of those 18-64 years, and .70% of those 65 years and over, are uninsured.
- Most of Will County's Medicaid recipients are 18 years old and younger (24.9%), compared to ages 18-64 years (9.7%) and ages 65+ (6.0%).

Uninsured and Medicaid at Silver Cross

The demographics of Silver Cross Hospital reflect a picture of patients being served who are in need. The hospital Emergency Department data reflects a significant picture of need in our community, where **29%** of all patients were uninsured or on public aid. Many were likely using the Emergency Department for primary care. **In fact, 41%** of all emergency room visits among this population were non-emergent visits.

Charity Care

In FY23, the hospital provided \$2,506,000 of charity care at cost. Charity care includes all services for which the hospital does not expect payment. As a matter of course, we provide charitable assistance to all qualifying patients through our financial assistance program. The program is administered by the Patient Accounts Department and offers bilingual financial counselors to help with inquiries for assistance.

Applicants are asked to provide income and employment information as a part of the screening and qualification process. Silver Cross employs social workers, case managers and discharge planners who also assist in finding appropriate follow-up services at a sliding scale or for no cost to low-income patients.

Providing quality care with compassion is at the center of the Silver Cross Experience regardless of ability to pay. Our goal is to work with each individual to fully explore payment options, including government assistance programs, payment plans, grants and charity. (*Charity Care Policy Attachment #2*)

Uncompensated Care (at cost) % of Net Revenues

Charity Care	\$2,506,000	.5%
Government-Sponsored Indigent Healthcare (Unreimbursed Medicaid at Cost)	\$12,867,000	2.6%
Total Uncompensated Care (Charity Care & Medicaid)	\$15,373,000	3.1%
Emergency Department	\$6,320,211	1.26%
Total Net Patient Revenue	\$501,604,062	

Bad Debt (at cost)

Silver Cross Hospital funded **\$4,289,000** in bad debt. Bad debt is defined as services for which payment is expected but is not received. In some cases, these patients may qualify for charity care or financial assistance but have been unwilling to complete the required paperwork due to a variety of personal reasons ranging from embarrassment to fear. Our records indicate that **14.16%** of the patients in this group do not have insurance and would possibly qualify for **\$1,331,272** of charity care. We will continue to work with our patients to help them qualify for charity care.

Government-Sponsored Healthcare

Silver Cross provided \$49,897,000 in unreimbursed services at cost through the Medicaid (\$12,867,000) and Medicare (\$37,030,000) programs.

Obstetrics Care

Silver Cross continues to provide obstetrical care for poor and uninsured expectant mothers from the Will County Community Health Center, a division of the Will County Health Department and Aunt Martha's Joliet Community Center, delivering **676** babies from community centers in **FY23**.



What's more, to ensure babies with special needs can receive all the care they need under one roof, and families can stay together close to home, Silver Cross opened Will County's first and only Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) in August 2022.

The Amy, Matthew and Jay Vana Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Silver Cross features 24 private, single-family rooms. It's modeled after the NICU of Ann & Robert Lurie Children Hospital in Chicago, staffed by Lurie neonatologists around the clock and equipped to care for newborns who require the most advanced treatment.

This includes:

- Assisted ventilation
- Neonatal surgery
- Nitric oxide therapy and
- Subspecialty diagnosis, consultation, and treatment for congenital anomalies

What's more, as the only Level III NICU in Will County, the NICU is a destination for premature or ill babies born at other nearby hospitals.

Pediatric Care

There were a total of over **301** pediatric inpatient admissions at Silver Cross. Of those, **39%** of the admissions were covered by Medicaid or uninsured.

Aligning Our Programs and Services with MAPP

At Silver Cross Hospital, we continue our tradition of caring for the community by providing programs and services that meet the community's needs. Since 2009, Silver Cross Hospital has participated in the Will County healthcare assessment and planning process.

Through the Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP) initiative, Silver Cross Hospital participates with other healthcare and community organizations to create the *Will County Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) and Strategic Plan*.

This assessment utilizes national public health performance standards by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to gather information through community surveys and focus groups. MAPP has enabled organizations to engage in a county-wide strategic planning process to ensure that area residents receive the best possible public health services.

To ensure we are aligned with the most current community needs, a number of Silver Cross Hospital professionals have participated on the MAPP Steering Committee, Behavioral Health Action Team, Primary Care Action Team, and Chronic Care Action Team.

