



EHS connections

November 5, 2007

DEACONESS MEDICAL CENTER • VALLEY HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL CENTER • FIRSTCARE

Benefits Fair

The 2008 Benefits Open Enrollment Health Fair will be held on:

November 14 in the DMC Café from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

November 15 in the VHC Café from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Electronic Enrollment is mandatory! Everyone is required to enroll for benefits that will become effective January 1, 2008.

Don't miss this opportunity to ask questions about our Medical, Dental, Vision, Life Insurance, Retirement and Wellness plans. Computer access will be available. Special Prize Drawings and freebies – so don't miss it! Benefit Packets will be delivered to each department on November 13.

Empire Health Services Signs Asset Purchase Agreement

October 10, 2007, was a historic day for Empire Health Services (EHS) as we announced the signing of an asset purchase agreement (APA) with a subsidiary of Community Health Systems, Inc. (CHS) – one of the nation's leading healthcare companies.

While it doesn't finalize the sale, the signing of the APA signals significant advancement in our search for a strategic partner. The purchase and transition documents will be reviewed by the Washington State Department of Health and the Washington State Office of the Attorney General over the coming weeks and months.

We know our employees have been closely following our strategic partner process. After discussions with numerous potential strategic partners, the EHS Board ultimately chose to have exclusive negotiations with CHS because of its strong reputation for quality and track-record of significant investment in the communities it serves.

Below are some of the key details of the sale that will help shed light on why this is a partnership that will benefit our future, our people and our community. The following are some highlights:

- Commitment to invest at least \$100 million over the next five years to facilities and technology improvements across the EHS system.
- Commitment to dedicate significant resources to recruit new physicians needed in the community.
- With the guidance and endorsement of the EHS board, adoption of a charity care policy that is more beneficial than the current EHS policy.
- Commitment to hire all active EHS employees at the time of close, honoring their rate of pay and seniority level.
- Commitment to continue community collaborations with Inland Northwest Health Services.
- Commitment to local leadership and guidance of the hospital, including a community board of trustees, local physician involvement and leadership, and a management team based in Spokane.

Of additional benefit to the community, proceeds from the sale, estimated at \$100 million, will substantially endow an independent community-run health foundation, and new sales and property taxes revenues will significantly increase the tax base of Spokane.

The Board appreciates your ongoing interest in this process and hope that you share in our excitement. The Board welcomes your input and questions, and you may contact them through ehsboard@empirehealth.org.

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Carol Evans Named Deaconess VP Cardiac Services



Carol Evans

Empire Health Services is pleased to announce Carol S. Evans as VP of Cardiac Services.

Carol has made significant contributions in health-care. Carol was born and raised in West Texas where she spent the first 25 years of her career at two major hospitals in Lubbock. She began her nursing career in the operating room

and transferred to the cardiac cath lab in 1972. This is when Carol realized her passion for the cath lab and cardiac services. Throughout her career, she has participated in the design, construction, and management of 14 cath labs and 3 EP labs.

Carol's Methodist Hospital six cath lab department was inducted into the Smithsonian Institution Innovation Collection for Computer Technology as the first comprehensive

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Asset Purchase Agreement (continued from page 1)

Questions asked about the strategic partnering with CHS

• **Does CHS subcontract out any services in its hospitals, i.e. material management, housekeeping, etc.?**

Generally no. As you may have heard during our recent employee forums with CHS representatives, CHS does not have a “cookie cutter” approach to its hospitals. They recognize that each of its hospitals is unique, with unique needs and circumstances. Though one facility may subcontract a particular service, another facility may provide the service in-house. These decisions are determined by local market needs and the availability of those resources.

• **What are the first five things CHS will change here?**

CHS plans to conduct a thorough capital and strategic planning process to gather input from physicians, employees, management, board members and others to fully understand our hospitals’ needs and the healthcare needs of the broader community.

• **Will the hospitals keep their own webpages?**

Yes. All CHS hospitals have their own websites.

• **When will CHS start with physician recruitment?**

CHS representatives have already conducted some initial meetings with EHS medical staff leadership, and have recently made a presentation to the Spokane County Medical Society. Their physician leadership and operations executives look forward to having more frequent meetings in the near future to determine where the gaps in coverage are in order to target recruitment.

• **Does CHS have a recruitment program for volunteers?**

The EHS auxiliary is not a part of the CHS transaction, so it will remain an independent non-profit operation. The Auxiliary will continue to operate the gift shops and will continue to receive the proceeds from the gift shops’ sales; they will also continue to recruit their own volunteers.

• **When do you expect the deal to be finalized?**

While we are very pleased to have signed the sale agreement, there are still several important milestones to achieve before the transaction is complete — most notably, review and approval by the Washington Attorney General’s Office and State Department of Health. We are in the early stages of making the appropriate filings with those offices and we honestly don’t know how long their review process may take.

Carol Evans (continued from page 1)

heart center in the United States utilizing all digital imaging. Subsequently, she was recruited to the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston (UTMB) in 1996 where she consolidated the divisions of Cardiology and Cardiothoracic Surgery into a Cardiovascular Service Line. In 2003 she joined Duke University Health System to develop a Heart Center and implement an open heart surgery program at a community hospital, Southeastern Regional Medical Center (SRMC), in Lumberton, NC. The Southeastern Heart Center was dedicated in May, 2006.

Carol is excited to be a part of the Empire Health family and feels there is such a wonderful and accomplished medical community in Spokane. Carol and her husband Bill are looking forward to experiencing all Spokane has to offer.

Communication is the Key



As part of Valley Hospital and Medical Center’s Healthy Work Environment campaign entitled “Crews Control,” each month hospital workforce are asked to focus on one of six basic standards to help create and maintain a healthy work environment. Through November and December, Valley Hospital will focus on skilled communication:

Skilled Communication

- Focus on finding solutions
- Protect and advance relationships
- Invite and hear all perspectives
- Goodwill and mutual respect
- Skilled communication protects and advances collaborative relationships

Skilled communication supports the ethical obligation to seek resolution that preserves a healthcare professional’s integrity while ensuring a patient’s safety and best interests. Skilled communicators focus on finding solutions and achieving desirable outcomes.