

Webs of Care: Connecting Patients with Family and Friends

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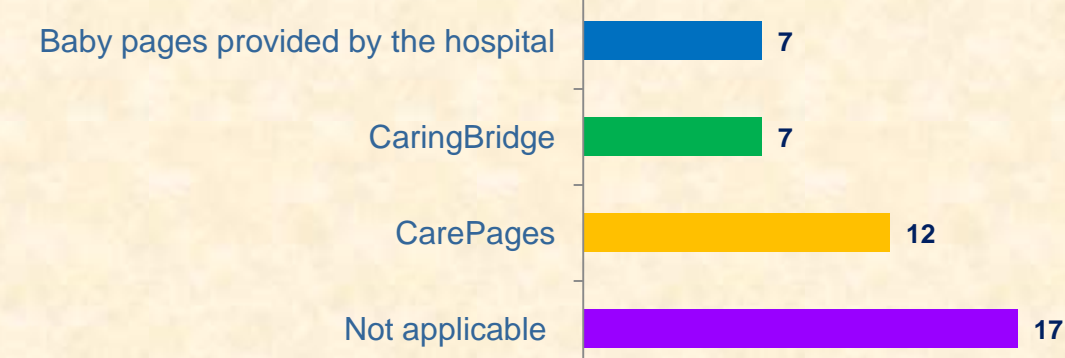
PURPOSE: To identify and compare websites that are designed to connect patients with family and friends.

METHODS: We identified several websites that provide patient communication and support and gathered information on these services through phone calls, emails, and/or data provided on their websites. To provide some context for this information, we conducted a survey of hospital librarians to gather information about use of patient websites at their hospitals.

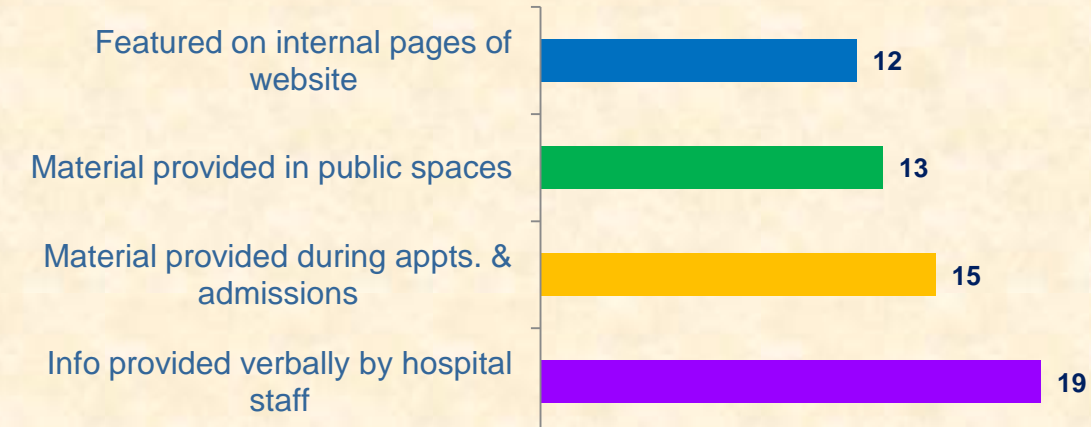
SURVEY OF HOSPITAL LIBRARIANS

We received 45 responses to our survey to hospital librarians from subscribers to MLA's Hospital Libraries discussion list. See selected questions below.

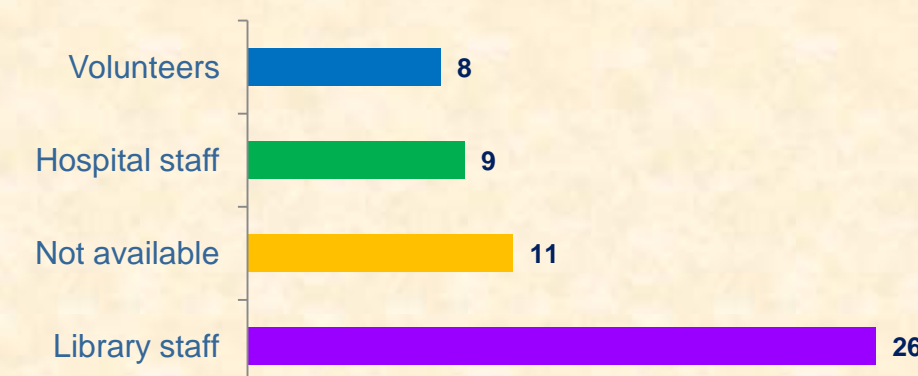
Does your hospital promote the use of any patient communication and support websites?



How are patient websites promoted at your hospital?



Is anyone available to help patients, family, & friends with patient websites?



www.carepages.com

Share your story. Build your support circle. CarePages websites are free patient blogs that connect friends and family during a health challenge.

Launched in 2000 with 30,000+ CarePages websites created, 4 million+ members and 30 million+ page views per month.

Offers three different levels of access: Community Access, Friends & Family Access or Invitation Only Access

www.caringbridge.org

Free, personalized websites that support and connect loved ones during critical illness, treatment and recovery. Connection, love, and support when you need it most

Created in 1997 with 139,000 personal sites and 850 million visits and 30 million visitors in the last 12 months.

Offers a menu of privacy settings from low to medium to high. Creators have the option of requiring registration and/or passwords to view or post to websites.

www.thestatus.com

Free, easy, secure, private web communications for patients, family, friends.

Started in 1997 and currently have over 9500 websites with 11.5 million views on these sites.

All sites are password protected which patients provide to family and friends.

www.mylifeline.org

Connect, inspire, heal. Free personal websites for cancer patients, survivors, and their caregivers.

Over 430 web pages created since 2006 with over 5000 registered visitors

Offers two levels of access: restricted and open. Restricted sites require registration to find or view websites while open sites are searchable on the web and open to all users.

www.lotsahelpinghands.com

Create a free of charge, private, web-based community to organize family, friends, neighbors, and colleagues – a family's 'circles of community' — during times of need. Easily coordinate activities and manage volunteers with our intuitive group calendar. Communicate and share information using announcements, messages boards, and photos.

Launched in 2005 with 16,000+ communities created, 250,000+ tasks signed up and 27 million total visits.

Sites default to private settings that require email invitations but coordinators can make some sections (announcements, well-wishes) semiprivate.

www.whatfriendsdo.com

When a life-changing event happens, friends and family want to help! The WhatFriendsDo.com webtool is a FREE website that can help family and friends form a "Team" and respond in an organized and helpful way. Helping a friend through a life-changing event involves lending a hand with meals, transportation and other tasks. These events also call for understanding, love and uplifting support.

Launched in 2007 with more than 200 active teams and 900 hits a day.

Help scheduler is private and requires login while blogs, photos, and guest books are open..

	CarePages	CaringBridge	TheStatus	MyLifeLine	Lotsa Helping Hands	What Friends Do
Features						
Profile	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓
Updates	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓
Guestbook	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓
Email Alerts	✓	✓	+	✗	✗	✓
Photos	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓
Calendar				✗	✗	✓
Visiting Hours			✓	✗		
No. of Languages	2	2	5	1	+	+
Templates	✓	✓	+	✗	✗	
Links to Health Info	✓	✓		✗	✗	✓
Forums	✓				✗	
Tips for Visitors	✓					✓
Support						
Email	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓
Phone	✓	✓	✓			
Chat	✓	✓				
Revenue						
Ads	✓					✓
Partners or Affiliates	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓
Donations	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓
Products for sale	✓	✓				✓
Minimum age specified	13	18	13	14		

✓ = current feature

+ = coming soon