

Southcoast hospitals hold service of ‘remembrance, support and renewal of strength

Southcoast Health hosted concurrent events on Thursday at the not-for-profit system's three hospitals – Charlton Memorial, St. Luke's and Tobey – to honor those who have lost their lives to COVID-19 and to celebrate those who have survived it.

The service for “remembrance, support and renewal of strength” also recognized and affirmed the dedication and sacrifice of nurses, physicians and providers, clinical staff, support services and all employees who have worked on the front lines and behind the scenes during Southcoast's response to the pandemic, officials said.



The events took place outdoors and prioritized physical distancing. They began with a moment of silence and featured brief readings by chaplains and bereavement staff from the

Southcoast Visiting Nurse Association's Supportive Care Team.

The moment of silence was streamed across each hospital's sound system for those inside the hospital to observe as a time of reflection and unity, said Chief Nursing Officer Jacqueline Somerville, RN, Ph.D. Volunteers distributed sea glass from beaches in the region as a symbol of renewal and healing, followed by music and meditation.

"This was an opportunity for us to come together as a community, acknowledging the suffering and loss, as well as the courage and resilience we have witnessed," Somerville said. "This country and our world are in deep pain right now, and today was about finding a path forward to a healthy future for every human being."

Upward of 200 employees and staff attended the events, Somerville said. Afterward, at noon, 8 minutes and 46 seconds of silence were observed throughout the system as part of a joint demonstration with members of the Massachusetts Hospital Association, the Massachusetts Senior Care Association and the local Service Employees International Union to represent Black, Indigenous and People of Color whose lives have been taken by systemic racism and targeted violence.

At Southcoast, all employees were invited by the organization's Diversity and Inclusion Council, commemorating its first anniversary. Learn more about the Diversity and Inclusion Council at <https://www.southcoast.org/diversity-and-inclusion-at-southcoast-health/>.

