



# CASE STUDY

## University Hospital (Cincinnati)

### OPPORTUNITY:

The University Hospital is a 49 percent owner of the Health Alliance of Greater Cincinnati. Other owners include the Jewish Hospital (45%) and Forth Hamilton Hospital (6%). The Jewish Foundation of Cincinnati, owner of the Jewish Hospital, has agreed to sell its hospital to a competing health care system in the Cincinnati region. This sale is likely to have two significant impacts on the community: it will lead to the dissolution of the Health Alliance and University Hospital will be left as a stand-alone hospital.

University Hospital is unique among Cincinnati area hospitals due primarily to its shared patient care, education and research mission with the UC College of Medicine. No other hospital in the region provides as much safety-net (indigent care). As the region's only academic medical center, its highly specialized care for the sickest and most injured patients is unmatched.

### SOLUTION:

Vehr Communications was engaged to increase public awareness of the precarious situation in which University Hospital would find itself, if not a part of an integrated health care system. Aggressive media and community relations efforts, combined with paid media and the development of a social media platform were determined to be the core elements of an integrated strategic communications plan. This plan was designed to provide University Hospital with time to develop a solution to its future, absent an affiliation with the Health Alliance.

### RESULT:

Due to intense public interest and scrutiny of the proposed sale of Jewish Hospital, the Ohio Attorney General appointed a mediator, the Cincinnati City Solicitor sought to intervene, and the Board of Hamilton County Commissioners scheduled public hearings. As of this date (January 2010), the sale has been postponed and University Hospital is using this time to secure a more stable future than it initially thought possible.

