



Strategic Plan

Fiscal Years 2019-2023



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I. Executive Summary

The Children's Institute of Pittsburgh is an independent, nonprofit, licensed organization in western Pennsylvania. The organization is one of the region's leading centers for pediatric rehabilitation, education of children with special health care needs, along with family placement, preservation/reunification and enrichment services. Founded in 1902, The Children's Institute is comprised of four components: Outpatient Physical Health Services, Outpatient Behavioral Health Services, The Day School, and Project STAR.

This is a pivotal moment for the organization and to assure that The Children's Institute will thrive in its next 100 years, it is imperative to favorably position the organization in response to the changing environment. With strong leadership from the Board, administration and staff, as well as critical input from key stakeholders, the Children's Institute has plotted a clear direction for the future through the identification of the following goals for the next five years:

- We will operate a portfolio of services within a financially sustainable model that achieves breakeven from operations, by the end of fiscal year 2023.
- We will aggressively pursue partnerships that enhance our capacity to provide, develop, and connect to a sustainable, holistic array of exceptional services that support individuals with disabilities across their lifespan.
- We will attract and retain the best talent to ensure our quality of services and reputation continue to differentiate us from our peers.

II. Our Strategic Assessment & Planning Process

The Children's Institute of Pittsburgh's (The Children's Institute) 2019-2023 Strategic Plan represents the future direction, as an organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for children, young people, and their families by providing a specialized continuum of services that enables them to reach their potential. In March 2018, The Children's Institute embarked on an initiative to facilitate the development of an updated strategic plan for the organization. We engaged the assistance of *OPEN MINDS*, a consulting firm specializing in providing services to the health and human services industry. The planning team reviewed and analyzed a variety of information as part of this planning process, including the following:

- Key national and local environmental issues impacting The Children's Institute
- A Community Child and Adolescent Health Needs Assessment for the Greater Pittsburgh area
- Detailed financial information about The Children's Institute and its service lines
- Key competitors
- Feedback from community stakeholders, board members, employees, and key thought leaders in the industry

Our strategic plan must consider the external environment both nationally and locally. Our team identified several environmental factors that influenced our plan:

- We are seeing a consolidation of providers in both the nonprofit sector, human service field, and the healthcare environment. Locally, the competition between Allegheny Health Network and UPMC has intensified with ongoing expansion of services into local community locations. We are also seeing competition for health care services emanate from nontraditional entities such as Berkshire Hathaway, Amazon, and CVS.

There is an ongoing discussion that in order to remain viable, providers must reach at minimum a size of \$100 million. This is driving an increased focus on opportunities for business recombination in many fields.

- Providers have recognized that more integrated, holistic services are optimal. The recognition of the role that social determinants of health play on healthcare outcomes has driven providers to define their services more broadly to address these social determinants.
- Payment methodologies are changing. Value based payments are being discussed and embraced by various payors and there are more conversations between payors and providers regarding some level of risk sharing.
- Providers are embracing technology in the delivery of their services. From virtual reality in therapies, to post care apps, providers are finding ways to infuse technology into their services. Legislators are recognizing the value of tele services and easing the regulations to providing these services. Payors are also beginning to broaden the scope of reimbursement for these services.
- The opioid crisis has created a greater need for family preservation services and foster care settings. County systems will continue to be challenged with how to meet the demand for services within their budgets.
- Schools will continue to seek to serve children in their home school environments. We anticipate receiving children who have significant complications that surpass the school's ability to educate

them. Nationally, there is a desire to have fully inclusive school settings and move away from congregate settings for individuals with disabilities.

- The demand for talent surpasses the supply. The competition for great employees is tremendous. Locally and nationally, many employers are moving toward a living wage of at least \$15 per hour. This will exacerbate our ability to compete for team members.

Key findings from the detailed strategic analysis of external and internal factors include the following:

- The national and local environment for services for children, youth, and their families with behavioral health conditions or disabilities continues to shift. It is becoming increasingly competitive, is changing from traditional fee-for-service payment models to those based on outcomes and best value and is focused on providing community-based services whenever possible over facility-based care.
- Stakeholder interviews and focus groups showed that The Children's Institute has a prominent history of serving children and youth with disabilities and other complex conditions. It has a stellar reputation for the quality of the care it provides, and a highly-skilled staff dedicated to its mission. Additionally, the stakeholder interviews identified a number of opportunities for The Children's Institute to expand its services and the organization's impact on individuals and communities.
- The Children's Institute has been experiencing financial losses in its operations for the past several years, and needs to revamp its operations and service lines to continue to thrive in its mission to deliver high-quality care to children, youth, and their families.
- The Children's Institute is experiencing staff morale issues due the financial situation and recent downsizing of programs, increasing the risk of having difficulty in recruiting and retaining the highly skilled workforce it needs.

