

A photograph of two women working in a community garden. In the foreground, a woman with dark curly hair, wearing a tan jumpsuit and floral gloves, is kneeling and smiling while working in a raised garden bed. In the background, another woman in an orange shirt and jeans is also working in a garden bed. The scene is outdoors with lush green plants and a clear sky.

2025 COMMUNITY BENEFIT REPORT

Your Health. Our Promise.

myLRH.org



PRESIDENT + CEO

A Message from Danielle Drummond

Polk County and its neighboring communities continue to rank among the fastest-growing regions in the nation. As our health system expands alongside this growth, our dedicated team members consistently provide essential health services to community members when and where they are needed most. We are honored to serve as our community's health system.

In the third year of our current Community Health Needs Assessment cycle, we remain committed to our mission to deliver the best outcomes and safest care. Our initiatives encompass financial assistance for those unable to afford medically necessary care, a variety of prevention programs in collaboration with

community partners that bring education and screenings into our community's social hubs, and investments aimed at improving access across our expanding community. This work underscores the significant impact of access and community on individual health.

In 2024, we achieved several milestones that reflect our commitment to excellence and community well-being:

- + **Expansion of Services:** We opened our fourth Urgent Care location, enhancing access to immediate care for our growing population.
- + **Recognition in Maternity Care:** Lakeland Regional Health was recognized by *U.S. News & World Report* as High Performing in Maternity Care, specifically for



achieving superior outcomes in cesarean section rates and reducing unexpected newborn complications among Black patients. This recognition highlights our commitment to providing equitable, high-quality care for mothers and newborns.

- + **Technological Advancements:** For the tenth time, we earned the Digital Health Most Wired status, reflecting our commitment to integrating advanced technology to enhance patient care.
- + **Community Engagement:** We deepened our commitment to meaningful community partnerships and proactive health initiatives aimed at improving the well-being of those we serve. Events and programs like EmpowerHer Heart,

Hoopin' for Health, and ShopTalk work to break down barriers to care, providing important screenings in engaging, accessible ways.

Looking ahead, Lakeland Regional Health remains dedicated to enhancing our community's quality of life. We will continue to advance and adapt to better meet the evolving needs of those we serve. We are proud to be **Community Grown. Nationally Known. Just for YOU.**

Danielle Drummond, MS, FACHE

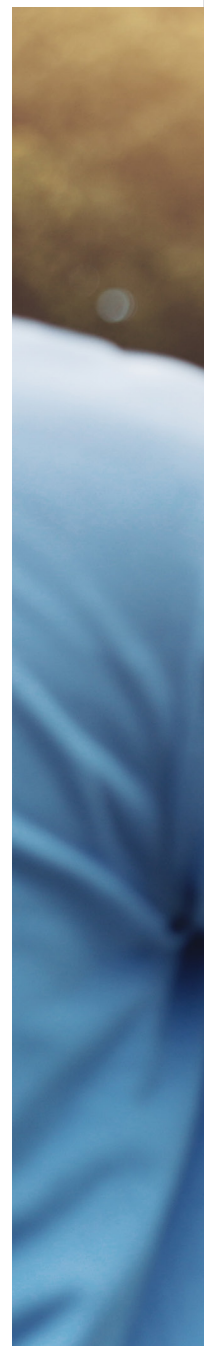
What is Community Benefit?

Community benefit refers to a broad spectrum of initiatives, education, activities, and investments undertaken by not-for-profit hospitals to improve health in the communities they serve.

As part of Lakeland Regional Health's community health program, these charitable programs align directly with our mission to provide high-quality healthcare to every member of our community. Our community benefit activities focus on community collaboration and improving the overall well-being of community residents.

