

Volume 10 | November 2010

foundation focus

2

Financial Accomplishments Lead to Excellent Outcomes



4

The Commonwealth Medical College



6

Sisters of Christian Charity Sponsorship



Sometimes, helping patients means helping one of our own families

Sometimes in Susquehanna Health's closely knit medical community, physicians and their loved ones find themselves on the receiving end of medical care.

It was a Saturday night nearly three years ago when Dr. **Dr. Chris and Kristin Wagner's** infant daughter, Heidi, began having difficulty nursing. Until that point Heidi had been a happy, healthy 5½-month-old who was breastfeeding exclusively and reaching all of the expected milestones. But a serious problem was beginning to unfold.

When Heidi continued to have difficulty feeding for another full day, Kristin took her to the family doctor suspecting an ear infection, but the baby did not have one. When they returned to the doctor's office the next day, Heidi seemed to be weakening.

"It was crazy," says Dr. Wagner, who was a second-year resident in Susquehanna Health's Family Medicine Residency Program at the time. "She didn't have symptoms of a cold or a fever. She wasn't

(Left to right) Dr. William Keenan, Heidi, Kristin and Dr. Chris Wagner

vomiting, but we could tell something was wrong. At about the time my wife thought she looked a little blue or dusky, our doctor told us to take her to the hospital."

Dr. William Keenan Jr., an associate director for the residency program, was the attending physician and admitted Heidi to the pediatric floor at Williamsport Regional Medical Center so he could do a medical workup. Among

Continued on page 3

Financial Accomplishments Lead to Excellent Outcomes

Fiscal year 2010, which ended June 30, 2010, was a very critical year for Susquehanna Health. The positive operational and financial accomplishments of the past year, coupled with significant fundraising and funding achievements, will greatly influence our ability to succeed in the future.

This was essentially a “recovery” year. With revenues exceeding expenses by \$11.8 million, Susquehanna Health achieved a 3.2 percent operating margin for the year, compared with 2.4 percent the prior year. With investment income, Susquehanna Health achieved a net income margin of \$21.4 million or 5.6 percent compared with a net loss (due to investment losses) of \$4.5 million last year.

Key to this improved financial picture is our strategy to provide the best patient care, including excellent outcomes and satisfaction, while being as efficient as possible. At a time when many health systems are experiencing a decline in volume, Susquehanna Health had a 2.2 percent increase in inpatient admissions.

Operational initiatives aimed at improving efficiency are also having

an impact. An example is a nursing recruitment program that began early this fiscal year and resulted in an outstanding recruiting class—50 nurses to work in all three Susquehanna Health hospitals. Because of this



Charles Santangelo, CFO

success we significantly reduced spending on agency nurses as well as recruitment and work bonuses. This and many other initiatives implemented in the past year made a positive impact on financial results that will continue into the future.

Susquehanna Health was also fortunate to have significant achievements in the form of funding and fundraising. The unprecedented generosity of so many

community donors made the *Count On Us For Life* Capital Campaign an overwhelming success. With an exceptional gift of \$3 million from The Donald B. and Dorothy L. Stabler Foundation, the campaign exceeded goals and raised \$15.2 million to support the renovation projects of Project 2012.

Strong community support also played a role in the successful issue of \$167.5 million in tax-exempt bonds. The bond issues made it possible to begin the final and largest component of Project 2012—the Patient Tower at the Williamsport

Regional Medical Center (WRMC). This bond issue represents permanent financing for the project and provides a very affordable long-term funding commitment for Susquehanna Health.

Additional significant funding achievements include a five-year provider agreement with Blue Cross of Northeastern PA, which qualified Project 2012 for \$24 million of special funding assistance from BC NEPA; the recent success of Senator Gene Yaw, Representative Garth Everett and Representative Rick Mirabito in garnering three Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP) grants totaling \$5.5 million for WRMC; a \$1 million grant from the Pennsylvania Energy Development Authority to fund the co-generation unit at WRMC; and achievement of an operating profit that will enable Susquehanna Health to reinvest in the Patient Tower project after all other funding sources are used.

The strong financial position of our health system is not only a credit to our leadership, physicians, managers and employees who work so hard to provide superior healthcare and carefully use our resources, it is also a credit to our community, which remains so generous with its support of Susquehanna Health’s healing mission. The continued efforts of all will keep us poised for success in extending God’s healing love by improving the health of those we serve.

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Sometimes, helping patients means helping one of our own families

Continued from front cover

the lab tests and X-rays he ordered was a spinal tap (lumbar puncture); he was concerned when Heidi didn't resist the invasive procedure.

