

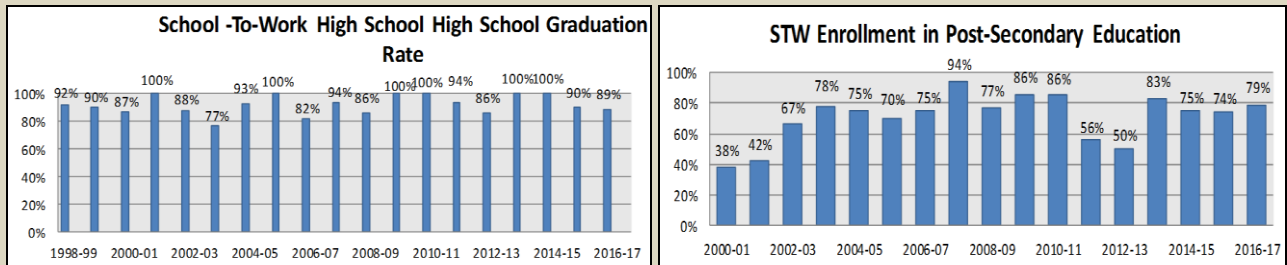
## Improving Access to Care – Reducing Health Disparities 2016-2017

Our St. Luke’s University Health Network (SLUHN) 2016 CHNA clearly revealed that people in our more vulnerable populations find it difficult to access care, and therefore experience health disparities. This priority focuses on addressing the social determinants of health to promote health equity. This report serves as an implementation plan update for the work undertaken by the Department of Community Health & Preventive Medicine (CHPM) at SLUHN in conjunction with a variety of network and community partners.

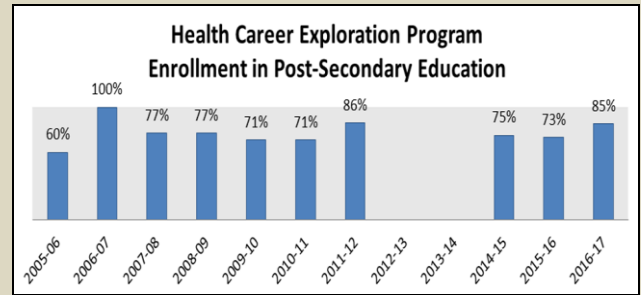
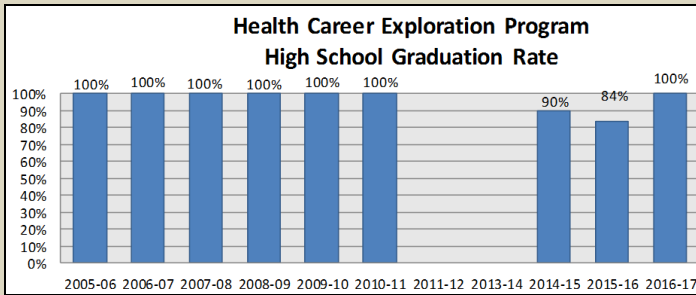
### Prevention and Wellness:

Since gainful employment is vital to success in adulthood and high school graduation is an important indicator for that, the Adolescent Career Mentoring Initiative provides career-mentoring programming for in-school and out-of-school youth in Lehigh and Northampton Counties, through a combination of hospital rotations, professional development sessions, and/or work experience. Initiatives include the School-To-Work Program, Health Career Exploration Program, Next Step, and CareerLinking Academy in Bangor, Bethlehem and Allentown. The programs focus on increasing graduation rates in high risk populations, improving English language skills for English as a Second Language Learners, providing work experience for high school students in the healthcare field, while teaching job keeping and job seeking skills, and diversifying the healthcare workforce. Adolescent Career Mentoring Initiatives address our CHNA goals related to Improving Access to Care and Reducing Health Disparities; and Improving Child and Adolescent Health.

