

July 1, 2010

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

There has been a great deal of discussion about the idea of investing over a quarter billion dollars of taxpayer money in a local operation of Jackson Labs, a leading genetics research laboratory.

I've been asked what NCH's position is relative to Jackson Labs. Here is the essence of what I told the *Naples Daily News*:

- *The real question is: What is the Value, measured by benefit (jobs, economic benefit, community benefit, individual benefit, etc.) divided by the Cost (\$360 million—\$130 million from the state, \$130 million from Collier County and \$100 million from philanthropy)? Stated another way: Is Jackson Labs the best use of \$360 million in eastern Collier County, or are there better ways to add value for the county?*

In any healthcare initiative, we must think first of what will bring about the greatest good for the greatest number—present and future patients, county government, local business, land owners, business organizations (e.g., Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development Council), potential new/different businesses and tax payers.

Such thinking has helped guide NCH in its evolution as a large, high-quality, community hospital. One major evolving initiative is evaluating whether to bring graduate medical education (interns and residents) to our system.

In this context, last week I visited the University of South Florida (USF) along with CMO Dr. **Aurora Estevez**, Chief of Staff **Kevin Cooper**, and Harvard summer intern **Brandon Perkovich**. Also visiting USF the same day to discuss among other things the Jackson Lab initiative were **Dolph von Arx**, esteemed former Chairman of the Board of NCH, and **Dick Bothof**, a loyal friend of NCH.

Our group met with USF Dean Dr. **Stephen Klasko**, Director of the Graduate Medical Educational (GME) Program Dr. **Chuck Paida**, COO of their physician practice group Dr. **Robert Belsole**, Chief Administrative Liason **John Ekarius**, and Associate Director **Sue Ann Middleton**. They shared their success directing 87 programs and training 701 physicians in nearby and distant hospital systems.

The advantages of embracing GME include cost effective coverage/access for patients, improved quality outcomes and operational improvements, access to graduates who have a tendency to remain in the area for their careers, and financial diversification for both the hospital system and community. We will keep you posted on developments in this area.

We live in times of unprecedented healthcare change and challenge. How we as a community and a hospital system plan, manage and lead with our limited resources will determine our future success. Jackson Labs and graduate medical education are just two opportunities we are studying to ensure our future responsible growth and development.

Finally this week, allow me to recognize with great pride, our *White Elephant* volunteers who received their first-ever nomination for the “Best Thrift Store,” from *Gulf Shore Life*. The team earned second place recognition this year. And at last week's volunteer appreciation dinner, Supervisor **Cameron Johnson** vowed that next year, they are aiming for first.

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.