

MARTS & LUNDY SPECIAL REPORT

# Essential Elements of a Grateful Patient Fundraising Program



# Introduction

Successfully engaging grateful patients in philanthropy has been a widely-accepted and critically important best practice in healthcare philanthropy for many years. Gratitude for compassionate, excellent care remains the most powerful motivator for patients to support the physicians and institutions they come to admire so deeply.

All healthcare organizations have an affinity group as central to their fundraising potential as alumni are to universities: *their patients*. However, patient relationships — and the regulations that govern them — make designing programs rather complex.

Marts & Lundy created this document to provide an overview of the essential elements needed for an effective patient fundraising program. It is an outline to provide guidance, however, rather than a template for every institution. Because culture, patient population, organizational structure and resources matter so much, every patient fundraising program must be matched and “right-sized” to each institution. Our hope is the following information supports efforts to create custom-designed, effective patient fundraising programs.

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› **Compliance**

- HIPAA
- Patient Services

› **Case for Support and Fund Policies**

- Approved and communicated case for support
- Policies for the management of donated funds

› **Culture**

- Philanthropy as core to mission for physicians, staff and volunteer leaders

› **Concierge Services**

- Pre-admission support
- Inpatient rounding
- Amenities
- Post-discharge follow-up

› **Information & Referrals**

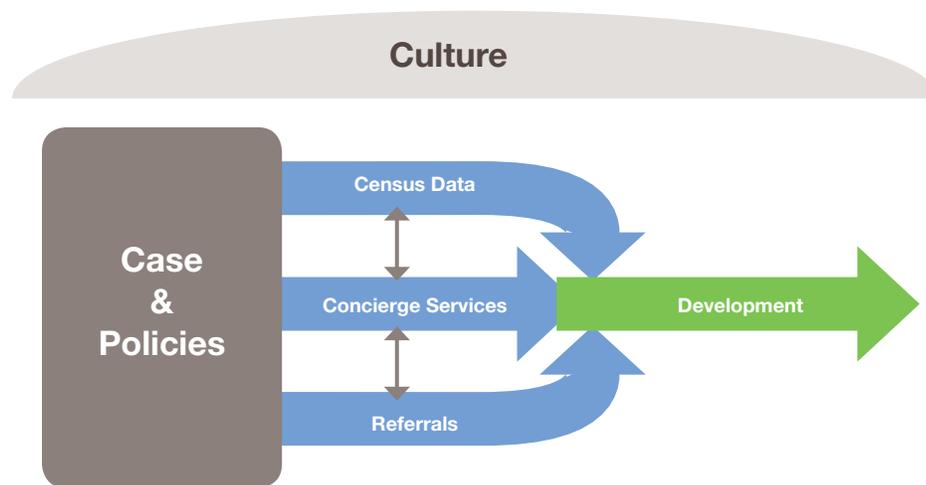
- To identify current donors who become patients
- To identify potential donors

› **Development**

- Mailings, event invitations, newsletters and customized strategies

An effective grateful patient fundraising program fundamentally relies on a culture of philanthropy within which senior leadership, physicians, staff and volunteer leaders share a common belief in the critical importance of philanthropy and common trust in working as a team to invite support from grateful patients and their families.

The diagram below depicts the integration and flow of tactics and actions in a grateful patient program. The fundamental goal is to identify current and prospective donors who become patients, to support them during their care experiences and to ultimately invite their support through the application of effective and appropriate fundraising strategies.



