Strategic Plan

2026
2028



El Paso County Hospital District

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Table of Contents

page 03 **Welcome Letter**

page 05 **Overview of the El Paso County Hospital District**

page 07 **Overview of Strategic Framework**

page 08 **Strategic Pillars**

- Quality
- Service
- People
- Finance
- Growth

page 13 **General Obligation Bond Projects**

page 14 **Acknowledgements**





Welcome Letter

Dear Community Members,

It is with great pride and a deep sense of responsibility that I share with you the El Paso County Hospital District's Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2026 through 2028.

This document is our vision and roadmap. It brings together the voices of our community members, associates, and partners, with the data and insights gathered through careful planning, analysis, and reflection. It aligns our operational goals with our long-term mission: to Heal, to Serve, and to Educate.

The plan is organized around five strategic pillars—Quality, Service, People, Finance, and Growth—which together reflect the foundation of a high-performing, community-owned health system. Each pillar includes clear goals and supporting objectives that guide our efforts across hospitals, clinics, health plans, and partnerships. From expanding services through the voter-approved bond to deepening our investment in the healthcare workforce, each section of this plan shows how we're preparing for the future—responsibly, equitably, and with purpose.

I encourage you to use this plan as a lens through which to understand our priorities and progress. Whether you're a community member, associate, partner, or patient, this is your hospital district—and this is your strategic plan.

Thank you for your continued trust, collaboration, and commitment to the health of our region. Together, we will ensure that care remains local, compassionate, and of the highest quality. I look forward to the next chapter we will build together.

With gratitude,

Jacob Cintron

Jacob Cintron
President & CEO
El Paso County Hospital District

Our Leadership



Kristina Mena, Ph.D.
Board Chair



Anna Perez, Ed.D.
Board Vice-Chair



Linda Yee Chew, J.D.
Board Secretary



Steve DeGroat
Board Member



Miguel Fernandez
Board Member



Isidro Torres
Board Member



Christina Paz, DNP, APRN, FNP-C
Board Member



Jacob Cintron
President/CEO
El Paso County Hospital District



Overview of the El Paso County Hospital District (EPCHD)

District Overview

We are **El Paso County Hospital District** (EPCHD), a public, nonprofit healthcare system dedicated to serving the residents of El Paso County and the surrounding communities. Guided by our mission—to Heal, to Serve, and to Educate—we are committed to delivering high-quality, compassionate care while advancing health equity and improving the overall well-being of our region.



To Heal, To Serve, and To Educate

Our healthcare system is built around three core entities:

University Medical Center of El Paso (UMC)

As the cornerstone of acute and specialty care in the Borderland, UMC offers services and capabilities unmatched in the region, including:

- The only Level I Trauma Center in the region
- The region's only Level I Stroke Center and a Joint Commission-Certified Comprehensive Stroke Center
- The first Level IV Maternal Care designation and a certified Baby-Friendly hospital
- A Level 2 Accredited Geriatric Emergency Department and Level 2 recognized Age-Friendly Health System (Committed to Care Excellence)
- The region's only safety-net hospital, providing care regardless of a patient's ability to pay
- The most comprehensive network of clinics with on-site imaging, laboratories, pharmacies, and rehabilitation services
- The region's largest clinical training site for healthcare professionals, including physicians, nurses, and allied health workers



El Paso Children's Hospital (EPCH)

EPCH is the only dedicated children's hospital in the region, providing the highest level of pediatric care across West Texas and Southern New Mexico:

- The only pediatric multispecialty center in the region
- The region's only member of the Children's Oncology Group
- A designated Level IV Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU)
- Only pediatric Emergency Department in the region with 100% of nurses certified in pediatric trauma and critical care
- Only pediatric Critical Care Transport Team in the region with flight and ground ICU capability

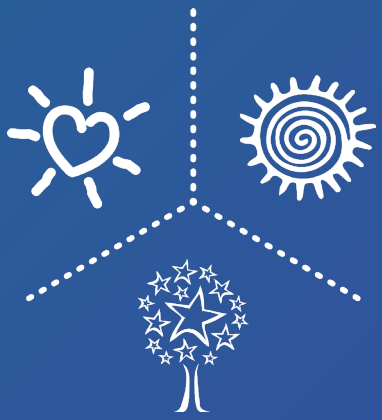
El Paso Health (EPH)

EPH is our nonprofit health plan, focused on improving population health and expanding access to care:

