



Tufts Medical Center

Community Health Improvement Programs
FY18 Community Benefits Report

“Before this, I wasn’t really an open person, so being here and working with other kids and bonding with them is a whole different thing. I won’t have to be by myself anymore.”
— Youth participant in anti-violence program at The Salvation Army Kroc Center

Our Community Benefits Mission:

Tufts Medical Center is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of, and striving to reduce health disparities and inequities in the communities we serve. We seek to identify current and emerging health needs, collaborate with community partners, provide culturally and linguistically appropriate health services and resources, and address community health needs through education, prevention, and treatment.

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OUR PRIORITIES

Every three years, Tufts Medical Center (Tufts MC) completes a rigorous Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA), most recently in 2016. The CHNA draws on available data collected by government agencies, universities, health facilities, and community organizations regarding the physical and social determinants of health and well-being of the local community. Tufts MC also learns about our communities' greatest strengths and current challenges from community stakeholders.

Tufts MC's patient data revealed that a large proportion of our patients come from Boston's Chinatown, Dorchester, South Boston, the South End, and the Greater Boston Asian community, including Quincy. The 2016 CHNA focused on these communities and identified key health priorities:



Tobacco Use



Youth Violence



**Substance Use
Disorder**



**Chronic
Disease**

We are committed to providing our patients with the best care possible, which includes reaching beyond our hospital doors to promote healthy systems and opportunities in the places where people live, work, and play. Since the 2016 assessment was completed, we have used these priorities to guide our community benefits work and reach hundreds of families in a meaningful way.

The following report covers activities in Fiscal Year 2018 (Oct 2017 through Sep 2018).

234

people from low-income families received food packages to reduce food insecurity and help maintain a healthy diet

1,124

people learned the legacy & contributions of Chinese immigrants through exhibitions and walking tours

35

community-based agencies received financial support from Tufts MC to help improve quality of life for thousands of families throughout the region

Creating Healthy Environments

Tufts MC staff is committed to empowering patients and community members with health knowledge to make informed choices about their health. Unfortunately, much of what determines our patients' quality of life is not entirely within their control. Access to affordable housing, open/green space, reliable transportation, education opportunities, a safe job and stable income, sufficient and nutritious food — i.e. **social determinants of health** (SDOH) — have a profound impact on our patients' ability, and those in the community, to care for themselves and their loved ones.

As volunteers, many Tufts MC staff dedicate their time to community-based initiatives that address different aspects of the SDOH for hundreds of community members, such as:

- **Ricesticks and Tea Food Pantry** (provides low-income families in Boston with access to culturally-appropriate food)
- **Red Oak After School Program** (offers educational support and arts enrichment to children and pre-teens)
- **Dedham Commission on Disability** (ensures public spaces are physically accessible to persons with disabilities)

Through collaboration and financial awards, Tufts MC supports a myriad of community-based public and private organizations that are working hard to improve the SDOH. Tufts MC helps to: connect individuals and families with affordable housing and financial literacy courses; create safe places for recreation; support the public education system; break down cultural, linguistic and racial barriers; and so much more.



In 2018, more than 1,500 community members benefited from Tufts MC's support for augmented capacity at the **Asian American Civic Association's Multi-Service Center (MSC)**. An MSC counselor will assess individual needs and connect community members with programs to boost access to healthy food, housing, fuel assistance, immigration and citizenship programs, and other necessities.

17,500

patients connected to health insurance, Supplemental Security Income, and medication cost assistance

230

children worked with the Asian Development-Behavioral Clinic to meet their behavioral needs

865

underserved community members — mostly uninsured — received free primary care through the Sharewood Project

Improving Access, Protecting Quality

Tufts MC invests in programs and services that help people live a healthy and fulfilling life. We also strive to make health care and other social services accessible for those facing acute health needs.

Boston is a multicultural city. Our staff is ready to greet patients in their preferred language. Our **Interpreter Services** department facilitated communication for 22,604 patients in FY 2018 across dozens of clinical departments. For instance, 64% of interpreter encounters served Chinese-speaking individuals. Tufts MC has also established numerous programs — like the **Asian Clinic** and **Asian Community-Based Flexible Support** — and protocols like clustering appointments with Chinese-speaking clinicians

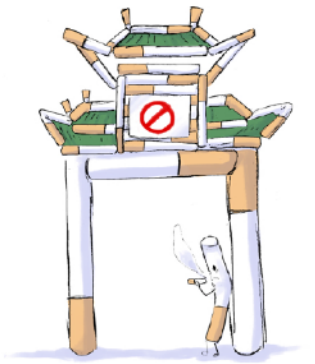
and interpreters to provide the best care possible to this population.