Silver Cross Hospital has used the *Will County Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) and Strategic Plan* as a resource tool to develop its community programming. Silver Cross' programs and services fall into the following four categories: **Access to Healthcare, Access to Food and Nutrition, Behavioral Health and Substance Use, and Stabilizing the Built Environment.**



MAPP Members

UChicago Medicine Advent Bolingbrook	Silver Cross Hospital
Ascension Saint Joseph Joliet	Stepping Stones, Inc.
Aunt Martha's Youth Services	United Way of Will County
Catholic Charities	Valley View School District
Chestnut Health Systems	Will County Center for Community Concerns
Easterseals Joliet Region, Inc.	Will County Community Health Center
Edward Hospital	Will County Executive's Office
Governors State University	Will County Health Department
Greater Joliet YMCA	Will-Grundy Medical Clinic
Senior Services of Will County	

1.) Access to Healthcare



Silver Cross Hospital's mission to "improve the health of those we serve and advance wellness in the community" guides every decision we make as an organization. Ensuring access to healthcare for all is paramount, and in FY23, Silver Cross continued to make great strides in adding programs and technology to make our services even more accessible.

We've also expanded healthcare access in a number of critical ways: by adding primary care providers in our total service area; continuing to provide urgent care on our hospital campus and in neighboring Mokena; expanding our Homer Glen freestanding emergency department; and by continuing to partner with federally qualified healthcare centers in our community.

Primary Care

Silver Cross Hospital continues to actively recruit primary care providers – physicians and advanced practice providers – to expand access to healthcare via more than a dozen locations throughout our total service area.

What's more, through our partnerships with the Will Grundy Medical Clinic, Aunt Martha's and the VA Clinic on our former Joliet hospital campus, we continue to bring vitally needed primary care services to at-risk residents on the east side of Joliet.

General Communication

Silver Cross provides consumer information, physician and service referrals through our 24/7 Call Center. In FY23, we provided **2,410** physician and service referrals to several thousand individuals at no charge, which included **1,890** physician referrals and **520** service referrals. Of those, **138** referrals were made to individuals requesting help finding a provider who accepts Medicaid and **270** referrals to individuals requesting a provider who accepts Medicare. In addition, we continued to provide important health education through community programming and screenings, e-blasts, videos and social media.

Transportation

According to the most recent Will County Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) and Strategic Plan 2023, access to transportation was identified and remains a top concern for individuals living in the region.

At Silver Cross, there have been several occasions when a patient has arrived at the hospital by ambulance, but does not have a means of getting back home after discharge. To accommodate these individuals, we provided **\$7,825 in taxi services in FY23**. What's more, we partner with Kaizen Health for medical rideshare services; **in FY23, we provided \$1,105 through Kaizen**, and that number is continuing to grow. We also provide free valet and shuttle bus services on our campus for patients and their family members. Silver Cross also works in conjunction with Pace Transportation, Uber, and city and county officials to assess the availability of public transportation for residents of Will County whenever possible.

Donations

Area churches, schools and other not-for-profit organizations look to large employers like Silver Cross Hospital to support projects that positively impact our community. Silver Cross offered support through monetary donations, goods and services, and time.

*Every day at Silver Cross, we see that the absence of coverage is a significant barrier to people receiving the right care at the right time in the right setting. Our Emergency Department is a living example: **29%** of all visits in the hospital and Homer Glen Emergency Departments are classified as non-emergent; **41%** of these non-emergent visits were public aid recipients or uninsured patients. We demonstrate our strong*

commitment to providing care in our Emergency Department regardless of a patient's ability to pay.

Coverage for the Uninsured/Underinsured

According to the most recent Will County Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) and Strategic Plan 2023, there is a need in the county to maximize and expand resources that will increase access to healthcare that is affordable, geographically accessible and culturally sensitive. To assist in this endeavor, staff from Silver Cross Hospital participate in the MAPP's Access to Care Committee.

To provide access and coverage for those patients who were either uninsured or underinsured, Silver Cross supported the Will-Grundy Medical Clinic through free services and procedures as well as **\$25,000** in monetary donations in **FY23**. Silver Cross Hospital accepted Will-Grundy Medical Clinic patients for surgical procedures and related services for more than **\$1.6 million**. The Will-Grundy Medical Clinic provides free medical and dental services to individuals who do not have health insurance or the ability to pay for quality healthcare. Silver Cross encourages employees and its Medical Staff to volunteer time at the Will-Grundy Medical Clinic. **Also donated were the services of Allied Anesthesia Associates, estimated at \$44,000.**

Lastly, Silver Cross assists patients in applying for government health programs including Medicaid, Medicare, State of Illinois' All Kids, Family Care and Get Covered Illinois.

