

Straight Talk

A weekly update from management on the issues that matter most



December 3, 2009

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

Providing the highest quality local care is an overriding mandate at NCH. Nowhere has this been more true than in our delivery of pediatrics and neonatal services, where in the past two years, we've opened the 24-bed MacDonald SeaCarium Pediatric Unit which includes four intensive care beds, added 24/7 in-house neonatology coverage, and now offer more and better options than ever for newborns, children and their parents.

I was reminded of this during Thanksgiving week, when Chief Medical Officer **Dr. Aurora Estevez** sent me an email, authored by Co-Chair of Pediatrics **Dr. Todd Vedder**, entitled "Another reason to be thankful." It was addressed to pediatric hospitalist/intensivist **Dr. Debra Lopez**, ENT specialist **Dr. Patrick Reidy** and anesthesiologist **Dr. Bruce Caldwell**, with a copy to Nurse Manager of Pediatrics RN **Jayne Roberts**. Other than making this email HIPAA compliant to protect the patient and family's privacy, here it is, in its entirety:

I just wanted to extend my sincerest thanks for the marvelous team effort put forth in the care of my patient. It was truly wonderful for the family to be able to have their son's procedure performed close to home. You may not have realized this, but the family was in the process of moving with their 9-month-old (former 28-week preemie) son who had been having respiratory difficulties. By having this child's surgery at NCH, all these other stressors became a little more manageable. Thanks again for taking care of this very special child with very special needs. I wish I had the names of all the anesthesia/post op and peds nurses who played an integral role in his care as well. The family felt the entire process went flawlessly smooth. This is just another fine example of what we can accomplish when talented and committed professionals come together with a common purpose. May you all have a blessed and peaceful Thanksgiving weekend.

This wonderful message underscores our commitment to newborns, children and their parents. The goal for patients, families, philanthropists and healthcare providers in southwest Florida is to provide the best possible care as close to home for all of the newborns and children in the region.

For **newborns**, this means providing the following services:

- Appropriate level nurseries in close proximity to birthing centers.
- Regional specialty nurseries to maximize scale and scope.
- Minimize the need to transfer but have transfer facilities available when necessary.

For **children**, this means providing the following services:

- Access to pediatric primary outpatient care, 24/7, in all geographic regions.
- Specialty outpatient pediatric care as close to home as possible.
- Available inpatient care as close to home as possible for all children with normal needs.
- Children with complex needs should be cared for as close to home as possible at a regional children's hospital.
- Psychiatric care for children.
- Dental care for children.

We are on the right track with an increase in pediatric admissions year-over-year at NCH. This includes some children transferred into our facility from nearby counties due to our capabilities and capacity. Whenever we have to transfer a baby or child elsewhere due to complex surgical needs or other complications, we will first call the nearest appropriate and available facility before proceeding to other children's hospitals in Florida. We will continue to grow as we serve our young families.

Respectfully,

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

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 to be added.