

Straight Talk

A weekly update from management on the issues that matter most



August 30, 2007

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

In light of the Labor Day holiday, I wanted to get this week's *Straight Talk* out to you before the weekend.

We understand that a petition has been filed or will be filed shortly with the National Labor Relations Board to give NCH nurses an opportunity, in a secret ballot election, to decide if they need to join the international SEIU labor union in order to speak to management.

Frankly, we are glad that our nurses will once and for all have a chance to decide – in a free and fair and confidential election – whether an outside labor union really makes sense for NCH, for our community, and for the nurses themselves.

Our clear view is that outside interference from a union wouldn't be in the best interests of any us – neither the hospital, the community, our employees, nor our patients.

Indeed, the SEIU already has been eager to claim “credit” for all our recent progress and achievements – from being recognized as a superior national hospital over a 5 year period, to listening to our employees and rewarding them in terms of such things as pay and benefits, nurse-patient ratios, plant accommodations, and the like.

At the same time, we've seen how the union has tried to drive a wedge between management and employees by warning of management resorting to such tactics as “*interrogating you about your beliefs,*” “*threatening your livelihood,*” and “*spying on you.*” Such absurd allegations no doubt will continue as an election draws near.

We're not surprised by these strong-arm tactics. More important, we aren't worried about the outcome.

We have great faith that the majority of our employees can see through the union's propaganda and scare-mongering. No one but the union and a few disgruntled employees disputes that ours is already an outstanding hospital with outstanding people. We are committed to treating our employees well, with dignity and respect.

Over the past several months, all of us in management have made a concerted effort to meet directly with the staff and to listen and act on your concerns and suggestions. I've been CEO for less than a year, and am “learning” as I go. But I do know that all of us on this streamlined management team want the best for NCH and for all of you.. That will continue to be our mission, even as we present our side of the union question over the weeks leading to the vote. Hopefully the union will allow that vote to happen and not change its mind later and try to block it.

I am confident that the vast majority of you will agree with us that an international union would be a hindrance not a help in allowing us to continue to work together to make NCH an even better health care provider, community partner, and employer. And that you will tell the union, “no thanks” on election day.

Enjoy your holiday.

Respectfully,

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

Allen S. Weiss, MD
President and CEO