



SPREADING OUR STORIES

Provena Health's New Ways

BY LISA LAGGER
Provena Health,
Mokena, Ill.

As we in Catholic health care are well aware, communicating the impact of our mission in a way that resonates with audiences poses a unique test. It's especially difficult when a ministry is facing a high-profile property tax exemption challenge and increased scrutiny over how it returns the optimal value of its charitable assets to local communities.

Such is the case for Provena Health in Mokena, Ill., which deploys a number of proactive strategies designed to communicate the lasting impact of the ministry's charitable works on the communities it is privileged to serve. At Provena, traditional methods, including distribution of more than 3,000 printed reports to elected officials, community and religious leaders, employees, physicians and the media, are combined with more contemporary and targeted tactics, such as direct mail, e-mail and social media, to make for a well-rounded and effective approach.

In 2010, constrained by expenses involved in distributing annual reports to the community at large, the Provena communications team looked for new ways to reach out more directly to area residents — the very beneficiaries of the faith-based quality care and service Provena's tax exemption allows it to provide. The team created two innovative ideas, which broadened the reach of Provena's message and allowed it to share stories of the organization's mission in action.

Six ministry-specific direct mail pieces were developed, each relaying the respective ministry's local charitable contributions. A corresponding statistic highlighted the daily

monetary impact of those efforts on communities served — a figure in the tens of thousands for each ministry. The pieces also featured one of the many local community benefit programs organized to address community needs. The mailing was distributed in late June to 190,000 households throughout primary and secondary markets. A custom URL was included to assist with tracking of results and to encourage viewing of additional online content. By early August, seven percent of the views to Provena's online content came via the direct mail pieces.

As part of a system-wide effort to be faithful stewards of the Earth, the Provena team also developed a "green" electronic message. A flash

slideshow was sent via e-mail to more than 1,000 Provena Health leaders, regional and national health association leaders, and colleagues in Catholic health care. Anecdotal feedback indicated the message was forwarded to various other groups playing a large role in generating

more than 450 visits to Provena's online annual report content (www.provena.org/annualreport) within a few days of the site's launch. The electronic message has also been shared as part of Provena's social media strategy, with posts to both its Facebook page (www.facebook.com/ProvenaHealth) and Twitter feed (@ProvenaHealth). These efforts are in addition to the mission-oriented videos Provena uploads to its YouTube channel regularly throughout the year.

Overall response to Provena's communication efforts has been overwhelmingly positive.

LISA LAGGER is system vice president, public relations and marketing at Provena Health.



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