



THE CRESCENT GROUP

# National Survey Findings

Best Practices of US Health System  
Government & Community Affairs  
Departments

# Survey

- Goals: Identify current best practices of leading health system government and community affairs departments
- Content: Developed by The Crescent Group and Yale professor Theodore Marmor
- Administration Process: Via e-mail and phone over 3 weeks, April 2009
- 30 leading departments queried
  - Top recipients of federal appropriations
  - Regionally prominent health systems
- 12 agreed, 11 participated

# Executive Summary

## Essential Elements for Success:

- Active, continuous, and clear communications with policymakers
- Informed, influential, and proactive effort spearheaded by CEO and board
- Alignment between the government and community affairs department and the CEO/board
- Average government and community affairs budget as percentage of total hospital expenses = 0.114%
- Employees informed and empowered for targeted outreach
- Lobbyists active at state and federal levels
- Ongoing participation in state and national hospital associations
- Outstanding reputation in the community
  - Quality of care
  - Community stewardship
  - Economic impact

# Survey Responses: Financial

- Total department annual budget
  - Range: \$180,000 to \$1.25M
  - 0.114% avg. of total expenses for hospital (range: 0.02% to 0.28%)\*
- Department FTEs range: 0.25 to 4.0
- Department FTE compensation range: \$42,000 to \$606,000
- Total spent on purchased services, consultants and lobbyists range: \$30,000 to \$340,000
- Total spent on legislative events range: \$1,000 to \$25,000

\*Total expenses available on GuideStar.org or Internet searches.

# Survey Responses: Political Activity

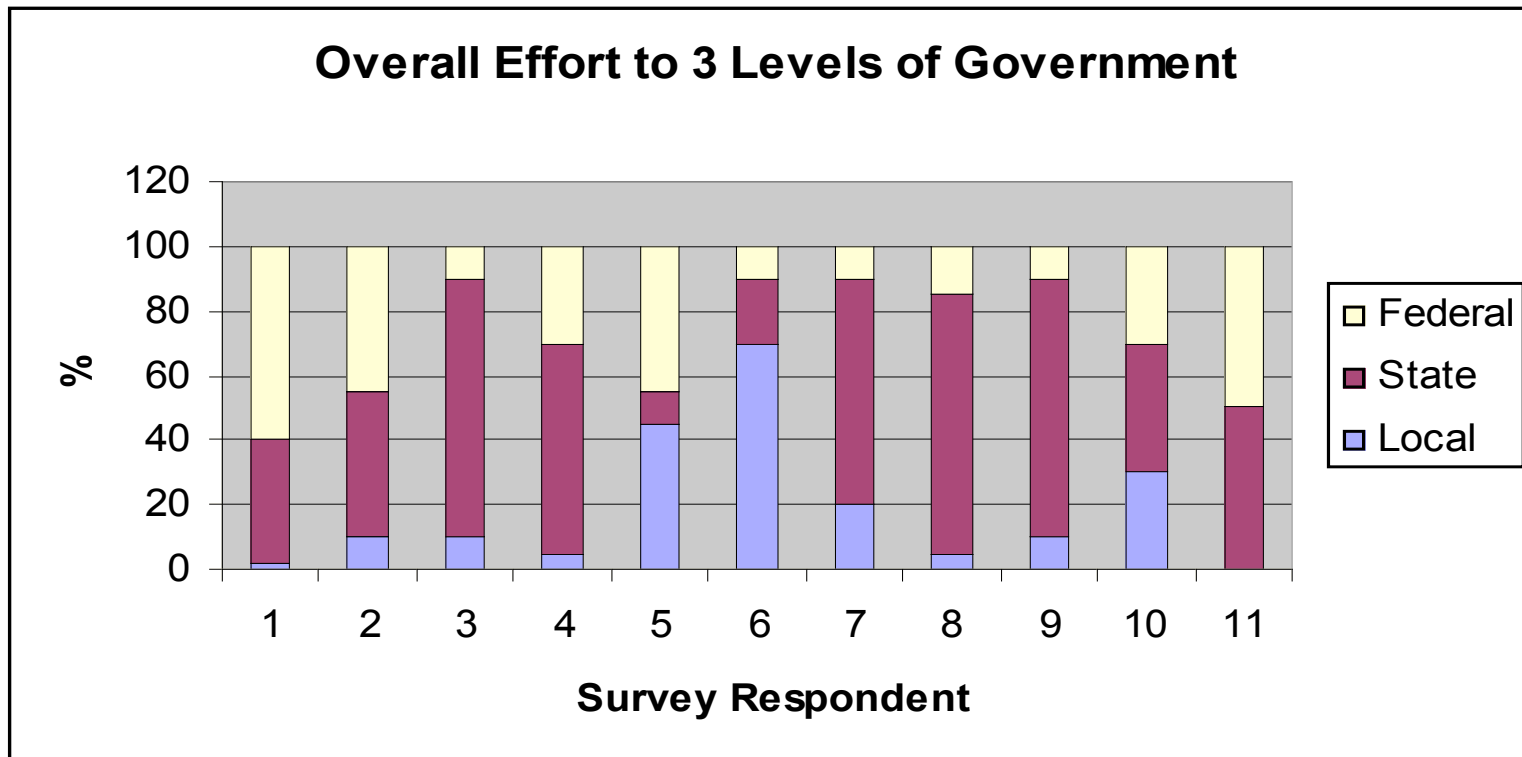
- PAC
  - Nine of the 11 hospitals support their state hospital association PAC, but none had their own
- Staff lobbyists
  - Eight of the 11 hospitals had a lobbyist as part of the departmental staff
- External lobbyists
  - Eight of the eleven hospitals surveyed used external lobbyists, both state and federal

