

January 25, 2007

Dear Friend and Colleagues,

This week we welcomed Dr. Aurora Estevez as our new Chief Medical Officer (CMO).

Dr. Estevez competed against 40 other candidates and was selected by a unanimous vote of the medical staff. She practiced for 14 years in West Boca and is a Fellow of the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology. For the past seven years she served in administration at West Boca Medical Center and was CMO there for the past three years.

At NCH, Dr. Estevez will work in collaboration with the medical executive leadership and all 580 or so staff physicians to focus on quality, communication and other issues important to patients. Physician and nursing relations will also be a primary focus. On the quality side, Dr. Estevez will be working with Susan Wolff, Chief Information Officer, on Computer Physician Order Entry (CPOE), to help implement our evidence-based medicine initiative.

Dr. Estevez and her husband Sergio have a college-aged daughter and look forward to becoming active members of the Naples community. They also have a blue Great Dane, which we are grooming for next year's *Heart Walk*. (If you're curious – as I was – I'm sure Dr. Estevez would be pleased to explain what exactly is a "blue Great Dane!") We are very pleased that Dr. Estevez and her family have joined ours at NCH.

On Monday, Brian Settle and his Human Resources team presented a report to the Human Resources Committee of the Board that highlighted, among other things, our nursing situation. Last year, a record 488 nurses applied for NCH positions, with 302 (about 62%) being hired. We are intentionally selective in choosing for these important slots, and this is an important part of why our patients appreciate the care they receive. Since 2003, we have steadily increased the number of nurses to an all-time high of 939 in 2007. As I mentioned in a previous *Straight Talk*, we are short only about 60 nurses, from our complement of about 1,000. NCH nurse turnover is consistently lower than the state average, and corrective actions are down. All good.

Also encouraging is that employee satisfaction at NCH has shown a marked rebound to a nears all-time high, reached in November and maintained in December. January numbers are not yet in, but we're hopeful. Also reported at the meeting: The Edison Nursing program has 144 students enrolled, many of whom are receiving scholarships with an anticipated 32 graduating in May.

Finally, thanks again for all the hard work helping with patient flow. The middle of the week is tough in the ER with "holds," but with patience, time and perseverance we manage to get to the weekend when the house empties. Early-in-the-day discharges make a huge difference. Please all help in any way with the discharge process. Many thanks.

Respectfully yours,



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