CHICAGO **HEAL** INITIATIVE
REPORT TO STAKEHOLDERS

HOSPITAL ENGAGEMENT ACTION AND LEADERSHIP



10 Leading Health Systems
U.S. Sen. Richard J. Durbin, IL

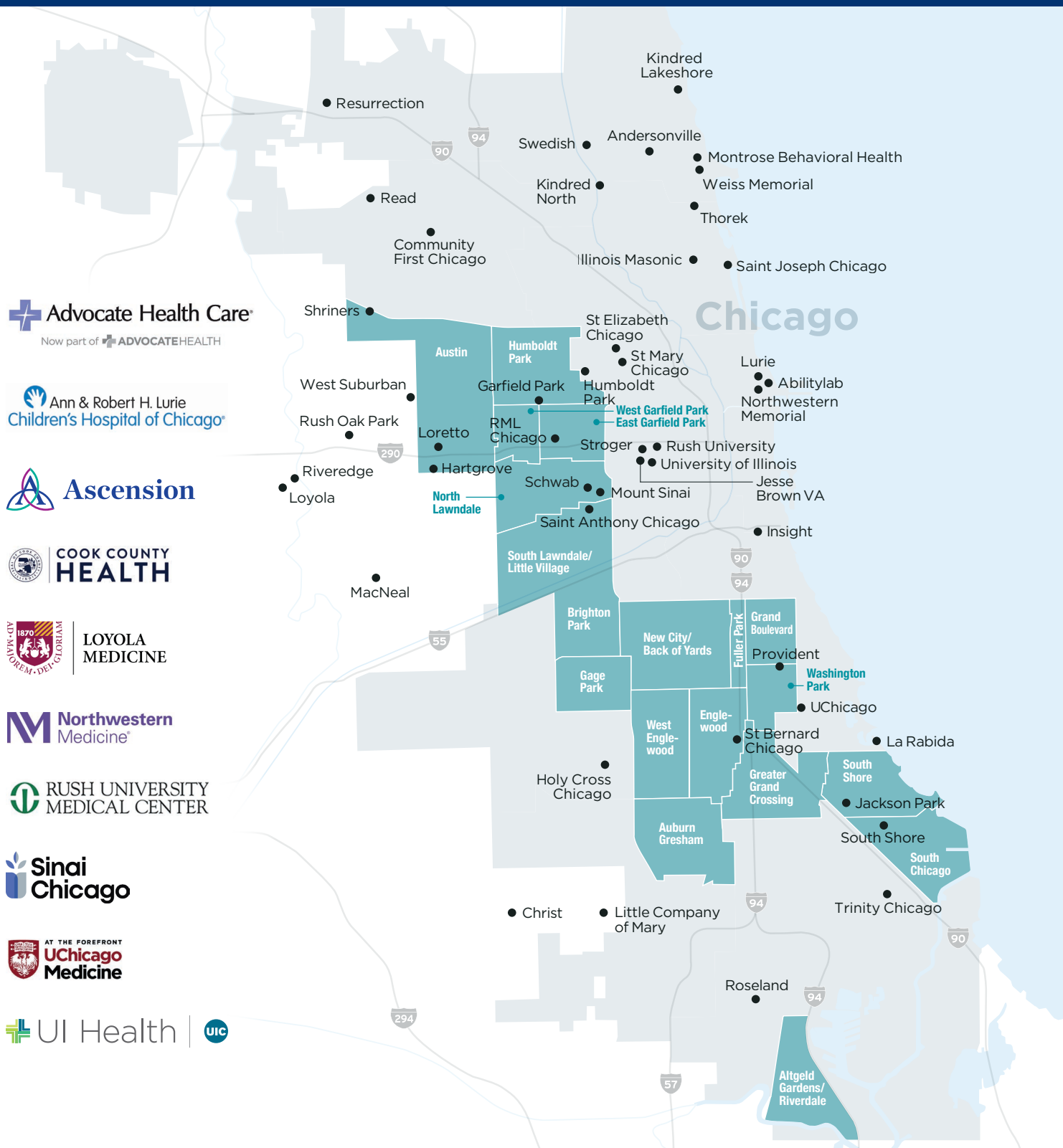
THE POWER OF COLLABORATION—HEAL 2.0

Strengthening neighborhood engagement to reduce gun violence and improve health

2025 CHICAGO HEAL REPORT

18 Vulnerable Neighborhoods
10 Leading Health Systems

One Powerful Goal



Advocate Health Care
Now part of ADVOCATEHEALTH

Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago

Ascension

COOK COUNTY HEALTH

LOYOLA MEDICINE

Northwestern Medicine

RUSH UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER

Sinai Chicago

AT THE FOREFRONT UChicago Medicine

UI Health | UIC

HEAL Neighborhood Zip Codes

Auburn Gresham 60620
Austin. 60639, 60644, 60651, 60707
Brighton Park. 60632
East Garfield Park 60612, 60624
Greater Englewood 60621, 60636
Fuller Park 60609
Gage Park 60609, 60629, 60632, 60636
Grand Boulevard 60609, 60615, 60653
Greater Grand Crossing . . . 60619, 60620, 60621, 60637
Humboldt Park. 60622, 60624, 60647, 60651
New City 60609
North Lawndale 60608, 60623, 60624
Riverdale 60827
South Chicago. 60617
South Lawndale/Little Village 60608, 60623
South Shore. 60619, 60637, 60649
Washington Park 60609, 60615, 60621, 60637
West Garfield Park 60624

“WE RISE BY LIFTING OTHERS.”

— Robert Ingersoll, 16th IL Attorney General (1867–1869)



U.S. SENATOR
RICHARD J. DURBIN
ILLINOIS

On July 17, 2024, Sen. Durbin visited with youth at **BUILD**, a non-profit that offers free services to youth facing systemic obstacles on Chicago’s West Side.

HEAL MILESTONES

2018

Sen. Durbin and 10 Hospitals Form Chicago HEAL
HEAL is launched as a three-year initiative to reduce gun violence and health disparities in Chicago's most vulnerable neighborhoods.

2019

Dashboard Developed to Achieve Tangible Results
Compiled with the assistance of IHA, this dashboard is organized around three pillars with a focus on achieving tangible results on 16 metrics.

2020

Inaugural Report Issued During COVID-19 Outbreak
Four of five Illinois zip codes with the highest rate of COVID-19 cases are zip codes targeted by the HEAL Initiative.

