

As we deal with the impact of COVID-19, hospitals and health systems should be creating and implementing emergency disaster plans to support patients and communities while strengthening the health workforce. COPE Health Solutions has partnered with hospitals and health care systems' to support their response to crisis that mitigate risks to patients, staff and communities. COPE Health Solutions has a history of providing support to health system clients in crisis mode. For example, in 1995, with the California earthquake, COPE Health Solutions utilized Health Scholars to transport patients up and down stairs and through the hallways in Santa Monica Hospital. In addition, Scholars have supported health care systems and regions with response to fires, staffing shortages and other disasters.

Currently across some client sites, Health Scholars are doing multiple activities in various areas to help support the current and expected increase in needs. These areas include:

TRAINING STAFF



COPE Health Solutions has utilized multiple vetted and proven resources to train individuals not experienced in health care to provide support in patient care areas. This includes understanding HIPPA and infection control, ambulating patients, responding to patient needs, transporting patients, etc. Many clients have repurposed the Health Scholar training materials for other staff (accountants, unit assistants, etc.) to support more with patient care, allowing staff availability and flexibility for priority needs across the system.

TELEHEALTH



Health Scholars inform patients of available telehealth services to help decrease unnecessary emergency department visits. Scholars call patients post-discharge to confirm they understand their next steps and to identify and address any barriers to care. Scholars can reach out to patients proactively to discuss their next appointment or procedure and to identify and escalate patients' care needs as appropriate.

SUPPLY CHAIN



Health Scholars support the increasing supply chain demands across hospitals by receiving and processing new supplies upon arrival. They also provide assistance with transporting needed supplies to nursing units, laboratory and pharmacy.

NUTRITION SERVICES



Health Scholars help prepare and deliver food trays to patients.

PATIENT SUPPORT



Health Scholars are increasing support for units or areas with higher workforce needs due to staff shortages. They are stocking supplies in rooms, getting patients blankets, assisting ambulating to restroom, sitting with patients who are more anxious and decreasing the workload on the registered nurses (RNs) and other licensed professionals, enabling them to have more time to do tasks requiring the RN license.

NAVIGATION



Health Scholars help patients and visitors navigate to appropriate places and avoid certain areas while keeping patients and visitors calm. In addition to navigation, Scholars are being utilized in cafeterias and gift shops to ensure someone is present to provide food options or additional items to those in need at hospital.

SCALE



There are more than 34,000 alumni from the Health Scholar program. Many are now nurses, physicians, social workers and administrators. Alumni can be leveraged to help support in areas of need across systems. Scholars and alumni can be utilized to support the needs identified by a health care system in house or remotely.

Hospitals and health systems can leverage the Health Scholar program and the expansive alumni network for support during the development of a disaster response plan.

For more information on how COPE Health Solutions provide quick, prepared and valuable services during a critical time of need, please contact Elizabeth DuBois, DNP, MSN, FNP-BC, AAHIVS at edubois@copehealthsolutions.com or 213-369-0571.