

# 2021 Annual Report





# dear friends,

Fifty years ago, the health and human services landscape — and the world as we knew it — looked drastically different than what we know today. Thankfully, the idea of shifting the health care system from one of “fixing” diseases and health concerns to one of responsive care and prevention was starting to gain traction.

One such responsive program was the National Family Planning Program — or Title X (Ten). Established in 1970 to improve access to reproductive health services, prevent maternal deaths, and reduce unintended pregnancies, Title X made crucial care available to all regardless of income or status. Title X is still an integral piece of our nation’s public health care system, and it is the cornerstone of the MFHS story. In June 1971, MFHS received a federal Title X grant to address family planning services for women right here in Northeastern Pennsylvania.



**MARIA MONTORO  
EDWARDS, PhD**  
PRESIDENT/CEO



**BARB BOSSI**  
BOARD CHAIR

**we started  
with a  
big goal**

Our founding team was committed to improving family life, promoting responsible parenthood, and coordinating effective service delivery in a relatively tight radius. As the only local Title X grantee, family planning services were available at two MFHS sites in Luzerne County.

MFHS served 98 individuals in the first year, and its leadership was in tune with community needs. Luzerne County's high incidence of maternal and infant deaths and newborns with serious medical problems was impossible to ignore.

**& aimed  
higher**

Along with offering family planning services, MFHS integrated affordable obstetric care in 1973. While the MFHS maternity service line — a Certified Nurse Midwifery Program with counseling and social supports — made strides towards delivering healthier babies, notable issues surrounding inadequate childhood nutrition gained the national spotlight.

**& dug in  
deeper**

In 1974, MFHS was one of 100 pilot projects in the country to administer the federally funded Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Nutrition Program. With a goal of serving slightly more than 630 participants a month, the staff and community embraced the importance of this new service line.

Our formative years set the roots for MFHS to thrive, and we've continued to flex and evolve over five busy — and impactful — decades.

**& made our  
mission of  
CARE come  
alive today**

Today, MFHS:

- Provides robust, accessible, and confidential family planning services at 5 direct service sites and 27 contract service providers.
- Delivers more than 200 healthy babies a year and provides supplementary family supports.
- Stewards a \$9.7M WIC budget and serves 41,211 participants in 17 counties.
- Serves over 90,000 individuals and families in 17 counties.

**& every  
day**

Leading MFHS into its next phase continues to energize me every day. No matter the direction we grow, we will always deliver on our mission of CARE. Our staff, leadership, board, and partners are committed to listening, learning, and looking ahead — and let me tell you, we are loving the view.

With great gratitude, I thank you for joining us on our journey and for your continued support of our work.

Cheers to the next 50 years,

*Maria & Barb*



# Year- in- review



## MFHS reaches WIC milestone

MFHS became the largest WIC provider in Pennsylvania, both in geographic footprint and number of participants, when we took over operations in Bucks County in the fall of 2021. This expansion included the opening of three new WIC offices in Bristol, Warminster, and Quakertown. MFHS staff worked closely with the Bucks County Department of Health to ensure a seamless transition and zero interruption of WIC services to the clients in Bucks County.

## Recognizing excellence in customer service

The Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce recognized MFHS with the 2021 SAGE award for Best Practices in Customer Service, which is a reflection of the hard work and dedication that MFHS staff showed during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic. MFHS launched a series of client surveys as part of Listen4Good project. Listen4Good is a national effort designed to help nonprofits build sustainable, high-quality, client-focused feedback loops that

lead to meaningful change. The Listen4Good project was a major highlight in the Best Practices in Customer Service nomination. Based on the survey question: "How likely is it that you would recommend Maternal and Family Health Services to a friend or family member?" across all programs, the Net Promoter Score for MFHS is higher than that of peer organizations. Highest scores in the survey were in response to questions about meeting client needs, and staff treating clients with respect.

When asked what MFHS did well, client quotes highlighted the outstanding care and customer service provided by MFHS staff:

**Helping me have a healthy pregnancy. Helping with feeding my baby. Helping with breastfeeding. Helping my family through a difficult time. Helping with children who have problems with eating.**

**Caring about me and my baby. Caring about my children's health. Caring about how my child is growing. Caring for families in need.**

## Celebrating MFHS at 50 at the EPIC Awards

The Greater Wyoming Valley Chamber of Commerce recognized MFHS during their 50th anniversary at the 2021 EPIC Awards with a Community Celebrations Award, which recognizes nonprofit organizations celebrating milestone anniversaries. The 2021 honorees, which also included Family Service Association of NEPA and the United Way of Wyoming Valley, have served Luzerne County for a combined 445 years!

