

December 10, 2009

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

Two themes have guided NCH over the past several years: **Innovation** and **collaboration**. Both have helped position our organization as a high quality health care provider. Here are three examples of the kind of innovation and collaboration that contribute to NCH leadership.

- **ONE.** Emergency Physicians of Naples (EPN) has held an exclusive contract with NCH since 2002, caring for more than 100,000 patients annually at the Downtown Naples Hospital, North Naples Hospital, and the Marco Healthcare Clinic. This month, EPN's 34 physicians and 18 physician assistants joined TeamHealth (www.teamhealth.com), with its more than 6,100 affiliated healthcare professionals in 550 hospitals, clinics, and physician groups in 46 states.

This new collaboration, according to **Dr. John Lewis**, TeamHealth's President and Chief Medical Officer, "will improve our practice and enhance our ability to deliver better care to patients in our community." Its Executive Chairman **Dr. Lynn Massingale** was attracted by "the clinical and leadership caliber of the physicians." For NCH, this change will mean that our competent emergency room personnel will now be supported by a talented national group, bringing increased resources and expertise to the community.

- **TWO.** The collaboration between NCH and Cerner Corporation will be "a big win for the community and everyone else," according to **Paul Gorup**, Chief Innovation Officer and one of Cerner's three co-founders in 1979. To help ensure that "win," Mr. Gorup will move to Naples to facilitate the continued transformation of NCH's information technology capabilities into a strategic asset. On his first visit to NCH, he observed nursing and physician work flow, as he made rounds through the ER, ICU, Rehab and other downtown units with his team of **Carolyn Brooks, Rick Plisko, David Vigil, and Dave Zurliene**. Nursing and physician workflow will continue to improve as safety and quality are enhanced.

NCH already ranks among the top 60 hospitals in IT in the country, according to Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society, a widely-recognized independent evaluator. Cerner (www.Cerner.com) is among the top healthcare information technology companies in the world and has a multitude of solutions to be implemented in southwest Florida. The complexity of today's medical care makes it imperative to obtain new tools for decision support for evidence-based medicine. That's the kind of innovation we're accomplishing with Cerner.

- **THREE.** North Naples developed its own innovative and collaborative solutions, as they faced a hectic end of last week in the Labor and Delivery (L & D) and the Pre and Post Operative areas. Last week, L & D was having a bumper crop of eight C-sections but was short of staff. **Sherrie Laurita**, Director of the OR at North Naples, and Post Op RN **Barb Meehan** jumped right in to help the L & D team catch up. Almost simultaneously, pre op nurse **Leanne Laettner** suggested that their team and the post op nurses be cross-trained, so they could help each other during these kinds of peak demand times. I learned all this first-hand while making rounds.

I also had lunch last week with our outpatient infusion service team, where their leader, **RN Sue Théroux**, recognized the group for going above and beyond to handle peak demands. This kind of working smarter, through innovation and collaboration, is the best way to ensure that NCH continues to be the health care quality leader for the residents of Collier County and beyond.

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.