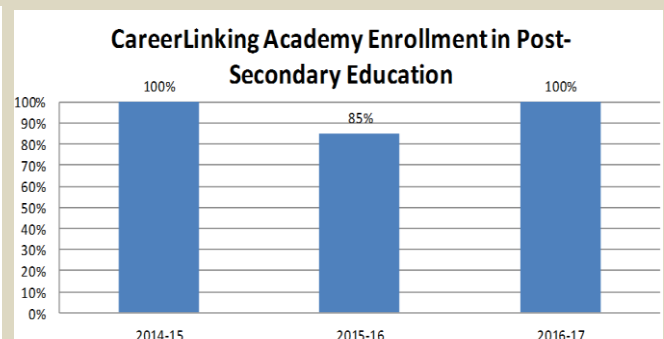
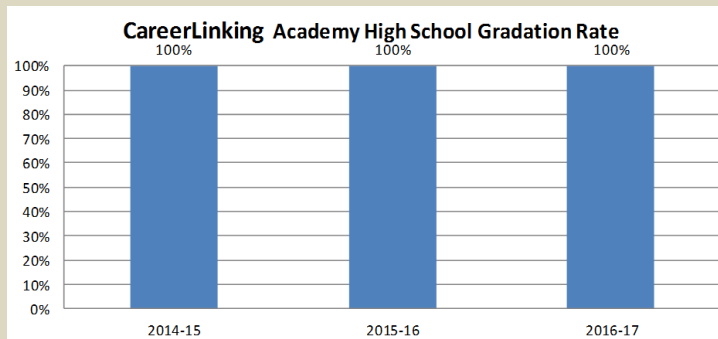
- School-To-Work Program (STW)** – In collaboration with the Bethlehem Area School District, the School-To-Work Program provides English as a Second Language students the opportunity to explore healthcare careers. Its intent is to engage at-risk students to remain in school by exposing them to health careers, to offer support and guidance as they work to achieve fluency in English, and to obtain valuable career and life skills.



- Health Career Exploration Programs (HCEP)** – In collaboration with the Bethlehem Area School District, Allentown School District and the Lehigh Valley Workforce Development Board Inc., the Health Career Exploration Program provides employability skills training and unsubsidized work experiences at St. Luke’s Bethlehem, Allentown and Anderson Campuses for high school seniors during the summer and academic year.



- CareerLinking Academy (CLA)** – In collaboration with the Bethlehem Area School District, Allentown School District, and Bangor School District, the CareerLinking Academy Program combines observational learning experiences and professional development sessions focusing on exposure to healthcare careers with job readiness skills training.



- Next Step Program (NSP)** – In collaboration with Lehigh Valley Workforce Development Board, Inc., the Next Step Program provides employability skills training and subsidized work experience for out-of-school youth aged 17 to 25 years old at the Bethlehem & Allentown Campus, and St. Luke’s Physician Group locations.
- Medical Career Pathways (MCP)** – In collaboration with Palisades School District and Quakertown School District, St. Luke’s Quakertown Campus provides high school students the opportunity to explore healthcare careers through clinical rotations and lectures. The program was designed to expose a dozen high school students from each district who are interested in the medical field to various aspects of the industry.

The St. Luke’s School-To-Work Program completed twenty years since inception. Additionally, St. Luke’s CareerLinking Academy expanded to the Bangor School District, in working with St. Luke’s Anderson Campus.

