The background image shows the exterior of a modern hospital building. The building features a red brick facade on the upper levels and a grey stone or concrete base. A large sign on the left side of the entrance reads "Balise Entrance" above "SOUTH COUNTY HOSPITAL". The "SOUTH COUNTY" part is in a smaller font, and "HOSPITAL" is in a larger, bold font. The "H" in "HOSPITAL" has a small heart icon inside the top curve. The building has large windows and a set of stairs leading up to the entrance. The overall lighting is bright, suggesting daytime.

# SOUTH COUNTY HEALTH

## ANNUAL REPORT

FISCAL YEAR 2023

# SOUTH COUNTY HEALTH ANNUAL REPORT 2023

Dedication Statement.....	3
Message to the Community.....	4
About South County Health .....	6
Our Vision: A Model Health System.....	7
System At A Glance.....	8
Awards and Accreditations.....	10
Advancing Healthcare.....	11
Facility Upgrades.....	11
Key System Statistics.....	14
Procedural Firsts & Milestones ..	15
New SCMG Provider Spotlight.....	17
Daisy and Petal Awards.....	19
Digital.....	20
Community Healthcare.....	22
Home Health.....	22
Community Health.....	24
Testimonials.....	27
Leadership, Governance, Finance.....	28
Board of Trustees .....	28
South County Health Senior Leadership.....	30
Financials.....	32
Charitable Giving and Donor Support.....	33
Business Partners .....	41





## DEDICATION STATEMENT

Being Rhode Island's Most Trusted Health Partner requires profound dedication on the part of our exceptional staff. With unwavering commitment, unparalleled expertise, and endless compassion, they illuminate the path towards healing and hope.

To our remarkable team, your tireless efforts transform challenges into triumphs, and uncertainty into reassurance. Your steadfast presence embodies the very essence of care, extending far beyond the walls of our institution, touching the lives of each individual and family you serve.

Amidst the ever-changing landscape of healthcare, you stand as beacons of resilience and empathy, guiding us forward with unwavering determination. Your collective spirit infuses South County Health with warmth, kindness, and a profound sense of community.

As we reflect on the past year's journey and celebrate the milestones achieved, let us pause to honor the heartbeat of our organization—the dedicated staff whose service and expertise inspire us all.

Thank you for your extraordinary dedication, for it is through your compassionate service that our community finds solace, healing, and strength.

We dedicate our annual report to our extraordinary staff who continuously embody our values of Integrity, Caring, Respect, Excellence, Partnership, and Stewardship, even during the most challenging times.





## MESSAGE TO THE COMMUNITY: FIXING A BROKEN SYSTEM

On behalf of South County Health's Administration, the Board of Trustees, and the Medical Staff, we are pleased to present our Annual Report for the Fiscal Year ending September 30th, 2023. We are excited once again to present a digital annual report and share more about what makes South County Health, Rhode Island's Most Trusted Health Partner.

In the ever-changing landscape of Rhode Island healthcare, where financial viability and sustainability remain elusive, the quiet champions of nonprofit health systems stand as beacons of community service. Small nonprofit health systems wield profound influence, not merely through their provision of medical services, but through their formidable advocacy efforts. Nowhere is this more evident than right here in Rhode Island, where South County Health has emerged as a driving force behind legislation aimed at enhancing access to primary and specialty care providers for all Rhode Island residents, while leveling the competitive playing field that will allow Rhode Island to routinely recruit the breadth and caliber of medical professionals available in neighboring states.

At South County Health, we believe the Senate Healthcare Bill 2722 and House Bill 8072, serve to stabilize the entire RI healthcare delivery system,

including hospitals, primary care, specialty physicians, and advanced practice providers. The Bill also represents a critical financial step in sustaining healthcare for all Rhode Islanders, addressing the needs of our community, ensuring patients have adequate access to primary care and specialty providers, and improving health equity. By rallying together in support of this legislation, we can create positive change that benefits health systems, healthcare workers, and patients, alike.

While South County Health's primary mission remains the provision of healthcare services, as Rhode Island's Most Trusted Health Partner, there is also recognition that responsibility extends beyond the exam room. Health disparities are often rooted in systemic barriers, necessitating proactive engagement with policymakers to effect lasting change. In Rhode Island, this has propelled South County Health to the forefront of legislative discourse.



At its core, this endeavor embodies the spirit of community stewardship that defines South County Health. By championing change that prioritizes the well-being of all residents, communities serve as catalysts for positive change.

This critical legislation will help:

- Ensure adequate access for all Rhode Islanders to primary care and specialty physicians, and advanced practice providers.
- Improve the sustainability and quality of Rhode Island's hospitals.
- Improve health equity throughout Rhode Island's entire healthcare delivery system.

One key aspect of the Bills is its focus on healthcare workers. Under the proposed legislation, physicians, advanced practice providers and hospitals will have the opportunity to achieve equitable reimbursement to their peers in Connecticut and Massachusetts. This not only ensures that our healthcare professionals are fairly compensated for their essential work, but also strengthens the healthcare workforce, ultimately benefiting patient care.

We know that as a supporter of South County Health, you share an understanding of the critical nature of healthcare access. That's why we are asking you to reach out to your elected officials in support of Senate Bill 2722 and House Bill 8072. In supporting this legislation, a more equitable and sustainable healthcare environment that benefits all members of the Rhode Island community will be possible.

#### **Send an Advocacy Letter**

[southcountyhealth.org/support](http://southcountyhealth.org/support)

#### **View Data On Rate Parity**

[southcountyhealth.org/support](http://southcountyhealth.org/support)



**AARON ROBINSON**  
*President and CEO*



**JOSEPH F. MATTHEWS**  
*Chairman, Board of Trustees*



**ROBERT BIERWIRTH, M.D.**  
*President of the Medical Staff*



# ABOUT SOUTH COUNTY HEALTH



What began as a cottage hospital on Kenyon Avenue in 1919 has evolved into a technologically advanced healthcare system whose innovations and expertise has enabled South County Health to gain regional and national recognition for excellence in patient care and positive outcomes.

A leader in medical quality, service, and innovation, South County Health provides care to patients across Rhode Island in acute and outpatient settings including at Medical and Wellness Centers in Westerly, East Greenwich, and Warwick, as well as Primary Care and Specialty provider offices in Cranston, Narragansett, Newport, and Wakefield. South County Health is comprised of three healthcare entities: South County Hospital, South County Home Health, and South County Medical Group.

A 5-Star hospital for Overall Quality, South County Hospital is a global leader in robotic-assisted surgeries and is home to more robotic-assisted options than any other hospital in the state.

