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A publication of Auburn Memorial Hospital

inside

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Strategic Plan Will Guide AMH Toward Excellence

By Scott Berlucchi, FACHE, NHE

The Auburn Memorial Hospital Board of Trustees has approved the AMH Strategic Plan for 2009 – 2014. This Plan is the product of many months of work and input from leaders throughout our community. It will guide AMH toward excellence in the areas of quality and patient safety; medical staff development; growth of services; and financial stability. The Executive Summary of the Plan follows.



Executive Summary: Auburn Memorial Hospital 2009-2014 Strategic Plan

Strategy: The overall strategy is to make our medical-surgical core excellent in every respect.

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Constant Improvement is the Focus of Auburn Memorial Hospital

By James Blute III, M.D., CPE, FACOG, Chief Medical Officer & Chief Quality Officer

If it can't be measured, you can't be sure you've improved. Constant improvement is the focus of the Auburn Memorial Hospital (AMH) medical staff when you're talking about Quality. But, the medical staff is only half the equation.

The patient may not necessarily see the level of Quality that goes into their care or understand the level of measurement that went into the process. But they'll feel the effects of it. The patient will put more emphasis on subjective outcomes to define Quality: Do I feel better?; Was I treated well?; Was the food good?; Were my nurses attentive?.

AMH's Quality Department works around the clock collecting data for quantitative analysis to keep improving in all aspects of patient care and safety.

The medical professional considers areas such as: Rate of complications; length of time to achieve an outcome; the most efficient and safest way to deliver care; and most cost-effective way to deliver care, when measuring quality. They'll define it the same way a patient does and also include: Was I able to get the

patient home in a very timely manner?; Did I use the safest procedure to fix the problem?; Could a procedure be done less expensively that is just as safe and achieves the desired result?



With rising costs to healthcare and shrinking salaries to citizens, cost effectiveness is a very important issue when talking about quality health care.

The most cost-effective way isn't always the cheapest way. Good quality care will save money in the long run because it will cut down on patients being admitted again for the same procedure or problem; it will cut down on doctors having to redo a procedure for whatever reason; it will cut down on all costs associated with patient care.

In state and national tests of Quality care, AMH ranks very high in the vast majority of core areas, some at 100 percent. Leading the charge to outstanding Quality

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Constant Improvement at AMH

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care is the Executive Team and the Board of Trustees.

The passion of this hospital's administration and Board of Trustees toward Quality patient care shows in our state and national rankings. They have put the resources behind Quality.

AMH, like many hospitals, has a department dedicated to Quality. The department's team members are constantly amassing information, analyzing it and preparing the variety of reports for the numerous testing and reporting agencies involved.

The overall management of Quality is given to a department. But the day-to-day enforcement is everyone's job.

Strategic Plan Will Guide AMH

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Our medical-surgical core services are: primary care and general medicine; urgent/emergent care; cardiology and pulmonology; surgery; behavioral health services; women and maternal health services; oncology services; geriatrics/long term care; and neurosciences.

Mission: Our mission is to provide compassionate, quality care and improve the health of our community.

Vision: Our vision is to be the trusted, first choice provider of high quality health care for our community, working together with our employees, medical staff, and regional partners.

Core Values: Collaboration; Accountability; Respect; and Excellence.

Key Planning Issues: Quality and patient safety; Medical Staff development; Growth; and Financial stability.

Anyone who wishes to see a copy of the entire plan may call 255-7239 or email bmiller@auburnhospital.org.

Auburn Memorial Hospital Introduces Palliative Care Program

Auburn Memorial Hospital is pleased to announce the formation of a Palliative Care Program.

Palliative care is the medical specialty dedicated to the relief of pain and to the improvement of the quality of life for patients with serious, life-threatening illnesses. The Palliative Care team is also specifically trained to help patients and their families with end of life issues.

Palliative care is not dependent on prognosis and can be delivered at the same time as treatment meant to cure the patient. A key benefit is that it customizes treatment to meet the individual needs of each patient.

