

Sustainability in the Rush University MS-HSM Program

1. Program Overview / How it Meets the Mission of CAHME. The Rush University Master's Program in Health Systems Management (MS-HSM) is a CAHME-accredited, two-year program that integrates practice-based learning throughout its curriculum. Operating under a practitioner-teacher model within the Rush System for Health, the MS-HSM program also aligns very closely with CAHME's mission to serve the public interest by advancing the quality of healthcare management education. The program's vision, to be "recognized as the premier graduate health care management program for developing leaders to transform health care," reflects our focus on facilitating wider adoption of the practitioner-teacher and practice-based learning approaches used at Rush, because we believe they can benefit our health systems and the future generations who will lead them. We therefore place great emphasis on disseminating all of our educational activities through regular presentations, publications, and disseminations of other sorts, including this application.

2. How our program manifests sustainability. Sustainability, as defined in the application, is "a combination of cultural competency, community involvement, environmental focus and accessibility." We believe that all of these defined areas are at the core of the values that the Rush MS-HSM program instills in its students. The Rush program has made particularly strong movement forward in each of these areas over the past few years, as demonstrated through the integration of required and elective courses, alumni involvement, and experiential opportunities such as internships, fellowships or residencies. The Rush MS-HSM program is using sustainability concepts to meet the greater Rush mission of improving the health of the individuals and diverse communities it serves through the integration of outstanding patient care, education, research, and community partnerships.

I. Cultural Competency – Rush is committed to sustainability through its continued focus and enhancement of cultural competency for both employees and students alike – especially through coursework and experiential learning. All HSM students get their initial introduction to cultural competency principles through the orientation process. This introduction is reinforced through sessions in the Human Resource Management course all students take during their first semester. Student interest in the topic led to the creation of a "Managing Diversity" elective, which is now being offered as an interprofessional elective university wide. The course is taught by JoyceAnne Wainio of the National Center for Healthcare Leadership, in collaboration with the Director of Student Diversity

and Multicultural Affairs, Dr. Kate Webster. This course has also helped fuel a larger Rush initiative to train all employees, including students, in the concept of implicit bias, as well as a certificate in diversity and inclusion.

In addition to the aforementioned coursework, HSM students are also very active in our cultural competency / patient centered care efforts through their internships and volunteer efforts – and the HSM department continues to be on the forefront to get the students experiences in critical areas that help develop future healthcare leaders. One of Rush’s alumni for example, worked with the Medicaid focused, Medical Home Network Accountable Care Organization while she was at Rush. This patient centered approach to care of the most vulnerable led to here continuing to work there – and years later she still does.

Lastly, due to student experience in the Health Equity electives offered by HSM and now Medicine (further described in Section B.), students have engaged in Rush’s Social Determinant of Health screening efforts to ask patients and community members about basic social needs such as housing and food. Due to the medical students and HSM students in the Office of Community Engagement (Koo and Abby Draper)they created the new Rush Community Service Initiative Program (RCSIP), Students Can Realized and Enhance Equity Now (SCREEN). This new program trains students briefly in cultural competency and motivational interviewing and to ask hard questions and connect patients/community members to resources.

II. Community Involvement - Opportunities for community involvement are pervasive throughout Rush’s programs. For example, the entire MS-HSM community has the opportunity to better connect to the community in which we serve through multiple experiences – classes, internships, experiential opportunities, and alumni involvement. Similarly to the “Managing Diversity” course, the MS-HSM program was the first at Rush, and one of the first healthcare programs in the nation, to develop a “Health Equity” elective course for its MS-HSM students. The course, a project-based elective co-taught by Rush’s Manager of Community Anchor Mission (Shweta Ubhayakar) and Rush’s System Manager of Community Health and Benefit (Christopher Nolan) provides opportunities to expose MS-HSM students to Rush’s community health efforts, and directly engage them as community problem-solvers with partners in the community. Recent examples of this work have included expansion of a healthy foods program to patients and employees.

