Creating an Even Better Place to Work

Recent employee satisfaction survey fuels journey for change

When the going gets tough, you often give (and get!) this age-old advice: “Take it one step at a time.” When our last Employee Satisfaction Check-in Survey showed our scores have gradually declined during the past few years, we decided to focus on a similar concept as we try to make Lehigh Valley Health Network an even better place to work.

The Employee Satisfaction Improvement Council, a group made up of a cross section of colleagues including front-line managers, directors and staff, came up with the idea. Recognizing that you are working harder than ever, the council decided each department should tackle one thing—and only one thing—to improve satisfaction within the department. You can read all about “The One Thing” on page 6.

You spend a significant amount of time here each week, and your job satisfaction can greatly influence how happy you are in life. When you’re happy at work, you’re doing your job to the best of your ability with a smile on your face. Your colleagues are aware of it, our patients notice it, and hopefully anyone who walks through our doors picks up on the feel-good vibe that can radiate through the entire network. Of course, the same holds true when you’re unhappy. Your colleagues see it, our patients feel it, and people who walk through our doors are not impressed by a so-so attitude.

Now is the time for you to take the opportunity to positively affect your work environment. I hope you have already participated in identifying the one thing your department is working to improve. I also hope you are taking part in putting ideas for improvement into action. If you need extra inspiration, you can read about the successes some departments are already experiencing in this CheckUp.

We’ll take a survey on the one thing you’re working on in November to see how your department is doing. In the meantime, I encourage you to make the decision to embrace this concept. One by one, we can make a difference in our work environment, which ultimately translates to the care and service we provide to our community.

Terry Capuano, R.N.
Chief Operating Officer
Clinical engineer Jay Kupiszewski is passionate about patient safety

It’s an ordinary day on the open-heart unit when Jay Kupiszewski gets the call. A monitor in a patient’s room isn’t sending electrocardiogram readings (which show the electrical function of a patient’s heart) to the nurses’ station. Within moments, Kupiszewski joins his clinical engineering colleague Bill Derbyshire at the scene.

With teamwork, Kupiszewski and Derbyshire diagnose the cause—a small server inside the monitor that seldom malfunctions. “It was a surprise,” Kupiszewski says, “but we were able to troubleshoot the problem and get it solved.”

The ability to solve problems quickly keeps patients safe, and Kupiszewski is passionate about safety. It’s a trait he learned naturally from his father, a volunteer fireman. Now Kupiszewski applies those natural skills in clinical engineering, where “safety first” is a mantra. The department includes two areas: imaging services, which maintains and repairs equipment such as CT scanners, and biomedical services, where Kupiszewski works.

Like most clinical engineering technicians, Kupiszewski covers a “beat.” Most days he’s inside the Kasych Family Pavilion at Lehigh Valley Hospital–Cedar Crest, servicing equipment such as thermometers, telemetry systems and defibrillators on 4K, 5K, 6K and the medical-surgical intensive care unit. He and his colleagues also spend time on-call, responding to emergency repair requests.

While staying cool under pressure is important for Kupiszewski, even more important is ensuring equipment runs smoothly so there are no emergencies. “If we do the testing and maintenance right, we can fix things before they become a problem,” he says. For example, when IV pumps need repair, they also undergo a complete maintenance check.

Even when he’s not at the health network, Kupiszewski focuses on safety. He’s an instructor for the Pennsylvania Motorcycle Safety Program. He also works with the Community on Elm Street Neighborhood Advisory Committee in his West Reading hometown, keeping residents and visitors safe.