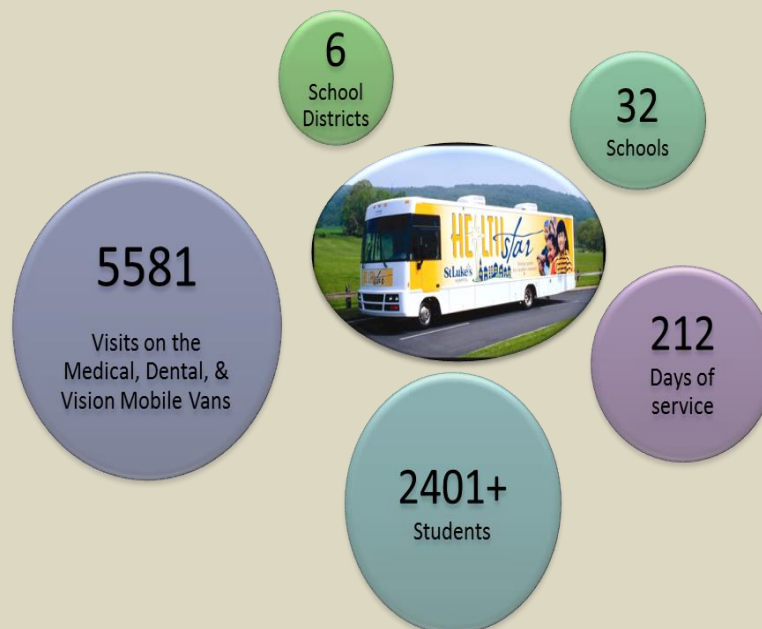
According to the Children's Defense Fund, a direct correlation exists between literacy at a young age and general health. Many studies confirm the link between poverty, academic performance, career success, lifestyle choices, and health status. Furthermore, students not reading at grade level by Grade 3 are more likely to, at best, live in poverty and at worst, become incarcerated. It also leads to poor health literacy; affecting people’s ability to search for and use health information, adopt healthy behaviors and act on important public health matters. With that in mind, SLUHN has developed a multi-pronged approach to help meet the literacy needs of children, with a focus on children from birth through third grade. Currently the literacy program is involved in the following:

- Book Drives
- Book Distributions to children and families
- Maternal-Child health programs
- Reading Rocks!
- Dr. Seuss Day
- Little Free Libraries

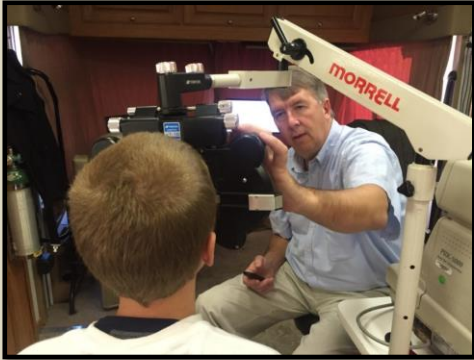
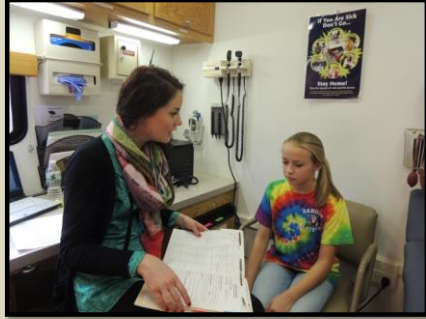
Additionally, in FY17 the VNA - St. Luke's Maternal Child Health programs, through our preventive nurse-led Home Visitation Programs (Nurse Family Partnership (NFP) and Parent Advocate in the Home (PATH) offered parent education, and pre-literacy instructions while providing 607 books to their families. SLUHN supported Read Across America - Dr. Seuss Day and sent volunteer readers to six school districts associated with six of seven hospital campuses and we traveled to twenty different schools, providing Dr. Seuss books and bookmarks. We visited 182 K-5 grade classrooms, reading and engaging 4,089 students through discussion and related activities.

