A definition of Community Benefit*: Programs or activities that provide treatment and/or promote health and healing as a response to identified community needs. These programs often operate at a financial loss to the Hospital, respond to needs of special groups, such as persons living in poverty; supply services that would likely be discontinued or would need to be provided by another organization, if the decision was made on a purely financial basis; respond to public health needs; involve education or research that improves overall community health.

* From “A Guide for Planning and Reporting Community Benefit,” published by The Catholic Health Association of the United States, 2006, developed in cooperation with VHA, Inc.
The mission of Middlesex Hospital is to improve the health of the people it serves and manage illness with skill and compassion. We accomplish our mission in a variety of ways, whether it is providing the latest technology to treat disease within the walls of the Hospital, or with improved, expanded and more accessible health services throughout the community beyond our walls.

“Community” is, after all, Middlesex Hospital’s namesake. We are a community hospital. It is at the core of our being. Our work to benefit the community is a natural outgrowth of the essence of the healing professions. It comes naturally to us because of our passion to improve people’s health and well-being.

Although you will see a wealth of data and details in this report, community benefit is not about numbers and charts and graphs. It’s about the compassion, caring and commitment of the people who provide this benefit and those who benefit from it - yourselves, your families, your friends, your neighbors - your community.

We hope you enjoy learning more in the following pages.

Robert G. Kiely
President/CEO
Middlesex Health System

“Community” is Middlesex Hospital’s namesake. We are a community hospital. It is at the core of our being.
As part of its governance responsibilities, the Board recognizes the importance of well-focused and effective community benefit programs. These programs are never looked upon as being in addition to the Hospital’s primary mission – they are an integral part of it.

As a result, community benefit programs are subject to the same needs assessment, goal setting, monitoring and measurement as are all important Hospital initiatives. The Board represents the community. In no area is that responsibility more clear than in our commitment to addressing community needs in the most appropriate and meaningful ways possible.

**Program Development Process**

1. **The Board of Directors** and the **Hospital** make a formal commitment to improving the health of community members through community benefit programs.
2. An **administrative team** is established to drive the health needs assessment process.
3. Relevant **community partners** are involved as part of the process.
4. Needs are determined through data gathering and shared with **decision makers** and **community leaders**.
5. Appropriate **community** programs are developed that coincide with identified needs. These programs are continuously reassessed for their relevance and new programs are developed accordingly.

Implementing the Hospital’s strategy to develop specific programs for our community requires a dedicated staff who are in touch with the people we serve.
Community Benefit Operations

Community benefit operations involve the development of community health needs assessment projects and strategies.

Community Benefit Administration

It requires a dedicated group of staff who offers its time and expertise to administer the Hospital’s extensive community benefit programs. The staff collects and analyzes data on a quarterly basis and ensures that it meets the necessary criteria to be categorized as true community benefit.

Community Health Assessment

In 2007, Middlesex Hospital will conduct a comprehensive community health assessment to determine the most important current health issues within its communities, with the goal of developing specific programs to address them.
WARNING: According to the Institute of Medicine, nearly half of all American adults—90 million people—have difficulty understanding and using basic health information. The ability to read, understand, and effectively use medical instructions and information is called "health literacy." Low health literacy can affect anyone of any age, ethnicity, background or education level. It is a problem that exists throughout the country and the communities served by Middlesex Hospital.
“What if you could prevent 90 million health problems with just three questions?” Aniella and Arissa Opalacz were shocked by this question. It made Aniella think of her own knee surgery. “I never really understood what happened until after the operation.” Three simple questions can clear the way to better understanding between doctor and patient: 1. “What is my main problem?” 2. “What do I need to do?” 3. “Why is this important to me?” These questions are the heart of Ask Me Three, a program of the Health Council of the Middlesex Chamber of Commerce, to which Middlesex Hospital lends its support.

Dr. Stan Opalacz joined the Council as a way to give back to his lifelong hometown. When daughters Aniella, 17, and Arissa, 15, heard about the enormous health literacy gap, they started attending Council meetings and were inspired.

