

June 13, 2013

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

“Be nice.”

It sounds so simple, but it takes real work if NCH is to translate that slogan to real patient, family and co-worker experience through the language of caring. Manager of Patient Experience **Paul Clarke** is leading a new training initiative under the banner of “The Language of Caring,” with assistance from the Leebov Golde Group.

Leebov coach Jill Golde shared her expertise with 150 NCH leaders, who will pass along their learning—not to mention, their passion and competence—with our entire 3,900 colleagues. Our goal is to produce not just a “good” experience, but rather to be able to give everyone with whom we interact a “**wow**” experience that exceeds expectations every time.

Four principles are key for reaching “wow.”

1. Our customers are anxious, and we can consistently lower anxiety while delivering technically superb care.
2. Caring and communication are different; we need to do both extremely well to fulfill our promise.
3. We need to go for perfection—every person, every time.
4. Accountability is critical to make it stick; our goal is for everyone to be on the team, with no exceptions.

The language of caring starts with “*heart to heart*” by addressing an anxious patient’s emotions, followed quickly by “*head to head*” intellectual information. This is a sharing dialogue directed to the healthcare issues. Closing the conversation by returning to the heart is the best way to share genuine compassion; this completes the “heart-head-heart sandwich” communication. Clearly, most NCH caregivers provide this kind of caring instinctively; these communication skills facilitate the process.

Better and more compassionate communication means focusing attention fully on the patient with active listening, acknowledging feelings, matching non-verbal communications (which some believe contribute 90% to what is remembered of an encounter), and explaining that our actions are solely devoted to our patient.

Our culture to heal will be rounded out by helping folks through disappointments with sincere empathy and subsequent problem solving, expressing gratitude and admiration with appropriate compliments, and reaffirming the message.

During our trainer training for the new program colleagues, including Assistant Director of Critical Care Microsystem **Jan Ringle**, Clinical Educator RN **Lisa Fletcher**, Director of Surgical Services RN **Bill Diamond**, and Practice Manager, Pediatrics and Edison Family Medicine **Belinda Mack**, shared their personal commitment statement to caring for each patient and our teammates as if they were a member of our own family. (Some day, we may well be one of those patients.)

In a healthcare environment marked by dramatic change, ours is truly a daunting challenge. We possess the will and the tools to continue this journey toward improving the quality of life for our community by helping everyone lead happier, healthier, and longer lives.

Together, we have made a huge difference already. And I have no doubt that together, we will continue to enhance our quality and our caring in the days ahead. And that will truly be “*nice*.”

Respectfully,



Allen S. Weiss, M.D., President and CEO

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