



CEO News & Views

Bruce Schroffel



UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO HOSPITAL
ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS

Turning Smoking Shelters Into Plow-shares

This week, you'll see more signs going up around our buildings reminding you that we're going tobacco-free starting on July 1.

I'm excited about this material stride toward employee wellness and patient healing, and you'll continue to hear a lot about the details and the ways we'll all be managing it in the coming weeks.

But, perhaps oddly, one of the most frequent questions about it I've heard is: what's going to happen to the smoking shacks?

I regret to tell those of you who want to use them as tomato hothouses at home that an even better idea has come from Pharmacy tech and avid cyclist Robin Leopold. She proposed to turn them into bike storage, as of July 1.

So, after being cleaned, they will reappear this summer in new guises. One will become a weather shelter for one of the new valet parking stations we established in February. The others will be devoted to bicycles.

I like to think of this as a slick way to convert something unhealthy into something that promotes wellness as well as alternative transportation.

Time Flies When You're Having Fun

Almost unbelievably, we are approaching the first anniversary of the completion of our move to the Anschutz Medical Campus.

I think of the move itself – and it was in reality a series of moves culminating on June 17 – as a spectacularly well-orchestrated operation involving hundreds of

inpatients, thousands of employees, tens of thousands of supplies and computers and pieces of furniture and literally hundreds of tons of expensive, fragile technology.

And I think of the following six months as some of the most difficult we have faced. Old systems had to be adapted to new settings, and new systems had to be properly exercised and stretched out. There were difficult adjustments to working in vastly bigger spaces. Many of us were learning to work in entirely new teams in different clinical areas, while others of us struggled just to help patients park in time for their appointments. All those things and many more, moreover, were being done as we worked to overcome some daunting financial challenges.

And the past six months? Even as some of the most pressing systemic difficulties associated with change have been at least mitigated, these have been times of switching from our three-year focus on moving into a new home forward to something still-grander: the promise of serving our patients and each other even better.

For you, our aim is to become the region's health care employer of choice.

For our patients, their families, our visitors and our community, the aim is to be a place of uncontested clinical excellence and skillful, compassionate, ennobling care.



That's why we chose a design that suggests a sunrise, a new day, hope and ambition.

But for one last look back as well as forward, please join me June 20 for food, freebies, music and what I hope will be a lot of fun.

Perhaps most importantly, I want to thank all of you for your incredible daily contributions toward making this a better place for our patients.

Our Vulnerable Electronic World

The hospital has some non-negotiable values, and

patient privacy is one of the most prominent. You can't insure patient safety without it.

But we were recently reminded how easily and innocently, in our increasingly wireless world, patient privacy can be compromised.

It came to light that a stolen university laptop had protected medical information on it. Happily, these were not medical records, and they included no financial information. The computer itself was password-protected. Better yet, we've had no indications that any of the data have been used since the theft.

Still, it did include ways to match about 4,900 patients with some medical indications, and clearly did not belong anywhere near anyone else's hands.

Upon discovering what happened, we immediately communicated with the patients involved as well as the staff and physicians who would be fielding worried phone calls.

Preventing it from happening again is a lesson in cooperation. After all, this was hospital data on a University of Colorado Denver computer, being used by a physician working with University Physicians Inc in space leased by the hospital.

The probability that we're going to be victimized by a thief again at some point in the future is unfortunately high. Making sure the criminal doesn't get protected medical information along with the hardware, though, means physicians, the hospital and all the organizations in the clinical enterprise work together closely. I'm pleased to report that COO John Harney and UCD, School of Medicine and UPI officials are indeed implementing the policies and procedures needed to make sure nothing like this ever happens again.

Sincerely,

Bruce Schroffel
President and CEO