Both sisters knew – the younger you learned, the better. So they formed a Health Club at Mercy High School in Middletown. They made presentations to every health class in school. And they got fascinating responses.

Older teens like Aniella are just starting to deal with health and medication needs. “If we can inform them now, they’ll know how to talk about their problems. And they’ll tell others.”

Arissa says, “Girls my age usually don’t have big health issues yet, but a lot of them go to the drug store with their grandmothers. They see this as a great way to help them.”

Aniella adds, “This was a chance to really make a change. And when people see the information, they get excited. That feels great.”
Since 1991, Brad has educated the community about the signs and symptoms of stroke. He has made hundreds of presentations at health fairs, to senior groups, schools, churches, and more. "We see a stroke every 3 to 4 days. Most people don't come in soon enough. That's what we're trying to change," says Brad Fowler, paramedic.

As a paramedic, Brad is on the front lines of caring for the community. Since most of the preliminary screening and preparation for definitive care can be done prior to arriving at the hospital, paramedics play a pivotal role in acute stroke care. The Paramedic Service at Middlesex Hospital began in July of 1987 and has been subsidized by the hospital since its inception. Middlesex Hospital was designated as a Primary Stroke Center by the Joint Commission in 2006.

"I have been fortunate enough to bring the message to the public," says Brad. "Being a paramedic, I am on the front lines of caring for patients, and I have a personal mission to make sure people understand the signs and symptoms of stroke. The more people know, the more likely they are to seek medical attention."

Brad Fowler, Paramedic
Community Health Services

Each year, Middlesex Hospital offers educational, support, screening and self-help programs to respond to identified health care needs. Most of these programs are either low-cost or free.

Disaster Planning for the Community
Hospital staff works on an ongoing basis with broad representation from throughout its service area to develop plans to prepare for a variety of potential emergency situations and natural disasters.

Public Information
The Hospital produces and distributes educational materials to the public on a variety of health and wellness topics, including Vita magazine and a quarterly Cancer Center newsletter.

Web-Based Consumer Health Information
The Middlesex Hospital Web site provides extensive resources to the public for health and wellness information.

Chamber of Commerce Healthcare Council Health Literacy Program
A county-wide program designed to increase the ability of community members to understand and use health information effectively. (Story pgs. 4-5)

Stroke Education
A free, ongoing public information presentation about the signs and symptoms of stroke is offered to local organizations and other community members by a dedicated Hospital paramedic. (Story pg. 6)

Caregiver Support Group
Provides support and comfort to help people face the challenges and overcome the frustrations of serving as a primary caregiver.

Financial Counselors
Middlesex Hospital provides information about financial assistance to all patients and makes this assistance available to individuals who meet established guidelines to receive it. (Story pgs. 26-27)

Middlesex Hospital Community Council
The Middlesex Hospital Community Council sponsors a number of free, family-oriented community events throughout the year.
There are currently more than 10 million cancer survivors in the United States. We offer comprehensive programs, support groups and educational/informational events for local cancer survivors, their families and friends.

Pregnancy & Birth Center
The following classes are offered by Middlesex Hospital's Pregnancy & Birth Center to low-income individuals and families:
- Newborn Care Class
- Prepared Childbirth Classes
- Breastfeeding Classes (open to all)
- Breastfeeding Support Group

Memorial Service
The Middlesex Hospital Pregnancy & Birth Center hosts a memorial service for families who have suffered the loss of a child.

Safe Sitter Course
A program for students ages 11 to 13 teaches new babysitters how to safely and responsibly care for children.

Tremaine Library
The Tremaine Medical Library offers comprehensive health information, resources and individualized search support resources at no charge.

Career Expos
Staff from Middlesex Hospital participates in a variety of local, regional and national career expos for nursing, technologists and other clinical professionals.

Behavioral Health Transportation Service
A free transportation service offered to behavioral health outpatients.

