



Private fundraising for research: success stories. Hospital Sant Joan de Déu

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Barcelona's Sant Joan de Déu Hospital for Women and Children is nearly 150 years old; it belongs to the Hospitaller Order of Saint John of God, which has 300 healthcare centers around the world. The hospital is a privately owned non-profit institution that has been affiliated with the Catalan Health Service since the 1970s.

Sant Joan de Déu has always had close ties with the city of Barcelona through the involvement and commitment of civil society. The institution's mission to humanize healthcare depends on the contributions, great and small, of individuals, social entities, and businesses, and these contributions have enabled the high levels of specialization and technology that have made this center an international reference in pediatrics, obstetrics, and gynecology.

Our overall mission to improve and humanize healthcare also implies the goal of reconciling the purely humane aspects of care with the development of new scientific advances. We want to promote initiatives that make it possible to reduce the negative impact of hospitalization on children and their families. We want to promote research to improve the treatment of diseases and find new treatments for patients with diseases that cannot be presently cured.

Our pediatric patients, their families, patients' associations, institutions, companies, foundations, and volunteers take the initiative in obtaining the resources necessary for each project. We are privileged to be able depend on a network of collaborators who show their solidarity in everything that they do.

Experience has shown us that defeating severe diseases is a long-distance race in which

research is the path toward the finish line. In pediatric diseases, this path is full of obstacles. One of the main obstacles to progress is the lack of funds for research into rare pediatric diseases.

In 2015, a total of 190 research projects were carried out at the hospital by 180 investigators, with the aim of improving patients' quality of life; these projects also generate knowledge that benefits society overall. These projects were funded through competitive grants from Spanish and European institutions (40%) and through private contributions (60%). In 2015, funds dedicated to research totaled €7.3 million derived from donations received over different years (Fig. 1).

Private donations for research have increased every year; in 2015 we received a total of €3,308,000, €1,785,000 (53%) of which was earmarked for research into cancer in children (Fig. 2). These private donations came from various sources, although most came from patients' families, who are our most active donors. By way of contrast, contributions from companies accounted for only 10% of our resources. It is important to point out that most funds are donated for specific research lines with concrete goals. This makes sense, given that the donors are family and friends of patients or associations that provide support for specific diseases.

Our experience in recent years has enabled us to grow and to develop a fundraising team. This team has led several projects, and we are happy to share our experience so that others can learn from our success.

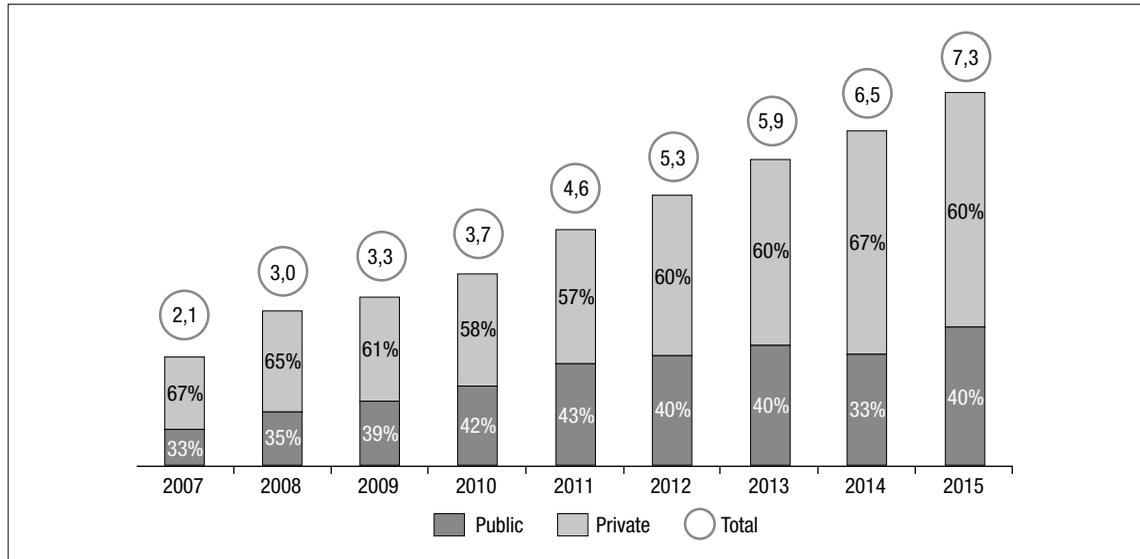


Figure 1. Total income 2015 (millions of euros)

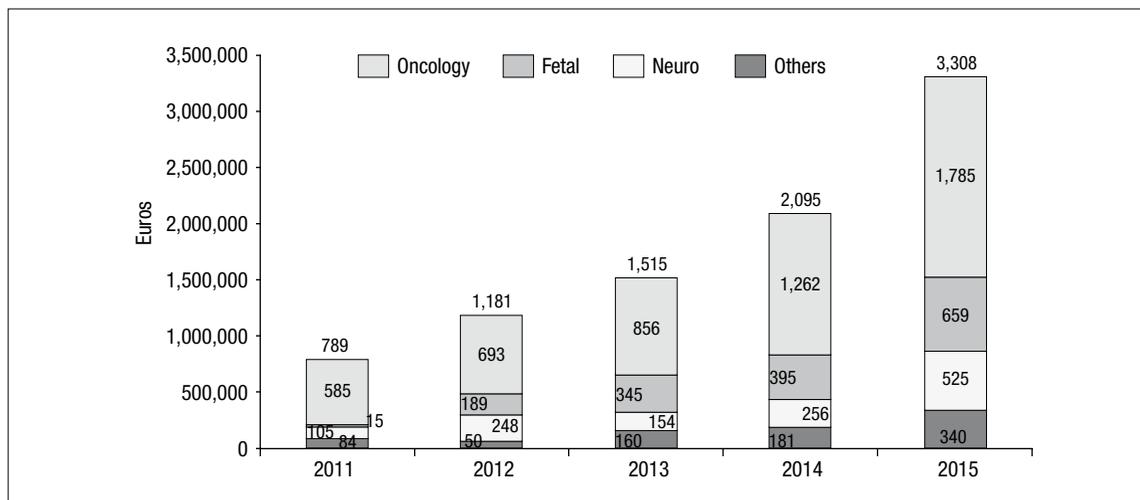


Figure 2. Total private funds obtained (thousands of euros).

