

'Quantity of Care'

Digital Strategy for Award-Winning Seattle Times Investigation



THE PROJECT

"Quantity of Care" was a Seattle Times investigation into surgical malpractice at a Seattle hospital. The project ran for 18 months and required sustained digital strategy from pre-launch audience building through more than a year of follow-up coverage. The investigation won the Selden Ring Award and was a Pulitzer Prize finalist. It drove institutional change, including resignations and reforms at Swedish Cherry Hill Neuroscience Institute in Seattle.

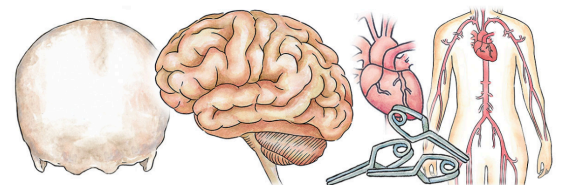
MY ROLE

As Digital Producer for the local news and investigations departments, I worked directly with the investigative team to conceptualize and execute the full digital strategy. This was not a passive support role. I was a creative and editorial partner throughout, making real decisions about how to present, promote, and sustain engagement with an extraordinarily sensitive story over a long period of time.

KEY WORK

Newsletter strategy: One of the most distinctive elements of the project was a pop-up newsletter we created specifically for the investigation. The lead reporter and I jointly conceptualized it as a way to build audience investment before the first story published. The teaser campaign told our spotlight patient's story in real time, timed to coincide with the third anniversary of her operation and subsequent death.

Building a dedicated audience before publication was unusual for the Times at the time, and it required careful thinking about how to introduce readers to a tragic story without sensationalizing it. We built more than 2,000 subscribers before launch and grew to more than 5,000 at the newsletter's peak.



You're reading the first parts of a Seattle Times investigation exploring the business of medicine and the stories of patients who seek care from some of our region's most celebrated doctors.

To get exclusive updates and insights about our ongoing "Quantity of Care" investigation, we welcome you to join our investigative team's newsletter. You'll get periodic updates on this series, special access to Q&As and inside information on upcoming stories.

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Digital production: I produced the digital presentation for more than 20 stories over the course of the coverage. This included web layout work, photo placement, search optimization, hyperlinking, and creating related content links. I also wireframed a major interactive piece for the developer to execute, and provided design recommendations for other articles. Every story required decisions about how to present difficult material clearly and respectfully, while also engaging audiences and driving subscriptions for the newspaper.

Promotional strategy: I created and executed promotional content across every available channel: website production and curation, social media posts, newsletter content both in the pop-up and in existing newsletters, email alerts, mobile push notifications, and search optimization. Each channel required a different approach, and every decision had to account for the sensitivity of the subject matter.

This meant ongoing, nuanced conversations with the reporters and editors about which angles to emphasize, which details to surface, and how to invite readers into the story without exploiting the tragedy at its center. Getting that balance right required responsible editorial judgment along with digital marketing instinct.

THE RESULTS

The investigation won the Selden Ring Award and was a Pulitzer Prize finalist. The sustained digital strategy kept audiences engaged through more than a year of follow-up coverage. The reporting ultimately drove institutional change at Swedish Cherry Hill Neuroscience Institute, including resignations and structural reforms.

SELECT LINKS

Initial story package:

- [A lost voice: Surgery was supposed to mean a better life for Talia. But something went wrong.](#)
- [The O.R. factory: High volume, big dollars, rising tension at Swedish's Cherry Hill hospital](#)
- [Pop-up 'Quantity of Care' newsletter sign-up](#)

Additional coverage:

- [Swedish double-booked its surgeries, and the patients didn't know](#)
- [Swedish Health's ambitious Seattle plans involved a developer with a stake in their success](#)
- [Investigators find 'numerous' issues related to patient safety at Swedish's Cherry Hill site](#)
- [Swedish Health largely bans overlapping surgeries](#)
- [Swedish CEO Tony Armada resigns in wake of Seattle Times investigation](#)
- [Top neurosurgeon Johnny Delashaw resigns from Swedish](#)