Putting Patients First is Key to Quality Healthcare

When Lynn Pierce, RN, gives a presentation on using high reliability science to improve the patient’s experience, she doesn’t just explain the mechanics of what is involved, she also reminds her audience exactly why it is so important for patients to feel safe, cared for, and respected.

Ms. Pierce, a consultant with HPI who has more than 30 years of experience as a registered professional nurse, spoke at CHA on October 19 about the need for healthcare providers to be thinking constantly about how they can better meet patients’ needs as they strive to eliminate all preventable harm. HPI is a consulting firm that specializes in improving human performance in complex systems using evidence-based methods derived from high-risk industries.

Using high reliability to ensure consistency in a patient-centered approach to care helps to reduce harm, she said, as well as improves Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) scores, which were instituted in 2002 by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to measure patient perceptions of care.

Putting in place procedures and practices to improve the patient experience is essential to building and sustaining an organization that is committed to excellence, she said.

“All roads lead to the patient’s bedside,” said Ms. Pierce, who is the former Senior Nurse Consultant for Baptist Health Care Leadership Institute, which won the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award. “If you’re not directly taking care of patients, you’re providing support to the people who do.”

High reliability science, which is used in the aviation and nuclear power industries, uses behaviors, leadership, and accountability to provide additional checks for systems, like healthcare, that are high risk. CHA launched a statewide initiative to eliminate all-cause preventable harm several years ago and has since trained more than 50,000 people across Connecticut in high reliability science, including hospital CEOs, clinicians, and non-clinical staff. Patient-family experience was the focus of the High Reliability Collaborative in 2014. As part of the high reliability journey, last year the emphasis was on expanding high reliability to the patient and family advocate community.

To improve patient satisfaction, Ms. Pierce described tactics including rounding; interacting in a friendly and empathetic way; and making an effort to see things from the perspective of the patients and families they serve.

“People come to us and they are sick and scared,” she said. “We have to take ourselves out of the equation and know that it’s all about the patients, who are essentially saying to us, ‘don’t harm me, heal me, and be nice to me.’ Those are the things our patients want and those are the things our patients deserve.”

CHA Provides Issue Briefs on Hospital Priorities

Just three months into the current fiscal year, Connecticut is already facing a budget deficit that is conservatively estimated at $77.9 million.

This latest estimate was reported last week by the legislature’s nonpartisan Office of Fiscal Analysis (OFA), which also estimated an $80 million reduction in personal income tax collections and a reduction in the sales tax revenue of $39 million.

Although the deficit as it stands now only represents a small fraction of the state’s overall budget, it has provoked some sharp words from Republicans in the General Assembly and set the stage for what will likely be a difficult legislative session.

In preparation for the upcoming legislative session, the Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) has released a series of Issue Briefs highlighting an array of topics important to hospitals, including some that are specifically related to state funding, such as Hospitals and Taxes, How Hospitals are Paid, and Hospitals for a Healthy Economy. The briefs are being distributed to lawmakers and others interested in hospital legislative priorities.

The ten briefs cover a wide swath of topics. In addition to the three listed above, they are: Connecticut Hospitals are Evolving; Hospitals Serve our Communities; Hospitals and Health Equity; Hospitals and Population Health; Hospitals and Mental Health; Hospitals and Substance Use Treatment; and Hospitals: Delivering Safe, Reliable, Quality Healthcare.

CHA Joins United Against the Flu Campaign
The Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) is participating in the third-annual United Against the Flu campaign, which uses social media outreach to bring national attention to the need for flu vaccinations.

United Against the Flu is a collaborative effort undertaken by several national healthcare organizations, including the American Hospital Association (AHA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), to emphasize the importance of being vaccinated. The four-month campaign will peak during the CDC’s National Influenza Vaccination Week (NIVW), Dec. 4-10.

Influenza sends hundreds of thousands of people to the hospital annually and kills tens of thousands of Americans, including the elderly, people with underlying conditions, and infants, according to the CDC. In Connecticut, the illness was attributed to 35 deaths during the 2015-16 flu season, according to the Department of Public Health.