## MFHS welcomes five new board members

We welcomed five new members to our board of directors. New members include: Lake Gemzik, Chief Administrative Officer/SVP at Building Blocks Learning Center; Terri Lacey, Executive Director of Behavioral Health Initiative at Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine; Kara Poremba, RN, Women's Health Practice Manager at Wayne Memorial Community Health Centers; Jess Simon, IT Tech Support at Luzerne County Head Start; and Melissa Wolf, CPA, Firm Director at Baker Tilly US. All are excited to support the MFHS mission of care by bringing their talents to our board.

## MFHS President & CEO receives Chamberlin Award

The Scranton Area Community Foundation and their Women in Philanthropy initiative awarded MFHS President & CEO Maria Montoro Edwards, Ph.D. the 2021 Margareta Belin Chamberlin Award in recognition of her commitment to our community, and her vision, creativity, innovation, and ingenuity in response to community need. Maria joins a long list of women who use their leadership roles to empower and transform the lives of women and girls in the community.

## MFHS awarded WIC innovation grant

MFHS is working to streamlining the WIC certification process through a USDA Innovation Grant provided by the PA Bureau of WIC. The project utilizes medical liaison staff and data from the statewide Health Information Exchange to expedite the enrollment process. The project aims to reduce the time for in-person WIC certification and enrollment, increase awareness of WIC among obstetric and pediatric providers, and improve referrals and coordination between WIC and medical providers.



Top: Maria Montoro Edwards, Ph.D. accepting the Chamberlin Award.

Opposite Page: Customer Service/ Retail Coordinator Sherry Koch enrolling new WIC Clients

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9



# // Lida was my angel from Day 1.

I called in the middle of the pandemic, discovering I was pregnant without a job or medical insurance. Over seven different OB/GYN offices wouldn't see me.

Lida empathized with my situation. She went above and beyond for someone she didn't even know.





## WIC Nutrition

The WIC Nutrition Program improves the lives of at-risk families by promoting good nutrition. Through nutrition counseling, electronic eWIC benefits for healthy food options, and breastfeeding support, we are fostering healthier pregnancies, improved birth outcomes, better growth and development of young children, and a reduction in childhood obesity.

## Breastfeeding Support

We are improving breastfeeding rates by providing new moms with education and support. New moms are paired with Breastfeeding Peer Counselors, other local mothers who have breastfed for at least 6 months. Peer Counselors act as educators and role models and demonstrate how valuable breastfeeding can be to the health, nutrition and emotional state of the baby and new mom team.

**LEFT: Vanessa Kanaovicz, MFHS Nutritionist (L) and Lida Nom, MFHS Program Assistant (R), Pottstown WIC. Note: Jenny's story lightly edited for clarity and brevity.**

## Maternity Care

Access to early prenatal care is vital to the health of both mother and baby. Partnering with Moses Taylor Hospital Family Birthing Suites in Scranton, we provide low-income, pregnant individuals with comprehensive prenatal and postpartum care — including medical, nutrition and social services. Through funding sources, such as Healthy Beginnings Plus, we assist our patients in achieving healthy pregnancies and developing long-term healthy lifestyles for themselves and their families.

## Reproductive Health

We believe every person, regardless of age, insurance status, or ability to pay, should be able to access quality reproductive healthcare. That's why we offer accessible, confidential family planning and related preventive care to women, men, and teens in 15 Pennsylvania counties. Through Title X of the Public Health Service Act, we prioritize the needs of low-income and uninsured women, men, and teens by offering free care to those whose incomes fall below the federal poverty level.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 10**

**“I just cannot  
thank them  
enough.”**

**Between Lida and  
Vanessa, I feel  
completely ready and  
comfortable caring  
for my baby. I have  
support whenever I  
need it. My daughter  
is healthy because of  
this team and what  
WIC at Maternal  
and Family Health  
Services offered me.**

Right: The Duong-Martineck  
Family







## **Senator Schwank visits Berks County WIC**

State Senator Judy Schwank toured the Berks County WIC Nutrition Center in Reading, where she was able to meet with the staff and learn more about the services provided by WIC and the essential role the program plays in protecting the health and nutritional status of over 8,000 at-risk women, children, and families in Berks County. Senator Schwank was able to see firsthand the nutrition education, breastfeeding support, referrals, and access to healthy food that WIC provides to the families in her district.