## OUR VALUES

### INTEGRITY

Honoring our commitments to those we serve.

### CARING

Exceptional compassion for our patients and co-workers.

### RESPECT

Building trust through mutual regard, openness, collaboration, and humility.

### EXCELLENCE

Relentless pursuit of benchmark performance in everything we do.

### PARTNERSHIP

Building relationships that support our values and accelerate results.

### STEWARSHIP

Managing organizational resources to preserve and sustain our mission.



## OUR VISION: A MODEL HEALTH SYSTEM



### KEY STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

#### 1. HIGH PERFORMING HEALTH SYSTEM

Achieving top 10% in quality, service, and financial performance.

#### 2. SERVICE LINE CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE

Destination quality, service, and innovation for key clinical programs.

#### 3. TRANSFORMATION

Deployment of contemporary, consumer-driven platforms and models of care leveraging automation, data, and analytics to enhance health outcomes.

#### 4. ACCESS

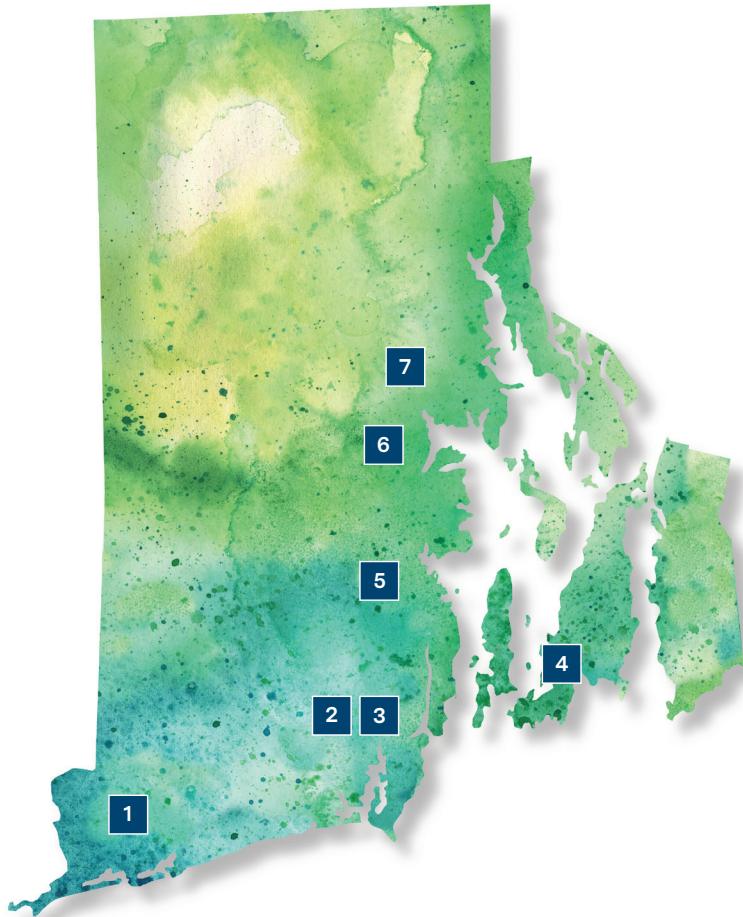
Seamless, connected, and easy access that delights our customers.

#### 5. COMMUNITY HEALTH

Integrate services that connect our communities to care across the continuum advancing health and value.



## SYSTEM AT A GLANCE



### LOCATIONS

Westerly 1  
Wakefield 2  
Narragansett 3  
Newport 4  
East Greenwich 5  
Warwick 6  
Cranston 7

### 11 PRACTICES

- Center for Women's Health
- Express Care
- General Surgery
- Hospitalists
- Infectious Disease Clinic
- Nephrology and Hypertension
- Oncology/Hematology
- Primary Care – Internal and Family Medicine
- Pulmonology and Sleep Medicine
- Urology
- Wound Care

### SOUTH COUNTY MEDICAL GROUP

**113** Total Providers  
**64** Total Physicians  
**49** Total Advanced Practice Providers

### SOUTH COUNTY HEALTH MEDICAL STAFF

**513** Total Members of Medical Staff



# LOCATIONS & PRACTICES

## SOUTH COUNTY HOSPITAL

p. 401-782-8000

[SouthCountyHealth.org](http://SouthCountyHealth.org)

## ANCILLARY SERVICES    EXPRESS CARE

### LABORATORY SERVICES

*Cranston, East Greenwich, Narragansett, Wakefield, Warwick, Westerly*  
p. 401-788-1418  
f. 401-782-9812

### DIAGNOSTIC IMAGING

*East Greenwich, Wakefield, Warwick, Westerly*  
p. 401-788-1486  
f. 401-782-9894

### EAST GREENWICH

p. 401-562-1020

### WARWICK

p. 401-562-1017

### WESTERLY

p. 401-604-2500

To see wait times, Get in Line, or start a virtual express care visit  
[GetCare.SouthCountyHealth.org](http://GetCare.SouthCountyHealth.org)

## PRIMARY CARE

### CRANSTON

p. 401-464-6617  
f. 401-464-6676

### EAST GREENWICH

p. 401-471-6760  
f. 401-471-6765

### NARRAGANSETT

p. 401-464-6617  
f. 401-464-6676

### WARWICK

p. 401-562-1020  
f. 401-562-1056

### WESTERLY

p. 401-604-2530  
f. 401-604-2560

#### NEW PATIENT / PRIMARY CARE LINE

Dedicated line for patients to schedule appointments with South County Medical Group providers at any of our five primary care locations.

## SPECIALTY CARE

### CENTER FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH

*Wakefield, Warwick, Westerly*  
p. 401-789-0661

### GENERAL SURGERY

*Wakefield, Warwick, Westerly*  
p. 401-284-1212  
f. 401-788-8730

### INFECTIOUS DISEASE CLINIC

*Narragansett, Wakefield*  
p. 401-471-6285

### NEPHROLOGY & HYPERTENSION

*Wakefield*  
p. 401-782-0090  
f. 401-782-0988  
*Westerly*  
p. 401-596-3313  
f. 401-596-2650

### CANCER CENTER

*Wakefield*  
p. 401-783-6670  
f. 401-789-4990

### RADIATION THERAPY

*Wakefield*  
p. 401-284-0850  
f. 401-284-0860

### PULMONARY & SLEEP MEDICINE

*East Greenwich, Narragansett, Wakefield, Warwick, Westerly*  
p. 401-788-2110

### SOUTH COUNTY HOME HEALTH

*Wakefield, Warwick, Westerly*  
p. 401-782-0500

### UROLOGY

*Newport, Wakefield, Warwick*  
p. 401-788-8780  
f. 401-788-8787

### WOUND CARE

*Wakefield*  
p. 401-788-1638

### PARTNERSHIP PRACTICES

#### CNE CARDIOLOGY

*SCH partner locations:*  
*East Greenwich, Wakefield*  
p. 401-921-5444

#### GASTROINTESTINAL MEDICINE ASSOCIATES

*SCH partner locations:*  
*East Greenwich, Westerly*  
p. 401-943-1301  
f. 401-946-8480