**Care Transformation:**

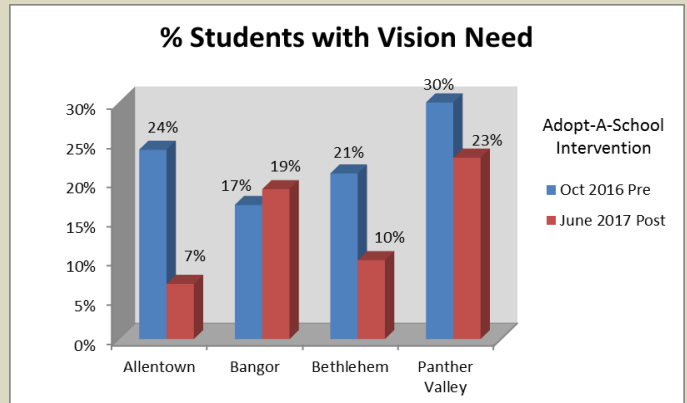
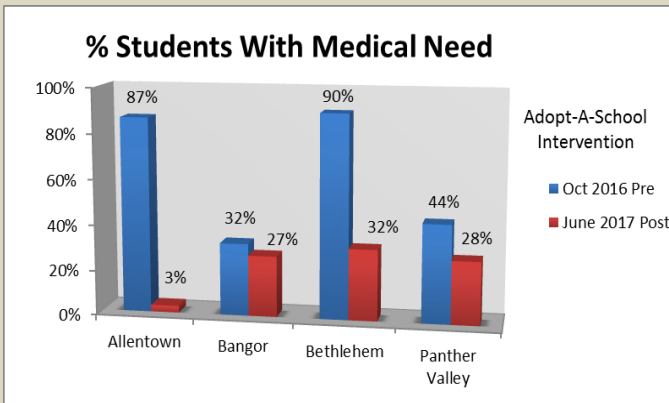
The Mobile Health and Adopt A School Initiative is one of our primary community based initiatives addressing issues related to this health priority. Since 1994 St. Luke's University Health Network (SLUHN) has been providing medical, vision and dental care on our Mobile Vans. Our goal is to increase access to care for students who are uninsured, underinsured or who slip through the cracks in our health care system. Additionally, we have added integrated behavioral health services and nutrition counseling to our Mobile Health services.

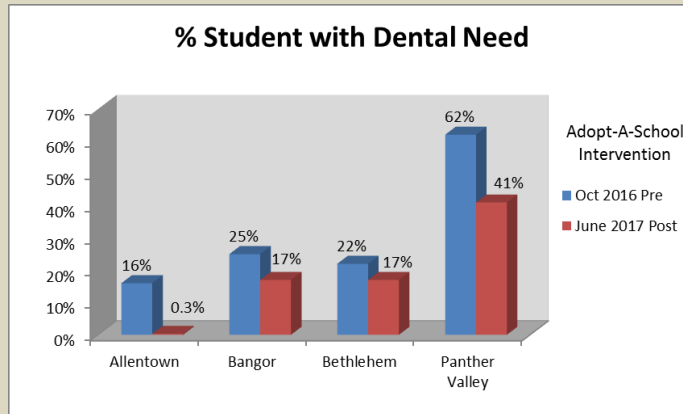


In FY17 we partnered with six school districts (Allentown, Bangor, Bethlehem, Panther Valley, Phillipsburg, and Quakertown) and brought services to 32 schools. CHPM Mobile Health Vans were out in the community 212 days, providing services on site to 2401+ students. The number of appointment visits on the van totaled 5581.

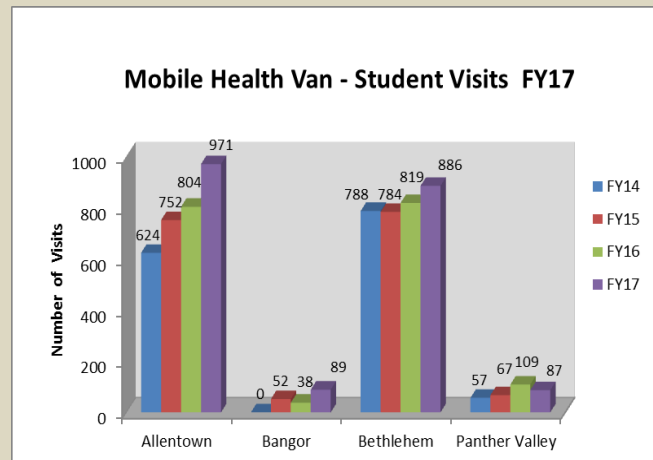
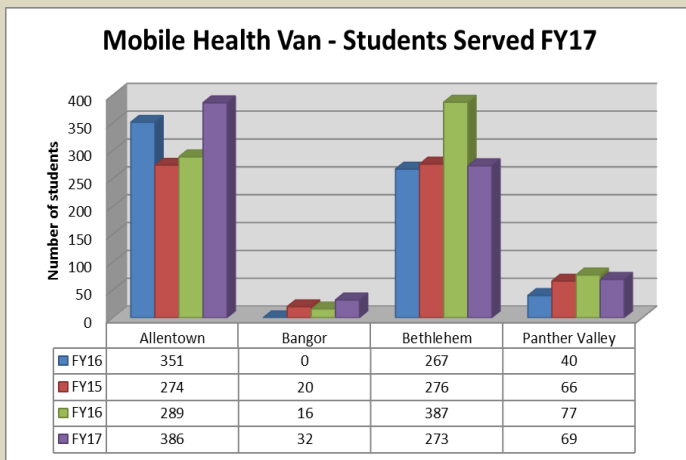