Tufts MC staff also provide care to patients closer to home through **Primary Care Home Visiting**, offering **OB/GYN services** at partner community health centers, and volunteering with local organizations like **Bridge Over Troubled Waters**, which serves homeless youth from their mobile medical van.

Quality of care is as important as access to care. Every day, Tufts MC staff employ innovative approaches to raising quality, including **long-term cancer survivor care** and the **Post-Intensive Care Unit Syndrome Clinic**, which reduces psychological distress among long-term ICU patients.




With support from Tufts MC, the **South End Community Health Center** is driving improvements in care quality by improving coordination among its departments. By convening primary care providers, nurses, community health workers, and case managers for regular check-ins and using more proactive outreach and reminders to patients, SECHC has seen improvements in blood pressure and diabetes management among their patients, and more community members are completing cancer and mental health screenings.



Artist: Red Oak student Emily Yan, age 11

**SMOKE
FREE
CHINATOWN!**


 Eleven-year-old Emily Yan designed this magnet to help raise awareness in the Chinatown community about the prevalence and dangers of tobacco use.




 For their summer projects, these teens created a video and posters about the dangers of tobacco and a map of smoking hotspots in Chinatown.

Reducing Tobacco's Impact

Cancer continues to be the leading cause of death among Asians in Boston and Massachusetts, and lung cancer is the most common form. Tobacco use is also associated with higher rates of numerous other chronic diseases, and secondhand smoke has widespread effects on the coworkers, friends, and family members of those who smoke.

Through our **Asian Health Initiative**, Tufts MC partners with six community-based organizations in Chinatown that have the cultural understanding and linguistic capacity to address this issue in an appropriate and effective way. Programs are offered in community settings and in conjunction with other social services in order to reach a broad swath of Chinatown residents across the age continuum. In FY 2018, activities included:

- At **Josiah Quincy Elementary School**, children received age-appropriate education and skills-building to prevent tobacco use before it begins.

- **Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center** wove tobacco lessons into its adult education and parenting programs.
- **Greater Boston Chinese Golden Age Center** expanded its anti-tobacco programming to its own staff and employees at partner organizations.
- Through a partnership between **Asian American Civic Association** and the **Rose**

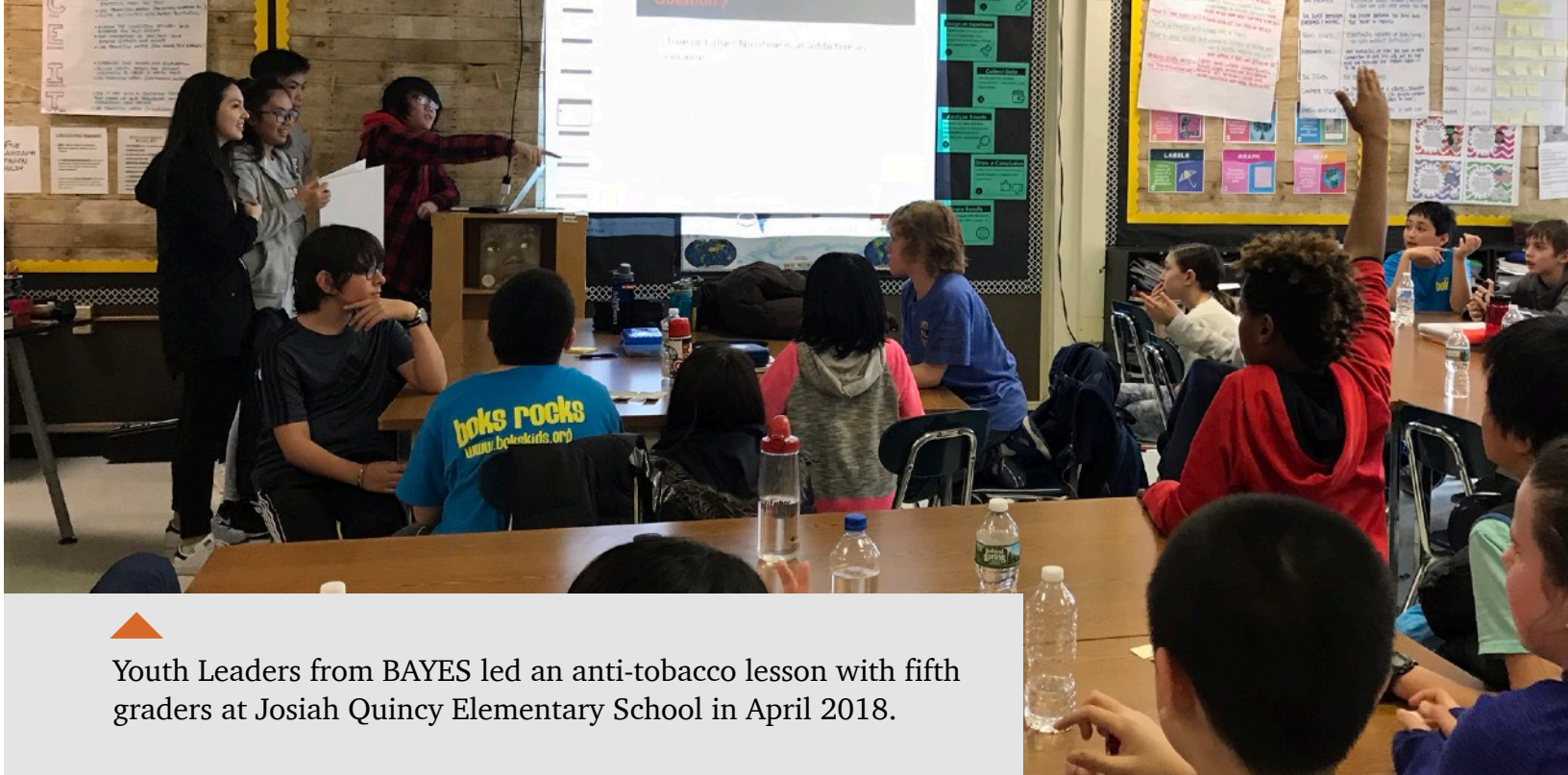
IN FY 2018:

559

children and youth learned about the health effects of all forms of tobacco and practiced not giving in to peer pressure to start smoking or vaping.

43

articles about tobacco & nicotine appeared in the popular bilingual newspaper **Sampan**, reaching tens of thousands of readers.



▲ Youth Leaders from BAYES led an anti-tobacco lesson with fifth graders at Josiah Quincy Elementary School in April 2018.

Kennedy Greenway Conservancy, an experienced case manager provides current smokers with the tools and support they need to face the incredibly difficult and critically important transition away from tobacco.

- All partners have incorporated information on e-cigarettes into their programs to respond to the rapid rise in vaping among youth and to their parents' desire for information.

1,266

adults & seniors attended workshops where experts answered their most pressing questions about tobacco & strategies to quit.

60

people joined smoking cessation programs. So far, 46 (77%) have significantly reduced their tobacco use and 14 (23%) have quit entirely.



Boston Asian Youth Essential Service (BAYES) doesn't just teach teens about the dangers of smoking; it gives those teens the power to change their community.

After 13 Youth Leaders spend several intensive weeks learning about the harmful effects of tobacco and targeted marketing to young people, the group then learns about goal-setting, campaign-planning, public speaking, and marketing strategies.

With these skills, the teens develop their own public health campaign that last year reached hundreds of Chinatown community members with anti-tobacco messaging through presentations, comic strips, and *Jeopardy*-like games.



Boys & Girls Clubs of Dorchester provides teens with positive learning environments and opportunities to try new activities — including guitar and cooking lessons — that can serve as alternatives to violence.



Preventing Youth Violence

Boston has one of the highest violent crime rates in the country. In 2018, the Boston Police Department investigated nearly 9,000 assaults, robberies, and homicides. Residents of Dorchester and other low-income neighborhoods have long cited youth & community violence as one of their leading concerns, but they don't just name the challenge — they take action to fix it.

Tufts MC works alongside community-based partners in Dorchester and South Boston to reduce youth violence by tackling the root causes: lack of opportunities for quality education; lack of opportunities to earn a living; and lack of opportunities for youth to explore their personal and professional identities — particularly for youth of color and from low-income families. By improving these social determinants of health, we can prevent violence before it takes hold. Last year through our programs, children and teens:

- Received academic support to excel in school;

- Learned to express themselves and to tell their stories through music, poetry, and visual arts;
- Exercised and practiced healthy competition through organized sports;
- Explored many career paths to find what inspires their passion; and
- Had the chance to talk and play with the Boston Police Officers who help to keep their community safe.

