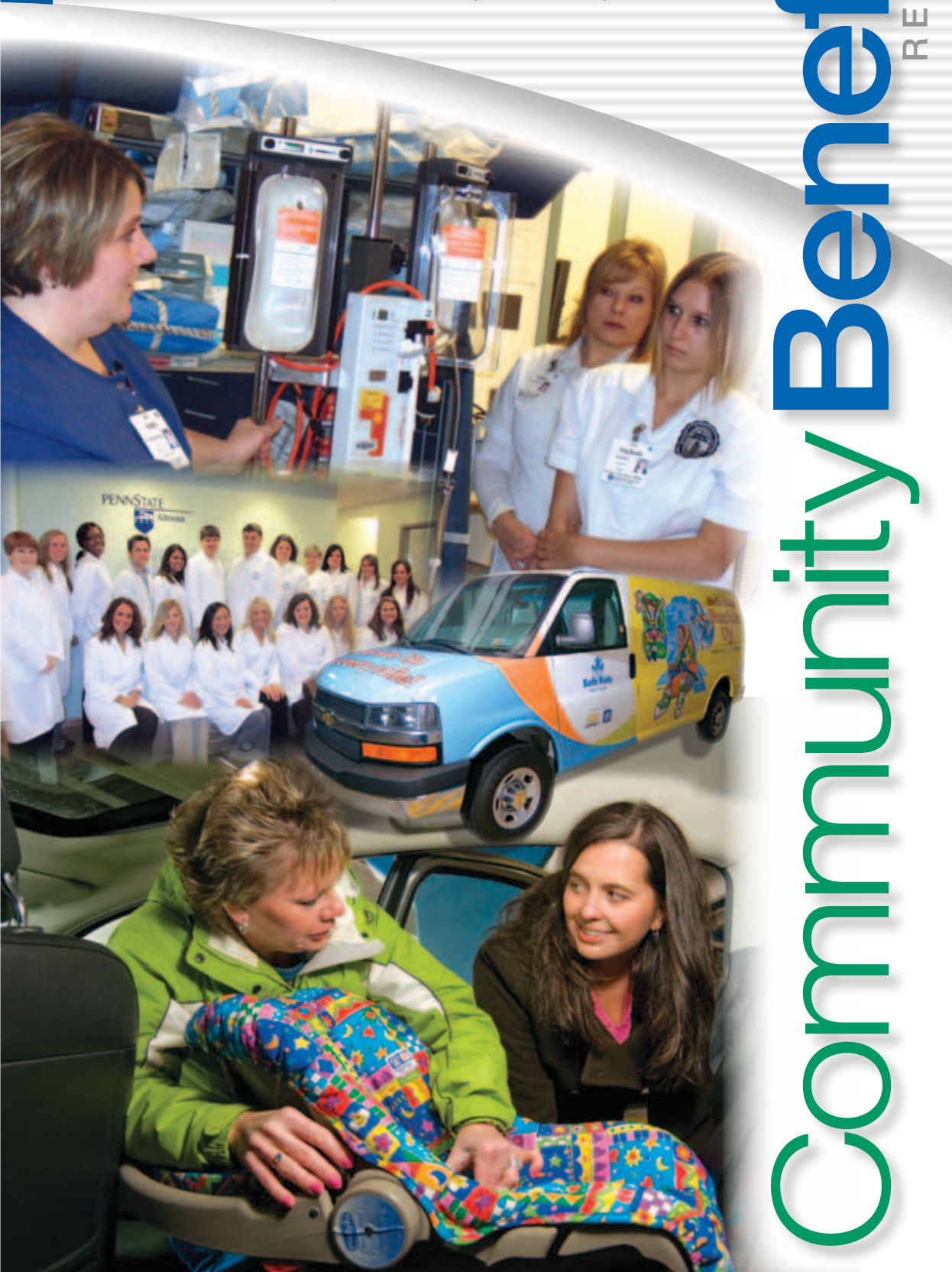




Altoona Regional Health System

A nonprofit community health care system



Community Benefit REPORT

A strong quality and service ethic

Welcome to Altoona Regional's Community Benefit Report for fiscal 2010.*

We are a nonprofit health care organization dedicated to providing tangible community benefit. Our goals are to:

- Increase health care access
- Reduce disparities in the health care system
- Champion the causes of those who face obstacles in their daily lives

We feel it is our obligation, given our tremendous people and resources, to reach into the community to meet the needs of those we serve. And we serve all, regardless of ability to pay.

