

## From the Editors:

### A Nurse's View

**Mary Ann Bresnock RN BSN** Member Children's Hospital Safety and Quality Committee



Quality is the result of care and nurses are critical to a hospital's delivery of excellent care. As nursing professionals we all want to promote a safe and healthy work environment and provide the best possible care for our patients. Here are some of the many tools available to us to improve care.

Effective communication is crucial to a culture of nursing excellence. It's all about communication; to administration, physicians, nurses and all members of the Interdisciplinary team. Another part of communication is the development of effective procedures for reporting both successes and errors.

Employees of the Children's Hospital are invited to Town Hall Meetings and encouraged to interact. We celebrate when we recognize our own staff members and we learn what's new within our hospital. This communication offers the potential to improve patient care. Learning from other nurses and other units is a hallmark of excellence.

Quality of care also can be a direct result of nursing input and research and we have many signposts to guide us. Safety Indicators, such as medication errors and occurrence reports, are adverse outcomes that should be reduced or prevented. Quality Indicators, such as the Press Ganey patient satisfaction reports deal with the care processes that should be present in all of our encounters.

National Database of Nursing Quality Indicators, is the only national nursing quality measurement program that provides hospitals with unit level performance reports with comparisons to national averages. Having national benchmarks is invaluable in motivating nursing improvements. Through leadership and unit based councils, unit level performance reports and indicators are analyzed and different courses of action are discussed.

Working with children is extremely rewarding. We can give the frailest preterm infant and the most critically ill pediatric patients a better chance at life. Dedication to quality of care is a forward movement. We know that an occasional look back can actually bolster our conviction to push forward and remain relevant. When we look over our shoulders it's amazing to

see how much we have accomplished within our own Children's Hospital;

## Update- The New Children's Hospital

**Gil Pak** Operations Director, Department of Pediatrics

With the approval in November 2009 by the Hospital and University Boards, the new, free-standing, children's hospital will soon be a reality. A dream for so many years, and then a reality put on hold last November due to the credit market collapse, the recent approval lays the foundation for a new facility to serve the children of Central Pennsylvania. Plans call for the building to be complete in the Fall of 2012. This five-story building will bring together all inpatient care for children on this campus; as well also some limited outpatient services (Peds Hem/Onc and same-day surgeries). Continuing our tradition of working with local hospitals and physicians the new Children's Hospital will have more intensive and intermediate care beds to accommodate the increased numbers and higher acuity of our referral population.



The new building will realize our long-held vision for a child- and family-focused facility. All rooms will house a single patient and will be significantly larger than our current rooms, large enough to accommodate additional medical equipment as well as the ability to have both parents sleep at the bedside.

Other amenities within the hospital will focus on serving our patients. With a theme of "healing through nature", the design and visual aspects of the building will reflect the flora and fauna of our region-inviting those who enter to engage in distraction, learning, and healing through a soothing environment. There will be gardens and play areas and the lobby will contain an informal performance space as well as hands-on, child-friendly exhibits.

A sturdy foundation is being poured to support the addition of 3 additional floors on top of the planned building. Over time,

as the needs of the community dictate, this building will serve as the base of an even larger structure that will allow us to meet our goal of continued service to our community.

## Focus Groups Identify “Three C’s” As Key Measures of Healthcare Quality

*Communication, compassion and cleanliness are determining factors for consumers*

**Sean Young**, Director, Strategic Services

This past spring, Penn State Hershey Medical Center retained an independent firm to conduct consumer focus groups to help select its new advertising campaign concept. Nearly 160 individuals from seven Central Pennsylvania counties took part in the focus groups in which participants were asked a series of qualitative questions about their health care preferences and perceptions.

For the first hour of the two-hour sessions respondents had no knowledge that the focus groups, which were conducted at off-site locations, had been convened by Penn State Hershey Medical Center.

Respondents overwhelmingly selected Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center as the hospital with the region’s best doctors, nurses and technology. Nearly 60 percent of respondents identified Penn State Hershey as the first provider they think of when it comes to treating children. (The next closest hospital earned less than 15 percent of responses).

When asked to rate which hospital they considered the best in the region, consumers not only indicated Penn State Hershey Medical Center was the top hospital, they did so by a significant margin with fifteen out of sixteen focus groups ranking the Medical Center number one. The results of the study also demonstrated substantial consumer recognition and positive regard for the Medical Center, as well as its physicians and nurses.



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An additional study, commissioned by 22 University Health-System Consortium (UHC) hospitals, including Penn State Hershey Medical Center, showed that consumers consider hospital cleanliness, compassionate treatment of patients and strong patient communication as the three biggest markers of hospital quality after physician reputations and “few medical errors”.

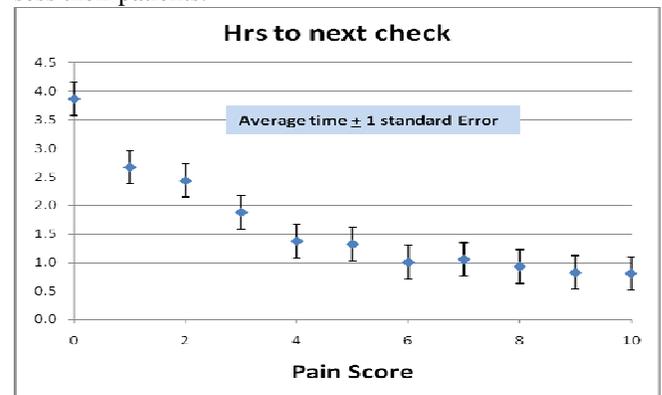
Penn State Hershey’s new ad campaign, *Good People, Great Medicine™*, was chosen by 74 percent of focus group respondents out of three different concepts developed over the past year. The concept was developed to address consumer preference for health care organizations that blend expertise in care delivery with compassion and good communication.

This study results show that consumers clearly identify Penn State Hershey Medical Center as a brand leader in health care innovation and expertise. The goal of the new campaign is to reinforce our leadership in these high tech aspects of care, while building consumer recognition of our high touch elements. Our new campaign places greater focus on our people, who are really the foundation of our brand.

## Pain Assessment and Treatment

**Steven J. Wassner, MD**, Physician-Leader, Quality and Safety Committee

As part of our attempts to limit pain within the Children’s Hospital we have been assessing our response to children in pain. Nurses are asked to assess their patient’s pain on at regular intervals and, of course, respond to those children who are uncomfortable. How well are we doing? Over the past several months we have been receiving monthly data reports detailing how often our pediatric nurses document pain and just as importantly, what they do about it and how soon do they reassess their patients.



The chart above noted the time to the next evaluation, after a previous pain score. For example, for nurses documenting a pain score of 6, the next evaluation takes place, on average 1 hour later. As can be seen, the more severe the pain, the closer the interval between evaluations with pain scores of 8-10 being evaluated less than one hour later. In addition to the evaluation, the nurses are documenting their methods of pain alleviation. Over 90% of the time, for children with high pain scores, opiates are prescribed and given to these severely ill patients. What is interesting is that it’s not just medication that our nurses provide. Comfort measures, distraction, deep breathing and other hands-on therapies are widely utilized to address the pain and discomfort. Our nurses’ combination of “high tech and high touch” exemplifies the communication and compassion we hope to provide throughout the Children’s Hospital. Keep up the good work...