John Tobin, Waterbury Hospital’s President/CEO, to Retire

After serving 24 years as Waterbury Hospital’s President/CEO, John H. Tobin announced last week that he will be retiring at the end of the year. Mr. Tobin will also be retiring from his position as President of the Greater Waterbury Health Network.

Mr. Tobin’s announcement comes after the hospital’s report of a financial surplus for FY 2009, which was the first following three consecutive years of reporting an operating loss. Waterbury Hospital is the city’s largest private employer.

Two of Mr. Tobin’s most notable achievements included developing, together with Saint Mary’s Hospital, the Harold Leever Regional Cancer Center and the Heart Center of Greater Waterbury. Kevin Kniery, Executive Director of the Cancer Center, said, “I think it would be fair to say that without his leadership the cancer center would not be here.”

“John Tobin has served his hospital and community with the utmost distinction, and his leadership has had a tremendous influence on all who have been privileged to know and work with him,” commented Jennifer Jackson, CEO of the Connecticut Hospital Association. “I am personally indebted to John for his wise counsel, skilled guidance, and passionate commitment to CHA throughout the years. He will be greatly missed, but we wish him all the best in his well-earned retirement.”

Mr. Tobin announced his retirement to the hospital’s board of directors last month, and the board’s chairman, Fred Luedke, said the hospital has chosen a private company to recruit for Mr. Tobin’s successor. Mr. Luedke estimates the process will take five to seven months. In the meantime, Mr. Tobin remains committed to Waterbury Hospital saying, “I expect to be fully engaged in my work and in the many exciting projects we have undertaken at Waterbury Hospital, including performance improvement, various physician alignment initiatives, and whatever challenges healthcare reform may bring us.”

General Assembly Meets as End of Session Nears

With the 2010 legislative session coming to an end on May 5, the General Assembly met several times this week to debate and vote on legislative proposals brought to the Senate and House floor.

Legislators took action on several bills of interest to hospitals and the healthcare community. HB 5024, An Act Concerning An Education Doctoral Degree Program In Nursing Education, would specifically authorize the Connecticut State University System to award doctoral degrees in nursing education. The CHA-supported bill was passed in the Senate in concurrence with the House, and was transmitted to the Governor. HB 5286, An Act Concerning Licensure Of Master And Clinical Social Workers, would create a new licensure category for certain social workers known as a “licensed master social worker,” which would be regulated by the Department of Public Health. The bill was passed by the House and transmitted to the Senate for action.

The Senate and House were still in session at the time of publication. Any votes on healthcare and/or hospital-related bills will be reported in next week’s edition of Update.

Health Care Reform Cabinet Established

Governor M. Jodi Rell has established a Health Care Reform Cabinet, designed to integrate recently enacted federal healthcare reform with state-administered health programs. The Cabinet will be led by Christine Vogel, Deputy Commissioner of the
The Health Care Cabinet will be charged with providing transparent access to information, pursuing federal funds for a temporary high-risk insurance pool, creating a consumer-friendly health insurance purchasing exchange, and reviewing insurance industry reforms to ensure Connecticut's readiness for full implementation of federal reform.

In announcing the Cabinet, Governor Rell stated, “The national law is such a massive and unprecedented piece of legislation that, in some cases, it will take years until uninsured individuals begin to see the effects. We can be proud that Connecticut is a national leader in providing affordable and accessible care and this Cabinet will ensure that state-run programs complement national reform.”

**CHA Nursing Workplace Environment Assessment Presented at National Nursing Leadership Conference**

At the Annual Meeting of the American Organization of Nurse Executives (AONE) last week in Indianapolis, CHA's Director of Nursing and Workforce Initiatives Liz Beaudin, and Sue Fitzsimons, Chief Nursing Officer and Senior Vice President of Patient Services at Yale-New Haven Hospital, shared the survey methods and results from the Hospital Nursing Workplace Environment Assessment Project conducted in 2008-09 in Connecticut. The first-of-its-kind project was launched by CHA to determine nurses’ perceptions of their hospital workplace environments and to use the results to enhance retention and recruitment of nurses.

More than 2,000 staff registered nurses from 20 CHA hospitals responded anonymously to a survey built on AONE’s *Principles & Elements of a Healthful Practice/Work Environment*. The results of the survey were very positive overall. In response to an open-ended question on why respondents like working in a hospital, nurses talked about challenge, diversity of experience and ability to keep skills current, flexible scheduling, the fast-paced environment, pay, and teamwork. In focus groups afterward, RNs cited flexibility of schedule as a huge support to work/life balance.

In addition to holding focus groups to clarify the results of the survey, CHA hosted two well-attended educational events as a follow up to the survey: a Nurses’ Day of Sharing, and a workshop on shared governance. Further activities to strengthen the work environment of nurses continue to be an ongoing focus of CHA and its members.

**CHA, Heart Center of Greater Waterbury, Receive American Lung Association’s Breath of Life Award**

As part of the American Lung Association’s *Breath of Spring 2010 Gala Celebration* held Friday, April 16, CHA was presented with the Breath of Life Award. The award recognizes organizations that provide a smoke-free environment for patients, visitors, and employees. CHA was recognized for its [Smoke-Free Hospital Campus Initiative](#), which encourages hospitals to prohibit smoking outside buildings and throughout their campuses. Twenty-five of the 29 acute care hospitals have gone smoke-free, with the remaining hospitals planning on going smoke-free by November 2010.