This strategic planning process continued for seven months, resulting in this strategic plan document.

III. Our History

In 1902, Mary Irwin Laughlin established the Memorial Home for Crippled Children in order to care for a six-year-old boy whose legs had been severed in a train accident. Today, the organization she created to care for one child in need, has grown into one of the nation's leading pediatric rehabilitation organizations. We are proud of our ever-changing, always meaningful history:

1902: Mary Irwin Laughlin establishes the Memorial Home for Crippled Children.

1919: 75% of our patients were recovering from polio.

1960s: Our expertise grew to encompass a wide array of disabilities.

1968: We became the nation's first comprehensive rehabilitation center for children to be accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF).

1980s: In response to an aging population, we developed adult inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation services.

1981: We changed our name to The Rehabilitation Institute of Pittsburgh.

1988: Staff wrote the first edition of the textbook, *Traumatic Brain Injury Rehabilitation: Children and Adolescents*. Ten years later, the second edition of this book was published.

1988: Designed and published Custom Trunk Support; long-term impact is still seen today in the design of wheelchairs, long sitters and standers.

1991: The original DynaVox, an augmentative communication device, was placed on the market, with the assistance of our staff, who worked collaboratively with the engineer to develop the first dynamic display.

1998: Our adult services transferred to UPMC, allowing us to reaffirm our original mission - to promote the wellbeing of children, young people and their families.

1998: We changed our name to The Children's Institute of Pittsburgh.

1998: The Children's Institute and The Children's Home jointly created Child's Way, a therapeutic day care program for medically fragile children under the age of three, which was the only one of its kind in the tri-state area.

2000: The Day School and Carlow University began one of the first university teacher preparation classes to be taught in an authentic learning environment. Students at the university actually attend classes in the classrooms of The Day School.

2002: Developed GymBop®, a conceptual model integrating the educational specialties of music and adapted physical education, with the related services of occupational, physical and speech/language therapies.

2003: The Day School became the first school in Pennsylvania to earn accreditation by the National Commission on Accreditation of Special Education Services.

2003: Began offering Vital Stim™, and later established a pediatric protocol that currently is being used throughout the field of pediatric speech language pathology.

2004: Introduced the Reflex Neurovascular Dystrophy program, only the second of its kind in the eastern half of the United States.

2004: Project STAR received the Adoption Excellence Award for support for adoptive families from the US Department of Health and Human Services.

2005 & 2006: Project STAR earned the Angels in Adoption Award from The Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute.

2006: Our Hospital partnered with Children's Hospital to introduce the Pediatric Cardiac Recovery Program, an innovative collaboration that provides long-term rehabilitation for children who undergo cardiac surgery.

2007: The Day School, Carlow University, and the Centre Ann Sullivan Del Peru (CASP) collaborated to sponsor a leadership-level internship for the Executive Director of CASP, to spend four months in The Day School.

2007: Project STAR introduced the first annual "Growing Families Through Adoption" matching event.

2007: Completed renovation of the 220,000 square foot Squirrel Hill facility.

2008: The Hospital expanded its CARF accreditation to include outpatient, along with inpatient that had been continuously accredited for 40 years.

2008 Project STAR, Diakon Lutheran Social Services, and Bethanna collaborated in an initiative to match older youth with permanent families through a grant from the Statewide Adoption Services (SWAN).

2008: The Day School launched a partnership with Foyle View School in Northern Ireland, using video conferencing to benefit student learning as well as staff professional development.

2008: We sponsored the launch of "Lose the Training Wheels," a bike camp designed for children with special needs.

2009: We were selected to partner with The Heinz Endowments and community volunteers to oversee the "Women for a Healthy Environment" initiative.

2011: The Hospital expanded its accreditation to include its Brain Injury Specialty Program, along with inpatient and outpatient accreditation.

2011: We dedicated the 10,000 square foot Nimick Family Therapeutic Garden.

2011: The Hospital opened a second unit for individuals with Prader-Will Syndrome.

2012: We dedicated the Project STAR Family Visitation Center located on the Squirrel Hill campus.

2013: Amazing Kids television campaign ad honored as "Most Memorable in Pittsburgh's History".