Generally, community benefit must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- + Generates a low or negative financial return
- + Improves access to healthcare services
- + Responds to public health needs
- + Enhances the health of the community
- + Advances medical or health knowledge through education





About Lakeland Regional Health

Lakeland Regional Health has been serving the community since 1916, providing advanced, high-quality care for patients. Lakeland Regional Health offers a comprehensive array of inpatient and outpatient care at its Medical Center, Hollis Cancer Center, Harrell Family Center for Behavioral Wellness, Carol Jenkins Barnett Pavilion for Women and Children, and multiple ambulatory care locations. Lakeland Regional Health's use of technology is redefining medicine, advancing safe and quality patient care, and promoting health and wellness.

Since 2013, Lakeland Regional Health has been named a Most Wired hospital ten times, twice earning Most Wired Advanced status from the College of Healthcare Information Management Executives. These designations recognize the dedication to creating an exceptional infrastructure and advanced clinical processes guided by technology.

Lakeland Regional Health Medical Center is the largest single component of Lakeland Regional Health. The 910-bed hospital is one of the largest in Florida. With more than 55,000 inpatient admissions and nearly 211,000 Emergency Department visits in 2024, the Medical Center encompasses:

- + The nation's second busiest single-site Emergency Department, garnering international and national recognition, and Polk County's only Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, with 30 beds.
- + Three state-of-the-art hybrid operating rooms
- + Only Level II Trauma Center in the tri-county area
- + Nationally accredited Chest Pain Center and Echocardiography Lab
- + Comprehensive Stroke Center, certified by The Joint Commission
- + Bannasch Institute for Advanced Rehabilitation Medicine is Polk County's only CARF-accredited inpatient rehabilitation facility providing inpatient medical physical rehabilitation services to maximize clinical outcomes for those with conditions such as stroke, brain injury, spinal cord injury, major multiple traumas, and neurological issues.
- + Carol Jenkins Barnett Pavilion for Women and Children is an eight-story, state-of-the-art facility featuring a Children's Emergency Department, a 12-bed high-acuity Pediatric Intensive Care Unit, surgical suites, private suites for labor and delivery, Polk County's only Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, and units dedicated to pediatric and women's care. It was named a Level III Maternal Care

Verified Facility by The Joint Commission in 2023 and earned High Performing in Maternity Care from *U.S. News & World Report* in 2024.

- + The Harrell Family Center for Behavioral Wellness is an inpatient behavioral health hospital and outpatient behavioral health clinic that is designed as a place of healing and allows patients a space of comfort, meditation, encouragement, and hope.
- + Lakeland Regional Health Hollis Cancer Center has been accredited by the American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer since 1989. In 2018, Lakeland Regional Health earned its first gold Accreditation with Commendation, the highest level of recognition, from the Commission on Cancer. In 2019, Lakeland Regional Health was awarded the prestigious Commission on Cancer Outstanding Achievement Award. CoC Accreditation is granted only to facilities that have voluntarily committed to providing the best in cancer diagnosis and treatment and complying with established CoC standards. To receive this distinction, a cancer program must undergo a rigorous evaluation and review of its performance and compliance with CoC standards.
- + The Lakeland Regional Health Physician Group provides primary care, specialty care, and urgent care with more than 380 providers in over 40 specialties at more than 25 convenient locations. All primary care locations are recognized by the National Committee for Quality Assurance's Patient-Centered Medical Home Program.

Lakeland Regional Health is an award-winning workplace, rated as a 2020 Making a Difference, Workplace Well-Being Gold Winner by Aetna, honored with the Excellence in Work-Life Balance Award by Constangy, Brooks, Smith & Prophete, LLP in 2019, listed as one of *Forbes'* Best Employers in Florida in 2022, recognized in 2018 as the Best Large Hospital Workplace in Florida by the Florida Hospital Association, and recognized as American's Greatest Workplaces for Diversity and Inclusion and American's Greatest Workplaces for Women in 2024 by *Newsweek*.

Mission

We deliver the best outcomes and safest care by placing people at the heart of all we do. We improve lives every day by promoting wellness, education, and discovery.

