

## Penn Medicine— Uses Physicians to Advance Grateful Patient Program



The University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine and Health System (Penn Medicine) is a five facility network with 1,500 beds. In 2003, Penn Medicine received 72 gifts of \$25,000+ from grateful patients. Due to their strategic use of physicians to promote their grateful patient program, that number increased to 201 in 2008 and accounted for half of their total gifts over \$25,000.

### Physicians can be excellent fundraisers

From Penn Medicine's 3,300 physicians, the development department looks for those who meet three key characteristics: they are caring, have access to model candidates and are interested in actively supporting Penn Medicine in general. Currently, 75 "key" physician partners are actively involved in Penn Medicine's development efforts. All of these physician partners have been formally trained on how to identify potential prospects and are asked to dedicate 10-15 hours a year to fundraising. A senior physician "leader"—appointed jointly by the Dean and CEO—works closely with this leadership team of physicians and strives to foster a culture of education, interest, and support for the grateful patient program.

### Steps for success with physician involvement:

- Identify and engage a core group of physicians as "philanthropic partners"
- Support physician partners as you would your top volunteers
- Make the best use of your physicians' time and regularly report on development activity
- Encourage administrative leadership to promote and recognize physician involvement in philanthropy
- Create development plans in close cooperation with physician leaders
- Focus physician attention on securing major gifts from individuals
- Use vested senior physicians to build culture among other physicians
- Train physicians on the donor development process in your organization

### Concierge program helps launch the discussion

Penn Medicine's concierge program for major donors supports physician efforts by providing an added level of personalized services and amenities for VIPs and friends. The program provides comfort and peace of mind to patients that all their needs are met and that their care is seamlessly coordinated by expert staff and the best physicians.

A critical factor to success in using physicians for prospecting, however, rests with the execution of development department staff. Development officers need to be responsive in the cultivation and solicitation of a grateful patient prospect after physician identification and prospect qualification. Using quick, online research and/or frequently screened data can bypass long research profiles and better position the development officer and physician to engage the prospect in a timely and appropriate manner.

*During the past five years, Penn Medicine has found that most of its major donors are motivated by a personal or family experience with a specific disease so certain physicians are better positioned to engage their patients in discussions about philanthropic support.*