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pulse



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A BIWEEKLY NEWSLETTER FOR PHYSICIANS, EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS FOCUSING ON THE HOSPITAL'S MISSION OF PROVIDING QUALITY CARE AND IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE TO THOSE WE SERVE

Daisy Award goes to Gail



Last week OPSU charge nurse Gail Rodrigues was feted as LMH's most recent Daisy Award recipient. Daisy awardees are nominated by their peers, and Gail's peers had the following to say about her: she works long, arduous hours making sure staffing in her department is always adequate. As a

charge nurse, she often fills in to handle difficult issues and concerns of patients and families with excellent results. This was evident in LMH's 2008 customer-satisfaction-survey data, with 68.5 percent of patients rating their experience in OPSU as "excellent," exceeding the LMH overall goal of 64 percent. In fact, this rating increased during the first quarter of 2009 to 72 percent. Gail is a very hands-on charge nurse who will not hesitate to work extra hours to ensure her patients are taken care of and their needs are met in an excellent manner. Gail will always be there to give extra hands to other departments when needed. She works closely with the hospital supervisors to make sure post-op patients receive adequate care while waiting for assigned beds. Gail's can-do attitude, coupled with her "tender-loving-care" approach to all her patients, makes her the epitome of all RNs, (*Debbe Moreno, ext. 7477*).

Wellness program kicks off

Ready to "Live More Healthfully?" LMH wants employees and their families to stay committed to health so they can enjoy tomorrow just as much as today. By participating in the employee-wellness program, staff can access valuable information about health, receive free health screenings, participate in fun group challenges and be rewarded for everyday health-conscious decisions. Participation fulfills employees' community-health goal of taking a health-risk assessment and enters them in raffles of their choosing to win great prizes. Visit <https://lodihealth.motivation.cc/> to get started. Login instructions are at the bottom of the sign-in page. Employees must obtain some key health information before they begin – current lab work from the last six months to a year; body-fat and blood-pressure stats (these can be obtained at West Fitness, call ext. 3011 to schedule); and waist circumference. A "wellness day" on Sept. 11, will offer all the testing needed – free. Enrollment is open through Sept. 29. Don't miss out, (*Kevin Vondergeest, ext. 3063*).

Financial plan continues development

Weekly communications from the CEO, the employee website (www.lmhemployees.org), department director and manager communications and the financial-action-plan (FAP) hotline (ext. 7887) are all keeping employees up to date on LMH's current financial circumstances. The executive team has also been holding town-hall meetings and rounding to departments. Suggestions regarding the FAP are welcomed and being evaluated for implementation. And, again, LMH continues to see more patients than ever, but unfortunately continues to see lower reimbursements than ever. The state's budget and health-care reform on a national level are also expected to exacerbate LMH's financial status. In order to remain viable, LMH has taken several actions and will continue to review further actions until stability is maintained. And, again, the tenets guiding financial decisions are as follows: provide quality care; provide access to care; preserve jobs; and open and grow LMH programs and services in the development stages. Employees can regularly find updated Q and A on the employee-bulletin board, along with other information related to LMH's financial circumstances. Department directors and managers are available to answer questions and address concerns. The measures taken so far will remain in effect until at least the end of the year. It is not known at this time how long beyond the end of the year the measures will continue, but employees will be kept posted. Hospitals throughout the state and nation have been impacted by the struggling economy. Several like LMH have taken measures to adapt, and many more are preparing to do so. Thank you, all, for the teamwork and dedication to patients, particularly at this challenging time, (*Joe Harrington, ext. 7560*).

Dr. Grady joins Millsbridge



James Grady, MD, joins doctors Mullen, Freund, Shukla, Mirmira and Kellar and FNP Dani Bassett at the new Lodi Memorial Community Clinic – Millsbridge. The clinic is the hospital's most recently opened family-practice clinic and is located on Kettleman at Mills in Lodi. Dr. Grady is board certified in family medicine. He is a graduate of Notre

Dame University and did his residency and internship at General Hospital in Ventura County. He's practiced medicine in Lodi for 33 years. He and wife Beth have four grown children and three grandchildren. They own and operate Grady Family Vineyards, and their wines can be found locally and beyond, (*Pam Schneider, ext. 7450*).