Opportunity Knocks
A community collaborative, committed to improving the health and well-being of young children, ages 5 and under. (Story pgs. 10-11)
Support Groups
Support groups for people with breast, prostate and other cancers, in addition to groups for cancer caregivers and for those who have lost loved ones.

Breast Cancer Awareness
A free, annual breast cancer awareness event to keep the community informed about the latest developments in the diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer.

Colon Cancer Awareness Event
A free, annual colon cancer awareness event featuring a panel of medical experts and information about prevention and treatment of colon cancer.

Cancer Survivors Day
This annual event is for cancer survivors and their loved ones to celebrate life in a fun and relaxing atmosphere with music, entertainment and inspirational presentations from other survivors and caregivers.

Cancer Care Program
The Cancer Care Program is a free service provided at the Middlesex Hospital Cancer Center for patients and their families. Care Managers assist patients to navigate the treatment, therapies and gain understanding of their breast, colon and other cancer diagnoses.

I Can Cope
A multi-part series co-sponsored with the American Cancer Society that addresses a variety of issues related to cancer diagnosis and treatment.

Focus on Healing
A free, monthly movement therapy program for breast cancer patients.

Look Good... Feel Better Program
A program co-sponsored with the American Cancer Society to provide women with cosmetic tips to address the side effects of cancer treatment.

Wig Room
Cancer patients can obtain free consultation and choose from a variety of wigs.

Arts in the Atrium
A free weekly arts program offered to cancer patients in the Atrium of the Cancer Center.

Cancer Care Transportation Assistance
A free van service is available to transport patients from the shoreline area to radiation therapy appointments at the Cancer Center.

Cancer Center Patient Resource Library
The Library is available to the public, cancer patients and their families as a resource for cancer information.

CLIMB Program
(Children’s Lives Include Moments of Bravery)
A six-week educational and support program for children ages 6 to 11 whose parents or grandparents have cancer.

Reach Program
An educational and support program for teens whose parents have cancer.

Light One Little Candle
A program that provides free children’s books to cancer patients to encourage them to spend time connecting with the children in their lives through reading.
In June of 2003, the people of Middletown made young children a priority by forming a community-wide collaborative called Opportunity Knocks (OK). A school/community partnership, OK includes representatives from local health and social service agencies, early care and education, and families— all committed to improving the health and well-being of young children 5 and under.

As a result of community-based research, the coalition addresses obesity, lack of routine dental care, and poor behavioral health issues that could lead to preschool expulsion or impact a child’s future school performance.

OK envisions that every Middletown child enters kindergarten physically and emotionally healthy and ready to succeed in school.

In collaboration with the Middletown School Readiness Council and Middlesex United Way, Middlesex Hospital secured a four-year grant from the Funders’ Collaborative to make OK possible. Middlesex Hospital houses OK’s program planner; carves out staff time from several departments to ensure active involvement in the collaborative; and is the lead fiscal agent and administrator of OK through its Finance Department. To date, Middlesex Hospital has contributed $15,500 and countless in-kind hours toward services to children at preschools that serve mostly low-income families.
Chronic diseases affect Americans annually. Diabetes programs are free to asthma, smoking cessation failure and diabetes.
The Center for Chronic Care Management's disease management programs are free to patients and focus on asthma, chronic heart failure, smoking cessation and diabetes. These programs are financially supported by the Hospital and community contributions. Program goals include keeping people out of the emergency room and hospital and instead, giving them the tools necessary to manage their illnesses successfully so they can lead healthier lives.

In the United States, about 20 million people have been diagnosed with asthma – 9 million of them are children. The following profile demonstrates how the LittleAir pediatric asthma program at Middlesex Hospital has made a difference in the lives of a mother and her two sons who have the disease.
If you’re a kid with asthma, chances are, you may not realize what brought on an attack. Being a kid is so much cooler when you can actually breathe. Imagine that.

