Creating an Optimal Healing Environment Pays Off for Cape Coral Hospital

A successful hospital system that is centered on health and well-being begins at the patient level. Cape Coral Hospital (CCH) in Cape Coral, Fl. applied this maxim through the use of Samueli Institute’s Optimal Healing Environment (OHE) framework in their strategic plan. Their operating margin grew and today is 16%, 15 times the average rate for hospitals of a similar size in Florida.

In an interview during a visit to Samueli Institute, Scott Kashman, Chief Administrative Officer, CCH said:

“The OHE framework provides guidance that incorporates holistic and optimal approaches to care. It supported our mission to improve the health status of people living in our community and our motto of being ‘caring people, caring for people.’

Mr. Kashman discovered Samueli Institute's OHE framework about 10 years ago at a medical conference and realized the power of the concept to impact his hospital system. Within the last three years, his vision of employing the OHE framework in his work became a reality. With his leadership, CCH began the journey to become an OHE and is already realizing improved quality, satisfaction and financial performance.

BY THE NUMBERS

In addition to positive feedback from patients, CCH has seen financial advantages that can be attributed to the journey to become an OHE and vetting innovation through the LEAN Six Sigma process. According to Kashman, the CCH operating margin increased 6.5% in 2014 compared to 2013, and was 3.3% higher than budgeted. This trend continues with a January 2015 Year to Date (YTD) operating margin 8.4% above budget. Admissions increased by 10% in 2014 compared to 2013 and were 28.8% higher than budgeted. Surgeries increased in 2014, with 450 more cases than 2013.

The OHE framework became a rallying force for employees, board members, volunteers, physicians, and the community. A fundraiser for Pathway to Discovery, a campus-wide walking path, raised $1,100 in two hours. Along that
pathway, patients, families and hospital employees find peace of mind by connecting to nature in gardens, exercising at outdoor stations, and taking moments for reflection before work at outdoor employee entryways. To date, the hospital has raised over $375,000 for pathways and a teaching garden, with strong support stemming from staff, administrators, the board of directors and the community.

A FOCUS ON HEALING

CCH continues to innovate and improve outcomes using the OHE framework as a strategic guide. Families and staff have created space for respite and reflection. Volunteers offer an ICU care cart to families of severely ill patients to use in order to nourish their body and soul during very difficult times.

Since the CCH focused on becoming an OHE, staff engagement has risen by 4 points (2014 compared to 2012) and overall patient satisfaction scores have increased by 10. One staff member reports,

“I could talk for a month about all the little things that I have experienced in the past year personally as an employee, how the Optimal Healing Environment has affected my productivity and me. It has absolutely changed my life, it has changed my family’s life, and therefore I am a much healthier, more active employee.”

In May, 2015, CCH became the first community hospital in the Florida to receive the prestigious Governor’s Sterling Award, the highest recognition a business or organization in Florida can receive for performance excellence. The hospital was cited as the community’s center for health, wellness, and well-being through the development of its Optimal Healing Environment.

“... It is so amazing to see the transformation of our environment to an OHE. When you do the right thing, the business successes follow.”