



RWJ Health Network Meets MD Needs

As the number of practicing physicians in certain medical areas dwindles, the RWJ Health Network and its hospitals have developed innovative programs designed to maintain a robust population of general practice physicians and in-demand specialists, while providing the breadth of services that ensure referrals to Network hospitals.

Mentoring, residency, and graduating fellows programs are designed to support new physicians in establishing community practices and forging ties with Network hospitals.

National statistics show that half of all physicians ultimately practice in the community where they complete their residency.

The Network and hospital initiatives include:

- CentraState Healthcare System's family practice residency program, which used the UMDNJ-RWJMS, a Network member, to fill its community's growing need for physicians. (As Freehold-area physicians near retirement, the need for primary care physicians grows.) Spearheaded by Kenneth Faistl, MD, the chair of family practice at CentraState, residents will help fill the shortage by helping to supervise and perform procedures, and by working at private physician offices and with CentraState staff physicians;
- Led by Ira Klein, MD, MBA, Medical Director for Quality and Case Management, Bayshore Community Health Service's year-long program for graduating residents develops business skills in specialties identified by the medical staff as in demand in the Holmdel area. With this mentored experience, new physicians are more likely to establish practices in the community;
- A new Network program that links member hospital physicians with graduating fellows is designed to foster relationships between new and established physicians, foster junior partnerships with community physicians, and increase new physician affiliations with Network hospitals;
- The Network Neuroscience Program (NSN) is meeting the Network hospital need for comprehensive neurological and neurosurgical services. With neurosurgeons from RWJMS delivering hard-to-provide neurosurgical services to member hospitals, the NSN is keeping more neurosurgical patients within the Network.

The programs underscore the value of Network-wide insight and resources when tackling immediate and long-term issues in health care delivery and patient care. With certain physician shortages emerging as a critical regional health care dilemma, the combined expertise of the Network will prove invaluable in developing unique and effective solutions.



Kenneth Faistl, M.D.



Ira Klein, M.D.

Billing Problems? RWJ Health Network Has a Solution

Failing to get proper reimbursement heads a stack of billing problems that drain physicians' financial and practice resources. A solution? The RWJ Health Network Physician Billing Service, which manages all aspects of billing and collection for physicians. With a combined 35 years experience—and on-staff certified coders—the service provides:

- improved cash flow through daily billing and follow-up;
- accurate electronic billing, follow-up and receivables management;
- accounts receivable reports that are understandable and accurate;
- meaningful feedback on account status.

The billing service also offers the IDX Group Practice Management System to help physicians realize tangible benefits. Physician office-staff classes, held at the Network's New Brunswick offices, include training in appointment scheduling, patient registration, charge entry, and reports. The service conducts nightly backups of all data entry and offers help desk services.

Participating physicians give high marks to the service. Dr. Nasser Ani of Ani Orthopedics wrote, "I recently renewed my contract with the RWJ Health Network billing service for the third year. Increased revenue in a shorter timeframe, stabilized reimbursement cycles, expedited submission of timely and accurate billing and improved patient relations are just a few of the benefits the Network's billing service brings to my practice."

MEWA Continues to Offer Savings

As it enters its third year on July 1ST, the RWJ Health Network's Multiple Employee Welfare Act (MEWA) health plan is going strong and continues to save Network physicians money on health care premiums for themselves, their office staffs and families. In 2004, the Network's annual premium increases averaged less than 7% compared to industry-wide increases of between 15% and 20%. Physicians from over 100 practices joined the physician's health plan which now covers more than 600 lives. Broad plan options offer something for every practice and new enrollment is expected to increase, further expanding benefits and cost savings for physicians. For more details or a price quote call the Network office at 732-418-8055.

NSN Gets to Work

With its official launch in January, the Robert Wood Johnson NeuroScience Network (NSN) is delivering state-of-the-art neurosurgical care to Network hospital patients. Neurologists on staff at Network hospitals help direct neurosurgeons from Robert Wood Johnson Medical School (RWJMS) to deliver neurosurgical services to patients of all NSN member hospitals. Initially, a transfer center at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital will facilitate patient transfers from member hospitals. Transfer center staff, a nurse-supervised administrative team with 24 hour/7 day availability, handles all administrative and logistic functions, such as securing a patient bed assignment. The center enables the neurosurgeon and the referring physician to focus exclusively on clinical issues. The long-term plan calls for these surgeons to:

- Provide services in participating community hospitals whenever possible, and
- Establish two outpatient medical offices located near NSN member hospitals.

In addition to accelerating neurosurgeon recruitment, the NSN is surveying member hospitals to assess their current neurosurgical needs and capabilities. The NSN's Medical Council, whose members are mostly private neurologists, will create protocols to determine where the patient will be best served. NSN will also track all neurosurgery patients to ensure optimal use of Network resources and compliance with mandated NSN protocols.

Patient safety: "Stop the rhetoric and start improvements"

Don Berwick, MD, Institute for HealthCare Improvement, February 2005

Against a backdrop of alarming statistics, the Institute of Medicine (IOM) challenged healthcare providers to build quality into systems and coordinate roles among clinicians, patients, payers, and regulators to improve patient safety. Despite the introduction of programs to address safety issues, results are not impressive. The RWJ Health Network took a leadership role in promoting patient safety when all member hospitals endorsed the principles of the Leapfrog Group's three safety practices (leaps) – Computerized Physician Order Entry (CPOE) systems, ICU physician staffing and evidence-based hospital referrals in 2002. Leapfrog's fourth leap – a survey of compliance with the National Quality Forum's 27 Safe Practices – was added in 2004.

