

# CONNECTIONS

A message from Bill Leaver to our leaders across Iowa Health System | August 2010



## Staying Connected

Welcome to Iowa Health System Connections, a monthly e-newsletter to share news from throughout the health system. Please forward this to others who may find it of interest. Thanks for all you do to help us achieve our Vision of delivering the Best Outcome Every Patient Every Time.



## Institute for Healthcare Improvement Taps Iowa Health System Performance Improvement Experts

Members of Iowa Health System's Center for Clinical Transformation are participating in an international steering committee that is helping to shape the Transformation Summit at the Institute for Healthcare Improvement's National Forum in December.

This annual event draws about 5,500 health care leaders from around the world and offers the best new ideas and tools to address issues most prevalent across the continuum of health care.

Iowa Health System is recognized as a leader in innovation and organizational transformation, and we're honored to help develop this event.

## Radiation Therapy at Trinity Regional Medical Center – Fort Dodge

Trinity Regional Medical Center will acquire the equipment necessary to provide radiation therapy for cancer patients.

The State Health Facilities Council acted favorably to Trinity's request to purchase the linear accelerator and CT simulator in Webster City from Mary Greeley Medical Center.

Currently, patients have to travel elsewhere in the state to receive the type of treatment made possible by this technology. About 80 percent of the local patients in this category receive radiation therapy at the facility in Webster City, operated by Ames-based Mary Greeley Medical Center.



Sue Thompson

Trinity CEO Sue Thompson said adding radiation therapy will significantly broaden Trinity's treatment options. Trinity currently offers surgical, medical and support care for cancer patients.

## St. Luke's – Cedar Rapids Achieves Chest Pain Center Accreditation Status

St. Luke's Hospital in Cedar Rapids has received Chest Pain Center Accreditation status from the Society of Chest Pain Centers, an international organization dedicated to eliminating heart disease as the number one cause of death worldwide.

Hospitals that have received this accreditation have achieved a higher level of expertise in dealing with patients who arrive with symptoms of a heart



attack. They emphasize the importance of standardized diagnostic and treatment programs that provide more efficient and effective evaluation as well as more appropriate and rapid treatment of patients with chest pain and other heart attack symptoms. They also serve as a point of entry into the health care system to evaluate and treat other medical problems, and they help to promote a healthier lifestyle in an attempt to reduce the risk factors for heart attack.

To become an Accredited Chest Pain Center, St. Luke's engaged in a rigorous evaluation for its ability to assess, diagnose, and treat patients who may be experiencing a heart attack. To the community served by St. Luke's this means that processes are in place that meet strict criteria aimed at:

- Reducing the time from onset of symptoms to diagnosis and treatment
- Treating patients more quickly during the critical window of time when the integrity of the heart muscle can be preserved
- Monitoring patients when it is not certain that they are having a heart attack to ensure that they are not sent home too quickly or needlessly admitted to the hospital

### **Allen Hospital Becomes Green Certified by the Cedar Valley Green Initiative.**

Allen Hospital in Waterloo has been Green Certified by the Cedar Valley Green Initiative. Organizations are assessed in 10 different areas:

- Communication: internal and external
- Community impact
- Buying and inventory management
- Personal health and wellness
- Air quality management
- Outdoor/Landscape management
- Transportation a emissions management
- Water and wastewater management
- Energy management and conservation
- Waste management and recycling



In the attached photo, members of Allen's Green Team are displaying their certificate. For information on the program and Allen's high ranking among Cedar Valley companies, visit [www.greencedarvalley.com](http://www.greencedarvalley.com).

If you would like help researching green certificate options in your community and get assistance with your application, please contact Iowa Health System's communications department sustainability intern, Laura Ippen, at [ippenlt@ihs.org](mailto:ippenlt@ihs.org).

### **Allen College Receives Federal Grants**

Allen College chancellor Dr. Jerry Durham has announced the College has received five federal grants totaling \$409,000. The grants are from the Health Resources and Services Administration of the Department of Health and Human Services which provides funds to support disadvantaged students, graduate students preparing for careers as nurse educators and assists the College in extending the acute care and psychiatric nursing tracks of the MSN program to distant learners. Some of the grants were funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

The funds will give scholarships to students from disadvantaged backgrounds with financial need, many of whom are underrepresented minorities. The Nurse Faculty Loan Program funds will provide low-interest loans to graduate students who want to teach nursing as incentive for nurses to select careers as nurse educators. Graduates who receive these funds can have 85 percent of their loan forgiven if they teach full time in a nursing program following graduation.

## Finley – Dubuque Cranks Down Water Usage

The Finley Hospital used 16 million fewer gallons of water in 2009 than in 2004.

The hospital also enjoys natural gas and electricity savings. “We really improved our purchasing practices,” said Neil Erdmann, director of facilities. “Our new units have water-saving faucets and low-flow toilets. We eliminated areas where we had leaking equipment and tightened up our whole system.”

Finley has been a leader among Iowa Health System facilities in its systemwide effort to improve operating efficiency. Finley also leads area businesses taking part in the Petal Project, which provides companies with a framework to save resources and educate employees about sustainable practices.

