

Straight Talk

A weekly update from management on the issues that matter most



April 7, 2011

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

It may be among the most common of commonsense things to do, but washing our hands is essential if we are to be superior health care providers. And “*Because We Care*” (our new campaign slogan), we are recommitted to making hand hygiene a number one priority at NCH.

According to the respected Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, hand hygiene is the most important strategy to prevent the transmission of germs in any environment, and particularly in hospitals.

Thus, we chose hand hygiene as our focus going forward to align ourselves with the Joint Commission’s National Patient Safety program. The 2011 Proactive Risk Assessment will engage us in hand hygiene compliance initiatives because this simple technique lies at the heart of decreasing hospital-acquired infections. The Director of Infection Prevention RN **Kathleen Kohut** recognizes avoiding an infection is always preferable for our patients. The Infection Prevention Department utilizes strict measurable outcomes to monitor all infection prevention efforts including washing our hands.

Recently, I watched RN **Cheryl Bullaro** on the 5South Rehab Unit washing her hands for what seemed to me to be a long time. Cheryl reminded me that proper technique takes about 30 seconds with both soap and water. To make sure she takes enough time, Cheryl said she sings the “ABCs” (alphabet) song to herself as she washes. The alcohol-based hand sanitizer is a time saver and can be found next to almost every doorpost in the clinical areas which will soon be replaced by a new foam product.

Experienced 5 South charge nurse **Mindy Henderson** said she advises new nurses taking the nursing certification exam that if one of the question choices is to first wash your hands, that is most likely the correct answer.

This week is our hand hygiene week, where we launched our new “*Got Foam?*” campaign logo, offered daily prize drawings, and nominated three colleagues as *NCH Hand Hygiene Heroes*—Mother & Baby RN **May Robinson**, North Naples ER physician Dr. **Carolyn Walters** and Cardio Vascular Radiologic Technologist **Linda Cavin**. Having fun is all part of serving our patients well.

One nurse who is definitely “having fun” is 5 South LPN **Jennifer Miller**, who has been making a fashion statement which has proved a big hit with patients and colleagues. I ran into Jennifer coming into the hospital, and she showed me her brightly colored scrub pants.

As proof, here’s what Microsystem Musculoskeletal Director **Sue Graziano** wrote me: “*Her (Jennifer’s) scrub wear kind of goes with our Compassion in Action program launched this month on CRC. Preliminary outcomes in terms of pain management, improving sleep quality and reducing edema in the surgical extremities have been extremely positive. Our program consists of providing complementary therapies to our patients such as massage, aromatherapy and spa-like music therapy. Our staff members received formal training and once credentialed are able to provide these therapies to our patients. Our Clinical tech staff love it and Jamie LaChance CT has been our lead Relaxation Therapist. Patients and their family love this program as well.*”

Brightly colored scrubs? Aromatherapy? Spa-like music? Diligent hand washing by all as we care for patients? Welcome to 21st century healthcare delivered by our talented and dedicated NCH colleagues.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Allen".

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.