

A Brief from the Chief - *By Gary Boyd, CEO*

As we roll into 2009 there are many projects on our plate. A very important initiative is the rollout of Information Technology (IT) to the clinical areas. This will increase access to information, improve patient safety, and really should be thought of as a “Patient Safety” initiative instead of an IT initiative. As most of you are aware, we purchased the Siemens MS4 system a couple of years ago and we have concentrated on implementing the financial system. We are now focusing on the clinical areas and have formed a steering committee, which includes staff, physicians, and vendor support, to set the priorities and guide the implementation of the MS4 system wide. This is a huge initiative that will impact each and every one of us, and it has my full support. Some of the projects and modules being implemented include:

- ***MS4 Business Continuity***

This consists of an additional IBM Server which is a backup to our main server. This will reduce downtime as we update software or experience problems with the main server. This will reduce downtime during software updates from eight or more hours to less than 10 minutes. This project is on-line now.

- ***Siemens Lab Information System (LIS)***

The Siemens LIS is being built as a replacement lab system for our current Schuylab system. Once the system is live, the lab results will be available in the clinical repository for easy access by care providers. Point of Care locations will be able to use the central system as well. Completion of the project is slated for late May or June 2009.

- ***Siemens Pharmacy***

The Siemens Pharmacy System will provide our first hospital pharmacy application. Phase One of the project will focus on the core pharmacy build which will offer patient profile checking of inpatient medications against the patient profile which will greatly enhance patient safety. Phase One of the project is scheduled to be complete in September but Siemens has offered additional help as a reward for agreeing to BETA test a new upgraded platform. Siemens feels that with their help we can complete the project in late June 2009.

Phase Two of the pharmacy project involves building the medication administration solution (MAK) with the “go live” date planned for spring 2010. The MAK system will provide full bar code control of patient medications at the point of administration which further enhances medication safety. One barrier to implementing this project is the lack of space for the packaging equipment required for the bar coding of individual doses, but we are working to find a solution to this issue.

- ***Clinical Suite***

The Clinical Suites provide computer based documentation of nurse charting; an online order communications tool for radiology, laboratory, dietary, PT, and respiratory orders; and a central repository for results. These tools will provide care providers with a central location for accessing key patient care data from any location within the facility and even from remote locations.

Phase One of the project involves setting up results for radiology and the lab in the patient portal. We will also start building the nursing workflows in OR, MedSurg, and L&D. To date, a good deal of work has gone into defining the flow sheet logic for the nursing documentation. It is planned that we will largely be done with this part of the project this February. The second phase of the Clinical Suites Project will involve the implementation of the electronic medication administration record and MAK. Completion dates for this phase are not yet decided and are dependant on the completion of the pharmacy space and licensing project. A current estimate for completion is during the calendar year 2010.

The third phase of the clinical suite project will involve computerized physician order entry (CPOE). This phase remains unplanned pending additional work on the first two phases.

- ***Decision Support System (DSS)***

This data warehouse and reporting system will supply management with dashboard views and reports of key business data and metrics that are currently difficult to retrieve. Ad hoc reporting functionality and the ability to drill down into data during analysis are also important functions of the solution. The DSS base and Financial Performance Suite are to be completed first, with the Cost

Accounting module following shortly thereafter, with an estimated completion date of spring 2010.

Recently a team of staff members visited two MS4 clinical sites in Texas; Scottish Rite Hospital in Dallas and Nacogdoches Memorial Hospital. They both have a tremendous wealth of knowledge in deploying the system in the clinical environment and the information we gleaned from them is invaluable. We have made key contacts with them and with their help we feel we can get the system built in the most functional and expeditious way. Again, we will all be impacted by this deployment over the next few years and our patients will benefit from the improved safety the system will provide, which is in concert with our mission of providing excellent, compassionate health care services. There will be much more to come on this subject but I wanted you all to be aware of its significance.

Last month I wrote about the Continuity Plan and we have made progress. As I write this our overall net revenue for December is approximately \$5.0M, compared to the monthly net revenue of about \$3.8M reported for the previous months, and it looks like we will have a positive operating gain for the month. During the last pay period of the year, full-time employees were down compared to previous pay periods, so it looks like our efforts to reduce hours are working. I apologize for being vague, but I'll know more as information becomes available. It looks like everyone's work is starting to have a positive impact. We have a long way to go but thank you all for your diligence and hard work.

Congratulations to Greg Young, SMHD Information Security Officer, for being published in a National Newsletter for HIPAA compliance. The newsletter is called, "Report on Patient Privacy." It is published by the Atlantic Information Service's HIPAA Compliance Center in Washington DC. The article is titled "Covered Entities Still Wrestle with Issues Related to Law Enforcement's Requests for Protected Health Information." Greg has done quite a bit of work researching what information can be released to police officers regarding patients in the Emergency Department and has developed policies, forms, and provided education. These are referenced in the article and he has been contacted by more than 50 people from across the country to obtain copies of the materials he developed here at SMHD. Congratulations to Greg for this recognition.

As everyone knows, December was a busy month in all areas of the hospital and Healthcare District. Even with everyone being so busy I received three letters from

patients praising the staff, physicians, and care they received here. One was from a patient who wanted to inform me of the very positive experiences he had at Mammoth Hospital. He started with a visit to the Emergency Department (ED) in October, then a follow-up with an orthopedist, several tests including x-rays, EKG, MRI, blood tests, all followed by surgery. He stated that “each and every contact with members of your staff was an experience of which all of you can be proud” and went on to say “I sincerely believe that the personnel at Mammoth Hospital...are a credit not only to Mammoth Lakes but to the entire County.” A second patient wrote to commend us on our “emergency room and your outstanding emergency medicine team.” He came here on Christmas Eve and received “terrific care and attention from everyone that I came in contact with and was extremely impressed with the diagnostic skills of the staff.” The third person was seen in the ED and admitted to the hospital the day after Christmas. She was “so very impressed by the excellent care I received,” and stated that “I think that your hospital is Outstanding and I appreciate the special attention that I received and your employees are Fabulous!” These letters are a testament to the skilled and caring staff and physicians at SMHD. Thank you all for living the mission, vision, and values of the Healthcare District and taking such good care of our residents and visitors.

As we enter the New Year we have the much anticipated change in Presidential Administrations upcoming in a few days. This will, no doubt, have an impact on us, we are just not sure at this point what that will be. President-elect Obama has targeted the following three goals for health care: reduced costs, enhanced IT, and increased access. This will truly be an exciting time to be in health care, and I think the SMHD will be up to the challenge.

Thank you for your attention, have a safe and happy 2009.