2014: The Children's Institute is honored as a Center of Excellence by Passy-Muir Inc. The Passy-Muir valve allows children dependent on tracheostomies or ventilators to speak and eat.

2015: The Day School is named one of thirty International MOVE Model Sites for work to help children gain independence and dignity.

2015: The New York Times Magazine featured an in-depth article on our Center for Prader-Willi Syndrome in the January 25, 2015 issue.

2018: The Children's Institute closes its inpatient rehabilitation and behavioral health services.

2018: We dedicated the Founder's Terrace which was the original entry for The Memorial Home for Crippled Children.

IV. Our Mission, Vision, Populations Served, & Guiding Principles

As part of our strategic planning process, The Children's Institute has updated and clarified its mission vision, populations served, and guiding principles. They are as follows:

Our Mission

The mission at The Children's Institute is as follows: *"To Heal. To Teach. To Empower. To Amaze"*

Our Vision

Imagine the proud new parents who have just delivered a beautiful baby. The doctor comes in and calmly announces the baby has Down syndrome. Suddenly the future they envisioned shifts out of focus and the ground beneath them unsettles. The puzzle pieces that have constructed their world are tossed into the air, and they are confused and uncertain as to what happens next. We, at The Children's Institute, want to be there as the world begins to reassemble – to be a resource, a beacon, a partner for the journey. Our vision is as follows:

"We seek to be the lifelong partner to individuals with a disability and their families. We will position our services to reach more individuals with an array of exceptional services that cross the lifespan, advance the models of care, and establish our organization as an influential voice regarding the subjects of disability, education, family support services and behavioral health."

Populations Served

The core populations we will serve at The Children's Institute are as follows:

- Children and adults with autism.
- Children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- Children and adults with certain neurological disorders, such as cerebral palsy, traumatic brain injury, and spinal cord injury.
- Children with behavioral health needs.
- Children who are neglected, abused, or exposed to trauma.

Our Guiding Principles

Our guiding principles at The Children's Institute are as follows:

- **We are stewards and protectors of our mission and recognize that effective execution of our mission requires financial viability.** We must strive to find that perfect balance between mission and resources.
- **Thoroughly vetting our initiatives is imperative to successfully executing our plan.** All initiatives requiring significant investments will be brought to our Board of Directors for approval. These initiatives will be thoroughly vetted for feasibility and execution.

- **Strategy execution is dynamic and continuous.** While our plan will drive our efforts and decisions as we move forward, we will continue to be attuned to our environment to refine and modify our plan.
- **Successful implementation requires focus and organizational alignment to our plan.** Engagement by our board and our team is necessary for our success. Our operations, allocation of resources, and performance measurement must all be reviewed against their relevance to our strategy.

V. Key Points in Our Strategic Direction

As part of the strategic planning process, The Children's Institute identified a number of key points as it planned its future direction. They were as follows:

- Deliver outpatient services in a model that is financially viable.
- Develop a continuum of care that extends our services to adults, with a focus on students in TDS.
- Pursue partnerships that will create a continuum of services for individuals with disabilities and complement our existing services.
- Calibrate organizational structure and identity, to facilitate implementation of our plan.
- Recruit and retain human capital to pursue building exceptional models of care, on an iterative basis and to fuel growth.
- Stay in the seat for the long haul – no quick fixes.
- Ensure our board and staff work and act, as one team in pursuit of the vision.
- Continue to recruit board members whose knowledge and talents align with the priorities of our strategic plan.

VI. Strategic Objectives & Discussion

As a result of the strategic analysis and planning process, The Children's Institute is adopting three strategic objectives for the future of the organization:

A. Strategic Objective #1

We will operate a portfolio of services within a financially sustainable model that achieves breakeven from operations, by the end of fiscal year 2023.

Discussion: *The Children's Institute has operated at significant financial losses in recent years, primarily due to continued decline in the demand, as well as insufficient medical assistance reimbursement for inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation services. Fortunately, it is able to continue to operate, due to its investment resources. All inpatient services have been closed, and the organization is ready to pivot, to invest in and develop an array of services that are mission-focused and sustainable. Investment resources will be used to underwrite these endeavors as The Children's Institute moves to break-even operations, no later than 2023.*

B. Strategic Objective #2

We will aggressively pursue partnerships that enhance our capacity to provide, develop, and connect to a sustainable, holistic array of exceptional services that support individuals with disabilities across their lifespan.