#### ORTHO RHODE ISLAND

*SCH partner locations:*  
*Wakefield, Westerly*  
p. 401-777-7000  
f. 401-782-6810  
f. 401-738-3777 (Warwick)

#### THE VASCULAR EXPERTS RI

*SCH partner locations:*  
*Wakefield, Warwick*  
p. 401-661-8088  
f. 401-661-8086





## SOUTH COUNTY HEALTH



### American College of Radiation Oncology (ACRO) Accredited:

Occurring in the first year of eligibility, South County Health Radiation Therapy is one of only approximately 300 practices nationwide to receive this prestigious accreditation.

### Baby-Friendly Accredited:

South County Hospital was the first hospital in RI to be designated Baby-Friendly in 2000, and has received re-designation for five-years as recently as 2023. This mark of excellence encourages and recognizes hospitals and birthing centers that offer an optimal level of care for infant feeding and mother/baby bonding.

### Blue Distinction Center+ for Hip and Knee Replacement:

Recognizes hospitals for their expertise and efficiency in delivering specialty care.

### Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS)

- **South County Hospital**  
5-Star Overall Rating
- **South County Home Health**  
4-Star Rating for Patient Experience

### Commission on Cancer Accredited:

Designates hospitals whose performance meets or exceeds nationally recognized measures of quality in cancer care.

### Healthgrades

Outstanding Patient Experience and Pulmonary Care Award.

### Joint Commission Accredited:

Designates hospitals that meet or exceed standards that promote safe and effective care of the highest quality and value.

- **Total Hip and Knee Replacement**
- **Primary Stroke Center**

### Press Ganey:

Reaffirmed 2023 Press Ganey Pinnacle and Guardian of Excellence Awards, placing in the top 5% of hospitals nationally for patient satisfaction for the fifth consecutive year.

- **Guardian of Excellence Award for Human Experience**
- **Pinnacle of Excellence Award for Patient Experience**



# ADVANCING HEALTHCARE

## FACILITIES UPGRADES AND EXPANSIONS

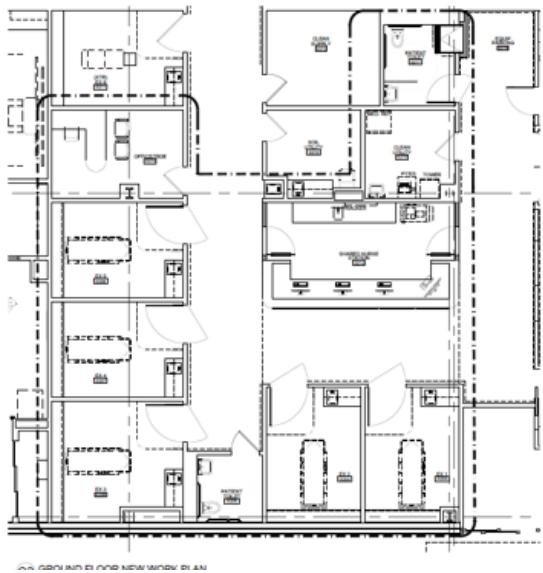
### BALISE ENTRANCE

Completed in March 2023, and made possible by a generous donation from the Balise Family, the new Balise Entrance, formerly the West Entrance, offers improved Hospital access to patients and visitors. Inpatient and Outpatient Surgical patients, Diagnostic Imaging, and all Hospital visitors are encouraged to utilize this entrance, where they will be directed to proceed to the Patient Information Desk. Use of this new entrance will improve patient and visitor access as dedicated parking spaces are adjacent to the new entrance.



This modernized and welcoming entrance will be the focal point for patients, staff, and community accessing the hospital for their care. It will also serve as a much-needed outdoor area for respite for patients and families while receiving their care and for the exceptional caregivers that serve our community daily.



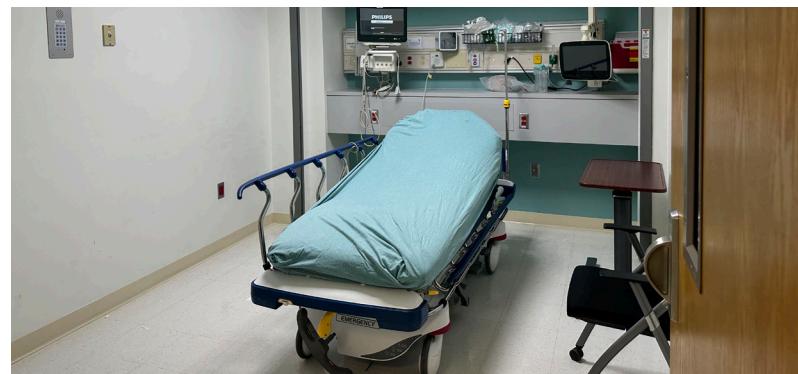


### ED-B BEHAVIORAL HOLDING UNIT

Fully funded by the Foundation through philanthropy provided by members of the community and our partners in support of South County Health, the ER-B unit of the Emergency Department, re-opened in June 2023 after months of renovations.

Renovations to the ER-B unit include facility response solutions to better accommodate patient holding in the Emergency Department, including but not limited to patients with behavioral health diagnoses who are there for extended periods, through enhancements to the rooms and common areas that intend to promote patient safety and experience

Many of these enhancements were developed and designed in part through input provided by a multidisciplinary team of South County Health stakeholders that included representatives from the Medical Staff, Emergency Department, Nursing, the Community Health Team, and Facilities among others.



## LOBBY IMPROVEMENTS - NEW CAFE & GIFT SHOP

In collaboration with our valued food and beverage partner Unidine, we are excited to open a new South County Health Café that is set to open in May 2024.

The new café – called Healing Grounds Café – is located in the main lobby near the Balise Entrance, where the current gift shop is located. The café is welcoming space, offering a selection of breakfast, lunch, and a variety of coffee and beverages. Unidine fully funded this project, demonstrating their commitment to enhancing the overall culinary experience at South County Hospital for our community. We are grateful for their support and look forward to the positive impact this new addition will have on South County Health.

