

Straight Talk

A weekly update from management on the issues that matter most

February 4, 2010

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

NCH is a leader in the community because of one quality in particular—its *people*. Here are three shining lights and their recent contributions to making a profound difference for the community we serve.

- **Michele Thoman**, recently appointed Chief Nursing Officer, is a champion of shared governance. Starting with nursing forums this past week, followed by shared governance information coming around to each nursing unit by “cart” and finally, shared governance fairs on both campuses—Michele’s goal is to get everyone informed and everyone enthused.

Now what, exactly, is “shared governance?” Basically, shared governance can be thought of as encouraging and empowering nurses to exercise control over nursing practice for their patients. Shared governance has emerged as one way for clinical nurses to become involved in the decision-making processes that affect patient care. Shared ownership, partnership, accountability and decentralized decision-making are all hallmarks of shared governance. Think of it as giving our nurses more power over patient care.

Michele’s information-sharing sessions will culminate with volunteer front-line nurses forming a *System Practice Council* as well as many *Specialty Practice Councils* which will address local practice issues specific to the area of nursing expertise. Additional councils will form as these initial teams impact the way we practice nursing at NCH.

Beyond her efforts to promote shared governance, Michele reported to the Board on the general state of nursing care at NCH. This included improving our nurse-to-patient ratios and the number of hours nurses are able to spend with each patient. Further, Michele reported that we would soon be benchmarking our nursing data with the National Database for Nursing Quality Indicators, so that we will constantly monitor our performance against national norms.

- **Dr. Babak Bozorgnia**, newest of five NCH electrophysiologists (cardiologists who specialize in treating the electrical system of the heart), successfully used the revolutionary EnSite System to diagnose and stop an abnormal heart rhythm in two recent patients. The EnSite System gives a real picture (a “map”) of the electrical system of the heart, enhancing the accuracy of the procedure. NCH volunteers donated \$260,975 to purchase this cutting-edge EnSite System for our community.
- NCH medical staff physicians **Vladimir Mathieu, William Murtagh, Phillip Organ, and Robert Pascotto**, along with CRNA **Barbara Murtagh** and RN **Vinouth Pierre-McNamara** all recently returned from Haiti where they helped hundreds of patients who had been extensively wounded in the earthquake. NCH continues to match employee contributions so we can assist our colleagues who have loved ones in need. Our supplies are channeled through *Hope for Haiti*. NCH has been sending supplies to Haiti since 2006. We have accelerated our response with the current crisis.

Finally, you might wish to tune in this weekend to learn about other NCH news-making people and developments on Jeff Lytle’s *One on One* interview with me, which will air on Channel 14 at noon on Sunday, February 7.

Thanks to everyone for being part of this wonderful team that **makes a difference** every day for our community.

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.