



Cross-Sector Partnerships to Advance Health

The Connection: Health through Housing

In the United States, it's common practice to detect and treat disease in medical settings. Yet the origins of illness can be identified long before someone enters a doctor's office.

An estimated 70 percent of differences in health status are associated with people's social and physical environment, including the quality, affordability, stability and location of a person's home. The result is striking disparities that adversely affect low-income communities.

As a proven and powerful nonprofit that improves communities and people's lives by making well-designed homes affordable, Enterprise Community Partners recognizes its role in laying a foundation for health and well-being nationwide.

We foster community improvement from the ground up, connecting homes to health care and other important resources like schools, economic mobility and transit.

For more than 30 years, Enterprise has brought together nationwide know-how, partners, policy leadership and investment to multiply the impact of local development. We also developed the standards to create greener, healthier communities.

We know there's more work to be done and we will continue finding innovative solutions because where you live affects the life – and health – you can have.

The Need for Cross-Sector Collaboration

People in need of affordable housing are often the same people who struggle to pay medical bills, face difficulty managing chronic diseases, or avoid preventive and routine medical care because of the cost. With the healthcare industry treating many of the same people served by community development organizations, the need for collaboration between the two sectors is critical to successfully and comprehensively connect low-income people to opportunity.

Cross-sector collaboration between healthcare organizations and community development nonprofits allows coordinated efforts that target the upstream factors contributing to health. It also amplifies community voices by engaging collaboration among local stakeholders and partners working with aligned goals and resources to ensure solutions focused on need.

Case Study: Enterprise Community Partners & Bon Secours Health System

As a multi-service organization in the heart of west Baltimore since 1919, Bon Secours Baltimore Health System (Bon Secours) has a hospital with only 72 beds and a wide variety of programs to support community residents' health and well-being. These include job training, early childhood development, financial education, fresh produce grown on its ½-acre urban farm, and—through a partnership with Enterprise—more than 800 affordable housing units.

The 1990s brought a fresh set of challenges to the hospital when within a few years two out of every three homes became vacant on the street leading up to the hospital and the crack epidemic hit the west Baltimore neighborhoods hard. The community's challenges were evident to those at the Hospital, where many local residents sought treatment. Out of this situation, Bon Secours and Enterprise began working together in the late '90s on neighborhood revitalization efforts in west Baltimore.

Fast forward 20 years and the relationship between Bon Secours and Enterprise has spanned across Enterprise's areas of expertise and service offerings, including capital investment, grant and consulting support, and technical assistance. What hasn't changed is the unity in our mission and values, and a shared determination to continue bringing innovative solutions to distressed neighborhoods.



Investment in Housing Development

The partnership between Enterprise and Bon Secours began with developing affordable housing in Bon Secours' neighborhood footprint. Continued collaboration in housing investment and development has resulted in the construction, renovation and planning of 10 housing developments with over 800 affordable homes. Over 500 of the homes are dedicated to senior citizens and/or people with disabilities.

Over the past two decades, Enterprise has played various roles in the development and financing of the projects, providing close to \$100 million of financing through tax credit equity and loans to Bon Secours. At the start of the partnership, Enterprise's affiliate, Enterprise Homes, provided significant support in the development process, largely overseeing design and construction, in addition to structuring the financing. Through shared learning, engagement and the expansion of its community development corporation, Bon Secours has grown to take on more of the development duties, with Enterprise Homes continuing to fill the financial structuring and oversight role.

Education and Youth Development

In addition to developing affordable housing in west Baltimore, Enterprise and Bon Secours work together on broad community revitalization efforts, including developing an education and youth development strategy by Bon Secours and Enterprise's Mid-Atlantic office. A school principals' collaborative launched in 2016 brings together principals from the six schools in the hospital's footprint. Enterprise is also supporting Bon Secours' new designation as a Community School Partner at a local elementary school. In that role, Bon Secours hired a coordinator to work directly in the school to help reduce barriers to student success, provide students and families with referrals to needed services, and develop partnerships to enhance academic outcomes.

Grants and Program Development

Enterprise has provided approximately \$400,000 in grants to support the various programs Bon Secours has implemented in west Baltimore. The most recent grant, a HUD Capacity Building Grant, is supporting the completion of four housing developments and the launch of a Community Health Network pilot project to evaluate a new housing-based health model providing health education and services to residents.

Outcomes and Insights

Bon Secours has been one of Enterprise's longest, most dedicated partners. Our work together has set deep roots in west Baltimore, helping Bon Secours fulfill its role as an anchor institution supporting growth and sustainable gains for residents in the community. Cross-sector affiliations like Enterprise-Bon Secours' are critical to effectively leveraging community resources and ultimately changing systems to create opportunities for people and neighborhoods. Our partnership is viewed nationally as an example of what can be achieved when health care and community development organizations join hands and join forces on place-based initiatives.

Building a Sustainable Organization

In 2015, Enterprise conducted an in-depth organizational assessment for Bon Secours, resulting in specific feedback on how to grow their organization and double their housing portfolio for low-income senior citizens and people with disabilities.

Enterprise and Bon Secours collaborated again in 2016 to increase the organization's asset management capacity, developing customized tools to ensure Bon Secours' staff and board have critical portfolio information at the ready for informed and strategic asset management decision making.

Additionally, an Enterprise Rose Architectural Fellow is currently on staff at Bon Secours through 2019 to help design healthy, sustainable homes and neighborhoods in west Baltimore.