“It feels like your lungs are collapsing. Suddenly, you can’t catch your breath.”
Rontarus Carr (r) and Jeavonté Freeman (l) can breathe a lot easier thanks to Middlesex Hospital's LittleAIR pediatric asthma program. Georgette Carr knows first hand: "Asthma runs in my family," she says. "I had a severe case as a child." When two of her three children showed symptoms, "I did everything a mom could. But I never really understood asthma, what triggered it, or how life-threatening it can be, until the asthma program. That woke me up."

Georgette’s doctor sent the family to Middlesex Hospital’s LittleAIR pediatric asthma program to find help for her sons, Rontarus, 13, and J eavonté, 10. The Program is free to the entire community through the Center for Chronic Care Management. Here, experts teach people with asthma – kids and adults – to manage the disease themselves. Each person discovers the different triggers, from allergies to dust mites, that bring on an attack. They learn step-by-step how to deal with it. "I learned how important it was to take my medicine, how much and when," says Rontarus. "And how to use the pump if you’re having a hard time breathing," adds J eavonté.

The Program’s goal: to help people with asthma function at a higher level - in short, to spend less time sick and more time being active and having fun like other kids.

The help goes far beyond education and medication. "We learned that carpet dust can bring on an attack," says Georgette. "So they even helped me find an apartment that didn’t have carpeting. They showed us special mattress covers, for more protection. They’re awesome."

It can happen anywhere, at any time. You’re scared. It’s terrifying.”

Georgette Carr knows first hand: “Asthma runs in my family,” she says. “I had a severe case as a child.” When two of her three children showed symptoms, “I did everything a mom could. But I never really understood asthma, what triggered it, or how life-threatening it can be, until the asthma program. That woke me up.”
Georgette has seen ‘steady progress’ in her sons since taking part. “They run around more and play longer.”

Rontarus loves swimming. “I’m feeling better. I’m not coughing hard. I’m growing out of my asthma and it’s good.” And Jeavonté, who was once too winded to climb the monkey bars? “I can go outside in the winter now and play!”

Way cool.
These programs involve clinical services to improve community health beyond the established Hospital outpatient services.

**Community Health Center Partnership for Prenatal Care**

Prenatal physician services are provided at the Community Health Center to low-income and uninsured mothers.

**Middlesex Hospital Homecare Screenings and Clinics**

Free blood pressure clinics are conducted throughout the year in a variety of towns in the Hospital’s service area, and annual flu shots are administered to those who are uninsured.

**Health Fairs/Screenings**

Health screenings are conducted by the Hospital annually, including the national “Legs for Life” screenings for peripheral vascular disease and skin cancer screenings conducted by the Middlesex Hospital Cancer Center. In addition, Hospital staff participates in health fairs throughout the year in many local towns.

**Annual Health Examinations for the Haddam Fire Company**

Annual free physical examinations are performed for the members of the fire company.

**Coumadin/Warfarin Safety Education**

Middlesex Hospital is deeply invested in educating the community on the proper administration and use of Coumadin and Warfarin. An educational seminar for the public on this topic was held in 2007.

**Red Cross Blood Drives**

Quarterly volunteer blood drives are conducted at the Hospital. Each session usually draws 80 to 90 donors and collects as much as 70 useable pints.
Margaret Flinter, Community Health Center

"It's something other communities would envy - a strong community health center and a strong hospital that work very effectively with each other."
Health Professions Education

This category includes educational and financial programs intended to help prepare future health care professionals, including physicians, nurses and other clinical personnel.

Shoreline Career Day
During this annual event at the Middlesex Hospital Shoreline Medical Center, local high school students can experience an emergency in real time and learn what it’s like to be a health care professional.

Students get the chance to explore many clinical areas, including medicine and nursing, radiology, physical therapy and the laboratory. In each setting, they are introduced to the professional education needed for that field. (Story pgs. 20-21)

Family Medicine Residency Program
The Hospital offers a well-respected Family Medicine Residency Program that has graduated many family medicine physicians who have established practices in the local Middlesex County area. Residents are required to develop and participate in community health projects during their course of study.