Ask Kupiszewski to name the best part of his job at the health network, and he’ll tell you it’s when he’s not noticed. “If people don’t know my job exists, it means all equipment is working well, and I’m doing my job right.”
If you work here, you should be well-aware that distracted driving affects everyone. “Drivers on average spend almost one out of five minutes distracted, and 80 percent of crashes occur within three seconds of a driver distraction,” says health network trauma surgeon Robert Barraco, M.D. Since we began our anti-distracted driving campaign last fall with car magnets, billboards, radio ads and a website (celllimit0.com), colleagues have made the cause their own. Here's how some of them are spreading the word:

**Pssst...Pass It On**

Colleagues spread the word about the dangers of distracted driving

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**Hit the road**

EMS liaison Shawn Silvoy always packs a patch from his fire company whenever he vacations—just in case he encounters any firefighters. As he packed for his recent vacation, he also tossed a Stop Texting car magnet in his bag. His destination? Historic Route 66. He picked up an RV in Albuquerque, N.M., and drove to sunny Santa Monica, Calif. When he noticed people texting while driving along the famous route, he stuck the magnet on the back of the RV. All told, it was on the RV for more than 1,500 miles. Some of the trip highlights included the Grand Canyon and Petrified Forest national parks, plus dozens of diners, drive-ins and dives.

**On the road again**

Our EMS liaisons must like the desert southwest. That’s where Amy Grill traveled recently too. She placed the Stop Texting magnet on the back of a rented silver Mustang she drove from Santa Fe to Taos, N.M. She drove a total of 800 miles, exposing thousands of New Mexico residents to our anti-distracted driving message.

**Emergency! Emergency!**

Patients leaving our emergency departments are sent home with a reminder to stay safe on the road. At Lehigh Valley Hospital–Cedar Crest and Lehigh Valley Hospital–Muhlenberg, the Stop Texting magnets are given to patients during checkout. At Lehigh Valley Hospital–17th Street, the magnets are shared during the registration process by registrars like Vicky DelGrosso (above). “People love them,” says Jillian Balik, supervisor of emergency department registration. “And many, many people have a story to share about distracted drivers they’ve seen on the road.”

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Are you displaying a car magnet to spread our anti-distracted driving message on vacation this summer? Log on to facebook.com/lvhealthnetwork at home and share photos that show us where you’ve been.
Next patient, please

Physician practices throughout the Lehigh Valley proudly display the Stop Texting magnet at their reception desks. One such practice is Family Dermatology of the Lehigh Valley in Schnecksville. “You see so many people texting on the road—it’s really scary,” says (l-r) practice manager Diane Parliman, seen here with Krish Lalik and Michele Yondura. “We like spreading the word about how dangerous it is.”

Do you want a magnet to display in your practice? Call 610-402-CARE.

It’s going viral

Social media is a powerful tool. “I like the fact that Facebook users are beginning to attach the Stop Texting icons to their profile pictures,” says Marion Nole, executive assistant to our president and chief executive officer Ron Swinfard, M.D. She first noticed it when someone from the Scranton area was using our Stop Texting icon on her profile. “I loved it and added it to my profile as well,” she says.

—Amy Koch

Want to help spread the message? Download a Stop Texting icon for your Facebook profile on cellimit0.com
Every year, you make a New Year’s resolution. Whether your goal is to exercise more, eat healthier or spend more time with family, your resolution is the one thing you can do to make yourself a better person.

Something similar is happening here. Network-wide, we’re searching for the one thing that will make us an even better place to work. “To do that, we’re using results from last year’s Employee Satisfaction Check-in Survey,” says Debby Patrick, vice president of human resources. “The results tell us we’re strong overall when compared to other hospitals, but also show a trend in which our scores have gradually declined over the past few years. We know we can return to our previous track record and be among the best of the best.”

To reverse our trend, we organized an Employee Satisfaction Improvement Council. Comprising a cross section of colleagues, the group is working to find the cause of the decline. Once it’s identified, council members will develop action plans containing steps that will be taken network-wide to make this an even better place to work.

Based on the survey results, your department also is focused on the one thing, like communication or efficiency, that will improve work life in your department. Supervisors and staff created action plans they feel are important to impact employee satisfaction. Here are examples of how departments are addressing their one thing.

