Providing Quality in Continuing Care

The importance of quality measures and measuring outcomes against national standards is a constant in the healthcare industry. For Catholic Health Continuing Care, which includes our long-term care facilities, adult homes and rehabilitation services, our commitment to quality reporting ensures our patients, residents and clients receive the best care in the most appropriate setting.

The New York State Department of Health (DOH) monitors the standards of care in long-term care (LTC) facilities and adult homes. The DOH conducts unannounced annual surveys and may visit any time to investigate a complaint or self-reported incident.

The survey team travels unescorted throughout our facilities observing all aspects of resident care. In addition to speaking with associates, the survey team also spends time with residents and their families and reviews charts to identify any deficiencies.

Each state reports their findings to the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), which has developed a five-star rating system based on health inspection findings, staffing levels, and 10 publicly reported quality measures. As with any rating system, there are variables that can influence the results. Despite our aging facilities and high-need population, Continuing Care remains committed to providing the highest quality care to all our residents. Consumers should use these ratings along with other sources of information, such as a visit to the home, when making care decisions.

Our Partners In Rehab Medical Rehabilitation Units (MRU) at Mercy Hospital of Buffalo and Kenmore Mercy Hospital also have a unique reporting standard. Providing comprehensive rehabilitation services to patients who have suffered hip fractures, stroke or other neurological impairment, the MRUs have been using a nationwide quality measurement tool that was developed in Buffalo. The tool was designed to measure the severity of a patient's disabilities and the functional outcomes of medical rehabilitation.

Using this evaluation method, the Partners In Rehab MRU at Kenmore Mercy was recently ranked in the top 10 percent of 813 inpatient rehabilitation facilities across the U.S. (see article on page 4). As we move to a person-centered model of care across our system, maintaining nationally-recognized standards of care throughout our ministries will provide our patients with the confidence and peace of mind that no matter where they receive care in Catholic Health, it will be of the highest quality.

Hitting the Road to Honor the Legacy of the Franciscan Sisters of St. Joseph

We’ve all seen Catholic Health’s Mission on the Move van driving around the streets of Western New York or parked outside a health fair or community event. What many people might not realize is that Mission on the Move is more than a vehicle, it’s a way to bring valuable health and wellness services to people throughout our community.

Each year, Mission on the Move serves thousands of people, providing free health screenings and education programs to keep our community healthy, help identify risk factors for illness and disease, and help people make healthy lifestyle choices.

Now, Mission on the Move is hitting the road again to not only keep our community healthy, but also to honor the legacy of the Franciscan Sisters of St. Joseph, former sponsors of St. Joseph Hospital and Catholic Health. Following the transition of St. Joseph Hospital to Sisters of Charity Hospital, St. Joseph Campus, Catholic Health pledged $100,000 to enhance the Mission on the Move program in honor of the Franciscan Sisters of St. Joseph.

“While the Sisters are no longer a formal sponsor of our system, they will always be part of our heritage and we will remember the contributions they have made to our Mission and healthcare in our region,” said Joe McDonald, President and CEO of Catholic Health. “It seems fitting that we would honor their legacy by dedicating a program in their name that carries our healing Mission to people throughout the community.”

As part of this special recognition, the Mission on the Move vehicles will feature new graphic details that acknowledge the Franciscan Sisters of St. Joseph. Now, when Mission on the Move travels throughout Western New York, people will know that the Franciscan Sisters of St. Joseph were a driving force behind Catholic Health and our Mission of service to those in need.

Changing Lives One Person at a Time

In the world of person-centered care, Continuing Care’s 1,800 dedicated associates (providing hands-on care and working behind-the-scenes) will touch the lives of thousands of people throughout Catholic Health. More than just nursing homes and outpatient centers, Continuing Care is an interdisciplinary and inter-organizational team of associates whose goal is to provide the right care in the right place, at the right time.

Through Partners In Rehab and AthletiCare, physical, occupational, and speech therapists; physicians; nurses; dietitians; chaplains; social workers; and athletic trainers, work in our hospitals, MRUs, subacute and LTC facilities, outpatient centers and on sports fields, preventing injuries and restoring function.

Our Senior Services ministry helps us care for the frail and elderly in new and better ways. Through a variety of care settings and innovative care models, including senior housing, nursing homes, adult care facilities and our new LIFE – Living Independently For Elders – program, we are giving seniors a greater choice and a greater quality of life.

Those in our care have many names – patient, resident, participant, athlete – but to us, they are one “person” in the healthcare continuum. Through our commitment to quality care and our Mission and Values, Continuing Care is changing lives one person at a time.

Chris Kluckhohn
President and CEO
Continuing Care

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Volume 3, Issue 4
May/June 2009
Believe in Giving Helps Feed the Hungry

The bible is full of stories of Jesus feeding the hungry. In the story of the loaves and fishes (John 6:8-9,11), Jesus multiplies five loaves of bread and two small fish to feed a hungry crowd that had followed him. With these modest gifts of food, Jesus was able to feed thousands. In our faith tradition, it is a simple act, but one that has tremendous meaning. For Catholic Health, we are helping to feed thousands by selecting the Food Bank of Western New York as one of the recipients of our 2009 Believe in Giving Campaign.

