

UM UPPER  
CHESAPEAKE  
HEALTH



UNIVERSITY of MARYLAND  
MEDICAL SYSTEM

# Strategic Plan

2025-2027

[umms.org/uch](https://umms.org/uch)



# In Service to Our Community

We are committed to providing our community with compassionate, innovative and accessible quality health care.

UM UPPER  
CHESAPEAKE  
HEALTH



UNIVERSITY of MARYLAND  
MEDICAL SYSTEM

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# Letter From the President and CEO

## To Our Community, Care Givers and Loved Ones:

As we reflect on over a century of health care in Harford County, I'd like to highlight the progress we've made at University of Maryland Upper Chesapeake Health (UM UCH) and reaffirm our unwavering commitment to the health of our community.

For more than a decade, guided by our system priorities, our integration with the University of Maryland Medical System has enhanced our ability to deliver advanced care locally. We're proud that Harford County has been recognized by U.S. News & World Report as one of the healthiest communities in the nation — a testament to our ongoing commitment to promoting health and wellness.

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**Our healthcare system has been acknowledged as a top performer in six key areas, including cardiovascular, pulmonary and stroke care.**

University of Maryland Upper Chesapeake Health has been acknowledged as one of the nation's top-performing hospitals in six specialties, according to U.S. News & World Report's 2024-2025 "Best Hospitals" ratings. These key areas include COPD, Heart Attack, Heart Failure, Leukemia, Lymphoma and Myeloma, Pneumonia and Stroke.

With over 70% of our team members residing in Harford County, their strong community ties drive the exceptional care we provide by creating an environment where team members are safe to discuss concerns and share feedback. This is part of our journey to become a High Reliability Organization, one that is focused on zero harm. Together, as friends and neighbors, we can continue to provide the high-quality care our community deserves. Community support

has been critical to our success, enabling us to expand services, adopt innovative technologies like robotics and remote clinical telehealth services, and sustain vital programs such as Cancer LifeNet, the Klein Family Center, and the Senator Bob Hooper Hospice House, with philanthropic investments averaging over \$6.6 million a year.

While we've made great strides, we know there's more to do. We're focused on improving access to services and enhancing patient experiences across our network.

Every day, we strive to serve with care, compassion, and dedication, ensuring the highest standard throughout every patient's health care journey.

Looking ahead, our goal is clear: as part of the University of Maryland Medical System, UM Upper Chesapeake Health will be an integral part of the safest health system in Maryland. We are honored to serve this community and are energized by our commitment to excellence.

Sincerely,

*Elizabeth Wise*



**Elizabeth Wise,  
FACHE, MSN, MBA  
President and CEO  
University of Maryland  
Upper Chesapeake Health**

**Delivering a Better State of Care**



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# Caring For Friends and Neighbors

**2,700+**

Team Members

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**550+**

Active Medical Staff

---

**\$504 Million**

Annual Revenue

---

**1 Acute Care**

Hospital

---

**366**

Licensed Beds

---

**20+**

Ambulatory &  
Physician Practice Sites

---

**3 Urgent Care**

Locations

## VOLUMES & PATIENTS SERVED IN FISCAL YEAR 2024

**21,000+**

Inpatients &  
Observations

---

**200,000+**

Outpatient Visits

---

**73,000+**

Emergency Room Visits

---

**10,337**

Surgical Cases

**86,085**

Primary Care Visits

---

**20,000+**

Telemedicine  
Outpatient Visits

---

**2,902**

Virtual Inpatient  
Consults

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**1,200+**

Babies Born

LEARN MORE ABOUT WHERE  
TO GO WHEN YOU FEEL ILL



# Setting the Stage

## Part of Maryland's Largest Health System

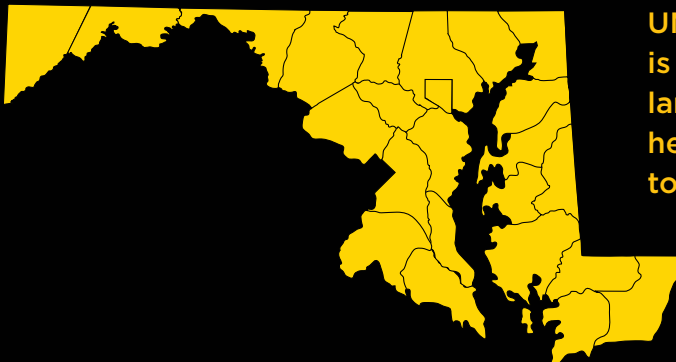
“ In Harford county and across Maryland, we continue to advance our foundational mission: high-quality care, commitment to community, health care transformation and academic medicine. This multi-year strategic plan lays the framework for our transformative journey at UM UCH as we continue to bring convenience, quality care and centralized services to the community for generations.”