"It was extremely nerve-wracking. Here was this child who had been healthy just three days earlier. Something unexplained was going on and it seemed to be turning into something very bad," says Dr. Keenan. "It was difficult to make sense of it. There were no real visual clues. There was nothing in her history to indicate what the diagnosis might be. She hadn't ingested poison, her lab work came back normal and her deterioration was too rapid for a degenerative neurological condition. Looking back, I'm grateful she didn't have a fever because I might have gone off in a different direction and lost precious time. As I rapidly went through the process of elimination, we just weren't left with that many possibilities."

The lack of possibilities led Dr. Keenan to conclude that Heidi had infant botulism, an extremely rare condition that occurs just 72 times each year in the United States. He knew timing was critical.

The condition causes muscles to weaken, including those necessary for breathing. He needed to get Heidi to a location equipped with ventilators for children.

At home with his older daughter, Dr. Wagner received a call from his wife that Heidi was being life-flighted to another hospital.

"That was the biggest moment. Up until then, I thought she was probably just going to bounce back. Suddenly, it was very shocking and scary, and I felt helpless," says Dr. Wagner. "It was a very frustrating time. As a parent, as a doctor, I was unable to help."

In the pediatric intensive care unit, Heidi was treated for dehydration first and responded so well her caregivers initially felt she might not have botulism. But when her condition declined again she required ventilator support to breathe.

During three weeks in the hospital Heidi received the treatment she needed, including an antitoxin called BabyBIG. When she came home, she spent time

catching up developmentally through physical therapy, and today there is no evidence of her illness. That's exactly the outcome Dr. Keenan enjoys.

"It is always gratifying to make a diagnosis of something that is fixable," says Dr. Keenan. "Once we knew what it was, that put us well on our way to getting her the appropriate treatment."

Dr. Wagner, who has since graduated and is working at Susquehanna Health's Community Health Center, made a presentation on infant botulism to his colleagues to raise awareness of the potentially life-threatening condition.

"Only half of the children admitted to the hospital with botulism have that diagnosis; it's not on the forefront as a possibility," he explains. "That makes it even more remarkable that Dr. Keenan nailed the diagnosis so incredibly fast. It really gave me a greater respect for the care available and the quality of training I was receiving. He got her the care she needed right away. It was fantastic. Fantastic."

3



Conceptual rendering of the Breast Health Center registration area



Conceptual rendering of the Divine Providence Hospital lobby

BREAST HEALTH CENTER UPDATES

Plans are in process to move the Kathryn Candor Lundy Breast Health Center from the Wenner Building to the first floor of Divine Providence Hospital in 2011. Patients and families will enter into an enlarged, renovated hospital lobby with modernized finishes and amenities, including a station for assistance and educational information.

Improvements to the Breast Health Center will include six additional exam rooms, enhanced patient privacy, closer ancillary support such as lab and radiology and more efficient care. Since 2008, patient volumes have increased by 38 percent, creating the need to move from the current 8,000-square-foot office to one with almost 14,000 square feet. The goal of the relocation and renovation is to increase both patient and staff satisfaction while still providing the highest level of care.

More information will be spotlighted in the February *Foundation Focus*.

The Commonwealth Medical College

The Commonwealth Medical College (TCMC) was envisioned just over six years ago to help address northeastern and northcentral Pennsylvania's critical shortage of physicians. TCMC welcomed its charter class in August 2009 and now in its second year of operation, the medical college has attracted thousands of applicants to fill 65 positions for its first and second years.

By design, the majority of students accepted, 70 percent, are from Pennsylvania. Of those, 46 percent are from northeastern Pennsylvania, and college officials hope the majority of graduates will stay in the area to practice medicine.

What makes TCMC unique and attractive to many prospective students is early clinical exposure. Within their first month of school, students are linked with a clinical mentor from one of three regional campuses (Scranton, Wilkes-Barre or Williamsport) and a multi-generational family that they will follow for their four years of enrollment. That's where medical staff and faculty from Susquehanna Health come in as part of the Williamsport Regional Campus. More than 130 physicians, mostly volunteer, from the area are participating with TCMC as clinical preceptors. In their third and fourth years, TCMC students will live in their assigned regions to train and be mentored in the community.

"We have received tremendous support from the Williamsport region through the community physicians who are providing learning opportunities for our students," says **Dr. Robert D'Alessandri**, President and Dean, TCMC. "This is an outstanding program, and our connection with Susquehanna Health gives our students an opportunity to see sophisticated healthcare in a rural setting."



Dr. Elizabeth Anderson, clinical mentor, guides Nathan Wool, second-year medical student, as they meet with patient Vicki Cohick. Vicki is part of the multi-generational family that Nathan will work closely with over his four years while studying alongside Dr. Anderson and attending The Commonwealth Medical College (TCMC). Once TCMC is into its fourth year of programming, Susquehanna Health will have the potential of 64 students studying right here in Williamsport.