- Offers Medicare plans, including Medicare Advantage and Dual-Eligible Special Needs Plans (D-SNP)
- Offers Medicaid (STAR), CHIP, Medicaid Managed Care (STAR+PLUS), and Healthcare Options program
- Third party administration of benefits for our UMC and EPCH employees
- A market leader in Medicaid and CHIP, serving over half of enrolled members in the region
- URAC-accredited, ensuring we meet the highest standards in quality, safety, and utilization review
- Committed to expanding access and removing barriers to preventive care for vulnerable populations

Together, our three entities are supported and strengthened by:

- A broad network of community-based clinics and health centers
- Strong partnerships with educational institutions to grow the local healthcare workforce
- Innovative programs that support healthcare workers and introduce emerging technologies
- Continued investment in infrastructure, access, and digital health



Each entity is governed by its own board, while UMC is overseen by a Board of Managers appointed by the El Paso County Commissioners Court. With a strong foundation and a deep commitment to our community, we continue to grow, evolve, and adapt to meet the diverse and expanding healthcare needs of the Borderland region.





Strategic Plan FY26-FY28

To deliver on our mission to Heal, to Serve, and to Educate, we organized our work into five strategic pillars: **Quality, Service, People, Finance,** and **Growth**. These pillars reflect our most critical and enduring responsibilities as a public hospital district.

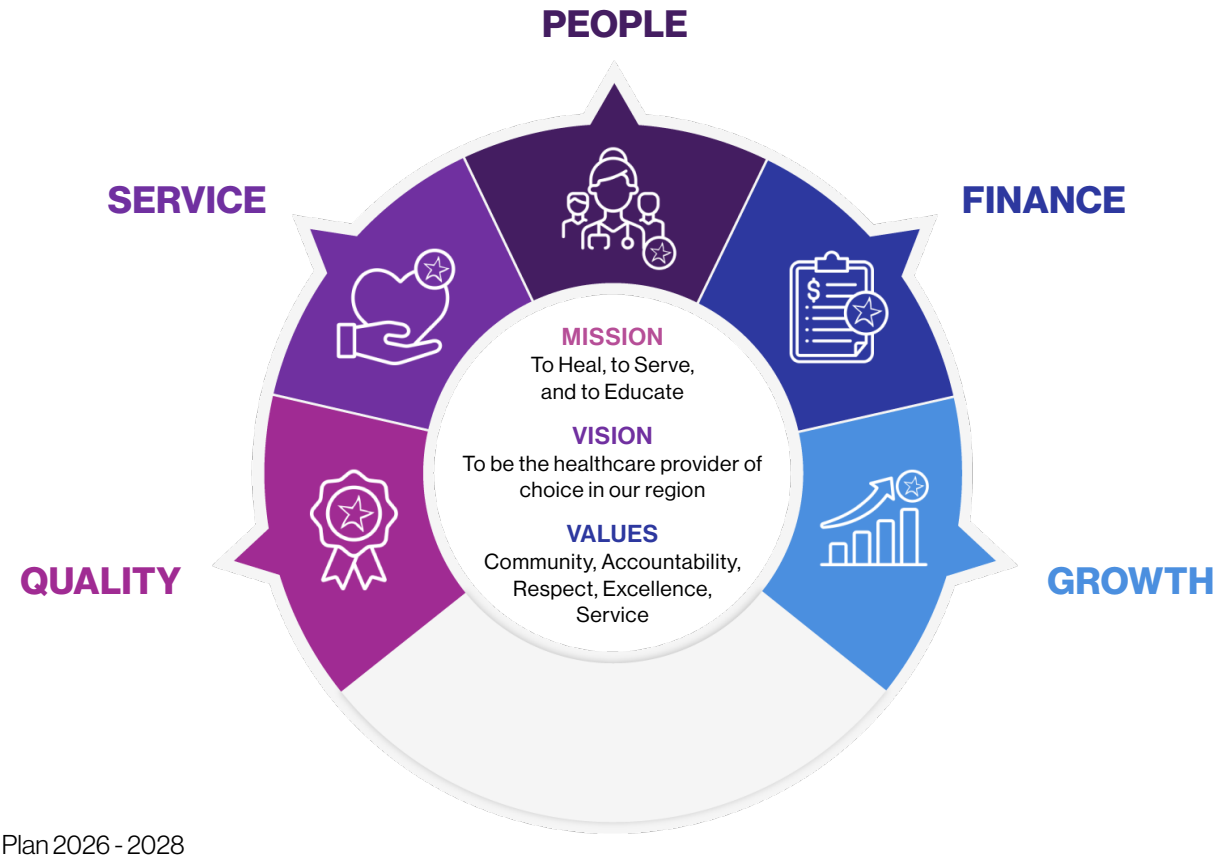
Quality and Service represent the direct experience of our patients—the safety, effectiveness, and compassion of the care they receive today.

