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For the Week of October 19, 2009

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## **LMHS Wins VHA Southeast Award!**

Late last week, LMHS received a 2009 Bright Ideas Award from VHA Southeast. Our System was recognized as the top health system in the category of Financial/Operational Improvement for our Cost Savings/Revenue Enhancement initiative that we launched last year, which resulted in \$65 million in cost savings and revenue enhancement. This hard work on everyone's part helped strengthen our system for the current year and beyond.

VHA is a nationwide network of community-owned hospitals and their affiliated physicians who are striving to be leaders in their fields by improving community health, clinical effectiveness and operational efficiency. VHA Southeast is made up of hospitals in Florida, Alabama and the Virgin Islands.

This isn't the first time that VHA Southeast has recognized LMHS! Our health system previously brought home two Bright Ideas Awards: an Operational/Financial Improvement award for our W.A.V.E. project focused on reducing waste and improving patient care, and a Safety Improvement award for our On-Boarding employee orientation program, which is still reducing voluntary employee turnover rates!

Way to go, team!

## **Capacity Management Work Team is Helping LMHS Get Prepared for Season**

The awards mentioned above are great honors for our health system, as well as proof that we are continually searching for ways to improve the quality of care and operational effectiveness of LMHS. These awards also show that our dedicated and determined employees really do pull together, work hard and succeed with teamwork!

That is why I was not at all surprised to see that our Capacity Management Work Team, which is one of our key Performance Improvement initiatives, has already made significant strides to improve patient capacity management at all of our acute care hospitals, just in time for our annual influx of "snowbirds."

Our Capacity Management Team was charged with finding ways to increase the number of patient beds throughout LMHS without actually building new beds. So far, the Team has come up with the equivalent of 70 additional patient beds, which came about through a variety of methods:

- The Team has focused on reducing unnecessary admissions by bringing Case Managers and Social Workers back into each of our Emergency Departments to help with patient flow.

- They have arranged for an additional 24 Medical-Surgical beds to be available at Cape Coral Hospital, as well as an additional 16 beds in The Children's Hospital of Southwest Florida's expanded operation at CCH.
- And they converted 48 beds (16 each at CCH, HealthPark Medical Center and Lee Memorial Hospital) into telemetry-capable beds, making them more widely available to ED patients. All of the beds at Gulf Coast Medical Center are telemetry-capable.

Considering that it costs more than \$1 million to "build" one hospital bed (facility with support services, if building under new construction), the Capacity Management Team has saved LMHS about \$70 million by making the best use of our staff and resources. But more importantly, the Team has helped to ensure that 70 additional patient beds will be available to our patients, from the youngest to the most senior, during this very busy time of year!

This is just one of several ways that our Performance Improvement Committee is striving to ensure that we meet our performance improvement priority goals for 2009-2010. In the weeks to come, I look forward to telling you more about performance improvement, as well as our other key system priorities for this year.

Judging by the success of our past, I know that we will achieve our performance goals, such as strengthening patient safety and improving patient experiences. Thank you for all that you do, each day and night, to make LMHS the best possible health system for our patients, our employees and our community!

### **Fill Out the Employee Satisfaction Survey by Oct. 23**

This is the last week for employees to fill out the online Employee Satisfaction survey.

This 100 percent confidential survey is your chance to tell us what you think about your work environment, leaders and more! The survey is available to all LMHS employees through Oct. 23. There is a direct link to the survey on the IntraLee site.

If you do not have computer access, you can use a computer in the Medical Library at any time. Contact the LMHS Security department if you need access after regular business hours.

We take the feedback from this completely confidential survey very seriously and have demonstrated our willingness in past years to fulfill as many of the recommendations made by employees as we could. Please take a few moments to provide us with this valuable information, so we can ensure that your workplace is the best that it can be for you and for everyone!

Peace,



Jim Nathan  
President, Lee Memorial Health System