

January 8, 2009

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

You know that New Year's resolution about "feeling and looking better?"

Maureen Powers, RN and Assistant Director-Emergency Services, and Julie Amoroso, Clinical Informatics Team Lead, as well as about 40 of their colleagues, are way ahead of the rest of us. Maureen, Julie, and their colleagues are all 2008 graduates of the *NCH Eight Weeks to Wellness* program, led by Health Clinician Lisa Rivera Herman.

This terrific program—which all of us should take—combines classroom and practical experience to focus on managing stress, health awareness, the mind/body connection, and other important health topics. All enrollees take a pre-test, which evaluates body weight, physical activity, smoking status, happiness, sleep, social support, blood pressure, cholesterol and diet (*well, nobody's perfect!*). When you complete the program, the same "How Healthy is Your Lifestyle" survey is analyzed to assess progress.

Maureen and Julie improved their scores enough to propel them to between "doing well" and "excellent" on the rating scale. Their post-program conclusions: "Life is good" and "I don't have to make a resolution to lose weight."

All NCH employees are encouraged to take the 15-minute, health risk assessment survey on line at <a href="https://wellsuite.com/nchmd/pwp/approot/PWPTermsOfUse.asp?sid=678BCB36DFAD4A3D846E">https://wellsuite.com/nchmd/pwp/approot/PWPTermsOfUse.asp?sid=678BCB36DFAD4A3D846E</a>. To participate, you have to get a finger stick cholesterol and blood sugar, available through Occupational Health or by calling Lisa, our Health Clinician, at 436-6878. You can get your blood pressure done at any of the automated machines on both campuses or at both Wellness Centers. Just by completing the survey your Wellness membership dues are reduced saving you \$130/year. If you participated anytime in 2008 prior to the December 31st deadline, you will enjoy your savings starting the first pay period of 2009.

That's not only a pretty good deal for 15 minutes and a finger stick, but it also makes life sense. Last year's results found 5% diabetics, 3% with heart disease, 15% acknowledging they had high blood pressure (with the actual number being 23%), and 13% acknowledging high cholesterol (with the actual number being 35%). Such programs enable us to find problems early and treat them appropriately, thus avoiding disease-inducing misery, such as strokes and heart attacks, and ultimately saving lives. This year, Lisa's volunteer classes will be organized every eight weeks or so, with the next starting today. Contact her for details (Lisa.Rivera@nchmd.org) or to be put in touch with a happy and healthy recent graduate of the program.

Moving from **prevention to repair**, at year-end I was pleased to visit the 500<sup>th</sup> cardiac surgical patient cared for by Kim Norman, RN, and her colleagues in the Cardiovascular Recovery Unit (CVRU). That's quite a milestone. And the patient was predictably grateful to everyone involved in his care. The food service folks delivered a predictably scrumptious meal to mark the occasion with the teams from the Cath lab, Cardiac Surgery, CVRU and 6 North, where most cardiac surgery patients recover. Also predictably, the CVRU nurses delayed enjoying the meal until their patients were stabilized.

There is a reason NCH was best in the state of Florida last year for cardiac care, according to www.HealthGrades.com. It's because we have a team of 3,400+ people, committed to serving the community's health care needs every hour of every day. I'm honored and proud to be on their team.

Respectfully,

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

P. S. Feel free to share Straight Talk and ask anyone to email me at allen.weiss@nchmd.org to be added.