— Mohan Suntha, MD, President and CEO  
of University of Maryland Medical System

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## Highlighting UM Upper Chesapeake Health



UM Upper Chesapeake Health (UM UCH) is proud to be a member of the state's largest and most comprehensive health system, bringing advanced care to Harford County.

**Over 100 Years Serving our Community**

**We Completed Over \$260 Million in Investments** aimed at enhancing healthcare services and facilities for our community.

**10+ Years of the Kaufman Cancer Center**

**\$6.6 M - Average Annual Community Philanthropy (Past 5 Years)**

# Priorities

## University of Maryland Medical System (UMMS)

Safety and Quality	Access to Care	Engagement	People Strategies	Academic Health	System Integration	Value-Based Care
Become the safest health system in Maryland and provide care that offers the best opportunities for positive outcomes	Increase options to access services and grow market share	Deliver on our brand promise including a consistent patient and consumer experience	Be a destination employer for top talent, who are aligned in purpose and values	Leverage our discovery and education missions to bring unique value to our communities	Leverage our size and scale to extend our statewide reach and increase our effectiveness	Ensure an integrated clinical, operational and financial approach to care delivery that delivers the care needed at the least cost



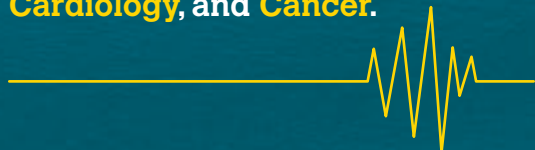
UMMS provides **25%** of all inpatient care in Maryland.

To ensure **future success**, the System must capitalize on the **strengths of each member organization** during the cultural evolution and rapidly integrate health equity to align with the All-Payer Health Equity Approaches and Development (AHEAD) model.



UMMS aspires to be the **safest health system** in the next **5 years** in Maryland.

The System is committed to being the market leader in four key service lines across the state: **Neurosciences, Orthopedic/Musculoskeletal, Cardiology, and Cancer.**



Leaning into **academic medicine**, while maintaining a **community focus.**



# Our Mission

The mission of the medical system is to purposefully advance the shared principles that are foundation to our work:

- **Compassionate, High-Quality Care**

We are unrelenting in our dedication to compassionate, high-quality, patient- and family-centered care.

- **Commitment to Community**

We are inherently entwined in the social fabric of our communities and demonstrate an unwavering commitment to the health and well-being of Marylanders.

- **Health Care Transformation**

Leveraging our scale and geographical reach, we transform the way we deliver health care to bring more value to our patients and their communities.

- **Discovery-Based Medicine**

Blazing new trails in medicine is inherent in us. We invest in and partner with those who are committed to the highest ideals of innovation, discovery-based medicine, and health education.

# Our Vision

We build upon our tradition of excellence in patient care and innovation, to be a national leader in the transformation of health care.



# Our Values

To advance our mission and vision, our organization and people are aligned around core values that define our work:

## compassion

We provide care and embrace our patients, families, team members and communities with compassion.

## discovery

We are relentless in our pursuit of discovery and innovation.

## excellence

We strive for excellence across all aspects of our mission.

## diversity

We foster inclusion and embrace diversity in human experiences, ideas and perspectives.

## integrity

We earn the trust of patients, one another and our communities by behaving morally, ethically and with integrity.





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## Delivering Advanced Care Locally

The strength of our primary and specialty care programs in Harford County comes from a dedicated team of over 500 medical professionals spanning more than 50 specialties. These include cardiology, oncology, orthopedics, pediatrics, behavioral health, emergency medicine, and more. Our expertise is rooted in the collaboration between community private practices, UM Upper Chesapeake Medical Group providers, and the renowned Academic Faculty of the University of Maryland School of Medicine.

