



THE WOMEN AND MEN OF
AMERICA'S HOSPITALS



First in Hope



First in Care



Always There



American Hospital
Association

Telling the Hospital Story



THE WOMEN AND MEN OF AMERICA'S HOSPITALS



Outstanding community programs like these significantly improve health and quality of life. Extending beyond hospital walls to make a real difference, the following

programs exemplify the tremendous good being done every day by America's hospitals.

The Family Advocacy Program —

Recognizing that children living in poverty can experience poor health and development regardless of the quality of medical care that they receive, Boston Medical Center has created a legal advocacy program to ensure families' basic needs—from adequate housing and nutrition to income supports and appropriate educational services—are met. The program also trains health care professionals to identify non-medical barriers to a patient's health so advocacy can become a part of their treatment plan. Since the program's inception, more than 3,000 families have been helped.

Boston Medical Center

Boston, Massachusetts

2005 Living the Vision Award winner

Camp Good Grief — Three programs—a day camp for children, an overnight camp for adolescents and a weekend retreat for adults—that help those mourning the loss of a loved one and are free to residents of the Memphis community. Children are encouraged to explore their grief through art, music, recreation and support groups. The teen and adult camps build on the success of the children's camp, focusing on the special needs of adolescent and adult mourners. All three camps encourage participants to express and explore the grief they feel in the company of others who also have lost significant people in their lives.

Baptist Memorial Health Care

Memphis, Tennessee

Every hour of every day—600 million times a year—people turn to their hospitals for help. Whether they have suffered a life-threatening injury, become seriously ill, or are ready to welcome a child into the world, America's hospitals are there to provide compassion, care and curing 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Since 1775, when America's first inpatient hospital opened its doors in Philadelphia, hospitals have held a special bond with the communities they serve. Today, more than 5,000 hospitals, rural and urban, large and small, are connecting with their communities to make them healthier...from acute care provided within the hospital's four walls to mobile health units and clinics that take the hospital into the neighborhoods. And hospitals collaborate with other local organizations to get people programs and services that make their communities healthier, such as immunization clinics, cancer screenings, job readiness, English as a second language, parenting classes, stress management, counseling...the list goes on and is as diverse as the needs of each community.

Hospitals' devotion to their communities has never been more obvious than in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, when the exhausted staff of Gulf coast hospitals, many of whom had lost everything they had, worked tirelessly to evacuate patients, tend the sick and reassure the storm's victims that they had not been abandoned. It was also evident in the alacrity with which hospitals across the country sent supplies and specialists to lend a hand.

The hospital story—your story—is the theme of the AHA 2006 annual meeting, *The Women and Men of America's: First in Hope...First in Care...Always There*. But it's more than a theme. It speaks of the tremendous good that hospitals provide to their communities with little fanfare. It speaks to how the instantly recognizable blue and white "H" sign points patients and families to the one place they can rely on to meet their needs—the local hospital.

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Using the most advanced technologies, hospitals each year treat more than 100 million patients who come through the emergency department doors, without regard for the patient's ability to pay. And in times of disaster, whether caused by the forces of nature or the transgressions of man, hospitals play a key role in protecting the public safety.

Hospitals also are often the largest employer in a community, hiring skilled medical, nursing and pharmacy staff along with administrative, security, maintenance and food service personnel of all ages and walks of life. The hospital's presence alone is often a major reason why new businesses choose to locate to a particular community, generating even greater job growth and spurring the local economy.

Each and every day the 4.5 million women and men who are America's hospitals keep the promise of care that the blue and white "H" sign represents. And you do it in the face of mounting challenges.

OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

Among those challenges confronting America's hospitals: the ranks of the uninsured continue to grow; the government continues to underpay hospitals for the cost of caring for Medicare and Medicaid patients; physician-owned limited service hospitals continue to threaten full-service hospitals' ability to meet community needs; soaring medical liability insurance premiums force doctors and hospitals to consider curtailing important services; workforce shortages, along with the looming retirement of some 78 million baby boomers, make it more difficult for hospitals to operate at full capacity.