Dr. Brian Bennett is the head of the Palliative Care team. He trained at Strong Memorial Hospital under one of the nation's leaders in palliative care, and is Board Certified in Internal Medicine. Dr. Bennett states, "Palliative Care at AMH is a team approach – my team, including the physicians, nurses, pharmacists, social workers and clergy, work in conjunction with the patient,



Dr. Brian Bennett

the patient's family and the attending physician. Our goal is to focus on symptom management. We ensure that the patient has what he or she needs to be physically, emotionally and spiritually pain-free while combating illness."

Palliative Care relieves symptoms such as pain, shortness of breath, fatigue, constipation, nausea, loss of appetite and difficulty sleeping. It helps patients gain the strength to carry on with daily life. It improves their ability to tolerate medical treatments. And it helps them to better understand their choices for care. The team also helps patients and families make medical decisions and choose treatments that are in line with their goals.

The Palliative Care team supports the attending physicians; it does not replace them. The team helps with seriously ill patients who require complex pain and symptom management or have a high demand for patient/family communication.

Palliative care is not the same as hospice care. Hospice care provides palliative care for those approaching the last stages of life, while palliative care is appropriate for anyone, at any point of a serious illness. It can be provided at the same time as treatment that is meant to prolong life.

Lisa Marsh Ryerson to Keynote AMH Women's Health Institute

Lisa Marsh Ryerson, President of Wells College in Aurora, will serve as Keynote Speaker of the annual Women's Health Institute, "Our Mothers, Our Daughters, Our Health," sponsored by Auburn Memorial Hospital. The event will take place on Saturday, October 17 from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Auburn Holiday Inn. Registration forms may be obtained by calling 315-255-7444, and a \$15 registration fee covers breakfast, lunch and all sessions.

This year's institute will offer a selection of ten workshops on topics related to women's health, presented by physicians from the AMH Medical Staff and other health care professionals. Topics will include: "Cosmetic Dermatology for



Women"; "Breast Cancer: What Women Need to Know"; "Osteoporosis Prevention and Treatment"; "When a Loved One Has Alzheimers"; "Cardiovascular Diseases in Women"; "Everything You Always Wanted to Know about Gynecology"; "End of Life Issues"; and "Recognizing the Crucial Signs of Stroke Onset."

Lisa Marsh Ryerson, Keynote Speaker, has served as President of Wells College since 1995. She is a member of the AMH Board of Trustees.

Center for Behavioral Health Responds to Community Need

Reprinted from an article by Christopher Caskey in The Citizen

When Auburn Memorial Hospital revealed its state-of-the-art Center for Behavioral Health in December, AMH began a new era of mental health services in the community. This spring, they found the doctor hospital officials believe will lead the program through that era.



Dr. David Strickland

Psychiatrist David Strickland began working in April as medical director for the Center for Behavioral Health. An expert in adult and geriatric psychiatry, Strickland began practicing in the Northeast after studying and working in the South.

During an interview at AMH, Strickland said he sees similarities between his former and current home. "The people of Auburn ... are almost like southerners. They're very warm and compassionate people," Strickland said.

Strickland is board certified in adult and geriatric psychiatry. He has completed residencies at the Bowman Gray School of Medicine at Wake Forest University, NC, and at the University of Virginia Roanoke-Salem School of Medicine. He has also completed a fellowship in geriatric psychiatry at the John A. Burns School of Medicine in Hawaii, and worked as a psychiatrist at St. Joseph's Hospital in Syracuse.

Strickland's expertise fits with AMH's behavioral health program, which specializes in older patients. When the center opened, hospital officials also announced the program would cater to patients with symptoms of dementia and Alzheimer's Disease.

Psychiatry as a discipline can be challenging, Strickland said. Doctors deal with complex symptoms, and treatment can take longer than general medicine. "There is a great deal of art involved. It's challenging, but rewarding," he added.

A person's mental health is an important aspect of his or her overall health. He said one of the reasons he decided to come to Auburn is its commitment to mental health. "The new unit is nice, but the environment and the staff are most important," he said.

The new unit has been going "gangbusters" since opening six months ago, AMH Chief Medical Officer Dr. James Blute said. "It shows the need for these services in the community."