2021

Impressive Results for 2nd Year
Despite the hardships and setbacks of COVID, HEAL hospitals remain undeterred in their commitment and issue their second-year report to stakeholders.

2022

Hospitals Renew Their Commitment
Based on progress made and the ongoing need in neighborhoods, the 10 hospitals vow to continue their work for another three-year period.

2023

HEAL Becomes National Model
After four years of collective hospital action to meaningfully address gun violence, Chicago HEAL has become a national model for engaging communities.

2024

Hospital Data Sharing Initiative

Over two years, a group of hospital leaders—including from RUSH, University of Chicago, and Cook County Health—has worked extensively with the Chicago Department of Public Health, Senator Durbin's office, and external subject matter experts to devise a pilot plan to initiate appropriate sharing of firearm injury data across Chicago HEAL Initiative hospitals.

The purpose of this effort is to harness data across hospitals to improve the quality of care for patients, enhance our understanding of the characteristics of gun violence in Chicago, and to prevent additional firearm injuries. Through several major meetings, key leaders examined the processes used by Chicago hospitals to deliver post-injury trauma recovery programs, in order to establish a joint roadmap for creating a data-sharing network.

Over the coming months, hospitals will continue working together on this pilot and with external partners to build the data infrastructure necessary to support this new project that will help break the cycle of violence.

THE POWER OF COLLABORATION

Chicago HEAL Initiative



U.S. Senator Richard J. Durbin, IL

Over the past year, we have seen an upheaval in Washington, DC, that has reverberated across the country. Federal funding has been halted or terminated arbitrarily by the Trump Administration, while the Republican-controlled Congress recently passed the largest cut to health care in American history. Efforts to improve community health are being targeted, while funding chaos has created uncertainty for local organizations.