### UM UCH PHYSICIANS

- Bariatric Surgery
- Behavioral Health
- Cardiology
- Diabetes & Endocrinology
- General Surgery
- Hand & Plastic Surgery
- Hospice/Palliative Care
- Interventional Cardiology
- Obstetrics & Gynecology
- Oncology & Hematology
- Orthopedics
- Primary Care
- Pulmonary & Critical Care
- Rehabilitation/Sports Medicine
- Sleep Medicine
- Wound Care

### COMMUNITY PHYSICIANS

- Dental
- Dermatology
- Emergency Medicine
- Gastroenterology
- Hospitalist
- Infectious Disease
- Interventional Radiology
- Nephrology
- Neurology
- Obstetrics & Gynecology
- Ophthalmology
- Orthopedics
- Otolaryngology (ENT)
- Pain Management
- Pediatrics
- Primary Care
- Rheumatology
- Spine Surgery
- Urogynecology
- Vascular Surgery

### UM SCHOOL OF MEDICINE FACULTY PRACTICES

#### Adult Specialties

- Breast Surgery
- Cardiac Surgery
- Gastroenterology
- Gynecology Oncology
- Oculoplastic Surgery
- Orthopedics
- Pediatric Allergy & Immunology
- Radiation Oncology
- Spine Surgery
- Thoracic Surgery
- Urogynecology

#### Pediatric Specialties

- Cardiology
- Endocrinology
- Otolaryngology (ENT)
- Genetics
- Hematology/Oncology
- Nephrology
- Neurology
- Orthopedics
- Pulmonary
- Surgery

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## A Focus on Harford County

As part of our commitment to our community we have developed a strategic plan designed to enhance the health and well-being of those we serve. This plan reflects a unified vision, ensuring exceptional care and strengthening our impact across the region.



## WE WILL:

- **Strengthen Community Health**
- **Achieve Organizational Excellence**
- **Care for Our Caregivers**
- **Expand Healthcare Service Lines**
- **Expand Digital Innovations to Enhance Healthcare Delivery**



# Strengthen Community Health

## OBJECTIVE

Enhance the well-being of our communities through accessible, equitable and comprehensive health services.

## STRATEGIES

1. Enhance community health programs by increasing outreach through community health workers and programs, with a stronger emphasis on chronic disease prevention.

### WE WILL:

- Partner with community providers to expand primary care, prevention and behavioral health services.

2. Actively engage in initiatives aimed at addressing social determinants of health and bridging equity gaps, particularly in the Route 40 corridor and surrounding rural communities.

### WE WILL:

- Target community health and outreach programs, more specifically, to neighborhoods in need.
- Expand outreach programs by the Comprehensive Care Center and Care Transformation Organization (CTO) to offer more in-home services.

3. Improve access and wait times at our Emergency Departments in Bel Air and Aberdeen through operational enhancements and strategic partnerships.

### WE WILL:

- Implement innovative models of care to reduce wait times.
- Partner with EMS and first responders to enhance coordination.



4. Improve access to primary and urgent care across Harford County by strengthening recruitment and retention, in addition to investing in enhanced facilities.

### WE WILL:

- Open an expanded flagship primary care practice in Bel Air.
- Grow Primary Care in Aberdeen to serve an additional 3,500 community members.
- Enhance and expand urgent care services throughout Harford County, ensuring seamless integration within the system's service line network to improve continuity of care.

## OUTCOMES

- Reduce wait times at Bel Air and Aberdeen Emergency Departments.
- Increase services along the Route 40 corridor.
- Enhance access and education to address health and service gaps.
- Build effective relationships with community providers and advocacy groups.

**VIDEO:**  
Tour the Emergency  
Department on the  
Aberdeen campus





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# Achieve Organizational Excellence

## OBJECTIVE

To achieve the highest standards of quality, safety and operational efficiency, while prioritizing health equity. Our commitment is to empower our team members, optimize our resources, and provide equitable, compassionate care to every patient.

## STRATEGIES

- 1. Enhance the overall patient experience by providing personalized, compassionate care, improving communication and creating a safe environment that prioritizes patient needs.**

### WE WILL:

- Leverage evidence-based training programs to foster a culture of caring and compassion.
- Achieve yearly improvements in patient satisfaction scores by optimizing patient care and communication in the hospital and across ambulatory practices.