## Compliance

- › **Everything we do – absolutely everything – must and will be compliant with HIPAA.**
  - HIPAA regulations confirm our ability to access certain protected information for fundraising purposes
  - All grateful patient fundraising program elements will be reviewed and approved by the compliance office in advance of implementation
  
- › **Everything we do in our grateful patient fundraising program should first and foremost enhance and/or support excellent, compassionate medical care and outstanding quality in customer service.**
  
- › **Advancement will ensure it fulfills its responsibilities at the highest levels.**
  - Information about donors and patients will be available only to those who need to know
  - All information will be kept confidential and secure
  - Donor funds will be allocated as designated by donors in a timely fashion
  - Advancement staff will partner with physicians, caregivers and patient services ongoing in all activities

## **HIPAA Changes**

### **Expansion of Protected Health Information Available to Fundraisers**

#### **Covered entities may use the following protected health information for fundraising purposes:**

- Name, addresses, other contact information, age, gender, date of birth
- Dates of services provided
- Health insurance status
- Treating physician
- Department of service
- Outcome information

#### **Strengthening of Opt-Out Provisions**

- Covered entities must provide a “clear and conspicuous” opt-out mechanism in all fundraising communications
- Fundraising statement and right to opt out must be included in notice of privacy practices
- Opt-out applies to both written and oral communications
- Mechanism must not place undue burden or more than nominal cost on patients
- Scope of opt-out may be campaign specific, depending on development resources for tracking
- May offer option to opt back in
- May not condition treatment or payment on choice to participate in fundraising

## **Notice of Privacy**

### **Sample Language**

#### **Marketing and Fundraising Activities**

We may use medical information about you to contact you in an effort to raise money for the hospital/ medical center/school of medicine/university and its operations. We may disclose medical information to a foundation related to the hospital so that the foundation (Office of Advancement) may contact you to raise money for the hospital, medical center/school of medicine/university. We only would release contact information such as your name, address and phone number and the dates you received treatment or services. The hospital, medical center/school of medicine/university will not sell your protected health information. If you do not want the hospital, medical center/school of medicine/university or the Foundation (Office of Advancement) to contact you for marketing or fundraising efforts, you must notify:

## Case for Support

An approved and communicated case for support is critically important for a successful grateful patient program to ensure philanthropy is applied to highest priorities and to encourage the engagement of physicians and caregivers.

Because the program will invite support at all levels, the case for support should offer compelling opportunities to support priorities that logically and emotionally match the gift amounts to be requested.

Many grateful patient donors will often care most about the physicians, caregivers and programs where they received their care. A case for support should clearly offer donors opportunities to honor the physicians and caregivers who provided their care and the programs that matter most to them.

Physicians and caregivers will naturally link grateful patient fundraising with needs and opportunities in the programs where they provide care to patients. Their willingness to participate in a grateful patient fundraising program is highly reliant on an approved case for support that includes giving opportunities they believe will enhance their ability to advance care, research and teaching.

## Policies

A general policy should be put in place that identifies the reasons for and the policies by which a grateful patient fundraising program will be undertaken.

### Sample

*The hospital, medical center/school of medicine/university has a natural constituency of grateful patients and families who are inclined to provide financial support to further its mission. A significant number of those families have the potential to provide financial support. This policy demonstrates our commitment to implementing the best practices associated with privacy and security of health information to ensure the protection of patients and staff across the organization. Utilizing best practices, we will leverage the value of census screenings across fundraising program areas to enable appropriate engagement of current and potential donors.*

Staff are expected to:

- Uphold HIPAA and be in compliance with hospital policies and procedures
- Support the implementation of a systematic grateful family philanthropic system
- Comply with security requirements to protect the data of our patients

Existing policies regarding restricted funds should be reviewed to confirm a timely and accountable flow of restricted funds to programs and departments in order to fulfill donor intent and to ensure continued physician and caregiver engagement.

Policies should also be considered for stratifying levels of giving for appropriate concierge services.

## Culture ... a shared commitment

Physicians, caregivers, volunteer leaders and development staff must share a common belief and a common commitment to philanthropy as core to fulfilling the hospital/medical center/school of medicine/ university mission.

Physicians and caregivers are often concerned about engaging in discussions about philanthropy with patients and their families. It can feel intrusive and inappropriate in their roles as caregivers. Best practices have been developed to provide educational services for physicians and caregivers in how best to appropriately engage grateful patients.