And yet, we are seeing progress in our shared goal to reduce gun violence. While too many mornings start with grim news of bloodshed from the night before, homicide rates have meaningfully declined in recent years. Lives are being saved. That is no accident.

BREAKING THE CYCLE

It is a reflection of focused investments in strategies that break the cycle of violence. Under the Chicago HEAL Initiative, these 10 leading hospitals are partnering together to drive real solutions, including tackling economic insecurity and exposure to trauma in their neighborhoods.



Sen. Durbin visits with youth at BUILD in July 2024

2024 HEAL INITIATIVE ACHIEVEMENTS

LOCAL WORKFORCE

+43%
in annual local hires since HEAL began in 2018

+170%
in career advancement and growth participation since 2022

SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

+63%
in community preventive mental health or violence prevention programs since 2022

+403%
in the number of schools with dedicated health and wellness support with the launch of CPS Network Health Specialist Model

TRAUMA RECOVERY

+30%
in individuals served by violence recovery programs in the past year—over 20,000 in 2024

+1,077%
in individuals served since baseline in 2018

My role in this project has been to provide federal resources and showcase the best practices of how Chicago hospitals are collaborating and engaging the community to prevent and reduce gun violence. From the hearing room of the Senate Judiciary Committee, to national summits hosted by the American Hospital Association and the Department of Justice, the Chicago HEAL Initiative has been recognized as a national example over the past year.

POSITIVE CHANGE

But just as important are the conversations with local students about their life experiences, the challenges they face, and their vision of the future. Young people who have been victims themselves, or who never knew that this large medical building offered more than just a place for treatment—but also a possible career path. Faced with too many stories of hopelessness, fear, and tragedy, they have participated in programs supported by HEAL hospitals to positively shape their trajectory—creating hope, sparking interest, and providing the skills and resources to thrive.

The HEAL hospitals are now partnering with more than 564 community organizations and Chicago Public Schools, providing health services to 7,200 students, and offering 4,700 local students shadowing and career pipeline programs.

TRAUMA RECOVERY

Another way that the Chicago HEAL Initiative is establishing a new standard is through hospital-based trauma recovery programs. Under our work, a record number of hospitals are now pairing victims of violence with trusted, qualified healers to







Photos from University of Chicago Crime Lab Community Violence Intervention Leadership Academy





Photos from University of Chicago Crime Lab Community Violence Intervention Leadership Academy

help patients cope with traumatic events to ensure a successful return to their neighborhood and prevent retaliatory shootings.

Last year, the hospitals provided more than 3,790 victims of violence with these ongoing case management and support programs—a 107 percent increase from 2018.

With federal funding I helped to secure, one hospital's violence recovery program has dramatically expanded its reach, while another hospital is using a new federal grant to open its own program and serve approximately 200 additional patients.

SIGNS OF SUCCESS

The success of these programs is paving the way for more sustainable, long-term funding for these interventions—including through insurance coverage for certain interventions to prevent violence. We also have laid the foundation for hospitals to appropriately share firearm injury data to improve our understanding of the challenge. This will help to better tailor interventions to prevent violence, and improve the quality of care for patients.

We know that providing economic opportunity, especially for those most at risk of being victims or perpetrators of violence, can reduce shootings and build hope. The 10 HEAL hospitals have strengthened their partnerships with community organizations, community colleges, and other stakeholders to invest in new career pathways while retaining and fostering upward growth for their current employees.





Photos from University of Chicago Crime Lab Community Violence Intervention Leadership Academy

In total, the HEAL hospitals hired 4,196 people in 2024 from the neighborhoods facing the highest rates of violence and poverty, and provided a record 2,216 current employees with career advancement opportunities.

This will change the trajectory of so many lives and families in our city.

The gun violence epidemic in Chicago and throughout the country proceeds at unacceptably high levels. Nationwide, firearms are the leading cause of death for children. Too many people, especially young people of color, are shot, injured, and killed in our neighborhoods each week. We need all stakeholders to be a part of the solution.

