

Straight Talk

A weekly update from management on the issues that matter most



October 24, 2013

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

This week we celebrate *Quality*, one of our primary focuses and strengths at NCH. Florida Gov. Rick Scott has officially proclaimed October 20-26 *Healthcare Quality Week*, and at NCH, we have much to celebrate.

We have been on the journey to higher quality for more than a decade with outstanding success, including the following:

- Prevention of death by sepsis (blood infections) saved more than 230 lives last year.
- Avoidance of Central Line infections (intravenous catheters used to deliver fluids, medications, and nutrition to very ill hospitalized patients); our system has decreased infections to just a few a year with a goal of zero.
- Surgical complications have decreased and are now significantly below the national average.
- Decreased urinary tract infections by avoiding inserting catheters unnecessarily and removing them as soon as they are no longer needed.
- Improved preventable readmissions in accord with Florida Hospital Association's (FHA) *No Place Like Home* program; NCH continues to be the only healthcare system in southwest Florida to not yet receive a penalty for excess readmissions. In fact, we have been asked to share our best practices with 750 others invited to an upcoming national meeting, sponsored by *U. S. News and World Report*.

Moreover, Critical Care Coordinator RN **Chris Raphael** and Director of Infection Control **Georgine Kruedelbach** shared our success with the Florida Hospital Engagement Network to avoid ventilator acquired pneumonia, Diabetes Program Coordinator **Mary McElligot** will be telling our story nationally about insulin control with surgical patients, Associate Chief Nursing Officer RN **Jon Kling** will be hosting an Institute of Healthcare Improvement webinar about Central Line infection prevention, and Critical Care Assistant Director RN **Jennifer Ringle** will be presenting our experience with Catheter-Associated Urinary Tract Infection prevention in a similar program. All of our efforts have been under the direction of our new Director of Quality and Performance Improvement, RN **Teresa Golden**.

With NCH as a major participant, the Florida Hospital Association's Quality Committee has been on a parallel "quality journey," with excellent success over the past five years. Leaders from around the state have been meeting quarterly during that time to share results in *Five Years of Quality: Working Together to Prevent Harm, Save Lives and Reduce Costs*. (<http://ww1.prweb.com/prfiles/2013/08/12/11015163/FHA%205Years%20Online%20version.pdf>)

NCH, first as a member and later as chairman of this productive committee, has worked to involve many of the 305 hospitals in Florida, with best practices, benchmarks, and encouragement to improve Florida's healthcare quality. According to the American Hospital Association (AHA), Florida has improved from 44th to 34th in state rankings, resulting in our state winning the Dick Davidson award for quality from AHA this past summer. (<http://www.aha.org/about/awards/davidson/index.shtml>) Across Florida, participating hospitals have reduced readmissions by 15% saving \$25 million; reduced surgical complications by 14.5% saving \$6.67 million; and reduced blood stream infections by 41% and urinary tract infections by 37%. So the committee's work is yielding impressive results.

As to our continuing quality journey at NCH, I am pleased to announce that **Dr. Doug Ardoin**, a quality leader and Chief Medical Officer (CMO) at Memorial Hermann in Texas and more recently at HCA TriStar Health in Tennessee, has joined our team as CMO. **Mike Stephens**, CFO, joined us in May. Doug and Mike are welcome additions to a seasoned, enthusiastic, smart, and prudent leadership team, which has as its foremost objective to continue to increase the quality of healthcare that NCH delivers to our community.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Allen".

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

P.S. DO YOU HAVE A COLLEAGUE OR FRIEND WHO WOULD BE INTERESTED IN THESE UPDATES?

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