As detailed in Mary Kate Wainwright’s letter, this robust involvement can take student work into the “day jobs” of our employees. Mary Kate’s stretch project and participation in the Health Equity elective helped her

engage Rush's student volunteer clinic at Franciscan Outreach, the second largest emergency shelter in the city of Chicago. Mary Kate worked to develop a pipeline to connect the guests of Franciscan Outreach with Rush's Transitional Care Program (TCP) to ensure connection to Primary Care services be it at Rush or our community partner, CommunityHealth. Mary Kate created a sustainable program that still exists today and helps create sustainable healthcare solutions for the most vulnerable of populations – those experiencing homelessness. Rush's ability to engage students in the community – be it in the classroom, through experiential learning, or alumni – such as engaging them in Rush's Days of Service – the HSM program considers this a true value of our approach to educating young leaders. Lastly, all students are required to complete a minimum of 16 community service hours during the program.

III. Environmental Focus and Accessibility – The Health Systems Management Department is at the core of Rush's commitment to the environment and accessibility through its Anchor Mission Strategy – in the classroom, in experiential learning, and alumni involvement. Due to Rush's mission to improve the health of the community it serves, it recently adopted an Anchor Mission. "Anchor mission" means that Rush regards all expenditures (e.g. payroll, supplies, building, investing, volunteering) as potential opportunities for supporting community vitality, and decisions should be influenced by our goals of optimizing community outcomes in addition to organizational performance. Rush has received national attention from the Democracy Collaborative Anchor Mission Network, among others for this work.

As a practice-embedded university, all of the above activities regularly find their way into the educational and experiential experience of our MS-HSM students, and thus alumni, as illustrated by the examples below. For example, in the classroom, students recently had the opportunity to take the Healthcare Facilities Management elective, which included the Rush tower's sustainability features as a case study. In addition, Tony Madison, a current HSM student (letter of support), has been interning with the Anchor team. Most recently, the Rush Anchor Mission team led a bus tour through Chicago's West Side for an international audience from the Academy of Management conference. Alumni and students have also presented our strategy and sustainability efforts to students from the University of Iowa and North Park University and to large audiences at the CleanMed sustainability conference and the World Hospital Congress of the International Hospital Federation.

Through the establishment of the [Mayur A. Patel Fund](#), students also have an opportunity to focus on sustainability projects with financial support. An alumnus from the MS-HSM class of 1988, Mayur was a beloved practitioner-teacher whose passion for the environment and the underserved inspired many of our students in the years before his passing. The Fund supports a variety of student-led research fieldwork activities with a focus on community and environment - and HSM alumnus Lonnie Yates, provided a letter detailing such a project.

3. University commitment to sustainability initiatives As an integrated component of the health system, the university aligns directly with the broader organizational mission, and is directly involved in Rush's larger commitment to sustainability. For example, aside from Anchor, Rush also supports initiatives at the national level through memberships in [Practice Greenhealth](#) and the [Healthcare Anchor Network](#). Rush's commitment to sustainability dates back most notably to Rush's patient care tower. The project was dubbed "Green Rush" when it first broke ground in 2008, in recognition of the goal of becoming [the largest LEED Gold certified health care facility in the world](#). In subsequent years, the tower's innovative and environmentally-friendly features received [numerous national and international recognitions](#), including recognition as one of the [50 greenest hospitals in America](#) by Becker's. The initiative paralleled the establishment of the [Rush Green Team](#), an organization-wide collaborative focused on pursuing a portfolio of complementary sustainability initiatives. Lastly, just last month Rush was honored by the Respiratory Health Association (RHA), for its work alongside RHA and the Environmental Law and Policy Center to become the first academic health system in the state to adopt a Clean Air Policy – regulating all new construction to be as clean as possible as well as eliminate unnecessary idling on campus for motor vehicles.

4. Conclusion Rush's HSM Department is often a common denominator for Rush's mission to improve the health of the individuals and diverse communities it serves and efforts around the area of sustainability – in particular cultural competency, community involvement, and sustainability and access through its educational course offerings, experiential learning, and alumni efforts/career trajectory. Rush's senior most leader responsible for all areas related to the broad definition of sustainability states, "I believe what sets Rush apart is its mission-level commitment, not only to the organization's footprint but also to the vitality of the communities our health system serves".