SCALING FOR THE FUTURE

The hospitals participating in the Chicago HEAL Initiative have demonstrated a positive commitment to their communities. They are building a national model—but more must be done to stem the tide of violence and suffering. I am grateful for these efforts, and I encourage more partners to join us as we scale up this framework and embed our lessons across health systems.

Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator

LOCAL WORKFORCE

Increase Local Workforce Commitment to Reduce Economic Hardship

43% Increase
in annual **LOCAL HIRES** since HEAL began in 2018

170% Increase
in career advancement and growth **PARTICIPATION** since 2022

Nearly 40% Increase
in youth summer employment, workforce development and apprenticeship programs **PROMOTING CAREERS** in healthcare fields since 2022

The Healthcare Career Pipelines Working Group supports the mission of Senator Durbin's HEAL initiative by engaging in healthcare career pipeline development for HEAL-area residents who are high school and college students, community members, and incumbent employees as they begin and advance in healthcare careers. In 2024, member hospitals focused on developing programs to increase retention among frontline workers and encourage internal advancement for incumbent workers.

Advocate Health was a leader in this effort, with their NAVIGATE Incumbent Training Program expanding to five hospital sites and increasing retention rates to over 70% for frontline workers.

Northwestern Medicine adapted the Advocate Health model and received funding to launch their Employee Success Navigator, which provides support for staff with identified needs related to housing, food, and transportation. Similarly, Rush adapted Advocate's model to prepare for the 2025 launch of their Level Up Program, which provides frontline workers with educational resources and mentorship to explore internal advancement. Other hospitals, like Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago and Sinai Chicago have redoubled their efforts to establish and grow their career pipeline programs for mental health



Rush Education and Career Hub

professionals and community health workers, respectively.

A major goal of the working group is to collaborate with other citywide workforce initiatives and create collective impact. To that end, several HEAL hospitals have been active collaborators with the Corporate Coalition of Chicago's Fair Chance Hiring Initiative, which enables companies to reduce barriers to hiring individuals with criminal records. As active participants, Northwestern Medicine, Rush, Lurie Children's, Advocate, and UChicago Medicine are analyzing their hiring and onboarding practices to identify and address any potential barriers to entry for job applicants who have criminal records.

Our Key Successes are Highlighted Below

Advocate Health Care's newly launched MedExplorer program featured 12 students in a four-week paid internship, shadowing physicians across specialties. They also continued the implementation of their NAVIGATE Program and provided guidance and expertise for other HEAL hospitals to replicate their model.

Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago engaged 590 students (300 middle school, 140 high school, and 150 college students) in Mentorship and Workforce Development programs in 2024. Of those students, 93% were from HEAL zip codes.

Ascension Illinois offered jobs to 86 allied health students who completed a clinical rotation in respiratory therapy, imaging, sterile processing department, and sterile processing. In 2024, there were over 2,600 8th grade and high school students who participated in career fairs and expos.

Cook County Health celebrated the graduation of 17 participants from an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) Apprenticeship program, funded by US Department of Labor funds secured by Senator Durbin. Partners included JumpHire and Superior Ambulance, and recruitment efforts were focused in HEAL zip codes.

Northwestern Medicine developed an Employee Success Navigator, modeled after the Advocate program, to provide newly hired entry-level staff support with identified social needs such as access to food, transportation, housing referrals and childcare.



Lurie Children's student interns at UIC College of Dentistry

Rush University Medical Center hired 1,065 new employees from HEAL zip codes and supported 50 participants in its pathway programs, with 40 being hired into full-time roles at Rush. In 2025, the Rush Education and Career Hub engaged over 8,000 students and families, increasing interest and awareness in STEM and healthcare careers, and provided 175 internships and apprenticeships for youth ages 15–24.

Sinai Chicago/Sinai Urban Health Institute became a Department of Labor Registered Apprenticeship Program for Community Health Workers, and has secured agreements with two external partners to host apprentices and placed two apprentices so far.

UChicago Medicine partnered with City Colleges on the construction of a new facility in Washington Park. The project will support 550 jobs and create 200 new positions for South Side residents, and City Colleges students will have the opportunity to gain real-world experience in new clinical labs.

