



# **Wellness Neighborhood**

*A Service of Tahoe Forest Health System*



**Annual Report  
FY2020**

# Wellness Neighborhood & Community Health

Since its inception in 2012, the Wellness Neighborhood has cultivated an integrated network of outreach, education, and multi-tiered programming to support the health system, primary and specialty care, and the community. We excel in problem solving and adapting to changing circumstances while bringing compassion, expertise, and action to all we do. We ensure collective impact by working collaboratively with multiple health system departments, local non-profits, and government agencies.

During fiscal year 2020 we demonstrated continued growth and refinement of our services with an enhanced focus on health inequities. This meant launching the system-wide Zero Suicide Initiative, supporting Primary Care and Specialty Clinics with streamlined Navigation services, providing **2,672** community health and education events reaching **19,023** people, and expanding services for our Spanish-speaking population through the Promotoras and culturally-relevant social media outreach.



We responded to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic with rapid evolution by transitioning to virtual platforms for counseling and education within a week of shelter-in-place requirements. To support our technologically-challenged community members, we developed tip sheets and provided support telephonically on how to access and navigate these now ubiquitous online platforms while advocating for multilingual outreach on all possible avenues.

We were able to maintain core programming while beginning new initiatives to support patient safety, and we continue to experiment with patient engagement strategies as we enter FY2021.

***The Wellness Neighborhood provides inspiration, expertise and advocacy in making meaningful change for individuals, our community and our health system.***

## Community Health Needs Assessment

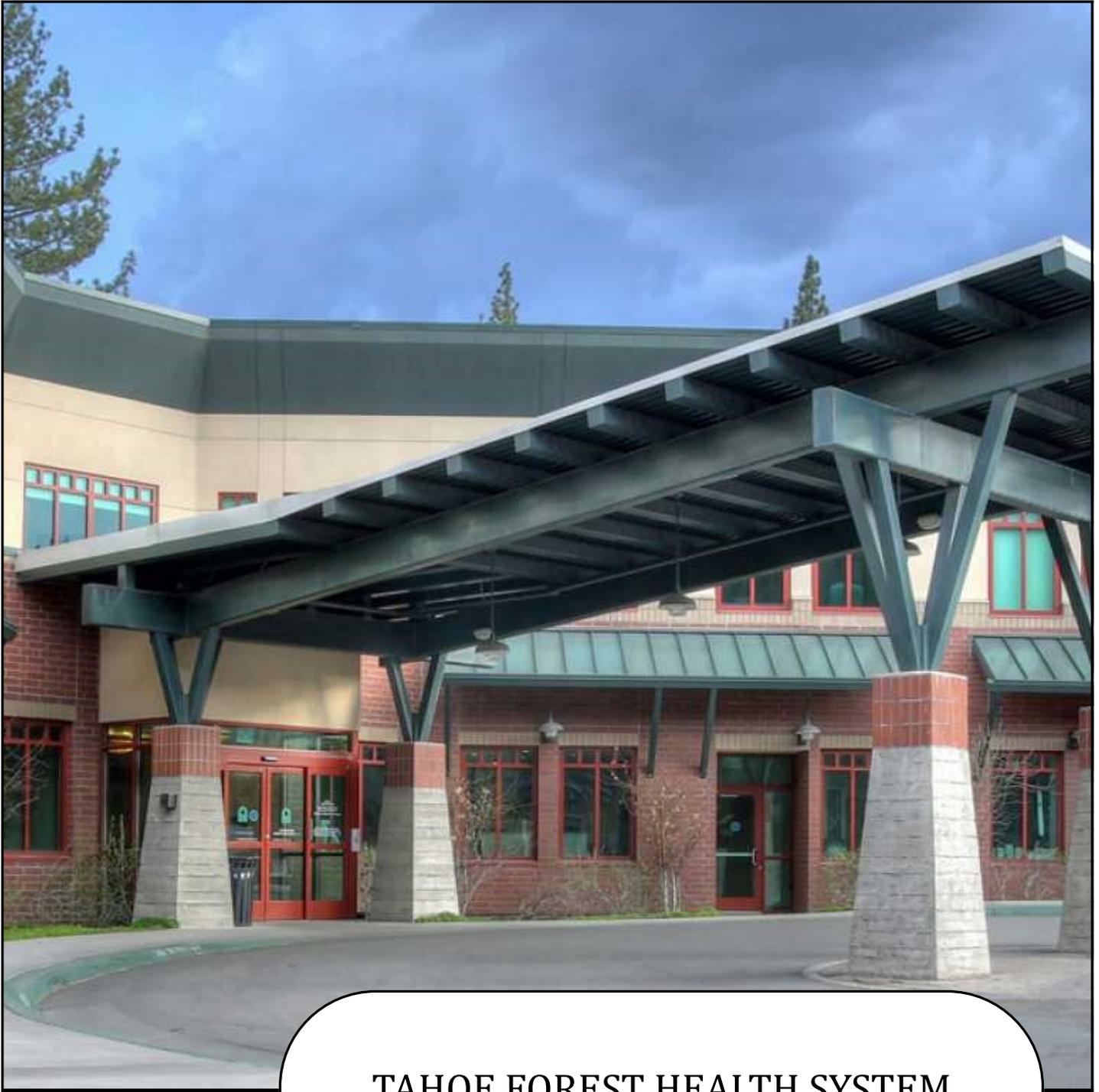
The Wellness Neighborhood conducts a triennial Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) and develops collaborative strategies and targeted programming based on these identified needs. The 2017 CHNA identified the most significant health risks, in terms of the number of people affected and the amount of death and disability each creates, to be related to substance use, mental health, and being obese/overweight, including behaviors such as diet and exercise. On par with these findings, health conditions such as high cholesterol, high blood pressure, and poor heart health were found to affect more people in 2017 than in previous CHNA surveys. The 2020 CHNA was postponed due to COVID and is scheduled to be conducted in 2021.