Discussion: *A key part of the efforts to modify and expand services lines is to look for partners to achieve the goal of financial sustainability. A whole continuum of partnership options will be considered – from joint ventures for delivering specific services to mergers and acquisitions. It is also likely that The Children's Institute will need to be considerably larger than it currently is, in terms of annual revenues to operate sustainably and forward its mission, thus making mergers and acquisitions with the right partners a likely choice versus simply organic growth.*

C. Strategic Objective #3

We will attract and retain the best talent to ensure our quality of services and reputation continue to differentiate us from our peers.

Discussion: *Having and retaining dedicated and talented staff remains critical for The Children's Institute both today, and as it shifts its service continuum to both further its mission and be responsive to community and market needs. The Children's Institute recognizes that the quality of services is predicated upon the expertise and commitment of our team. This objective will require considerable investments in ensuring that The Children's Institute remains an employer of choice for staff, offering competitive wages and benefits, along with opportunities to develop new skills sets as well as share in achieving positive outcomes for children, youth, and their families.*

VII. Strategic Initiatives

The initiatives for The Children’s Institute to accomplish its three strategic objectives are as follows:

A. Initiatives For Strategic Objective #1

We will operate a portfolio of services within a financially sustainable model that achieves breakeven from operations, by the end of fiscal year 2023. The key initiatives to accomplish this strategic objective are as follows:

- Develop a framework to evaluate our services/programs for financial viability, alignment to our core mission, and impact and unique program competency
- Deliver our outpatient services in a model that is financially viable
- Seek organic growth for our outpatient behavioral health services, Day School services, and Project STAR services. Examples could include:
 - Develop capacity to accept referrals of children with intense behavioral needs to our Day School
 - Explore models for embedding specialized classrooms into schools and developing services that would be purchased by educational entities
 - Identify counties within Southwestern Pennsylvania that are conducive to our Project STAR services
 - Expand our outpatient behavioral health services to logical Children’s Institute locations
- Determine if our main campus continues to be the most optimal location for our services, and if not, determine our desired location for programs
- Procure a new health information system to best position The Children’s Institute for outcome measures, alternative payment methodologies, and an enhanced customer experience
- Ensure our overhead aligns with industry standards, and that we are at an organizational size that accommodates immutable overhead costs
- Enhance and develop relationships for funding sources including new donors, government funding sources, and grants

B. Initiatives For Strategic Objective #2

We will aggressively pursue partnerships that enhance our capacity to provide, develop, and connect to a sustainable, holistic array of exceptional services that support individuals with disabilities across their lifespan. The key initiatives to accomplish this strategic objective are as follows:

- Provide or connect to a robust array of services for individuals with disabilities, which will support them across their lifespan. This expansion will focus on partnership with organizations whose services complement and extend our existing services. The priority of logical partnerships will focus on:
 - Educational services

- Child and adolescent outpatient behavioral health services
- Transition age and adult intellectual and developmental disability (I/DD) services
- Family preservation, foster, and adoption services
- Explore the development of sustainable tele-models of service delivery for all facets of our programs
- Assess how to provide care coordination services to individuals that will connect them to resources, supports, etc. This will become the central hub of our services that will differentiate us from our competitors.

C. Initiatives For Strategic Objective #3

We will attract and retain the best talent to ensure our quality of services and reputation continues to differentiate us from our peers. The key initiatives to accomplish this strategic objective are as follows:

- Realign our leadership structure to ensure our ability to execute our strategic plan and procure talent to fill any leadership gaps.
- Develop a comprehensive talent acquisition plan that reflects best practices of both the nonprofit and for-profit sectors. This plan will ensure timely identification and on-boarding of team members that will best position them for success.
- Implement a professional development plan that builds and enhances our leadership capacity, propels intellectual curiosity and advances our services. We will then seek opportunities to promote our body of knowledge and expertise beyond our walls.
- Deploy best practices for enhancing our organizational culture. These will include soliciting employee feedback, revising our performance evaluations, and finding opportunities to reward high performing team members.
- Develop a total compensation philosophy based on market and financial feasibility that positions our organization to be in an advantageous position to recruit and retain team members.

VIII. High-Level Timeline

This section of the report details the proposed timeline for implementing the strategic initiatives over the five year period of this strategic plan.

