

Straight Talk

A weekly update from management on the issues that matter most



November 21, 2007

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

There's a reason we call this wonderful holiday, Thanksgiving.

As the name implies, it is a time for both "thanks" and "giving." For most of us, consumed by our daily struggles, it's easy to take for granted how well off our lives, families, health and careers are each day. But, all of us have much to be thankful for.

The "thanks" we give should extend to those around us at home and at work. After all, we are all dependent on each other. The safe and secure environment we enjoy every day is dependent on people and services we rarely consider. Think about how uncomfortable we get when we are hungry, cold, insecure, ill, worried or troubled. Now, think about how thankful we should be to those who provide the food, shelter, safety, health and mental peace that keep us comfortable.

In terms of "giving," all of us at NCH are especially privileged for the role we play in providing care for everyone else in our community. What would happen to the 31,000 patients each year who spend a night or more in one of our hospitals, if we were not here? Who would provide for the more than 120,000 visits to our ERs or the 4,000 moms having babies or the 400 patients receiving open-heart surgery if we weren't here, working together to care for our neighbors?

We provide this critical care often without realizing the true "giving" nature of our healthcare duties. Moreover, Thanksgiving is a time to be thankful that we are in this noble profession of helping others. Certainly, there are other noble professions – teaching, the clergy and many others. But healthcare is fundamental. Without your health, little is possible.

Our community is blessed to have NCH and the people who work here. Our rising patient satisfaction scores and the 25 healthcare quality awards we have received over the past three years are evidence of our hospital's professionalism and competence.

For that, I personally thank each and every one of you. The rising number of "grateful patient" letters I have received lately reminds me of how the community feels about the job you do.

As a small token of our thanks, our food service will be serving a bountiful Thanksgiving dinner at both campuses starting tonight at 11 PM to 1 AM and then tomorrow from 11:15 AM to 2 PM and finally at 5 PM to 8 PM. Please come and join us. The Department Directors, Administration and I will be helping to serve. But don't worry, our real chefs will still be doing the cooking!

Tomorrow, my family and I – with an age spread over four generations, from one-year-old to 90 – will be having dinner together at home. I'll take plenty of pictures. May I wish you and your family the happiest and most peaceful of Thanksgivings. And for all you do, our most heartfelt thanks.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Allen S. Weiss".

Allen S. Weiss, MD
President and CEO