**The 2017 CHNA (and previous surveys) support interventions to address the following key focus areas:**

[2018 Community Health Improvement Plan](#)

· **Mental/Behavioral Health** · **Chronic Disease** · **Substance Misuse** · **Prevention and Wellness**

*The initiatives and outcomes presented in this document are intended to highlight programming for population health management. This is not an exhaustive list of all Wellness Neighborhood & Community Health programs.*



## TAHOE FOREST HEALTH SYSTEM

The **Wellness Neighborhood** supports the **Health System** by identifying and addressing community health needs and disparities, seeking and managing grant funding, and responding to needs through community engagement, collaboration, leadership, and program development.

# Grant Funding and Management

## Grant Funding and Management

As a driver of population health, the Wellness Neighborhood has the responsibility, capacity and expertise to seek funding opportunities to address gaps in health services and community needs. Wellness supports the grant lifecycle with program development, implementation, data analytics, evaluation, reporting, and oversight.

### FY2020 Grants:

HRSA - Behavioral Health Integration into Primary Care Quality Improvement Grant

PRIME/QIP – Million Hearts, Chronic Pain, Diabetes/Behavioral Health

AEGIS/SOR2 –Medication Assisted Treatment Program

NEOP – Nutrition interventions targeted to the SNAP-eligible population (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)

## Community Grants

The Wellness Neighborhood supported local community organizations in addressing youth mental health needs, health disparities, and substance misuse through **\$128,000** in community grants.

# Community Engagement and Collaboration

The Wellness Neighborhood leads and participates in multiple **Collaborative Community Partnerships** - leveraging our resources by working together to address diverse community health needs.



### COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS:

- Dental Coalition
- Suicide Prevention Coalition
- Youth Health Initiative
- Immunization Coalition
- Diabetes Task Force
- Crisis Team
- Vaping Task Force
- Sierra Community House
- Community Collaborative of Tahoe Truckee
- TTUSD Wellness Committee
- Cancer Committee
- Truckee Tahoe Perinatal Outreach Team
- Tahoe Truckee Future Without Drug Dependence
- Gateway Mountain Center
- Placer County Nutrition Action Partnership
- Behavioral Health Advisory Group

# ZERO Suicide

IN HEALTH AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE



Everyone can help prevent suicide and save lives.  
 Suicide is not inevitable.  
 You can make a difference.

## Zero Suicide is:

- A system-wide approach to safer suicide care through comprehensive **policies and procedures**, **training** a competent, confident and caring workforce, and **universal screenings** to identify risk
- The awareness that everyone can help prevent suicide and save lives
- Stigma reduction to improve access to care

In September 2019, the Wellness Neighborhood began a collaboration with the state of Nevada to implement Zero Suicide throughout TFHS. A survey conducted in November 2019 gathered baseline data on knowledge and beliefs around suicide prevention. We identified that **74%** of TFHS providers and staff believe suicide prevention is important, however only **29%** agreed that TFHS had clear policies and procedures in place around system-wide suicide prevention, and only **19%** had received training at TFHS related to suicide prevention.

Zero Suicide milestones for FY20, included convening a multi-departmental Zero Suicide Leadership Team (including Education, Human Resources, Wellness, Primary Care, Behavioral Health, Emergency, and Change Management representatives) to participate in the Zero Suicide Academy, developing and refining policies and procedures, and identifying training options to reach 100% of providers and staff in 2021.