A new South County Health Gift Shop has also been constructed simultaneously with the café and is fully funded by philanthropy and South County Hospital Auxiliary. The South County Hospital Auxiliary has long-supported South County Health and this permanent and upgraded space adjacent to the courtyard and Balise Entrance will better support the Auxiliary's fundraising efforts for many years to come.

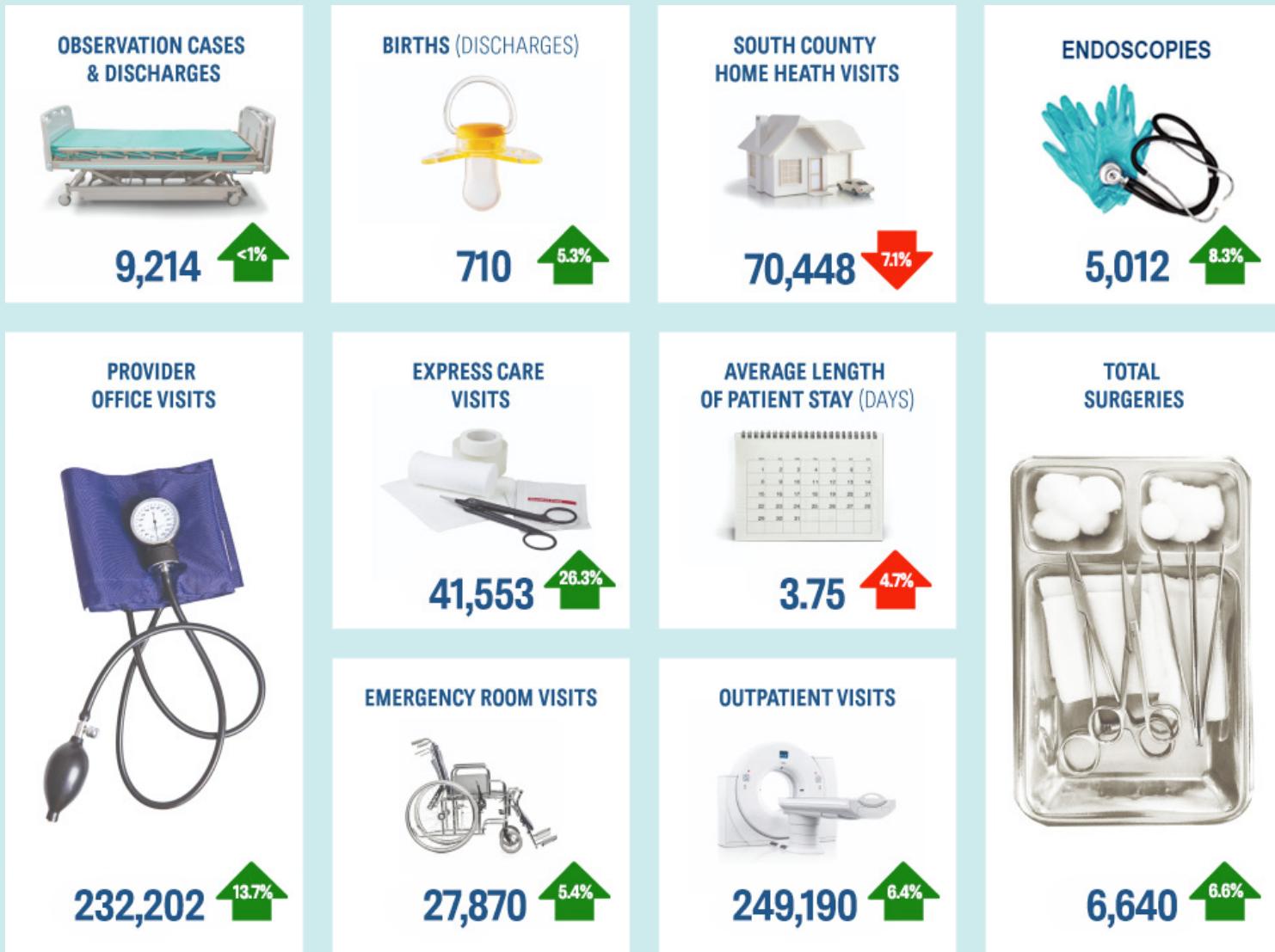
Temporarily, we will also be relocating our History wall and donor plaques to storage. However, these important elements will be reintroduced later this year in a new manner. The History wall will be relocated to the surgical hallway and will feature Hospital artifacts, elements of the previous History wall timeline, and new

digital displays. This will allow us to highlight more of the great history and culture that helped shape who South County Health is as an organization today. Additionally, we will be centralizing all donor plaques to an interactive digital monitor that will be located by the entrance in the main lobby as part of a new digital wall recognizing our amazing donors and business partners. We recognize the significance of these displays and are dedicated to preserving and enhancing their legacy at South County Health.

All of these facility upgrades mark significant milestones in our ongoing commitment to providing exceptional care and experiences for all who walk through our doors. These additions not only elevate the aesthetic appeal of our facilities but also enhance the overall experience for our patients, visitors, and staff. We recognize the importance of creating welcoming and comfortable environments, and these enhancements are a testament to our dedication to that endeavor.



## FY 2023 KEY HOSPITAL STATISTICS



## PROCEDURAL FIRST AND MILESTONES

### DR. MARCHAND'S MAKO MILESTONE

In March, 2023, Dr. Bob Marchand of Ortho Rhode Island reached a global milestone after becoming the first orthopedic surgeon in the world to complete their 9,000th Mako-assisted procedure. As part of Ortho Rhode Island's pioneering joint replacement team, Dr. Marchand is one of the foremost robotic surgeons in the world.

"Thirteen years ago, we brought Mako to South County Health to offer state-of-the-art treatment that puts patients' needs and outcomes at the center of our care," Dr. Marchand said. "It's a privilege to have helped thousands of patients with robotic-assisted procedures, and to grow this technology along with our expert team at Ortho Rhode Island."

Through a partnership with Ortho Rhode Island, and the opening of the Center for Advanced Orthopedic Surgery at South County Hospital, South County Health is a global leader in robotic-assisted surgery. Since pioneering the use of Stryker's Mako SmartRobotics™ surgical technology for hip and knee replacements in 2010, the expert surgeons at Ortho Rhode Island have performed more than 17,000 robotic-assisted hip and knee replacement surgeries at South County Hospital.





## DR. BRADY'S DA VINCI MILESTONE

In February, 2023, Dr. Joseph Brady reached a milestone after completing the 1,000th robotic-assisted surgery of his career. A general surgeon at South County Health since 2017, Dr. Brady, achieved this milestone during a routine gall bladder surgery using the assistance of the da Vinci Xi Surgical System.

