

2024-2025 Impact Report



XAVIER
UNIVERSITY of LOUISIANA

INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH EQUITY AND RESEARCH

Advancing Better Health Across Louisiana

In 2024-2025, the Ochsner Xavier Institute for Health Equity and Research (OXIHER) advanced its mission to improve health across Louisiana by leveraging the combined expertise of Ochsner Health and Xavier University of Louisiana (XULA).

Guided by five strategic pillars—**Outcomes Research, Community Engagement, Population Health, Health Careers & Workforce Development and Advocacy**—OXIHER addressed the root causes of poor health outcomes, expanded access to care and strengthened partnerships statewide.

From enrolling hundreds of patients in groundbreaking studies and reopening community wellness centers, to training the next generation of healthcare leaders and driving major improvements in maternal health, OXIHER delivered measurable progress.

This report highlights our impact, the collaborations that make it possible, and the path forward to a healthier Louisiana.

MISSION STATEMENT

OXIHER brings together Ochsner Health and Xavier University of Louisiana to improve health outcomes through research, education, advocacy and community engagement.

2024 KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

2,500+

Community members reached through targeted health events

28%

of clinical trial participants reflected Louisiana demographics

34

Interns placed across programs spanning clinical research, nutrition and public health



Xavier University is uniquely positioned as the ideal partner to co-lead, expand and deepen efforts toward health equity and community wellness.



Ochsner continues its legacy of delivering high-quality healthcare and academic excellence, with a culture rooted in compassion and accelerated by innovation.

“Through our partnership, we leverage the academic and research-based strengths to improve health outcomes for everyone in our communities, educate providers to promote a culture of community health and train more students to advanced careers in healthcare. We believe that clinical expertise, data, knowledge and action will lead to improved health for the people in the communities we serve.”

– Eboni Price-Haywood, MD



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OUTCOMES RESEARCH

Generating Knowledge to Improve Care for All Communities

OXIHER supports research studies that help guide decisions and create solutions meaningful to Louisiana's communities.

WHY RESEARCH MATTERS

Research studies, like clinical trials, help test new ways to improve care for people. They provide evidence to make sure new treatments are safe and effective for everyone.

Highlights

- ✓ Research teams spread awareness of research studies and careers at local community health and career fairs.
- ✓ New participants in clinical research more closely reflect Louisiana's population.
- ✓ Ochsner leaders piloted Xavier University of Louisiana's online course on cultural responsiveness and respect in healthcare.
- ✓ Researchers from both Ochsner and Xavier University of Louisiana shared findings from their joint studies in community engagement, cancer screening, diabetes and hypertension at local and national forums.
 - Ochsner's 2025 Research Week featured a special health outcomes lecture series on May 22, 2025 with speakers representing Ochsner Health, Xavier University of Louisiana and Tulane University.
 - During Research Week, a University of Queensland-Ochsner Clinical School medical student presented an oral abstract on a top-rated OXIHER sponsored research project on digital medicine remote care management
- ✓ An OXIHER study funded by the National Institutes of Health, "Decision Support and Behavioral Health for Reducing High-Dose Opioids in Comorbid Chronic Pain, Depression and Anxiety: Stepped-Wedge Cluster Randomized Trial," was chosen as one of the top-rated quality improvement and implementation science in health systems publications in the Journal of General Internal Medicine between 2023-2024.

Looking Ahead

OXIHER is working to strengthen our partnerships, secure funding to support research and advance studies to help people manage their health. PROPEL IT, a partnership with Pennington Biomedical Research Center, University of Alabama and Ochsner Digital Medicine wraps up at the end of the year. We look forward to reviewing the results of this virtual weight loss program for adults with prediabetes or diabetes.



HEALTH CAREERS & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Preparing Tomorrow's Healthcare Workforce

OXIHER continues to strengthen Louisiana's healthcare pathway through internships, pre-college programming and K-12 engagement. These initiatives provide students with early exposure, mentorship and practical learning opportunities across Ochsner Health, cultivating purpose-driven healthcare leaders and shaping a healthier future for all Louisiana communities.

Highlights

- ✓ Xavier University of Louisiana senior Healthcare Management students presented innovative, data-driven capstone projects addressing real-world community health challenges. Supported by Ochsner Health leaders and Xavier University of Louisiana faculty, students delivered impactful solutions in senior wellness, workforce development and culturally responsive care, demonstrating strong readiness for the healthcare industry.
- ✓ A total of 20 students completed high-impact internship placements across Ochsner, including 12 clinical research interns (exceeding the target of four), four MPH interns embedded in key community and clinical initiatives and four nutrition interns gained hands-on experience in Ochsner clinics.
- ✓ K-12 outreach through Xavier University of Louisiana's SOAR X program introduced 12 students from across the nation to careers in Health Sciences.