SLUHN became the lead and corporate partner to two more United Way Community Schools. As lead partner, SLUHN employs two full-time Community School Coordinators who, with full agency support, work directly in the schools to enhance and coordinate social services and opportunities for students and families to learn and be successful. The charts below show the percentage of students who were identified as needing Medical, Vision and Dental care through failed screenings



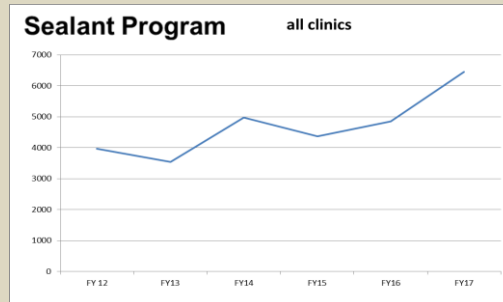
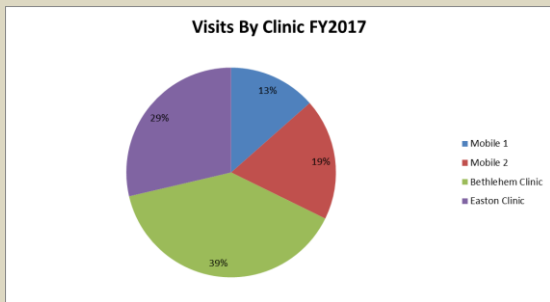
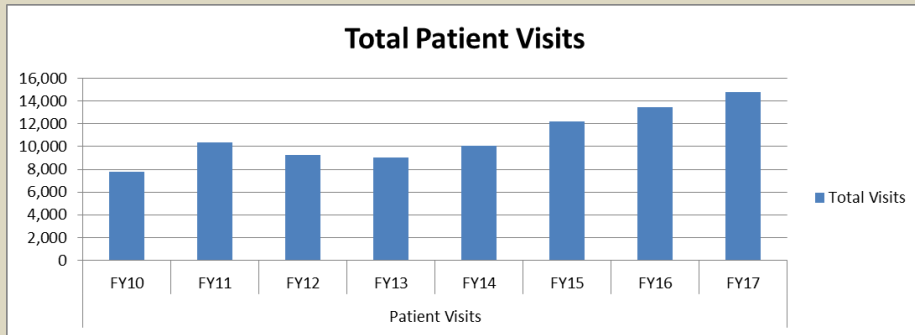


In FY17, SLUHN partnered with two of our school districts in a marathon event using the Penn State Pro Wellness model to perform state mandated health screenings at the start of the school year. Four schools participated in this pilot and the screenings were completed in October 2016. Historically, these screenings may not be completed until Jan/Feb 2017 of the academic year delaying access to care and contributing to poor academic performance.



Additionally, St. Luke’s is committed to the oral health needs of the community by bringing together groups and resources to address dental challenges. Working together, we can address the dental needs currently challenging our community by reducing future decay through enhanced oral health education, increased access to services, and prevention strategies. The Bethlehem and Easton Dental Clinics provide comprehensive dental treatment to the adults and children of the Lehigh Valley and surrounding counties. Easton Dental Clinic provides adult dental services as well as focus on pediatric dentistry. St. Luke’s Mobile Dental Program provided dental care to Bethlehem, Allentown, Bangor, Quakertown, and Phillipsburg School Districts for the 2016-2017 school year. St. Luke’s Mobile Dental Program also provided dental care in partnership with Neighborhood Health Centers of the Lehigh Valley, Bethlehem Kids Care, and AmeriHealth Caritas. The Kids Care and AmeriHealth Caritas partnership was to establish a dental home for children who have not previously received dental care. Through a collaborative effort with Northampton Community College’s School of Dental Hygiene, the Dental Sealant Program provides the dental van for placement of preventive dental sealants for Bethlehem Area School District students.





