

Another Model for Giving

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ABSTRACT: Most of the global healthcare issues facing us—from expanding access to care, to providing medical and dental care in the aftermath of disasters—are far too complex for any single sector to successfully solve. Industry, the healthcare profession, government, academia and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are all limited in their scope and their ability to effectively address the necessary challenges of these multifaceted issues. It is only through public-private partnerships, in which the participants contribute resources and skills for which they individually are best suited, that true progress can be made in affecting change. In addition, every effort should be made to expand the pool of participants for these partnerships, including small and mid-sized organizations that may be inclined to help, but lack the experience or the infrastructure to initiate programs on their own. As the largest distributor of healthcare products and services to office-based practitioners in the combined North American and European markets, Henry Schein, Inc., is uniquely positioned to use its association with thousands of healthcare product manufacturers and its day-to-day relationships with more than 550,000 healthcare practices around the world to catalyze awareness of and support for important healthcare issues. Through Henry Schein's model for giving, the Company has been successful in forging new partnerships among industry, the healthcare profession, government, academia and NGOs, and in expanding existing ones to help meet the healthcare challenges facing us all. © 2008 Wiley-Liss, Inc. and the American Pharmacists Association *J Pharm Sci* 97:5084–5088, 2008

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CONFRONTING THE CHALLENGES

Consider just a few of the many global healthcare challenges facing us today. How can we increase access to healthcare services in developing nations around the world? How can we begin to bridge the gap between those with ready access to healthcare practitioners and underserved populations in the United States and other developed

countries? How can we prepare to provide vital healthcare products and services to areas of the world that will be devastated by natural disaster or political unrest?

From any perspective, the size and complexity of these and other healthcare issues are daunting—too daunting I believe for any single sector of society to begin to effectively address. For example, well intentioned corporations in the private sector may have the resources and infrastructure to respond quickly, but they lack the necessary broad mandate of a government. Governments can provide this power to act on a broad scale, but they may not have the specific professional expertise that is necessary. Associations representing the various healthcare

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professions—including clinicians and educators—have this expertise but may need the logistical abilities of organizations already on the ground in the affected countries. And non-governmental organizations (NGOs) may have committed staff already in place in these countries, but are usually dependent on external sources for the products, services and funding to drive their in-country efforts.

ANOTHER MODEL FOR GIVING: PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Viewed in this way—with each sector as an integral and interdependent spoke supporting a wheel that can address today's global healthcare challenges—it is easy to see the importance of public-private partnerships. Only by working together and contributing our core competencies (those resources and expertise for which we individually are best suited) can we begin to move this wheel and get traction against the important healthcare issues of our time.

The essential element, of course, is the hub at the center of the wheel that links all of the spokes. This hub is a catalyst organization that has strong ties to each of the sectors and is willing to leverage these relationships, in collaboration with local communities, to mobilize support for healthcare issues of common concern. This is the role that we seek to play through Henry Schein Cares, our global social responsibility program.

The mission of Henry Schein Cares is to assist in narrowing the disparity in the delivery of the healthcare services and information in underserved communities, both in the United States and abroad. We use our company's core competencies—our extensive healthcare product offerings and logistical distribution capabilities, our close relationships with customers and supplier partners, and our extensive communication network—in creative and innovative ways to provide resources that support the programs of community-based health professionals and their organizations. The initiatives we support help to enhance healthcare advocacy and education; increase access to care among underserved populations; strengthen community wellness programs and volunteer activities; and further humanitarian relief and disaster response. By “helping health happen” in this way, we believe that we are furthering our Company's long-term success—a

concept of enlightened self-interest that Benjamin Franklin described as “doing well by doing good.”

Without question, straightforward financial donations will continue to play a key role in addressing global healthcare issues. Funding is the fuel that powers the engine of most philanthropic initiatives. In our experience, however, we have discovered that strategically driven public-private partnerships effectively increase the horsepower of any initiative's engine. This multi-sector model of giving is enhanced by contributions of professional, business and logistical expertise; by volunteerism; and by commitment at all levels of an organization—all directed towards a single goal. It is further enhanced by its ability to provide small and mid-sized companies, which may have the desire to help but lack the expertise or infrastructure, with a path to participation. Adding funding to this “turbocharged” type of engine can invariably drive the success of a healthcare initiative faster and farther (Fig. 1).

PROVIDING HEALTHCARE TO CHILDREN

The potential power of this model for giving is clearly seen in the American Dental Association's Give Kids a Smile initiative.

Over the course of 6 years, Henry Schein (through Henry Schein Dental) has partnered with the American Dental Association (ADA) to transform a pilot program in St. Louis, Missouri into an important ongoing national access to care initiative that has provided free screenings,

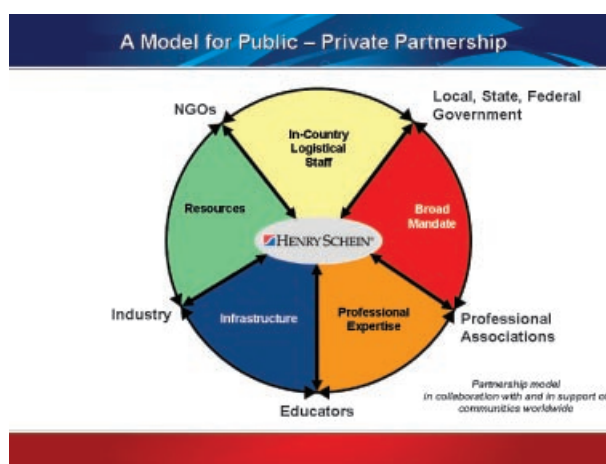


Figure 1. Henry Schein's model for public-private partnership.

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