

# Straight Talk

A weekly update from management on the issues that matter most



July 10, 2008

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

This week I want to say a word about our new “*Greet, Meet & Eats*” that have been going terrifically.

The goal of these sessions, which were proposed by fellow employees, is to ensure that everyone employed by NCH has a chance, in an informal setting, to share views and suggestions directly with a VP or with me. *Greet, Meet & Eats* are in addition to our more traditional unit breakfasts and lunches and *Around the Clocks* with me every 6-8 weeks. All of these communications forums are designed to share information and seek feedback.

We began the *Greet, Meet & Eats* with breakfasts for a week at both campuses, followed by lunches, and this week an 11:00 p.m. dinner with the night team. So far, we’ve “broken bread” with about 250 NCH staffers. The spirit and spirited discussions have been great, and we plan to continue this rotation every other week, year-round. Interestingly and not surprisingly, the same topics are of interest to all.

Let me give you a sample of the topics and follow-up action, growing out of productive sessions this week with PCU nurse Jean Werner, ICU nurse Jacquie Crandall, Radiology tech Mike Miller, James Gregory, 2N CC, CVRU nurse Heather Cheriell, Genia Stoute, a CT on 6N and Teresa Haberkorn, an LPN who has been with registry for years.

- **Nursing ratios.** The patient-to-nurse ratios continue to be discussed. The ratios we have in place are in line with other hospitals in the area. However, we do have patients in certain units who are sicker than ever with objectively higher acuity. In response to a specific inquire, I looked at the actual average patient-to-nurse ratio in PCU. For days it is 2.12 over the past 3 months (nights 2.43). This ratio is considered *safe* for high quality care. That said it is also clear that in these hectic times with sicker patients, everyone needs to continue to assist each other with patient care.
- **Linen availability.** We are developing a linen cart exchange system that will provide for one set of linens to be on the unit while the other set is in the laundry. The new system will be implemented in the next month or so.
- **Night noise levels.** Evidently, some of the rolling equipment, such as phlebotomy carts and portable x-ray equipment could be made quieter. We will work to correct this and also investigate mitigating background noise.
- **North Naples ICU nurses & medication administration process.** I learned we had a bit of a logistical problem with ICU nurses floating from North Naples, but fortunately, Jean Werner helped organize the group. I also learned from Jacquie Crandall that our new bar coding medication administration process and closed ICUs (only certain physicians can admit) reflected the “best practices” discussed in her masters curriculum at FGCU.

We discussed many other topics—from the possibility of Team\$hare and NCH’s financial condition to HCAHPS and the cafeteria’s night hours and, of course, food quality. We have posted summaries of these discussions on the internal MyNCH website.

Finally, let me say how grateful I am for everyone who has participated in these sessions, and how much I look forward to meeting with the rest of you. Meeting together is the only way—and the *best* way—for all of us to get to know each other and to work better together.

Respectfully,

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

Allen S. Weiss, M.D.