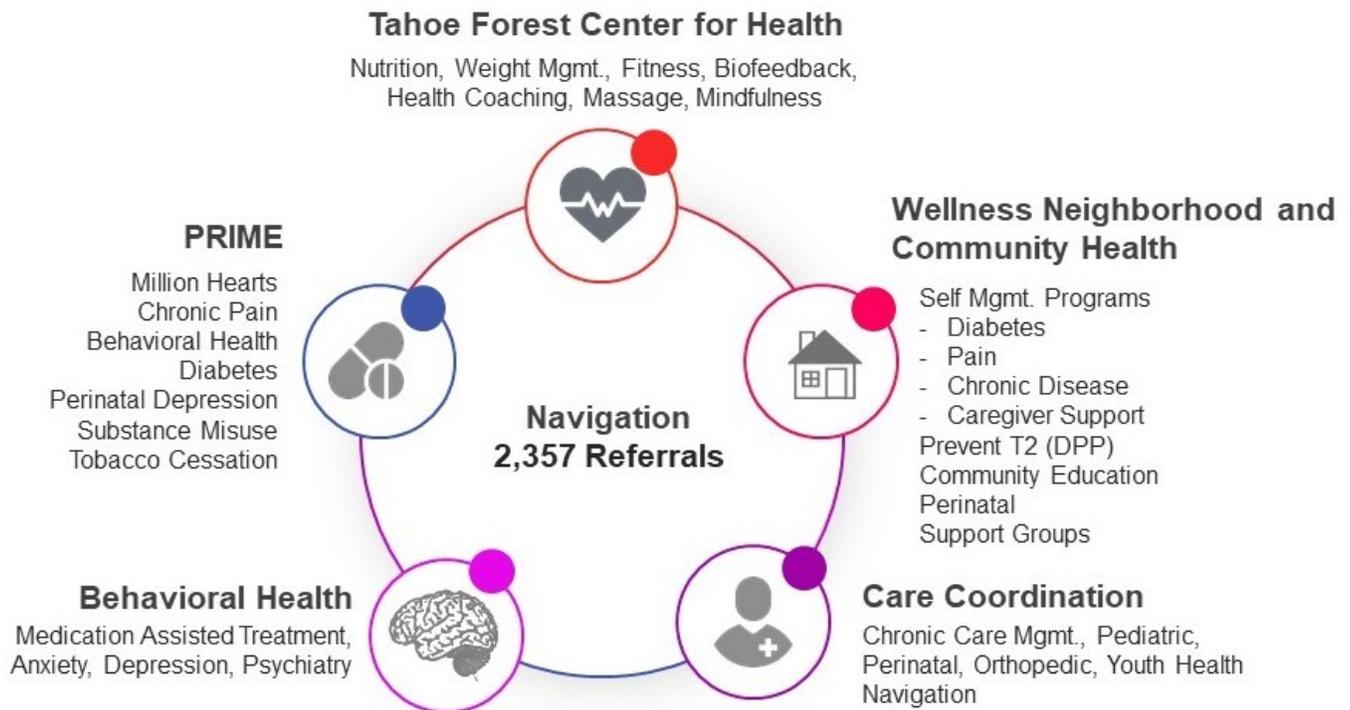




**Wellness Neighborhood supports Primary Care and Specialty Care** in improving patient health outcomes and increasing provider productivity by serving as a referral resource, developing sustainable programming, and utilizing quality metrics to ensure meaningful change and improved population health.

## Referral Resources

**Customer Care Navigators** manage all EPIC Referrals to Wellness. They navigate referrals to the appropriate care providers and follow up with patients to improve patient engagement.



## Quality improvement

### Quality Metrics Redesign: PRIME (Public Hospital Redesign and Incentives in Medi-Cal)

TFHS has been participating in the PRIME Program since 2016. The quality improvements achieved through PRIME have returned approximately **\$4M** to the health system. The ambitious design of the PRIME program is attainable through multi-departmental collaboration and synergy with the Wellness Neighborhood, whose key focus areas complement PRIME metrics.



#### PRIME supports Primary Care through:

- The development and implementation of consistent screening methodologies for heart health, chronic pain, diabetes and behavioral health/substance use
- Identifying gaps in care and increasing awareness and utilization of Wellness programming
- Providing training and education to primary care teams
- Supporting a sustainable collaborative team model with the expansion of resources including Mental and Behavioral Health Therapists, Care Coordinators, Health Coaches, Health Promotoras/Community Health Advocates, and Patient Navigators
- The development and implementation of a comprehensive Medication Assisted Treatment program

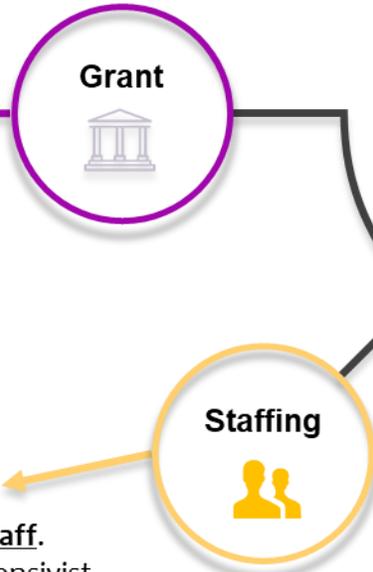
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# Developing Sustainable Programming

## Integration of Behavioral Health into Primary Care

Depression goes undetected in more than 50% of primary care patients. Evidence shows co-located behavioral health services increases access, supports early identification, and reduces barriers of stigma and transportation.