Vision

Together, our Promise is YOUR HEALTH.®



Key Accomplishments of 2024

During 2024, thousands of community members were impacted by the work of our team members through the following initiatives, programs, or events:

- + 76 new providers joined Lakeland Regional Health Physician Group in 2024, strengthening our ability to serve a growing patient population.
- + Hosted our second RideSafe event at Bonnet Springs Park and provided bike safety education to over 200 community members!
- + Screened over 1,300 community members through our community health and wellness program.
- + Collaborated with community groups on a variety of health issues including HPV vaccination, prevention screenings, cultural competency, heart health education, and cancer care.







2024 Accreditations, Awards, and Recognitions

This past year our health system was widely recognized by numerous organizations. Each honor is a testament to our team's unwavering commitment to the health of our community.

- + Named High-Performing by *U.S. News & World Report* in Heart Failure Care, Colon Cancer Surgery, Heart Attack Care, Knee Replacement, COPD Care, and Maternity Care (2024-2025)
- + Named Asthma-Friendly Hospital by the Florida Asthma Coalition (2024)
- + Named One of America's Greatest Workplaces for Diversity and Inclusion by *Newsweek* (2024)
- + Named One of America's Greatest Workplaces for Women by *Newsweek* (2024)
- + Anticoagulation Center of Excellence (2024-2027)
- + Get With The Guidelines Stroke Gold Plus Award (2024)
- + Stroke Elite Honor Roll and Type II Diabetes Honor Roll (2024)
- + Recognized for Excellence in Black Maternal Care by *U.S. News and World Report* (2024)

Financial Summary of Community Benefit

Financial Statistics

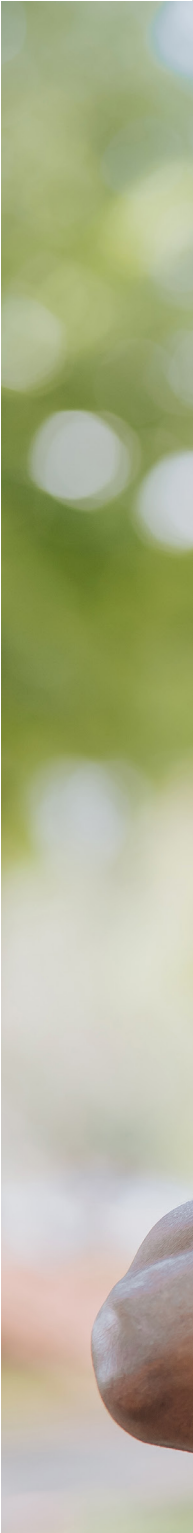
(in thousands)

	2024	2023
Operating Revenue	\$1,315,486	\$1,154,398
Operating Income (Loss)	\$77,874	\$41,191
Excess (Deficit) of Revenue Over Expense	\$206,255	\$91,814
Cost of Providing Charity Care	\$24,061	\$14,949
Cost of Uncompensated Care	\$68,421	\$51,453

Operating Statistics

(in thousands)

	2023	2022
Admissions	51,432	45,392
Surgeries	21,971	21,925
Emergency Visits	211,801	206,902







Community Health Needs Assessment

Lakeland Regional Health understands that everyone does not have an equal opportunity to thrive and be healthy. The environment in which someone lives can have significant effects on their health.

The Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) process identified cultural competence as an overarching priority/ theme that impacts each of the selected priorities. A culturally competent healthcare system can help improve health outcomes and the quality of care while also addressing health disparities present in the community.

Upon review of our county's current health data and as a result of the CHNA process, Lakeland Regional Health has identified the following areas of need:

1. Cultural Competency
2. Access to Quality, Coordinated Care
3. Cancer Screening and Prevention
4. Diabetes
5. Heart Disease and Stroke
6. Injury Prevention
7. Mental Healthcare
8. Obesity, Nutrition, and Physical Activity

Priorities were selected, in part, based on issue prevalence and severity according to county data, in addition to input provided by community members and county stakeholders.