Consumer Reports jumps on wagon

In the past decade, public reporting of hospital and physician customer-satisfaction and quality data has begun to take shape. The past few years, there's been a push to engage patients in reviewing public data to help them make informed decisions about their care. The jury is still out, though, on how helpful consumers are finding the data, or if they even consider it a factor when making health decisions. In most surveys, patients indicate their primary reason for "selecting" a hospital is based on their insurance coverage and where their doctors practice. That said, the data is available for all to review. At one of the better known sites, www.hospitalcompare.org, patients can look at LMH-satisfaction data and compare it to what patients are saying about St. Joe's, Dameron, Sutter Tracy and more. The dimensions of care consumers can view include: nurses' communication; doctors' communication; staff-response time; pain control; explanations about medications; cleanliness of bathrooms; night noise; information at discharge; overall quality of care; and likelihood to recommend. In all dimensions, LMH patients rated the hospital better than St. Joe's and Dameron patients rated their hospitals 60 percent of the time. Of the three hospitals, LMH was rated not the best 30 percent of the time and least impressive 10 percent of the time. Yet despite leading in 60 percent of the areas, LMH comes in second for likely to recommend and overall quality of care. LMH outshined St. Joe's and Dameron when it came to controlling pain. LMH performed poorest, per patients, when it came to night noise. LMH is 20 percent below the national average in this dimension of care. These findings cover the period from October 2007 through October 2008. And just last week Consumer Reports noted it will make patient-satisfaction data available to consumers for a \$20 subscription fee. The same data is available at www.hospitalcompare.org, gratis. Employees can see related links at the LMH employee Web site, www.lmhemployees.org. Physicians can find more information at www.lmhmds.org, (Carol Farron, ext. 7535).

Interpreter workshops offered

LMH's validated Spanish interpreters must attend one of the following workshops to keep their validation current: Tues., Sept. 22, 8:30-10a, Classroom W; Tues., Sept. 22, 11:30a-1p, Classroom W; Thurs., Sept. 24, 11a-12:30p, Education office; or Thurs., Sept. 24, 5-6:30p, Classroom A. Those wishing to become validated Spanish interpreters must attend an initial-validation workshop on Wed., Sept. 30, 8:30-11:30a, Classroom A. All participants will receive a refresher packet before the workshops, and the subjects covered include: ethics and confidentiality; the role of an interpreter; techniques for interpreting; consecutive interpreting; interpreter positioning; improvement suggestions and practical applications. All employees wishing to interpret for patients must attend one of the workshops. Contact Community Development, ext. 7590, by Sept. 11 to sign up, (Sonia Padilla-Casillas, ext. 7567).

Electronic-MD-bulletin board takes off

Physicians can now take advantage of a new hospital resource to assist in communications: A unique, electronic-bulletin board for hospital physicians only. The site is a work in progress and had 558 visits in the month of July. The site includes a listing of new physicians, moving physicians and departing physicians. It includes "Updates" on order sets, news from the CMA, health alerts and more. There's a "Classifieds" listings, which right now contains information about housing in this area. The classifieds listings can contain much more, and physicians are welcomed to add to it as they wish. Under "Publications" there's a picture that was taken of Dr. Nakata with his twin daughters kneeling under a tree for shade as they watched a helicopter take off from LMH on a recent afternoon. There's information on the site about doctors' scorecards, and there are also links to "SWING" (the new LMH newsletter about the South Wing and activating patient care in those 90 new beds); copies of "Pulse" and copies of "HouseCalls," the hospital's community newsletter. Check out www.lmhmds.org. Linda Brown, in the medical-staff office, is the moderator and happy to post items at physicians' request, (Carol Farron, ext. 7535).

Employee-med refills explained

Just a few important pieces of information about the LMH West Pharmacy's automatic-refill system:

- "Expired" prescription – when calling in to the refill line, patients might hear their prescriptions have "expired." This has to do with the pharmacy's software. When a prescription has been in the system for one year, it "expires" it. So, recent refills are still valid. Please just ignore the message.
- "Delivery" means that West Pharmacy will deliver employee prescriptions to the east pharmacy. This is a courtesy for employees who work late hours and are not able to get to the West campus between 8a-6p, Mon.-Fri. The pharmacy does not deliver to employees' homes.
- Refill requests – if there are no refills remaining on a prescription, the pharmacy will automatically contact the physician for refills. This takes 48 to 72 hours for physicians' offices to respond. Please plan refill requests accordingly, (Sandy Atwater, ext. 7555).

Hooray for Dr. Hall and lone clinic

Craig Hall, MD, and the staff of LMH's Primemed Clinic in Lone, recently received "honorable mention" in the category of "best doctor" in the Amador County Best of Amador recognition event. Congratulations to Dr. Hall and his fabulous staff for meeting the needs of their customers with the ideal patient experience, (Pam Schneider, ext. 7450).

Classic-car show scheduled

On Fri., Aug. 14, the LMH Adult Day Care program will host a classic-car show from 11a-2p, in the parking lot at Hutchins Street Square. Stop by for a look and enjoy these beauties, (Terri Whitmire, 369-4443).