



NEWS RELEASE

Gallup Community Health Receives Five-Year Grant Award from Merck Foundation to Improve Cardiovascular Care in Gallup and McKinley County, New Mexico

Gallup, New Mexico, November 18, 2025—Today, Gallup Community Health (GCH) announced that it was awarded a five-year grant through the Collaborative for Equity in Cardiac Care (the “Collaborative”), an initiative funded by the Merck Foundation (the “Foundation”) aimed at enhancing access to high quality, person-centered health care for people living with heart conditions in the United States. With this grant award, Gallup Community Health aims to develop and implement local programs that will help close the gaps in the delivery of cardiac care in Gallup and McKinley County.

“We are honored to have been selected as a participant in the Collaborative which has the potential to substantially impact risk factors for cardiovascular disease and quality of care for cardiac patients in our region,” stated Valory Wanger MD and Executive Director of Gallup Community Health. “We have very few cardiac care resources in our community, and this program will allow us to help fill the gap.”

Gallup Community Health serves the rural and highly underserved Gallup and McKinley County, New Mexico region where life expectancy is 67.9 years, a full 9 years shorter than the state average. Cardiovascular disease remains the leading cause of death, exacerbated by very high rates of diabetes and uncontrolled cardiovascular risk factors. The program will focus on Native American and low-income populations disproportionately affected by cardiovascular disease.

Through the Collaborative, GCH will develop a comprehensive program that expands access to coordinated cardiac care for residents living with heart disease. The program will engage patients with Community Health Worker support, offer training to local healthcare workers on culturally grounded approaches to cardiac care and expand community partnerships to address social determinants of health and increase access to heart-healthy foods, exercise, and specialty care.

Cardiovascular disease continues to be the number one cause of death for men and women living in the U.S., and its burden hits under-resourced community the hardest. By addressing the medical and social needs of people living with heart conditions, the Collaborative for Equity in Cardiac Care will have a significant, lasting impact on the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities across the county,” said Kalahn Taylor-Clark, vice president and head, Social Impact & Sustainability, Merck.

In addition to Gallup Community Health, Collaborative program grantees include [Capital Health System](#); [La Clínica del Pueblo](#); [Public Health Institute/Population Health Innovation Lab](#); [University of Chicago](#); [UPMC Center for High-Value Health Care](#); [Providence Medical Foundation](#); [The Foundation for Black Women’s Wellness](#); [Zufall Health Center](#); [Georgia State University Research Foundation/Atlanta Regional Collaborative for Health Improvement](#); and [MedNorth Health Center](#).

As a Collaborative, grantees will help bridge gaps in the delivery of care for a range of heart conditions and advance sustainable, and potentially scalable, approaches to improve the lives of people with heart disease.

The Foundation is also supporting the [Johns Hopkins Center for Health Equity](#) as the Collaborative’s National Program Office, which will provide technical assistance to grantees as they build local partnerships and implement their programs. The National Program Office will also foster peer-to-peer learning among grantees, conduct a cross-site evaluation, and disseminate the Collaborative’s results and lessons learned.

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Gallup Community Health is a 501 (c) 3 not-for-profit organization created in 2022 to improve health outcomes by providing high-quality primary care for all, regardless of ability to pay. As a FQHC (Federally Qualified Health Center) Look-Alike, GCH is truly patient led, with a majority patient Board of Directors which provides regular feedback from and outreach to the community regarding needs and strategic planning. GCH's collaborative approach has resulted in representation on the New Mexico Primary Care Council, in the New Mexico Primary Care Association and the New Mexico Primary Care Training Consortium.

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