**ONE THING: EFFICIENCY**

“By asking ourselves ‘What can we change?’ we’re working more efficiently and improving the way the clinic operates,” says Lee Seckinger, associate director of the children’s clinic. Colleagues like (l-r) Diane Karetsky, R.N., and Janice Petruccelli, R.N., started by organizing medications and supplies so items are easily accessible. Caregivers save time by not repeating questions that patients already answered. Patients move through the clinic more efficiently because colleagues tell each other when patients are ready for the next step in their visit. By sending alpha pages (instead of numeric pages), nurses better communicate the importance of their needs and get timelier responses. Because physicians and nurse practitioners complete charts by the end of the day, billing is being done more efficiently.
ONE THING: LISTENING
On the transitional trauma unit (TTU), managers paid attention when survey results showed they could do a better job listening to colleagues. “We scheduled quarterly question-and-answer sessions where staff members can gather and ask managers anything that’s on their mind,” says TTU director Jody Shigo, R.N. TTU also developed guidelines that charge nurses like Kai Bortz, R.N. (left), can use to determine when it’s necessary to call a manager during off hours. The guidelines explain they should call the director if they have questions about staffing, security, safety or the use of restraints. “It gives managers a chance to listen to colleagues who have concerns so they can provide immediate input and help solve problems,” Shigo says.

ONE THING: COMMUNICATION
Survey results showed engineering department colleagues wished to open the lines of communication. How did they do it? “We scheduled regular meetings where colleagues can talk about anything they want,” says director Steve Onushco. Great ideas came from the first meeting. To keep colleagues informed about large construction projects taking place network-wide, an e-mail is sent to everyone in the department. “It encourages them to provide feedback about how we can best do the project,” Onushco says. At the meeting, colleagues also said they feel their work goes unrecognized. It led to the creation of the department’s first Reward and Recognition team. Now, colleagues who tackle a big job, get a “thank you” letter from another department, or go one year without taking sick time are eligible for a gift card like the ones (l-r) Gary Williams is presenting to John Tatkovsky, Mike Billowitch and John Lenner.

–Rick Martuscelli
“Art imitates life,” goes the old saying. But as Elise Marcano watched her diabetic mother, Elizabeth, struggle to survive on kidney dialysis, the phlebotomist at Health Network Laboratories in Quakertown desperately hoped life would imitate art—or more specifically, a popular television show.

Compatibility tests indicated Marcano wasn’t a match to donate a kidney to her mother. That’s when she recalled a 2008 episode of the medical drama, "Grey’s Anatomy", about unrelated donors swapping kidneys after they didn’t match their intended recipients. “I thought, ‘If they can do it on TV, maybe I can do it, too,’” Marcano says.

She asked colleagues at our health network’s Transplant Center about the possibility of doing a “paired kidney exchange,” as the swaps are known. Though the center had yet to perform the procedure, living donor coordinator Sonja Handwerk, R.N., told Marcano she might be in luck. Just weeks earlier, Doylestown resident Carleen Kulscar had also inquired about doing an exchange. Kulscar didn’t match her husband, Frank, whose kidney transplant was failing after 37 years.

Could these complete strangers make a life-changing kidney swap? This time the compatibility tests said … yes!

On May 4, 2011, a 30-person surgical team performed the simultaneous organ removal and transplants: Elise donated to Frank while Carleen donated to Elizabeth. It took six hours, three operating rooms and a great deal of teamwork.

“Doing a live organ transplant with four patients is a major triumph,” says chief of transplant surgery Michael Moritz, M.D. And it’s a triumph that extends beyond the families involved. By taking two people off the national kidney transplant waiting list, the exchange freed up two kidneys for others facing an average wait time of 33 months.

“The ‘domino effect’ of these exchanges makes their value immense,” Moritz says. Although less than 250 paired kidney exchanges have been performed nationwide over the past five years, Moritz believes they will become more common.

The two donors were discharged three days after surgery. The recipients followed two days later. All four are recovering well. Elise Marcano exceeded expectations and returned to work after just two weeks, surprising a very special patient (see photo). She’s thrilled to see both her mother and Kulscar looking healthier and growing stronger. “I believe this was meant to be,” she says. “Being able to help another family makes it extra special.”

–Gerard Migliore

Matching Pairs

Unable to donate to her mother, Elise Marcano swaps kidneys with another woman

“A unique bond” – Elise Marcano and Frank Kulscar are now connected in more than one way. Marcano is keeping tabs on Kulscar’s health—and her donated kidney—by drawing his follow-up blood work at Health Network Laboratories. Kulscar was impressed by her skill. “She did a great job,” he says. “It didn’t hurt a bit!”