Just like we supported Gerard Place and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in 2007 and 2008, this year we are going to focus our fundraising and outreach efforts supporting the Food Bank and our own associates through our ministry Helping Hands fund. In this issue of Connection, we would like to tell you a little more about the Food Bank and how you can support their important work in our community.

Since 1979, the Food Bank of Western New York has been serving the emergency food needs of people in Erie, Niagara, Chautauqua and Cattaraugus counties. Today, the Food Bank distributes over 13 million pounds of food to 90,000 families annually through a large network of social service providers.

The Food Bank does not distribute food directly to those in need, but acts as a non-profit clearinghouse for private and public donations from food manufacturers, distributors, retailers, and state and federal agencies. Through its 37,000 square-foot warehouse on Holt Street in Buffalo, the Food Bank re-distributes food to approximately 500 charitable providers, such as soup kitchens, food pantries and emergency shelters.

In addition to public and private food donations, the Food Bank also relies on monetary donations from individuals, charitable foundations and various public and private grants to purchase additional food items. There are many ways you can help the Food Bank, including sponsoring a food drive, volunteering your time, or donating money or non-perishable food items such as:

- Canned meats: SPAM®, ham, meat spread, cheese
- Fresh produce: tomatoes, oranges, carrots, broccoli
- Rice and pasta: mixes and plain
- Canned fish: tuna, salmon, sardines
- Canned/dry beans: kidney, lentils, lima, etc.
- Canned soup w/beans, chicken, ham or beef
- Peanut butter
- Macaroni and cheese
- Canned ravioli or spaghetti and meatballs
- Drink mixes: ice tea, Kool-Aid®, Tang®
- Milk: canned or powdered
- Canned fruit: peaches, cherries, pineapple
- Canned vegetables: green beans, carrots
- Canned tea and coffee
- Cereal, hot or cold of any brand
- Canned fruits and vegetables
- Canned sauces
- Rice and pasta: mixes and plain
- Canned soups
- Canned sauces
- Canned fish and vegetables
- Canned rice and beans
- Canned pasta and soups
- Canned vegetables
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- Canned vegetables
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- Canned rice and pasta

Confused on which fruits and vegetables should you buy organic? Yes, it can be expensive, but studies show that there are some produce items that you should always be buying organic because of the amount of pesticides used. The foods on the “Dirty Dozen” list below are foods that have very porous skin, making it harder to wash away pesticides, with some receiving a heavier dose of pesticides than other foods. These are the items that you should always be buying organic.

The Dirty Dozen

(in order from least pesticide-rich to most)

1. Peaches
2. Apples
3. Bell peppers
4. Pineapples
5. Nectarines
6. Strawberries
7. Sweet peas
8. Kale
9. Cabbage
10. Eggplant
11. Carrots
12. Pears
13. Broccoli
14. Tomatoes
15. Sweet potatoes

St. Joseph Campus “Improving Procedure Imaging”

For years, attempts have been made to use computed tomography (CT) scanning to help guide surgical instruments and check the results of surgical procedures. The surgical team at Sisters of Charity Hospital, St. Joseph Campus recently received a new $215,000 C-Arm portable fluoroscopy unit, giving surgeons this enhanced capability.

“We only had two C-Arm machines and one was due to be replaced, so this new state-of-the-art unit is a wonderful addition to our surgical suite,” said Dr. M. Youssif Fazili, Chief of Surgery at the St. Joseph Campus. The C-Arm creates a “live-time” x-ray image for doctors to visualize the actual area in which they are operating without having to make large incisions. This intra-operative imaging equipment promises to overcome conventional limitations by providing the surgeon with real-time image updates during the procedure. This new equipment can be used by Mercy Hospital of Buffalo and Sisters of Charity Hospital to recruit new physicians to work in our Primary Care Centers that serve patients in Springville, Eden, Cuba, Franklinville and the Lovejoy and Riverside areas of Buffalo. In exchange for the grants, the physicians agree to remain at the designated centers for a period of two to five years.

Rachael Nees, Director of Grants, and Mark Shilling, Grant Coordinator, worked to secure the funding for Catholic Health. The program is expected to begin this summer and run for two years.

“This is a great opportunity to bolster our physician recruitment efforts and ensure we are able to attract and retain skilled doctors in our Primary Care Centers,” said Victor Ramirez, Director of Physician Recruitment for Catholic Health.

Catholic Health Receives Grant to Support Physician Recruitment

Catholic Health’s efforts to recruit physicians in medically underserved areas of Western New York just got a shot in the arm, thanks to $870,000 in grants through the state’s “Doctors Across New York” program. Administered by the NYS Department of Health, the program helps repay medical school loans for physicians who agree to practice in rural and high need areas across the state.

“It’s a win-win for Catholic Health Primary Care Centers located in physician shortage communities, and the high quality doctors we can attract to work in the centers,” said Mike Reilly, Vice President of Primary Care. “More importantly, it benefits our patients by ensuring we are able to continue our mission to serve those in need.”