Specializing in gall bladder and hernia repair surgeries, Dr. Brady performed his first robotic-assisted surgery in 2015 and the first ever at South County Hospital on May 31, 2018, using the da Vinci Xi. Since 2018, 788 robotic-assisted surgeries have been completed by the expert general surgeons on South County Health's medical staff, with 16.3% of all general surgery procedures performed at South County Hospital being robotic-assisted surgeries. In 2022, that number increased to 24.8% of all general surgery procedures, with 50.1% of Dr. Brady's surgeries performed with the assistance of da Vinci Xi.



## DR. SARAZEN'S AQUABLATION PROCEDURE

Arnold Sarazen, MD, Chief of Surgery and Urology at South County Health, performed the first Aquablation procedure at South County Hospital on January 20, 2024. This procedure, Aquablation therapy, is the latest in medical technology for men suffering from Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia (BPH), also known as enlarged prostate.

Now available at South County Hospital, Aquablation therapy is an advanced, minimally invasive treatment that allows our surgeons to use the power of water delivered with robotic precision to provide long-lasting BPH relief without compromise and minimal risk of irreversible complications like incontinence, erectile dysfunction, and ejaculatory dysfunction, all with a fast recovery time.

“We are proud to be the first in Southern Rhode Island to offer a solution for men with BPH that provides significant, long-lasting symptom relief, with lower risk to sexual function and continence,” said Arnold Sarazen, MD, Chief of Surgery, Chief of Urology, South County Health.



## NEW SCMG PROVIDER SPOTLIGHT

### SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

**Brian Kwetkowski, DO**, joined South County Health in 2023 as Medical Director, Primary Care. In Fall of 2023, a new leadership position was created within South County Medical Group and Dr. Kwetkowski was named the inaugural Assistant Vice President of Physician Services in addition to his Medical Director position. As AVP of Physician Services, he provides operational leadership over all of the clinical service lines.

### PRIMARY CARE

**Julie Carroll, AGNP**, is a board-certified Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner. Julie attended the Chamberlain College of Nursing and Purdue University. Julie is currently seeing new patients in our Cranston Primary Care office.

**Mohammed Kattan, FNP**, is a board-certified Family Nurse Practitioner with experience in assisted living facilities, telemetry, and Interventional Radiology. Mohammed holds a Master of Science from Salve Regina University and is currently seeing patients in our Narragansett Primary Care office.



**Diane McKeff, APRN**, is a board-certified Advanced Practice RN specializing in primary care and internal medicine. Diane studied at New York University. She has been in practice since 1999 and is currently seeing patients in our Narragansett Primary Care office.



**Renee Morais, FNP-BC**, is a board-certified Family Nurse Practitioner. Renee studied at Elms College and The University of Rhode Island. Renee is trilingual in English, Portuguese Creole, and Spanish, and is currently seeing new patients in our Warwick Primary Care office.



**Melissa-Jean Suttmeier, FNP-C**, is a board-certified Family Nurse Practitioner. She is a graduate of Rhode Island College and Purdue University Global. Melissa is currently seeing new patients in our East Greenwich Primary Care office.



## GENERAL SURGERY

**Marissa Cunetta, PA-C**, joined the surgical team at South County Health. Marissa is Board Certified by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants and assists our general surgeons during operative procedures and in providing care to patients during their hospital stay.



## OBSTETRICS AND GYNECOLOGY

**Sarah West Allen, CNM**, is a Certified Nurse Midwife. Sarah studied at Oberlin College and Oregon Health Sciences University. She graduated with honors from The University of Massachusetts Medical School in 2015 and has expertise in obstetrics and gynecology.



## ONCOLOGY

**Matthew Danish, MD**, is a board-certified Oncologist. He completed his fellowship at Brown University and residency at Rutgers University. Dr. Danish brings his expertise treating all blood diseases and malignancies to our Cancer Center in Wakefield.



**Paul Lvovsky, DO**, is a board-certified Radiation Oncologist. He studied at the New York College of Osteopathic Medicine and completed his residency in the Department of Radiation Oncology at the College of Physicians & Surgeons of Columbia University. Dr. Lvovsky has particular expertise in prostate, breast, skin, and lung cancers.



## UROLOGY

**Katelyn Johnson, MD**, is a board-certified Urologist. She completed her residency at Yale University with expertise in robotic surgery and the diagnosis and treatment of unwanted fertility, erectile dysfunction, prostate cancer, kidney cancer, urologic reconstruction, benign prostatic hypertrophy (BPH), kidney stones and overactive bladder.



## DAISY AND PETAL AWARDS

The DAISY Foundation was established in 1999 by the family of J. Patrick Barnes. His family was awestruck by the care and compassion his nurses provided and one of the goals they set in creating a Foundation was to recognize extraordinary nurses everywhere who make an enormous difference in the lives of so many people by the super-human work they do every day. Cinnamon rolls were a favorite of Patrick's during his illness. The Barnes Family asks that whenever and wherever nurses smell that wonderful cinnamon aroma, they stop for a moment and think about how special they are. The Petal Award is a program created by South County Health's Nursing Shared Governance group to recognize nursing support staff who go above and beyond their line of duty. Nurses wouldn't be able to perform their jobs without the help of dedicated and talented support staff.

### 2023 Daisy Award Recipients

- Samantha Chin, RN
- Becca Crofts, RN
- Sarah Aubois, RN
- Caroline Peguero, RN
- Corey Cook, RN
- Sarah Kettle, RN
- Bethany Reinhard, RN



Petal Award honorees personify South County Health's commitment to patient experience. These individuals consistently demonstrate excellence through their extraordinary, compassionate care while promoting a restful and healing environment.

Petal Award honorees personify South County Health's commitment to patient experience. These individuals consistently demonstrate excellence through their extraordinary, compassionate care while promoting a restful and healing environment.

### 2023 Petal Award Recipients

- Laura Gardiner
- Corrine Perrin
- Elisa Lovegrove

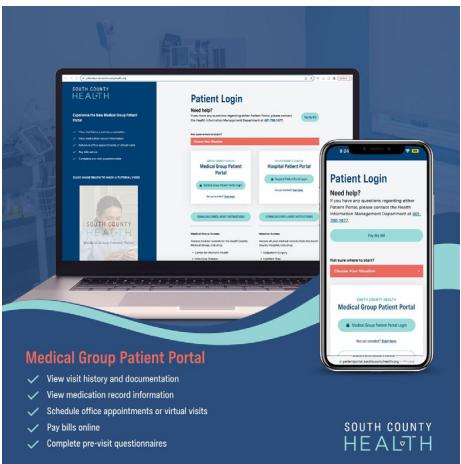


# DIGITAL

## ENHANCED PATIENT PORTAL

As part of South County Health's digital transformation strategy to improve patient access to healthcare and personal health information, an upgraded electronic medical record (EMR) system used by South County Medical Group practices was launched in March of 2022. The enhanced patient portal used for primary care and specialty practices, offers a new feature allowing current patients to self-schedule upcoming primary care and specialty visits including virtual visits.