## **MFHS launches WIC+ campaign**

In an effort to highlight all of the benefits that come with WIC, MFHS partnered with Posture Interactive to develop a fully integrated Marketing Campaign - WIC +more - with new messages focusing on the extended benefits of WIC. The campaign ran throughout the 17 county MFHS service area on traditional and digital platforms, and highlighted WIC benefits like breastfeeding support, keeping kids on WIC until age 5, eligibility for foster parents and grandparents raising grandchildren, and more.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 11**

## Nurse-Family Partnership

The Nurse-Family Partnership empowers mothers to develop critical parenting skills and knowledge through the guidance and support of highly trained nurse home-visitors. With funding from the Pennsylvania Office of Child Development and Early Learning, we partner at-risk moms — many of whom are teens — with visiting nurses who provide health, planning and goal-setting education. Through this evidence-based program, parents learn skills that set them up for a lifetime of health and economic self-sufficiency. In 2021, MFHS introduced NFP+, which allows pregnant mothers who have had children previously and have high-risk factors to benefit from the NFP program.

## SafeTeens

Through a website, text line and hotline, the MFHS SafeTeens initiative provides adolescents across Pennsylvania's 67 counties with the knowledge to prevent unplanned pregnancies and make informed, healthy choices about their futures. The programs enable teens to take charge of

their health on the engaging, innovative platforms that they use the most. MFHS continues to bring reproductive health education to at-risk teens in local school districts through such programs as the SafeSpace Health Resource Center.

**As a first time mom, I felt like everything was working against me. Lida and Vanessa rose up, answered all my questions and never judged me. They always welcomed me back, offering the help I needed.**

**—JENNY, MFHS WIC CLIENT**

## Behavioral Health

MFHS Behavioral Health provides a comprehensive approach in assessment and treatment for maternity and reproductive health patients who have a mental health or substance use dependency. In addition, the MFHS therapists provided case management services that included referral and linkage to needed interventions as well as monitoring service delivery to at-risk patients.





## Introducing our new look

In celebration of our 50th anniversary, MFHS debuted a new brand identity and website. The layered, circular design of the new logo represents the different people MFHS serves: children, adults, parents, families, and the broader community. The new MFHS website reflects this as well, with a focus on easily connecting our community with vital healthcare information.

“MFHS continues to adapt to the needs of our community, and our new logo and website reflect those changes,” said Maria Montoro Edwards, Ph.D., MFHS President & CEO. “We wanted to create a logo that is fresh and modern, but still connected to our history of creating a ‘circle of care’ of services for our clients.”

## Celebrating NFP at 20

In 2002, MFHS brought the Nurse-Family Partnership Program to first-time mothers in Lackawanna and Wayne Counties. Since then, NFP has expanded to include Susquehanna, Luzerne and Carbon Counties, and serves not only first-time mothers, but at-risk pregnant women with children as well. For 20 years, the nurses of NFP have provided vital health, planning and goalsetting education to families in need in our community.

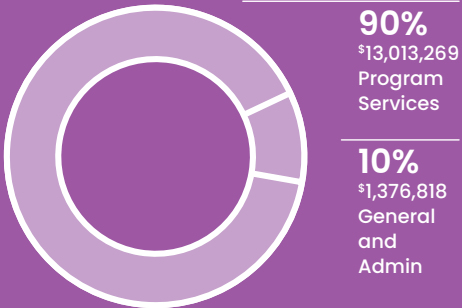


# Fiscal Report

**\$15,814,801**  
Total Revenue



**\$14,390,087**  
Total Expenses



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 Willary Foundation



# thank you.

# 41,211

families provided with nutrition counseling and vouchers for nutritious food<sup>1</sup>

## 10,488

women, men, and teens provided with reproductive healthcare and counseling<sup>2</sup>

## 133

babies delivered—with their parents connected to prenatal and postpartum care<sup>5</sup>

## 458

families paired with nurses for ongoing parenting and health support<sup>3</sup>

## \$51m+

local economic impact with \$32m generated in 380 stores<sup>1</sup> and \$19m saved in public expenditures<sup>2</sup>

## 46,000

teens connected to reliable health information and care<sup>4</sup>

#### Programs referenced:

1. WIC Nutrition
2. Reproductive Health
3. Nurse-Family Partnership
4. SafeTeens
5. Maternity Care





# our impact

## HOW WE DO IT:

- C** Commitment to quality in our work and to the respect and dignity for the individuals we serve.
- A** Accountability for our actions and interactions with others.
- R** Respect for all individuals, regardless of their range of human differences, both in our workforce and throughout the communities we serve.
- E** Excellence in performance and service.



## Maternal & Family Health Services

15 Public Square, Suite 600

Wilkes-Barre, PA 18701-1700

1-800-367-6347 | [Marketing@mfhs.org](mailto:Marketing@mfhs.org)

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