Catholic Health received three $150,000 grants and three $100,000 grants, which can be used by Mercy Hospital of Buffalo and Sisters of Charity Hospital to recruit new physicians to work in our Primary Care Centers that serve patients in Springville, Eden, Cuba, Franklinville and the Lovejoy and Riverside areas of Buffalo. In exchange for the grants, the physicians agree to remain at the designated centers for a period of two to five years.

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What Produce To Buy Organic: the “Dirty Dozen” and the “Clean Fifteen”

Confused on which fruits and vegetables should you buy organic? Yes, it can be expensive, but studies show that there are some produce items that you should always be buying organic because of the amount of pesticides used. The foods on the “Dirty Dozen” list below are foods that have very porous skin, making it harder to wash away pesticides, with some receiving a heavier dose of pesticides than other foods. These are the items that you should always be buying organic.

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(in order from least pesticide-rich to most)

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5. Nectarines
6. Strawberries
7. Sweet peas
8. Kale
9. Cabbage
10. Eggplant
11. Carrots
12. Pears
13. Broccoli
14. Tomatoes
15. Sweet potatoes

The Clean Fifteen

(in order from least pesticide-ridden)

1. Onions
2. Avocados
3. Sweet corn
4. Pineapples
5. Mangos
6. Asparagus
7. Sweet peas
8. Kiwi
9. Locally grown produce is fresh and has little or no packaging. The produce in supermarkets has usually traveled hundreds or even thousands of miles and is often picked before it’s ready, preventing it from ever reaching its nutritional potential.

This spring and summer visit a few of the area’s farms, farmers markets, farm stands, and local meat producers. Some farms will even let you pick your own fruit!

Creighton Model of Natural Family Planning Sessions

Sisters of Charity Hospital • June 27, Aug. 22 and Sept. 26
Mercy Hospital • July 18, Aug. 12 and Sept. 19
Mt. St. Mary’s Hospital • June 18, July 16 and Aug. 20
Call Mary Zablocki at 862-1944 for more details.

Our Roots, Our Mission, Our Promise of Excellence

www.chsbuffalo.org
Mercy Hospital Declares Independence from Smoking on the Fourth of July

Along with celebrating our nation's independence, Mercy Hospital of Buffalo will declare "Independence from Smoking" as the hospital plans to become a smoke-free campus on July 4, 2009. The new smoke-free policy will cover all hospital property and off-site locations, including all buildings, parking areas, cars parked on hospital property, grounds, and adjacent sidewalks.

"As a healthcare provider committed to improving the health of our patients and our community, we are joining other Catholic Health facilities in taking this important step in the fight against heart and lung disease by becoming a smoke-free campus," said C.J. Urlaub, Mercy Hospital President and CEO. Currently, Kenmore Mercy Hospital, Sisters of Charity Hospital and the Nazareth Campus are smoke-free facilities in Catholic Health.

Over the next few weeks, leading up to the smoke-free effective date, Mercy Hospital will continue to offer free smoking cessation classes and other initiatives to help staff adjust to the new policy and provide them with an opportunity to kick the habit permanently.

Mercy's current smoking policy allows smoking in designated areas outside of the hospital. "A committee of associates worked hard over the last several months to prepare for this change in our smoking policy," Urlaub continued. "We felt it was critical to get the input from our own staff. We also recognize and look forward to joining the many other organizations, restaurants, airlines and public facilities in our community that have gone before us to institute no-smoking policies."

Cardiac Rehab Gets Results

Over the past few years, cardiac rehab programs across the region and New York State have closed or downsized due to low reimbursement rates. In Catholic Health, the outpatient Cardiac Rehabilitation program at Mercy Hospital closed on May 8, leaving Sisters Hospital the only Cardiac Rehab provider in our system.

Since it opened in 1981, Sisters Hospital Cardiac rehabilitation and Wellness Program has a history of helping people get heart healthy.

Chuck Bloom, a 78-year-old Hamburg resident, suffered a heart attack in 1987 and was advised to begin cardiac rehab at Sisters Hospital. Today, 21 years later, Chuck is dedicated to staying healthy and exercises three times a week under the supervision of Eileen Pataki, Cardiac Rehab nurse at Sisters, and her team.

"Cardiac Rehab gets you back to living again," said Chuck. "All the nurses here are great and they really motivate you." The comprehensive Cardiac Rehab Program at Sisters Hospital uses a two-phase approach to help those recovering from many forms of heart disease.

Phase two (phase one begins in the hospital following a cardiac event) involves supervised exercise and participants are taught lifestyle changes for healthier living. Phase three emphasizes an exercise program and maintaining a physically active lifestyle.

Chuck has some advice for anyone who suffers from a heart disorder. "Check with your doctor and definitely do cardiac rehab when you get the OK," he adds. "You won't be sorry you did."

Continuing Care Receives Fall Prevention Grant

Preventing falls among the sick and elderly is an important priority for Catholic Health's Continuing Care Division. To help support this effort, Continuing Care was recently awarded a $25,000 grant from the Community Health Foundation of Western and Central New York as part of the Falls Prevention Collaborative to Benefit Older Adults.