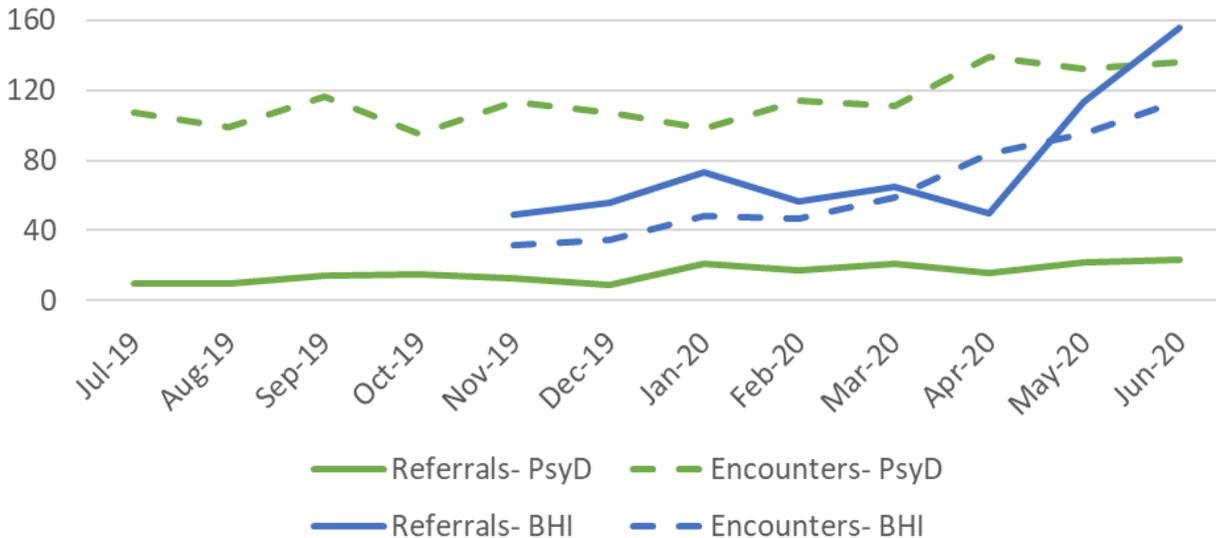
In August 2019 the Wellness Neighborhood and Behavioral Health Departments were awarded a Health Resource and Services Administration (HRSA) Quality Improvement **grant** of \$200,000/year for the next three years to integrate behavioral health into primary care (BHIPC).



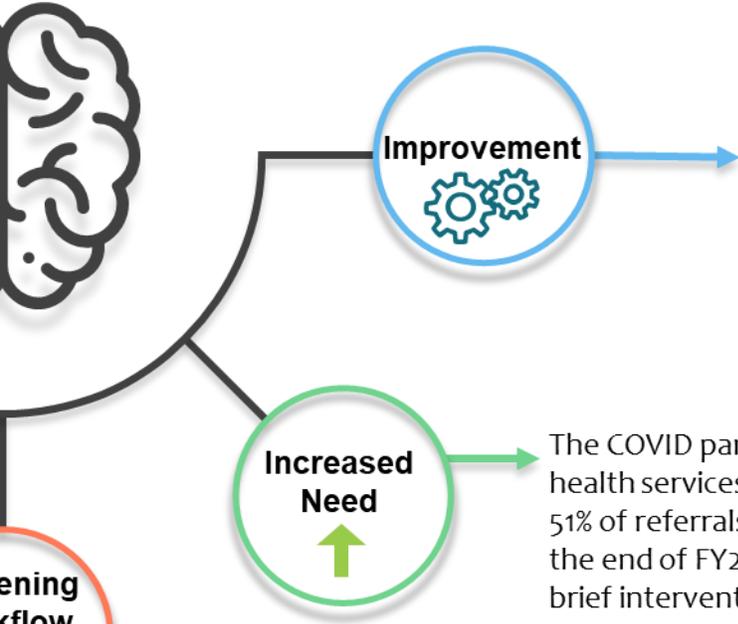
Grant funding along with Wellness resources were used to hire BHIPC **staff**. This included a Behavioral Health Intensivist (BHI), Clinical Psychologist (PsyD), Community Health Advocate/Promotora, Behavioral Health Director and Data Analysts.