Community Snapshot

Geographic Location

Polk County is geographically larger than the state of Rhode Island and equal in size to Delaware. The total area of the county is approximately 1,796 square miles, which makes it the fourth largest county in Florida, exceeded only by Miami-Dade, Palm Beach, and Collier counties.

13,761

People who benefited from community health education programs and resources

1,300+

Community members who received free health screenings

178

Community members engaged in support groups for cancer, diabetes, weight management, and stroke

Population Demographics

Polk County is home to approximately 818,330 residents. The County consists of 17 municipalities, with Lakeland as its largest city having a population of 122,264 residents (U.S. Census, 2023).

340+

People who received transportation assistance for their cancer care appointments

2,180+

People who engaged in physical activity, fitness programs, or wellness initiatives aimed at promoting movement and overall well-being





Addressing Community Needs

2022-2025 Community Health Needs Assessment

2024 Progress

Cultural Competency

- + Hosted the 2nd Annual Thrive University program — a month-long education program committed to providing cultural competency education for our team members. Topics covered: microaggressions, equitable and responsive healthcare, racism, and emotional intelligence.
- + Team members united to serve organizations across the county during our annual MLK Day of Service.

Access to Quality, Coordinated Care

- + 76 new providers joined Lakeland Regional Health Physician Group in 2024, strengthening our ability to serve a growing patient population.
- + 110,000+ annual primary care visits, ensuring accessible, comprehensive healthcare for our community.
- + 26,000+ annual visits in pediatric care, supporting the well-being of children and families.
- + Enhanced telehealth access with the addition of a dedicated primary care telehealth provider, increasing convenience and accessibility.
- + Established a Memory Care Disorder Clinic within the Lake Miriam Primary Care location, offering specialized care for patients with cognitive impairments.
- + Launched a Transitional Care Medicine Clinic at Gateway to support patients post-hospitalization and reduce readmission rates.
- + Expanded capacity at Morrell Internal Medicine, ensuring access to care for patients regardless of their ability to pay.
- + Introduced new Graduate Medical Education programs, including:
 - + A newly accredited Pulmonary and Critical Care Fellowship to advance specialized training in respiratory and critical care medicine.
 - + A newly added Neurosurgery Fellowship, enhancing expertise in complex neurological care.
- + Increased our residency program to 121 residents, further strengthening our commitment to training the next generation of healthcare professionals.

Cancer Screening and Prevention

- + Provided transportation assistance to 347 patients for their cancer care appointments, made possible by a grant from the American Cancer Society.
- + Received the Jean Byers Award for Excellence in Cancer Registration and the Pat Strait Award for Excellence in Cancer Abstracting from the State of Florida.
- + A Hollis Nurse Navigation program was established to assist patients in obtaining the health services needed for optimal outcomes.
- + There are 175 patients enrolled in clinical trials and 186 patients in follow-up with 27 open trials including breast, prostate, pancreas, and observation.
- + Improved Nutritional Screening using methods such as the Subjective Global Assessment used to identify and address nutritional deficits in patients at significant nutritional risk.
- + 20+ education sessions delivered to community members regarding diabetes and preventive measures.
- + Conducted 250+ blood glucose screenings as part of the ShopTalk program, a barbershop health education and screening initiative.

Diabetes

- + Awarded the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association's (AHA/ASA) Get with The Guidelines® Target Stroke Honor Roll Elite and Type 2 Diabetes Honor Roll, recognizing our dedication to improving patient outcomes.



