

August 4, 2011

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

With 36,041 inpatients and 106,082 outpatients to serve each year, we sometimes lose sight of the many innovative and compassionate activities occurring daily in the halls of NCH. For example:

- An incidental finding of parasitic ring forms in a routine blood smear caused NCH Medical Laboratory Technologist **Janet Keddell** to raise suspicion for blood parasites.

Janet presented the smear to Microbiology Laboratory Manager **Robin Williams**, who identified it as the blood parasite *Babesia*, which can infect humans from a tick bite. *Babesiosis* is also known as “Nantucket disease.” How can a rare New England parasite be discovered by a Florida clinical laboratory? The answer is that our NCH laboratorians have years of experience in recognizing unusual or atypical parasites and pathogens that are present in our diverse community of immigrants, vacationers and well-traveled folks. It is cases like this where our extraordinary laboratorians work together to bring travel and clinical history to physicians and nurses with diagnostic findings to confirm a disease process.

- Another unsung-yet-critical area is interventional radiology. Interventional radiologist Dr. **Paul Dorio** writes, “*We see the sickest patients on up to the relatively healthy outpatients here in the interventional radiology suite. We are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year and provide rapid, compassionate and highly-skilled care.*”

One example of this unit’s essential role in the care process is the call Paul received from a Ft. Myers gastroenterologist, asking if he could send five patients to NCH for TIPS work (Transjugular Intrahepatic Portosystemic Shunt)—a high-end, technically-challenging, life-saving procedure typically performed to stop variceal bleeding risk or diminish refractory ascites in cirrhotic patients. Apparently, the interventionalists in Ft. Myers have stopped doing this procedure.

But NCH could be counted on to complete the TIPS procedure, just one of the many sophisticated medical procedures that our interventional radiologists perform routinely. We’re proud of our interventionalists and the entire subspecialized radiology group, especially in a day where more specialists are moving exclusively to the outpatient setting.

- RN **Kristin Miller**, nurse manager and project coordinator for our Chest Pain Center, explained NCH’s plans to become accredited through the Society of Chest Pain Centers, an international non-profit health care organization that assist facilities to adapt best practices and implement new ideas to ensure the highest quality of care for patients suffering Acute Coronary Syndrome (heart disease due to hardening of the arteries). Our success over the last 12 month—in consistently performing at 100% for all Acute Myocardial Infarction (heart attack) Core Measures and door-to-balloon in less than 90 minutes—underscores our quality.
- Finally, **Laura Rosen**, community relations manager for our Community Blood Center, received the following from a grateful blood recipient: “*I went to OPIS, weak and in a wheelchair. I walked out on my own. Thank you is really too small for the precious gift I received - two units of someone’s blood. I hope to be cancer-free for a year, so that I can give back myself.*”

We all should be willing to donate blood. And we all should be thankful and proud for what goes on here each day, which may not receive fanfare but often saves lives and serves so well the community we love.

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.