New lease on life – Diabetic since age 7 and on dialysis for more than two years, Elizabeth Marcano (left) was overjoyed to receive a kidney from Carleen Kulscar. “My life is much better now,” she says.

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Proud of Your Department?

New “We Are ...” website is the place to tell colleagues why

You asked … and we listened! A large number of readers who responded to a recent CheckUp survey said they’d like to know more about the departments, units and programs that make up our health network. What exactly do other departments do? Who works there? What makes them proud? How do they make their workplace fun? The best way to find out is to hear directly from you, which is why we created the new “We Are ...” website ( weare.lvhn.org ).

It takes a team to create a superior health care network, and the more we know about each other, the stronger our team will grow. This website is a place for you to share interesting “behind the scenes” glimpses into the work your department does and the people who do it.

Post your stories, fun facts, photos and videos so everyone in our health network can better understand what makes your department unique. Four times a year we’ll pick an entry from the website and spotlight that department or program in CheckUp. So don’t be shy … tell us why … you’re proud of your department!

—Gerard Migliore

Share Your Pride
Join the conversation at weare.lvhn.org and tell your colleagues interesting or unusual things about your department.

Does your team answer 150 calls a day, repair 50 machines in an average week or speak a total of six languages? Tell us the facts.

Does a colleague start juggling or do magic tricks when your department’s morale needs a boost? Post a video and make him a star.

Is your lunchroom wallpapered with patient and family thank-you cards? Share a photo.

Be Proud.
We’re a U.S. News hospital for 16 straight years

Lehigh Valley Health Network

Lehigh Valley Hospital is among U.S. News & World Report’s Best Hospital for 2011-12. It’s the 16th consecutive year we’ve made the list. This year we ranked for diabetes and endocrinology, gastroenterology and geriatrics.

The health network also was cited as “high-performing” in 12 categories with Lehigh Valley Hospital—Cedar Crest and Lehigh Valley Hospital—Muhlenberg ranking No. 1 and No. 2 respectively in the Allentown-Bethlehem-Easton metro area.
The young doctor steadies himself as he stares intently through his magnifying glasses. He knows even the slightest twitch while holding the suture could jeopardize the painstaking work he already performed to repair the artery. The stakes are high, even though he isn’t working on a patient. In fact, the closest operating room is two floors above him.

Welcome to the Surgery Education Center. Located on the lower level of the Kasych Family Pavilion, the center gives health network residents the tools they need to improve their surgical skills while eliminating the risk of working on an actual patient. “In this new era of enhanced patient safety, the most difficult task is to adequately teach students the concepts of the operating room,” says Michael Badellino, M.D., vice chair for education in the department of surgery. “The Surgery Education Center allows students and residents to learn the critical tasks of the operating room without having to actually be there.”
As one of only 60 surgery education centers accredited by the American College of Surgeons, the center offers a wealth of technology, including simulators and instruments used in actual surgeries. A hands-on experience with one of the simulators shows just how realistic they are. While performing a colonoscopy, for example, the simulator lets out a virtual cry of pain every time the fiber optic camera is misguided. At the end of the procedure, the simulator provides a list of statistics ranging from how long the procedure lasted to how much pain was endured.

Spending hours working with these tools allows many of our residents to improve their surgical skills. “Having to stitch two arteries together using sutures thinner than a strand of hair requires a great deal of dexterity and patience,” says third-year resident Ramon Garza III, M.D. “Practicing here allows me to improve in both those categories.”

If Garza or any of the residents run into problems or have questions, they have two more valuable tools at their disposal: surgical educator Charles Scagliotti, M.D., and center coordinator Bob Ruhf. Both spend much of their time coming up with new ways to use the center’s equipment, and encourage students to come to them for guidance.

When it finally comes time for residents to perform on a real patient, the experience they gained in the Surgery Education Center will help them succeed. For our patients, that means successful surgeries and a return to good health—a goal that’s worth the practice.

—Alex Onushco

New for You

Introducing Healthy You Program Packages for Culture of Wellness

Starting August 1, there’s a new way to enroll in your favorite Healthy You fitness and yoga classes that are part of Culture of Wellness. Instead of enrolling in each class separately, you now will purchase a Healthy You Programs Package.