Rehabilitation

Silver Cross Hospital continues to treat hundreds of patients through its partnership with the Shirley Ryan AbilityLab at Silver Cross Hospital (formerly the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago). In 2023, Silver Cross offered several free fall and balance screenings for seniors and post-natal screenings for women. What's more, Silver Cross outlaid **\$104,400** in expenses for rehabilitation student interns.

Obstetrics

Silver Cross Hospital continues to treat a large and growing portion of the Medicaid and uninsured population in our communities for inpatient obstetrical care, as **1,084** newborn deliveries from these populations were at Silver Cross. This represents **35%** of all deliveries at Silver Cross. In addition, these mothers received prenatal services and testing at Silver Cross.

Prenatal Care

Silver Cross provides referrals to the Will County Health Department's Healthy Families Program. This program promotes positive parenting and child health and development, thereby preventing child abuse and other poor childhood outcomes.

Silver Cross continues to actively participate in the Joliet Area Breastfeeding Alliance (JABA) and the International Lactation Consultant Association (ILCA) to reach mothers in the local community who are or would like to breastfeed. Silver Cross also partners with Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago to provide neonatal coverage for all high-risk deliveries.

In addition, Silver Cross has certified lactation consultants available to support new moms who choose to breastfeed their babies. They offer education and support before and after delivery, even for those babies who were not delivered at Silver Cross.

Premature Births

Premature births continue to be a major health concern in Will County. To respond to this threat, Silver Cross opened Will County's first and only neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) in August 2022. The 24-bed Amy, Matthew and Jay Vana NICU is located on the third floor of Silver Cross Hospital's new addition on the east side of the hospital, adjacent to our birthing center and features all single-family private rooms. Modeled after and staffed 24/7 by neonatologists from the NICU of Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago, Silver Cross Hospital's Level III NICU provides care for seriously ill or very premature newborns.

Patients are safely cared for by a team of highly skilled neonatologists, neonatal nurse practitioners, neonatal nurses, therapists, and other caregivers and have immediate access to Lurie Children's Hospital pediatric medical and surgical subspecialists.

In Fiscal Year 2023, the NICU cared for its very first set of triplets, performed its first NICU surgeries and hosted our first Walk to Remember for parents and families who experienced the loss of a newborn, either in our traditional Mother/Baby unit or our NICU. The walk drew hundreds of grateful participants.



Emergency Services

The Emergency Department at Silver Cross Hospital in New Lenox and our Homer Glen Free-Standing Emergency Care Center combined cared for **more than 75,000 patients in FY23**. In addition, we offered urgent care services at our Urgent Care Center in New Lenox, opened in July 2020, and our second Urgent Care Center in Mokena, which opened in the fall of 2021. These two facilities provide care for patients with flu and cold symptoms, broken bones and fractures, stomach and joint pain, infections, minor burns, asthma, allergic reactions and more.

Silver Cross Emergency Medical Services System

Silver Cross continues to serve as the resource hospital for the Silver Cross EMS System, training **46** paramedics from more than a dozen fire departments and ambulance services, including dispatch centers in Cook and Will counties in **FY23** at a total cost of **\$557,280**. This program provides the initial paramedic training, continuing education, and monitoring of ambulance service and staff within Will, Cook and Grundy Counties. Silver Cross also provided EMS training and program development assistance for medical providers in other states.

The Silver Cross EMS System is a network of more than 2,000 specially trained personnel within 34 fire departments, ambulance services, industrial responder agencies, and dispatch centers, and four associate hospitals, all committed to the coordination of quality pre-hospital patient care.

Language Assistance

It's estimated that there are over 126,000 individuals of Hispanic background living in the Will County area – or approximately 18% of the entire population. (Source: census.gov 2020)

Silver Cross Hospital has a formal Limited English Proficiency (LEP) policy. What's more, we continue to provide Voyce language assistance 24 hours/day, 365 days/year. Voyce connects through an easy-to-use app via an iPad, delivering instant, accurate VRI/OPI medical interpretation, allowing for visualization of the interpreter as well as sign language if needed.

Through the use of a translation service, vital health information and educational materials are translated into Spanish or any other language. Further, Silver Cross continues to provide education and discharge instructions in Spanish, as well as a 24/7 bilingual Physician Referral Service, and signage with the Universal

Hospital symbols to assist people in navigating through the campus.