To qualify as community benefit, all programs and services included in this report meet at least one of the following universally recognized criteria:

- Generate a low or negative margin
- Respond to needs of special populations, such as people living in poverty and other disenfranchised persons
- Supply services or programs that would likely be discontinued or would need to be provided by another nonprofit or government provider if the decision was made on a purely financial basis
- Respond to public health needs
- Involve education or research that improves overall community health

Altoona Regional exists solely for the well-being of the community and believes in a strong quality and service ethic. Year after year we embrace that ethic. I am happy to report these results to you.

Sincerely,



Jerry Murray
President/CEO



Meeting the need for health professionals



The first class in Penn State Altoona's Bachelor of Science in Nursing (second degree option) graduated in December 2010. Class members received much of their clinical training at Altoona Regional.

Altoona Regional cooperates with a number of local colleges and universities to provide essential sites for the clinical education of nursing students in the area.

By providing clinical sites, Altoona Regional is playing a major role in the education of future nurses and helping reduce the impact of the nursing shortage in our area.

A school with one of the highest numbers of nursing students gaining clinical experience at Altoona Regional is Penn State Altoona. Both associate degree and bachelor's second degree option students attend clinical at Altoona Regional.

Suzanne Kuhn, who has a Ph.D. in nursing and is coordinator of nursing programs at Penn State Altoona, reports that there are 80 to 90 nursing students per week completing clinical assignments at Altoona Regional.

"The clinical experiences are an integral part of their education. It is an opportunity for the students to put theory into practice and it gives them hands-on experience," Dr. Kuhn said.

She explained that the students start the clinical portion of their education within the first few weeks of their nursing classes by completing basic nursing skills, then progress to the more-complex procedures. As their education continues, so do the opportunities to provide direct patient care.

The nursing students complete clinical rotations on medical-surgical units as well as pediatrics, obstetrics, psychiatric and intensive care units.

Dr. Kuhn said the diverse clinical experiences are vital to the students and having Altoona Regional as a clinical partner is invaluable to the nursing program at Penn State Altoona.

Altoona Regional also partners with the University Park campus of Penn State, Mount Aloysius College in Cresson, St. Francis University in Loretto, Findlay University of Ohio and the Greater Altoona Career and Technology Center to help educate and train future health care providers. The health system has in-house programs in Medical Technology/Clinical Laboratory Science and Nuclear Medicine.

Trauma educator aims to reduce teen traffic deaths

Distracted driving is the No. 1 killer of American teenagers, and the major cause is cell phone use, both talking and texting.

When Amy Stayer relates these statistics to students in driver education classes, many admit to using cell phones in the car. After her presentation, including a video that graphically displays some of the consequences of distracted driving, the students agree to stop using their cell phones while driving.

This program, which Amy presents to young drivers every opportunity she gets, is just one of many prevention programs she has created as the trauma educator/injury prevention coordinator at Altoona Regional.

“One of the aspects of my job is to recognize injury prevention needs and provide appropriate educational programs for the community,” Amy said.

The Trauma Center is required by the Pennsylvania Trauma Systems Foundation to provide education to the community as part of its annual accreditation, explained Denise Gdula, Trauma Service administrative director.

“Even if it was not required, we feel strongly that part of our commitment is to be a leader in the community and provide necessary trauma education/prevention programs,” Denise said.

Amy and other Trauma Service staff continually review local statistics to determine what injuries are on the rise during various times of year, then craft programs to address the needs. Along with education on the dangers of distracted driving, these topics have also been presented recently:

- Hunting safety focusing on preventing falls from tree stands
- Sports concussions
- Underage and binge drinking
- Importance of proper seatbelt use

Amy plans more presentations at local high schools on distracted driving as well as on sports concussions.

“We get such positive feedback from students and parents,” she said. “Our goal is to heighten student, parent and teacher awareness of risky behaviors that definitely increase the likelihood of traumatic injury.”

Trauma educator Amy Stayer instructs Mount Aloysius nursing students on the use of equipment in the Altoona Regional Trauma Service treatment rooms.





Safe Kids Blair County coordinator Sherry Turchetta (left) demonstrates the proper way to secure a child safety seat at one of the many lifesaving safety-seat checks the group performs in the community. Altoona Regional is the lead agency for Safe Kids Blair County, providing financial accountability, office space, support and the coordinator position.

Altoona Regional Health System has been the lead agency for Safe Kids Blair County since 1992. Safe Kids is a national effort to educate parents on the increased risk of unintentional injuries to children.

Altoona Regional is one of 318 national coalitions making local Safe Kids programs possible through funding and other assistance. As the lead agency, the health system offers financial accountability, office space, support and a coordinator position.

“Safe Kids strives to prevent unnecessary harm to children 14 and younger, mainly educating adults and children on the risk of car-pedestrian injuries, but also fires and burns, poisoning, drowning and choking,” explained Sherry Turchetta, Safe Kids Blair County coordinator and Altoona Regional employee.

