



## **SAMPLE COMMITTEE CHARTER: COMMUNITY BENEFIT/MISSION COMMITTEE**

### **Overall Roles and Responsibilities**

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The Community Benefit/Mission Committee is responsible for recommending and overseeing policies and programs designed to carry out the mission and values of the organization and enhance the health of local communities.

Due to increasing oversight by IRS and state governments of the way not-for-profit hospitals and health systems fulfill their obligations as charitable organizations, the role of the Community Benefit/Mission Committee is growing in importance.

### **Responsibilities**

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The specific responsibilities of the Community Benefit/Mission Committee include:

- Reviewing and approving a Community Benefit Plan outlining long-term community health strategies based on a community health needs assessment or other objective sources of data.
- Guiding and monitoring the planning, development, and implementation of major programs aimed at improving the health of the local community.
- Overseeing policies and programs designed to carry out aspects of the organization's mission and values, such as assessing and meeting community needs, serving populations with disproportionate unmet health-related needs, and building a diverse workforce.
- Establishing explicit, rational criteria for priority-setting among potential community benefit activities and projects. Criteria that might be used include the size of the problem, the seriousness of the problem, relevance to people and communities with disproportionate unmet health-related needs, economic feasibility, available expertise and resources, the number of people who would be helped, and whether this project complements other efforts by the hospital and other community organizations.
- Making recommendations for program continuation or termination based on progress toward identified measurable objectives, available resources, level of community ownership, and alignment with criteria for priorities.
- Recommending financial assistance policies for approval by the board and monitoring compliance with the policies.
- Reviewing public communications about the organization's community benefit activities.
- Overseeing the organization's fulfillment of other aspects of the mission and values not encompassed in community benefit reports, such as providing compassionate care, patient-centered care, or promoting organizational excellence.

## **Meetings**

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The committee will meet at least four times a year and additionally when necessary at the call of the committee chair. Meeting dates and times should be specified a year in advance.

## **Members**

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The committee charter should include a list of the committee members as well as the staff supporting the committee.

The Community Benefit/Mission Committee often includes board members as well as other community members who can broaden the board's information base, offer insights regarding community needs, and build ties to community resource. Members might include community leaders, local company executives responsible for community relations or corporate diversity, leaders of community service organizations, leaders of public health agencies and organizations, and marketing executives.

The committee should seek out members who can supply needed expertise in areas such as characteristics and history of local communities with disproportionate unmet health-related needs, clinical service delivery, analysis of service utilization and population health data, primary prevention, social services, immigration, youth and family services, finance, accounting, and legal issues.

## **Reports**

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The committee will receive and review the following reports:

- Community health needs assessment.
- Hospital utilization reports, categorized by payer, for ED utilization and preventable hospitalizations, to help understand unmet community needs.
- Community perceptions survey.
- Cultural diversity report.
- Annual community benefit plan.
- Report of community benefit activities.
- Report of compliance with hospital's financial assistance policies.

## **Annual Committee Goals**

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The committee will establish annual goals specifying its principal work focus areas for the coming year. Typical examples might include:

- Review hospital utilization reports for emergency room utilization and preventable hospitalizations to better understand unmet community needs.
- Survey local communities for perceptions of the hospital as a charitable organization. Review effectiveness of various methods to communicate the organization's charitable efforts and achievements.

- Review community benefits reporting requirements of IRS Form 990.
- Analyze transparency of hospital financial assistance policies and practices and increase efforts to publicize these policies.
- Increase communication about the hospital's community benefit activities to the local community, the general public, and government leaders.



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