

CheckUp

Aug. 5, 1993

Hospital Trustees Appoint New CEO

For the first time in its nearly 100 year history, Lehigh Valley Hospital will be led by a chief executive officer (CEO) who is also a physician. The hospital's Board of Trustees voted unanimously yesterday to name Elliot J. Sussman as the new president and CEO of Pennsylvania's largest teaching hospital. The appointment is effective September 1.

Speaking about the appointment, on behalf of the hospital's Board of Trustees, Chairman Irwin Greenberg expressed a very deep sense of accomplishment among the members of the search committee. "We wanted a strong leader who would forge bonds among our various constituencies. We also felt we needed someone with a very diverse background to lead us through a period of fundamental change in healthcare. And, we wanted someone who would be comfortable in our community," said Greenberg. "In Elliot Sussman, we found these qualities!"

During a day of introductions in Allentown this week, Dr. Sussman said, "I am excited about the opportunities ahead. The people of this Valley have a very important healthcare asset in Lehigh Valley Hospital. In an era of fundamental change in healthcare, Lehigh Valley Hospital will be a mainstay in bringing about new, integrated systems of patient care that are collaborative and cost effective. These qualities ensure a bright future for the community and the hospital."

"I expect to bring together a very strong team of professionals who will continue the hospital's commitment to the needs of people throughout the region," Sussman said.

Through his varied clinical and administrative responsibilities, Dr. Sussman has had experience running extensive physician practices, initiating total quality management activities, developing managed care programs for large teaching



Elliot Sussman, MD

hospitals and negotiating new and innovative clinical and educational relationships.

Sussman has been involved in expanding healthcare systems in Chicago at the University of Chicago Hospitals and Pritzker School of Medicine, and previously at the University of Pennsylvania Medical Center (hospital and school of medicine). He has had management responsibility for the University of Chicago Health Plan, a prepaid, managed care plan. He has also had overall marketing responsibilities for physician practice groups in Chicago and Philadelphia including the establishment of satellite facilities.

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Hospital employees are invited to meet Dr. Sussman at a reception to be held at 2 p.m. on Aug. 5 in the auditorium at 17th & Chew. Light refreshments will be served.

During his undergraduate years at Yale University and again during medical school, in the 1970s, Sussman was involved in a number of healthcare policy and planning activities with the City of New York and then with the Harvard School of Public Health.

Sussman received his medical degree in 1977 from Harvard University, School of Medicine and his graduate degree from the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania in 1981. His medical residency and fellowship were completed at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine where he also served as a Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholar.

After completing his MBA, Sussman was appointed director of clinical practice for the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania (HUP) Section of General Medicine. Concurrently, he was appointed an assistant professor of medicine. In 1982 he also took on responsibility for the hospital's Health Evaluation Center which offered programs in disease prevention, exercise and wellness.

Sussman later served as associate administrator for HUP and as director of HUP's Clinical Effectiveness Program which evaluated costs and outcomes of care for each department and service. The Clinical Effectiveness Program was a hospital-wide effort to lower costs, improve quality and change behavior among those providing care so that care would continuously improve and costs drop as well. Following this he served as the first Executive Director of Clinical Practices of the University of Pennsylvania's 600 physician practice organization at HUP.

Sussman was most recently associate dean, Biological Sciences Division, Pritzker School of Medicine, University of Chicago. He also had a faculty appointment at the University and was one of only two physicians from the University to be a member of the Board of Trustees of the University of Chicago Hospitals and of Weiss Memorial Hospital (Chicago).

As associate dean of the biological sciences department at Chicago, Sussman planned and managed clinical programs. He also developed and oversaw both on-site and off-site clinical

activities of the 500-member faculty medical group which included both primary care and specialty physicians; contractual marketing to businesses and third-party payors; continuing medical education; risk management; house staff program reviews; clinically related investigations; and billing for professional fees.

Clinical chairmen reported to Sussman for clinical issues at both the University of Chicago Hospitals and off-site in the metropolitan Chicago area. Other facets of his responsibility at the University of Chicago have been for teaching and research. In addition to being part of the review team for all clinical and basic science departments and their chairmen, he had direct responsibility for the activities of 550 residents and fellows. To enhance the quality of the medical education program in Chicago, Sussman negotiated a new teaching affiliation with Lutheran General Hospital when the affiliation with Michael Reese Hospital was terminated.

Joseph Candio, M.D., president of Lehigh Valley Hospital's medical staff and a member of the search committee, spoke of the unprecedented opportunity the new chief executive brings to the Valley. "One of the clearest messages coming to the medical staff in this period of change in healthcare delivery is that physicians must join with the hospital to provide programs and services for the patient. Lehigh Valley Hospital and its medical staff have set a course in this direction and Dr. Sussman is the right person to bring us together on that course. He is ideal for the challenge ahead of us," said Candio.

Sussman is a diplomate of the American Board of Internal Medicine and a member of numerous professional and scientific societies. He co-authored a book, *Medical Care of the Surgical Patient*, and has completed numerous chapters, editorials, reviews and original papers on medical and administrative issues in healthcare.

Sussman, a native of Clifton, NJ, is married and has two young children. His wife, Jody Carr, is a writer who has published novels for young adults. The Sussman family plans to move to the Lehigh Valley over the summer.

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