Finley has received three petals – water conservation, energy conservation and staff education. It is nearing completion of the waste-reduction criteria after working with the Iowa Waste Exchange, a program it was referred to via the Petal Project, to recycle items that formerly would have landed in the landfill.



## Robert Young Center – Quad-Cities receives Federal Donated Funds Initiative grant

The Robert Young Center for Community Mental Health, part of Trinity Regional Health System in the Quad-Cities, has received a Federal Donated Funds Initiative grant award of \$270,000 for a three-year period for the improvement of total health care for the patients of the Robert Young Center and Community Health Care. The grant will be used to further develop an integrated system of physical and behavioral health care between the two entities.

“By creating an integrated system of care, the Robert Young Center and Community Health Care will work collaboratively to ensure quality and oversee common standards for service integration as we move toward national health reform,” said Robert Young Center President Dr. David Deopere.



Community Health Care is the federally qualified health center for the Quad-Cities. For the past year, medical providers from Community Health Care have seen 50-60 patients twice each week at Robert Young Center’s Community Support Program in Rock Island. The new funding will help provide education to all medical and allied health staff from Community Health Care about the relationship between physical and behavioral health problems. Studies have shown that persons with severe and persistent mental illnesses, on average, live 20 years less than the rest of the population.

The federal dollars also will provide physician-directed training and consultation for Community Health Care providers regarding the management of medications prescribed for behavioral health issues. Medical case management to assist patients with chronic health problems such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease will also be available thanks to grant funding.

## St. Luke's - Sioux City Recognized for Quality Stroke Care

St. Luke's Health System has received the American Stroke Association's Get With The Guidelines-Stroke Gold Performance Achievement Award.

The award recognizes St. Luke's commitment and success in implementing a higher standard of stroke care by ensuring stroke patients receive treatment for at least 24 months according to nationally accepted standards and recommendations.

St. Luke's will be among hospitals featured in a special advertisement in the "America's Best Hospitals" issue of US News & World Report (August issue) to commemorate its receipt of the award.



## Iowa Health – Des Moines Honored as “Best of Des Moines”

Each year, the Des Moines Business Record asks their readers to vote for the best individuals, companies and organizations in a broad range of categories. They always get an outstanding response, and 2010 was no exception.

Iowa Health – Des Moines received the following 2010 Top Honors:

Best Hospital: Iowa Methodist Medical Center (5th year in a row)

Best Up-and-Coming Business Leader: Tom Mulrooney, Iowa Health – Des Moines

Best Company Workforce: Iowa Health – Des Moines



2010 Runners-Up:

Best Hospital: Iowa Lutheran Hospital

Best Up-and-Coming Business Leader: David Stark, Blank Children's

Best Large Company with a Promising Future: Iowa Health – Des Moines

Past Honors:

Voted Best Hospital 12 Years

Voted Best Workforce 5 Years

"We're extremely proud that the Des Moines community regards our hospitals, physicians, staff and leaders so highly that we consistently appear at the top of local health care preferences year after year," said Eric Crowell, president and CEO. "It's a great honor to be recognized for our commitment and efforts, as it is a privilege to serve our community."



## Iowa Health Physicians Adopts Lean Improvement Strategies

During the past year, Iowa Health Physicians has adopted various LEAN strategies within multiple services offered. The clinics, as well as the billing office, have implemented new strategies to serve our patients in a more efficient and approachable manner. A few of these new strategies include:

- 5S (Sort, Straighten, Shine, Standardize and Sustain) supply/inventory management
- Rooming standards guidelines for clinical staff

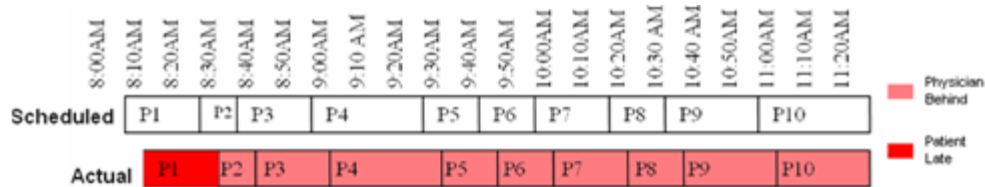
- Enhanced and expanded billing office collections communication techniques

Almost two years ago, Dr. Jeffrey Bebensee at Merle Hay Family Medicine - Des Moines put into practice a LEAN technique of his own – a process improvement endeavor to alter his schedule. His goal was a 50 percent reduction in tasks after 5 p.m. and minutes worked at the end of the day. Before implementing improvement strategies, it was common that if a patient would show up after their scheduled appointment, Dr. Bebensee would be behind for the remainder of that half day.

The scheduling team worked carefully to consider strategies as to not decrease the average number of patients seen. The improvements made included a new scheduling system with only 15- and 30-minute time slots. Staff arrived early, before 7:30 a.m., to open doors at 7:45 a.m. Priority registration before 8am was given to patients on schedule for that day. Lastly, building 30 minutes of task time in morning and afternoon created a buffer in the schedule.

“The best part of the project was working with several of our staff members to figure out how to make this work and anticipate how the how the changes would affect other areas of operation within the clinic. This form of scheduling dramatically reduces the effect a late arriving patient has on my schedule for the rest of the day,” Dr. Bebensee said.

### Before Countermeasures Implemented



### After Countermeasures Implemented



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