

2022-2023

Community Impact Highlights



Washington



The American Heart Association's health equity efforts aim to dismantle systemic barriers that impede opportunities for optimal heart and brain health. Alongside local community and clinic leaders, we unite in our pursuit to build more equitable avenues to health. Throughout Washington State, our efforts to increase access to nutritious, culturally relevant foods, build and strengthen systems of care to identify and treat high blood pressure and tobacco and e-cigarette education and prevention have impacted the lives of millions of Washingtonians.

YEAR IN REVIEW

170,000 

As a result of our collaborative health initiatives throughout the year, nearly 170,000 people are able to access services and resources that improve health, including nutritious food, tools to manage high blood pressure and higher quality, lower-barrier health care.

34 

We've united with clinical and community organizations to enact sustainable health improvements through policy, systems and environmental changes. Through 34 projects, we help combat health inequities among local communities.

42,000 

We've made a concerted effort to reach individuals who face compounding barriers to resources and services based on where they live. Within communities designated as rural or USDA food deserts, we reached nearly 42,000 people who face an elevated risk of cardiovascular disease.



Blood Pressure Control

Research shows that Korean Americans experience higher rates of hypertension than other Americans or Korean individuals living in Korea. Language barriers, a lack of culturally congruent medical care and lower awareness of risk factors may contribute to this disparity.

To help bridge the gap, the American Heart Association collaborated with Advanced FamilyCare Medicine in Lakewood, a clinic working to shift this paradigm by providing linguistically and culturally appropriate care to Korean American patients, to integrate a self-measured blood pressure (SMBP) program.

To account for barriers, including transportation or the inability to afford a blood pressure device, the Association provided validated blood pressure devices for use during the duration of patients' one-month self-measuring program.

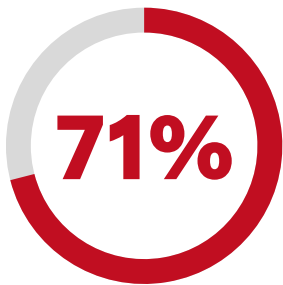
Translated resources in Korean and Target: BP guidance equip Advanced FamilyCare to train patients on how to measure blood pressure accurately, understand blood pressure readings and make lifestyle changes to lower high blood pressure.

"Now that we can lend patients blood pressure monitors, they are more likely to track and report their numbers during their follow up visit. This translates to better outcomes." Dr. Junghee "Julie" Che, DNP



"The partnership with the American Heart Association has given me the confidence to invite residents to learn how to check their own blood pressure to ensure that they are involved in their own care."
Jarvis Betts, Behavioral Health Navigator at Urban League

Impact Snapshot



70,000



Through our evidence-based quality improvement program for high blood pressure, Target: BP, 122 clinics touched the lives of over 1.5 million patients, resulting in a collective blood pressure control rate of 71%.

People were reached through blood pressure screening and referral, self-measured programs and team-based policies within clinics.

72% of Hard Hats with Heart participants reported healthier blood pressure numbers through self-measurement and lifestyle modifications.

Blood Pressure Vision

Blood pressure control rates vary greatly depending on where patients receive care. Our 3-year goal is to achieve 75% blood pressure control across all participating clinics and health centers. We will specifically focus on increasing blood pressure control within community health centers that serve historically under-resourced populations.

Nutrition Security



"Providing access to culturally relevant food is a reflection of love in this neighborhood."
Crystal Brown, Executive Director, Cultivate South Park



"The addition of the fridge has greatly improved our client experience and enables us to strengthen relationships with local farms." Adrienne Hall, Administrative Director of Darrington Food Bank Foundation.

Cultivating a Healthier South Park

The South Park neighborhood of Seattle, while rich with global knowledge of food and agricultural practices, is a USDA designated food desert. Residents also disproportionately lack other basics like clean air, clean water, safe sidewalks and financial opportunity when compared to other areas of Seattle.

These challenges are a result of racially driven practices that hinder opportunities for health and prosperity. Consequently, South Park residents experience higher rates of heart disease, diabetes, cancer and mental illness than other Seattle neighborhoods.

Cultivate South Park, a resident-led community development organization mobilizes volunteers and advocates to co-create a more equitable South Park. Their Urban Fresh Food Collective ensures hundreds of households have easily accessible, no-cost food and hygiene supplies.

By leveraging Cultivate’s lived experiences, we co-developed a nutrition policy and increased their capacity to provide more produce and perishable cultural food staples.

After we invested funding for a commercial refrigerator, we guided the development of a nutrition policy that guides Cultivate’s food provisions and mobilizes their dedication to social justice by increasing the abundance of healthy foods that reflect the many cultures that make up South Park.

These efforts help to address the neighborhood’s most prevalent health inequities for nearly 2,500 residents each month.

Impact Snapshot

100,000

People impacted by our efforts to increase nutrition security. Projects included community-informed nutrition policies, systems to identify food insecurity and refer to resources and capacity building to store and distribute fruits and vegetables.

Other key contributions:

- ✓ Supported eight Tacoma Metro Parks Mobile Teaching Kitchen sessions engaging 250 families and seniors in heart healthy cooking.
- ✓ Provided spices to local food access organizations to equip clients with ingredients to create flavorful, culturally familiar meals.
- ✓ Worked alongside the Washington Food Coalition to develop nutrition policies with their member food programs. We also developed a suite of educational resources to distribute to 70 food programs across the state.
- ✓ Extended comprehensive support, funding and staffing for a Summer Meals program in Tukwila, made possible by Apex Foundation.
- ✓ Shared best-practice nutrition security project guidance with American Heart Association colleagues through our Healthier Communities through Nutrition Security project, made possible by Costco.



Saving & Improving Lives

School Engagement



Physical and emotional well-being are foundations for heart health. In Washington, over 23,986 students across 415 schools participated in the American Heart Association’s school-based programs, [Kids Heart Challenge](#) and American Heart Challenge. 3,322 students completed Finn's Mission which equips them to take care of their health and emotional well-being by moving more, being kind, funding lifesaving research and learning Hands-Only CPR and stroke warning signs.

Tackling Youth Tobacco and Vaping



More than 1 in 5 high school students in Washington State report using an e-cigarette in the last 30 days. Our collaborations and advocacy efforts help break the cycle of addiction.

Key contributions:

- Collaborated with the Association of Washington Student Leaders on a series of student-led dialogues sharing youth perspectives on vaping to identify strategies for adult stakeholders.
- Worked with local school districts to advocate for policies that support comprehensive quitting strategies that fight back against Big Tobacco's targeted marketing to youth.
- Joined federal advocacy efforts to ban the sale of flavored and menthol products.

CPR



212,498

Washingtonians trained in Hands-Only CPR

50

Adult and Child CPR Anytime® Kits placed in historically excluded communities through Sea Mar Community Health Center in South Seattle.

With the support of generous donors, our community engaged in Hands-Only CPR education at the Puget Sound Heart and Stroke Walk events in October, Be the Beat Go Red for Women Experience in March, through the Hands-Only CPR Training Kiosk at Sea-Tac Airport as well as content in local media outlets and social media.

What’s ahead

We have exciting new projects underway, including cardiac emergency response plans, a focus on maternal health outcomes, mental well-being initiatives and more. If you'd like to collaborate, please contact puget.sound@heart.org.

TOGETHER, WE ARE A RELENTLESS
FORCE FOR A WORLD OF LONGER,
HEALTHIER LIVES.



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