Set out below is some sample language that could be used to develop the core principles of a grateful patient fundraising program.

- › **We recognize the critical role of philanthropy in fulfilling our mission**
  - Increasing charitable giving is critical to saving and improving more lives through excellence in care, research and teaching
  - Those who receive care are those most likely to consider giving
  
- › **We must become proactive in inviting support from our grateful patients**
  - Throughout our history, patients have expressed their gratitude through charitable support.
  - We honor and recognize our grateful patient donors when they ask, “How can I help?”
  - Today we make a commitment to proactively engage our patients; to ask them — respectfully and appropriately — “Would you consider helping?”
  
- › **We will always engage our grateful patients respectfully and appropriately**
  - We recognize nothing is “routine” for patients and their families
  - Excellent patient care and patient safety will always be our highest priority
  - The work we do is life-saving and often life-changing
  - Confidentiality is a promise we’ll never, ever break
  - We will honor and uphold the dignity of every patient in all we do... always
  - The deep human bond patients have with their physicians and their caregivers is profoundly important
  - We seek to honor the gratitude patients wish to express to their physicians, caregivers and hospital
  - We will always ensure the intent of grateful patient donors is fulfilled at the highest level possible

## Concierge Services

A donor’s experience as a patient can profoundly influence — positively or negatively — their willingness to give.

From a donor’s perspective, the hospital to which they have made charitable gifts is “their hospital.” It’s an institution that matters to them and to their family and to which they have chosen to provide charitable support. In some cases, they view the hospital and its staff as an extended family. Recognizing them as donors when they become patients is often deeply appreciated. For some donors, it is expected.

A common best practice in grateful patient fundraising is the provision of concierge services to donors who become patients. These services — stratified by level of giving — often include:

› **Pre-admission Support**

- Physician referral
- Scheduling
- Courtesy or streamlined admission
- Preferred parking or valet services
- Member or “VIP” card

› **Inpatient Rounding and Amenities**

- Periodic visits by a Foundation representative (preferably a physician)
- Amenities (delivered by Foundation staff)
  - Newspapers
  - Flowers
  - Special menu
  - Robe, slippers
  - Preferred parking

› **Post-discharge follow-up**

- Phone calls (preferably by a physician)

## Information & Referrals

Daily review of inpatient census data is a common best practice in grateful patient fundraising programs. This is done for two primary purposes:

- 1. To identify donors who become patients
- 2. To identify prospective donors

Compliance with HIPAA and hospital policies is critically important when gathering information of this nature. Policies such as those described earlier in this document should be confirmed to ensure compliance.

Identification of inpatients who are donors should — based on levels of giving — trigger rounding and the delivery of appropriate amenities. Prospective donors should be referred to appropriate development staff for inclusion in mailings, newsletters, event invitations or customized cultivation efforts.

Coordination with internal information services is required to gather patient data. Outside vendors are often used to analyze data for the identification of both current and prospective donors.

Referral of current and prospective donors by physicians and caregivers is often the most effective means of engaging grateful patients. Patients often share their gratitude and their interest in providing support with their caregivers first. Referral to the Foundation office should then trigger protocols for appropriate development strategies in partnership with the referring physicians or caregivers.

## Development

As current and prospective donors are identified and referred, protocols should be in place to implement fundraising strategies based on:

1. Past giving history
2. Giving capacity
3. Patient services received and resulting outcomes
4. Physician and caregiver relationships

Development strategies can include:

1. Solicitation mailings
  - a. General case
    - i. High-end “membership” gift
    - ii. Annual gift
  - b. Service line or department specific case
2. Event Invitations
3. Newsletters
4. Salon events
5. Customized
  - a. Assignment to major gift officer
  - b. Assignment to planned gift officer
  - c. Meeting with physicians/scientists
  - d. Meeting with CEO
  - e. Meeting with Board leaders

Results of efforts — no response, low response, high response — should dictate successive strategies as appropriate.

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