IN FY 2018:

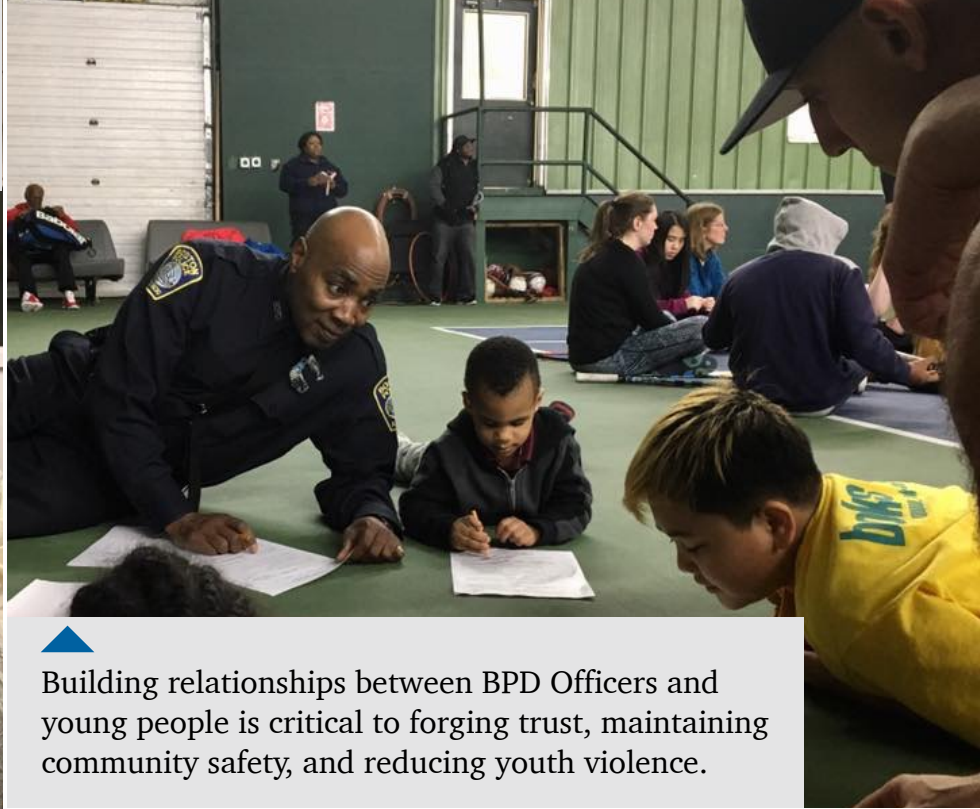
1,729

youth participated in after-school programs that offered academic support, physical activities, creative arts, and college and career fairs

24

student athletes took part in conversations with teammates and coaches about healthy romantic relationships and preventing dating violence

Teens in the SIP practice using Personal Protective Equipment like Tufts MC's surgeons. ▼



▲ Building relationships between BPD Officers and young people is critical to forging trust, maintaining community safety, and reducing youth violence.

Tufts MC created opportunities for youth through our **Summer Internship Program (SIP)**. For seven weeks at Tufts MC, high school students from Chinatown and surrounding communities learned about the many different professional roles available in health care while building skills that they can translate into their education and future jobs and earning a living wage to support themselves.

312

youth at **South Boston Community Health Center** engaged in community service projects to share their strengths with friends and neighbors

72

young people at **DotHouse** joined groups that combined conversations about youth's concerns & experiences with relaxation activities



At **Sportsmen's Tennis & Enrichment Center**, hundreds of children, teens, and their families learn tennis in a safe, welcoming, and professional-grade facility, spending up to eight hours a week on the courts, playing together and getting their hearts pumping.

Youth learn about and discuss what it means to be caring and empathetic and to manage self-direction and planning. Children and teens host an annual health fair for their families and community, and they visit colleges to explore what their futures may hold. Many teens serve as mentors and coaches to younger players. All this makes Sportsmen's an invaluable asset to their community.



Children experience stress just like adults do — often in the form of family or academic pressures. Offering school-based social-emotional support is one way Tufts MC and its partners are helping children reduce stress and improve mental health.

Caring for the Mind & the Body

The rising threat of the opioid crisis in the US is undeniable; the National Safety Council concluded that in 2017, the risk of death due to opioid overdose surpassed road traffic accidents for the first time ever. In Boston, the rate of deaths due to substance misuse rose 54% between 2011 and 2015. Tufts MC partners with organizations in our priority neighborhoods to reduce harm related to substance use and to support recovery:

- **Codman Square Health Center (CSHC)** provided patients experiencing addiction with Medication Assisted Treatment and connections to housing and other services; also expanded substance use screening to pediatric patients.
- **Gavin Foundation's Cushing House** took a holistic approach to helping young men to end and recover from addiction by securing stable housing, improving interpersonal

relationships, and advancing marketable skills through education or job placement.

