

Sharp Healthcare San Diego, California

As a health care leader in San Diego, [Sharp Healthcare](#) (Sharp) serves its community through four acute care hospitals, three specialty hospitals, two affiliated medical groups and a health plan. Sharp focused on incorporating the voice of its community members in its 2013 and 2016 community health assessments (CHAs) through a unique process that maintained **community engagement** throughout and beyond both CHA processes.

In 2013, Sharp developed phase one of its CHA, which involved participating in a countywide, multisystem collaborative process led by the Hospital Association of San Diego and Imperial Counties (HASD&IC), as well conducting additional processes specific to the communities served by each of Sharp's hospitals. Both processes included collecting data from the community through activities such as surveys and key informant interviews. To maintain engagement, a follow-up process (phase two) of the CHA was conducted, both collaboratively with HASD&IC and specifically for Sharp hospitals. The phase two process involved going back to the community to share results and collect feedback (through online surveys and community group forums) on the 2013 CHA process as well as offer recommendations on planning the 2016 CHA. This process helped Sharp identify barriers to community programs and areas of improvement in the CHA process, and to determine whether the identified health needs resonated with the community. Eighty-seven percent of respondents agreed with the collaborative 2013 CHA findings, and 78 percent of respondents recommended that the 2016 CHA process should be structured as a deeper dive into the health needs identified in 2013.

In 2016, phase one of the collaborative (HASD&IC) CHA was advanced by conducting various community engagement activities including behavioral health discussions, community partner discussions, key informant interviews (increased from five to 20 in 2016), health access and navigation surveys, and San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency survey. Sharp also conducted additional facilitated discussions, key informant interviews and health access and navigation surveys with its own care coordinators, service line leaders and patients. As access to health care was identified as a priority need in the previous CHA, the health access and navigation survey was developed to identify the challenges and limitations experienced by community residents when accessing care. This survey provided tremendous insight into the collaborative and Sharp-specific CHAs.

Jillian Barber, program manager of community benefits and health improvement at Sharp, advises, "Community engagement is an ongoing process that we must continuously build upon. We need to create strategic partnerships with nontraditional, cross-sector partners in order to address the health and social challenges faced by our communities. Not one organization can move the needle on these challenges alone, and we all have a role in improving the health of our community."

Templates for these community engagement tools can be found in the appendix of Sharp's 2016 community health assessment [here](#).

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