"As a healthcare provider committed to improving the health of our patients and our community, we are joining other Catholic Health facilities in taking this important step in the fight against heart and lung disease by becoming a smoke-free campus," said C.J. Urlaub, Mercy Hospital President and CEO. Currently, Kenmore Mercy Hospital, Sisters of Charity Hospital and the Nazareth Campus are smoke-free facilities in Catholic Health.

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(continued)
Kenmore Mercy Introduces Robotic Knee Surgery

Already among the top hospitals in New York State for joint replacement, Kenmore Mercy, recently acquired a MAKO medical robotic knee surgery system. The MAKO system uses a robotic arm and special visualization technology to prepare the knee joint for a minimal-incision unicompartmental (mini-knee) resurfacing operation, originally developed by Kenmore Mercy’s own John Repicci, D.D.S., M.D. Targeted toward patients with early- to mid-stage osteoarthritis, the surgery resurfaces the diseased portion of the knee, sparing healthy bone tissue.

Up until recently, the surgical approach for arthritic knees had been to replace the entire knee joint, which is comprised of three compartments. Often, surgeons are unable to create a specific compartment manually, and therefore replace the entire knee.

By using the MAKOplasty® robotic technology to replicate the unicompartmental resurfacing operation perfected by Dr. Repicci, hospitals across the United States are saving thousands of dollars and patients are able to postpone and potentially eliminate the need for a full knee replacement. In many cases, patients are permitted to walk soon after surgery, drive a car within two weeks and return to normal daily activities shortly thereafter.

Sisters Expands Bariatric Surgery to Canadians

While thousands of patients throughout Western New York are realizing their weight loss goals and living healthier lives, the Bariatric Surgery Program at Sisters of Charity Hospital, is expanding services to meet the increased demand for weight loss surgery.

During the past year, Dr. Joseph Caruana, founder of Synergy Bariatrics and Chief of Bariatric Surgery at Sisters Hospital, has added Dr. James Viglianco and Dr. Dang Tuan Pham to his medical team. Dr. Viglianco specializes in the LapBand procedure. Synergy Bariatrics was also named a preferred provider by the Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP) in Canada. The Ontario government selected Synergy and Sisters Hospital because it is a Bariatric Center of Excellence. These services will now be covered by OHIP for Ontario patients undergoing bariatric surgery at Sisters Hospital.

To complement its nationally-recognized care, Sisters is the only area hospital with a dedicated bariatric wing and specialized medical equipment to meet the unique needs of bariatric patients.

St. Vincent de Paul Summer Camp

St. Vincent de Paul Summer Camp, located on the shores of Lake Erie in Angola, N.Y., is accepting applications for its overnight and day camps. The camp is open to boys and girls, ages 8-13. The summer camp session runs for six weeks starting July 12 & 13. Campers have a wide variety of activities to choose from, including swimming in a heated pool or at the beach, crafts, nature walks, basketball, and soccer or dodgeball on the camp’s large sports field.

St. Vincent de Paul’s Summer Camp was a recipient of Catholic Health’s Believe in Giving Campaign and welcomes children of Catholic Health associates. Financial assistance is available. For an application or registration information, please call 882-3160 ext. 7 or download an application online at www.svdpwny.org.

Partners In Rehab MRU at Kenmore Mercy Receives National Ranking

The Partners In Rehab Medical Rehabilitation Unit (MRU) at Kenmore Mercy Hospital has been ranked in the top 10 percent of 813 qualifying inpatient rehabilitation facilities (IPR) in the United States for 2008 by the Buffalo-based Uniform Data System for Medical Rehabilitation (UDSMR).

"To be recognized in the top 10 percent is a significant achievement for our Partners In Rehab MRU team," said Christina Sage, Vice President of Rehabilitation Services for Catholic Health. "At Partners In Rehab we recognize the importance of measuring the quality of our medical rehabilitation service and have used outcome measurement tools for over 20 years."

The rankings are determined by UDSMR’s program evaluation model (PEM), a tool that identifies and recognizes facilities that perform at a consistently high level. The goal of the PEM report card is to recognize high-performing facilities that deliver high quality care that is effective, efficient, timely, and patient-centered.

"When patients experience hip fractures, strokes or other neurological impairments, our goal is to provide them with the highest quality rehabilitation services and person-centered care in a setting that offers them the best opportunity to maximize their recovery," added Angelo Ventrenga, Director of Partners In Rehab MRU. "Our Medical Rehabilitation Units at Kenmore Mercy, which was recognized by UDSMR, and Mercy Hospital of Buffalo, offer this specialization.

The Partners In Rehab MRU at Kenmore Mercy Hospital ranked in the 94th percentile of 813 inpatient rehabilitation facilities throughout the country.

Catholic Health Primary Care has a Doctor that is Right for You

This past March, Dr. Vincent Carfagna closed his primary care practice in East Aurora to join Catholic Health’s Chestnut Ridge Family Practice in Orchard Park. A well-known physician in the East Aurora community, with his Marcus Welby-style and quaint, home-like office to match, Dr. Carfagna joined Catholic Health’s Primary Care Services to begin his transition into semi-retirement.