Looking Ahead

OXIHER will continue to expand STEM outreach, support the development of new science degree programs at local universities and deepen collaborations to prepare a workforce ready to lead, innovate and improve health outcomes across Louisiana.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Building Partnerships Where People Live

Our commitment is to the intentional planning of activities that align with our mission to be community-centered, person focused, data driven, distributive, decentralized, inclusive and empowering. OXIHER meets people where they are – places of worship, health fairs and community organizations – strengthening relationships and creating pathways to healthier living.

Highlights

- ✓ Interacted with thousands of community members through our longitudinal partners, including Zulu Men's Health Event and Urban League of Louisiana, by providing education, health screenings, volunteers, referrals to care and STEM learning opportunities.
- ✓ Laid the groundwork for the launch of our faith-based health ministry at Rock of Ages Baptist Church. The ministry will advance OXIHER's mission to improve health outcomes by bringing prevention, navigation and support into trusted community spaces to serve people where they are – churches and houses of worship.
- ✓ Piloted an approach to community empowerment that promotes the following: Listen first, co-design with partners, use trusted messengers and measure what matters to learn and improve – to build longitudinal partnerships that will improve the health outcomes of the communities we serve.

Looking Ahead

OXIHER will expand its community presence by bringing health education and services to large-scale events such as the ESSENCE Festival of Culture and Big Health Event with the Urban League of Louisiana. The team will also continue to grow the Rock of Ages Health Ministry with continued education and screenings and scale to other houses of worship with the launch of our faith-based Health Ministry Toolkit and continued outreach to community-based organizations to deepen impact and trust.

XAVIER UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF PHARMACY HEALTH AND WELLNESS CENTER

The Center reopened in early 2024, serving nearly 1,200 people in the Greater New Orleans area and expanded to a new site in the Lower 9th Ward to better serve the community with health screenings, cooking demonstrations, and education on nutrition, physical activity and medication to improve health outcomes in the communities we serve.



HEALTH ADVOCACY & POLICY

Strengthening Community Health Priorities

OXIHER advocates for policies impacting community health by advancing evidence-informed strategies, fostering partnerships across sectors and driving sustainable systems change.

Highlights

- ✓ OXIHER's Health Priorities: Monthly Focus on Wellness series spotlights differences in health outcomes across the nation, pairing education and advocacy with actionable strategies to advance population health. Each monthly feature covering topics such as uterine fibroids, rural health, mental health and cancer awareness serves as a call to action to promote community wellness.

Looking Ahead

OXIHER will continue to prioritize women's and maternal health, tobacco cessation, cancer early detection and addressing social drivers of health.



POPULATION HEALTH MANAGEMENT

Improving Care Beyond the Clinic

In 2024–2025, OXIHER advanced system-level strategies to improve health outcomes by addressing clinical gaps and social drivers of health. Through data-driven tools and collaborative workgroups, we strengthened care delivery and promoted health outcomes across Louisiana.

Highlights

- ✓ Introduced a practical guide for using data to identify and evaluate health disparities, enabling providers to target interventions effectively.
- ✓ Engaged physician leadership to uncover root causes of patient non-adherence, focusing on unmet social needs and destigmatizing barriers to care.
- ✓ Closed gaps in primary care for statin use and blood pressure control through regional improvement strategies.
- ✓ Launched a Pediatric Quality Workgroup to champion system-wide visibility and collaboration, driving excellence in pediatric inpatient outcomes and accelerating improvement in key measures.
- ✓ Activated Epic-based tools prompting clinicians to complete social needs assessments and refer patients with positive screens to community health worker support.
- ✓ Expanded Patient and Family Advisory Boards to amplify patient voices in care design.
- ✓ Deployed a health outcomes dashboard to offer demographic views within the Qualtrics patient experience tool.



Looking Ahead

We will continue to strengthen system-level engagement to accelerate data-informed decision-making. Standardizing social determinants of health data utilization across the system is advancing care optimization, while OXIHER is leveraging new self-service analytics platforms to empower teams with real-time insights that drive proactive strategies and improve community health outcomes – positioning the organization to embed community health principles into everyday practice and achieve sustainable improvements in care delivery.

The **Strong Heart, Strong Life**

Symposium held in November 2025 at Ochsner Medical Center's Gayle and Tom Benson Cancer Center was a free community event that brought together patients, families, caregivers and healthcare providers to talk openly about heart disease and stroke. Through real stories, expert guidance and practical resources, participants gained tools to protect their health, support loved ones and build stronger, healthier lives.



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Looking Ahead to 2026

OXIHER will enter 2026 positioned to strengthen outcomes research, workforce pathways, advocacy and community partnerships.

With the combined leadership of Ochsner Health and Xavier University of Louisiana, the Institute remains focused on building inclusive research, innovative care models and a stronger healthcare workforce for Louisiana.

To learn more, visit ochsner.org/oxiher