One of the things Dr. Blute says he noticed when Dr. Strickland started working in April is his willingness to come in for consults with other physicians on occasions when a mental health expert is needed. "He's been a life saver. It's just amazing," Dr. Blute said.

Breast MRI Now Available at AMH

Auburn Memorial Hospital is pleased to offer breast magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) to our community. An MRI of the breast has emerged as a new technique in the evolution of diagnosing diseases of the breast.

Breast imaging, when used in conjunction with conventional mammography, provides valuable information for the detection and characterization of various ailments of the breast. It does not replace mammography, but does provide additional diagnostic information. An MRI of the breast is performed for a number of reasons, including surgical planning, staging of breast cancer and treatment planning, post surgical and post radiation follow-up, dense breast tissue evaluation, evaluating trouble areas identified through a mammogram or ultrasound, or breast implant rupture.

"Breast MRI is a powerful tool in the fight against breast cancer," stated Jennifer Mosch, Director of Radiology at AMH. "Breast MRI, when used in addition to standard methods such as mammography, is widely viewed as an improvement in breast cancer screening technology for women at high risk, including those with a previous history of breast cancer or women with a known genetic risk for breast cancer."

Researchers are optimistic that there may be long-term savings to patients and to the health care system due to an MRI's ability to detect breast cancer prior to therapy, which may result in fewer rounds of chemotherapy and breast surgeries. Women should discuss the treatment with their primary or specialty care physician to determine if and how breast MRI fits into their particular health care needs.

Auburn Memorial Hospital MRI service is available Monday through Friday. Call 315-255-7582 for appointments. A physician prescription is required.

Junior Volunteers Serve AMH during Summer Months

Auburn Memorial Hospital had nine Junior Volunteers who served in a variety of departments throughout the hospital during the summer months. Shown here is an orientation session in which the Junior Volunteers practice getting a person in and out of a wheelchair. From left are Meaghan Allyn, Kaleen Allyn, Aiswary Irri, Palak Patel, Parth Patel, and Jake Melfi. In the wheelchair is Diane Vitkus and kneeling is Shiva Sharma. Not shown is Grace Bassett.





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Welcome to New Physicians, Nurse Midwife

Auburn Memorial Hospital recently welcomed **Dr. Donald Calzolaio, FACOG**, and **Certified Nurse Midwife Betty Guisinger**.

Calzolaio is Board Certified by the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology and a Fellow of the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology. He completed his medical degree, internship and residency at State University Hospital in Syracuse. Dr. Calzolaio brings 17 years of experience to the practice.

Guisinger is a member of the American College of Nurse Midwives and the American College of Obstetrician/Gynecologists – Education Affiliate. She received her certificate in Midwifery from the State University of New York Health Science Center at Brooklyn, NY. She also completed the Registered Nurse Surgical First Assistant's Program at the University of Rochester School of Nursing. She has 35 years of experience. Both Calzolaio and Guisinger practice at Auburn Obstetrics & Gynecology.

AMH also welcomes **Dr. Nelly Kazzaz**, who is returning to Auburn Cardiology & Pulmonary Associates. She is Board Certified in internal medicine with special qualifications in cardiovascular disease and interventional cardiology. She is also Board Certified by the National Board of Nuclear Cardiology in nuclear medicine. She completed her medical degree at Jordan University – Faculty of Medicine and her residency and Fellowship training at the University of Arkansas in cardiovascular disease. She completed a Fellowship in Interventional Cardiology at Providence Hospital in Detroit, MI.

POSTAL PATRON

5th annual M.A.S.H. Camp a Huge Success

AMH held its 5th annual Medical Academy of Science and Health (M.A.S.H.) Camp from June 30 – July 1. The two-day camp gave 8th and 9th grade students from all over the region a first-hand view into numerous health care professions. The 22 students that participated were from Skaneateles, Cato, Syracuse, Camillus, Liverpool, Savannah, Marcellus, Auburn, Memphis and Union Springs. AMH sponsored M.A.S.H. Camp with the Central New York Area Health Education Center (CNYAHEC) and Excellus BlueCross Blue Shield.



Students participate in a decontamination exercise led by the Emergency Department.

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