

Straight Talk

A weekly update from management on the issues that matter most



January 6, 2011

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Let's start 2011 with four NCH New Year's resolutions that create high expectations in areas we can control to make a difference for our community. Then at year-end, we'll take a look back and see how well we did.

- **Resolution #1: Creating a memorable patient experience.**

The mantra for NCH nurses is the one coined by ICU RN **Laurey Ploski** at the Shared Governance Committee of Nursing Practice: "*Nurses Care Here.*" From the threshold of the ER to the trip home from the hospital campus, we must continue to enhance the manner in which we care for our patients, who are also neighbors, friends and family. Recently, the spouse of an ER patient (who is also a renowned hospitality expert) commended NCH teamwork, collegiality, kindness, compassion and general "*bon ami.*" We "*rivalled a five-star resort,*" in some respects. Our ER is saving lives, decreasing wait times, and increasing hospitality.

And in 2011, we will only get better. Led by **Paul Clarke**, Patient Experience Coordinator and the Patient Satisfaction Committee of the Board, led by **Mariann MacDonald**, we plan new and innovative solutions. Creating a memorable experience for our patients—from directing a lost visitor to the right destination to greeting someone warmly—is a front-line responsibility for all of us in the New Year.

- **Resolution #2: Improving community health.**

We have a full plate in working toward this resolution. Confronting smoking, obesity, lack of exercise, too few primary care providers, and environmental concerns such as air pollution lead our challenges. We are making progress. A few years ago, Collier County was filled with smokers in public places. Today, all hospital campuses in southwest Florida are tobacco free. So are restaurants and bars. Most tobacco users—upwards of 70%—report that they want to quit. There's help at www.eahtobacco.com or the Collier County Health Department at 252 6852.

This year, let's help the other large institutions in town such as schools and government, to encourage exercise. The Collier County Health Director, Dr. **Joan Colfer**, has begun by organizing the first combined session of over 100 people from all agencies to collaborate on health opportunities. Although we are the healthiest county in Florida, according to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, there are still opportunities to lower the number of uninsured and the rate of teenage pregnancy.

- **Resolution #3: Achieve a higher value for our patients.**

Harvard Professor Michael Porter says that "*achieving a high value for the patient should be our greatest goal.*" Value, says Prof. Porter, is defined by the patient, and everyone else should be rewarded based on the patient's outcome. Value is a measurable outcome divided by cost. Costs are the total costs for a cycle of care. Often, total costs can be reduced by spending more up front—with prevention, for example. All of us working together in 2011 will improve value, reduce waste, and produce better patient outcomes.

- **Resolution #4: Build our own self image.**

"*This Is My Hospital*" is our declaration of pride of our past accomplishments, current plans, and future ambitions. Years ago, people chose to leave southwest Florida for care. Today, 12% of our patients come here for hospital care from out of our area. NCH has become a destination for quality healthcare delivery, while remaining the area's leading engine of growth.

We have come a long way and have much to be proud of. In 2011, that journey continues.

Respectfully,

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

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.