



**THE JOINT COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD OF
JACOBI MEDICAL CENTER AND NORTH CENTRAL BRONX HOSPITAL**

March 9, 2012

Dear Bronx Community,

The Jacobi Medical Center Community Advisory Board is comprised of community residents who are consumers of health and medical services at Jacobi hospital in the Bronx. We are volunteers, and either work full time or are retired. We are all well-known in our respective communities and serve on a variety of other community based boards.

We meet monthly and together with hospital leadership, review numerous aspects of hospital operations, patient satisfaction, clinical outcomes and performance improvement, especially safety initiatives. In turn, we go back to our community and “spread the word.” And none of us is shy about bringing concerns to the attention of our hospital’s CEO or other staff.

We are outraged at the Consumer Reports erroneous conclusions concerning the safety of our hospital. We know that measurement of clinical data for this purpose is in its infancy. It is simply *impossible* for every hospital in New York City to be among the lowest performing. Moreover, to single out Jacobi, the hospital we know the most about, is patently absurd. CR has done more to set back the public’s confidence in Public Report Cards than perform a public service.

The Jacobi Medical Center we know never hides its problems and never stops working to improve. In contrast to the CR report, Jacobi’s efforts in the area of safety have been widely recognized and publicly acknowledged.

We have a robust Electronic Medical Record which helps prevent medication errors or allergic reactions (real safety issues.) A powerful risk reduction tool called “Failure Mode Effect and Criticality Analysis” is performed twice a year within every service and department. It analyzes and identifies steps in a process of care or diagnosis that could possibly go wrong, and then revises them appropriately, so as to prevent error from ever occurring.

Concerns about Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) scores produced a comprehensive Service Excellence program. And this is not just talk. For example a specific patient concern identified during patient surveys related to noise levels in the evening. This was addressed by the nursing department with innovative solutions for improving the patient experience to insure a quieter patient environment at night. Though this might be viewed by some as a comfort amenity, it’s viewed as extremely important from a safety perspective – rest is essential to healing.

Jacobi has created Chronic Disease Registries to help physicians and staff track and monitor outcomes for patients with diabetes, to be certain diabetic patients get essential screening tests, vaccinations, and eye exams, and that their medications are working properly.

JMC has created oversized business cards with the photographs of physicians so that patients admitted under emergency circumstances to the medical service “know” who their treating physicians are.

Jacobi has partnered with national and regional organizations to improve the prevention of hospital acquired infections. We have adapted the use of the World Health Organization Pre-op Checklist which is completed by the entire OR team prior to each surgical procedure, to be certain that surgery is performed on the right patient, right side, right site, with appropriate bleed precautions as indicated. We partner with the Institute for Healthcare Improvement to use standardized treatment protocols called bundles which are proven to reduce the incidence of infection in critical care settings. We are proud to say that for the last 15 months, our Surgical Intensive Care unit has outperformed national benchmarks.

In terms of community awareness and education, in May 2011, Jacobi hosted a wonderful conference on Suicide Prevention. More than 100 attended and were very enthusiastic about the caliber and knowledge of the presenters. Also every spring, Jacobi hosts its annual Trauma Symposium, which attracts more than 500 trauma specialists and first responders from all over the country. Finally, Jacobi hosts an annual Patient Safety Leadership Conference every June, which draws medical and nursing leadership from public and private facilities throughout the NYC metro area.

In November 2010, the NY Business Group on Health and Leapfrog Group gave Jacobi Medical Center its Patient Safety Award, stating “The Leapfrog Group rates hospitals on the national level on their quality and safety-and sets a very high bar. Jacobi Medical Center shows that they welcome that challenge-and the people of New York City should be proud of their accomplishments.” (Leah Binder, CEO, The Leapfrog Group)

Thank you for taking the time to review my message.

Cordially,

Sylvia Lask

**Sylvia Lask
Chairperson
Jacobi Medical Center
Community Advisory Board**