

# A VOICE FOR HEALTHCARE SUPPORT

Providence was the first U.S. health system to admit and care for a patient with COVID-19. Like many hospital systems, Providence, with 51 hospitals and 1,085 clinics from Alaska to Texas, supported congressional efforts to fund a response to the crisis.

The government affairs professionals at Providence have been navigating the advocacy space for decades, and in recent years began sharpening their digital advocacy skills. So, when the CARES Act came before Congress offering funding to support health care workers and their COVID-19 response, Providence was ready.

“We dipped our toe in the space for a number of years and what we did prepared us,” said Kristen Downey, senior manager, digital advocacy and government affairs at Providence. “It gave us more confidence to be a little more bold in how we engaged our caregivers (our employees).”

Providence launched its online grassroots campaign to support the CARES Act, inviting participation from its 120,000 caregivers, as well as patients and others in the community. The results were extraordinary: more than **10,000 emailed letters to Congress** from caregivers and **another 10,000 from those outside the Providence system**—more than **20,000 connections all in just five days**.

Providence is continuously proving the value and worth of its advocacy program, learning from each campaign.

“We rely on regional leaders to tell us what works and what resonates with local audiences,” said Louise Hoy, a senior manager on the national communication team at Providence. “We listen, so we have the tools that reach the broadest set of people.”

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