

CEO NEWS & VIEWS



Dear Colleagues:

Well, September came in with a big bang and very few whimpers (with apologies to T.S. Eliot for the line alteration)! I am speaking, of course, about the September 3 Epic “Big Bang” in the inpatient areas.

Given the scope and complexity of this go-live, it has gone extraordinarily well. We are certainly dealing with many, many issues. Some of them have affected everyone, but the majority have affected single users or single workflows.

Many of the big issues that affected everyone (Pyxis, discharge prescription printing, patient labels) have been resolved. We are still dealing with new security-related issues every day, as we fix log-ins and user templates. We will continue to have many of those until we get everyone just right. We also had struggles on Saturday in the ED, where providers are still handling a heavy workload while they adjust to a new system.

As we have seen in all of our previous go-lives, transitioning to Epic is a very individual kind of thing. It is impossible to say it is going great or it is going poorly, because that is in the eye of the individual beholder, but as a whole the organization is doing very well getting through the change.

Here are some stats I thought you would be interested in, and that I thought were pretty darn impressive:

- We have had close to 300 people (red shirts) to help with the go-live.
- We had over 1,500 users in the system at the same time today.
- The pharmacy teams converted more than 7,100 medication orders during our go-live cutover, and the nursing “swat” teams converted more than 7,000 non-medication orders as well
- We have logged more than 2,600 issues since 9/2, and roughly 1,500 have been resolved

I spent the better part of Saturday and Sunday walking the floors, stopping by the command center and taking the overall pulse of the house. I must tell you that that I was full of pride as I walked about! Sure, there were problems, but everyone, including our physician partners, has come together as a team to help get through this incredible change and make sure that our patients are taken care of. That was just incredible to be a part of. There is a lot of work yet to do over the coming days and weeks, but there is an equal amount of excitement about what this system can do for us and our patients.

All I can say is “thank you” to the hundreds of staff who gave up their holiday weekend (and a whole lot of days and nights before that) to make this happen. I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge and thank our Ambulatory, Executive Health, RAC, HIM, Revenue Cycle, Lab Express, and Retail Pharmacy pioneers who helped us with our initial implementations and positioned this go-live for better success. And, thanks to our faculty and residents; I know these transitions are not easy, but I do believe this will enhance the quality of care of UCH.

And, I would also be remiss if I did not give a huge shout-out to Chief Information Officer Steve Hess and Epic Project Director Soren Schultz! These two have invested more time and effort than we can even count, and have remained unflappable. Also, many of our senior management team who have pretty much slept at UCH during the Labor Day weekend. We are fortunate to have such leaders in our midst!

Tell us what you think...It’s time for the annual employee opinion survey, which will run from September 19 to October 2. Last year, we achieved an 81% participation rate, and I think we can beat that this year. There’s a lot going on here and this is YOUR chance to tell us what you think. This survey is important to the overall wellness of our organization and is a critical measure of our overall success. We really do listen to what you tell us through these surveys. For example, some of the ways we used the results in the past year include:

- Supporting as many employees as possible to develop, test, train and implement Epic; these team members have been integrally involved with decisions that affect their job.
- Increasing our visibility to and support of our community – especially through our work with and support of Park Lane Elementary School in Aurora.
- Partnering with UPI and School of Medicine on ACT I, an initiative that is designed to improve our quality and ultimately, our patient satisfaction. We want to make sure our employees feel absolutely comfortable in recommending UCH to family and friends.
- Asking leaders to attend at least 16 hours of training to become even better leaders!

So watch for information coming around September 19. The link to the survey will be available via the Hub and results will be available early November. PLEASE tell us what you think!

And speaking of thinking...the vice presidents and I spent a day and a half doing a lot of that at our annual Kitchen Cabinet retreat. Our goals this year focused on better understanding key strategic projects, learning from each other, providing course corrections where needed and continuing to develop a greater understanding of the views and talents of the team members.

We began with an assessment of Epic to describe how we might apply the principles we learned during its implementation to large-scale change efforts. We gave those principles their first trial run when we looked in-depth at the current Service Excellence plan and made adjustments to that plan for 2011 and 2012. We then followed the examination of Service Excellence with a review and confirmation of the work underway on our Physician Engagement initiative. And, finally, we shared a robust conversation about affiliations with other health care systems, including Poudre Valley, and developed a set of operating practices that we will share in the very near future.

Overall, we came away from the retreat with a better understanding of the Kitchen Cabinet's roles and accountabilities in these and other major initiatives. We also renewed our commitment to support the 2020 vision, our mission and the business objectives of UCH and the School of Medicine.

I think one of the smarter things we did was to *not* come away with a list of new projects; I do think there is a danger in reaching our saturation point if we take on a lot more at this point in our history. But there is certainly a commitment to working on our ongoing projects, all of which tie closely to our 2020 vision and our goal of being a top 10 academic medical center.

Have a great rest of your week – and keep up the good work with Epic!

Regards,

Bruce

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