The first class (Class of 2013) of medical students met their mentors and families in Williamsport during the three, one-week shadowing experiences in 2009, and they were reunited with them again this fall. Students of TCMC's class of 2014 assigned to the Williamsport Regional Campus were also introduced to their mentors and families this fall.



Dr. Robert D'Alessandri, President and Dean, TCMC



Dr. Keith Shenberger, Associate Dean for Regional Campus Development - Williamsport

"This is an incredible learning experience for our students," says **Dr. Keith Shenberger**, Associate Dean for Regional Campus Development - Williamsport. "Mentors take them under their wings to show them how medicine is practiced in the real world."

Through the unique family relationship, students experience healthcare from the patient's perspective to see how seemingly unrelated issues like transportation and finances can play a role in a patient's health and quality of medical care. For many students it's their first exposure to what it's like to have a health problem or to have to choose between food and medicine.

For Susquehanna Health and community members, participation with the college provides many benefits.

"Ultimately, we're building a physician workforce for the 21st century in a reformed healthcare environment," says Dr. Shenberger. "With every student we want to provide a strong foundation in general medicine and a broad experience of education so they can be good residents and practitioners of evidence-based medicine wherever they choose to go. Of course we hope that some of our students will want to stay here and be part of our family medicine residency program. We hope they will be so immersed and connected to our community that they will want to stay and practice right here."

Other advantages include the exchange of information and ideas between established physicians and their students and the additional patient care and support students provide. Dr. Shenberger notes that first year students orchestrated four community health research projects last year, two of which have already impacted practices related to Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) and advanced directives at Susquehanna Health.



CADUCEUS SOCIETY SPOTLIGHT

5

Dr. and Mrs. John Becker

"When you make a contribution within the community, whether it's to the health system or the United Way, you can see the positive outcomes. That's really important to me," says **Dr. John Becker**, a radiologist.

Dr. Becker and his wife, **Donna**, have supported Susquehanna Health with their donations for more than 15 years and became members of the Caduceus Society with their gift to support the recent *Count On Us For Life* Capital Campaign.

Hoping to escape the congestion of city life that he experienced growing up in urban New Jersey, Dr. Becker came to Williamsport in 1990. He and his wife enjoy the mix of city and country living that the area offers, and he especially appreciates the community's commitment to healthcare.

"For a hospital in a community this size, it's really amazing what we have to offer. All of the specialty services are here, from surgical to medical. In many communities this size, the healthcare is much more limited," he explains. "Add to that the outstanding medical community—we have very good, well-trained doctors. I don't think many people realize how unusual that is."

Dr. Becker has appreciated the health system's commitment over the last 20 years to keeping pace with evolving imaging technology.

"To this day we are current. I give the health system a lot of credit because significant planning and investigating and a very large investment are required to stay current with the new generation PACS systems, CAT scans and MRIs," he explains.

Dr. Becker is looking forward to more improvements when the Patient Tower is completed at Williamsport Regional Medical Center as part of Project 2012. Plans call for separate inpatient and outpatient radiology functions to protect the privacy and maintain the dignity of patients.

"It's always nice to see change, it keeps your interest in the profession," he explains.

Over the years Dr. Becker has participated in several golfing events to support the health system. "I think it's important that everyone contribute in whatever way they can, whether it's financially, intellectually or physically," explains Dr. Becker. "This profession has been very good to me, and I try to do my part to give back in whatever way I can."

Sisters of Christian Charity Sponsorship



SCC Leadership Team tours Susquehanna Health hospitals.

More than 60 years ago, the Sisters of Christian Charity (SCC), a Catholic faith-based organization, brought a Christian mission of healing to the Williamsport area with the creation of Divine Providence Hospital.

Today that mission continues through a unique partnership with Susquehanna Health that places the SCC at the heart of the organization to assure that all aspects of business, service and care are conducted as a faith-based organization.

In 2008, the SCC authorized the formal consolidation of Divine Providence and Muncy Valley Hospitals into Susquehanna Health's corporate family. Under the new structure these hospitals were able to assist the Williamsport Regional Medical Center, the Susquehanna Health Medical Group and the Susquehanna Health System Insurance Network in issuing the debt necessary to complete the three-campus facility redevelopment and modernization plan we refer to as Project 2012. In addition, the new structure streamlines administration and consolidates the governance process into a single unified team.

"We have a very long commitment to extend God's healing love to the people of this region. Our goal has always been to do what's best to assure that affordable, excellent quality healthcare is available," explains **Sister Teresa Ann Jacobs**, Director of Sponsorship Services for the SCC. "When we saw the significant

community benefits to be gained by legally merging, we moved forward."

As part of the new formal, intentional relationship between Susquehanna Health and the SCC, faith-based principles are being applied throughout Susquehanna Health. Acting much like the organization's conscience, representatives from

Sponsorship Services and Director of Mission Integration and Ethics. "We are calling on the leaders and employees of the organization to look at every aspect of Susquehanna Health to make sure we are reflecting Christian standards."

