

January 27, 2011

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Yesterday was Board day at NCH. And since most of us don't get the opportunity to observe our 25 dedicated community board members in action, allow me to give you a short report on what we talked about.

First and foremost, we brought everyone up to speed on our quality initiative, sharing an overview of nine NCH presentations to the Institute of Healthcare Improvement, ranging from door-to-doctor time improvement in the ER to getting enough rest for post-op cardiac patients. Summaries of all nine posters can be found in the December 16 *Straight Talk* (<http://www.nchmd.org/default.aspx?id=835>). As to other items on the Board agenda:

- The Graduate Medical Education (GME) Committee reported on the effort of the combined Medical Staff, Board and Leadership team to have Internal Medicine residents accomplish the goal of “stethoscopes on the chest” by July 1, 2014. In the meantime, we're focused on finding the right academic partner(s), bringing on an experienced program director, and satisfying all the educational requirements of the accreditation boards. Board Chair **Joe Perkovich** restated our three-pronged goal with GME: (1) continue to improve quality; (2) grow the primary care capacity of our community by having residents trained here; and (3) maximize our intrinsic advantage with all of the Medicare and Medicaid patients we care for already.
- Our information technology partner, Cerner Corporation (www.cerner.com), reported on the 24 objectives for meaningful use. These objectives speak to improving quality, safety, efficiency, care coordination, population health, public health, protecting privacy, reducing health disparities, and engaging patients and their families in promoting better health care. We now rank 8th among 554 hospitals surveyed. The reward for our success could be a Federal award to NCH of some \$11 million. Most importantly, we continue to strengthen our IT backbone to help enhance quality and reduce cost.
- The Board also heard an update on our NCH Healthcare Group, which continues to grow and mature. We recently added three new physicians and continue to integrate back-room processes. Cardiologist Dr. **Ron Levine** recounted how 14 cardiologists are evolving into a team with the common goal of providing world-class quality. We understand that as the system evolves, there will continue to be many different ways to deliver healthcare to southwest Florida. We know that our almost 20-year-old physician hospital organization, Community Health Partners, will be intimately involved as we explore the development of accountable care organizations.
- The Board then heard about the plans to add rehabilitation to our beautiful and unique Brookdale Center for Healthy Aging. Specifically, we will assimilate the downtown 5S Rehabilitation Unit into Brookdale. Once complete, we will have 54 beds, a rehab gym, full dining facilities and everything else a patient might require, complemented by two beautiful gardens, extra-wide corridors, and a peaceful external pond.
- Finally, we reviewed our financial results for the first quarter of the new fiscal year. Thankfully, our results continue to be good, reflecting primarily the quality of the experience we deliver to our patients. And while we must maintain “prudence” in managing NCH, our steady progress in all areas is a testimony to this talented and dedicated healthcare team.

Respectfully,



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

P.S. Feel free to share *Straight Talk* by emailing me at allen.weiss@nchmd.org to be added; and join us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/nchflorida.