- Tufts MC's **Cardiovascular Center** educated staff, public safety officers, and community members about how to recognize overdose and steps that could reduce the risk of death.

In some cases, substance use is only a symptom of a deeper problem, a method of coping with chronic conditions like depression, anxiety, and

IN FY 2018:

85

young men completed treatment at Cushing House, reducing or eliminating substance use and improving their overall health

75

youth worked with Tufts MC psychiatrists to address the causes of addiction through the **Boston Regional STARR Program**

SBCHC embraces multiple methods of supporting its patients suffering from addiction. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy with a trained counselor can help address the psychological issues that can underlie substance abuse disorder.



stress -- frequently the result of exposure to racism, homophobia, poverty, academic and family expectations, poor physical health, and other factors. Through partnerships with **Communities for People** and **Josiah Quincy Upper School**, as well as its own **South Boston Behavioral Health Clinic**, Tufts MC enabled access to mental health services for vulnerable populations throughout the city, helping them cope with these stressors in healthier ways.

1,635

children, teens, and adults benefited from mental health support services at Tufts MC's South Boston Behavioral Health Clinic

120

patients at CSHC partnered with a health worker to manage addiction, reduce stress, and connect with social services



South Boston is hard-hit by the opioid crisis, and **South Boston Community Health Center (SBCHC)** has mobilized to address it. They've fortified programs for addiction treatment and associated conditions, and their efforts are bearing fruit: more than half of patients receiving addiction treatment have gone more than a year without a single relapse, and more than 97% of patients with Hepatitis C (often caused by intravenous drug use) have been cured of the disease.

SBCHC is also building the infrastructure within their health center to enable providers to connect these patients with other services, ensuring their patients get all of the care they need today, tomorrow, and in the future.

Sharing Knowledge (and Power)

External forces and patients' choices beyond the hospital's walls can greatly shape their long-term health. The right information at the right time is critical to make the decisions that are right for them.

Last year, Tufts MC health providers and support staff organized dozens of events and campaigns throughout Greater Boston to share their expertise with community members:

- The **Center for Youth Wellness** worked with area YMCAs to provide nutrition education, opportunities for physical activity, and social support groups to adolescents struggling with their weight.
- The **Frances Stern Nutrition Center** hosted workshops to help older adults learn about sodium's impact on blood pressure and how to easily reduce sodium intake by adjusting one's diet.
- Chinatown teens participated in a comprehensive sexual health program through **Boston Asian Youth Essential Service** that focused on healthy peer



Kiwanis Pediatric Trauma Institute donates child safety materials to groups across New England. ▲

relationships, teen pregnancy, and sexually transmitted infections prevention.

- Tufts MC medical staff allied with students from Tufts University to provide free **kidney health screenings** to underserved communities within and outside of Boston.
- Students at **Josiah Quincy Elementary School** learned about maintaining oral health and a nutritious diet of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.
- Tufts MC's **Division of Trauma** visited housing complexes to educate seniors about the danger of falls among the elderly and how to reduce physical risks of falls in their homes.

These are only a few of the many outreach and education programs Tufts MC staff organized throughout the year.

The **Asthma Prevention & Management Initiative** aims to reduce the frequency of costly and preventable hospitalizations for asthma attacks among asthmatic children. With support from medical providers, a community health worker offered one-on-one and group-based asthma education to the families of children diagnosed with asthma. These lessons ensure that the children and their families understand the condition and how to use medications effectively. They also help families explore methods of reducing environmental conditions that trigger asthma attacks, such as pests or secondhand smoke in the home.



A student graduates from our externship program offered through YMCA Training, Inc. She was immediately hired for a full-time position at Tufts MC.



Staff from Greater Boston Chinese Golden Age Center reached over 200 people with anti-tobacco workshops, like this one at Hong Lok House in Feb 2018.



With support from Tufts MC and its staff, Chinese Historical Society of New England hosted events exploring Asian identity and experience. Above, an artist shares her perspective.

Pictured is the first class of graduates from Tufts MC's English for Speakers of Other Languages pilot program with Asian American Civic Association.

Tufts Medical Center

800 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02111
www.tuftsmedicalcenter.org | (617) 636-5000



Questions? Please email CHNA@tuftsmedicalcenter.org