A newly designed multifaceted Colorectal Cancer Screening research project across four separate clinics was designed and implemented in FY17 to ensure that screening and treatment rates increase among our vulnerable populations, where rates are typically lower and later stage cancers are more frequently diagnosed. This project is a result of collaboration among clinic staff, providers, service lines, medical students, residents, researchers and CHPM. The first phase of this project was the completion of surveys by providers, staff and patients to assess and inform of needs. As a result, the group continues to work on a multidisciplinary approach to improving quality metrics among some of our highest need populations.

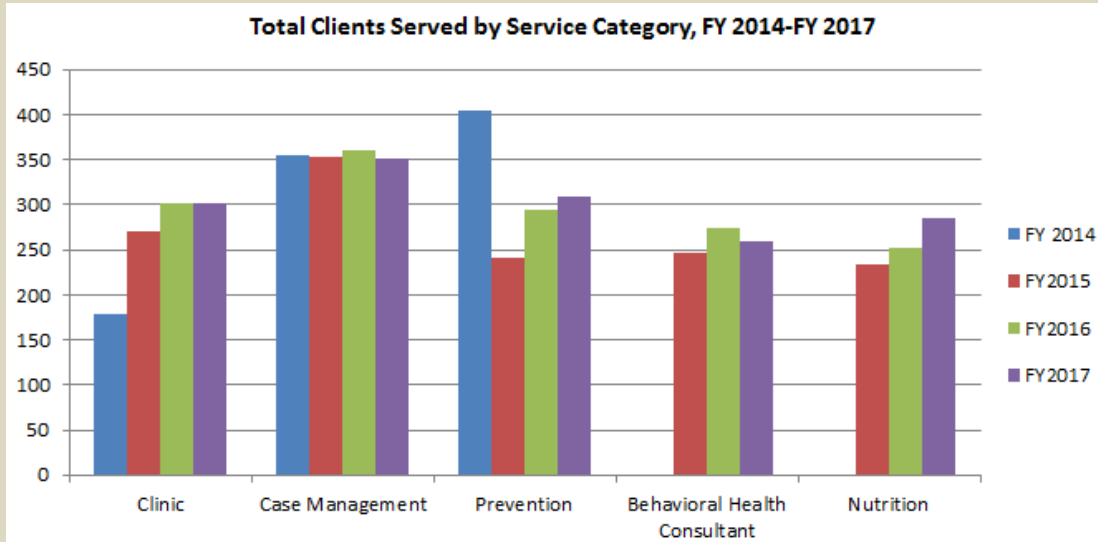
Behavioral Health, Diabetes Self-Management and Treatment (DSMT) program and Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) tied to our clinics and employee health continue to grow. As we build our community-facing programs we look to expand our team-based approach of care coordination within SLUHN's many clinics. Currently we have at least a part-time outpatient Social Work Case Manager in each of our clinics. Our future goals seek to develop a more team-based approach with RN Care Coordinators, Social Work Case Managers, and Primary Care Physicians working as a team to assess patients holistically and help reduce barriers to adherence to treatment plans; self-management; reduction in emergency room visits; and access and follow-through with preventative care. Mental Health is at the top of the list for social work referrals. Understanding and continuing to track our trends will help give us some clear direction on how to improve our services.