Heart Disease and Stroke

- + Achieved National Recognition:
 - + Obtained The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval® and the American Stroke Association's and American Heart Association's Heart-Check Mark for Comprehensive Stroke Certification, reinforcing our commitment to excellence in stroke care.
 - + Awarded the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association's (AHA/ASA) Get with The Guidelines® Target Stroke Honor Roll Elite and Type 2 Diabetes Honor Roll, recognizing our dedication to improving patient outcomes.
- + Empowering Patients & Caregivers:
 - + Hosted a monthly Stroke Support Group for survivors and caregivers, providing education, resources, and peer support.
 - + Launched the first-ever StrokeCare Summit, bringing together healthcare professionals and community members to advance stroke awareness and care.
 - + Held the inaugural Stride for Life Stroke Awareness Walk on World Stroke Day, celebrating stroke survivors, caregivers, and healthcare teams.
- + Expanding Community Outreach & Prevention:
 - + Provided health screenings at multiple community health events throughout the year, increasing access to early detection and prevention.
 - + Hosted the first EmpowerHer Heart event at Bonnet Springs Park, raising awareness about women's heart health and empowering the community to take charge of their cardiovascular well-being.
- + Continued the community partnership with the Center for Independent Living (CIL) to assist with post-discharge Fall Prevention: 544 patients agreed to a free in-home assessment and 244 patients have received services such as grab bars, rug tape, shower tape, and LED motion detector lights.

Injury Prevention

- + The Bike and Pedestrian Safety Task Force assisted with Back-to-School programs in May, July, and August of 2024. This task force was able to assist students with bicycle safety education and ensure they were properly fitted with a helmet. 435 helmets were distributed. (Lakeland Regional Health's Trauma Support Service's Coalition on Injury Prevention)
- + We participated in RideSafe at Bonnet Springs Park — a community event dedicated to promoting bike safety through proper helmet use.
- + As a part of our SunSmart Summer program, we delivered water safety education to over 150 community members.
- + The Stop the Bleed program saw participation from over 130 community members.

Mental Health Care

- + Trained and Engaged First Responders: Conducted tours and provided Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) to 375 law enforcement officers and 911 dispatchers from Polk, Highlands, and Hardee counties, enhancing their ability to support individuals in crisis.
- + Delivered presentations on mental health awareness and resources at community events, including:
 - + Leadership Polk
 - + Southeastern University Wellness Event
 - + Multiple sessions for Polk County Public Schools Mental Health Professionals
- + Investing in the Next Generation of Mental Health Professionals: Hosted bachelor's and master's level Behavioral Health interns from multiple local colleges, providing hands-on training and mentorship.
- + Increased our Peer Recovery Specialist team, now offering additional group therapy and seven-day-a-week coverage across medical floors, the Emergency Department (ED), and Behavioral Health locations.
- + Enhanced Addiction Treatment Services: Launched Medication-Assisted Therapy (MAT) for opioid use disorder in the LRH ED, ensuring patients receive immediate support and follow-up with a community-based peer recovery specialist.
- + Strengthened Post-Discharge Support: Introduced a weekly aftercare group for patients transitioning from HFCBW programs, reinforcing long-term recovery and wellness.
- + Participated in mental health and advocacy events, including:
 - + Child Welfare Provider Fair
 - + Alzheimer's Walk
 - + Polk Vision Mental Health Symposium

Obesity, Nutrition, and Physical Activity

- + More than 600 community members engaged in fitness classes conducted by our wellness partner, the YMCA of West Central Florida, and through our Summer Dance Series with Bonnet Springs Park.
- + 20+ opportunities for community members to engage in walking meet-ups at local parks and nutrition education.
- + 176 community members took part in our Get Active virtual challenge, where daily steps were measured to promote physical activity.
- + 7 teams participated in the 2024 Congregational Health Partnership's FitChurch Challenge.

EmpowerHer Heart:

A Community Collaboration for Women's Heart Health

Heart disease remains the leading cause of death for women in the U.S., and Black women face even greater disparities in heart health outcomes due to factors such as delayed diagnoses, limited access to care, and higher rates of hypertension. Recognizing the need for awareness and prevention, Lakeland Regional Health partnered with Bonnet Springs Park and Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated® (AKA) to host the EmpowerHer Heart event, a community-driven initiative aimed at educating, screening, and empowering women to take charge of their heart health.

