

Proof of Principle: From Idea to Measurables— Starting a Committee for Social Responsibility

The Problem

The needs of our patients extend beyond the walls of our hospitals and clinics. Thus, providing truly equitable care requires social responsibility to address the traditionally non-medical components of health and assist those in need. Simultaneously, members of the Department of Surgery desired a forum to meet colleagues with similar interests, share ideas, and generate initiatives to serve the community on a deeper, more personal level.

Aims / Goals

1. To make a positive impact on the lives and communities of people in need through inclusive, sustainable, and measurable initiatives
2. To bring together employees with diverse backgrounds and varying priorities to work towards a common goal

The Team

- Allen Hamdan, MD; Dept of Surgery
- Debra Rogers; Chief Administrative Officer
- Jane Matlaw; Community Relations
- Kevin Hart; Surgery Administration
- Elliott Chaikof, MD; Chair, Dept of Surgery
- Emily Fish, MD; Resident, Dept of Surgery
- Many other faculty, trainees, and administrative staff

The Interventions

- Creation of a volunteer Dept. of Surgery Committee for Social Responsibility
- Utilization of the “nominal group technique”
 - Allows all members to express their ideas and be heard
 - Focuses the group’s efforts through a rank/tally system
- Solicitation of feedback from the department through an open survey
 - Garnered support from dept. members unable to attend meetings
 - Ensured interests of the dept. at-large were represented

Results / Progress to Date

- Top priorities identified: hunger, homelessness, and childhood education
- Progressively larger endeavors were undertaken

INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
Socks drive to support Boston Health Care for the Homeless	375 pairs of socks donated
Coat drive to support MA Coalition for the Homeless	>100 new or gently used coats donated
Toiletries drive to support Sidney Borum Jr. Health Center	Hundreds of toiletries donated
Parker Hill / Fenway food drive	>\$1,100 in gift cards / food donated
High school education initiative	Health care providers entered classrooms to discuss careers in medicine
Food is Medicine campaign	Greater Boston Food Bank gala raised >\$30,000, worth >100,000 meals

Table 1: 2012-2013 Committee for Social Responsibility initiatives and associated outcomes

Lessons Learned

- Utility of the “nominal group technique” and open surveys in facilitating “buy-in” from all members versus only focusing on initiatives important to the leadership
- Garnering support from hospital community relations magnifies efforts and helps avoid pitfalls such as violating solicitation rules
- Impact of measuring outcomes and reporting results back to the larger group

Next Steps

- Increase participation in current yearly drives
- Improve accessibility and success of the Greater Boston Food Bank fundraiser
- Collaborate with similarly vested groups such as the Gold Humanism Society
- Stimulate interest among other residency programs
- Strengthen inclusivity to ensure broader departmental representation