

October 18, 2012

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

For more than 20 years now, we have been partners with Cerner, the architect of streamlining and automating our systems and processes. Over these two decades, our relationship with many of the Cerner folks has become "personal." And so it was fitting last week when our team joined the 10,000+ healthcare information technology professionals at Cerner's 27th annual Cerner Health Conference in Kansas City.

The theme of the conference: "Because it's personal."

Neal Patterson, Co-Founder, Chairman, CEO and President of Cerner (and a long-time loyal friend of NCH) spoke about the importance of predictability in healthcare—being able to predict the likelihood of individual illness in any environment. Having the data at hand—namely, records of past experiences—leads to a clearer understanding of what may happen, which encourages earlier intervention, which leads to better outcomes.

Certainly, having the most sophisticated information technology in place with constant monitoring of critical metrics has made a real difference at NCH. For example:

• ICU System Director **Jon Kling** shared the following recently, "We have just finished the last quarter of 2012 CLABSI-free [Central Line Associated Blood Stream Infections] as a system (3 consecutive months)! I will announce it at Friday's Nursing Leadership Council. Want to celebrate and congratulate staff, and would love for you to be a part of it if possible. Thanks for all your support."

CNO **Michele Thoman** also recently shared our Smart Room technology experience to a standing room only crowd whose first question was, "Are you hiring?" The presentation and a short video can be viewed at www.nchmd.org/smartroomimplementation. Michele underscored that, with our Cerner partner, we are poised for the next generation of healthcare information technology; including iPads to create office notes, based on the flow of information from the patient to physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant; and then electronic transmission of the prescription to the patient's pharmacy. This same ability will be used to change how everyone is compensated and interconnected so that we can all become more efficient and effective.

These changes in healthcare are accelerating, as we search for ways to use innovation to offset rapidly rising costs. One leading commentator on healthcare's technological revolution is Dr. Eric Topol, whom I met recently after reading his book, *The Creative Destruction of Medicine*. Dr. Topol predicts the future of medicine will include prescribing "apps" to help our health, rather than prescriptions. With "apps" we will have fewer side effects, better prevention, more engagement, and perhaps more value.

As healthcare providers, it's our responsibility to optimize the new technologies and interconnected mobility of the future, to improve the health and well-being of ourselves, loved ones, neighbors, friends, community, nation and world.

In fact, we have no alternative ... because it's personal.

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.