

MENTAL HEALTH IMPROVEMENT FUND

2024-2025

BACKGROUND

The United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County (United Way) and the Milwaukee Health Care Partnership (MHCP) came together to launch the **Mental Health Improvement Fund** (MHIF) to support organizations that provide mental and behavioral health care services for low-income, underserved people of all ages in Milwaukee County, with the **goal of increasing access to mental health care, improving mental health outcomes, and promoting health equity.**

The first iteration of the fund, known as the Health Improvement Fund, had a broader health care access focus (medical, behavioral health, and dental) and was launched in 2012 by the United Way and MHCP in support of their shared priorities of coverage, access, care coordination, and community health.

In 2024, the fund shifted to a narrowed mental health scope recognizing the increased need for mental health services in the community and to **create a more targeted impact around the shared United Way and MHCP mental health priority.**

PLEDGES & COMMUNITY AWARDS

MHIF pledges are received via donor designations through the United Way fall campaign. MHIF grants (based on the amount pledged) are investments to non-profit, health and human service agencies in Milwaukee County. Grants are awarded to organizations providing mental or behavioral health services to children, adults, or families. This could include activities such as increasing access to mental health outpatient diagnostic or treatment services, or improving care coordination for people of all ages needing mental health services.

Since its inception, the Milwaukee health systems—Ascension Wisconsin, Aurora Health Care, Children’s Wisconsin, and Froedtert ThedaCare Health Inc.—have passed their MHCP Shared Community Investment Fund (SCIF) contributions through the United Way to bolster its annual campaign and sponsor the Mental Health Improvement Fund (previously HIF) challenge grant. Health systems have committed \$2 million in 2024 and a cumulative \$20.8 million in SCIF pass-through dollars since 2012.

COLLECTIVE INVESTMENTS

Since 2012, the Health Improvement Fund has invested **over \$3.8 million** in aligned programming. In 2024-2025, the HIF is funding **five programs for a total investment of \$195,000.**

Each year, the (now) MHIF Review Committee and the United Way invite proposals that align with United Way and MHCP mental health care access priority. Funding recommendations are then advanced to the health system CEOs and the United Way board who approve strategic investments that support shared objectives.

PAST HIF AWARDEES

- Ascension Blanket of Love Program
- Ascension Seton Dental Clinic
- Ascension St. Ben’s Clinic
- Aurora Walker’s Point Community Clinic
- Benedict Center
- Bread of Healing Clinic
- Children’s Wisconsin Community Clinics
- Community Smiles Dental
- CORE El Centro
- Diverse & Resilient
- IMPACT 211
- Medical College of Wisconsin Periscope Project
- Milwaukee County Housing Services
- Milwaukee Health Services, Inc.
- NAMI
- Next Door
- Penfield Children’s Center
- Progressive Community Health Centers
- Sixteenth Street Community Health Centers
- WellPoint Care Network