—Local Workforce Workgroup



Parents of students from Belmont Cragin Elementary School in Lurie Children's workforce development program visit the hospital



Tom Shanley, MD, President and CEO of Lurie Children's with CPS student interns



Rush Education and Career Hub



Rush M.A. Apprentice Program Graduation



Advocate MedX

SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Support community partnerships to improve health and safety of public environments



63% Increase

in community preventive **MENTAL HEALTH OR VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAMS** since 2022

403% Increase

in the number of schools with dedicated **HEALTH AND WELLNESS SUPPORT** with the launch of CPS Network Health Specialist Model

In 2024, Chicago HEAL Initiative hospitals partnered with 190 schools to co-develop and implement **initiatives to prevent violence and keep students, teachers, and staff safe and healthy**. These partnerships are wide-ranging, and include school-based health centers, mobile health programs, training and education sessions, mental health and resilience support, policy revisions, and youth development activities.

In order to continue to grow these partnerships in 2024, the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) Office of Student Health and Wellness launched the CPS Network Level Health Specialist Initiative supported by Congressionally Directed Spending championed by Senator Durbin. This initiative increases access to health programs and resources for students, teachers, and staff by establishing network-based Healthy CPS Network Specialists roles. These new



Lurie Mobile Health Van at Bud Billiken Day Parade



Rush SBHC health event at Wendell Academy High School

CPS staff members are trained by and work closely with HEAL hospitals, facilitated through monthly meetings to enhance our partnerships and better support CPS staff and students.

In 2024, the Healthy CPS Network Specialists met with experts from Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago, Northwestern Medicine, Rush and UI Health to learn about specific health issues impacting schools.

This new model provides direct and targeted support to schools to increase compliance with health policies, many of which address the underlying causes of violence in our city.

CPS launched the initiative in 2024 with five of the school district's 17 networks, encompassing over 140 total schools, using Healthy CPS data and the CPS Opportunity Index to thoughtfully select the networks that have the greatest opportunity to break down health-related barriers to learning.

Using various data sources, the Healthy CPS Network Specialists and HEAL hospital representatives also identified a few priority projects to focus on in the first school year of the initiative. This included increasing medical compliance by connecting students who are out of compliance with School-Based Health Centers (SBHCs), mobile health programs, and local providers, and helping schools become designated as Heart Safe through Project ADAM to ensure they are prepared to respond to a cardiac emergency.

In addition to schools, Chicago HEAL Initiative hospitals partnered with 335 community organizations to prevent violence in our city. These partnerships underscore the hospitals' understanding that lasting change will only come when we truly listen and follow the lead of long-time community leaders who know their own neighborhoods. HEAL hospitals provided public health expertise, trainings, evaluations, and clinical and mental health support to complement the work being done on the ground in our communities to prevent violence.

—School and Community Partnerships Workgroup

TRAUMA RECOVERY

Increase support and usage of violence recovery programs



Five more

hospital **VIOLENCE RECOVERY PROGRAMS** established in the past year

30% Increase

in **INDIVIDUALS SERVED** by violence recovery programs in the past year—over 20,000 in 2024

1,077% Increase

in **INDIVIDUALS SERVED** since baseline in 2018

In the past year, the **Trauma Recovery Work Group** continued its efforts to promote collaboration among hospitals that offer trauma recovery/violence prevention programs.

Our discussions have focused on sharing best practices and encouraging HEAL hospitals to promote violence recovery work,including:

The Advocate Trauma Recovery Center (TRC) Hospital-Based Violence Intervention Program (HVIP) program serves patients from HEAL communities through **Advocate Trinity Hospital**, **Advocate Christ Medical Center**, and **Advocate South Suburban Hospital**. Since its inception in 2020 with just two teammates at Advocate Christ Medical Center, the program has expanded to a team of 12 across all three hospitals supporting HEAL neighborhoods. In 2024, the Advocate TRC HVIP program served 1,727 patients. The team works closely with street outreach organizations to prevent retaliation, support individuals affected by intentional violence throughout their hospital stay, connect them with essential external resources, and ensure a seamless transition to the outpatient Advocate TRC. Trauma Outreach Workers (TOWs) are often members of the communities the TRC and hospitals serve. They come with unique lived experience and are trained to work in the healthcare industry. This offers them broader professional experience, additional opportunities, and stability, which aligns with workforce development goals.

Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago has developed a Hospital-Based Violence Intervention Program (HVIP) to offer culturally relevant and trauma-informed care coordination and referrals to community-based services for children and their families who are victims of violence. The HVIP team, staffed by two full-time clinical social workers, engages patients with violence-related injuries and their families within 72 hours of first being seen at the Lurie Children's emergency department, inpatient unit, and/or outpatient clinic. In addition, HVIP works with a planning team of six community partners, and parent and youth leaders, to assist with the design and implementation of the program.

In 2024, **Cook County Health's** (CCH) flagship violence intervention program, Healing Hurt People Chicago (HHPC), was expanded with funding from a Cook County American Rescue Plan Act grant. Serving CCH patients and families since 2013, HHPC now sits within the newly established a Division of Trauma Recovery, Intervention and Prevention (TRIP) in the Department of Trauma. HHPC includes inpatient and community-based services for violently injured persons, with a staff of 17 people. Inpatient services focus on crisis intervention, emotional support, brief intervention, and referrals

for violently injured persons. Community-based care includes intensive case management, support for medical care, relocation, employment and mental health care.

On average, HHPC serves 600 individuals annually, which includes patients, family members and acquaintances who benefit from these services.

Northwestern Memorial Hospital's Hospital-Based Violence Intervention Program (HVIP) launched in 2020 and in 2024, it served more than 140 patients and their families. In collaboration with several community-based organizations such as Acclivus, NMH's HVIP has implemented violence prevention services and victim services to assist with the physical, emotional and psychosocial healing of survivors and families. The program has engaged the Department of Psychiatry, to offer outpatient treatment services with licensed clinical social workers for comprehensive addiction medicine treatment. In collaboration with the Department of Dermatology, physicians provide free-of-charge tattoo removal services for persons with gang affiliated tattoos or tattoos whose placement (i.e. face and neck) may be a barrier to employment. On average, each tattoo removal session takes 5-6 treatments. In FY24, 472 tattoo assessments were completed, demonstrating interest in the program. Finally, a new program that educates patients and their families about gun safety, provides gun locks to emphasize the importance of secure storage in saving lives, and connects families with necessary services was also launched this past fiscal year.

UChicago Medicine (UCM) launched its violence recovery program in 2018. As of March 2025, UCM has a staff of 21 full-time violence recovery specialists. Services are offered on a 24/7 schedule. The program has served over 11,175 individuals.

Productive Discussions and Improved Approaches

Senator Durbin's HEAL initiative has supported our work group and led to productive discussions and improved approaches in the following areas:

1. Effective techniques for violence recovery specialists;
2. Improved practices related to interaction with survivors of violence and other stakeholders;







Violence Recovery Training Program at UChicago Medicine (photos above)

3. Support for staff members who experience vicarious trauma.

HEAL hospitals focused on developing and implementing effective post-injury violence prevention and recovery programs. Key elements of this work included surveying hospitals to better understand their programs and partnerships and reviewing data collection processes.

Our areas of focus in 2025 will include staying involved in discussions related to Medicaid reimbursement for hospital-based trauma recovery/violence prevention services, including opportunities to leverage and partner on the approved Medicaid 1115 waiver, which includes new coverage of violence prevention and intervention services.

—Trauma Recovery Workgroup

UNITING AROUND SHARED GOALS

Our hospitals have become anchors of hope



A.J. Wilhelmi (right) with U.S. Senator Richard J. Durbin, IL

"The Chicago HEAL Initiative demonstrates what's possible when hospitals unite around shared goals—saving lives and breaking cycles of violence in our most vulnerable communities.

Our hospitals have become anchors of hope, providing critical support and employment opportunities in affected neighborhoods. Senator Durbin recognized that hospitals are uniquely positioned to address violence through workforce development, community partnerships, and trauma recovery.