What's more, our website features a link to Google Translate so patients and consumers can quickly and easily translate all content to their preferred language.

Coverage for Senior Citizens

To meet the needs of our significant senior population, Silver Cross offers education and outreach about health topics of interest and assistance with Medicare plan and prescription selection through our partnership with LifeSmart Senior Services.

In addition, Silver Cross provides dedicated billing experts to help senior patients sort through medical bills and determine appropriate payments for services provided not only by the hospital, but also by other healthcare facilities.

Prevention and Management of Disease

It takes more than blood pressure checks and medications to sustain a healthy lifestyle. It takes an understanding of the behaviors that cause poor health. At Silver Cross, we combine education and support to promote healthier lifestyles and improve health through health screenings, clinical lectures and educational classes.



Silver Cross Connected Care

Nearly 70% of Medicare beneficiaries have two or more chronic conditions such as arthritis, diabetes, heart disease and high blood pressure that requires regular care and an understanding of how they can proactively manage their conditions between medical appointments.

That's why Silver Cross developed its Connected Care program, which encourages a patient's doctor and clinical team to provide additional care in between visits to help patients manage their health and achieve their health goals. Patients are paired with a personal health coach – a registered nurse or mid-level provider – to create and share a tailored care plan. Once the plan is created, enrolled patients receive two weekly text messages to ensure they're managing their health and chronic conditions. Health coaches also are available to discuss lab results, medication schedules, schedule medical appointments and ensure patients avoid unnecessary and costly hospital visits.

In **FY23 our Connected Care program delivered nearly 12,000 hours of in-between visit care for approximately 2,300 of our seniors with multiple chronic conditions.** The care team is focused on activities around prevention, access to primary care, screening for social factors influencing health, and interventions on positive social factor screenings using community-based organizations. This program has increased access to primary care, resulting in reduction of hospitalizations and ED visits to Medicare and its beneficiaries.

Women's Health – Fighting Heart Disease & Breast Cancer

Cardiovascular disease continues to be a significant health concern in our community. According to the most recent *Will County Community Health Status Assessment*, hypertension and heart conditions are among the leading medical conditions that are found in Will County households. To provide help to these individuals, Silver Cross Hospital collaborates with the MAPP's community-wide coordination of cardiac education and services.

What's more, nationally, the American Heart Association reports that heart disease is the number one killer of U.S. women. Equally concerning for area women is their risk for breast cancer. In 1940, the lifetime risk of a woman developing breast cancer was 5%, or one in 20. The American Cancer Society estimates that risk to be 12%, or almost one in eight women. In many cases, it's not known why a woman gets breast cancer. In fact, 75% of all women with breast cancer have no known risk factors.



Silver Cross continues to educate women about the risk of both diseases through social media, regular e-blasts to more than 125,000 email addresses, articles and newsletters. We also offer an affordable \$49 Heart Scan that we heavily market to women and men. And, we've made scheduling a mammogram easier than ever through our online scheduling platform, SCHEDULE NOW.

Addressing Advanced Heart Failure

Heart failure is a leading cause for hospitalization, and the number one reason for hospital readmissions, particularly in the Medicare population. In early 2023, Silver Cross established the Advanced Heart Failure Clinic to help ensure that all patients have access to the care and resources they need to manage their chronic disease.

The Advanced Heart Failure Clinic offers an opportunity for patients to be seen by an Advanced Heart Failure physician and a nurse practitioner. The frequency and duration of the appointments depend on the needs of each patient and includes the use of an app powered by Carium for daily check-ins and monitoring. Cardiologists on staff at the Advanced Heart Failure Clinic collaborate with the patient's primary cardiology team to provide optimal care.

Fighting Cancer

Cancer is the second leading cause of death in the United States, and Will County mirrors this statistic. In keeping with the hospital's commitment to improving access to services, in 2012 the hospital opened the 20,000-square-foot Carolyn J. Czerkies Pavilion, which is home to the UChicago Medicine Comprehensive Cancer Center at Silver Cross Hospital.

The Cancer Center is a collaboration between Silver Cross and UChicago Medicine, bringing academic cancer specialists and access to more than 100 investigational therapies or clinical trials to a community hospital setting at Silver Cross. Patients have access to UChicago Medicine specialists, state-of-the-art chemotherapy and radiation therapy, a wide range of clinical trials close to home, and needed support throughout, thanks to our relationship with the Cancer Support Center.

