




community networks

PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN CATHOLIC CHARITIES AND CATHOLIC HEALTHCARE ORGANIZATIONS



Like other healthcare organizations in the United States, Catholic healthcare facilities are developing new relationships with a wide array of partners to extend their ministry and to improve efficiency, coordination, and quality of care.

In forming these partnerships, Catholic-sponsored organizations may have an advantage over others. Through Catholic Charities and other social service programs, the Catholic Church in the United States is the largest provider of human services (see *Profile of a Community Partner: Building Networks with Catholic Charities*, Catholic Health Association, 1996). In addition, the Church's network of almost 20,000 parishes enables healthcare organizations to reach into communities where little infrastructure exists. The current movement toward integration of community-based health and social services creates opportunities for Church-sponsored organizations to work together as never before.

The following case studies are part of a series, begun in the January-February 1997 issue, designed to help persons creating integrated systems of care.

If your healthcare organization is collaborating with a Catholic Charities agency in your area, we would like to know about it. Please contact Julie Trocchio by phone at 202-296-3993 or by e-mail at jtrocchi@chausa.org.



FIVE PROJECTS INITIATED BY CATHOLIC CHARITIES AND ALEXIAN BROTHERS HEALTH SYSTEM

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“Our health system’s strategic direction on community initiatives supports the overall vision developed by *New Covenant*,” says Terry McGuire. “The question we

always ask ourselves is: How can we, working together, improve the health of communities?”

McGuire, vice president for mission effectiveness, Alexian Brothers Health System, Inc., Elk Grove Village, IL, is describing the community projects the Alexian Brothers initiated with local Catholic Charities organizations. He helped begin planning for the projects in 1988. The first project, in the northwestern suburbs of Chicago, was launched two years later.

The Five Projects

Chicago In 1990, after two years of planning, Alexian Brothers Health System, Alexian Brothers Medical Center in Elk Grove Village, IL, and Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago launched Catholic Charities Physician Referral Service (CCPRS), a service for Medicaid recipients. The project, which now has 22 participating hospitals and about 800 participating physicians, receives 75 percent of its funding from the state. CHA honored CCPRS with an Achievement Citation in 1992.

In 1994, through Alexian Brothers Medical Center, a Community Health Alliance was established in northwestern Chicago. Kelley Clancy, the medical center’s director of health promotions, is the alliance’s director. The alliance comprises 40 organizations, including Catholic Charities of Chicago and the Diocese of Joliet, IL. The alliance completed a community health analysis in 1996; in 1997 it opened an indigent care clinic.

At present Catholic Charities of Chicago and Alexian Brothers are exploring a pilot project involving managed care for frail seniors.

Since 1990 CCPRS has been replicated in the Diocese of Rockford, IL.

St. Louis In 1992 Alexian Brothers assisted Catholic Charities of St. Louis in replicating the CCPRS in that city. “We went up to Chicago to learn how to set up a physician referral service. The Alexian Brothers were wonderful to us,” says Sr. Betty Brucker, FSM, executive director of the Archbishop’s Commission on Community Health, which includes Catholic Community Services, the Catholic Charities agency in St. Louis. The service now comprises 19 participating hospitals and nearly 450 physicians (see “Community Networks,” *Health Progress*, September-October 1997, p. 41.)

San Jose, CA In 1995 a partnership made up of Catholic Charities of San Jose; Alexian Brothers Hospital, San Jose; O’Connor Hospital, San Jose; and Saint Louise Hospital, Morgan Hill, CA (the latter two organizations are sponsored by Catholic Healthcare West) launched the Catholic Community Initiative (CCI). CCI is currently sponsoring two projects, according to Amanda Navar, the partnership’s collaboration director:

Asian Senior Assistance Program (ASAP). This project helps older Vietnamese immigrants who, because they often find themselves isolated, are at risk for depression. ASAP has trained more than 350 hospital workers to screen such people and refer them to a case manager, who arranges for them to get social support from the community. Although ASAP currently focuses on Vietnamese immi-

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grants, it plans to extend its service to include other Asian nationalities.

End of Life Issues Personally and Spiritually Explored (ELIPSE). CCI is seeking funding for this project. ELIPSE is envisioned as a three-year project in which the initiative would:

- Conduct a needs assessment concerning end-of-life needs throughout ethnically diverse Santa Clara County, CA
- Educate Catholic hospital staffs in the ways different ethnic groups see end-of-life issues, and develop a Catholic response to different ethnic preferences
- Evaluate the results of this education

ELIPSE was inspired by Supportive Care for the Dying: A Coalition for Compassionate Care. "We think our project could be a model for the region and for Catholic healthcare in general," Navar says.

Milwaukee The Northwest Community Collaborative (NWCC), which was launched just last spring, is a partnership involving Alexian Village of Milwaukee, Catholic Charities of Milwaukee, Goodwill Industries, the United Way of Milwaukee, the Silver Spring Neighborhood Center, and the Northwest Business Association.

Dareene Roisler, director of development and community initiatives, Alexian Village, says the NWCC recently hired a director. Based in a section of the city that lacks the healthcare resources and general social infrastructure necessary for a population of about 20,000, the NWCC is currently seeking a site for a back-to-school fair planned for August 1998. The fair, which will offer community resource information for families and school supplies and immunizations for children, is based on a successful model recently implemented by Catholic Charities in the Diocese of Joliet, IL.

The NWCC is also working with a local school to expand after-school activities for the area's children.

Tennessee With the encouragement of Alexian Village of Tennessee, Inc., Signal Mountain, TN, Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Knoxville, TN, recently brought the Appalachian Exchange Program to Lone Oak, TN. Under this program, youth and adult groups from around the country volunteer time repairing homes for those in need, especially seniors.

Governance Structures

Most of the projects are governed by their own advisory boards as part of the local Catholic Charities organization. Each board assumes strategic and financial responsibility for the advancement of the project. McGuire has been a

board member in each project in its developmental stages.

McGuire notes that the Alexian Brothers-Catholic Charities partnership has improved on its start-up time as it replicates projects in new communities. "It took us two years to plan the Chicago project, one year for the San Jose project, and eight months for the Milwaukee project," he says. "So we're becoming more effective and efficient as we progress."

Staffing

The size of the staff varies according to the project. Interviewing for staff positions is done by the local advisory boards. In most instances, staff members are supervised and paid by the local Catholic Charities organization.

Funding

The Alexian Brothers Ministry Fund has been a vital source for initial funding of several of these projects. Other funding has come from state, community, and foundation sources and from other healthcare providers.



practical advice

- "The Catholic healthcare community can learn from the community-based knowledge Catholic Charities brings to a partnership, and Catholic Charities can gain strategic support for future collaborating with Catholic healthcare."