People focuses on our workforce, the caregivers and professionals who bring that care to life.

Finance ensures we use our public and philanthropic resources wisely, making our work sustainable.

Growth speaks to ensure that tomorrow's needs are met—our responsibility is to anticipate needs, expand access, and bring advanced care to more of our community.

This strategic plan reflects our promise to grow with our community, ensuring that healthcare in El Paso is advanced, accessible, and patient-centered. Together with our partners and supporters, we are building a healthier future.





Quality

Vision: UMC aims to provide the highest quality and safest healthcare in the greater El Paso region.

Delivering quality care is the foundation of our mission. We are focused on improving clinical outcomes, patient safety, and equitable access to advanced care across all populations we serve. By building national recognition and expanding specialty capabilities, we are raising the bar for excellence throughout our hospital system and health plan.

Goal 1: Advance system-wide quality and safety

- Align hospitals' performance with national standards
- Enhance monitoring of inpatient and outpatient metrics across the EPCHD
- Strengthen health plan performance by advancing value-based care initiatives, improving quality scores, and addressing social needs that negatively affect members' health outcomes

Goal 2: Strengthen specialty and surgical excellence

- Expand accreditations to ensure that component organizations follow best practices in patient care, safety, and infection control
- Grow neurosurgery, endocrinology, extracorporeal membrane oxygenation (ECMO), and burn services to address gaps in the region's health care offerings
- Expand robotic-assisted surgeries, which typically involves smaller incisions, less disruption to surrounding tissues, and faster recovery

Goal 3: Improve care access and outcomes for vulnerable populations

- Reduce preventable hospital visits through care navigation and follow-up
- Incorporate social screenings into patient assessments to ensure that all factors influencing health outcomes are identified and addressed
- Utilize technology to ensure that vulnerable populations get necessary screenings and primary care

Service

Vision: UMC aims to exceed the customer's expectations every time.

We are committed to delivering a compassionate, seamless, and responsive patient experience. Whether through in-person visits, mobile clinics, or virtual services, we aim to make every interaction easier, more personal, and more equitable—so our patients can focus on healing, not navigating complexity.



Goal 1: Enhance the patient and family experience

- Improve patient satisfaction across hospitals and clinics
- Expand real-time feedback systems and community listening sessions

Goal 2: Increase ease of care

- Expand hours and locations, including urgent care (pediatric and adult) and mobile units
- Expand telehealth, self-scheduling, digital intake, and online registration tools
- Improve parking and entry flow across our campus and clinics

Goal 3: Strengthen continuity and coordination across the patient journey

- Improve coordination across our internal inpatient, outpatient, and specialty services to enhance care continuity and support seamless transitions including post-discharge and follow-up care
- Strengthen care coordination and patient transitions with Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso and other key community partners
- Provide convenient home delivery of prescriptions to support medication access and adherence





People

Vision: UMC aims to maintain a workforce that is competent, compassionate, engaged, and committed to providing the highest level of service.

Our people are the heart of our organization. Investing in their growth, satisfaction, and long-term success is essential to delivering outstanding care. Through education, recognition, and support, we're building a future-ready workforce rooted in our values and mission.

Goal 1: Strengthen workforce stability and satisfaction

- Maintain low turnover and foster long-term employee engagement
- Eliminate reliance on contract labor and strengthen team continuity
- Promote recognition through STAR and DAISY Awards
- Continue to invest in CARES Student Loan Assistance, CARE Pull-Opp (Pursuing Upward Learning and Legacy Opportunity) Program, and CARES Home (Home Ownership Made Easier) Program

The DAISY Award®

The DAISY Award is an international program that recognizes and celebrates the extraordinary, compassionate care that nurses provide.

The "STARS" recognition program was developed to acknowledge eligible Associates who have exceeded their daily work responsibilities and made a positive impact in various areas.

