

Straight Talk

A weekly update from management on the issues that matter most



September 7, 2007

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

This week we added the *NCH Fact Line*, at 239-436-4988, to answer your questions about the attempt by outside SEIU organizers to unionize NCH or about anything else on your mind concerning the hospital. Just leave a message (anonymously if you prefer), and we'll post answers on the MyNCH.org website.

The first anonymous call we received wanted us to "*explain to the general NCH employee population the facts about the proposed union... so that everyone can understand the pros & cons.*"

Fair enough.

Let me try to summarize why we strongly believe that outside interference from a union wouldn't be in the best interests of anyone, particularly those who work for NCH.

- First, unions preach "unity" but sow the seeds of "conflict." Listen to the nurses leading the SEIU charge here at NCH. The real reason they want a union, they say, "*to improve patient care,*" as if our hospital's care was inferior. The facts, of course, are just the opposite. NCH, as most of you know, is not only considered one of Florida's best hospitals, but continues to rack up recognition nationally for the quality of its health care. We are good and getting better, not getting worse, as the union would have us believe. The union simply uses "*quality care*" in an effort to drive a wedge between staff and management.
- Second, unions talk a good show about having magic cures for workplace issues, but their promises are hollow and their "solutions" are pie-in-the-sky. Take a moment to read the canned literature the SEIU distributes and judge for yourself whether it has any relevance to us at NCH. By contrast, consider what we have already accomplished, without union interference – from Ben Bucks to improvements in shift differential pay and nurse/patient ratios to planned increases in salary and bonuses.

As you can see that while the SEIU "promises" and "takes credit," we're busy listening and acting on your suggestions to improve the hospital for everyone.

- Third, the SEIU proclaims that it wishes to reduce "tension in the workplace." But as anyone who has dealt with unions knows, tension in the workplace is nothing compared to the tension caused by a picket line. The local leaders of the union effort claim that disruptive strikes are the furthest thing from their mind. Don't be so sure. Consider carefully what we will share with you about happenings at SEIU represented healthcare facilities.
- Fourth, finally, non-nurses should care about a union invading NCH, because the SEIU's next step is likely to be to organize others. This is an international union that needs local workers' money to finance its national political and social agenda.

That is our view on why a union would be wrong for NCH. Thanks for the question. And keep 'em coming.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Allen S. Weiss".

Allen S. Weiss, MD
President and CEO