

Straight Talk

A weekly update from management on the issues that matter most



December 27, 2012

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

In the first *Straight Talk* of this year, I made three predictions about how NCH would contribute to the quality of life we all enjoy. It's now 51 weeks later, and the year 2012 has been a good one for us. So how did we measure up?

- **First, NCH as a medical destination and economic engine.**

Becoming affiliated with the famed Mayo Clinic is a giant step forward. The *Naples Daily News* on August 17th repeated the quote that we have “hitched our wagon to a rocket ship.” NCH is the first in Florida and the seventh in the nation to be able to share Mayo’s knowledge base. Over time, we will adapt their culture and utilize their assistance with tertiary and quaternary care.

In little more than a decade, NCH has changed course from being a solo community hospital to becoming nationally recognized for quality and an important player in a competitive healthcare market. A few of the validations include: Twice being recognized by *U.S. News & World Report* as best in region; having the most poster presentations and the largest team at the Institute for Healthcare Improvement for the past two years; and being among the top 10% of hospitals in the country in cardiac surgery, according to the Society of Thoracic Surgeons. Transforming quality into an economic engine requires patience, as well as patients who trust our institution. Slowly but surely we are attracting more folks to both our inpatient and outpatient facilities from new geographic areas, such as north along the I-75 corridor and east over to Miami/Dade.

- **Second, NCH to create a Health Information Exchange for all to use.**

CIO **Helen Thompson** joined our system mid-year, and her first major accomplishment was to start an information exchange among our community’s physicians and health systems. The Health Information Exchange has been operational for the past two months; it encourages physicians to exchange clinical information in a safe, secure environment using an “information cloud.” Currently the NCH Healthcare Group, including the Naples Heart Institute, uses this exchange. We anticipate many other physicians in the region will begin sharing over the coming months. The more participation among offices and hospitals, the better and more efficient our region’s care will become.

Information technology (IT) is a major tool to obtain better value in healthcare. NCH has benefitted from our longstanding relationship with our partner Cerner, and IT will continue to drive our nation’s healthcare forward.

- **Third, NCH will continue to add value through growth.**

Building, renovation, and growth have continued this past year in spite of the overall economy. The more visible projects include the front lobby of the downtown campus, two new operating rooms with infrastructure support at North Naples, the ongoing entire renovation of the Telford Building, a new 5-South Orthopedic Unit, and continued expansion into the outpatient area as new physicians and services are added to the NCH Healthcare Group.

Our 4,000 colleagues, 650 physicians, and 1,200 volunteers continue to deliver high quality care, and improve the quality of life we all enjoy. We have had a fine year with everyone’s help and hard work, and the support and good wishes of the community. Thank you, all. And to all, best wishes for a healthy and happy New Year.

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.