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The Beat: July 2009

CentraCare Health

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Hospital expansion has potential to benefit all



Dear Friends:

As a regional referral center, St. Cloud Hospital is a hub for specialty care. Therefore, the construction project under way at St. Cloud Hospital is important for patients served by providers throughout Central Minnesota.

Any one of the CentraCare Clinic sites around the region might send a patient to St. Cloud Hospital for a highly specialized test, procedure or inpatient stay. A patient stabilized in the Long Prairie Memorial Hospital emergency room might be flown to St. Cloud for a critical procedure best performed by a cardiac surgeon from the Central Minnesota Heart Center. A premature baby delivered at Melrose Area Hospital might require the specialty services of the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit in St. Cloud.

In reaffirming their commitment to the construction project in mid-June, the boards of directors of St. Cloud Hospital, CentraCare Clinic and CentraCare Health System said they recognized the strategic importance of the project. They see the need for replacing our 25-year-old intensive care units, creating new operating rooms that can accommodate today's technology, and providing the private rooms that improve outcomes and give patients and their families the privacy they expect and deserve.

It is clear that employees across CentraCare Health System embrace these goals as well. Your support is evident through your generosity. More than 1,600 employees contributed to the Caring for Generations Employee Campaign, raising a total of \$2.4 million. That support no doubt will motivate residents of the communities we serve to contribute to the project as well.

Some have questioned the wisdom of moving forward with this large project during a recession, and at a time when we have suffered substantial losses in non-operating income. However, our operating revenue has been strong throughout the past fiscal year, and through judicious use of resources we have been able to avoid layoffs at a time when hospitals and systems in the Twin Cities have laid off hundreds. In addition, we believe we will be able to obtain more competitive bids from contractors during the current economic climate. This project will have the added benefit of providing a much-needed boost to the regional economy.

This is the right project at the right time. This project will allow CentraCare Health System to meet the health care needs of the region for generations to come.

Sincerely,



Terry Pladson, MD
President, CentraCare Health System

St. Cloud Hospital receives awards



Jean Chenoweth (third from left), senior vice president with Thomson Reuters, presented the 2008 100 Top Hospitals Award, Everest Award, Performance Improvement Leaders Award and 100 Top Cardiovascular Hospitals Award to St. Cloud Hospital June 23. Accepting the awards on behalf of the hospital were (left to right): Linda Chmielewski, RN, SCH vice president and chief nursing officer; Craig Broman, SCH president; Terry Pladson, MD, president, CentraCare Health System; Dan Whitlock, MD, SCH vice president of medical affairs; and Bob Johnson, executive director, Central Minnesota Heart Center.

Diabetes management for seniors

“Diabetes Management” presented by Laurie Bartlett, RN, of Home Care Services at St. Benedict’s Senior Community - Monticello will take place at 2 p.m. Aug. 20 at The Village. The presentation is free, but space is limited. Call (763) 295-4051 for reservations.

Win lunch with Tony-O

Win lunch with former Minnesota Twins player, Tony Oliva. Bring your ticket stub from the Aug. 21 River Bats Alumni game to the seventh annual Expo for Seniors from 8 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Aug. 22 at Whitney Senior Center in St. Cloud for a chance to share a ballpark frank with Tony-O. This free event provides seniors and adult children with information on senior resources available in Central Minnesota. For more information, call the Senior Linkage Line at (800) 333-2433, or visit www.expoforseniors.com.

Heart Center physician honored as Health Care Hero

Cardiac Electrophysiologist Keith Lurie, MD, of the Central Minnesota Heart Center at St. Cloud Hospital, was honored as a Minnesota Health Care Hero by *Twin Cities Business* for his development of two impedance threshold devices (ITDs).



Psychologist receives national recognition

Congratulations to Dani Jakubowski, national winner of the 2009 Spirit of Women Healthcare Hero award. Jakubowski, psychologist with the St. Cloud Hospital Behavioral Health, Women’s Specialty Services, received the award July 10 during the Spirit of Women’s 10th Annual National Awards celebration in Washington, D.C. The Healthcare Hero Award is given to a professional who has shown an extraordinary commitment to service in her community and beyond.



Heart Center begins pacemaker outreach clinic

In support of the new Brainerd Lakes Heart & Vascular Center at Brainerd Lakes Health, a pacemaker/ICD clinic, staffed by the Central Minnesota Heart Center, is available at St. Joseph’s Medical Center in Brainerd.

CentraCare pharmacies offer lower co-pays

Employees covered under the CentraCare Health System medical plan are eligible to receive their prescriptions at CentraCare-owned pharmacies at lower co-pays. CentraCare owns the following pharmacies: CentraCare Pharmacy - Heartland, Health Plaza, Becker and St. Cloud Hospital. These pharmacies are covered under Tier 1. All other pharmacies are covered under Tier 2. The pharmacy at the new CentraCare Clinic - St. Joseph is owned and operated by Coborn’s. This pharmacy falls under Tier 2 with higher co-pays than those owned by CentraCare.

Pladson receives honorary doctorate

St. Cloud State University bestowed an honorary doctorate upon Terry Pladson, MD, president of CentraCare Health System, during spring commencement ceremonies. Pladson, who attended SCSU for three years before earning his bachelor’s degree and medical degree at the University of Minnesota, had the opportunity to address the graduates. He urged them to find a job that is rewarding and challenging, one with a purpose and mission. “It’s important to love your work every day,” he said. In addition to his education at SCSU and the U of M, Pladson earned a Master of Business Administration degree from the University of St. Thomas.

Cardiac surgery program receives top rating

The cardiac surgery program at the Central Minnesota Heart Center has been awarded a three-star (the highest) rating from the Society of Thoracic Surgeons for the third consecutive year. Only 12 percent of hospitals in the nation received this award based on data from January through December 2008.

Orthopedic services expands in Melrose

Melrose Area Hospital expanded its minimally invasive surgery services with St. Cloud Orthopedic Associates. Kim Schaap, MD, will see patients twice each month. Her partner, John Geiser, MD, will continue to see orthopedic patients three times each month in Melrose.

Be prepared in times of emergency

The Central Minnesota Healthcare System Preparedness Program is sponsoring an emergency preparedness conference from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Aug. 6 at the St. Cloud Civic Center to help participants better plan for emergency situations. This conference is open to all CentraCare employees. For more information or to register online, visit www.togpartners.com/epc.