The Heart Center of Greater Waterbury, a collaborative program between Saint Mary’s Hospital and Waterbury Hospital offering Waterbury residents access to advanced cardiac services, received the Breath of Life Award for its successful Freedom From Smoking (FFS) program. The Heart Center FFS program yielded an 85 percent quit rate at its last session.

**CHA Hosts Fourth Session of Nurse Manager Leadership Academy**

The fourth session of the five-part Nurse Manager Leadership Academy, *Managing the Business Module*, was held on Wednesday, April 21. Participants began with coursework on employment laws and regulations that have a direct impact on workforce decisions. The afternoon was devoted to identifying and improving an organization’s patient care quality environment and performance improvement strategies. Building performance improvement teams and evidence-based practices in patient safety, such as the use of briefings, rounding, and situational awareness techniques, were explored.

John Zandy, Chair of Wiggin and Dana's Labor, Employment and Benefits Department, presented *Employment Law Training*; followed by Beth Dupont, CHA’s Director of Human Resources, who discussed *HR Basics for New Managers*. Alison Hong, MD, CHA’s Interim Vice President of Quality and Patient Safety, closed the program with a presentation on *Quality Management and Patient Safety Issues Facing Healthcare* and *Tools and Strategies for Performance Improvement*. 
CHA to Host Improving Surgical Safety on Tuesday, April 27, 2010

This full-day program is designed to help hospitals identify and overcome the barriers to improving surgical patient safety. Verna C. Gibbs, MD, Professor of Clinical Surgery and member, Department of Surgery at the University of California, San Francisco, will deliver the opening address examining major issues in surgical patient safety, quality improvement, and error analysis. Dr. Gibbs initiated the surgical patient safety project “No Thing Left Behind: Prevention of Retained Foreign Bodies,” which has become a national surgical patient safety initiative.

William Berry, MD, of the World Health Organization’s Safe Surgery Saves Lives program will provide teams with a simple, efficient set of high priority checks for improving effective teamwork and communication. Brian Fillipo, MD, Vice President, Medical Affairs at Bon Secours Richmond Health System, will discuss human factors in the OR and the fundamentals of crew resource management to sustain improvements in surgical safety.

The closing session will be presented by a team of healthcare professionals from Middlesex Hospital, who will describe how they implemented and have maintained a culture change in the OR. Teams that provide surgical, anesthesia, and nursing care to patients in the perioperative area are encouraged to attend, as well as quality managers, risk managers, patient safety coordinators, and physician and patient care executives.

The Connecticut Hospital Association is an Approved Provider of Continuing Nursing Education by the Connecticut Nurses’ Association, an Accredited Approver by the American Nurses Credentialing Center’s Commission on Accreditation. This activity was submitted to the National Association of Healthcare Quality for CPHQ CE credits. The John D. Thompson Hospice Institute for Education, Training and Research, Inc. is pending designation of this educational activity for AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™. Physicians should only claim credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

Registration and breakfast are 8:30 – 9:00 a.m.; the program is 9:00 – 3:30 p.m. Click here to register. For more information, please contact Christine Prestiano, Coordinator, Education and Sponsorship Services at (203) 294-7257 or prestiano@chime.org.

CHA to Host Control Charts—A Proven Tool in Quality Improvement on Monday, May 10, 2010

Building on CHA’s previous data tools programs, this cost-effective, half-day program will provide advance-level training in the design and use of control charts to measure and sustain quality improvements. Participants will explore when to use the different types of control charts to guide the efforts of improvement teams. The program will be presented by Brian Fillipo, MD, Vice President, Medical Affairs at Bon Secours Richmond Health System.

The Connecticut Hospital Association is an Approved Provider of Continuing Nursing Education by the Connecticut Nurses’ Association, an Accredited Approver by the American Nurses Credentialing Center’s Commission on Accreditation. This activity was submitted to the National Association of Healthcare Quality for CPHQ CE credits. The John D. Thompson Hospice Institute for Education, Training and Research, Inc. is pending designation of this educational activity for AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™.

Registration and breakfast are 8:30 – 9:00 a.m.; the program is 9:00 – 12:00 p.m. For more information, please contact Christine Prestiano, Coordinator, Education and Sponsorship Services at (203) 294-7257 or prestiano@chime.org.

Nurse Manager Leadership Academy’s Final Session to be Held on Tuesday, May 25, 2010

There is still time to register for the final session of the Nurse Manager Leadership Academy, Managing the Business. The session will focus on the financial management skills nurse managers must acquire in today’s cost-conscious environment. Fundamental concepts of healthcare economics, hospital budgeting, and business plan development will be reviewed.

The Connecticut Hospital Association is an Approved Provider of Continuing Nursing Education by the Connecticut Nurses’
Association, an Accredited Approver by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation.

Registration and breakfast are 8:30 – 9:00 a.m.; the program is 9:00 – 4:00 p.m. Click here to register. For more information, please contact Christine Prestiano, Coordinator, Education and Sponsorship Services at (203) 294-7257 or prestiano@chime.org.