

# Straight Talk

A weekly update from management on the issues that matter most



August 2, 2012

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Chief Human Resources Officer **John McGirl** and I were treated to a tour of one of the highlights of our recent Joint Commission review—our downtown kitchen. And boy, what an eye opener!

The Commission nurse preceptor surveyor declared our downtown kitchen staff and the entire food preparation process as “the best kitchen” she has inspected in seven and a half years. **Evelyn Vance**, Director of Food and Nutrition, said this was one of two excellent inspections she has had in her career. The dietary staff prepared long and hard for this rigorous review, with **Barbara Huston** and **Anita Martinez** coming in on weekends for months to do deep cleaning. It all paid off with the stellar inspection.

For our tour, **Donna Dicola**, Food and Nutrition Patient Services Manager, showed us around after we donned our sanitary hairnets. **Denise Lolesar** and **Johnny Joseph** were the cooks “on the line,” serving about 200 inpatients for lunch in an hour. Serving capacity is 360-380 in season. Temperature of each food item was carefully checked and kept at the correct level by our new, preheated hot serving plates. This process insures that food stays hot.

Simultaneously, about 2,000 meals are served in the cafeteria at the traditional three meal times with a fourth serving for the night team from 11:00 PM-1:00 AM. Chefs **Ron Mahon**, **John Hart**, early morning chef **Arben Tasho** and colleagues prepare all the great food we enjoy daily. Our nine Joint Commission guests enjoyed a physician’s lunch, as catering chef **Lumturi Karuni** prepared attractive salads, served by catering hostess **Enrjeta Shuaipi**. Behind the scenes, **Trinidad De La Rosa** and **Arben Ruka** in the “wet room” draw the tough assignment of washing the huge kettle cooking pots, getting ready for the next meal.

Food service is a mammoth undertaking—understanding the scale and size of the freezers and refrigerators which store enough food to get us through a hurricane; the complexity of the cooking equipment which can heat up a sauce to just the right temperature as confirmed by a probe thermometer; and keeping a sharp eye on the dates to ensure we only serve fresh food. Our North Naples kitchen parallels that of the downtown in quality and capacity, making NCH arguably the largest food purveyor in the county. We are fortunate to have a long and excellent partnership with Sodexo Health Care Services which includes our Environmental Services Department. Relationships with global subject matter experts such as Sodexo help us enhance the patient’s experience.

And our kitchen team doesn’t rest on its laurels. Starting in late August, a Hostess Program will get underway, in which a hostess (iPad in hand) will visit each patient three times per day to take their orders. We piloted this experience on 6N last summer; the resulting room service and courtesy scores climbed to 95% and 99%.

In fact, no one at NCH seems to be resting on their laurels. Responding to last week’s *Straight Talk* about efficiency, North Naples ICU RN **V. Jo Crandall**, BSN, and RN **Amber Mihalik** suggested reusing the plastic bags that hold medications and pulling the blinds, shutting the lights and computers, and adjusting the temperature in vacant patient rooms to save energy. Both are wonderful suggestions.

From the kitchen to the ICU, NCH staff is proactive and responsive. That’s why our reputation for quality care continues to ascend, and why we are well-positioned for whatever economic challenges confront us.

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* and ask anyone to email me at [allen.weiss@nchmd.org](mailto:allen.weiss@nchmd.org) to be added.