And in many communities, hospitals are being challenged to demonstrate that the special status historically conferred on them by their communities is still valid today in a rapidly changing and highly competitive health care environment.

Toledo/Lucas County CareNet — CareNet helps more than 6,000 people access hospital services at no cost, as well as connect them with local physicians for preventative care and an optional program for lower cost prescription drugs. CareNet oversees patient transportation to caregivers and helps schedule primary care appointments. The quickly growing organization hopes that by bringing community groups together the area's uninsured will be better served.

Mercy Health Partners, Toledo, Ohio
ProMedica Health System, Toledo, Ohio
Medical University of Ohio, Toledo, Ohio
St. Luke's Hospital, Maumee, Ohio
2005 NOVA award winner

Nutritional Options for Wellness (NOW) — Recognizing that more than 75 percent of families who are "food insecure" also have a family member in poor health, Spectrum Health felt nutrition could play a strong role in chronic disease management, healing and long-term wellness. NOW gives residents "food prescriptions" and referrals to local food banks for healthy food items. In addition to offering food prescriptions, this collaborative program also provides chronically ill and food insecure families with disease self-management education, healthy lifestyle education and referrals for other identified needs.

Spectrum Health
Grand Rapids, Michigan

Developmental Disorders Treatment Unit — A program for children and adolescents who suffer from both severe mental illness and pervasive developmental disorders, such as autism, whose aggressive behavior can require a one-to-one staff-to-patient ratio. The 12-bed Developmental Disorders Treatment Unit uses an array of interventions to help this underserved and challenging population, and finds ways to successfully move them back with their families or into group homes in the community.

Spring Harbor Hospital
Westbrook, Maine



American Hospital
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Project Dulce — This diabetes care and education program was created in response to uncontrolled diabetes among San Diego's uninsured and underinsured populations. The program addresses myths and beliefs among cultural groups that can interfere with diabetes management while empowering patients to manage their condition. Project Dulce connects diabetes patients with trained peer educators, or promotoras, nurse case managers and dieticians. Since the program's inception in 1997, it has served over 4,000 low-income, uninsured and underinsured adults at the program's 17 operational sites.

Scripps Health

San Diego, California
2005 NOVA award winner

Care Van Transportation Program — In its rural service area, distance is sometimes an obstacle to medical access so Silverton Hospital volunteers created the Care Van Transportation Program. The program provides rides to and from medical appointments. Currently, Care Van has 6 vans, 17 drivers and 13 dispatchers. Care Van's volunteers provide vital access to Silverton Hospital's most dependent and needy patients.

Silverton Hospital

Silverton, Oregon
2006 HAVE award winner

Dean/St. Marys Neighborhood Asthma Clinic — Asthma is a highly manageable disease, yet many individuals don't get the care they need and can't afford the high cost of medications. Often, they end up in the ER for their asthma care. The Dean/St. Marys Neighborhood Asthma Clinic provides screening, education and treatment—including medication—for residents with asthma. A clinic coordinator, volunteer physicians, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, respiratory therapists and other clinical professionals staff the clinic, which is located in a strip mall in the neighborhood. No appointments are needed, and services and medications are supplied at no cost.

St. Marys Hospital Medical Center

Madison, Wisconsin

A PLAN OF ACTION

While daunting, these challenges are not insurmountable. Hospital leaders always rise to the challenge, whether local or federal. Anchoring the AHA's advocacy agenda is our new Community Connections initiative that will help communities and others understand the special role hospitals play in the lives of people. At a time when so much of what we do is called into question, it's essential that policy makers and the public get a complete picture of the work we do, not just the business we are in. The AHA and our state, regional and metropolitan hospital association partners will work with you to effectively communicate how hospitals improve the overall health of your communities and merit broad public support. The hospital-community bond that was begun in 1775 has weathered many storms over the past two centuries...but none was able to topple hospitals' rightful place as a valued and vital community resource. Working together, we can ensure that special bond for years to come.



community
CONNECTIONS