- 2. Expand our commitment to High Reliability — fostering a culture of continuous improvement and aligning with UMMS’ goal of becoming the safest health system in Maryland.**

### WE WILL:

- Make data-driven decisions by leveraging key analytic tools to enhance efficiency, reduce waste and improve patient outcomes.
- Drive quality, safety and patient experience at the unit level.

- 3. Maximize operational efficiency and throughput by meeting key performance targets, streamlining processes and leveraging data-driven insights for informed decision-making.**

### WE WILL:

- Meet core targets related to emergency department throughput, length of stay and reducing readmission rates.
- Utilize data analytics to enable informed decision-making and drive better outcomes.

## OUTCOMES

- Achieve year-over-year improvements when benchmarked against national peer hospitals.
- Increase patient flow, reduce wait times and optimize resources to improve organizational efficiency as measured in our annual operating plan.
- Build a more diverse, inclusive and equitable workplace to boost employee satisfaction, strengthen decision-making and deepen connections with the community.



# Care for Our Caregivers

## OBJECTIVE

Prioritize recruitment and retention to empower our team members to deliver the best care possible.

## STRATEGIES

### 1. Empower our team members with continuous training and leadership programs.

#### WE WILL:

- Offer certifications and training programs, increasing front-line manager participation in leadership development.

### 2. Provide comprehensive mental health resources and wellness programs designed to reduce burnout and support overall well-being.

#### WE WILL:

- Leverage UMMS' and community resources to support the well-being of our caregivers.
- Develop local partnerships to support community engagement, outreach and caregiver programs.

### 3. Foster an inclusive work environment by increasing engagement in staff recognition activities and expanding Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) programs.

#### WE WILL:

- Celebrate and highlight contributions and use multiple platforms for inclusivity.
- Offer ongoing Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) training, support Employee Resource Groups, and promote cross-cultural mentorship.

### 4. Build a dynamic recruitment pipeline for registered nurses, advanced practice providers, and physician providers through strategic partnerships with the University of Maryland and other academic organizations.

#### WE WILL:

- Establish training programs for ongoing rotations.
- Secure philanthropy and grant funding to support training efforts.

## OUTCOMES

- Reduced burnout, increased job satisfaction, and improved health among caregivers, leading to stronger retention and better patient care.
- Year-over-year expansion of student training programs for nurses, providers and physicians building sustainable programs.
- Expanded outreach, partnerships and training for allied health and entry-level workers.
- Achieve year-over-year reduction in voluntary turnover.





# Expand Health Care Service Lines

## OBJECTIVE

Expand and optimize clinical service lines to meet the community’s evolving needs, improve patient outcomes and drive sustainable growth.

## STRATEGIES

**1. Strengthen our position as Maryland’s market leader in heart care, cancer care, neurosciences and musculoskeletal services.**

**WE WILL:**

- Expand regional partnerships with University of Maryland Medical Center and UM St. Joseph Medical Center to provide integrated care across service lines.
- Leverage training and clinical research protocols through our affiliation with the UM Greenebaum Comprehensive Cancer Center.
- Enhance our partnership with the UM School of Medicine for sub-specialty care.

**2. Guided by Harford County’s Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA), we will invest in and grow key services focused on chronic conditions and behavioral health.**

**WE WILL:**

- Expand cardiovascular services at the Bel Air campus, focusing on general and interventional cardiology.
- Strengthen alignment and outreach across our behavioral health services.

**3. Promote interdisciplinary collaboration across service lines to deliver coordinated care, particularly in Women’s Health, minimally invasive digestive disease and general surgery.**

**WE WILL:**

- Partner with the UM School of Medicine to expand Gastroenterology services.
- Broaden oncology services and establish a community-wide screening program by adding colorectal and GI care.
- Evaluate the development of an integrated women’s health program, including mother-baby care, cardiovascular services and gyn-oncology.

## OUTCOMES

- Strengthen our position as Harford County’s leader in cardiology, oncology, neurosciences and musculoskeletal services by increasing market share and patient volume.
- Improve access to behavioral health services with a focus on underserved populations, driving increased usage and better care coordination.
- Boost operational efficiency through enhanced interdisciplinary teamwork and seamless care coordination across service lines.

**READ MORE**





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# Expand Digital Innovations to Enhance Healthcare Delivery

## OBJECTIVE

Leverage cutting-edge technologies and innovative care models to enhance patient care, streamline operations, and expand service access.