In FY2023, over 21,000 patients enrolled in the SCMG Patient Portal with over 1,700 appointments or virtual visits scheduled through the portal.



## GET CARE NOW (VIRTUAL)

Providing easy access to patients with non-life-threatening injuries and illness to get same-day care, Get Care Now offers additional features that saves patients time when visiting our Express Care or Emergency Department services. In March of 2022, we introduced the ability for patients to access eVisits and Video Visits with our providers.

## SCH NOW APP

The SCH Now App, our digital front door was relaunched in 2023 making it easy for patients to access high-quality healthcare – including our Get Care NOW portal from their smartphones or other personal devices. Available on the App Store and Google Play, over 5,000 individuals downloaded the new SCH Now App in 2023.

- Get Care Now portal
- Test Results
- Locations
- Find A Provider
- Bill Bay
- Careers



## DIGITAL STATISTICS

### DIGITALLY SCHEDULED APPOINTMENTS

FY23  
EXPRESS CARES & EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT



12,924 

### FY23 % OF EXPRESS CARE/ED VISITS DIGITALLY SCHEDULED



18.7%

### VIRTUAL VISITS AND APP DOWNLOADS

#### FY23 eVISITS & VIDEO VISITS



1,074 

### PATIENT PORTAL

#### FY23 MEDICAL GROUP PATIENT PORTAL ENROLLMENTS



21,376 

### FY23 MEDICAL GROUP PATIENT PORTAL

SCMG

1,742 

### FY24 (THRU MARCH) % OF EXPRESS CARE/ED VISITS DIGITALLY SCHEDULED



20.59%

### FY23 SCH NOW APP DOWNLOADS

SCH  
NOW

5,469 

### FY23 MEDICAL GROUP PATIENT PORTAL UTILIZATION

SCMG

38.2%





## COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE

### SERVING OUR SOUTH COUNTY COMMUNITY

### SOUTH COUNTY HOME HEALTH

*South County Home Health is a leader in the delivery of skilled visiting nurse care, rehabilitation, wound care, and other medical and non-medical services for patients who are recovering at home. As the community grows in demographics and geography, South County Home Health responds to current needs and positions itself to pivot and meet changing needs supporting our community by providing the option of quality care at home.*

At South County Health, we are stewards of your health. We want you to maintain or achieve optimal health so together, we can create a healthier, more vibrant community. Our community benefit initiatives and collective health improvement efforts with diverse partner organizations, are one way that we demonstrate our commitment to the health of the South County community.

Last year South County Health developed a three-year Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) to guide community benefit and population health improvement activities across South County. The CHIP builds upon previous health improvement activities, while recognizing new health needs identified in the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA), a changing healthcare environment, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Goals, objectives, and strategies from the three-year CHIP are outlined below. In developing the CHIP, South County Health sought to focus on upstream interventions to address social determinants of health barriers and advance health equity for our communities.

#### BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

**GOAL:** Strengthen and support community initiatives that increase awareness of behavioral health, improve access to treatment, and promote wellness, recovery, and resilience.

- Reduce behavioral health stigma and fear of seeking treatment.
- Improve access to high quality behavioral health services and supports along a full continuum of care.
- Reinforce behavioral health as a chronic condition.



## CHRONIC DISEASE

**GOAL:** Achieve equitable life expectancy and quality of life for all people by ensuring all residents have the resources they need to maintain their health.

- Promote healthy living for residents through all stages of life, with a focus on addressing social determinants of health barriers.

## PATIENT EXPERIENCE

In FY2023, South County Home Health achieved its goal of 4 Stars for Patient Experience as measured by Home Health Compare (Medicare.gov).

By continuing to improve upon best practices to enhance the patient experience, our goal is to achieve a 5-Star rating in Patient Experience and Quality metrics.

### Focused efforts will:

- Optimize best practices with scheduling around patient preferences.
- Support newly admitted patients with in-home leadership rounding and follow-up on discharge calls to ensure smooth transition back to community support.
- Encourage all Home Health staff to complete Field Staff OASIS-E certifications.

## ADDRESSING SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

South County Health has supported clients with Social Determinants of Health (SDOH), providing financial assistance, education, social and emotional support, among other items. The following is a list of services provided by the South County Home Health community health worker:

- Supplied grocery gift cards and Be Safe bags with cleaning supplies, masks, gloves, sanitizer, hygiene items, paper goods, thermometer, and food items.
- Helped home-bound patients and families to arrange pick-up or delivery services for prescriptions.
- Provided pick-up and delivery services from the local food bank for home-bound patients.
- Provided ongoing social and emotional support to patients and families socially isolated during the pandemic, including regular check-in phone calls.
- Supported vaccination education and clinics.
- Support issues related to housing, evictions, and other moratoriums, including partnership with the Medical Legal Partnership of Boston (MLPB) for legal counsel.
- Offered a borrowing service for iPads and WiFi hotspots to enable patients to connect with friends and family, schedule medical appointments, and/or attend partial day programs.



## COMMUNITY HEALTH

*The Community Health Division provides stewardship for the community through strategic, collaborative partnerships with other organizations whose mission and vision support the health and well-being of residents within the communities we serve.*

### HEALTHY BODIES HEALTHY MINDS (HBHM)

Healthy Bodies Healthy Minds (HBHM) provides programs that focus on system-level changes through a convener of community partners with individual community-based support offered through the Community Health Team and other specialized programs.

To ensure inclusivity of all communities within Washington County, South County Health provided administration and staffing for the HBHM program for its role as one of 15 Health Equity Zones (HEZ) in the state. HBHM is funded by the Rhode Island Department of Health, Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration, The Rhode Island Foundation, and Blue Cross Blue Shield of RI.

### WASHINGTON COUNTY ZERO SUICIDE PROGRAM (WCZSP)

WCZSP takes a population health approach to suicide prevention by implementing Zero Suicide within the region's eight major healthcare organizations, including South County Health. An important part of this effort is having an adequately trained workforce and universally screening patients for depression and suicidality.

