

Dartmouth's "My Brother's Keeper" receives Southcoast Health holiday drive donation

While a box truck and delivery team may not make quite the same kind of entrance as a sleigh and reindeer, My Brother's Keeper still warmly welcomed the arrival of Southcoast Health's gifts for area families this past week.

A holiday collection of donations, which had been placed in bins at Southcoast's Charlton Memorial, St. Luke's and Tobey hospitals, along with its Fairhaven campus, was transported to the My Brother's Keeper facility in Dartmouth. From skateboards to cookware, comforter sets to clothing, and video games to craft sets, hundreds of new gifts were contributed by Southcoast Health employees, providers and staff, which benefited more than 50 families.

In addition, Southcoast personnel working remotely due to the pandemic were able to sponsor other local residents through My Brother's Keeper's "Adopt a Family" program.

My Brother's Keeper delivers furniture, food and other items to families in need. Founded in 1988 by a husband and wife working from the basement of their home, today, My Brother's Keeper is flourishing with 4,000 volunteers and 14 employees at two modern facilities located in Dartmouth and Easton to make upward of 10,000 deliveries each year.

Josh Smith, Director of the My Brother's Keeper Dartmouth facility, was grateful for the support and participation of Southcoast Health.

"The holidays are always a struggle for the families we serve, and that is especially true this year due to the challenges presented by COVID-19," Smith said. "Without question, My

Brother's Keeper will serve more families this year thanks to the generous support of our partners like Southcoast Health."

In recent years, Southcoast Cares programming has led collection drives in support of families throughout Southeastern Massachusetts and Rhode Island. In 2020, more than ever, Southcoast Health has collaborated with hundreds of the region's not-for-profits to support the community through contributions and volunteerism – a community that itself has stepped up to support Southcoast's front lines during their response to the pandemic, said Rachel Davis, Director of Community Benefits.

"Our Southcoast Cares program enables us to deliver on our mission of providing health services that extend beyond direct patient care, addressing emerging needs in the community," Davis said. "The number of gifts collected is just one example of how wonderful our outcomes can be as part of a collective effort. The Southcoast family, following the leadership of President and CEO Keith Hovan, has enthusiastically come together with My Brother's Keeper to offer aid to our friends and neighbors."

These programs focus on reducing high rates of chronic disease and increasing access to care, safe and affordable housing, transportation, healthy and affordable food and education and employment opportunities, Davis said, including through Southcoast's grants program.

This year, Southcoast employees also voted overwhelmingly to use funds previously set aside for holiday festivities impacted by the pandemic for donations to the United Way of Greater New Bedford's Hunger Commission and Salvation Armies in Aquidneck Island, Fall River and New Bedford.

Other meaningful financial support from Southcoast was given to NorthStar Learning Center, the Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater New Bedford and Fall River, Health First, SSTAR and

the Greater New Bedford Community Health Center, Davis said.

For more information on the Southcoast Cares program, please visit <https://www.southcoast.org/southcoastcares/>.

For more information on My Brother's Keeper, please visit <https://mybrotherskeeper.org/>.



My Brother's Keeper photo.