

Straight Talk

A weekly update from management on the issues that matter most



July 31, 2014

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

It's official! Our 14-member NCH Healthcare System Board, chaired by **Mariann MacDonald**, met yesterday at its two-day quarterly meeting and affirmed the recommendation that, in recognition of our outstanding financial performance year to date, all eligible non-management colleagues who have worked at least 500 hours since October 2013 (the unofficial beginning of the season) will receive a reward check, net of taxes and deductibles, for \$300 on August 15, 2014.

The NCH Board also affirmed, like last year's process, a merit-based increase, dependent on the individual's overall performance rating which will go into effect January 2015. Moreover the board voted to maintain health insurance premiums at their current rates for the coming year and to expand potential HRA points to help offset deductibles. So congratulations all for your collective outstanding performance in the face of the adverse healthcare environment around us.

The board heard reports, beginning with **Mike Riley**, Chief of Strategy, and **Debbie Curry**, Director of Marketing, who shared our *Five Tactical Initiatives*, listed below, and our increase of 1%, year over year, of inpatient market share.

1. Increase patient satisfaction scores to exceed established targets across all areas of the system.
2. Enhance and expand our strategic partnerships with our physician colleagues, as we all focus on patient care and satisfaction.
3. Expand a culture of lean transformation and information technology throughout our healthcare system to improve the value of the care we provide.
4. Grow our Population Health Program to serve patients, colleagues, and our community.
5. Continue to evolve the Mayo affiliation with best practice implementation and shared learning.

Next, the Quality and Patient Satisfaction Committee reviewed our progress in many areas, particularly in controlling C. diff infections, which can cause severe gastrointestinal problems, with our rate dropping from just under 14% to under 5%, compared to a national benchmark comparison of 8%. We also have noticeably improved hand hygiene, reduced the use of antibiotics and certain medications known to increase risk, and partnered with Environmental Services to enhance cleaning. The board also reviewed extensively our patient satisfaction metrics, which are also improving but not as quickly as many of our other clinical parameters; this will continue to be a key area of focus as indicated in the above tactical initiatives.

The Foundation Committee, under the leadership of board member **Terry Flynn**, was up next, reporting on the continuing support of a generous community, working with NCH to enhance the quality of life and help everyone live a longer, happier, and healthier life. The most recent success of the Foundation has been the doubling in size of the Neonatal ICU.

The Finance Committee highlighted the reasons behind our stellar performance this year—basically everyone working collaboratively and managing our limited resources with prudence. This is the formula that has allowed us to change the course of our system over this past decade. Finally, we reviewed with the NCH Board our goal of developing a comprehensive 10-year plan to improve southwest Florida's population's health.

And just to affirm the Board's affirmation of all of our positive work, last week *Gulf Shore Business* recognized NCH as "*Best Hospital in the Region.*" We are grateful to our community, proud of our employees, and view all of the recognition NCH has received over these past several years as even greater motivation to continue to work together to ensure for all of those who depend on us, the highest quality healthcare.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Allen".

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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