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**Graph 1: Behavioral Health Supports**



# Behavioral Health



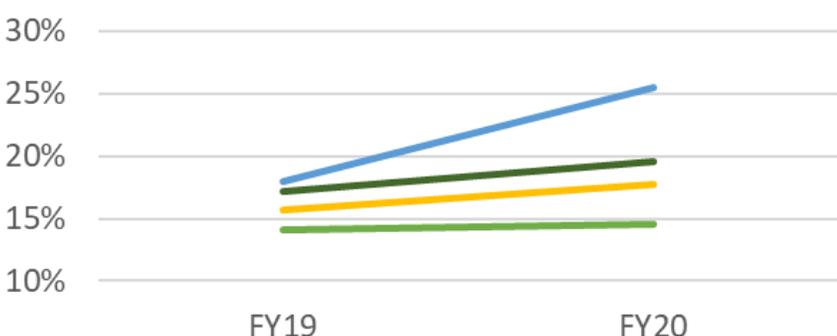
Although depression screening rates remained steady at 12% from FY19 (baseline) to FY20, the additional behavioral health resources resulted in **improved** follow up care for patients at risk of depression from 63% (FY19) to 77% (FY20).

**Increased Need** → The COVID pandemic reinforced the need for behavioral health services. Behavioral health referrals accounted for 51% of referrals managed by Customer Care Navigation at the end of FY20. **Graph 1** shows the **increased need** for brief intervention and counseling services as the pandemic wore on.

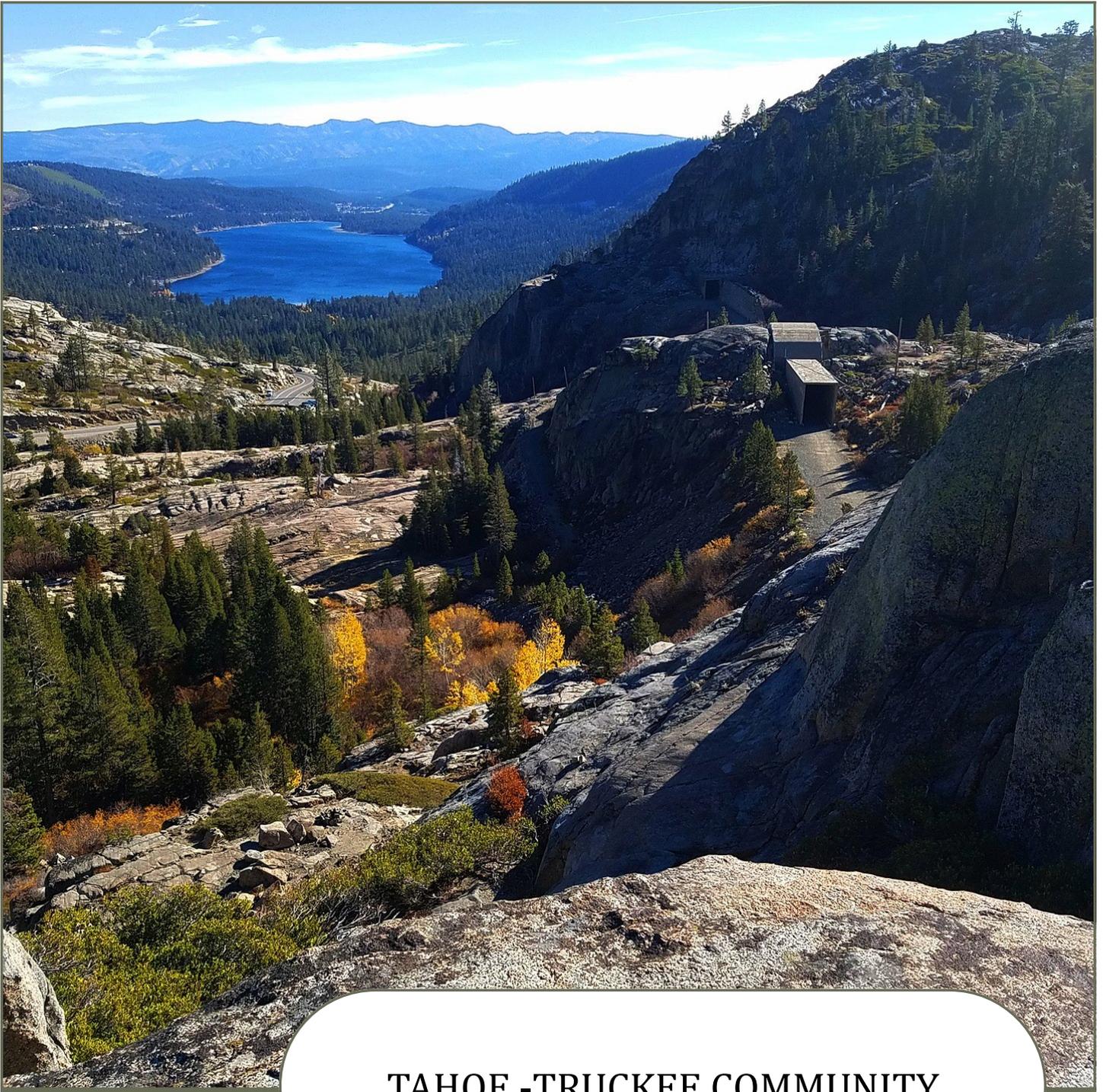
Certain populations were impacted by the pandemic disproportionately. **Graph 2** shows the **increased need** for specific populations. The risk of depression was higher for females, Medi-Cal (low-income) and Hispanic patients. We were positioned to meet this increase in demand while working to secure additional resources.

