

June 16, 2011

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

The primary reason NCH is an exceptional hospital are the passionate people who deliver such compassionate care. Let me give you three sterling examples.

- **RN Pat Wagner** literally “grew up” at NCH, starting 40 years ago in the Intensive Care Unit as an LPN, when the 3rd floor of the downtown campus was about to open and we were still delivering babies on the old 1-South unit. Prior to joining NCH, Pat worked and learned from two nuns in an ICU, who shared their knowledge and experience. Pat remembers when cataract patients were hospitalized for days and heart attack patients for weeks. As she puts it, *“Everything has changed so. Acuity is so high, technology is everywhere.”* In 1975, Pat continued her education and received her RN. She continued for 12 more years in the ICU. Later, she filled in as the Relief Night Supervisor for another legendary NCH stalwart, **RN Jessie Brown**. Subsequently, Pat worked everywhere in the system, mostly on nights, for many years finally settling into the role of Administrative Coordinator.

Recently, Pat retired, leaving behind a legacy of a steady, positive, reassuring, communicative, empathetic, and complimentary style that calmed many crises, solved innumerable problems, assisted so many families, and helped create the “can do” culture of NCH.

- **RN Elaine Wade**, another recent retiree, started as a school nurse 15 years ago as a department of one. Our public school system had no on-site healthcare facility, often resulting in elementary school children with asthma having to use the Emergency Room unnecessarily. Elaine changed all that by helping to create the school nurse program, which today boasts 37 nurses and assistants and nine certified athletic trainers in 56 schools. Sometimes it wasn’t easy, but Elaine had the courage and stubbornness to persevere when resources seemed unavailable. And today, the school nurse program, which has been supported by charitable contributions from leaders like Mr. and Mrs. **Dolph von Arx** and institutions like NCH and the School Board, averages nearly 60,000 visits per year as well as over 45,000 visits to athletic trainers in their local schools. They treat everything from head lice to new onset diabetes, an all too-frequent occurrence.

We all owe Elaine—who also served as President of the National Association of School Nurses (NASN), received the NASN Distinguished Service Award, and was named an NASN Fellow—a great debt of gratitude.

- Finally Clinical Technician **Judith Bond** received unsolicited recognition from both **Pat Wagner** and **Claire Ralli** B.A, MSW, who wrote to ICU Microsystem RN **Jon Kling** as to how she had worked with Judith *“on a patient requiring lots of love and care in order to get him to eat. Judith not only created concoctions that pleased his palate but that got him the calories that he desperately needed in order to gain strength. Judith was cognizant of this patient’s changing tastes due to medications as well as his lack of appetite. She made sure to get him excited about the meal that she had for him. Judith developed a routine and rapport with the patient and his wife that was instrumental in keeping his spirits high, even in the Critical Care unit.”* The patient has now successfully moved on to the regular medical floors, thanks to the compassionate and competent work of Judith and her associates.

So it’s no mystery why NCH is regarded as a high quality healthcare institution. People such as Pat, Elaine and Judith make it so. And we are all so fortunate and grateful to have such extraordinary co-workers. Thank you all.

Respectfully,



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

P.S. Feel free to share *Straight Talk* by emailing me at allen.weiss@nchmd.org to be added; and join us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/nchflorida.