

October 17, 2013

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

One important reason that NCH has steadily improved the quality care it delivers to patients is our seven-year partnership with Cerner, the information technology (IT) specialists. Our partnership with Cerner has been eventful and mutually beneficial.

So much so that at this year's annual Cerner Health Conference, attended by 10,000 healthcare and IT colleagues from 667 systems and 23 countries, NCH Chief Nursing Officer **Michele Thoman** was chosen to follow Cerner CEO Neal Patterson's keynote address. Michele's prestigious role at the conference was emblematic of an alliance between two successful and growing institutions.

Cerner was recognized in August by *Forbes* as the 7th most innovative company in America and 13th most innovative company in the world. Cerner had the largest research and development department devoted to healthcare IT in the world two years ago, and has since added 50% more capacity. NCH made a strategic decision seven years ago to grow our long standing relationship with Cerner to a partnership. Together we can deliver better care in ways that were once unimaginable.

At the Cerner conference, I had the privilege of introducing CEO Patterson to a smaller group of select colleagues, who share a similar deep and growing relationship with Cerner. I compared Neal with others who have contributed over the recent decades to changing the way we practice healthcare; among them, Alexander Fleming and the beginning of the antibiotic era in the 1940s, Morton Levin who made the connection with tobacco and lung cancer in the 1950s and John Charnley who did the first total hip replacement in the 1960s. Neal Patterson and his two colleagues left secure jobs to start an IT company that initially helped pathologists with billing. From that modest start and after more than a decade of struggle, their Cerner Corporation became the dominant IT provider for healthcare worldwide, with as profound effect on the health industry as any of their predecessors.

Neal's keynote stressed the need to evolve quickly from in-patient emphasis on electronic health or medical records—which all successful hospitals will have within a decade—to a new business model based on connectivity, interoperability, and the ability to predict and subsequently prevent illness. This digital healthcare data, he said, must be utilized intelligently to discover problems, predict illnesses, and importantly intervene to prevent disease. In this context, two weeks ago in *Straight Talk*, we shared NCH's exemplary experience with recognizing early sepsis (blood infection) and saving over 230 lives—a huge change from passively treating sickness.

Michele Thoman followed Neal by sharing NCH's IT story to over 3,500 conference participants, emphasizing North Naples' use of *CareAware Connect*<sup>™</sup>, a new mobility and communications solution for smart phones, which brings together communications, alarm management and nursing workflow tools on a single device. *CareAware Connect* enables clinicians to make voice calls inside and outside their facility, send HIPAA (private) secure text messages, and review clinical electronic health record data and alerts on their smart phone device. By mid-winter we will have our entire system using iPhones to connect.

Being intertwined with a world IT leader such as Cerner expands the scope of the NCH competencies we can deliver to our patients and our community. It is a partnership that has helped us immeasurably, and one we look forward to enhancing in the years ahead.

Respectfully,



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

***P.S. DO YOU HAVE A COLLEAGUE OR FRIEND WHO WOULD BE INTERESTED IN THESE UPDATES?***

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