Throughout his distinguished decades of service to Illinois, Senator Durbin has consistently championed healthcare, justice, and opportunity for all. As he prepares for retirement, his legacy through HEAL—and countless other initiatives—will continue transforming lives across our state.

It is an honor to support both Sen. Durbin and the commitment of the Chicago HEAL hospitals and health systems."

— A.J. Wilhelmi, President and CEO
Illinois Health and Hospital Association

Hospitals are uniquely positioned to address violence through:

- **Workforce Development**
- **Community Partnerships**
- **Trauma Recovery**

Illinois Health and Hospital Association

TRACKING OUR PROGRESS
HEAL Initiative 2.0 Dashboard

Target Status: 12 On target 5 In progress

1: Increase local workforce commitment to reduce economic hardship

	Description	2024 Highlights	Status
1.1	**Hiring:** Compared to 2018 baseline, target a 10% increase in hiring out of the 18 target communities	Hires from target ZIP codes— 2018 Baseline: 2,933 | CY 2023: 4,402 | CY 2024: 4,196	
1.2	**Workforce Retention:** Develop career advancement and growth opportunities to foster local workforce retention	Employees participating in programs— CY 2022: 819 | CY 2023: 918 | CY 2024: 2,216	
		Previous program participants hired— CY 2022: 281 | CY 2023: 210 | CY 2024: 268	
1.3	**Workforce Development:** Target a 5% increase of high school and college combined from 2018 baseline	Number of high school and college programs— CY 2022: 103 | CY 2023: 119 | CY 2024: 142	
		Number of high school students and college students participating— 2018 Baseline: 4,742 | CY 2022: 3,639 | CY 2023: 4,403 | CY 2024: 4,709	

2: Support community and school partnerships to improve health and safety of public environments

	Description	2024 Highlights	Status
2.1	**Community Partnerships:** Support community preventive mental health or violence prevention programs	Number of partner organizations supported by hospitals— CY 2022: 229 | CY 2023: 261 | CY 2024: 374	
2.2	**School Partnerships:** Engage hospital experts to support student and school staff health	SY 2023-2024: Specialists recruited/hired and training initiated	
		Number of CPS schools engaged with hospital partners— SY 2021–2022: 212 | SY 2022-2023: 253 | CY 2024: 190	
2.3	**Accessibility:** Increase access to care through school-based health centers and mobile health programs	Number of school-based health centers and mobile health programs supported by the hospital—CY 2022: 24 | CY 2023: 16 | CY 2024: 21	
		Number of students served by school-based health centers and mobile health programs supported by the hospital— CY 2022: 11,277 | CY 2023: 7,599 | CY 2024: 7,189	

3: Increase support and usage of violence recovery programs

	Description	2024 Highlights	Status
3.1	**Violence recovery programs:** Establish violence recovery programs within hospitals	Number of hospitals with violence recovery programs— CY 2022: 11 | CY 2023: 13 hospitals | CY 2024: 18	
		Number of individuals served by violence recovery programs— CY 2022: 17,623 | CY 2023: 16,477 | CY 2024: 21,523	
		Annual budget for the hospitals' violence recovery program— CY 2022: >$5M | CY 2023: >$5M | CY 2024: >$5M	
		Number of staff FTEs assigned to violence recovery programs—CY 2022: 204 | CY 2023: 188 | CY 2024: 329	
3.2	**Violence recovery programs:** Serve patients within hospital violence recovery programs*	Number of patients enrolled in ongoing case management 2018 Baseline: 1,828 | CY 2023: 3,386 | CY 2024: 3,790	
		Percent of needs assessments completed for eligible patients CY 2022: 59.1% | CY 2023: 65.5% | CY 2024: 75.6%	
		Percentage of patients who return to be treated for a different violent injury—CY 2023: 2.9% | CY 2024: 19.8%	

** Percent of eligible patients who received referrals to address SDOH under Metric 3.2 has been removed from the 2025 report due to evolving best practices on how to best measure screening and referral practices. This work continues across HEAL hospitals, but the metric will be refined for future reporting.*

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Hospital Engagement Action and Leadership