All Healthy You classes are now organized into the packages listed below. You must be in a package to participate. By enrolling in a package, you get access to as many classes as you wish within that package. For example, if you love a good cardio workout, you can take cardio cross-training and kettlebells during the same month for one price. Also, you no longer have to re-enroll in classes; instead your package membership will renew automatically month-to-month until you decide otherwise.

You will continue to get Culture of Wellness reimbursement for program packages if you meet minimum attendance requirements. These packages are separate from the Healthy You Fitness Center memberships.

To sign up for a Healthy You Programs Package, call 610-402-CARE. You also can get a schedule and specific class information at lvhn.org/checkup. You will need to complete paperwork prior to receipt of your membership card.

Cardio-Strength Group ($32/month)
Includes these classes:
- Boot Camp
- Cardio Cross-Training
- Cardio-Strength Training
- Chisel
- Interval Express
- Kettlebells
- Spin

Healthy Aging Group Fitness ($36/month)
Includes these classes:
- Age-Proof Workout
- Exercise for Life
- Staying Strong (Lower Macungie Township only)
- Yoga Basics
- Yogalatte

Mind-Body Group Fitness ($40/month)
Includes these classes:
- Energizing Yoga
- Relaxing Yoga
- Very Gentle Yoga
- Line Dancing
- Zumba

Specialty Group Fitness ($32/month)
Includes these classes:
- Belly Dance
- Bollywood
- PAS (Power, Agility, Strength)
- Funtastic Fit Kidz
- Funky Fit Kidz

Youth Fitness Group and Sports Performance ($36/month)
Includes these classes:
Attend the 50th Summer Festival

Family fun continues at Lehigh Valley Hospital–Muhlenberg’s annual Summer Festival. Celebrating its 50th anniversary, the festival will be held August 17-20 at the hospital campus. Attendees can enjoy free nightly entertainment as well as crafts, book and plant sales, a cash raffle, rides and games, and festival food. Special activities for children include face painting, sand art, a duck pond and more. Proceeds will benefit Lehigh Valley Hospital-Muhlenberg to enhance the care provided to patients and people of our community.

She’s an Advocate

Despite being diagnosed with type 2 diabetes in 1999, Ann Marie Schlottman paid little attention to her health. She ended up in Lehigh Valley Hospital–Muhlenberg’s ICU in 2008, barely able to breathe. She was later transferred to 5T, where staff taught her about nutrition and proper diabetic care. It changed her life. “I was scared, but they gave me the confidence to get well,” she says. She also began a new career, becoming an administrative partner on—appropriately—5T, where she now manages her colleagues to patients and families. “I say, ‘I’ve been a patient on this floor, so I know you’re in good hands.’ I tell everyone I feel so lucky to work here.”

Are you an advocate for our health network? If so, call 484-884-0806 or e-mail Lauren_L.Fetterman@lvhn.org and share your story in CheckUp.

The Buzz in Our Community

- Our first ever paired kidney exchange was covered by 6 ABC News, 69 News (WFMZ-TV), Service Electric TV-2 News and The Morning Call. (See story on page 8.) This year marks the 20th anniversary of our transplant program.
- Colleagues celebrated the grand opening of the Community Health and Wellness Center at Lehigh Valley Hospital-17th Street and thanked legislators who secured the $700,000 needed to open it. 69 News (WFMZ-TV), Service Electric-TV-2 News, The Morning Call and the East Penn Press covered the opening.
- A patient at Lehigh Valley Hospital–Muhlenberg’s Heart and Vascular Center who was hospitalized right before his son’s wedding would have missed it if not for the actions of colleagues who helped video stream the ceremony live from the church to his bedside. 69 News (WFMZ-TV) covered the story.
- The Morning Call and the Salisbury Patch featured our Lehigh Valley IronPigs cover design contest that gives local children a chance to design the team’s game program, Pork Illustrated.
- In an article by The Morning Call about the last 30 years since AIDS/ HIV was discovered, AIDS Activities Office medical director Timothy Friel, M.D., said today’s message is one of hope and not the death sentence it used to be for those infected with the disease.