Although the numbers of Americans vaccinated have trended upward in recent decades, that number declined slightly during the 2015-2016 flu season. The CDC calculates that about 140 million people, or 46 percent of the eligible population, received a flu vaccination last year.

In 2011, the Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) Board adopted a statewide policy endorsing mandatory influenza vaccination for hospital personnel as part of CHA hospitals’ commitment to patient safety. To date, the vast majority of acute care CHA member hospitals in Connecticut have implemented a mandatory participation or mandatory vaccination program.

CHA Nurse Leadership Forum: Building a Culture of Engagement, Respect, and Accountability

On Friday, October 28, CHA will hold its 16th annual Nurse Leadership Forum, built on a theme of “Building a Culture of Engagement, Respect, and Accountability.” Speakers will present creative leadership strategies to combat incivility and bias, while improving the patient-family experience, and increasing humor in the workplace.

Sharone Bar-David, author of Trust Your Canary, will be the keynote presenter. Ms. Bar-David, an expert at creating respectful and productive workplaces around the globe, will present an interactive, entertaining, and thought-provoking session that will inspire participants to feel, think, and act differently with regards to workplace civility. She will offer information on key issues and strategies for maintaining a civil work environment that results in exemplary care.

Troy Cicero, President of MulticultuReal® Communications, will present a plenary session on “Celebrating Diversity—Building Cultural Competence.” It is incumbent that nurse leaders build and create a culture and climate where differences are recognized, valued, and respected.

Mr. Cicero will present a model that is behavior, situation, and skill based, and depicts the four Levels of Relationship and 10 key Steps for building cultural competence—the MulticultuReal® ‘Relationship’ & ‘Accountability’ Model™.

Other speakers include Tory Zellick, Founder and CEO of All Things Caregiver, who will share her personal story of caring for her mother as a recent high school graduate; and Patty Wooten, nurse and humorist, who will discuss the importance of having a humorous perspective in the face of chaos.

Continuing education credits will be offered.

View Brochure | Event Registration

Education Updates

HRO Leadership Method Training
Tuesday, October 25, 2016
9:00 a.m. - 4:15 p.m.
Event Registration

Leadership Method Training is for organizations that are new to high reliability or for new management employees in organizations that are already on the high reliability journey. Both hospital and ambulatory organization leadership practices will be addressed. The leadership session is designed to teach hospital or ambulatory leaders the concepts of high reliability science and behaviors. The sessions are structured for leaders at the manager level and above.

Medicine, Nursing, Quality, and Radiology continuing education credits are offered for this session.

HRO Train-the-Trainer
Wednesday, October 26, 2016
9:00 a.m. - 4:15 p.m.
Event Registration

The model for sharing high reliability training with the rest of the staff is Train-the-Trainer. The training is scripted. It requires an enthusiastic participant who is willing to make time to train others within the organization. Other hospitals in Connecticut have trained educators, front-line managers, and senior leaders, including the CEO, as part of their training contingent. Train-the-Trainer sessions are for hospitals and ambulatory practices.
Medicine, Nursing, Quality, and Radiology continuing education credits are offered for this session.

**Lean Principles: Process Flow and Value Stream Mapping in Healthcare**
Session I: Monday, October 31, 2016
9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Session II: Monday, November 7, 2016
[View Brochure](#) | [Event Registration](#)

As the demands of health reform drive change in all areas of healthcare delivery, hospital leaders are focused on transforming their organizations through strategies that simultaneously increase revenue and sharply reduce costs. Lean principles offer leaders a management system and methodology that improves team engagement, eliminates roadblocks, and allows hospitals to improve the quality of care for patients by reducing errors and waste streams, including wait times. It is a systematic approach to reducing costs and risks, while simultaneously setting the stage for growth and expansion.

Please note: this is a two-session program, participants should attend both sessions.

Continuing education credits will be offered. See the brochure for details.