Goal 2: Build pipelines for the future healthcare workforce

- Expand our Nurse Residency Program and seek national accreditation
- Establish strategic partnerships with local schools and higher-ed institutions to develop residency and fellowship programs that directly address critical workforce shortages in high-need sectors
- Continue to invest in local programs the develop the future workforce

Goal 3: Cultivate professional growth and excellence

- Increase the percentage of certified nurses and continuing education access
- Offer new leadership development and mentorship programs
- Expand clinical career pathways for nurses from entry-level through advanced practice

Finance

Vision: UMC aims to increase its financial position such that the organization is positioned to be financially resilient during turbulent periods and to save capital to invest in future growth.

Responsible financial stewardship ensures we can serve the community today—and for generations to come. With rising costs and growing needs, we are optimizing our resources, expanding coverage options, and investing wisely in innovation and infrastructure.



Goal 1: Ensure long-term financial strength and resilience

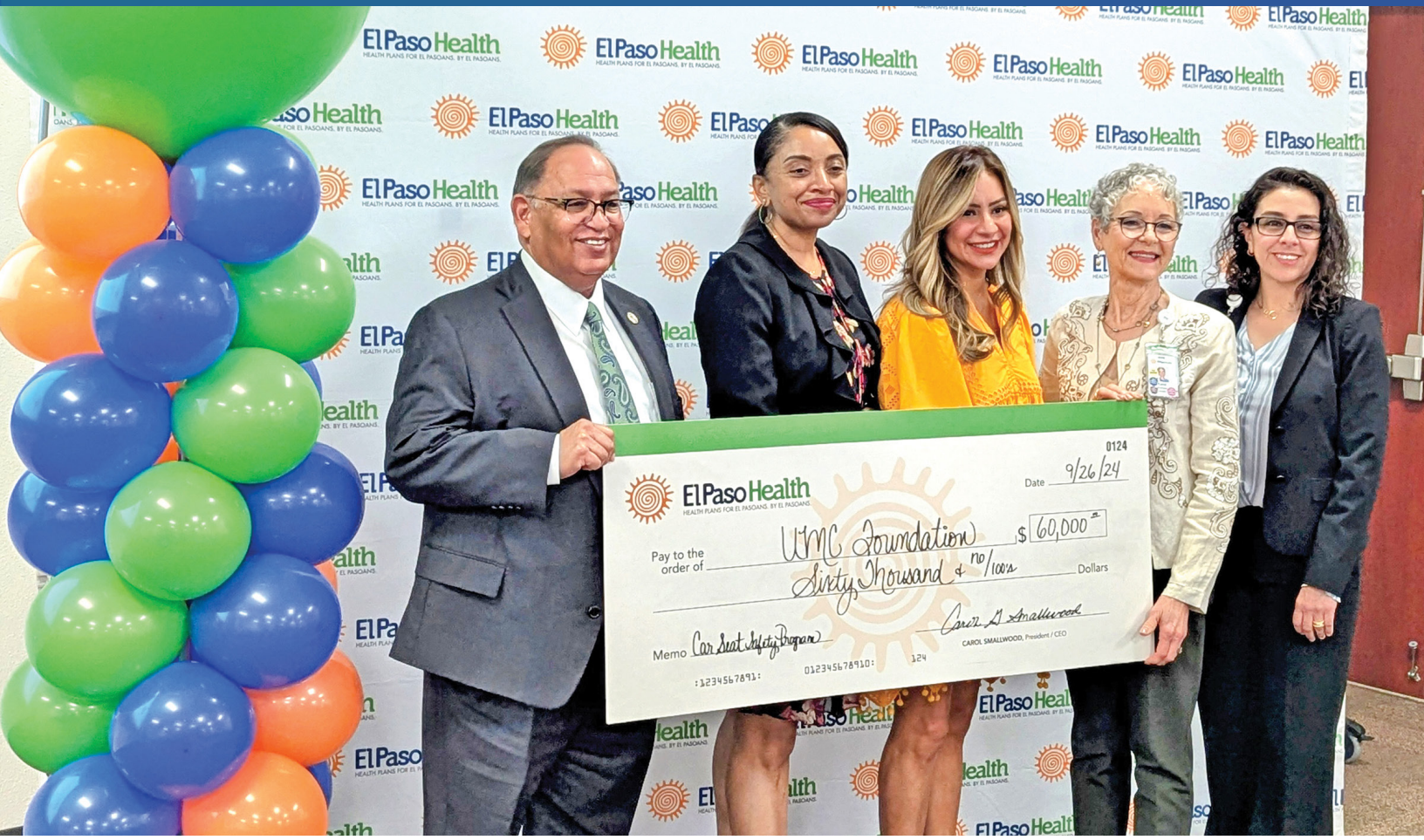
- Use data-driven reviews to improve the revenue cycle
- Strengthen cost accounting tools to improve financial decisions
- Optimize managed care contract performance and payor credentialing processes