To ensure cancer patients get the very best care, multi-disciplinary teams continue to meet in the UChicago Medicine Comprehensive Cancer Center at Silver Cross Hospital each week for a Breast Cancer Conference and Lung Cancer Conference. **In FY23 alone 97 breast and lung cancer conferences were held in which 675 individual patient cases were presented.** At the conferences, physician specialists representing general surgery, medical oncology, radiation oncology, radiology, interventional radiology, pulmonology, plastic surgery, thoracic surgery and pathology review radiological images and pathology slides to develop a consensus treatment recommendation. The team documents the recommendations, and a certified breast and general nurse navigator provides the recommendation to the patient's doctor within 24 hours. Additionally, Silver Cross continues to provide free colon cancer screening kits to all who request them through our website.

In September 2023, Silver Cross hosted a free Cancer Prevention and Screening Event with **more than 60** individuals attending. Physicians and medical experts provided vital information on some of the most common cancers, including lung cancer, ear, nose and throat cancer, and skin cancer. Additionally, information about cancer clinical trials was provided, and program participants received free skin cancer screenings by a dermatologist on staff.

Additionally, Silver Cross has developed a plan to impact cancer prevention and awareness in the community by implementing the following programs:

- **Colon Cancer**

In FY23, Silver Cross provided nearly 100 free colon cancer kit screenings to the community and continues to encourage individuals ages 45 and over that have never been screened for colon cancer to have a colonoscopy.

- **Breast Cancer**

With COVID-19 restrictions lifted, we were once again able to offer community education programs, including a well-attended breast cancer lecture in May 2023, featuring radiation oncologist Anne McCall, M.D., discussing the very latest in breast cancer treatments. Silver Cross also was reaccredited by the National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers by the American College of Surgeons.

- **Lung Cancer**

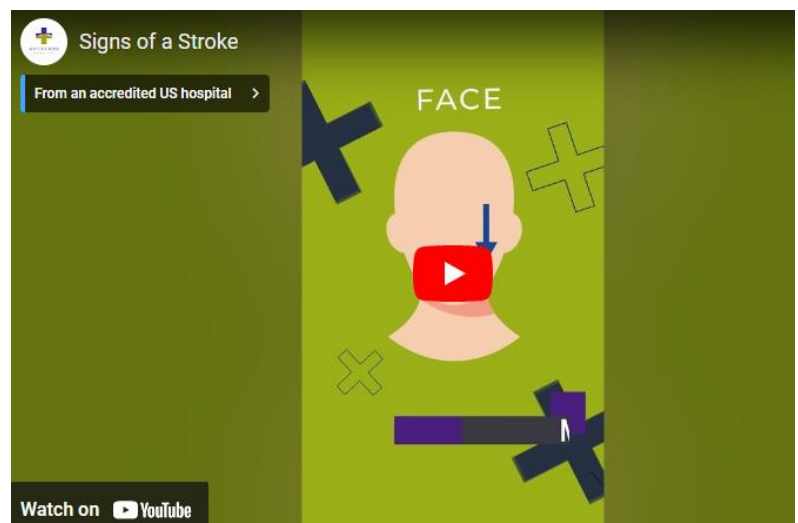
Silver Cross continues to offer its Lung Scan, a low-dose CT scan, which has demonstrated significant year-over-year growth since it was reintroduced in 2019. The screening detects nodules or spots on the lung and has been shown to reduce the lung cancer death rate by 20%. A dedicated lung cancer nurse navigator works with patients to confirm insurance coverage for the Lung Scan and helps create a seamless experience for lung cancer patients and providers, ensuring a timely experience from early screening through treatment – and beyond. Lastly, to catch and cure lung cancer more effectively, Silver Cross invested in the Ion robotic-assisted bronchoscopy platform, manufactured by Intuitive, to remove lung nodules earlier than ever in hard-to-reach parts of the lung.

Stroke

Stroke continues to be a leading cause of death and disability. To offer the very latest care and treatment, Silver Cross Hospital collaborates with the University of Chicago Medicine to expand upon our already robust neuroscience program, which includes neurological cancer care, stroke care and neurosurgery. Through this arrangement, residents in Will County and beyond have even greater access to these vital services close to home. UChicago Medicine's *U.S. News & World Report* nationally ranked experts utilize a full range of technologies to provide the latest and most effective treatments for the entire spectrum of neurological diseases, including cancer, stroke and other neurological disorders. This expertise is now available to patients at Silver Cross.

