

What Is “Community Benefit”?

What is “community benefit”? Why should Catholic health care organizations seek to provide it?

One answer to the second question is given by Sr. Patricia Talone, RSM, PhD, CHA’s senior vice president for mission services, in “The Theology of Community Benefit” (p. 20), which serves as the introductory article to this issue’s special section on the subject. The notion of community benefit, Sr. Patricia writes, derives from the Catholic Church’s traditional dedication to the common good.



Another answer to that question appears in “Does Mission Still Matter?” by J. David Seay, executive director, National Alliance for the Mentally Ill of New York State, Albany, NY (p. 27). In our time, Seay writes, the public is losing its ability to distinguish between voluntary, not-for-profit hospitals and for-profit ones. If they are to survive, he argues, not-for-profit institutions must reaffirm their links to the communities they serve.

As for the first question, Natalie Dean, director of social accountability, Trinity Health, Novi, MI; and Julie Trocchio, CHA’s senior director of continuing care ministry, explain “Community Benefit: What It Is and Isn’t” (p. 22).

In addition, seven other articles in this unusually full special section consider multiple aspects of the community benefit issue. *Health Progress* is grateful to Julie Trocchio and Aimée DeVoll, a CHA communications specialist, for their work in bringing the section together.

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