

# WHAT'S HAPPENING

A newsletter for the Maine Medical Center family

## Improving Patient Care Through Operational Excellence *Physician Participation Strengthens Teams, Increases Communication*

As Operational Excellence continues expanding through the hospital, physicians are finding the daily management system to be a helpful tool for patient centered care. They say the practice leads to team skills building, increased communication, increased engagement, and motivation among staff.

“OpEx improves communication between multidisciplinary teams on our pediatric unit,” says Logan Murray, M.D., a physician at The Barbara Bush Children’s Hospital. “This in turn improves patient experience and safety.”

One Key Performance Indicator (KPI) in particular helped bridge communica-

tions within Dr. Murray’s care team and with patients. The KPI ensured that covering physician names were listed on the whiteboards in patient rooms to help patients and families feel more connected to the physician team caring for them. It also helps cut down on confusion for families who already have many things to remember.

Physician participation in Operational Excellence also engages other staff; physicians are often looked upon as role models by other employees.

“Patient centered care is truly practiced when doctors, nurses, and all of our colleagues who support the front line, work in partner-



*Physicians, as partners in the care team, join in the daily gembu huddle. They lead walks, present feedback, and bring action items back to their teams.*

ship to bring value to our patients and families,” says Suneela Nayak, Director of Operational Excellence, Center for Performance Improvement.

Joel Botler, M.D., Chief Medical Officer, agrees. “Our success is inextricably tied to us behaving as a team in all aspects of

*Continued on back*

## Spring Harbor Hospital Expands Capacity

Spring Harbor Hospital soon re-opens its 12-bed unit in response to the growing demand for adult inpatient beds. The first six beds will open at the end of May, and the second six will open gradually over the subsequent three months.

According to hospital President Mary Jane Krebs, the

decision by the Department of Health & Human Services is a “reflection of the exemplary work of Spring Harbor employees, providing our patients and clients with the right level of care, at the right place, at the right time.”

The hospital plans to hire an estimated 33 additional

full-time employees, including medical staff, nurses, psychiatric technicians, social workers, care coordinators, and other support services for the unit.

As a member of Maine Behavioral Healthcare, Spring Harbor will be able to connect with other mental health providers, hospitals

and primary care sites to admit patients in a timely manner with quick access to appropriate treatment. Currently, the hospital accommodates an average of 79 adult and adolescent patients daily. With this expansion, Spring Harbor expects to accommodate ten additional adult patients daily.

# MMC Recognizes 579 Board Certified Nurses

MMC celebrated Certified Nurses Day, nationally recognized on March 19, with presentations, information on how to become certified, and refreshments at the Dana Center. The nurses were honored for their professionalism, leadership, and commitment to excellence in patient care.

Board Certification of nurses plays an increasingly important role in the assurance of high standards of care for patients and their loved ones. Nursing, like health care in general, has become increasingly complex. While a registered nurse (RN) license provides entry to general nursing practice, the knowledge-intensive re-

quirements of modern nursing require extensive education, as well as a strong personal commitment to excellence by the nurse.

MMC encourages national board certification for all nurses. There are many nursing certification specialties, such as medical-surgical, pediatric, pain management, cardiac vascular, oncology, hospice, case management, emergency nursing, and critical care.

“Board certification of nurses signifies expert knowledge in a clinical specialty area that raises the standard of care for our patients and advances the profession of nursing,” says



*Darlene Rouleau, R.N., Clinical Nurse Leader, R4, shares a poster with the names of all 579 Certified MMC Nurses, and information for nurses who are interested in becoming certified.*

Marty Riehle, VP Patient Care Services, Associate

Chief Nursing Officer.

## *‘Improving Patient Care’ from front*

patient care,” he says. “Operational Excellence’s success needs participation by all members of the team.”

Elizabeth Eisenhardt, M.D., Clinic Physician Site Leader, believes Operational Excellence has led to improved patient care, more efficient care, and better communi-

cation with patients. She says that, thanks to OpEx, her patients are getting the diabetes prevention care they need and the number of poorly controlled diabetic patients (i.e., patients whose blood sugar levels are not maintained at a healthy level) at the Clinics has dropped 6 percent.

The Clinics implemented and achieved these KPIs to support patients with diabe-

tes:

- 100% of diabetic patients will receive an after visit summary when leaving
- 100% of diabetic patients will receive a point of care HgA1C at time of office visit (if it was due)

Dr. Eisenhardt says the Clinic’s physicians played an important role in suggesting

ideas, supporting staff, and offering guidance through the Operational Excellence process.

“We are very proud of our improved HgA1C [measure for blood sugar] control in our diabetic population,” says Dr. Eisenhardt. “Using certain OpEx interventions, we were able to demonstrate a dramatic improvement in the outcome for these patients.”

## MMC is Tobacco-Free

Be mindful of our neighbors, if you choose to leave the property to smoke. Don't stand near windows or doors, keep moving, and pick up your butts. Thank you for respecting our policy.



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