The National HIV/AIDS Strategy has four primary goals

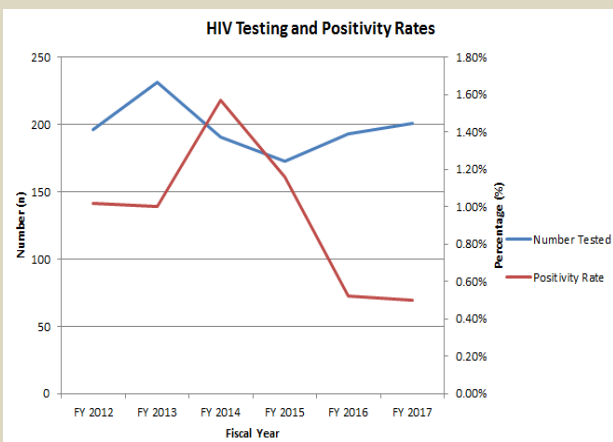
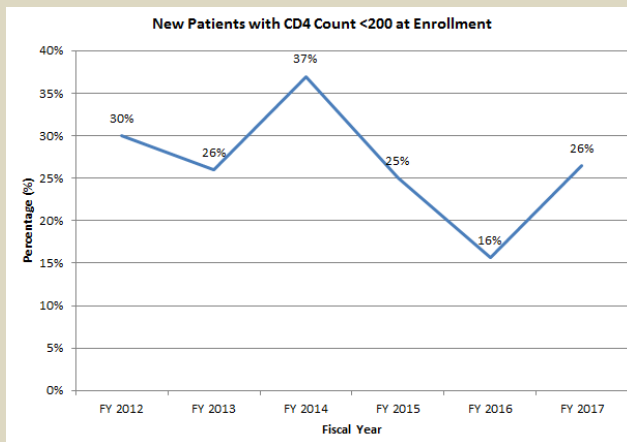
- 1) Reduce new HIV infections.
- 2) Increase access to care and improve health outcomes for people living with HIV.
- 3) Reduce HIV-related disparities and health inequities.
- 4) Achieve a more coordinated national response to the HIV epidemic.

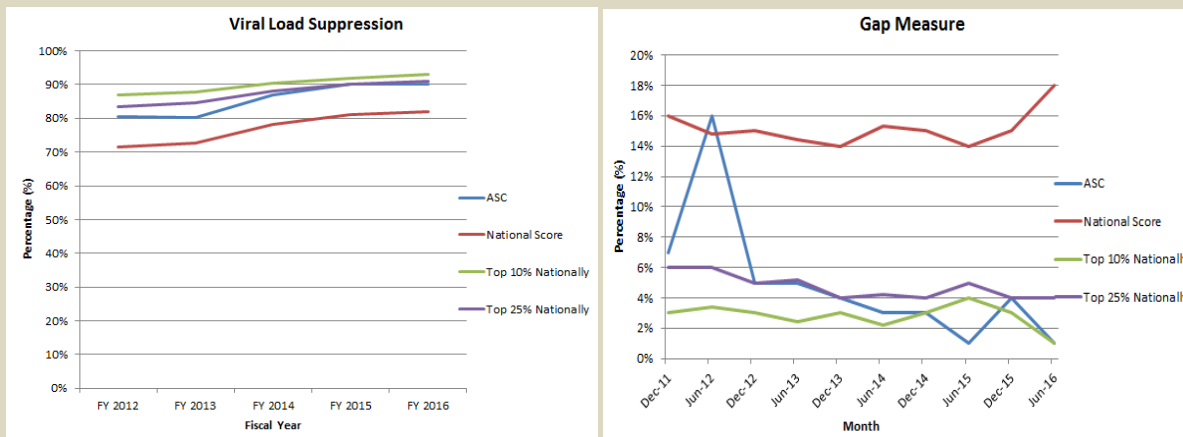
The new vision of the strategy states that the United States will become a place where new HIV infections are rare, and when they do occur, every person, regardless of age, gender, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, or socio-economic circumstance, will have unfettered access to high quality, life-extending

care, free from stigma and discrimination. At St. Luke’s AIDS Service Center (ASC), staff strives to meet the national vision by providing rapid HIV testing and prevention services, comprehensive primary and specialty care, case management and social support services, housing case management services and integrated behavioral health services to HIV+ or high-risk individuals. This past year, services were funded by the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services through its Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Ryan White grant program, AIDSNET, and the PA Dept. of Health.