Silver Cross Hospital is an Advanced Certified Primary Stroke Center, meaning it has demonstrated the ability to provide expert stroke care around the clock. A multi-disciplinary team that includes highly skilled neurologists, neuro-interventionalists, emergency department specialists, radiologists, neurosurgeons, nurses, therapists, pharmacists, technicians and more works together in a coordinated, collaborative system to ensure the best outcomes for patients who have suffered a stroke.

Silver Cross also has a robust stroke presence on its website and offers stroke prevention tips, especially during the month of May, which is Stroke Awareness Month.



Diabetes

As one of the first American Diabetes Association's recognized quality comprehensive diabetes management programs since 1996, the Silver Cross Diabetes Center is focused on helping individuals with diabetes manage their chronic condition and lower the risk of comorbid conditions such as heart disease and stroke.

Silver Cross also offers the Silver Cross Center for Advanced Wound Healing, which treats, among many other types of wounds, diabetic foot ulcers, and invested in hyperbaric oxygen therapy, pictured below, in 2023 to provide even more advanced care for non-healing wounds.



Obesity

Obesity continues to be a leading risk factor for illness; that's why Silver Cross Hospital provides a variety of educational support and nutritional counseling to fight obesity. The hospital also continues to offer its award-winning Crossroads to Health program (re-branded as IMatter Health/Employee Wellness in early 2024), to help our employees make better nutritional and exercise choices.

What's more, the Warren-Sharpe Community Center, supported by the Silver Cross Healthy Community Commission, continues to offer several programs such as Backyard Basics Classes, Kids in the Kitchen, and more.

2.) Access to Food and Nutrition



Food and nutrition are closely related to health. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, each year, chronic diseases account for 70% of all deaths in the United States. Poor diets lead to chronic illnesses such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, hypertension, and obesity.

That's why ensuring community access to nutritious foods is a major priority for Silver Cross Hospital. We do this in several ways.

Screen and Intervene Community Relations Program

Studies demonstrate there is a connection between food insecurities and chronic diseases such as obesity, hypertension and diabetes. According to Feeding America, people who reported living in food-insecure households were more than twice as likely to develop Type 2 diabetes as those in food-secure households. Creating direct access to nutritious food and nutrition education can help patients better manage their symptoms and improve their quality of life.

Access to healthy, affordable food is a key component of obesity and chronic disease prevention and is cited in the 2023 Cross Hospital/Will County Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA).

To bridge the gap between chronic disease and food insecurity, Silver Cross Hospital partners with the Northern Illinois Food Bank to address social determinants of health, specifically food insecurity, through its Screen and Intervene Program. The target population of the Screen and Intervene initiative is food insecure chronic disease patients.

At Silver Cross, all patients are screened to ensure they have proper food, nutrition and healthcare services. As a result, over 4,000 patients have been screened for food insecurity, and hundreds now have access to this weekly benefit through the online food pantry, My Pantry Express (MPX).



Silver Cross Connected Care (referenced on page 14 of this report) uses a technology platform, Phamily, that enables our care teams to connect with food-insecure patients through texting. It was determined that we could easily and cost-effectively screen thousands of patients using text messaging and workflow design within our existing Chronic Care Management program.

More than 75% of members from the cohort group completed their annual wellness visits and 88% completed depression screenings. Other preventative services based on age and gender were delivered such as mammograms and colonoscopies.

Wrap-around services include but are not limited to:

- Bi-Weekly “check-ins” to drive patient engagement with care teams
- Patient chart review and flagging with care gaps and annual wellness visit status
- Vital checks – glucose, blood pressure, gait, falls, depression and loneliness, medication changes and appointments
- Readmission prevention through high-touch care
- Palliative and home health referral management
- Lifestyle Interventions with instruction on proper diet, sleep, movement, etc.
- Transitional care management services after discharge from the hospital
- Smoking and alcohol screening and cessation programs.

Community Garden

Silver Cross continues to work with the Warren Sharpe Community Center, which strives to improve the quality of life for the people in the community.

The center also addresses food insecurities within its area through the Green Sprout Urban Farm, a project designed to educate youth about agriculture, healthy food choices and increased physical activity along with supporting their food pantry.

The center currently serves 250+ meals per week to needy children and now has four complete lots for gardens, which are handicapped accessible.

Other events sponsored by the center include: Kids in the Kitchen, a cooking and nutrition class for children and parents that focuses on healthy food choices and how to prepare meals within budget; Parenting Support Group requiring parents whose children are in programs to participate in monthly forums; and Girls Rock Program designed to help girls develop creativity, self-esteem and important life skills.