Altoona Regional and Safe Kids have educated parents of young children not only in Blair County but in surrounding areas that don’t have the opportunity to establish a Safe Kids program.

“Safe Kids Buckle Up” and a National Child Passenger Safety Technician certification program have spread the education well beyond Blair County’s borders. Safe Kids obtained a \$50,000 Mobile Car Seat Check-up Van through a grant from National Safe Kids in Washington, D.C., in 1994. The van travels to six counties — Blair, Bedford, Huntingdon, Centre, Cambria and Fulton — teaching parents how to travel safely with children and properly secure child safety seats.

Altoona Regional also supports a yearly class to certify child passenger safety technicians.

“This is a national four-day course that certifies personnel such as policemen, firemen and interested community partners providing education in child passenger safety to take into their own communities,” Sherry said.

All of these lifesaving programs are only possible because of Altoona Regional’s support.

“Without the assistance and support that Altoona Regional Health System provides, Safe Kids Blair County not only wouldn’t be as successful as we are but likely would not be here at all,” Sherry said.

Community Benefit

FOR FISCAL 2010

We provide free and discounted care (charity care) to the poor and people with no insurance.

As a nonprofit community health care system, our mission is to care for everyone. We offer charity care according to a patient's ability to pay.

Community Benefit \$1,868,114

We provide health care under government programs even though the government pays us less than what the care costs.

Very often, care for low-income and uninsured or underinsured people covered by programs like Medicaid (Medical Assistance) and the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) is more expensive to give than the payment we receive from the government. We receive no payment for the difference but remain committed to caring for anyone in need.

Community Benefit \$13,796,868

We provide programs and services to help all people lead safer, healthier, happier lives and to care for them in times of crisis.

Space does not permit a full listing of these programs and services, but they include:

- Community education classes such as our Safe Sitter child-care courses; many programs by physicians on dealing with various conditions and diseases, as well as on achieving and maintaining better health; free child safety-seat checkups, and more.
- Support groups that help people deal with Alzheimer's disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes, grief, mental health issues, caring for an ill loved one, and more.
- Self-help programs, such as classes on exercise, nutrition and quitting smoking.
- Screenings for osteoporosis, depression, high blood pressure, hepatitis, stroke, heart disease, colon cancer and more.
- Free health care for people with no insurance or not enough insurance through our Partnering for Health Services medical clinic.

Community Benefit \$1,435,758

We provide education and training programs to prepare future health care professionals for our community.

We support the Altoona Family Physicians residency program and local universities and colleges in the training of nurses and other health professionals.

Community Benefit \$812,820

We provide the community with critical services despite a financial loss.

Our community has specialized health care needs that only we provide. These needs include services such as trauma and emergency care, women's health care, renal dialysis, transitional care and behavioral health.

Community Benefit \$3,454,003

We support people and groups in the community.

In addition to contributing to events and organizations that improve the community's health, we allow them the use of our meeting rooms, supplies and parking areas. We donate food to the local food banks. We provide assistance to important community services like the homeless shelter, domestic abuse shelter, CONTACT Altoona, and many more, and provide people who need these services with information and referrals. Some of the events we sponsor include the Blair Unit of the American Cancer Society's Daffodil Days and Relay For Life. We also provide free emergency care at local events.

Community Benefit \$428,857

We help make our community a better place to live and work.

In big and small ways, we support causes that, although not always directly related to health care, provide chances to address the root causes of health problems, such as poverty and homelessness.

We also show our dedication to the community through our efforts in disaster preparedness and local, state and national support for better access to health care.

We offer regular sign language classes to break down communication barriers among community populations.

Community Benefit \$42,636

We supply the staff and funds necessary to ensure exceptional service to the community and its people.

As a health care system and one of the area's largest employers, we are committed to providing value to the region we serve. Therefore, we dedicate staff time to ensuring that we provide high quality services and programs toward the betterment of the people of our area, collectively and individually. As examples, we maintain full-time staff to help people find doctors, provide community education, and make our children safer and our older people more independent and secure.

Community Benefit \$139,232

Subtotal \$21,978,288

Bad debt/Uncompensated care \$ 4,973,676

(Some or all could be classified as charity care)

Medicare shortfall \$ 8,546,989

(Difference between cost of care and reimbursement)

Total \$35,498,953

Number of people served: 93,592



Altoona Hospital Campus
620 Howard Avenue
Altoona, PA 16601-4899

**Bon Secours
Hospital Campus**
2500 7th Avenue
Altoona, PA 16602-2099



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Health System**

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814.889.2011

www.altoonaregional.org