In typical fashion, he spent the last day in his East Aurora office seeing patients, having lunch with staff and professional colleagues, and reminiscing about a medical career that has spanned more than 46 years. And just like Dr. Carfagna’s small-town charm, his office looked like something from days gone by, with its wooden exam tables and antique medical furniture. He has collected throughout the years.

Not yet ready to give up his medical career, Dr. Carfagna has found a perfect home at Chestnut Ridge Family Practice. With Chestnut Ridge’s growing number of physicians and commitment to quality care, Dr. Carfagna is able to light his love while ensuring his patients continue to receive the best care possible.

The same can be true for you and your family. With more than 40 physicians working at 14 primary care centers throughout Western New York, Catholic Health Primary Care has a doctor that is right for you. “We have made finding a primary care physician quick and easy,” said Mike Riley, Vice President of Primary Care Services. “Over the last few years, we have recruited a number of family practice, pediatric, internal medicine and OB-GYN specialists who are accepting new patients.”

For more information on Catholic Health’s Primary Care Services or finding a doctor that is right for you, call HealthConnection at 447-6205.

Sleep Disorders Are Nothing to Snooze About

According to the National Sleep Foundation, over 70 million Americans suffer from sleep problems, with the majority of these sleep disorders going undiagnosed and untreated.

While May is Better Sleep Month, Catholic Health offers sleep testing and treatment services throughout the year at SleepCare, a fully accredited sleep center by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine, at Sisters Hospital, St. Joseph Campus, and Mercy Hospital’s Sleep Lab for the study of sleep-related breathing disorders. “There are about 100 different sleep disorders that can be diagnosed with the help of a sleep study and evaluation by a sleep disorders specialist,” said Dr. Francis Augustine, a Mercy Hospital pulmonologist board certified in sleep medicine.

“One of the most common sleep disorders is sleep apnea, which is a breathing disorder that affects the flow of air in and out of the lungs,” Dr. Augustine continued. “If left untreated, sleep apnea can lead to heart disease, stroke, and high blood pressure.”

When someone displays symptoms of a sleep disorder, their primary care physician may make a referral for an overnight sleep study. During the study, patients are carefully monitored to measure stages of sleep, heart rhythm, respiratory movement, airflow, leg movement, and oxygen levels in the blood.

People with sleep disorders, such as sleep apnea, often complain of fatigue, low energy and a poor quality of life,” said Dr. Alexander Gelfer, Medical Director of SleepCare. “The good news is that with proper diagnosis and treatment, we can change the lives of people with sleep disorders.”

For more information on the sleep testing service available at Catholic Health, call Mercy Hospital’s Sleep Disorders Lab at 828-2335, or SleepCare at St. Joseph Campus at 891-2782.
Steel Work Begins on New Mercy ER

Progress on Mercy Hospital’s Emergency Department of the future continues as the construction project entered Phase II, with the arrival of the steel beams in early May. According to Mike Flannery, Project Director from The Pike Company, the steel work is expected to be completed by early summer. Because there is a great deal of welding that occurs in this phase of the project, he issued a reminder to onlookers that as a precaution to avoid eye damage, it is not recommended to stare at the flashpoint of the welding.

Preparation work on the Ford Addition of Mercy Hospital, which was the hospital’s center front entrance many years ago, began in late April. The Ford Addition will be incorporated into the new ER design. Expected to be completed in Spring 2010, the $32 million ER construction project will result in a 46,000 square-foot addition to the front of the hospital.

Cambodian Mission Patient on the Road to Recovery

Makara Tuan walked unassisted to her seat on a flight home to Cambodia this past April after undergoing extensive surgery at Kenmore Mercy and weeks of physical therapy at the hospital’s Williamsville Diagnostic Center. What makes this story more remarkable is that only a month earlier, she used crutches to navigate through her tiny village of Svay Rolom and risked losing her leg to a rare bone disease.

First discovered by the medical missionary group, Operation Renewed Hope (ORH) at a medical clinic in Cambodia, Makara’s right leg was so badly diseased she could break it simply by walking on it. Doctors diagnosed her with an aneurysmal bone cyst and determined that to prevent the eventual amputation of her leg, she needed extensive surgery and rehabilitation.

After several American physicians declined to perform the surgery, Deborah Franco of Lockport heard the story and approached the patient’s chart. Dr. Andrew Cappuccino, who along with the rest of the team, was operating on the patient’s leg, took on the case. Franco credited everything coming together to the work of God. “It is a miracle,” she said, “the whole thing, from start to finish.”

Mercy Hospital’s Go Green Committee Holds Neighborhood Clean Sweep

Mercy Hospital staff and members of the BCLA (Belvedere, Chautauqua, Lorain, Albion) Block Club, teamed up to clean the neighborhood surrounding the hospital on April 25, in recognition of Earth Week 2009. About 25 volunteers put their brooms and rakes to work for the first-ever Mercy Neighborhood Clean Sweep.

“For our first effort, I thought everything went very smoothly and we collected a lot of garbage,” said Peggy Jetter, Coordinator of the Neighborhood Clean Sweep, Chair of Mercy Hospital’s Go Green Committee, and Director of Imaging Services at the hospital. “I was particularly impressed with how everybody pitched in, worked hard, helped each other, and needed little direction. Overall, it was a great team effort.”

