

May 28, 2009

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

Most organizations like to say, “*Our people are our most important asset.*” But is it true? In the case of the NCH Healthcare System—you bet it is! Here are four examples of the people who define NCH.

- **Lisa Sparks**, RN, in the downtown PCU, and **David Sparks**, a transporter who was recently trained with all his colleagues in CPR, found their five-year-old nephew at the bottom of a pool this past weekend and initiated successful CPR. EMS took the resuscitated child to the closest hospital, PRMC on Pine Ridge Road, where he was stabilized. **Dr. Debra Lopez**, our star Pediatric intensivist/hospitalist was consulted and she went to PRMC to help transport the child back to the MacDonald SeaCAREium. Dr. Lopez physically pumped the ambu bag while they were in the ambulance. The child is now home perfectly normal—truly a save. *Take home message: Learn CPR.*
- **Karen Spina**, MA, Certified Clinical Competence in Speech-Language Pathology, recently shared her vision for a unique community support group with her colleagues on the Marco Campus, as **Kevin Cooper** and I joined a luncheon discussion. Karen is organizing the first local chapter of Support for People with Oral, Head and Neck Cancer (SPOHNC), a national self-help organization founded by an oral cancer survivor. By profession, Karen is a speech pathologist. But she recognized a community need in this special area, and she decided to do something about it locally with the inaugural meeting June 3 in Telford at 3 PM. Contact [karen.spina@nchmd.org](mailto:karen.spina@nchmd.org) or 393-4083.
- **Anne Loughridge**, MA, has a similar story. For at least seven years, she has worked with aphasia patients and their families in a group called “SpeakEasy.” Aphasia, literally the inability to speak, is a not-uncommon complication of stroke and other diseases. SpeakEasy meets twice a month to practice communication, with members going out for dinner and even taking trips together. Anne, like Karen, recognizes that patients and families benefit when they help each other.
- **Susan Wolff**, Chief Information Officer, got some welcome news recently that indicated her journey of nearly two decades is paying off handsomely. Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society notified Susan that NCH is one of only 41 national hospitals at the next-to-the-top stage of adoption of the electronic medical record. The top level includes only 15 hospitals among the 5,170 under consideration. Susan and her team have worked diligently on this important issue for NCH. Later this year, we will implement a huge code update process to facilitate the computer provider order entry system. We’re investing significant resources in this initiative, which will result in a safer, more efficient environment.

The work of these four and their colleagues are just a tiny indication of the people who make NCH great. In the face of a terrible national recession, NCH recorded for the first seven months of our fiscal year that we were 2% busier than the same period last year. The summer remains a question mark. But one thing is never in question: That the innovation, compassion and quality that have characterized the NCH Healthcare System for the past 54 years will continue, uninterrupted. And for one simple reason. **NCH people!** Thank you, all.

Respectfully,



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

P.S. Feel free to share *Straight Talk* and ask anyone to email me at [allen.weiss@nchmd.org](mailto:allen.weiss@nchmd.org) to be added.