

In its first three active months, a community health initiative led by Passavant Area Hospital has improved the quality of life of more than 30 families living in the program's targeted neighborhood in northeast Jacksonville.

Healthy Jacksonville, a partnership between Passavant, Southern Illinois University School of Medicine and MacMurray College, launched in 2018 to increase access to healthcare using a holistic approach for at-risk city residents. The initiative also aims to address social and environmental issues that impact health such as unemployment; violent crime; and access to transportation, housing and food.

The Passavant Area Hospital Foundation pledged \$169,000 to fund the program's first year. Two community health workers and a program intern coordinate the bulk of direct client care.

Adreana Law, 28, a single mother of two, is one of the program's clients. For much of her adult life, mental health therapy and treatment has been difficult to maintain. Healthy Jacksonville provides access to regular visits with a mental health therapist, treatment for her son's ADHD, transportation assistance and a strong support system.

"It helps to not have to do it all on my own," Law says. "I'm getting resources and information and access I did not have before."

Hospital leaders expect residents in the targeted neighborhood to have fewer emergency department visits, lower hospital readmission rates, fewer calls to 911, higher levels of self-sufficiency, and increased neighborhood participation and pride.

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