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...ng of patients in primary  
... Neighborhood  
...blem-solving process by  
...e using the workflows  
...nsus among all parties

**Graph 2: Elevated Depression Risk by Population**



- PHQ9>9 Everyone Screened
- PHQ9>9 Medi-Cal Popn
- PHQ9>9 Females
- PHQ9>9 Hispanic



## TAHOE -TRUCKEE COMMUNITY

**Wellness Neighborhood supports the Tahoe Truckee Community** in achieving Wellbeing and Optimal Health. We provide education and outreach to maintain health and improve the quality of life for those with chronic disease. Community Health Advocates/Promotoras provide culturally appropriate education, advocacy and support for our Latinx patients.

# PREVENT T2

A PROVEN PROGRAM TO PREVENT OR DELAY TYPE 2 DIABETES

## Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP)

Prevent T2 is a CDC-recognized, year-long lifestyle change program for people at risk of developing diabetes. Dedicated participants are rewarded with a 58-71% reduction in risk of developing diabetes. Participants report improved quality of life both during and after the program.

Wellness Neighborhood has been offering this program since 2017. This fiscal year was the first year we facilitated concurrent groups with 4 cohorts staggered throughout the year including our first Spanish-language group.

Our participants are successful because they establish relationships, with both the facilitator and members of their cohort, supportive to making long-term lifestyle changes. They use Prevent T2 tools and knowledge as a starting point to take care of themselves and their family's overall health (i.e. identifying a PCP, starting Cardiac Rehab etc.).

Throughout FY20, average retention rate was **89%**, which is a higher retention rate than most other DPP providers. Our participants saw such great success with weight loss and tracking their healthy lifestyle measures that Tahoe Forest achieved **Full Recognition** from the CDC. This designation is reserved for programs that have effectively delivered a quality, evidence-based program that meets all of the standards for CDC recognition.

### Prevent T2 Spanish Cohort Graduation Ceremony



### Testimonials

"I have participated in two years of this program. It has been wildly successful for me. Over the two years on the program I have lowered my A1C numbers and have lost and kept off a total of 20 pounds. I have changed my lifestyle including eating healthy and exercising. It has not been easy, but the alternative is not thinkable. The program gave a life-line of information and guidelines to a new and healthy life. The program also offered invaluable group support and motivation to change. I am incredibly thankful that this program existed to help me out in a difficult time in my life."

