

CEO NEWS & VIEWS



Dear Colleagues:

I always find May to be one of the busiest months of the year – and this year is not disappointing me! It always feels like everything needs to be crammed into these 31 days or we’re all going to dissipate once the calendar flips over to June! So let me get busy and provide some updates on our most visible and significant issues.

As you can see, we’ve made real progress on the new tower. It is just a big hole right now, but to date, 75,900 cubic yards of dirt (that’s a whole lot of dirt!) have been moved (it’s being temporarily stored in Stapleton in case you miss it). Like our beloved Rockies, our construction experienced some rain delays of their own last week, but I have every confidence that time will be made up and we’ll be back on track in the coming weeks.

Meanwhile, Epic is humming along. Support continued for the Wave 2 clinics this past week. Steve Hess reports that most staff and providers are doing quite well, although there are still some key areas we are monitoring. A main area of focus continues to be on referral, letters and charge capture. All that said, it is not a walk in the park and has presented challenges for our faculty and our staff.

Our patients are also using the improved tools that the Epic project has introduced. In the year leading up to our initial Epic go-live, we would average around 1760 unique patients logging into My Health Connection each month. In April, that number was 5,034 (180% increase) and it’s steadily climbing in May. Clearly, our patients are embracing this feature.

Speaking of our patients... Parking is getting better, although our valets also suffered through some rain delays last week! Overall, wait times for drop-off and pick-up are down significantly; and the new shelters where people can wait for shuttle service are being put together as I write. This is still not perfect – and let’s face it, it never will be! But it’s better than it was a month ago and I want to thank all of you – especially our valet, information desk and front line staff who have worked diligently to make things better, safer and faster for our patients.

Round and Round I Go.... This time of year I also make my annual grand rounds to many of our clinical departments. These are always a lot of fun for me; I do a little bit of my “State of the Hospital” address and try to spend a significant amount of time addressing department-specific issues.

This year, I have been particularly struck by the passion of our faculty. It is heartening for me to hear the care, concern and real fervor our faculty have – not just for their own departments, but the

entire enterprise and most importantly support and concern for our patients. I'd be remiss if I did not call out the Emergency Department for their dedication and hopefulness. If there's any department in the hospital that has a right to feel challenged on a daily basis, it's the ED; yet their concern for the challenges they face, and the impact those have on the house, staff and patients, is to be applauded. They know a solution to many of their concerns is two years away, but I really think there is a lesson for all of us in their attitude about how can they make *today* better.

In general, the conversations I have had during my Grand Rounds focus on several broad issues: hospital operations; construction projects (remember, we have a Cancer Center expansion going on right now, as well as the patient parking garage); and finances. But many times, the concerns have been focused on meeting the needs of all our patients. Given all that we have on our plates, I could not be more pleased to have that as our faculty's main focus.

There have been frustrations voiced as well (I would be terribly suspicious if there weren't!). The issues with access – something that most of you can relate to – have been the number-one issue most departments bring up.

Of course, it would be nearly impossible to have these kinds of dialogues without addressing the elephant in the room: health care reform. We have had some healthy conversations about providing health care in a system that is by and large broken, and how we continue to provide quality care for all social economic groups.

We've also been discussing how we position ourselves in this ever-changing market. As I said to everyone during my State of the Hospital addresses a couple of months ago, I think it is imperative for us to start thinking about the types of relationships we should have with physicians throughout the state and Rocky Mountain region. We also need to explore more aggressively whether we can remain an independent hospital or if we need to form different relationships, and if so, with whom and where.

There are so many unknowns in the health care industry right now. What we do know is that the future is going to force all of us to do more with less. These are tough questions and challenging conversations that have no clear answers. But the conversations have been terrific starting points. As I have always said, passion can make a lot of things happen and we're fortunate that we have a lot of that at UCH.

Speaking of our Faculty....Our partners at the Colorado Clinical & Translational Sciences Institute (CCTSI) had some interesting news to share recently. They have partnered with a unique web-based volunteer registry for prospective research participants called ResearchMatch. In short, ResearchMatch brings together researchers and willing volunteers who want to be a part of an upcoming study around any number of topics. Signing up is easy and confidential, so if you're interested, just fill out the "Researcher Interest Form" located on the ResearchMatch home page, [Welcome to ResearchMatchCCTSI/ResearchMatch website.](#)

And the winner is... May also brings about the annual Nightingale Awards. UCH has been well represented at these ceremonies the last several years. This year, we had three finalists: Camy Boyle, from Burn/Trauma ICU; Jamie Nordhagen in Oncology/BMT; and Mary Krugman from Professional Resources.

It was with great pride that I shared the evening with my colleague Dick Krugman, MD. We were there to congratulate Mary Krugman, a recipient of the 2011 Nightingale Award. She was among the 43 top-rated nurses in the state of Colorado and was one of only six recipients of this award. As Dick wrote in his weekly column, "What's Going on Here?" the following Monday, "I am incredibly proud of her and her achievements." I could not agree more and echo the sentiments of a very proud husband!

Speaking of our Nurses... We're coming up on this year's RN Survey, so I'd like to remind all of our nurses how important it is to provide us with your feedback—it's one of our best ways to improve systems and communications that are already quite strong. Our goal this year is to match or beat our record-setting participation rate of 97% set last year. The survey will be open from June 6 through June 26. For details, click on the "Annual RN Survey" link on the Hub.

America's Got Talent... I am not sure my vice presidents and I have any singing talent! But, there we were last week, dressed in our poodle skirts (the women) and looking like we just jumped out of our Thunderbirds (the men), singing "Grease is the Word" as a part of "UCH Idol." We didn't win but we didn't expect to; we just hoped to leave with a smidge of dignity that would allow us to continue to move our respective areas forward!

There were some great performances from our colleagues – there is some real singing talent in this hospital! Idol capped our week of saying thank you during our second annual "People Make it Possible" week in honor of our employees. Continued thanks for all that you make possible here every day!

Have a great remainder of the week,

Bruce

Your feedback is important, so if there's something on your mind, write to me at talktome@uch.edu