**Transitioning From Staff to Management: What's Next?**
Wednesday, November 9, 2016
8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
[View Brochure](#) | [Event Registration](#)

Whether recently assigned to the role of manager or a seasoned veteran, it is important to determine how well one's problem solving, critical thinking, and decision making skills are keeping pace with the ever-changing healthcare environment. For those who attended “Staff to Management: Starting the Transition” in March or September, this is the second course in the two-part program and provides additional development for all managers who want to improve their skills.

Continuing education credits will be offered.

**Leading in a VUCA Environment**
Thursday, November 10, 2016
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
[View Brochure](#) | [Event Registration](#)

The scope and pace of change in healthcare is unrelenting. VUCA is an acronym that describes an environment that is Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, and Ambiguous—a military term that was created during the Cold War and reused during the Middle East conflicts. Healthcare fits the description perfectly—and as the landscape continues to evolve, learning the strategies and principles of VUCA Leadership will enhance focus and agility. This workshop will blend didactic and experiential material, giving leaders practical tools to engage their employees in shaping organizational culture and achieving outcomes that drive operational excellence.

Continuing education credits will be offered.

**Best Practices for Handling Hazardous Drugs (for Hospital Engineers)**
Thursday, November 10, 2016
8:00 a.m. - 11:15 a.m.
[View Brochure](#) | [Event Registration](#)

This training—which is designed for hospital engineers—will include examples of the effects of exposure to hazardous drugs (HD) on healthcare staff that handle HDs, best practice related to HD compounding, and differences between USP Chapters <800> from <797> and <795>. A description of the primary, secondary, and supplemental engineering control requirements will also be provided.

Registration for this session includes access to CriticalPoint’s eLearning course: Engineering Controls and Personal Protective Equipment. This lesson and post test must be completed by all participants prior to the scheduled training.

**Best Practices for Handling Hazardous Drugs (for Hospital Pharmacists)**
Thursday, November 10, 2016
8:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
[View Brochure](#) | [Event Registration](#)

This full-day, interactive training is designed for hospital pharmacists and pharmacy technicians, and will review current and proposed regulation concerning all aspects of handling hazardous drugs (HD). Understanding these regulations will allow users to future-proof their facility and employ best work practices when performing both non-sterile and sterile HD handling.

Registration for this session includes access to CriticalPoint’s eLearning courses Introduction and Overview and Engineering Controls, Personal Protective Equipment, and Hazardous Drug Work Practice Strategies (5 hours of ACPE-approved CE). The three lessons and post tests must be completed by all participants prior to the scheduled training.
Creating Sustainability for High Reliability Organizations
Tuesday, November 15, 2016
9:00 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.
Event Registration

This session is designed for drivers of change in the organization and covers techniques to ensure the changes resulting from high reliability approaches are ongoing.

Medicine, Nursing, and Quality continuing education credits are offered for this session.

HRO Top Ten Problem Lists and Action Plans
Tuesday, November 15, 2016
1:00 p.m. - 4:15 p.m.
Event Registration

When issues are identified in Safety Huddle, how are they solved, while maintaining work on other projects? Problem Solving with the Top 10 is a tool for prioritizing and implementing projects without losing sight of the core value of safety.

Medicine, Nursing, and Quality continuing education credits are offered for this session.

HRO Safety Coach Training
Wednesday, November 16, 2016
9:00 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.
Event Registration

Safety Coaches are peer mentors, designed to recognize and acknowledge good high reliability behavior and to remind people about opportunities to improve behavior that does not stay true to high reliability concepts.

Medicine, Nursing, and Quality continuing education credits are offered for this session.

Worker Safety and Worker Engagement: A High Reliability Approach
Wednesday, November 16, 2016
1:00 p.m. - 4:15 p.m.
Event Registration

This session supports CHA’s efforts to take care of the staff who take care of patients. Worker Safety and Worker Engagement: A High Reliability Approach discusses behaviors, techniques, and measurement for worker safety, as used by other high reliability hospitals that are farther along their journey.