3.) Behavioral Health and Substance Use



Through our joint venture with US HealthVest, Silver Oaks Behavioral Hospital continues to offer critically needed mental health and substance use disorder treatment to our surrounding communities. Opened in 2019, this 110-bed facility is equipped with the latest safety features designed to provide patients with a comfortable environment to receive therapeutic care.

Therapy modalities are evidence-based models proven to decrease symptoms of mental illness and help patients find lasting change. Silver Oaks Behavioral Hospital offers a caring environment with licensed psychiatrists, nurses, therapists and technicians with programs for children as young as 12 all the way up to geriatric care for seniors.

Through our partnership, we have a shared medical staff and hold weekly huddles with our Silver Oaks partners, which includes the President/CEO of Silver Cross and Silver Oaks and various clinicians. What's more, Silver Oaks social workers are stationed in the Silver Cross Hospital Emergency Department to ensure patients who arrive in our ER are screened by mental health experts on a timely basis.



Thriveworks Program

Anxiety, stress, depression and other mental illnesses continue to be global health concerns, especially among those with limited access to mental healthcare. They're also present right here in the communities we serve.

But through our partnership with the City of Joliet and Thriveworks, Silver Cross is helping to make affordable mental healthcare more accessible than ever before. Uninsured residents now have access to Thriveworks' mental health services through a voucher dispatched by the City of Joliet Fire Department while residents with insurance will have any out-of-pocket expenses covered.

Expanding access to affordable mental healthcare services is perfectly aligned with our Silver Cross mission to "improve the health of those we serve and advance wellness in our community." Silver Cross donated office space to Thriveworks so they can treat all who need these vital services.

Thriveworks Joliet also features TherapyLand®, Thriveworks' unique pediatric behavioral health center equipped with the best resources to foster child development, mental health counseling, including designated areas for home/kitchen play, sandbox play, dress up, blocks, puppets, nurturing toys, art supplies, and more.

SANE Coordinator Continues to Assist Victims of Sexual Assault

Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners are crucial in ensuring that sexual assault patients receive more compassionate care. In Illinois, specially trained nurses are able to reduce re-traumatization of patients and improve the quality of forensic evidence collection, which in turn increases prosecution rates of offenders.

At Silver Cross, all victims of sexual assault are first examined by a physician to make sure there are no immediate physical traumas to be addressed, such as any wounds or head injuries. They are then offered the services of a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE), who is available to the victim within 90 minutes of arrival.

This assures quality patient care; full, fair and accurate forensic evaluations; and a multidisciplinary approach that holds offenders accountable for sexual assault crimes.

Patients are counseled about sexually transmitted diseases, human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and acquired immunodeficiency virus (AIDS), pregnancy concerns and referred to other local agencies for additional assistance, including the Guardian Angel Home and the Will County Children's Advocacy Center.



4.) Stabilizing the Built Environment



Silver Cross Hospital's initiatives to improve the quality of life in our neighborhood focus on awareness to services, economic development, individual development and ensuring quality healthcare for every patient that comes to our hospital.

Fostering neighborhood safety and creating opportunities for people to improve their lives are key components of our community benefit program.

Creating a Healthier Community

In January 2008, the Silver Cross Hospital Board of Trustees and local community leaders launched a not-for-profit organization called the Silver Cross Healthy Community Commission. The Commission is chaired by Derrick Brown with 14 members that represent the interests of constituencies on Joliet's east side. The 501(c)3 Commission is committed to creating a stronger, healthier future for the neighborhood, which has suffered from a lack of economic development over many decades.

Unprecedented in Will County, the Commission was launched in response to the community's concern about the hospital's relocation from Joliet to New Lenox; since that time, the scope has been expanded beyond campus redevelopment to workforce initiatives, job training, scholarships and healthcare access. Additionally, our former Joliet campus is now home to a Veteran's Administration (VA) Clinic, Aunt Martha's Joliet Health Center, and Hope Manor Joliet, a Volunteers of America (VOA) housing complex for veterans with families.

The Healthy Community Commission provides an extraordinary opportunity for the community to provide feedback, advice and direction to Silver Cross Hospital. Realizing that social and economic wellbeing are often factors impacting an individual's health, the Commission seeks to address a multitude of issues to improve the quality of life on the east side of Joliet.