ASC provided comprehensive clinical care and case management services to a total of 399 unduplicated patients. The Ryan White Part C grant funding was extended until April 2018 to support our clinics in Bethlehem and Easton. Moreover, health economic benefits of moving patients from unsuppressed viral loads to suppressed in the past year indicate total medical costs averted due to ASC care was \$229,100. 99 HIV+ patients were seen at our new Easton Clinic at the end of FY17. 34 new patients enrolled in our comprehensive HIV clinical services – 9 in Easton and 25 in Bethlehem. Overall, 92% of our patients have a suppressed viral load, and our 2% gap measure rate equaled the top 10% national rate. Additionally, our 91% patient retention rate was just below the top 10% national rate of 92%. Tobacco cessation counseling was at 90.2%, a 3.2% increase over last year and 13% more than FY15. Success continued for the ARTAS program (a program to reconnect people living with HIV/AIDS to clinical care), with the completion rate increasing from 50% in FY16 to 67% in FY17. 100% of patients participated in the Partnership for Health intervention program in FY17, up from 98% in FY16





### Research & Partnerships:

We continue to address the needs determined through our CHNA through collaborative partnerships at the local, regional, state and national levels. The school based care team recently received a \$40,000 donation to continue care coordination services. Additionally, the mobile health team assisted many refugees from Syria and undocumented students with medical, dental, and vision needs. A notable success was two students who were provided resources to help assimilate into the U.S. and connected to medical and social services through our Mobile Health team, and are now both enrolled in college. Furthermore, collaboration with the Allentown Health Bureau (AHB) and the Mobile Van team to provide nutrition counseling on the Mobile Medical Van. SLUHN received an award for “Commitment to Healthy Kids/Healthy Allentown” for providing nutritious snacks and education to students. On a national level, St. Luke’s Miner’s Campus hosted a rural health “Listening Session”. There were 40 community members in attendance who shared their thoughts and perceptions on barriers, challenges, and opportunities for accessing care in a rural community.

In FY17 SLUHN has developed a Health Equity Fund comprised of money secured through grants totaling approximately \$55,000. This fund allows the network to address the social determinants of health among our vulnerable populations to facilitate access to care and reduce health disparities. Additionally, a partnership with the HCM foundation allows our patients access to additional funds.

SLUHN was awarded a grant from the Lehigh Valley Workforce Development Board Inc., to provide fifteen out of school youth employability skills training and subsidized work experience at the Bethlehem & Allentown Campuses, and SLPG locations. Additionally, the St. Luke’s Adolescent Career Mentoring Initiatives partnered with Boy Scouts of America to offer an Explorer Post Program at Allen High School.

The literacy initiatives received \$7,000 in funding to expand Reading Rocks! This allowed the purchase of guided reading leveled books. A total of 11,424 books were received in FY 2017. Books are received through the St. Luke’s Book Drive (fall 2016) as well as book drives and collections by community partners. They include Penn State Lehigh Valley, Weissenberg Elementary School, Cops ‘n’ Kids, American Assoc. of University Women, and private individuals. Books were distributed to children via SLUHN programs (Maternal Child Health programs, Reading Rocks! Adopt-a-Schools, and Little Free Libraries) as well as the mobile health vans going out into the community, Kids Care clinics, various community events and to literacy partners. Last year over 10,500 books were distributed.

When reviewing aggregate data for the Lehigh Valley, the majority of people who comprise our vulnerable populations identify as Hispanic. Therefore, it is important to ensure that community organizations like the



Hispanic Center of the Lehigh Valley (HCLV), who provide resources and support to the Hispanic community, are vibrant and successful. In the fall of 2016, there was a management change at HCLV and to provide support and infrastructure, SLUHN and CHPM developed a more intentional collaborative partnership. We conducted an operational assessment at HCLV, which helped us identify areas such as data systems, personnel issues, policies and procedures that we were able to assist with. Additionally, St. Luke's assisted with a capital campaign for the revitalization of HCLV. We continue to be a resource and support to the community agency to ensure success.

Submitted in 2017