Mike Shedler, President of the BCLA Block Club, agreed with Jetter as he expressed his thanks to the hospital for organizing the cleanup. “I just can’t believe it. We were so thrilled to hear about the project,” he said. “It is a big help to us since most of our block club members and residents are elderly. It was a wonderful and well-organized community event.”

The Mercy Hospital Go Green Committee coordinated the Clean Sweep as a way for staff to celebrate Earth Week, but also to give back to the hospital’s neighborhood.

Culture of Safety: Patient Safety Expectations Prevent Errors

In 2008, patient safety expectations for all Catholic Health associates, leaders and medical staff were introduced. It is well documented that when the patient safety expectations listed below are met, serious medical errors that cause patient harm can be prevented:

- Pay attention to details
- Communicate clearly and directly and perform effective handoffs
- Have a questioning attitude
- Work together with your team
- Follow the rules

Leading by Example

Nicole Johnson and Sherri Kopinski, registered nurses at the St. Joseph Campus, followed the rules, paid attention to details, and had questioning attitudes. Their use of patient safety expectations prevented what could have been a serious patient identification error related to a blood transfusion.

In this case, a patient came to St. Joseph for an outpatient transfusion. Patient Registration mistakenly used the medical record number of a patient with the same name, but a different date of birth. When the patient arrived on the nursing unit to begin the transfusion, Nicole and Sherri followed the procedure to involve the patient in the care process by asking for her date of birth. When this did not match what was on the patient’s chart, Nicole and Sherri paid attention to the details and questioned Patient Registration. The error was immediately corrected and blood for the type and cross-match was re-drawn.

Although this error was caught early in the process and the mistake was avoided, an occurrence report was filed. There are plenty of lessons to be learned and opportunities for improvement from this single event. Reporting potential errors on occurrence reports is an opportunity to improve patient safety.

Catholic Health hospitals noted a 14 percent increase in the number of occurrence reports from 2007 to 2008. This is a positive response to an improved Culture of Safety and we encourage staff to continue to report unexpected events as a way to identify opportunities to improve the care we provide to our patients.

Be a Safe Care Champion!

Your efforts to improve patient safety have led to great stories like the one in this article. To strengthen our Culture of Safety even more, it’s important that we get your continued feedback and suggestions to see how far we’ve come and what we can do to become even safer. Catholic Health will be conducting its second Culture of Patient Safety Survey from June 15 - June 28. The Quality Department will be sending out additional information about the survey and how you can be eligible for prizes by participating. Your continued support is appreciated as we continue to assure the safety of every patient we serve.
Our Roots, Our Mission, Our Promise of Excellence

LOVE Award & Kudos Winners

The Annual LOVE Award Breakfast for the 2008 recipients and nominees took place on Friday, May 9 in the Home Care Conference Center. Nineteen Home Care associates were honored during the breakfast. Each received a fleece jacket in gratitude for their exemplary work. Joyce Kiewicz, Home Care President and CEO, and Mark Sullivan, Catholic Health Executive Vice President and COO, thanked the associates for their efforts on behalf of our clients.

Sue Hagner, RN, from McAuley Seton Home Care, and Jerilyn Beutner, home health aide from Mercy Home Care, are the recipients of the 2009 first quarter LOVE Award in Home Care.

Laurie Kinsella, from McAuley Seton Home Care was the winner of the KUDOS movie quiz for February and Sandra Williams was March’s KUDOS movie quiz winner.

Home Care Auction/Bake Sale

The spring Auction/Bake Sale, held in March, netted over $2,200 for Home Care’s Mission Fund which is used throughout the year to assist clients, families, caregivers, and associates in need. Thank you to everyone who participated in and supported this important event.

Mission Activities

The Home Care Pharmacy was dedicated on May 27. Leadership and associates gathered to bless and dedicate this new service for Home Care patients.

Corporate Compliance

Offers Language Assistance Services

Imagine you are vacationing in a foreign country where no one speaks your language. You become ill and are taken to a medical facility. The foreign doctors and nurses begin examining you to try to determine your medical condition. Although you are desperately trying to communicate that you have a stomach illness, a nurse continues to grab your right ankle and touch your legs. Although you continue to communicate your needs, it appears no one understands.

While this scenario may seem remote to some, there are over 44 million American immigrants in the United States, who may be subjected to similar situations in our nation’s hospitals. Numerous studies have found that language barriers can negatively affect quality and access to care, resulting in a growing demand for formal language assistance programs.

Our Catholic Health Values affirm our commitment to treat all people with Reverence, Compassion, Justice and Excellence. Our Language Assistance Program (LAP) ensures patients with language barriers are identified and provided with assistance, such as a language interpreter, so they can effectively communicate with our associates and physicians. This program, which improves patient care and satisfaction, is outlined in the policy, Language Assistance for Limited English Proficient (LEP) Persons and Hearing Impaired.

You can help ensure that our patients are aware of this FREE service by using the LAP posters and tools available throughout Catholic Health and by attending educational and training sessions. Language assistance coordinators, as well as nursing supervisors, are also available to answer questions regarding language interpretation or sign language services.