The Network's Physician Coordinating Council (PCC) set goals aimed at understanding patient safety regulations and reporting requirements, and identifying resources, benchmarks and best practices. To that end, the Council formed the Network's Patient Safety Committee in January 2004. The Committee works collaboratively on challenges that come from understanding and responding to data requests from patient safety proponents. The Committee's evaluation of the safety environment at each Network hospital – using Leapfrog's

patient safety survey – highlighted the need to add accountability for patient safety in all employee job descriptions. Presented to the Network Board, the Committee's recommendation was endorsed by the Network's Human Resource Vice Presidents in December 2004. The Committee also monitors Network performance on AHRQ's 20 safety measures and works with the Nurse Coordinating Council to achieve compliance with JCAHO's patient safety goals.

This year, the PCC's goal is to assess and improve compliance with the safety strategies in the Institute for Healthcare Improvement's (IHI) 100K Lives Campaign. All Network hospitals agreed to participate in the program. By incorporating the following six strategies into practice at U.S. hospitals over 18 months, the IHI expects to save 100,000 lives:

- Deploy Rapid Response Teams
- Deliver Reliable, Evidence-Based Care for Acute Myocardial Infarction
- Prevent Adverse Drug Events (ADEs)
- Prevent Central Line Infections
- Prevent Surgical Site Infections
- Prevent Ventilator-Associated Pneumonia

National, state and local patient safety initiatives will arm hospitals with the information and tools to make it happen. Through the Patient Safety Committee, Network hospitals are sharing information,

RWJ Health Network News

Top 50 Ranking Consumers Digest' April issue ranked RWJUH and RWJUH at Hamilton on its list of "50 Exceptional U.S. Hospitals." They ranked 5th and 45th respectively in patient safety among hospitals returning the recent Leapfrog survey. **New Chief of Staff:** Anthony Emanuel, MD, has been elected to a two-year term as chief of staff by the medical-dental staff of CentraState Medical Center. Dr. Emanuel, a pediatrician and chair of the Pediatrics Department from 1991-2004, joined the medical staff in 1983. **'Most Wired' Feature.** The Network's program of applying its system of monitoring and assessing severity-adjusted hospital outcomes to developmentally disabled care was featured in the February 2005 issue.

establishing committees, educating staff and developing policies and procedures aimed at saving patient lives. Physicians are urged to be involved by being knowledgeable about patient safety, incorporating evidence-based protocols into practice, and informing patients so they can be educated, active participants in their own healthcare.

The Physician Coordinating Council is comprised of the medical leadership of the Robert Wood Johnson Health Network members which include:

- Bayshore Community Health Services, Inc.
- Carrier Clinic
- CentraState Healthcare System
- Children's Specialized Hospital
- Raritan Bay Medical Center (Perth Amboy and Old Bridge)
- Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (New Brunswick, Hamilton, and Rahway)
- UMDNJ-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School (New Brunswick)
- Eric B. Chandler Health Center
- Henry J. Austin Health Center
- Plainfield Health Center
- VNA Community Health Center
- Presbyterian Homes & Services, Inc.

It is the only healthcare network in New Jersey to include a medical school among its partners.

Please direct questions about any information contained in PCC Pulse to your chief medical officer or the Network's Clinical Integration Analyst, lois.doman@rwjuh.edu.

ORGANIZATION

Joint Commission for the Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO)
Leapfrog Group

Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ)

Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI)

State of New Jersey

PATIENT SAFETY MEASURE

National Patient Safety Goals – compliance required for accreditation (www.jcaho.org)

Four initiatives "leaps" - National hospital comparative reports are available to consumers (www.leapfroggroup.org)

20 administrative data-based patient safety measures (www.ahrq.gov)

100K Lives Campaign – 6 interventions targeted to save 100,000 lives in 18 months (www.ihl.org)

Mandatory reporting of serious preventable adverse events - effective February 1, 2005 (www.state.nj.us/health/quality)

RWJ Health Network Hospitals Unveil ED Expansions

Three Network hospitals celebrated the opening of expanded emergency departments adding new capacity and services in response to ever-increasing patient volume. A new pediatric ED at the Bristol-Myers Squibb Children's Hospital at RWJUH New Brunswick, and new EDs at RWJUH at Rahway and CentraState Medical Center, – feature square-foot expansions, more treatment rooms, more patient-friendly amenities, and new systems that improve staff communication. They offer the Network's "15/30 Guarantee", a promise that patients will see a nurse within 15 minutes and a physician within 30 minutes or the visit is free. The Network's hospitals receive national media attention for the "15/30 Guarantee Program" which has been favorably recognized by the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award.

Highlights include:

- **BMS:** 8,000 square feet from 7,000; 12 treatment rooms; new pediatric trauma room, Level One trauma center, designated radiology area
- **CentraState:** 32,000 square feet from 14,500; 48 treatment rooms; 5-room pediatric unit; mental health assessment and treatment area, portable workstations.
- **RWJUH at Rahway:** 15,000 square feet from 5,000; 23 treatment rooms, additional consultation rooms, wireless bedside registration; private MD work area