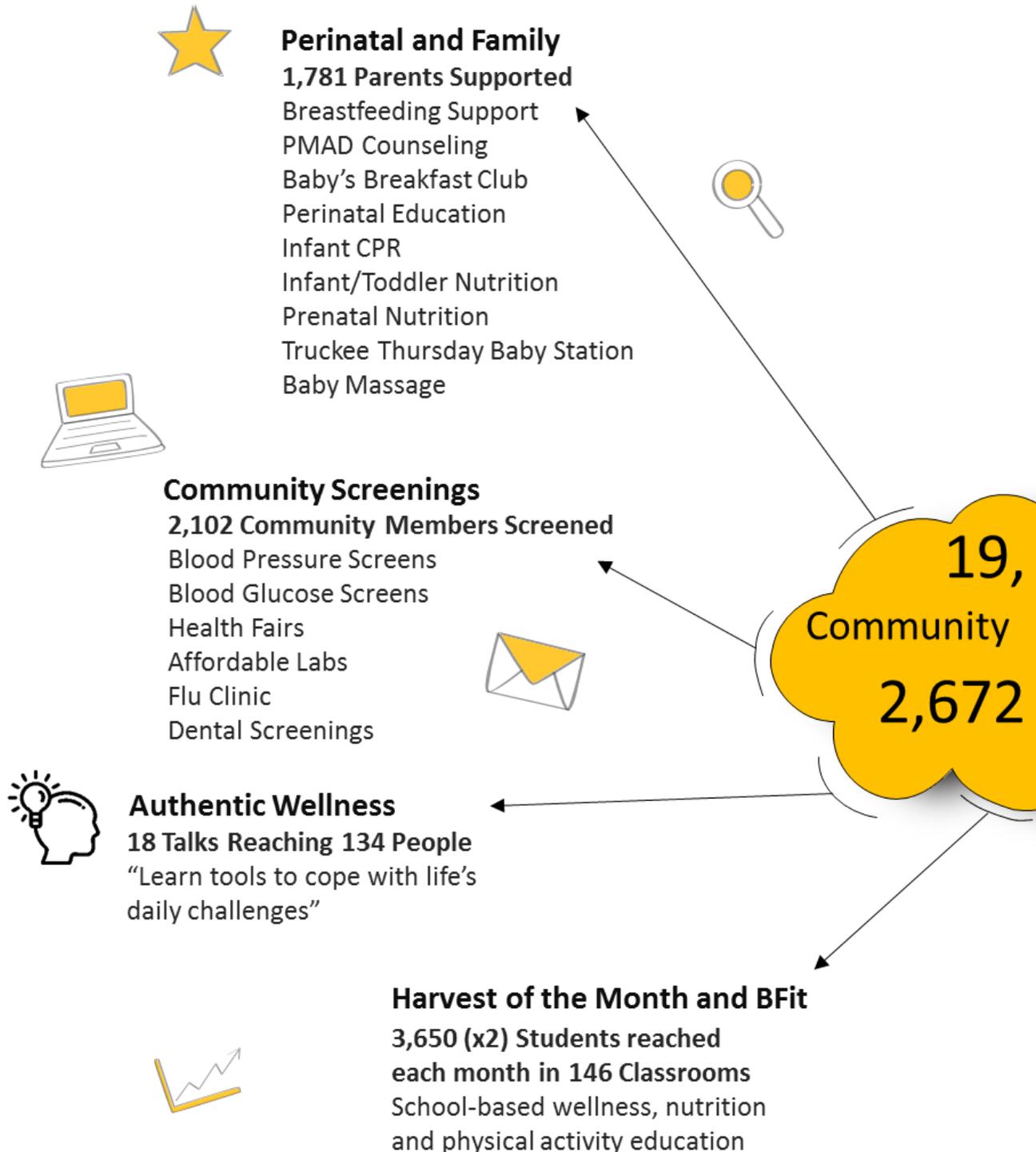
"The Prevent Type 2 Diabetes course was absolutely life changing for me. Knowledge of good diet and exercise can be acquired anywhere but for that knowledge to be applied and beneficial one has to commit to a long term lifestyle change. And for that people need repetition, constant reminders, and coping tools that will help make better long term choices. This course is structured in a way that is not only informational but it's also practiced based where we were accountable for the decisions we made, whether good or bad. This course is casual, fun, and definitely helpful in preventing Type 2 Diabetes."

# Achieving Wellbeing & Optimal Health

**Wellness is defined as a state complete of physical, mental, and social wellbeing.** (World Health Org.)

Achieving wellness is an active process of becoming aware of and making choices towards a healthy and fulfilling life. The Wellness Neighborhood supports this process through a variety of education and outreach activities addressing our four key focus areas:

- Mental/Behavioral Health
- Chronic Disease
- Substance Misuse
- Prevention and Wellness





**Chronic Disease**  
566 Patients Empowered  
Self Management Programs for  
Diabetes, Pain, and Chronic Disease  
Building Better Caregivers  
Prevent T2  
Parkinsons Support Group



**Community Health Outreach**  
6,416 Community Contacts  
Rethink Healthy Talks  
Vaping Education  
Cooking Club  
Senior Appreciation Nights  
Senior Chair Yoga  
Nicotine Cessation  
Air Show, Block Party, Big Truck Day,  
Junior Career Fair etc.

**Wellness Challenges**  
565 Participants  
Walktober  
10,000 Steps a Day in May  
Project Zero  
Alcohol Awareness  
Gratitude



**Employee Produce**  
29 weeks of Produce Boxes  
nourishing 159 Employees  
Making the healthy choice the easy choice  
with community supported agriculture



# Supporting Women and Families

## Working with Vulnerable Populations

### - It Takes a Village

Pregnancy is a beautiful experience and also a challenging time as women are presented with new stressors both mentally and physically. There is a reason the phrase “It takes a village” universally resonates, and the Perinatal Care Coordination team at Tahoe Forest is striving to expand this village.



The Perinatal Care Coordinator, RN and Bilingual Community Health Advocate/Promotora act as a bridge between the patient and medical perinatal services including obstetric care, care coordination, perinatal mood and anxiety disorder counseling, gestational diabetes nutrition counseling, lactation support, and affordable prenatal and infant CPR education.

