

Straight Talk

A weekly update from management on the issues that matter most



November 2, 2007

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Today we all received the pay increase promised by the Board of Trustees in late July. This salary increase is well deserved by all, as we have reached new heights in quality care for those we serve.

Being the leader in the local market continues to give us a competitive advantage. In fact, we have had more than 50 new nurses join the system over the past two months. As we ramp up for the "season," we will continue to hire. The less we need to supplement our core and seasonal staff with travelers, the better we will be able to provide extra opportunities for those who desire to work extra shifts. This is an option only, not mandatory. But those "Ben Bucks" do come in handy.

Our Benefits Fair, which shows all of the options available for colleagues, was well received. Signing up for appropriate options with a counselor was a very comfortable experience. In fact, I was dazzled by the number of options offered and the very reasonable rates, which our group purchasing power makes possible. *Sometimes we forget how much we have.*

Speaking of changes, our physical plant has had some recent major upgrades. The North Naples MRI is back and running. The North Naples OR air conditioning was upgraded for greater staff and physician comfort. The North Naples ER waiting room was revamped with new drywall and the color changed to match the patient tower. I hope everyone is pleased with these improvements

Downtown, too, has been upgraded with new elevator button lights proving a big hit. The red color seems to stand out better. Pulse oximeters are either on site and ready to be installed, or on order for the acute med/surg rooms which don't yet have them. Overall, the downtown campus is looking cleaner and sharper with floors shined, dust removed and clutter controlled.

We still have work to do and things to fix, but we continue to make progress in areas that the staff has cited. On Monday, Phil Dutcher and I received some great suggestions for an Acudose for the specials room, better collaboration with anesthesia for scheduling, as well as other areas for improvement. We appreciate your suggestions and will act on them.

I also want to review the process for submitting your name as a candidate for the nurse or non-nurse employee Board position. Please email (Carl.Westman@NCHMD.org) or mail Mr. Carl Westman and also ask your friends and colleagues to share letters of support.

Finally, let me mention that we had so many requests for Dr. Bertice Berry to return to Naples, I'm please to say that she will be back next Friday, November 9, at 10 AM at North Naples and 3 PM Downtown. She will also speak in Telford on Saturday at 10 AM.

Dr. Berry's message is an inspiring one, and I would encourage everyone to see her. Space permitting, bring your spouse or friends involved with healthcare. Dr. Berry is a bone fide "5-Star attraction," which in Michelin guidebook language means "worth going out of your way to see." Listen to her message, and I'm certain you'll be even more enthusiastic about the work we do.

Respectfully,

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

Allen S. Weiss, MD
President and CEO