Goal 2: Improve operational efficiency and performance

- Optimize staffing and productivity benchmarks across departments
- Align length of stay with national benchmarks to enhance resource utilization
- Optimize the group purchasing arrangement

Goal 3: Maximize reimbursement opportunities and alternate revenue streams

- Grow El Paso Health's Dual Eligible Special Needs Plan ("DSNP") membership
- Expand participation and performance in value-based payment models
- Increase non-operating revenue through philanthropic partnerships and strategic grant opportunities





Growth

Vision: UMC aims to expand its service lines, such that the El Paso County Hospital District offers unique, sustainable service lines unlikely to be duplicated by other health care organizations in the El Paso area.

As our region grows, so must we. Through expanded services, increased capacity, and new clinical offerings, we are making it easier for more El Pasoans to receive advanced care close to home. With strong public support, including a $397 million bond, we are building a stronger healthcare system—designed by and for this community.

Goal 1: Modernize and expand our physical infrastructure

- Expand UMC's facilities by adding ICU beds, surgical suites, and observation units to better handle patient volume
- Expand imaging and diagnostic capacity

Goal 2: Bring care closer to home for all communities

- Open urgent care and primary care clinics in areas with gaps in services
- Expand mobile health clinics and virtual care offerings
- Develop a women's health center and geriatric clinic
- Expand managed care offerings, including STAR+PLUS and Medicare Advantage

Goal 3: Offer specialty services that reduce the need to travel out of town

- Establish the region's first Comprehensive Cancer Center in partnership with Texas Tech
- Launch the region's first dedicated Burn Center to provide critical care locally
- Expand access to hard-to-find specialty care services in areas of the region where they are currently limited or unavailable

General Obligation Bond

Hospital District Bond-Funded Capital Projects Overview

In November 2024, El Paso County voters approved a $396.6 million bond to support the expansion and modernization of healthcare services across the University Medical Center of El Paso system. These investments align with EPCHD's strategic goals to improve access, enhance clinical capabilities, and keep care local.

Key Initiatives Include:

✓ Main Campus Modernization

$134.5 million to expand surgical suites, add cardiac catheterization labs, increase imaging and laboratory capacity, and enhance parking and patient flow infrastructure.

✓ Regional Burn Center

$24.5 million to establish a specialized burn center with critical care capacity—addressing a long-standing regional gap in burn services.

✓ Comprehensive Cancer Center

$30 million toward developing a full-service cancer center in partnership with Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso.

✓ Expansion of Community-Based Access Points

$207.6 million to develop new clinics and specialty centers, including:

- A geriatric clinic in Central El Paso
- A Horizon City health center
- A Westside ambulatory surgical and emergency care center
- An expanded Eastside rehabilitation clinic

These projects are funded solely for capital improvements and equipment, with no bond proceeds allocated to operating costs. They are a critical component of EPCHD's strategic plan to build capacity, reduce outmigration, and improve the health of the Borderland community.



The El Paso County Hospital District's Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2026–2028 represents more than a set of goals—it reflects our enduring promise to the people of this region. Grounded in our mission to Heal, Serve, and Educate, this plan is a roadmap for delivering compassionate, equitable, and advanced care across our growing community.

By aligning our efforts across five strategic pillars—Quality, Service, People, Finance, and Growth—we are building a healthcare system that meets today's demands while preparing for tomorrow's opportunities. Whether it's investing in workforce development, expanding specialty services, or modernizing our facilities through bond-funded improvements, our commitment is clear: to make care more accessible, more effective, and more responsive to the diverse needs of El Paso County.

This work will require partnership, innovation, and perseverance. As a publicly owned hospital district, we are accountable to the community we serve—and we are deeply grateful for the trust and support that make this progress possible.

Together, we will continue to advance health, reduce disparities, and strengthen the fabric of care in our region. The future of health in El Paso is local, it is collaborative, and it begins now.



Acknowledgements

This strategic plan was informed by extensive collaboration with senior leadership, Board members, associates, community stakeholders, and partners, including Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center. We are grateful for the time, expertise, and shared commitment that guided its development.

STRATEGIC PLANNING TEAM

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