

Leaders Affirm *Health Progress's* Direction, Pose Future Challenges

In its vision statement the Catholic Health Association (CHA) proclaims its commitment to strengthen and nurture the healing ministry through education, advocacy, and collaboration. To support CHA's vision, *Health Progress* provides a forum for educating members through the exchange of ideas and information. The journal's staff has completed the first part of a project to assess the journal's current and future effectiveness in helping CHA realize its vision of leading the ministry by educating.

A recent telephone survey of 20 top leaders in Catholic healthcare yielded information the *Health Progress* staff will use in shaping the design and content of the journal to meet readers' needs in the coming years. *Health Progress* staff conducted the telephone interviews to gain insight into the types of information our readers need now and anticipate needing in the next two to three years, as well as to learn how readers perceive the journal.

The survey respondents indicated they view *Health Progress* as a valuable source of information about the Catholic healing ministry. All the persons we spoke with agreed that the journal keeps them up-to-date on activities and concerns in Catholic healthcare, as well as the Catholic perspective on issues such as reform and ethics.

FUTURE INFORMATION NEEDS

The healthcare executives suggested the following topics as the most important for *Health Progress* to cover now and in the future (these are not in any priority order):

- Catholic identity, especially how to preserve identity in collaborative networks
- Biomedical ethics
- Sponsorship models and issues
- Models of integrated delivery and collaboration, with details on developing integrated networks and collaborations between Catholic and non-Catholic organizations
- Organizational culture and values, including

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their influence in new arrangements and the human costs of change

- Leadership development
- Ethical issues related to managed care and capitation
- Relationships with the Catholic Church
- Providers' role in promoting health and well-being
- Governance models and structures, particularly in networks
- Management skills such as planning, evaluating performance, motivating staff, and assessing departmental progress and performance
- Physician-hospital integration
- The healthcare organization's responsibility to the community

WAYS TO MAKE HEALTH PROGRESS MORE USEFUL

Interviewees suggested several ideas for changes or additions to the journal. These included increasing the focus on practical management information, adding a column devoted to the concerns of chief executives and top managers, emphasizing coverage of networks, including more detailed case studies on integration activities, and listing an issue's main two or three articles on the cover.

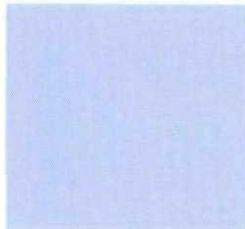
As we make decisions about our activities, we will consider these suggestions. For example, to respond to readers' requests for more detail in articles that describe specific collaborations and programs, we will include the name and telephone number of a contact person to help readers obtain further information.

Readers indicated that they appreciate article summaries, boxes, bulleted lists, and graphics that help them grasp information quickly. We will enhance these to make *Health Progress* more user friendly.

FUTURE SURVEYS

We will continue to survey our readers on a regular basis. This survey focused on executives with long experience in Catholic healthcare (an aver-

age of 30 years; see **Box**) to obtain credible insights on the information needs of healthcare managers. Because of their familiarity with *Health Progress*, they were able to give us a well-informed perspective on the journal. In future telephone surveys we will interview readers in a variety of disciplines and positions and report the results in *Health Progress*.



These surveys supplement other feedback from CHA members, including information the staff obtains from conversations and letters from readers. We encourage all *Health Progress* readers to send us their ideas so that we can continue to refine our efforts to educate CHA members about the crucial issues for the Catholic healing ministry.

—Judy Cassidy

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