



Frequently Asked Questions

Is University Health part of Bexar County? What is the Bexar County Hospital District?

Bexar County Hospital District is the formal legal name of University Health. Authorized by the Texas Constitution and established by the voters of Bexar County in 1954, the Bexar County Hospital District is a separate governmental and nonprofit health organization. The Bexar County Commissioners Court appoints the Board of Managers, sets the annual hospital district property tax rate and approves University Health's annual operating and capital budgets.

Is University Health the same as UT Health San Antonio?

University Health and UT Health San Antonio are separate organizations. University Health has served as the primary teaching partner for the UT Health San Antonio School of Medicine since 1968. UT Health San Antonio faculty physicians and resident physicians are among the clinicians providing care for patients at University Health hospitals and clinics.

Who does University Health partner with related to training doctors, nurses and other health care professionals?

University Health has academic affiliation agreements with many schools and programs to provide clinical training to health care professionals in a variety of disciplines. Our primary partnerships for training clinical staff include those with UT Health San Antonio (Schools of Medicine, Nursing, Allied Health, Public Health and Pharmacy); The University of the Incarnate Word School of Medicine; Texas A&M College of Medicine; Texas A&M University-San Antonio; and St. Mary's Nursing School. Our Pharmacy Residency Programs partners with UT Austin, Texas A&M University and the University of the Incarnate Word to provide advanced training for those with doctorates in pharmacy. University Health provides support for more than 800 physicians in Graduate Medical Education. University Health serves as the clinical site for 465 resident physicians and fellows who completed residency and are pursuing more specialized training.

Do student doctors treat patients at University Health?

Medical students do not provide independent treatment but rather work as part of a team under the direct oversight of licensed physicians, adhering to institutional and legal guidelines. Medical students primarily provide basic patient care activities like taking patient histories, performing physical examinations, explaining diagnoses, providing patient education and assisting with procedures. They cannot independently diagnose conditions, prescribe medication or perform complex medical procedures because they are still in training and not yet licensed to practice medicine.

What are residents?

Residents are physicians who are receiving specialized training (referred to as Graduate Medical Education). After graduating medical school and obtaining an MD or DO degree, physicians who enter residency undergo additional years of training at hospitals and clinics (typically 3-7 years) in order to become independent physicians practicing in that medical specialty. Residents provide direct patient care including diagnosing, managing, treating and performing procedures under the supervision of more experienced physicians (faculty or attending physicians) in a designated medical specialty.

What kind of research happens at academic medical centers like University Health?

As an academic health system, University Health physicians, nurses and other health care professionals are continuously evaluating opportunities to improve care and outcomes for patients. Clinical research is one of the ways new protocols, resources, medications and other treatment options can be evaluated and potentially approved and shared across the world.

Who does University Health serve?

About 25% of University Health patients have commercial health insurance, 25% are covered by Medicare, 25% are enrolled in Medicaid and 25% of our patients do not have any health coverage.

Frequently Asked Questions, continued

How is University Health funded? What percent of the budget comes from property taxes?

University Health is funded by payments for services provided, premium revenue from Community First Health Plans (its nonprofit managed care organization), grants, philanthropy, supplemental Medicaid programs and local property taxes. University Health's reliance on local property taxes is low, with taxpayers funding about 15% of the total operating budget.

Is CareLink insurance?

CareLink is not health insurance. It is a nationally recognized financial assistance program. Bexar County residents may qualify if they meet certain qualifications, including: income must be at or below 250% of federal poverty guidelines and they do not have or qualify for health insurance. CareLink members have access to affordable preventive health care, primary care and specialty care services at University Health clinics and hospitals.

Who is Community First Health Plans, and how is it related to University Health?

Community First Health Plans is the nonprofit managed care organization owned by University Health. Community First Health Plans offers a variety of managed Medicaid and Medicare plans, as well as commercial insurance plans.

What is University Medicine Associates, and how is it related to University Health?

University Medicine Associates is the nonprofit multi-specialty provider group of University Health. University Medicine Associates' primary care and specialty care providers, including physicians, nurse practitioners and physician assistants, care for patients at University Health's more than 30 outpatient care clinics, University Hospital and the Women's & Children's Hospital.

Do we offer telehealth in all of our clinics?

Yes, we offer telehealth services across all of our facilities. This allows patients to access medical consultations, follow-ups and other health care services remotely, ensuring convenience and flexibility for those who may not be able to visit in person.

What is the difference between a community hospital and an academic medical center?

Academic medical centers are often affiliated with medical schools or universities and traditionally focus on clinical care, education and research, including clinical trials. Academic medical centers provide a wide range of medical specialties, offer advanced technology and access to innovative treatments and procedures. Because of their expertise and advanced capabilities, they care for the most complex and acutely ill patients. At academic centers, patients receive care from a multidisciplinary care team, including faculty (attending) physicians, residents, students and many other health care professionals. Many physician specialties are covered 24/7 at academic centers, meaning these medical and surgical specialists are on call in the hospital every day, around the clock. By comparison, community hospitals provide essential care, with fewer staff members and more limited medical specialties as well as fewer specialties on call for after-hour clinical care.

What other services does University Health provide?

University Health provides medical, dental and behavioral health care to adult and juvenile detention patients.

Hospital at Home is a program where clinically appropriate patients who still require care for an acute condition are screened by a medical professional and can be transferred home to receive care and continuous monitoring by a multidisciplinary group that consists of physicians, advanced practice providers and registered nurses. Patients appropriate for this program are transferred home with monitoring and have daily nurse visits. Nurses evaluate and treat these patients in the comfort of their homes until they are safe to be discharged. In 2024, University Health cared for 1,169 patients in their homes. This program saved 6,102 bed-days, with an average daily census of 17.1 patients. This savings of bed-days helped create available hospital beds for patients who needed to be admitted and remain physically in our hospital to receive a higher level of care.