Margaret Flinter of the Community Health Center (CHC) says, “Middlesex Hospital people were providing ‘community benefit’ long before the term was labeled.” She points to the Family Medicine Residency Program that “attracts great people, trains them superbly, and exposes them to community health. And many of these physicians stay in the community. Middlesex Hospital and the CHC have made two decades of progress on prenatal and obstetric care, making sure women who often have many risk factors get the comprehensive help they need.” Thanks to the partnership between the organizations, “We’ve made real progress on meeting the demand for behavioral health care in children, in managing chronic diseases, and in getting uninsured patients access – not just to primary care – but to the many specialty services that are critical to managing complex health problems.”

Margaret puts it this way: “The critical element in providing community benefit is always leadership. It’s happening so proactively in this county because Middlesex Hospital and its administration understand that health care – and improving health – doesn’t just happen inside hospital walls.”
Of the almost 200 local high school students who’ve attended Middlesex
Career Day is the inspiration of emergency nurse Rhonda Forristall, R.N. Learning of a looming nursing shortage, in 2002 she created this annual event where students from the community can experience an emergency in real time and learn what it’s like to be a health professional.

“They go from the crash site through the noise and action of the E.R. to recovery and physical therapy,” says Rhonda. “It’s a hands-on day. We’re always asking them, ‘Help me with this splint,’ or ‘Put the IV in the rubber dummy’s arm.’ They get really excited.” She does admit: “There hasn’t been a year when one of them doesn’t get light-headed and has to sit down.” But even more of them get turned on to the careers and go on.

“Some of them learn they’re not right for blood and gore. But we show them there are so many other fascinating sides to care, like radiology and physical therapy ... We help them explore it all.”

The program has been so successful, it has been featured in Advance for Nurses magazine, Nursing Spectrum, and Journal for Emergency Nursing, as well as in local newspapers. In 2006, the Connecticut Hospital Association honored Rhonda as a “Healthcare Hero” for her work. But her greatest satisfaction comes from the young eyes she opens.

“Parents have told the guidance counselors we work with, ‘Thank you for this experience.’ They say it has opened doors that their kids never thought about before.”

More than 30 Shoreline Medical Center and other Hospital staff members volunteer their time every year to conduct the Career Day event at the Shoreline Medical Center. Junior and senior high school students are invited to participate.
Loretta Marion  
Hospice Volunteer

When loved ones pass on, great stories vanish with them – even tales their own families never heard. Capturing those lives is the mission of Hospice volunteer, Loretta Marion. Loretta uses her writing gift to share the legacy of a lifetime. Her "Legacy Stories," for which she donates her time to the Hospice Program at Middlesex Hospital, "were intended to record the love stories that our families and the entire community have for their loved ones," says Loretta.

"I wanted to record the stories of our patients and honor their lives," says Loretta. "As a breast cancer survivor myself, I wanted to record the stories of our patients and honor their lives." Loretta Marion's "Legacy Stories" have given generations of families – and the entire community – deeper roots.

The Hospice Program at Middlesex Hospital began in the late 1980s. Since then, it has served the needs of patients and their families by bringing dignity and compassion to the end of life. The program is offered both in the hospital and in the home, due to the enormous cost of hospice care. The program is supported by philanthropic support and other Hospital funding.

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Subsidized Health Services

Several services provided by the Hospital routinely operate at a loss but continue to be offered in order to serve the community.

Emergency Department
The Emergency Department is the “front door” to Middlesex Hospital. The Department treats every person who comes through the door, regardless of their ability to pay. In addition, the Emergency Crisis Service provides assessment of acute psychiatric patients 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Emergency Departments are located in Middletown, Marlborough and Essex.

Family Advocacy Program
The Family Advocacy Program offers comprehensive programs for children and adults that include behavioral health outpatient services for children and adolescents, parenting education and community resource referrals for families.

Cardiac Rehabilitation
After a heart attack or heart surgery, a patient often undergoes a program of monitored exercise and education to help in recovery and improve lifestyle. Although insurance often pays for this service, it does not generate enough income to be sustained without a Hospital subsidy.