## STRATEGIES

### 1. Continue to lead virtual care and remote monitoring by investing in and implementing advanced technologies.

#### WE WILL:

- Increase telemedicine and virtual health utilization across ambulatory practices.
- Improve access to our underserved rural communities and patients along the Route 40 corridor.
- Partner with iHarbor, UMMS' innovation center, to implement solutions and improve outcomes.

### 2. Maximize the capabilities of our electronic health record and the MyChart patient portal to optimize clinical workflows.

#### WE WILL:

- Become advanced power users of Epic's electronic medical record (EMR) system and participate annually in industry conferences to expand the use of best practices. EMRs are digital systems that store and share patient health information across different healthcare settings.
- Refine clinical and operational workflows leveraging AI solutions to streamline processes.

### 3. Broaden access to advanced therapies and infusion services.

#### WE WILL:

- Expand home-based infusion services and key pharmacy benefit programs.
- Continue partnerships with the UM Greenebaum Comprehensive Cancer Center on clinical trials and advanced cancer care programs.
- Explore implementation of infusion programs for digestive and cognitive related conditions.

### 4. Enhance clinical and social services delivered at home, specifically for our growing senior population.

#### WE WILL:

- Expand primary care and acute clinical care and support programs at home.
- Increase outreach through community health workers.

## OUTCOMES

- Double the number of telehealth visits to 40,000 annually.
- Year-over-year growth in the delivery of advanced therapies to patients across our sites.
- Establish home-based programs and expand the integration of community health workers.

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**UM UCH is the largest user of telemedicine in the University of Maryland Medical System and pioneered advanced telemedicine technology in the Aberdeen emergency department.**



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## Strengthening Our Foundation



### **IN SERVICE TO OUR COMMUNITY**

Our partnership with the community is vital to our shared success as we continue to uphold our mission, vision and values. Your support allows us to strengthen our role as a leading institution in Harford County.







### **STRONGER AS A SYSTEM**

Our success is rooted in the collective strength of the University of Maryland Medical System. By harnessing the power of our community provider network, the expertise of our academic medical system, the resources of the nation’s oldest public medical school, and our reputation for excellence, we can meet our commitment to the community.

### **COMMUNITY STEWARDSHIP AND PHILANTHROPY**

The generosity of our community has been truly inspiring. Your philanthropic gifts have contributed an average of \$6.6 million annually for the past five consecutive years.

These gifts have enabled us to invest in new technologies and innovations while sustaining and strengthening essential, unfunded programs such as:

- Cancer LifeNet
- The Klein Family Center for behavioral health
- The Senator Bob Hooper House

Philanthropy is a cornerstone in expanding access to care and advancing health equity across our community. These generous gifts fuel innovation, support underserved populations and ensure a compassionate patient experience.

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**Did you know that our Senator Bob Hooper House was built for the community by the community?**

### **PARTNERING WITH OUR PATIENTS AND FAMILIES TO ACHIEVE BETTER HEALTH**

We invite you to partner with us in your health journey. In Harford County, chronic diseases are on the rise and rates of obesity have increased, especially following the COVID-19 pandemic. Mental health challenges such as anxiety and stress remain significant concerns.

### **OUR ASK OF YOU**

That’s why we ask for your commitment to self-care — for both you and your families. Now more than ever, prioritizing fitness, nutrition and social engagement is critical, particularly as our community ages.

Equally vital is your partnership with your care team. Please work closely with your providers to do the following:

- Take your prescribed medications
- Follow any recommended diet and lifestyle guidelines
- Stay actively engaged in your care

Through mutual respect and collaboration, we can create a stronger, healthier community.

**READ MORE**



# Our Deepest Gratitude

We extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who played a role in shaping our strategic plan. Your insights, dedication and collaboration have been instrumental in shaping a roadmap that will guide us in delivering exceptional care to our community. Together, we've created a plan that reflects our shared commitment to the well-being of those we serve.

- Clinical Service Line Leadership
- Community-Based Private Practices
- Harford County Chamber of Commerce
- Harford County Health Department
- Harford County Office of Aging
- Healthy Harford Board
- Hospital Leadership
- Kaufman Cancer Center Patient and Family Advisory Council
- Physician Leadership Workgroup
- Senior Leadership
- Shared Nursing Governance
- UMMS Executives
- UM UCH Board of Directors
- UM UCH Patient and Family Advisory Council
- West Cecil Community Health



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