

Lehigh Valley Hospital • Muhlenberg Hospital Center

■ What's Up?

Human resources -- This subgroup is drafting guidelines for hiring that include the requisition policy and the posting process. This work is expected to be completed next week. Use of these policies and the administration of wage and benefit practices, which are still under study, will be reviewed in specially scheduled department manager workshops early in 1998.

Cultural integration -- The first joint department manager meeting of the Lehigh Valley Health Network will be Thursday, Dec. 18, at the auditorium at LVH, Cedar Crest and I-78. The meeting is from 8 to 10 a.m.

Finance -- A group of senior managers in LVHN finance areas are meeting weekly to outline a process for integrating the function, the first such planning process. Staff from both sites are informed of the group's progress through reports from their supervisor, and have opportunities for input and involvement. As the integration process is determined, timelines are set and implementation begins, learnings will be shared throughout the network.

■ Former IBM Building

Plans are moving forward to refurbish the former IBM building on the MHC campus, and to relocate key network functions. Several criteria will be applied in making decisions regarding "tenant" departments: 1) Reduces the network's substantial expense in off-site leases at various buildings; 2) Facilitates the integration of key network functions when it cannot be accommodated in existing sites; and 3) Enhances departmental operations by enabling space redesign.

Departments that are certain to relocate to the building are Lehigh Valley Physician Group's central office functions, the human resources department, organizational development and a disaster recovery center for information systems. Several other departments are being considered for the space.

Videoconferencing will be available at the site, as well as some type of food service yet to be determined.

■ Physicians' Team

In response to some concerns raised by physicians, there are no plans for attending physicians to provide on-call coverage at both the LVH and MHC campuses. Also, graduate medical education programs will not be extended to the MHC campus at this time.

Upcoming: Elliot J. Sussman, M.D., president and CEO of LVHN, will address the medical staff at MHC on Thursday, Dec. 11 at 5:30 p.m.

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■ Rumor Control -- Call 402-CARE

Heard a rumor? Unsure what is fact, what is fiction? Call 402-CARE with your question or drop a card in any one of a number of "Rumor?" boxes placed at all sites.

Rumor: Techs at MHC will have to go to LVH to do testing and vice versa.

Fact: As departments begin the process of integration, work processes will be closely examined for "best practice."

There will be ample time to seek input from staffs at both sites to develop policies and practices that create flexibility in staffing while maintaining high-quality patient care and sensitivity to employee inconvenience. Our goal is to capitalize on the talents and interests of our staffs and create more career options as a result of the merger.

Rumor: If a person's position is eliminated as a result of the integration of departments, LVHN will try to find another position for that person.

Fact: Yes. The integration process will include a step for identifying staffing needs based on patient volume and patient requirements, which have always been the determining factors. All decisions regarding personnel will be guided by the key principles of individual respect, fairness, equity and integrity, in the best interests of quality patient care. If staff are displaced, considerable effort and resources will be devoted to finding jobs within our expanding health network, and to retraining people if possible.

■ A Line or 2 from Lou

...and Stu, too. Both Stu Paxton and I have had the happy experience of spending a good deal of time at MHC these past few weeks. Stu of course is on site full-time now, and I also have an office at MHC half-time. I know I speak for both of us when I say the welcome has been nothing short of overwhelming. Just as important, those same kind of connections are being forged across the Lehigh Valley Health Network, as department managers get together, get to know each other and learn about our similarities and differences. We certainly have our work cut out for us over the next several months, as we begin the intensive integration process. But we have already taken a giant step forward because we've met each other halfway, all across our new Lehigh Valley Health Network.



Lou Liehaber
COO, Lehigh Valley Health Network