



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 [CHA], 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.

In its January-February 1997 issue, *Health Progress* began offering a series of case studies of such partnerships, hoping they might serve as models for those creating integrated systems of care. These case studies of Catholic Charities agencies and Catholic health organizations were prepared by the Catholic Health Association as part of *New Covenant: A Health Ministry for the 21st Century*, an initiative cosponsored by the National Coalition on Catholic Health Care Ministry, the Catholic Health Association, and Consolidated Catholic Healthcare. The *New Covenant* process is designed to strengthen and promote the organized expression of the Catholic health ministry through strategies and actions at the national and regional levels.

Here is another case study. *Health Progress* will present others in future issues.

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.

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ALZHEIMER'S RESPIRE CARE PROGRAM

Youngstown, OH



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Organizational Structure

The adult day services respite program for persons with Alzheimer's disease is the result of ongoing diocesan-wide collaboration. Directors of Catholic Charities and Catholic social services agencies, and administrators of Catholic hospitals, nursing homes, and adult day services belong to the Health and Human Services Commission of the Youngstown

diocese. The members of the commission meet regularly to find ways to work together to provide coordinated services. This particular program also involves a collaboration with diocesan parishes.

Goals of Affiliation

The program aims to relieve the stresses of caregivers and Alzheimer's patients in the early to middle stages of the disease. It focuses on social, rather than medical, needs (no medical care is provided). By providing respite care outside of participants' homes, the program supplies a needed outlet from constant home confinement. The day respite service is open for four hours one day each week; so caregivers can rely on a consistently available service. The program is open to the entire community, and it also offers a support group for caregivers.

The Project

The adult day services respite program is individualized; clients' families help the staff assess what activities, such as music, exercise, or crafts, to provide to the participant. Currently the program each day serves an average of five Alzheimer's patients, who must be able to take medications and use the bathroom when cued. A medical van supplied by Humility of Mary Health Partners, Youngstown, provides health screenings to family caregivers.

The program will begin offering vacation respite care in July 1999 as a collaborative effort with the home care pro-

gram of Humility of Mary Health Partners, which will provide nursing staff. Respite care will be available one weekend every month, as well as up to a week at a time, in the homelike atmosphere of the Antonine Sisters adult day care facility in North Jackson, OH, another member of the diocesan Health and Human Services Commission.

Budget

Started with a \$10,500 Brookdale Foundation grant to Catholic Charities, the adult day services respite program is now supported by a grant from Catholic Charities and clients' fees of \$15 a day (clients also pay for meals). The parishes supply the space and utilities for the adult day services respite program. Volunteers from the parishes staff the program, with a paid coordinator whose salary is funded by Catholic Charities. Many volunteers are retired healthcare professionals. The vacation respite program will be funded by client fees of \$75 a day.

practical advice

- Housing this program in parishes provides the opportunity to bring major institutional services to people where they need them. The program makes parishioners aware of available support and resources and increases their acceptance of services.
- Consider collaborating with nursing homes, which can provide training for staff and educational opportunities for caregivers. Such an arrangement also allows families to develop a relationship with a long-term care facility.