



Helping **HOSPITALS** reaffirm  
their rightful place as  
a valuable and vital  
**COMMUNITY RESOURCE**



American Hospital  
Association

[www.caringforcommunities.org](http://www.caringforcommunities.org)

Photos courtesy of Doug Haight, photographer —  
illustrate programs from recent Foster G. McGaw Prize winning organizations.



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## People are hearing a lot about hospitals...

But are they hearing it from you? The White House wants to cut hospital Medicare and Medicaid funding, while some in Congress are questioning hospitals' tax-exempt status and programs like "60 Minutes" target hospitals' treatment of the uninsured. Is any good news coming out of America's hospitals?

**Of course there is!** But are you talking about it? Are you sharing with the public, the media and legislators how your hospital serves the community and finds ways to care for the poor and uninsured. Are you telling the untold stories of the work you do every day over and above delivering patient care? Now, more than ever it's important that we effectively connect with our communities—with our patients, with our caregivers and with our neighbors.

## COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

The American Hospital Association's Community Connections initiative is designed to help hospitals reaffirm their rightful place as a valued and vital community resource that merits broad public support. 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.

That's why AHA is partnering with state and metro associations to help hospitals across the nation more effectively communicate with their communities and channel that strong community support into a partnership for advocacy.

Through targeted resources created for CEOs, communications with Capitol Hill and plenty of successful examples from the field, we're making sure people know about the many good things hospitals do.

## TELL US YOUR STORY

Every community is different. That's why we want you to tell us about the ways you make your community healthier, better.



## RESOURCES

The materials listed here are just a few of the resources that can help you listen and communicate more effectively with the patients, families and community you serve. All of them are at the AHA's special Web site, [www.caringforcommunities.org](http://www.caringforcommunities.org).

**Trust Counts Now** — It is increasingly difficult to win and keep the public's admiration and trust. This powerful report by former AHA Board Chair and CEO, John King looks at how hospital leaders can bring the community closer to their organizations by leading the organization closer to the community.

**Community Benefit Reporting—Guidelines and Standard Definitions** — Developed by VHA and the Catholic Health Association of the United States.

## Community Connections: Case Examples

**Do Good and Talk about It** — A CHRISTUS health study emphasizes the importance of telling our stories to the public. Health Progress. 2005 Jul-Aug 86(4):51-4.

**Messages and Strategies for Community Owned Health Care Organizations; a guide to communicating value** — VHA Mountain States, 2000.

**Association for Community Health Improvement Resources** — Site includes sample community benefit policies, state reporting programs as well as articles and tools.



## It is vital that your senators and representatives

understand how your hospital's work improves the overall health of your community. While your local legislators may know many members of your hospital family, do they truly understand your hospital's mission, and the vital role it plays in the health, safety and strength of the community? In today's political climate, it is vital that legislators are fully aware of the good hospitals do. That knowledge must come from hospitals themselves ... the people whom these legislators represent. That's where real grassroots power is generated.

Don't wait a minute longer to drive that message home by sharing your special programs with legislators. Let us know if you have!

- Yes, I have shared or plan to share our community service report with our congressional delegation.**
- Yes, I would like my hospital considered as a case example for upcoming Community Connections materials.**



Please provide **a contact** in your organization we can follow up with to obtain your report and bolster our advocacy work here in Washington, as well as consider it for the new Community Connections case example booklet.

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

