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@ UH Heart and Soul

INSIDE THIS ISSUE
University Hospital faces a big challenge in the coming months as we prepare for our next hospital survey by The Joint Commission (TJC). Every single employee in every capacity at UH will need to be fully engaged in this process.

We expect a visit from the TJC in the first half of 2020. As those of you who have participated in past surveys know, this is a four-day process that requires months of advance participation. Rest assured: the surveyors will find issues, they always do. Our goal is to minimize the number of issues and to prevent any one of them from developing into a pattern.

Why is accreditation important? It assures our patient community of the quality and safety of care they can expect to receive here. Accreditation enables us to stay competitive in the healthcare marketplace. And it improves our management and reduction of risk. But one immediate reason stands above all others: without accreditation, our ability to continue participating in the Medicaid and Medicare programs which fund so much of our operations could be severely jeopardized.

The Joint Commission will assess our performance in key functional areas, such as patient rights, patient treatment, and infection control. The standards focus on the systems we put in place, but our actual patient outcomes will be measured as well. Performance measures, are essential to establish the credibility of the work we do.

The Quality and Patient Safety team is putting together our game plan to prepare for the survey and manage a command center when the surveyors come on site. You will be receiving guidance, education and training in the months ahead. Mock surveys and patient tracers will be conducted to enable us to flag potential issues. Documents and records will be assembled to have ready for the surveyors.

Our success will be determined by our ability to work as a team. That is going to require open communication by employees with their supervisors and with each other. It has been my initial priority as your President and CEO to begin establishing a culture of trust and respect to support open communication. I have impressed upon senior managers that rounding should not be reduced to a cosmetic exercise where the goal is simply to be seen visiting on a unit. Management needs to listen to what their employees are saying and to take action whenever possible.

I have every confidence in the professionalism and dedication of all of you. I have made it my goal to hear from you what you need to succeed. Some small changes have been implemented, and bigger plans are in the works. The TJC survey offers a valuable opportunity to accelerate change and get University Hospital on the move to a position of leadership in healthcare.
The Patient Experience Department at University Hospital includes a series of specific roles to fulfill its mission: To enhance the patient experience throughout the continuum of care.

“Our job requires us to see every patient as a complex individual with a constellation of factors that influence his/her experience and outcomes, rather than just not a diagnosis or a disease state,” said Chief Experience Officer Joan Dauhajre (second from right). “The patient’s experience reflects everything that touches or impacts them, including beyond the bedside.”

Members of the Patient Experience team, working with Anthony Lisske, Director, Patient Experience (center), spoke recently of their roles:

**Patient Relations** Megan Gargiulo, Manager (far right)

“Patient Representatives conduct proactive rounds in the Emergency Department and on inpatient units to address complaints in real time before they become a grievance. We act as the liaison between patient/family and the healthcare team to resolve issues of concern, communicating the voice of the patient in a collaborative relationship with our providers.”

**Guest Relations** Lawrenda Henry-Willis, Manager (second from left)

“Our team includes volunteers and interns who visit with patients to respond to their non-clinical needs, and customer service receptionists in the Main Lobby and ER to facilitate guest access. An important recent addition was the installation of the pCare in-room television service.”

**Language Services** Diely Martinez, Medical Interpreter (far left)

“Nearly half of Newark residents speak a language other than English in the home and have only limited ability to speak, read, write, or understand the English language. We provide staff interpreters, as well as over-the phone and video remote interpretation services to insure language does not serve as a barrier to quality care.”

**Chaplaincy Services** Helen Kurczynski, Manager (third from right)

“At University Hospital we are committed to caring for the whole person, and we recognize the role spirituality and religion play in our patients’ lives. As such our chaplaincy services team is available to all, and includes a staff chaplain, chaplain intern, and a small team of dedicated community clergy volunteers.”

Dauhajre said Patient Experience is “everything we do and how we do it. Patient experience reflects every single point of care that a patient touches, including when they first call up to make an appointment, and how we relate to them as individuals.”

“Being patient-centric,” she clarified, “means knowing that patient’s background so that we can better understand them.”
More than 2,000 UH employees were served up hamburgers, hot dogs, and chicken with all the fixings at this year’s Staff Appreciation Barbecue. Human Resources, Food and Nutrition, EMS, Support Services, the Hospital Auxiliary and many volunteer employees, including several members of the executive leadership team, staffed the serving stations and grills during the event.

Continuing a recent tradition, flu shots were administered to several hundred employees. Music accompanied the event and employees were able to get their pictures taken in a photo booth.
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University Hospital was proud to co-sponsor Newark’s 58th Annual Puerto Rican Day Parade held on Bloomfield Avenue. This year, the UH contingent rode aboard a float.

Puerto Rican Day is dedicated to create awareness about Puerto Rican history and the preservation of the island’s culture. The focus of this year’s parade was on heart disease awareness in the Porta Caribe region, the southern part of the island. The event included the Boricua Music Festival on Verona Avenue.
PUERTO RICAN DAY PARADE
New Jersey’s first successful transplantation of a machine-preserved liver was performed recently at University Hospital at the Center for Advanced Liver Diseases and Transplantation.

Known as portable hypothermic machine perfusion, this novel technology is designed to help improve transplant outcomes, including increasing the time surgeons have in determining an organ’s health and performance before a transplant, said Dr. James V. Guerrera, who led the liver transplant procedure.

Guarrera is the Center’s Program Director and Chief of the Liver Transplant and Hepatobiliary Surgery Division.