As a faith-based organization, Susquehanna Health serves all people regardless of their faith, belief



"Our goal has always been to do what's best to assure that affordable, excellent quality healthcare is available."

— Sister Teresa Ann Jacobs

the SCC are playing an integral role in governance, administrative and patient care functions to assure that everything from the quality of care provided, the way community resources are used, the integrity of business practices and even the way employees, patients and their families are treated reflects Christian values."

"The whole system is not Catholic, but it is a faith-based organization that follows Christian faith teachings," says Sister Teresa Ann, explaining that this new mission is being integrated under the guidance of the Director of

or non-belief. While Susquehanna Health has a historic commitment to excellence, the relationship with the SCC creates a visible commitment and empowers service partners to enact high-quality standards in every aspect of the organization.

"Jesus did not do shabby work," says Sister Teresa Ann. "We are engaged in the work of healing, and that not only means compassionate care but also advanced technology, a comfortable healing environment and a commitment to treat everyone who passes through our doors with dignity and respect."



Susquehanna Health Invitational Golf Tournament Results:

1st Place Low Net Winners with a score of 103 – Pictured left to right: Craig Weckerly, Mark Kuchler, Chairman Larry Allison Sr., Chris Sabo and Tom McHale.

Low Gross Winners with a score of 141 – Pictured left to right: Larry Allison Jr., Chairman Larry Allison Sr. and Bill Kinley (*missing from photo Eric McNulty and Steve Cappelli*).

Muncy Valley Hospital Invitational Golf Tournament Results:

Champion Flight Winners – Pictured left to right: Tom Briggs, Mark Huffman, Jack Spotts and BJ Smith.

Susquehanna Health Invitational Golf Tournament

One hundred and twelve golfers participated in the 29th Annual Susquehanna Health Invitational Golf Tournament held Monday, August 16, 2010, at the Williamsport Country Club.

Proceeds from this year’s tournament will help purchase a mobile health unit for The WorkCenter of Susquehanna Health. The new unit is beneficial for small and large businesses in and around Susquehanna Health’s primary service area. The mobile unit will allow specially trained staff to administer on-site drug and alcohol testing to company employees. Staff will help employers establish comprehensive employee health, wellness and work-related injury management and prevention programs to an anticipated 4,000 employees.

Cheryl Chapman, Special Events Coordinator, would like to thank our golf tournament Chairman **Larry Allison Sr.**, along with Committee Members **Sam Aloisio, Donna Bastian, Tony DiSalvo, Brent Fish, Mary Ann Johnson** and **Beth Schluter** and Volunteers **Sue Everett** and **Chuck Myers**. This year’s event raised more than \$66,000. In the 29-year history of the tournament, more than \$1,140,000 has been raised to support multiple programs and services of Susquehanna Health.

Muncy Valley Hospital Invitational Golf Tournament

Muncy Valley Hospital held its 25th Annual Invitational Golf Tournament at Wynding Brook Golf Course in Milton on Friday, September 10, 2010. Thirty-one foursomes participated in this year’s event.

The tournament raised more than \$25,800. Proceeds will support Project 2012, in particular the Muncy Valley Hospital renovations converting semi-private inpatient rooms to single-occupancy rooms. Some benefits to this renovation include providing greater comfort and privacy for patients, curtailing the spread of airborne infectious diseases and allowing patients to have procedures completed at their bedside.

The golf committee was chaired by **Dean L. Barto**. Committee Members and Volunteers were **Sharon Adams, Rhonda Adams-Freezer, Troy Detweiler, Colleen Gronski, Myra Hartman, Steve Kelchner, Emily Shelley, Sherry Smith, Barry** and **Cyndy Whipple**. A special thanks is extended for the continued support of the committee for another successful event.

foundation
focus

The 7 Secrets to Wealth

to Enhancing and Protecting Your Wealth

- *Avoid unnecessary taxes and enhance your wealth.*
- *Tax-saving strategies.*
- *How you can benefit from charitable giving.*

November 30
5 to 6:30 p.m.

**Free Planned Giving Seminar presented by
Johni Hayes, JD, renowned planned giving expert.**

(includes a 30-minute question and answer session)

Conference room in the
Susquehanna Health Cancer Center
On the campus of
Divine Providence Hospital
1100 Grampian Boulevard
Williamsport, PA 17701

Space is limited.
Please RSVP by November 23 by
calling Susquehanna Health Foundation
at **(570) 320-7460**.



Johni has been practicing law with an emphasis in charitable and estate planning for 17 years. She regularly lectures on:

- estate and charitable planning
- probate
- living wills
- annuities
- life insurance
- retirement planning
- IRAs
- income, estate and gift taxation

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