—Matthew Burns
Scan the Code, See the Mobile Site

Anyone with a smart phone can get quick information about our health network on our revamped mobile website. To get there, all you have to do is scan the QR code on the right. You also can get there on your smart phone at lvhn.org. On the mobile site you can find a doctor, get directions to health network services, request a call from 601-402-CARE, reorder a prescription, get important phone numbers, send a card or flowers to a patient and link to the complete lvhn.org website. Standard data charges apply.

Cancer Screenings at the Community Health and Wellness Center

The Community Health and Wellness Center at Lehigh Valley Hospital–17th Street now offers cancer screenings. This includes screenings for breast and cervical cancers. Screenings for rectal and oral cancers will be available in the fall. These important screenings are made available through National Cancer Institute Community Cancer Centers Program (NCCCP) funding designed to improve access to cancer care for underserved populations in our community.

New TeleBurn Partner

If you have family and friends in the Pottstown area, let them know adults and children can access our Regional Burn Center specialists through our new partnership with Pottstown Memorial Medical Center (PMMC). Our TeleBurn service allows PMMC physicians to upload photos of patients’ burn injuries to a secure website for our specialists to review on a computer or smart phone. The physicians then consult to determine where the patient can be most appropriately treated, which may include inpatient or outpatient care at our Regional Burn Center. PMMC is the 39th hospital partnering with us through TeleBurn.

Physicians Honored by Website


New Pediatric Neurologists

Pediatric Specialists of the Lehigh Valley welcomes two additional pediatric neurologists. Muhammed Sheikh, M.D., and Elizabeth Corbo, M.D., care for children with cerebral palsy, tics, movement disorders, seizures, headaches and other neurological conditions. Our comprehensive pediatric neurology team includes three board-certified pediatric neurologists, certified nurse practitioners, registered nurses, social worker and dietitian who provide inpatient and outpatient care.
It’s Performance Evaluation Time

Your department head is currently arranging your performance evaluation. You’ll discuss accomplishments of the past year and set goals for the next 12 months. The results of your evaluation will determine your pay increase. Remember these dates:

July 1 - Sept. 1: Performance evaluations conducted
Sept. 18: Merit increase effective beginning this pay period
Oct. 7: Compensation changes and SSP bonus (if we reach our overall patient satisfaction and managed cost goals) appear in paycheck

Spring Cleaning

Colleagues donated time and a little elbow grease to renovate a health network-sponsored apartment at Allentown’s Sixth Street Shelter. The two-bedroom apartment gives families a temporary place to stay while they search for jobs. Colleagues equipped the apartment with new furniture and repaired some of the “wear and tear” to ensure families have a comfortable place to stay while they work to get back on their feet.

Get Him to the Church… Online

Instead of attending his son’s wedding in Coopersburg, 78-year-old Arthur Geyer of Daytona, Fla., was lying in a hospital bed at Lehigh Valley Hospital–Muhlenberg’s Heart and Vascular Center. Geyer had trouble breathing and was admitted with an irregular heartbeat. When Nancy Throckmorton, R.N., learned he would have to miss the ceremony, she worked with other caregivers and information services colleagues to arrange for him to view it live through Skype technology in his hospital room. “That was fantastic,” Geyer said. “I thought I was going to miss the whole thing.”

Granted … She Deserves It

Mary Ellen Herzog, senior director, grants, in the development department, has earned Certified Grants Management Specialist (CGMS) designation from the National Grants Management Association. She is one of only 148 people nationwide to receive certification, offered for the first time this year to grants professionals who meet criteria for work experience, education and professional eminence. Herzog, who has more than three decades of fundraising experience, will join her fellow designees in helping to create the Board Examination that all future CGMS candidates will take. Herzog has been a Certified Fund Raising Executive (CFRE) since 1989, endorsed by the Association of Fund Raising Professionals.
Schedule

For more details on classes (including times, locations and costs), call 610-402-CARE or visit lvhn.org/checkup.

