

June 24, 2010

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

Last week, our NCH Wellness Centers repeated as first place “Champion Award” recipients for best fitness centers according to *Naples Daily News* and “Best of the Gulfshore” by the *Gulfshore Life* survey.

The importance of “*staying in shape*” extends beyond our superior Wellness Centers. It’s imperative for each of us as individuals and for all of us as an organization. We learned that again last week when NCH received a visit from two Joint Commission surveyors for four days of Periodic Performance Review (PPR).

The bottom line on the PPR: According to **Rodney Judd**, our most competent survey liaison, “*Joint Commission surveyors were very complimentary of our staff’s engagement and participation. Our staff’s friendliness, competence, pride in providing quality patient care, and customer service skills were evident throughout this past week. For example, Case Manager Valerie Bress—who had no idea who the surveyors were—voluntarily walked them under an umbrella to their car in the middle of an afternoon rainstorm.*” That’s just one example of how excellent customer service has become embedded within our organization.

Some of the NCH “best practices” areas/departments singled out by the surveyors were:

- Medical Staff Services. The E-Priv system, in which staff can easily look up and identify a practitioner’s privileges. Congratulations to **Susan Sherwood** and her team.
- Operating Rooms. **Bill Diamond**’s team was recognized for the process of tissue storage and sending tissues to the lab, and commended for the quality and adherence to standards in the operating rooms. Great work OR team.
- NCH Downtown ED. Surveyors concluded that “*your staff has got it*” in assessing the understanding and correct use of behavioral vs. medical restraints. Congratulations to **Todd Haner, Maureen Powers** and their staff.
- Radiology. Interventional Radiology was cited as a “*very tight ship,*” run by an outstanding captain, **Karen Lyster**. Surveyors were also impressed with the practice of radiologists and nursing staff providing collaborative consultative visits with patients. Congratulations to **Jim Bates** and his team.
- Environmental Services. **Judy Walker** and **Jisele Bayard Valcin** from 5N and Labor and Delivery flawlessly answered questions about safety and daily processes to maintain a safe environment.
- Physical Therapy. **Sean Wells**, PT—recognized by the surveyors for being very knowledgeable and enthusiastic about fall prevention protocols. The surveyors were so impressed by his knowledge of research/evidence based practices related to fall prevention. He provided them with a copy of a research article in this regard.
- 4E Med/Surg. While touring the surveyor Nurse Manager **Erica Szczepkowski** stopped and responded to a patient who was moaning in discomfort. The surveyor was very impressed with the compassion and skills Erica demonstrated.
- Volunteer services. **Elizabeth Wardein**, ED Volunteer—the surveyor was very impressed with Elizabeth’s knowledge. The surveyor stated: “she had all of the right answers; it was obvious how well she was trained.”

Joint Commission surveyors also scored 13 standards as being partially or non-compliant. On these areas, we will develop and submit improvement plans to the Joint Commission as part of healthcare system’s endeavor of being continuously compliant with all of the standards. But all in all, this survey, just like our top rating for the Wellness Centers, was most promising as we continue our journey.

As **Beth Jameson**, Director of Wellness, noted, “*I just sent an email to our entire staff thanking them profusely for all their hard work. In a time when our competition is heavily knocking on our doors, it is nice to know that we continue to win awards. We must be doing something right!*” I couldn’t agree more. Thanks again to all.

Respectfully,



Allen S. Weiss, M.D., President and CEO

P.S. Feel free to share *Straight Talk* and ask anyone to email me at allen.weiss@nchmd.org to be added.