	Strategic Initiative	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Objective #1	Develop a framework to evaluate our services/programs for financial viability, alignment to our core mission, impact and unique program competency.	X	X			
	Deliver our outpatient services in a model that is financially viable.	X	X	X	X	X
	Seek organic growth for our outpatient behavioral health services, Day School services, and Project STAR services.	X	X	X	X	X
	Determine if our main campus continues to be the most optimal location for our services, and if not, determine our desired location for programs.	X	X	X		
	Procure a new health information system to best position us for outcome measures, alternative payment methodologies, and an enhanced customer experience.	X	X	X		
	Ensure our overhead aligns with industry standards and we are at an organizational size that accommodates immutable overhead costs.	X	X			
	Enhance and develop relationships for funding sources including new donors, government funding sources and grants.		X	X	X	X
Objective #2	Provide or connect to a robust array of services for individuals with disabilities that will support them across their lifespan. This expansion will focus on partnership with organizations whose services complement and extend our existing services.	X	X	X	X	X
	Explore the development of sustainable tele models of service delivery for all facets of our programs			X	X	X
	Assess how to provide care coordination services to our individuals that connects them to resources, supports, etc. This will become the central hub of our services that will differentiate us from our competitors.					X

	Strategic Initiative	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Objective #3	Realign our leadership structure to ensure our ability to execute our strategic plan and procure talent to fill any leadership gaps.	X	X			
	Develop a comprehensive talent acquisition plan that reflects best practices of both the nonprofit and for-profit sectors. This plan will ensure timely identification and on-boarding of team members that will best position them for success.		X	X		
	Implement a professional development plan that builds and enhances our leadership capacity, propels intellectual curiosity and advances our services. We will then seek opportunities to promote our body of knowledge and expertise beyond our walls.			X		
	Deploy best practices for enhancing our organizational culture. These will include soliciting employee feedback, revising our performance evaluations and finding opportunities to reward high performing team members.	X	X			
	Develop a total compensation philosophy based on market and financial feasibility that positions our organization to be in an advantageous position to recruit and retain team members.		X	X	X	X

IX. Performance Metrics For Monitoring Success

The Children's Institute is committed to continuously evaluating its organizational performance as a means to improve. In alignment with this performance improvement focus, initial metrics have been identified for each of the strategic goals to ensure successful implementation. These metrics will be monitored at appropriate intervals and revised as appropriate on an annual basis.

Goal One: We will operate a portfolio of services within a financially sustainable model that achieves breakeven from operations by the end of fiscal year 2023.

Metrics:

Operating margin less depreciation expense and single occurrence strategic plan investments

Number of Individuals Served By Service Category:

- Educational services
- Child and adolescent outpatient behavioral health services
- Child and adolescent intellectual and developmental disability services
- Transition age and adult intellectual and developmental disability services

Goal Two: We will aggressively pursue partnerships that enhance our capacity to provide, develop, and connect to a sustainable, holistic array of exceptional services that support individuals with disabilities across their lifespan.

Metrics:

- % total services provided to over age 21 / number of individuals served over the age of 21
- % of new revenue
- Stakeholder/patient satisfaction
- Number of resources or services we connect to/provide on our identified continuum of services for Individuals with a disability

*We recognize that as partnership opportunities arise, we will need to have metrics to gauge financial and mission success.

Goal Three: We will attract and retain the best talent to ensure our quality of services and reputation continues to differentiate us from our peers.

Metrics:

- Employee satisfaction surveys/Best Places to Work designation
- Turnover percentage

We will also measure our progress towards completion of each of our tactics against our established timelines to monitor our advancement towards our goals.

X. Supporting Documentation

The following support documentation is included in the appendices of this document:

- **2018 PRC Child & Adolescent Health Needs Assessment** – This is the report commissioned by The Children’s Institute to determine the health status, behaviors, and needs of children and adolescents in Southwestern Pennsylvania, the service area of The Children’s Institute of Pittsburgh. It was completed by, conducted by Professional Research Consultants, Inc. (PRC).
- **June 20th Strategic Planning Meeting PowerPoint** – This includes all of the external and internal analysis materials compiled by *OPEN MINDS* for the planning session itself. Key components are as follows:
 - Overview of Best Practices in Strategic Planning
 - National Trends Impacting Behavioral Health & Children’s Services Providers
 - Local Environmental Trends
 - Key Competitor Profiles
 - External Stakeholder Focus Group Summary
 - External Stakeholder Qualitative Interviews
 - Child & Adolescent Health Needs Assessment Summary
 - Internal Stakeholder Focus Groups Summary
 - SWOT Survey Summary
 - Financial Service Line Portfolio Analysis
- **Continuum of Services graphic**