This collaboration was intentional — partnering with AKA, a historically Black sorority, allowed us to reach and engage Black women in a meaningful and trusted way, ensuring that heart health education was not only accessible but also culturally relevant. Bonnet Springs Park provided the perfect setting for a holistic approach to wellness, integrating fitness, education, and direct access to healthcare in a way that made prevention approachable and impactful.

At EmpowerHer Heart, attendees had the opportunity to receive on-site health screenings, including blood pressure, cholesterol, and glucose checks. What made this event unique was the immediate access to healthcare providers who were available on-site to review results, answer questions, and offer guidance on next steps, ensuring that participants left with not just knowledge but also an action plan.

Beyond screenings, the event emphasized movement and physical well-being, featuring a fitness session that encouraged women to engage in heart-healthy exercise. Through this partnership, we reinforced the message that heart health is a community priority, and by working together, we can close the gap on disparities and empower women to live healthier lives.





Hoopin' for Health:

Where Basketball, Community, and Screenings Meet

At Lakeland Regional Health, we believe that health and wellness should be accessible, engaging, and fun. That's why we teamed up with the West Central Florida YMCA to launch Hoopin' for Health, a 3v3 basketball tournament that not only brings the community together for a day of competition but also provides health screenings and education for men — a group that often delays preventive care.

Obesity and chronic disease remain significant health concerns in our community, and access to fitness, nutrition, and health screenings plays a crucial role in prevention. Hoopin' for Health was designed to bridge the gap by creating a space where men of all ages could engage in a sport they love while also taking an important step toward better health.

Throughout the event, participants and attendees were encouraged to get their basic health numbers checked, including blood pressure, cholesterol, and glucose levels. Our motto for the event — “You know your sports stats, but do you know your own numbers?” — underscores the importance of prioritizing personal health just as much as athletic performance.

Through this tournament, we were able to connect health with fitness in a way that resonates with our community. The event reinforces that wellness isn't just about doctor visits — it's about staying active, building healthy habits, and having fun in the process. Hoopin' for Health is more than a tournament; it's a movement toward a healthier, more engaged community, where sports and screenings go hand in hand.

Morrell Clinic | Primary Care

Training the Next Generation of Physicians, Caring for Our Community

Exceptional healthcare starts with access to trusted, high-quality primary care. Morrell Clinic represents our commitment to innovative, patient-centered medicine and the training of the next generation of physicians through our Graduate Medical Education (GME) program. With same-day appointments and walk-in care, we are expanding access to primary care for our patients (18+).

Morrell Clinic is uniquely staffed by resident physicians — highly trained medical doctors who are completing advanced training in family and internal medicine under the guidance of experienced faculty. These dedicated physicians bring the latest medical knowledge, evidence-based practices, and a passion for patient care to every visit. With a focus on preventive care, chronic disease management, and personalized treatment plans, our residents ensure that patients receive comprehensive, compassionate, and forward-thinking care tailored to their needs.

Patients at Morrell Clinic benefit from the collaborative, team-based approach that defines academic medicine. Each resident works closely with board-certified attending physicians, providing an added layer of expertise and oversight. This structure ensures that patients receive not only innovative and up-to-date treatments but also the personalized attention and continuity of care that are essential to building strong, long-term provider-patient relationships.

Beyond individual care, Morrell Clinic plays a vital role in expanding healthcare access across our community. By increasing capacity and offering services for patients of all abilities to pay, this clinic serves as a bridge to coordinated care in a space that becomes the patient's medical home. The integration of Lakeland Regional Health's resources, specialty services, and community partnerships allows our resident physicians to connect patients with the broader network of care they need to thrive.

At its heart, Morrell Clinic is about investing in both the future of medicine and the well-being of our community today. By training tomorrow's healthcare leaders while delivering compassionate, expert-driven primary care, we are ensuring that every patient has an advocate, a partner, and a trusted provider by their side — now and for years to come.





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