Brenda Cramer, RN, MSCRN, Kenmore Mercy Hospital

Focused on best practice and positive patient outcomes, Brenda Cramer, RN, MSCRN, is a leader on the med-surg unit at Kenmore Mercy Hospital, a unit that includes the hospital’s certified stroke beds and hospice suites. In the early stages of the hospital’s stroke program, Brenda was an active member of the interdisciplinary stroke team and shared her expertise in stroke care as a presenter at the 2008 International Stroke Conference. She demonstrates a continuing interest in professional growth and development. While attending Niagara University to obtain a BSN degree, Brenda is also preparing to take the oncology certification exam. Her commitment to embrace new technologies and challenges is evident in everything she does.

Anne Marie Bugenhagen, RN, BSN, Mercy Hospital of Buffalo

A role model for the nursing profession, Anne Marie Bugenhagen, RN, provides valuable guidance and support to her fellow nurses and nursing assistants on 6 McAuley West. In addition to her excellent nursing skills and leadership qualities, Anne Marie is also known for her compassion and dedication to both her patients and their loved ones. Her efforts have been recognized by many thank you letters, and in 2008, she received the “Angel of Mercy” pins, a special recognition from the Mercy Hospital Foundation. Anne Marie started her nursing career in 2004 as a nurse assistant. She graduated from Erie Community College’s nursing program in 2005 and received her BSN Degree from Daemen College in 2007.

Diane Clark, RN, BSN, Sisters of Charity Hospital

A role model and inspiration to others, Diane Clark, RN, BSN, is dedicated to her patients, her peers, and her profession. She began her career at Sisters Hospital 28 years ago as an LPN. She became a registered nurse in 1996, received her BSN Degree from Daemen College in 2006, and is presently pursuing her master’s degree in nursing education. In 2002, she became the Surgical Unit charge nurse, teaching and mentoring new graduate nurses. Today, in addition to her work at Sisters Hospital, she educates nurses of the future as a part-time instructor at Niagara County Community College. She is an active member of the Professional Nurses Association of WNY, serving as co-chair of the membership committee and chair of the nominating committee.

Kathy Avino, RN, MSN, Sisters of Charity Hospital, St. Joseph Campus

For Kathy Avino, nursing comes from the heart. As the cardiac advisor for Sisters of Charity Hospital, St. Joseph Campus, Kathy uses her expertise to educate cardiac and stroke patients and their families about the disease processes. Part of the patient care management team, Kathy is looked on as a leader in both surgical and medical settings. She also served as the stroke coordinator for St. Joseph Campus, creating a stroke book for the nursing staff and arranging monthly mock stroke codes. Kathy will soon share the knowledge and expertise she has gained during her 30-year nursing career with fellow staff at Sisters of Charity Hospital, where she has accepted a position as nurse manager of 3 South, a medical teaching/telemetry unit.

Patricia Dean, RN, Home Care

For the past 10 years, Patricia Dean, RN, has served as an exceptional community health nurse for McAuley Seton Home Care, a division of Catholic Health Home Care. Her nursing career has provided Pat with opportunities to expand her clinical knowledge and showcase her leadership skills as a shift supervisor and unit manager in a long-term care center, as well as a supervisor of a licensed nursing agency. As a co-worker, Pat is dedicated, caring and professional. As a nurse, she continually provides quality, individualized patient care and is an inspiration to others. As a preceptor, she is a role model for new associates, sharing her clinical experience, organizational and communication skills, and her thorough knowledge of home care regulations.

Susan K. Mutton, RN, Home Care

Through 32 years of service, Susan Mutton as a registered nurse, has exemplified professionalism and commitment to patient care. Her career has given her many experiences in various fields of practice, including roles as a private duty nurse, clinical instructor, ER and critical care nurse, and discharge planner. As a lead nurse on the cardiac care team at McAuley Seton Home Care, a division of Catholic Health Home Care, she acts as a preceptor to the staff and mentors student nurses from area colleges. Susan’s work illustrates the art as well as the science of nursing care. Often the only daily or weekly contact for her homebound patients, she not only provides needed nursing care, but also important social support.

www.chsbuffalo.org
Around the System...

Theresa Amborski, RD, CNSD, registered diettian and Clinical Nutrition Manager at Mercy Hospital of Buffalo, was selected as the 2009 Young Dietitian of the Year by the NYS Dietetic Association. The award recognizes the accomplishments of registered dietitians under the age of 35 who demonstrate leadership and community involvement.

Marty Boryszak has been named Director of Financial Services for Sisters of Charity Hospital. Marty holds an MBA from St. Bonaventure University and a bachelor’s degree from the State University of New York at Buffalo. Most recently, he served as Corporate Financial Transportation Manager for United Parcel Service. In his new role at Catholic Health, Marty will be responsible for financial services on the two campuses of Sisters Hospital, working in conjunction with the Finance Department.

Catholic Health Home Care was a finalist in this year’s Best Places to Work in Western New York. Home Care was honored during a luncheon sponsored by Business First on March 26. Home Care’s Staff Practice Committee submitted the nomination.