Middlesex Hospital Homecare
Middlesex Hospital Homecare has offered a wide range of professional clinical services in the home for more than 100 years. Teamed with the extensive resources of Middlesex Hospital, this tradition continues, combined with state-of-the-art health care and a dedicated, caring staff.

Hospice and Palliative Care
The Hospice Program at Middlesex Hospital began in the late 1980s. Since then, it has served the needs of patients and their families by bringing dignity and compassion to the final stages of life. The program is offered both in the Hospital and in the home. (Story pg. 22)

Behavioral Health
Middlesex Hospital offers a large spectrum of behavioral health services, including inpatient and outpatient therapy and support groups for children, adults and seniors.
“I figured a clinical trial was offered just didn’t seem an alternative then.”
Clinical studies are conducted to determine new or more effective methods of cancer treatment.

**Cancer Center Clinical Trials**

There are currently 27 clinical trials underway for patients with cancer, including breast, colon, lung, esophageal, pancreatic, prostate, rectal and other cancers.

Patients have become very comfortable undergoing clinical trials for a number of reasons. The trials involve very strict guidelines regarding patient follow-up, including how to adjust dosage to minimize side effects and how to monitor effectiveness. And clinical professionals always conduct them under close medical supervision by the trial monitors.

Many trials do not use placebos (sugar pills). In fact, most trials now either use new combinations or new agents (Phase II) or a comparison of two already-proven treatments, to decide which one is better (Phase III). Placebo use in clinical trials is becoming a thing of the past and the days of patients feeling like “guinea pigs” are long gone. Many patients actually consider themselves trailblazers, in that they are moving the field of cancer science and research further ahead through their participation. They also feel reassured that they are participating in clearly defined protocols, developed by a national group of medical experts.
"It’s been that kind of year," says Ellie Hughes. Ellie and her husband, Tom, run a small business. They lost their health insurance when the business took a downturn. Ellie was diagnosed with breast cancer and Tom with heart problems and broken bones due to a fall. They turned to Middlesex Hospital for care. The Hospital staff suggested they apply for financial aid.

"Middlesex was amazing," said Ellie. "Like everyone else we met here, our financial counselor was so patient and compassionate." Tom added, "The financial aid took a load off my mind. I can’t say enough good things about Middlesex."

Middlesex Hospital offers free or discounted health services to persons who cannot afford to pay and who meet the Hospital’s criteria for financial assistance. Great care is taken to make sure that patients are informed of the availability of these funds, which was the case with the Hugheses.
Financial and In-Kind Contributions

Any funds and in-kind services (i.e., equipment, food, supplies) donated by the Hospital to the community at large.

Corporate Donations From Middlesex Hospital

In 2007, Middlesex Hospital provided corporate support in the form of sponsorships to a variety of community organizations throughout Middlesex County.

Community Use of Meeting Space

The Hospital provides on-site meeting space for many local groups and organizations throughout the year, free of charge.
Specific values have been annualized until September 30, 2007.
In 2007, Middlesex Hospital provided its community benefit programs at a total of $24,984,806. The following pages provide further detail by category. Although these figures were developed according to established reporting guidelines, it is impossible to place a dollar value on the true impact these programs have on the lives of people throughout our community.

In addition, the Hospital has absorbed $7,290,687 in bad debt costs. These costs, however, do not qualify as reportable Community Benefit.

Total Community Benefit

<table>
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<th>Category</th>
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<td>Charity Care</td>
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<td>Government Sponsored Health Care (Medicaid Shortfall)</td>
<td>$9,183,421</td>
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13,908,498
146,909 PERSONS SERVED
Middlesex Hospital is helping to build a stronger community – one person at a time.
A definition of Community Benefit: Programs or activities that provide treatment and/or promote health and healing as a response to identified community needs. These programs often operate at a financial loss to the Hospital; respond to needs of special groups, such as persons living in poverty; supply services that would likely be discontinued or would need to be provided by another organization, if the decision was made on a purely financial basis; respond to public health needs; involve education or research that improves overall community health.
