
2020 SHVL Impact Award Winner

UNC Health Care
“Carolina
Conexiones”



What is the SHVL Impact Award?

The **Impact Award** recognizes one program/organization of SHVL for efforts which have:

- made a positive significant impact to the healthcare organization and/or the state or local communities which are served by the organization,
- upheld high standards for volunteer/retail management engagement and effectiveness through a professionally managed volunteer/retail management program; contributed to the increase of patient satisfaction scores and/or employee satisfaction, and/or
- multiplied community resources available through the healthcare organization.



What is “Carolina Conexiones?”

Carolina Conexiones is a bilingual patient navigation program in NC Children’s Hospital that facilitates wayfinding and non-medical communication for Spanish-speaking families. Carolina Conexiones started in the Children’s Specialty Clinic to increase patient satisfaction and flow by decreasing language barriers for Spanish-speaking families, and is expanding to serve additional areas in the Children’s Hospital.



Coordinator Kristina Morris (middle) gives Sofia Corella (left) the Heart of Service Award and Holly Ozgun (right) the Spirit of Continuous Improvement Award at the 2018 Volunteer Appreciation Dinner

How Does “Carolina Conexiones” help meet the mission of UNC Health Care?

UNC Health Care’s mission is to “improve the health and wellbeing of North Carolinians and others whom we serve. We accomplish this by providing leadership and excellence in the interrelated areas of patient care, education, and research.”

Carolina Conexiones contributes to this mission by serving Spanish-speaking families who seek care at UNC Children’s Hospital; preparing future health care professionals to work in multicultural, multilingual health care settings; and contributing to a growing body of research on how to bridge gaps in care for Spanish-speaking pediatric patients.



Navigators have an opportunity to engage in quality improvement projects, practice their Spanish medical terminology, support one another, and build leadership skills through the regular navigator team-building event called Encuentro.

How Does “Carolina Conexiones” contribute to the effort to increase HCAHPS/CAHPS scores?

Patient satisfaction is the most important metric and central to programmatic decisions. Prior to Carolina Conexiones, few Spanish-speaking families participated in satisfaction surveys. Volunteer navigators educate families about satisfaction surveys and encourage their participation. The program also developed a paper survey to better measure satisfaction.

Since the first year of the program (2015), the number of Spanish-speaking families completing Press-Ganey surveys has quadrupled.



Every year navigators can apply for leadership positions, which allow them to be directly involved in program development and gain leadership skills in the process.

Carolina Conexiones has consistently collected data since the program's inception in 2015. Data collected

Include:

- number of families served;
- number of phone calls made in Spanish;
- patient satisfaction scores;
- no-show rates for English and Spanish-speaking families;
- numbers of patients successfully enrolled in the hospital's electronic medical record.

With the assistance of Carolina Conexiones patient navigators, the percentage of Spanish-speaking families using the hospital's electronic medical record has increased dramatically from 3 percent to 27 percent.



Volunteers are also involved in hospital-wide initiatives such as the one above who sang holiday carols to patients and staff, or the one below who oversaw the decoration of our holiday tree.



UNC Health Care embraces Carolina Care, a UNCH brand of customer service. All patients at UNCH receive Carolina Care and service that is multidisciplinary in nature and involves all staff members and volunteers across the organization. The six key behavioral characteristics used by volunteers include rounding, words and ways that work, blameless apology, no passing zone, moment of caring, and patient-engaged handoff.

Carolina Conexiones is an excellent example of this multidisciplinary approach to patient care and satisfaction.



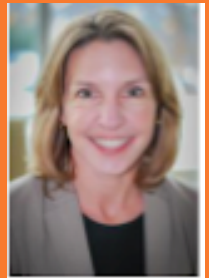
Volunteers purchase bilingual children's books and engage young children and their families in literacy activities.

Carolina Conexiones Support Staff

Kristina Morris, a volunteer coordinator in the Volunteer Services department, is the Children's Bilingual Navigator Program Coordinator. She recruits, assesses, on-boards, and trains the bilingual volunteers. Additionally, she supports navigators directly and guides continuous improvement in navigator recruitment and training. She is also responsible for program evaluation and expansion to new clinical areas.



Dr. Kori Flower is Physician Advisor to Carolina Conexiones. Dr. Flower led implementation of bilingual patient navigation in the Children's Specialty Clinics as part of her overall work to improve quality of care for Spanish-speaking patients. Dr. Flower oversees program direction and evaluation, and sees patients in the Children's Specialty Clinic and Children's Primary Care Clinic.



Linda Bowles is the Director of Volunteer Services and a key member of the Carolina Conexiones team. She has been involved in the implementation of the program and supported its growth since its inception.



Society for Healthcare
Volunteer Leaders

Congratulations, UNC Health Care!



**“Carolina Conexiones”
embodies an impactful,
sustainable, and replicable
program worthy of praise!**

