HEALTHCARE ANCHOR NETWORK

Healthcare Anchor Network
and the Anchor Mission Framework

Improving health and economic opportunity in local communities

The Healthcare Anchor Network (HAN) exists to align hospitals nationwide around a common vision and practical framework for promoting economic inclusion and supporting local economies to create healthy, thriving communities.

HAN catalyzes its 70 member health systems to individually and collectively, leverage their hiring, purchasing, investing, and other key institutional assets as part of an intentional, place-based strategy to maximize their community impact.

We call this intentional commitment—to apply an institution's place-based economic power in partnership with its community to create mutual benefit—**the anchor mission**. Health systems already hire, purchase, and invest. The anchor mission asks them to do so with their communities in mind.

By working at the intersection of mission alignment and good business practices, health systems can meaningfully address economic inequities, build community wealth, and improve community health.

As a national convener, HAN builds the anchor mission movement by setting institutional standards through leadership commitments, documenting and disseminating best practices, providing strategic guidance through subject matter experts, capturing sector data to track trends and provide benchmarks, and curating forums for peer learning and collaboration.

WHY HEALTH SYSTEMS ARE UNIQUELY POSITIONED TO LEAD

Nonprofit hospitals are anchor institutions: place-based economic engines, deeply rooted in place through their missions, capital, and the patients and communities they serve. Unlike many large employers, hospitals rarely relocate, and that rootedness creates both opportunity and responsibility.

HAN member health systems collectively:

2M+	$100B+	$250B+
people employed	in goods and services purchased annually	in investment assets held

By directing even a portion of those resources intentionally, toward local hiring, local businesses, and equitable community development, health systems can help build the economic conditions that make communities healthier. Healthier communities mean fewer patients arriving in crisis, a stronger local workforce, and a more resilient supply chain. This is what it means to work at the intersection of mission alignment and good business practices.

CORE OPERATIONAL PILLARS

HAN members operationalize the anchor mission primarily through three interconnected strategies.

Impact Workforce	Impact Purchasing	Place-based Investing
HAN members are among the largest employers in their communities and collectively employ over **2 million people**. By creating intentional pathways to employment for residents of under-resourced communities and building career advancement opportunities for existing employees, health systems can address workforce shortages while expanding economic opportunity and mobility.	With more than **$100 billion** in collective annual purchasing, HAN members can direct a portion of their everyday spending toward local and high-impact businesses. This keeps dollars circulating locally and creates a multiplier effect—strengthening businesses, creating jobs, and building community wealth.	Health systems hold significant long-term investment assets. Shifting even a small portion of those assets toward community-focused impact investments can bring affordable capital to communities facing financing gaps. HAN members have already invested **$630 million** in affordable housing alone, supporting more than **40,000 units**, while generating a financial return.

These strategies are mutually reinforcing. Together, they give health systems a practical, place-based framework for expanding economic opportunity and building community wealth while advancing the health outcomes central to their mission.

HAN's initiative groups are the primary vehicle for peer learning, co-creating tools, and promoting accountability across institutions on specific anchor strategy areas. Current initiative groups span HAN's three core operational pillars, as well as Advancing the Organizational Imperative, Aligning to Advance Policy, Building the Evidence Base, Collaborating with Community, and Leveraging Anchor Philanthropy.

THE BUSINESS CASE

The anchor mission calls on hospitals to intentionally direct existing operations and align strategies and decisions with positive economic outcomes for their communities.

IRS regulations already require nonprofit hospitals to conduct Community Health Needs Assessments and adopt Community Health Improvement Plans. Addressing the economic conditions that drive poor health, including unemployment, a lack of affordable housing, and food insecurity, is increasingly recognized as core to that mission, not separate from it.

> No single health system can address economic and health inequities alone. But when **70 health systems**—representing over **1,200 hospitals** and nearly **40% of nonprofit hospitals**—act with intention and shared purpose, they can shift what's possible: how anchor institutions do business and what communities can expect from them. **For health systems to thrive over the long term, their communities must thrive.**