

AMERICA'S TOP 20 NONPROFIT HOSPITALS RECEIVED OVER \$23 BILLION IN COVID-19 PAYMENTS

The federal government doled out [more than \\$23 billion in taxpayer-funded Wuhan coronavirus \(COVID-19\) aid](#) to the nation's top 20 nonprofit hospitals.

This is according to a report compiled by Open The Books, an Illinois-based research nonprofit that compiles and publicizes spending by all levels of government in the United States.

According to the report, the 20 largest nonprofit hospitals in the country saw their cumulative net assets [soar to \\$324.3 billion in 2021 from \\$200.6 billion in 2018](#). This represents a 62 percent increase in collective net assets. Furthermore, from 2018 to 2021, the total profits and revenues of these 20 hospitals also surged.

The biggest recipient of federal COVID-19 funding is CommonSpirit Health, formerly Dignity Health until early 2019, located in San Francisco. This hospital alone received \$3.6 billion. Its net assets soared from \$8.4 billion in 2018 to \$21.9 billion by the end of 2021, and its CEO compensation also soared to \$17.4 million by the end of that year.

Without naming which institutions, Open The Books noted that only two providers have begun repaying the government for the COVID-19 aid they received. These two institutions have only partially repaid the government.

Despite these massive taxpayer-funded investments into these nonprofit hospitals, the overall health of Americans actually declined.

“American life expectancy during this period sharply declined by a staggering 2.5 years ... while ‘comparable country averages’ rebounded from a COVID-related drop in 2021, the United States continued declining in life expectancy,” the report found.

Furthermore, Open The Books lamented the fact that healthcare costs are still astronomically high, with the average American family spending \$22,463 in health insurance premiums in 2022 while not considering the spending made on out-of-pocket costs like co-pays and deductibles.

NONPROFIT HOSPITALS MAKE BILLIONS, AND DON'T REINVEST INTO COMMUNITIES

Another report examining the finances of 1,773 nonprofit hospitals in the U.S., notes that more than three-quarters do not significantly reinvest their earnings into the communities they serve despite the millions or billions they save on costs [in the form of tax breaks](#).

This is according to the Lown Institute, a Massachusetts-based think tank, which identified over 1,350 nonprofit hospitals that have “fair share” deficits. This means the value of their community investments is not equal to the value of their tax breaks.

The combined deficits of these nonprofit hospitals totaled \$14.2 billion in 2020 – the first year of [the COVID-19 pandemic](#). The Lown Institute noted that this deficit would have been enough to fully relieve 18 million of the approximately 100 million Americans with a medical debt of what they owe, or to keep open 600 rural hospitals at risk of closure.

“Americans desperately need hospitals to use their billions in tax breaks as intended ... to promote health while relieving the problems of medical debt and access to care,” said Lown Institute President Dr. Vikas Saini. “These are charitable organizations and they should do a better job at prioritizing social responsibility over profitability.”

Two of the hospitals in Lown Institute’s [list of biggest offenders](#) were also some of the biggest recipients of federal COVID-19 aid.

Northwestern Memorial Hospital had a fair share deficit of over \$97 million. Its parent health network, Northwestern Medicine, received \$419 million in federal COVID-19 aid, with over \$18 million of that going directly to Northwestern Memorial.

The Indiana University Health University Hospital had a fair share deficit of \$136 million. Its parent health network, IU Health, received \$726 million in federal COVID-19 aid, with around \$135 million going directly to University Hospital.

By far the biggest offender is UPMC Presbyterian Shadyside, which had a fair share deficit of \$246 million. Its parent health network, UPMC-University of Pittsburgh Medical Center Group, received \$1.4 billion in federal COVID-19 aid, with over \$56 million going directly to Shadyside.

In exchange for being exempted from paying most federal, state and local taxes, nonprofit hospitals are supposed to provide the communities they serve free or discounted healthcare and medical outreach programs like substance abuse treatment programs and programs to support affordable housing and access to healthy foods.