The transplant was part of a national multi-center clinical trial evaluating the effectiveness of hypothermic machine perfusion, including potential benefits for improving the recovery of donor livers and transplant patient health. Guerrera is Principal Investigator for the nationwide study.

“Dr. James Guerrera and the team at the University Hospital have done truly leading-edge clinical work in implementing ex vivo machine perfusion into our transplantation operations,” said Dr. Shereef Elnahal, CEO and President of University Hospital.

“We’re honored to be one of a select group of national clinical trial sites that is working on evaluating this important life-saving technology,” said Elnahal. “Dr. Guerrera’s extensive knowledge and experience in liver transplantation research and surgery will provide exciting new opportunities for the Center to make contributions to advancing the field of transplantation.”

Guarrera is a co-inventor of several medical technology patents, and he has helped pioneer important developments in the field of liver transplantation. His research has been widely published in peer-reviewed medical journals and prominently recognized by the American Society of Transplantation, the American Society of Transplant Surgeons, and the International Liver Transplantation Society. Throughout his career, he has also been awarded numerous scientific federal and foundation research grants.

“There is a very short window of time for a surgeon to safely recover a donated organ, determine its quality and viability, and then successfully transplant into a patient; every second counts,” Guerrera said. “Having new technology to potentially expand that crucial timeframe can be the determining factor in conducting a successful transplantation operation.”

The Center for Advanced Liver Diseases and Transplantation opened in 1989, becoming the first liver transplant center in New Jersey and one of the busiest in the nation. In addition to transplant operations, the Center provides a comprehensive multi-disciplinary approach for treatment of complex hepatobiliary disorders, such as: liver masses, Hepatitis C, bile duct and gall bladder abnormalities, fatty liver disease and portal hypertension.

“I’m grateful for the support from the hospital and our team that allows us to focus on incorporating new technology and advancements to improve the quality and safety of our work,” Guerrera said. “We look forward to more fully integrating ex vivo machine perfusion into our future clinical operations.”

Guarrera came to UH from Columbia University Irving Medical Center, where he served as Surgical Director of Adult Liver Transplantation for over a decade. Considered an international expert and pioneer in using novel technology to protect donated organs during transportation to the recipient for transplantation, Guerrera is a co-holder of seven patents.

“There are lot of opportunities to get more people transplanted in New Jersey,” he said. “In an era of increasing waitlists and relatively stagnant donation, we need to use novel strategies to maximize the opportunity to get people transplanted. My research has been to investigate and optimize novel techniques to expand the donor pool.”
COMMUNITY EVENTS

SEPSIS AWARENESS
UH took part in national Sepsis Awareness Day (September 13, 2019), as the Quality Improvement team visited units to raise awareness to the condition which can cause tissue damage, organ failure, amputations, and death. Sepsis is more likely to affect very young children, older adults, people with chronic illnesses, and those with weakened immune systems, but can affect anyone regardless of age or level of health.

LATINX CULTURAL EXTRAVAGANZA
University Hospital celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month (September 15-October 15) with a host of events, including a Latin Dance session in the cafeteria led by Newark’s “Smiling David.” Visitors and employees, including President and CEO Dr. Shereef Elnahal, took part in group lessons for Salsa, Bachata Merengue, AfroCaribbean and other dances.

INTERNATIONAL WALK TO SCHOOL DAY
University Hospital hosted International Walk to School Day events in Newark to promote pedestrian safety for local students, including a special looking at Marion P. Thomas Charter School PAC Academy where experts discussed the importance of walking to and from school safely.

“University Hospital has a responsibility to the Newark community, in not only addressing medical needs within our walls, but to reinforce health and wellness practices where Newark residents work, study, and live every day,” University Hospital President Dr. Shereef Elnahal. “We have folks from law enforcement here, we have people who are crossing guards, people who help kids in the streets, so each person has a different perspective about what they’ve seen that increases risks for kids.”

The UH contingent worked with more than 400 students from kindergarten to fourth grade to raise awareness around pedestrian issues and to identify safe routes between destinations. Demonstrations using props were conducted to illustrate real-life scenarios and the children met with emergency personnel who would help them if an accident were to occur.

“School-age children are vulnerable populations for pedestrian injuries especially in the city of Newark,” said Iesha Suber, injury prevention and outreach coordinator at University Hospital in Newark. “One critical thing that we try to teach the kids is to not be distracted when they’re crossing the street. So cellphones down, ear phones off, stopping at the curb, looking left, right, left.”

The students were provided reflective backpacks filled with educational materials on pedestrian safety.

“We are often concerned about heavy traffic, distracted drivers and preoccupied pedestrians,” Charter Schools Superintendent Robert Gregory said.

Dr. David H. Livingston, chief of the Trauma Division, who took part in the events, said, “In the worst-case scenario of a pedestrian injury, children can be left with lifelong physical impairments as well as emotional trauma from post-traumatic stress.”
OPEN ENROLLMENT
FOR PLAN YEAR 2020

October 1, 2019 — October 31, 2019

Eligible employees, please take this opportunity to make sure that you have the medical and dental plans that meet your health care needs and review the optional tax savings plans that will maximize your savings!

UH BENEFITS FAIR
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2019
10:00AM TO 4:00PM AT UH H-Level, Room 349/342

HR Benefits Services Staff, representatives from our health plans, investment providers and other vendors will be available to answer any questions you may have.

PLEASE JOIN US

For additional information regarding the fair or Open Enrollment, please visit our website at www.uhnj.org/hrweb or call Claudine Cruz-Green at (973) 972-0885 or Robin Hynes at (973) 972-4743 or Diane Wieckowski at (973) 972-3925