Continuing Care welcomes Karen Hughes back to Catholic Health as Director of Outpatient Rehabilitation Services. Karen is a graduate of Ithaca College and holds a master’s degree in Health Service Administration from D’Youville College. Early in her career, she worked for McAuley Seton Home Care and AthletiCare at Kenmore Mercy Hospital as a physical therapist and certified athletic trainer. Most recently, she owned a private physical therapy practice in Batavia. In her new role, Karen will have direct oversight for all outpatient and sports outreach services.

Amy Kirsch has been named Web Coordinator for Catholic Health. Most recently, Amy served as an account coordinator with Advanced Marketing Direct in Buffalo. Amy will be responsible for the continued maintenance and development of our website, including content, applications, and functionality.

Tisha Luciani has been named Director of Financial Services for Kenmore Mercy Hospital. She comes from Kaleida Health, where she served as a business advisor and budget analyst. Tisha received her MBA from St. Bonaventure University and a bachelor’s degree from the State University of New York at Buffalo. She will be responsible for financial operations at Kenmore Mercy, working closely with the system Finance team.

Julie Mungo has been named Recruiter for Catholic Health’s Corporate Division. She holds an MBA from St. Bonaventure University and has over six years of experience in recruitment and retention. She recently served as Recruiter for Kenmore Mercy, responsible for recruiting over 200 associates and reducing RN vacancies at the hospital by 48 percent in 2008.

Congratulations to Krista Nati, Creative Services Specialist. Her design for the benefit enrollment/new hire packet won a merit award in the Healthcare Marketing Awards. In the Astor Awards, Krista’s design for the orientation folder won a bronze award and her design for the Go Green logo won a gold award. The Healthcare Marketing Awards and the Astor Awards showcase the best in marketing initiatives across the nation.

Partners In Rehab and AthletiCare are pleased to announce the promotion of Carol Olt to Business Manager for Outpatient Rehab. Since 2001, she has been the Supervisor of Support Services. Carol will work with the system revenue management team to optimize reimbursement for Outpatient Rehab services.

Equinox Update

Soarian Financials Live!

After many years of hard work and a tremendous amount of effort in redesigning dozens of internal processes, the Soarian Financial Team successfully implemented Soarian Financials at Sisters of Charity Hospital, St. Joseph Campus on April 1, 2009. The implementation coincided with the merger of Sisters and St. Joseph hospitals, which made the task even more challenging.

“Our team did a tremendous job in making this happen,” said JoAnn Ormond, Soarian Financial Project Manager. “This has been a long process, but the team has been resilient and determined.”

Once fully implemented, Soarian Financials will be the first common business software platform for all four hospital campuses. The St. Joseph campus implementation went very well, with only minor slowdowns in patient registration on the first day. Much like the Soarian Clinical implementations, the team will take lessons learned to make the next implementation at Sisters of Charity Hospital (Main Street) even better.

Soarian EDM System Introduced

Soarian Electronic Document Management (EDM), an enhanced health information management tool, has recently been introduced at both campuses of Sisters of Charity Hospital. A significant feature of Soarian EDM is that it enables electronic signatures for physicians. This means that physicians can now complete patient charts with a few simple clicks of a mouse. Because the process is electronic, the reports can be signed from anywhere a physician has secure internet access, including home and office locations. This should provide faster, more efficient chart completion, which in turn, has a positive impact on revenue.
Identifying Your Asthma Triggers

Do you or a loved one suffer from asthma? The Catholic Health Benefits Division would like to provide the following information to help you and your family members avoid common asthma triggers this allergy season and promote better health and wellness among all our associates.

Asthma is a chronic (long-lasting) illness that affects the respiratory system. It causes inflammation in bronchial tubes that carry air to the lungs. This inflammation can make your bronchial tubes overreact to certain asthma triggers. This can lead to decreased lung function, sudden difficulty breathing, and other symptoms of an asthma attack.

If you avoid these triggers, you can prevent or reduce the frequency and severity of asthma attacks. Identify your asthma triggers by monitoring your breathing around common allergens and by being tested for allergies.

If you have allergies, exposure to the trigger can cause an allergic reaction or asthma attack. A mild attack can usually be controlled with medications, while a severe attack may mean you will have to go to the hospital.

What are asthma triggers? Some triggers are substances (allergens) you may be allergic to, such as dust mites, animal dander, indoor mold, and pollen. Other triggers are not allergens, but they can cause the same types of asthma symptoms. These may include:

- Cigarette smoke and air pollution
- Upper respiratory infections such as colds, influenza (flu), and sinusitis
- Exercise (many people with asthma have symptoms when they exercise)
- Dry, cold air
- Medicines, such as beta-blockers, aspirin, and other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs)
- In adults, hormones, including those involved in pregnancy and menstrual cycles
- Gastrointestinal reflux disease (GERD) - some experts believe GERD makes asthma worse

Identifying asthma triggers is a key step in managing your lung disease and can provide you with important information to discuss with your doctor or healthcare provider. If you would like to know more about services within Catholic Health to monitor and manage asthma and other chronic lung conditions, call HealthConnection at 447-6205.