

No Matter What, Keep in Touch



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An important element of this year's Catholic Health Assembly theme — The Future of Compassion — rose to the top during the past few months of preparation for our gathering in San Diego: Human touch is a fundamental expression of our healing ministry. As medical technology develops at an ever-increasing rate, our facilities will continue to provide communities with the best care available, but not at the expense of meaningful, loving contact with those we serve.

Articles, departments and columns in this special issue of *Health Progress* reflect, in one way or another, the reality of Catholic health care's continuation of Jesus' mission of love and healing today. And the continuation of this mission demands a holistic, deeply personal encounter of people's suffering. This is where Catholic health care shines today, and where it will distinguish itself in the future. We diagnose, intervene, ameliorate and heal, but most importantly, we touch.

It is quite fitting that our first installment of a new department, "No Hands But Yours" (Page 52), celebrates the important contribution made by one hospital chaplain who ministers to patients and co-workers through touch. And it is this personal approach to the other that we celebrate at this year's assembly.

In July, I begin my new job with the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity HealthCare Ministry based in Manitowoc, Wis., so this issue marks the end of my stint as editor of *Health Progress*. Though I've been in this role for a relatively short time, I am quite proud of what our small team has been able to accomplish with the past 11 issues of the journal. The most important outcome during our two-year evolution is a noticeable increase in feedback from readers. Every change we've made on these pages and on the website have been done with this goal in mind because it is *your* vehicle for exchanging ideas, pursuing solutions and sharing wisdom. *Health Progress* will continue to serve your needs as long as you are making those needs heard. So keep the comments and suggestions coming, and expect even greater things from this journal in the future . . . I certainly do.