From January 1, 2019 to September 29, 2023 a total of 36 organizations including South County Health trained staff through face-to-face and online Question/Persuade/Refer (QPR) training modalities. Across Washington County, a total of 2,812 health care

workers were QPR trained. South County Health is also one of seven health care organizations in Washington County that conducts universal screening of all emergency department patients ages 25 and up using the Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ) 2, PHQ 9 and the Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale (C-SSRS). A total of 258,107 PHQ and C-SSRS screens were conducted from 2020-2023.

- To date, 1,568 of South County Health's staff have been trained in Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) suicide prevention training and all new employees go through training as part of their orientation. This accounts for 55.7% of Washington County's total QPR trainings.
- A universal Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ) was implemented for patients seen in the Emergency Department with South County Hospital screening all ED patients 25 and up. From 2020-2023, a total of 158,802 PHQ and C-SSRS screenings have been conducted to identify patients at risk of suicide. This accounts for 55.7% of Washington County's total PHQ and C-SSRS screenings.



## BEHAVIORAL HEALTH IN RI

Washington County is a designated mental health shortage area due to an inadequate number of providers and inpatient beds. The Mental Health Association of Rhode Island recognizes multiple reasons for the current state of the mental health care landscape in Rhode Island. Lack of resources, however, is cited by 67% of providers as a reason for not being able to accommodate new patients into their already full caseloads.

Additionally, the pandemic has had profound and far-reaching effects on Americans' mental health. Depression among adults in the United States tripled in early 2020 — jumping from 8.5% before the pandemic to a staggering 27.8%. Findings indicate this trend is actually worsening, affecting one in every three American adults. Mental health challenges are impacting children too; with the proportion of mental health-related visits for children aged 5 to 11 and aged 12 to 17 increasing to approximately 24% and 31% from 2019 to 2020. Similarly, substance abuse and overdose deaths are also spiking. More Rhode Islanders died of accidental drug overdoses in 2021 than any other year on record according to the Rhode Island Department of Health. Short staffing and lack of available beds has led to long wait times and delayed services.



## COMMUNITY APPROACH TO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE

South County Health has been actively working within Washington County on improved care for behavioral health patients for many years, collaborating with local partners, people with lived experiences of behavioral health issues, and state and local officials. While there is a crisis at hand, we are working toward sustainable improvements including investments in:

- Significant environmental upgrades to Emergency Department Behavioral Holding Unit (ED-B)
- Psychiatry services
- Crisis Intervention Training
- Suicide Prevention Training
- Behavioral Health Trained Nurses and Ancillary support
- Care Plans and Clinical Pathways
- Utilization of Newest Medication Regimes
- Community Health Workers
- Peer Support Workers
- Leveraging Patients with Lived Experiences
- Growth in Social Work Services
- Community Care Team
- Paramedicine
- Collaboration with Local and State Partners



## RHODE TO EQUITY

One such partnership within Washington County is through Rhode to Equity (R2E), a RIDOH two-year grant with funding under the Washington County Health Equity Zone (HEZ) to support community-based initiatives providing equity and access to care all of which align with the Community Health Needs Assessment initiatives.

The grant allowed SCH to add two full-time community health workers to support patients with multiple emergency room visits and intervene when identifying gaps in Social Determinates of Health (SDOH) such as food insecurity, housing instability, transportation, safety, or financial concerns. The program is in partnership with Thundermist, who also added one full-time community health worker to connect patients to long-term access to behavioral health care in the community with their well-established psychiatric providers and programs.

SCH invested in a behavioral health-friendly unit adjacent to the emergency department, an advanced practice provider position for early initiation of medication management, and earlier access to treatment. All staff are trained in suicide prevention and initiation of de-escalation training. Local EMS provides a Paramedicine Program that can complete home visits for patients as another layer of support post-hospitalization.

SCH and Thundermist launched a Community Care Team in October 2023, convening local municipal and community partners to review community members with the highest need to consider options for wrap-around services stabilizing and improving long-term issues person by person.

## GOALS OF R2E

- Reducing avoidable visits to the ED for Behavioral Health reasons
- Reducing total time in the ED for Behavioral Health concerns
- Starting as early as possible - treatment in the ED
- Improving Transitions of Care among patients who visit the ED for Behavioral Health, including connections and follow up through Primary Care and Behavioral Health providers
- Improving overall Patient Experience for Behavioral Health patients

## R2E DATA

Overall, goal was achieved of reducing High Utilization patients & visits to the ED:

- 649 interventions for 277 individuals
- For 7 individuals tracked, this meant a total of 44 fewer visits as compared to the prior year.
- R2E supported systemic improvements, including investments in a behavioral health friendly unit, and improved basic needs such as better meal options and more activities.



"I have to start by saying I am a nurse, and I was blown away by Caroline [Caroline Peguero, RN]. At the end of September, my father was in and out of the hospital, and he was found to need a pacemaker. After receiving the pacemaker, he was doing okay. But around the end of October, we found him having difficulty walking and holding items. My mom had a planned surgery for October 23, and while we were there, my dad developed a headache. After some convincing, he agreed to be seen in the ER, and we came across Caroline. My nurse-gut told me something was wrong, and she listened to me and helped in every way she could to get him the assessment he needed. We found out that he had a bilateral brain bleed, and we were shipped off to a bigger hospital. As we were waiting, she came back to check on us, and she held my hand as I took a second to cry. Then, she gave me the confidence to push on and get my dad the help he needed. I will be forever grateful for her."

"The ER nurses and the Borda 1 nurses and support staff were angels. I cannot say enough good things about their skill level, compassion, attentiveness and professionalism. They were equally concerned with my physical and emotional well-being. They protected my dignity, as well as my health. The nursing/support staff are a critical component to the functioning of the hospital. They are the cornerstone that makes it run with competence and compassion. The entire team treated me as they would have treated their mom. Much gratitude and appreciation."

"I'm sure Sarah [Sarah Morrisette, RN] and all the nurses are under stress managing difficult situations. However, without exception, Sarah walked into the room with a smile and positive disposition. Given that my dad saw Sarah more often than the doctors, she became his anchor during his stay. Thank you so, so much for Sarah and the entire staff. You're all guardian angels."

"Thank you to everyone at South County Hospital for a terrific experience yesterday when I had foot surgery. The volunteer at the first desk was very friendly and helpful and he made me feel at home and less nervous. All of the nurses were wonderful, especially Maggie, who made getting an IV port installed as quick and minimally uncomfortable as possible- I have had less pleasant experiences elsewhere; and her help with everything else was great.

A big thank you to Dr. Keller for the anesthesia that did not leave me with any trace of pain in my throat, unlike a previous experience elsewhere. And of course the biggest thank you to Dr. Mechrefe for my foot surgery. I had some pain yesterday but very little today; I am already in the mend."

