

Straight Talk

A weekly update from management on the issues that matter most



February 15, 2008

Happy Belated Valentine's Day,

Although this is coming out the day after, I did write these thoughts on Valentine's Day morning, right before a number of us served a free pancake breakfast to any colleague who came by the cafeterias. All told, I estimate we served 1775 pancake and sausage breakfasts to our NCH colleagues, among the three serving times (breakfast, dinner and late at night) on both campuses. (On Marco and at NCH Central, the folks enjoyed traditional Valentine's Day bagels!)

Valentine's Day is usually a happy time, which gives us extra incentive to share good feelings with one another. Everyone appreciates positive feedback, especially those with whom we work. After all, most of us spend more time with each other professionally than we do with our spouses, significant others, kids or parents.

So it's important to share positive feedback with each other. That's even been proven empirically. Researchers tell us that a child who is doing well has had seven positives for every negative. Conversely, a child who is struggling has had two negatives for every positive. So despite our occasional differences, we need constantly to find positive attributes in our personal and professional lives. While it's true, as they say, that sometimes, unavoidably, "bad things happen to good people," it's also true that seeing the "positive" side of things is always preferable to being downbeat and negative.

Two of the most positive people I know are Carrie Capps and Sue Graziano. As you know, Sue will replace Carrie as Interim CNO (Chief Nursing Officer), after Carrie departs for Georgia next week.

Both Carrie and Sue helped serve pancakes yesterday and reflected on their jobs. Carrie noted that as care-givers, we give compassion and strength to those in our care, and ought to treat our coworkers with similar respect and support. Sue said that since Valentine's Day is a celebratory time, it's important to put our differences aside and make a special effort to offer a simple "thank you" to our coworkers.

Both ladies, of course, are right. NCH has proven over the years that we are, indeed, all better off when we work together.

And the spirit of good will and compassion synonymous with Valentine's Day should remind all of us that no one of us travels alone. As we share positive thoughts and actions, we and our organization can only benefit.

Respectfully yours,

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

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