Culture of Wellness
Aug. 1, 8, 21 and 29 – Adult Maternity Tour
Starting Aug. 2 – Preparing for Childbirth Series
Aug. 8 – CPR Family and Friends
Aug. 10 and 25 – Breastfeeding Baby
Aug. 12 and 29 – Car Seat Check
Aug. 13 – Baby Care, One-Day Class
Aug. 13 and 14 – Preparing for Childbirth, Sat.-Sun. Class
Aug. 17 – Baby Care Series
Aug. 20 – Preparing for Childbirth, One-Day Class
Aug. 21 – Sibling Maternity Tour

Employee Discounts
Save on Dell computers through Dell Computer Employee Pricing Program. Visit dell.com/eppp, and enter company name (Lehigh Valley Health Network) and member ID (#S31702603).

Recreation Committee Events
Sept. 29 – Menopause The Musical at Sovereign Performing Arts Center, Reading. $84/person includes bus, show and buffet
Nov. 11-16 – Disney World, Orlando, Fl. Contact Nicole Maranki at 610-402-1421. Visit the “LVH_Recreation_Comm” bulletin board for more details.

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7C Hematology/Oncology Staff, Lehigh Valley Hospital–Cedar Crest
Nominated by Nicole Reimer, R.N.

It was a heart-wrenching situation. A 41-year-old patient on 7C hematology/oncology was diagnosed with stage 4B cervical cancer. The cancer was so aggressive, she had less than two weeks to live. Colleagues asked if there was anything they could do for her in the time she had left. Happily married for 20 years with a 10-year-old son, the patient had one last wish—to renew her wedding vows.

Staff obliged. They reserved the hospital chapel, worked with Sodexo to organize a catered lunch, and found local businesses to donate flowers and a cake. Colleagues volunteered to sing, and one nurse sewed silk pouches to hide the patient’s catheters during the ceremony.

On the morning of the service, colleagues prepared the bride for her big day by doing her hair, nails and makeup. Family, friends and colleagues gathered in the chapel to hear her and her husband renew their vows. Content that her last wish was granted, the patient peacefully passed away just two days later, surrounded by family.

“I am blessed to work with the most dedicated, compassionate, caring individuals I have ever met,” says 7C director Nicole Reimer, R.N. “Their hard work and commitment assured our patient’s last wish was granted.”

–Matthew Burns

First Core Bundle on The Learning Curve

The first core bundle of fiscal year 2012 will be released on The Learning Curve (TLC) in August. The mandatory training must be completed by Sept. 30. This first-quarter bundle includes courses related to our corporate compliance program, which promotes following federal and local regulations as well as Lehigh Valley Health Network standards.

To access the bundle, click the new TLC icon on your SSO toolbar to visit the TLC home page for:
• Tours of new TLC features
• Tips for common TLC tasks
• FAQs

The Learning Curve (TLC) is Live

The eLearning system has been upgraded and renamed The Learning Curve (TLC). It has many of the same features, but has several enhancements. Click the new TLC icon (shown at right) on your SSO toolbar to visit the TLC home page for:
• Tours of new TLC features
• Tips for common TLC tasks
• FAQs

Things to remember when nominating a Service Star:
• Choose a colleague or a team of colleagues.
• Tell a story. Specifically explain how the colleague or team did something extra special.
• You don’t have to provide direct patient care to be a Service Star. All colleagues and teams can be nominated.

To nominate a star, go to the intranet at lvh.com. Go to the “Find Fast” box and click on Service Star Nomination.

Congratulations to Award Nominees
Brian Mendez, R.N., interventional radiology
Jacaline Wolf, C.R.N.P., and Barbara Sikora, L.P.N., OACIS
Sharon Maitski, R.N., and Robert Santucci, home health and hospice
Anne H. Parsons, Lehigh Valley Hospital-Muhlenberg ultrasound services
Michelle Motsko, case management
Tami Transue, L.P.N., Lehigh Neurology

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Recreation Committee Events
Sept. 29 – Menopause The Musical at Sovereign Performing Arts Center, Reading. $84/person includes bus, show and buffet
Nov. 11-16 – Disney World, Orlando, Fl. Contact Nicole Maranki at 610-402-1421. Visit the “LVH_Recreation_Comm” bulletin board for more details.
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