"We would like to thank all of you for the wonderful care and compassion that we experienced as a family through the journey of having a loved one with cancer. The care Joe received and the joy he had in seeing everyone meant the world to us. While Joe may not have crossed paths with all of you, it is without a doubt, all of you who made his journey through the difficult times of this nasty disease more bearable. He looked forward to seeing all your smiling faces, the friendly banter, and of course, the busting of a few beans. This team is truly special in all the ways that it connects with, and cares for patients and their families. We appreciate all you did to support him and us through his treatments and final days. We are sure he is watching over you to make sure the center has not fallen apart in his absence. They say it takes a village to raise a child; we believe it takes a village to care for the many cancer patients you encounter every day. If there are angels on earth, your team most definitely fits the bill."

"EVERYONE from SCHH were 100% awesome. As the patient everything was explained, and as the caregiver my husband felt they were 100% right on."

"I am very grateful for the care I received from the PT staff. They were professional, compassionate, & friendly, and they were a significant part of my successful recovery. Thank you very much!"

"My grandfather called me after a nice young lady stayed past her shift to clean him up because he was too afraid to bother anyone to tell them he was a little wet! He said she treated him with care, respect and dignity and kept telling him it was okay and that she would stay as long as he needed her. He was brought to tears and so thankful for this interaction."

"I would love to thank Dr. Colin Ireland in the ED for saving my son. He had gone to another hospital in the state twice for breathing difficulties. He was misdiagnosed both times. The staff at South County Health really listened! Dr. Ireland and his team heard our story and sent my son directly for imaging. I think we only spent about an hour total in the South County Health Emergency Department before being transferred to a more specialized facility in Boston. Thank you Dr. Ireland and your team, and thank you South County Hospital, for the amazing care you gave my son."

"I had my son on 9/14/23. It was a very long labor and I had a difficult time post-birth. Meg [Megan Moran] was there every step of the way helping me through, making sure I'm okay, taking the extra steps to help me clean up and ensure I was comfortable. We were fortunate enough to have Meg both nights and throughout our time with her she checked on us more times than I could count. When I was exhausted and desperately needed a break, she took my son and kept him safe running tests so that I was able to take a nap. Honestly and truly, Meg made our birthing experience above and beyond and I have thought about her often over the past couple of months. I truly think Meg deserves to be honored for her compassion, kindness, skill with her job, and ability to connect with her patients. Thank you so much Meg! We are so, so grateful every day for our experience with you!"



"Diane and Jill from SCHH were wonderful. I was down and they brought me up and helped me tremendously. I am blessed to have had them as my PT team. LOVE THEM."

"Positive experience receiving services from SCHH - Consistent, timely and professional - follow up of care and progress steady."

"Sue, Tammy, Hope & Josh from SCHH were very helpful and instructive. It was a huge support to have their services - I could not have gotten by as well without them."

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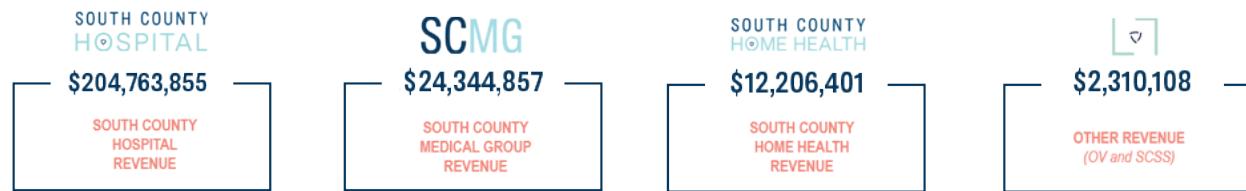
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## FINANCIAL SUMMARY FY2023



### OPERATING REVENUE



### INVESTMENTS INTO OUR COMMUNITY



## SOUTH COUNTY HEALTH FOUNDATION



### CHARITABLE GIVING AND SUPPORT

FY2023 saw opportunities to again gather for some fundraising events including:

- May 18 - Breast Health Ladies Event - A ladies night out at Coast Guard House raised **\$17,500** for the Breast Health Center.
- May 24 - A panel discussion at Newport Tennis Hall of Fame moderated by Dr. Kevin Charpentier with panelists: Dr. Michael Mason and Dr. Akshay Yadhati from Ortho Rhode Island, General Surgeon Theodore Delmonico, MD; South County Radiation Therapy Medical Director, Daniel Fass, MD; Urologist Arnold A. Sarazen, MD, FACS, Chief of Surgery and OB/GYN - Mohamad Hamdi, MD.
- June 14 - Invitational Golf Event – golfers enjoyed a beautiful day at Misquamicut Club while raising over **\$80,000** to support South County Health.
- June 21 – Auxiliary Fashion Show at the Dunes Club – This popular event saw a full capacity crowd enjoying a wonderful lunch and fashion show, and raising over **\$30,000** for the Auxiliary.



Charitable gifts from our community helped to support:

- ED-B Behavioral Health Holding Unit
- Glidescope
- Hercules Patient Positioning System
- Balise Entrance
- UroCuff Pro System
- Care packages for patients in the Cancer Center
- Transportation Assistance
- Housing Assistance



## CIRCLE OF CARE

With 164 members of the Circle of Care, we raised over **\$597,100** for the Annual Fund to be used where needed most. This generosity enables us to remain innovative in our ability to provide the best patient care possible and increase organizational capacity to care for every person who walks through our doors.

## BUSINESS PARTNERS

We have engaged 13 community-based businesses in support of South County Health's mission. Now in its sixth year, the Business Partner program provides an opportunity for local businesses to demonstrate their support for the health and wellness of those in their communities. See a full listing on page 42.

## PLANNED GIVING AND BEQUESTS

Over **\$1,189,597** realized from charitable bequests and planned gifts.



## GRANT SPOTLIGHT

In addition to the generous contributions from individuals and businesses, we received support from 12 grant funders in FY 2023. These foundations collectively donated **\$491,345**, enabling us to enhance the quality of care we provide. We are deeply grateful for their support and are proud to highlight three foundations whose commitment has been particularly impactful.

**Three Angels Fund - \$40,000** plus a \$10,000 matching grant during our employee campaign for the Cancer Center and Breast Health Center.

**Champlin Foundation Grant - \$196,500** grant awarded for telemetry system enhancements, advancing cardiac care capabilities.

- **\$250,000** grant in FY24 for new beds on Borda, Intensive Care and Telemetry Units

**Rhode Island Foundation - \$75,000** grant to support hiring an Advanced Practice Registered Nurse to provide care to patients in our Emergency Department Behavioral Health Holding Unit.



## SOUTH COUNTY HEALTH DONORS

*We are grateful for your support.*

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