The hospital's Pediatric Oncology Laboratory is an accomplishment of civil society

Created in 2003, the hospital's Pediatric Oncology Laboratory, under the leadership of Dr. Jaume Mora, researches cancers that affect children and adolescents. Three-quarters of its budget comes from initiatives by the family entities that are interwoven into Sant Joan de Déu's research activities.

Over 10 years' experience in this project have taught us that the most important aspects of fund-

raising are increasing awareness of the disease and building hope for improved treatment.

To this end:

- We have consolidated a trend toward continuous income growth, with €1,785,000 in non-competitive private funding received in 2015.
- We have benefited from the growing involvement of patients' families and friends —every event, action, and proposal expands our network of collaborators.
- We rely on a self-sufficient management team that includes volunteers who participate in



fundraising proposals and activities. A wide variety of events have become established in our annual calendar. Especially noteworthy are the institutional oncology supper, sales of fair-trade products, and many sporting events, ranging from basketball or hockey tournaments to running the Barcelona Marathon for the Hospital Sant Joan de Déu. Society's involvement goes well beyond patients' families to include elements such as schools, parent associations, foundations, civic centers, town councils, cultural associations, and companies.

- This great movement to support research into pediatric cancer is a reference for the third sector.

Reviewing our experience, we conclude that the keys to our success are:

- The individuals that support us form part of and actively participate in the projects.
- The close working relationship among volunteers, donors, and the hospital's fundraising team leads to great ideas —taking into account a wide variety of points of view helps us to get it right.
- The multidisciplinary team guarantees effectiveness and reinforces the commitment and motivation of everyone involved.
- Everyone involved in the project —donors, volunteers, physicians, researchers, and fundraisers— benefit in a win-win situation, resulting in tangible gains, with transparency adding value to solidarity.

Firefighters light the fuse for solidarity

The calendar *Bombers amb causa* ('Firefighters with a Cause') finances a grant dedicated to funding three-year projects. In five years, thousands of people have bought this photo calendar for €10, and this means:

- €260,000 has been collected in five years.
- The calendar is present in 7000 homes in Catalonia.

- Sales have increased every year, and the project continues to grow and to incorporate new initiatives.
- It has had a good impact in the mass media and brought recognition to our institution.
- This initiative came from a group of firefighters who wanted to volunteer to help a good cause promoting research.
- The project currently enjoys the support of the firefighters of the Government of Catalonia, of Andorra, and of the city of Barcelona.
- Patients, their families, volunteers, researchers, active photographers and photojournalists, illustrators, and various shops and stores collaborate in the project.

Keys to success

- We promote solidarity as a collective good that adds value to the entire process of making and distributing the calendar: a product resulting from a multidisciplinary team.
- All participants share the stardom.
- We focus on transparency and creating win-win situations: everyone who participates in the project discovers positive aspects and identifies with the action.
- We maintain coherency with the final aim, ensuring maximum efficiency in management and production.

Crowdfunding, an endless sea of actions that can be used for fundraising

Our platform *Implica-t.org* ('Get-involved.org') and other online initiatives are also examples of successful cases that provide us with a measure of power with respect to the position of the institution and add value to our brand, a reference for both healthcare and charity.

These initiatives are focused toward fundraising for research projects in various fields such as oncology, neurology, rare diseases, and diabetes. Promoters tend to be patients' families, who

are keenly aware of the diseases that their sons or daughters, nieces or nephews, or grandchildren suffer from and are highly motivated to fight against them.

Our success lies in the emotions that are implicit in the message —these are real stories, life experiences that result in a nearly immediate emotional response. Empathy is the key, because everybody knows that something similar could happen to anyone, and everyone would want to be able to count on help from others in that situation.

Our fundraising team focuses on advising families, enriching proposals, setting reasonable and feasible financial goals, and building our hospital's brand.

Keys to success

- The emotion in the message is what moves society to show solidarity.
- This social impulse leads to a community that is involved and spreads its solidarity.
- We grow our circle of collaborators, and these people make others aware of our cause and bring others on board.
- The success of an action depends in large part on getting the promoters involved and ensuring they are proactive.

- Crowdfunding initiatives for the hospital add up, involving more and more people and multiplying the intake: some projects have brought in more than €30,000.

These examples of fundraising initiatives for research projects at the Sant Joan de Déu Hospital for Women and Children are only a small sample of the more than one hundred diverse activities that we carry out every year in Catalonia and in the rest of Spain.

The people who deserve the credit for these results, successes, and donations that are transformed into opportunities are first and foremost our patients, their families, and friends, followed by the team of professionals who care for them and anyone else that believes in our work and shares our vision of humane care.

It is truly gratifying to find donors committed to the Hospital Sant Joan de Déu's work, because every message, photo, idea, and campaign comes from the sincerest motivation and because it is exciting to grow our resources when we know that they will lead to better care and scientific discoveries that can lead to better treatments. And maybe someday we will find the keys to treating these diseases for which no cure is yet available.