Silver Cross Hospital provided **\$225,000 in FY23** to fund the Commission's work, bringing our total to **\$3.25 million in grants and scholarships since 2008**. These have included educational healthcare-related scholarships, workforce development grants and quality-of-life initiatives to over hundreds of individuals associated with several organizations, including:

- **After the Peanut**
- **Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority**
- **Coalition of Black Trade Unionists**
- **Community Service Council**
- **Fighting Chance**
- **Girl Scouts of America**
- **Greater YMCA Joliet**
- **Hispanic/Latino Coalition of Will County**
- **NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People)**
- **National Hook-up of Black Women**
- **Redeemed Connections**
- **Senior Services**
- **Spanish Community Center**
- **United Cerebral Palsy-Center for Disability Services**
- **Warren Sharp Community Center**

These scholarship students attend the following colleges:

Alabama State University	Joliet Junior College	Spelman College
Butler University	Lewis University	Trinity Christian College
Chamberlain College of Nursing	Loyola University	University of Aurora
Columbia University	Maranatha Baptist College	University of Illinois
Eastern University	Northern Illinois University	University of Missouri
Governor’s State University	Olivet Nazarene University	University of St. Francis
Howard University	Purdue University	Western Governors University
Illinois State University	Saint Xavier	Western Illinois University
Jackson State University	Southern Illinois University	

In addition, Silver Cross enhanced its faith-driven community outreach program to include more of the network of churches that are in the underserved neighborhoods on Joliet's east side. This was the logical step to reach the underserved population since churches are where residents gather to find resources such as health screenings, education and lectures.

In 2023, Silver Cross provided valuable health information to more than 75 churches to share with their parishioners through educational newsletters and e-blasts, urging them to get regular check-ups and screenings.

Creating a Diverse, Equitable and Inclusive Workforce

At Silver Cross, we're committed to working together to achieve diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI).



And leading the way in this important endeavor is our Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Council, a diverse group of employees and leaders from across our organization, dedicated to ensuring that DEI guides every aspect of our culture, including our leadership, hiring, retention, promotion, training and communication practices.

In addition, we offer DEI educational forums to new and existing employees to shed light on unconscious bias, prejudice and inequity – especially in its most subtle forms.

In Fiscal Year 2023, our DEI Council hosted **31 listening sessions**, which were attended by **425 employees**.

Pathway Program Encourages Healthcare Careers

In 2022, Silver Cross Hospital, Joliet Junior College and Lewis University joined forces to educate our community about careers in the field of healthcare.

The Pathway Program features education about a wide range of healthcare career opportunities, including nursing, phlebotomy, imaging, ancillary and support roles, dietary services and more.

Interested students can attend informational sessions and, if interested, receive assistance to apply for healthcare certification or degree programs at Joliet Junior College and Lewis University. They can also explore financial support to cover the cost of tuition, books and fees.

Best of all, after successful completion of a program the Pathway Program will help match students with career opportunities at Silver Cross.



Nursing Student Loan Repayment Program

Old National Bank, Silver Cross Hospital and the Lewis University College of Nursing and Health Sciences joined forces to provide student loan repayment support of up to \$27,000 for Lewis nursing graduates who pursue a nursing career at Silver Cross after graduation.

The program helps alleviate some of the concern over student debt for nursing graduates while promoting Silver Cross Hospital's, Lewis University's and Old National's commitment to the future of the nursing profession.

Equal payments will be made over a four-year period which they can use to assist in repaying their student loans. In order for Lewis University graduates to qualify, they must

- Complete their BSN degree at Lewis University
- Pass the NCLEX licensure exam
- Commit to a nursing career at Silver Cross for a minimum of four years
- Participate in Silver Cross' Student Nurse Assistant Program, complete a clinical rotation at the hospital, or work in a paid summer employment opportunity at Silver Cross.

To date, several Lewis University nursing graduates have been hired at Silver Cross Hospital as part of the loan forgiveness program.

Silver Cross Foundation Awards More than \$75,000 in Employee Scholarships

Just as Silver Cross continues to invest in new facilities, technology and programs, it is equally important that we continue to invest in our staff as they truly are what makes the Silver Cross community special.

In August 2023, the Silver Cross Foundation distributed **over \$75,000** in educational scholarships to **47** deserving individuals. An additional **7** employees also received scholarships made available by the Silver Cross Healthy Community Commission and the Healthcare Workers Pathways Program for the 2023-24 academic school year.



Since 1895, Silver Cross Hospital has been committed to taking care of those in need of healthcare. Every day, we live our promise to treat all patients The Way They Should Be Treated while continuing to provide added benefits to the communities we serve.