

A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JACOBI MEDICAL CENTER

March 2, 2012

Dear Hospital Staff, Visitors, Community Residents, Volunteers and Patients:

At each and every opportunity I have to meet and talk with you I invariably communicate two messages. The first is that Jacobi Medical Center strives to be one of our nation's safest hospitals; and the second is that Jacobi is well on its way to becoming a great hospital.

The March 1, 2012 Consumer Reports criticized the performance of most New York City hospitals for their poor results on four "safety" measures and placed Jacobi Medical Center in its lowest ratings for the time period studied 2009-2010. It is fair to say that the four indicators selected by Consumer Reports which included hospital-acquired infections, readmissions for Medicare patients, and how well hospital staff communicates with patients about medications and discharge planning are neither sufficient nor representative as the basis for their conclusion about *overall* patient safety and are moreover already out of date.

I write now to re-affirm that Jacobi Medical Center has what it takes to be one of our *Nation's Great and Safest Hospitals*. Is there room for improvement? Always! But have we already improved? Absolutely! And we are committed to continue our important improvement work.

Though the four areas measured are undeniably important areas of hospital performance they represent only *a small fraction of the more than 100 quality and patient safety-related measures* that we focus on every day and document and measure regularly.

Jacobi Medical Center's many accomplishments have been widely recognized and applauded. For example, in the past 9 months we have been awarded Center of Excellence status for our radiology and breast care imaging services, our breast care surgical services and for bariatric surgery. These designations are not achievable without concrete evidence of spectacular interdisciplinary teamwork, safe outcomes and outstanding clinical results.

Over the past 4 years Jacobi Medical Center has received many *prestigious awards* including:

- 2008 Pinnacle Award from Health Association of NY State (HANYs) for outstanding quality and patient safety in Psychiatry
- 2009 The American Hospital Association NOVA Award for outstanding work in HIV/AIDS Services
- 2010 The NY Business Group on Health & the Leapfrog Group Award for dedication to assuring patients quality safe care
- 2011 Pinnacle Award from HANYs for Outstanding Efforts to improve quality of patient safety for mothers and babies
- June 2011 JMC Trauma Service featured in NY Magazine "Best Doctors" Issue
- June 2011 the Safety Net Award from The National Association of Public Hospitals for outstanding achievement in Obstetrical Patient Safety

Moreover, Jacobi has taken a Leadership role sponsoring patient safety training forums for hospitals throughout the region showcasing award winning programs and strategies.

With your help we have implemented robust result-producing systems to both prevent and identify problems resulting in a safety-centric culture. For example, we partner with expert national and local organizations to improve the patients preparedness for self-care; we proactively assess the potential for patient harm in every hospital department; we have A Good-Catch Hotline to make it easy for our staff to report concerns; we conduct weekly unannounced patient safety Executive walk-rounds. And these initiatives have real traction. For example, over the past 5 years Hospital Acquired Infection rates for both Ventilator Acquired Pneumonia and Catheter Acquired Urinary Tract Infections has decreased to below National Healthcare Safety Network rates. And over the past 15 months, Jacobi's surgical intensive care unit has outperformed national benchmarks across three types of hospital-acquired infections.

Though the characterization by Consumer Report is unfair the essential message that all hospitals need to do more is on target. And we are doing more and moving in the right direction. I ask our dedicated staff to keep up their great work and I ask our patients and all who live and work in the communities that we are honored to serve to know we are committed to continue to provide safe and effective care.

Cordially,

*William P. Walsh
Executive Director
Jacobi Medical Center*



WILLIAM P. WALSH