# Survey Responses: Stakeholder Roles

- Board
  - Meet with elected officials, write letters, make phone calls and attend meetings on behalf of the hospital
  - Community support
  - A board committee primarily focused on advocacy
- Employees
  - From CEO (CEO often takes lead) down, meet with elected officials, write letters, make phone calls, and attend meetings on behalf of the hospital.
    - Hospital employees informed and enabled to be grassroots advocates (eg, rapid-response online platform)
- Medical Staff
  - Expert testimony and op-eds on medical issues related to proposed policies
  - Media activities regarding the medical need for patient, disease, research)
  - Engage professional and community organizations
- Patients
  - Community advocacy on a voluntary basis regarding public policy issues (eg. Parents testify on behalf of hospital where child is being treated)
- Community Groups/Partners
  - Media interviews
  - Testimony to policy makers
  - Contacts with elected officials
  - Collaborations for common interests

# Survey Responses: Overall Effort

Question: "In terms of local, state and federal levels of government, approximately what percentage of your department's overall effort (including resources such as time, personnel, and budget) is devoted to each?"



**Survey average: Local 19%; State 52%; Federal 29%.**

# Survey Responses: Local Government Relations

- Goals
  - Local funding
  - Planning and zoning coordination and approval
- Strategies
  - Continuous communication with local officials and boards
  - Reputation for being a solid community partner dedicated to providing highest level of healthcare to patients and their families
- Success measures
  - Public opinion metrics
  - # of meetings/interactions with local government officials
  - Funding received



# Survey Responses: State Government Relations

- Goals
  - Shape state policy to benefit the hospital
    - Medicaid
    - State healthcare reform
  - Access to appropriations and line items (for children's hospitals)
- Strategies
  - Constant contact with state government officials
    - Clear lines of communication
    - Providing officials with the correct policy info from the hospital's perspective
  - Work with state associations and advocacy groups
    - State hospital association
    - Child/patient groups
- Success measures
  - Positive legislative and regulatory outcomes
  - Responsiveness of state legislators and agency officials
  - Amount of budget appropriations received (for children's hospitals)

# Survey Responses: Federal Government Relations

- Goals
  - Shape federal policy to enable hospital to provide excellent care
    - Medicaid and Medicare
    - Uninsured
  - Federal appropriations and earmarks
- Strategies
  - Constant contact with federal government officials, elected representatives and their staffs
  - Demonstrate economic impact of institution on region and state
  - Look for funding opportunities from HHS and beyond (Department of Transportation, Department of Energy, etc.)
  - Work with associations and advocacy groups
    - American Hospital Association
    - Child/patient groups
- Success measures
  - Positive legislative and regulatory outcomes
  - Budget appropriations received