The Perinatal Team also helps women and families with access to non-clinical comprehensive services necessary for a healthy pregnancy such as housing, food security, and other factors related to socioeconomic status which impact health outcomes far more than access to clinical care.

## Normalizing Breastfeeding

The Perinatal Team strives to normalize breastfeeding by facilitating multiple avenues for women to receive breastfeeding support. Truckee Thursdays Baby Friendly Station provided services throughout the summer of 2019, Baby's Breakfast Club launched in person in the winter of 2020 and pivoted to virtual during COVID, and Breastfeeding Support Group—Truckee has a steady stream of new moms. Combined, these community support services had **796** encounters with breastfeeding moms.

## Prevention and Early Education

The Perinatal Team collaborates with County Public Health Nurses, Teen Parenting Program (STEPP), Truckee Healthy Babies, and the Truckee Tahoe Perinatal Outreach Team in ensuring all babies are off to a healthy start. They serve as a resource for early education around maternal and infant oral health hygiene, immunizations, nutrition, and child abuse prevention and safety.

# Baby's Breakfast Club



*A warm and fun environment for mothers & newborns to socialize and learn about how to get a healthy start to life, and hands-on breastfeeding support*

**Currently Held Virtually Every  
Monday, 10:00-11:00am**  
ZOOM ID: 177975401

Offered in both  
English and Spanish

Fee: No Charge



For more information, please call (530) 582-3297.

# Team Members - Drivers of Change

The Wellness Neighborhood is a team of health professionals on a mission to educate, inspire, and empower the Truckee/Tahoe community to improve health through meaningful change. We are successful because of the collaborative work of multiple departments and individual and community stakeholders.

We thank you for your commitment.

## Wellness Neighborhood & Community Health

Maria Martin, MPH, RDN - Director  
Chris Arth, MD - Medical Director  
Lizzy Henasey, MPH - Population Health Analyst  
Gwen Van Natta - Wellness Program Coordinator  
Maison Powers, MS - Community Health Coordinator  
Dana Dose RDN, CDE, LD - Wellness Dietitian (Prevent T2, Pediatrics, Perinatal)  
Jill Whisler, MS, RDN - Wellness Dietitian (Schools)  
Betsy Taylor, RDN - Wellness Dietitian  
Reyna Sanchez, MA - Promotora (Chronic Disease, PRIME), Master Trainer Self Management programs  
Victoria Ferris - Promotora (Chronic Disease, Behavioral Health)  
Amelia Espinoza, MA - Promotora (Perinatal)  
Lisa Stekert, LCSW - Youth Behavioral Health Navigator  
Mary Hoffmann, RN, LCCE, ASPO - Prenatal and Infant CPR Educator

## Zero Suicide Leadership Team

Maria Martin, MPH, RDN - Director  
Lizzy Henasey, MPH - Population Health Analyst  
Eileen Knudson, RN - Director PRIME and Behavioral Health  
Natasha Lukasiewich, DNP - Manager Emergency Services  
Stephen Hicks - Non-clinical Education  
Ashley Davis, RN - Clinical Practice Coordinator  
Brian Parrish, MPH - Manager Primary Care Clinics  
Estela Iñiguez, MA - Manager Primary Care Clinics  
Sarah Redgrave, LCSW - Behavioral Health Intensivist  
Kelley Downs - Change Management Coordinator  
Chris Arth, MD - Medical Director  
Megan Cooper - Internal Communications Coordinator

## PRIME

Eileen Knudson, RN - Director PRIME and Behavioral Health  
Sunee Zrno, LMFT - Care Coordinator Chronic Pain, PMAD Counselor  
Lorna Fichter, RN - Care Coordinator Million Hearts  
Liz Schenk, NBC-HWC, MBA - Health Coach

## Tahoe Forest Center for Health

Wendy Buchanan, MS - Director  
Brandy Willoughby - Customer Care Navigator  
Gloria Acevedo-Klenk - Customer Care Navigator  
Tracy Chaney - Customer Care Navigator

## Integrated Care Management & Lactation

Jackie Griffin, RN - Care Coordinator, Master Trainer Self-Management Programs  
Sue Train, MPH, RN, IBCLC - Perinatal Care Coordinator, Lactation Consultant  
Tamaro Margraf, RN, IBCLC - Lactation Consultant  
Fernando Campos-Taylor, RN, IBCLC - Lac. Consultant

## Provider Champions

Liana Bailey, PA - Primary Care Mental Health  
Mathew Gustafsson, DDS - Dental Director  
Tim Lombard, MD - PRIME Million Hearts  
Katy Schousen, MD - PRIME Chronic Pain





**wellnessneighborhood**

*A service of Tahoe Forest Health System*

**For more information, please visit our website at:**

**<https://www.tfhd.com/wellness-neighborhood>**

**Or contact us at: 530-550-6719**