

# Street Medicine Program

## 2024 Montgomery County Nancy Weiman Award for Innovation

The 2024 Innovation Award is presented to the Street Medicine Program. Street Medicine (including the recent addition of Street Psychiatry) is a trailblazing effort, made possible by the collaboration of its partners. At the forefront of this partnership are: Tower Medical Group (including Pottstown Hospital), Access Services, and Pottstown Community Health and Dental Care. Street Medicine launched in 2020 with the goal of taking the idea of accessible healthcare and making it a reality for folks living in the Pottstown Area. The thought leaders at these organizations looked around at their neighbors and community members who were unable to access the care needed to manage their own health and wellness needs, and posed the question “what can we do together to change the trajectory here?”. With accessibility, equitable provision of services, and sustainable collaboration held tightly as the center of the mission, the Street Medicine Program took root. The Street Medicine team completes twice-weekly care visits or Street Rounds, going into the community and woods to meet directly with those who need medical attention. The team seeks out individuals who are living unhoused, in tents, in shelters, or on the street, and engages, builds rapport, offers in the moment interventions (such as primary and wound care services), and develops ongoing treatment plans. Post-visit team debriefs are essential to coordinating care and working towards healing and wellness, and represent a major innovation in partnership with different sectors of healthcare coming together to support individuals hard to meet needs.

As the positive impact of Street Medicine became clear, Tower Medical Group saw the opportunity to expand the reach of the program by adding a Street Psychiatry service. Launched in 2023, this service aims to meet the specialized behavioral health needs of the most vulnerable members of the Pottstown community and works to bring free psychiatric care to individuals experiencing homelessness. The Street Psychiatry team consists of Dr.

Sunil Verma, Chair of the Department of Psychiatry at Phoenixville Hospital, Psychiatrist, Dr. Zhabiz Kazeminezhad, and Program Director, Casey Fenoglio, Director of Community Engagement at Pottstown Hospital. In addition, the program engages 4th-year psychiatry residents to offer innovative, community-based, field experience that works to expand the clinical horizons of future providers. From April 2023 to December 2023, the Street Psych team had over 120 patient encounters. The team goes above and beyond to ensure behavioral healthcare is not only accessible, but tailored to the population being served.

As Street Medicine continues to bring healthcare, and with it healing and hope, to the people of Pottstown, the partnerships have grown to expand the net of services and supports working together in this effort. In addition to the leadership of the core Street Medicine members, with this award we would like to acknowledge the contributions of the following partners: Mission First Pottstown, Pottstown Beacon of Hope, Mental Health Partners Recovery and Learning Center, Hopeworx, and Pottstown Pharmacy. These service organizations have joined the Street Medicine effort with many years of dedicated support to the Pottstown community and bring to the table their own offering of insights, supports, and compassionate interventions, helping to ensure that the outcome and impact of the overall Street Medicine collaboration is even farther reaching than the sum of its individual parts.

When considering nominees for this Innovation Award, we are looking for an impact that is new, or different, something that fills a gap or brings together existing resources in a way that is revelatory. The Street Medicine Program does all of that and more. For these reasons, and in recognition of the positive impact they have made on our community, we present the Street Medicine Program with the 2024 Nancy Wieman Innovation Award.



Montgomery County  
Department of  
Health and Human Services

