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I’m pleased to introduce myself as the new CEO of CharterCARE Health Partners.

I chose to come here because I recognize the significant promise and potential of CharterCARE’s vision. The Rhode Island health system is undergoing rapid change, spurred on by national health reform. All hospitals will be challenged to deliver care within the context of a radically new paradigm...where our focus on quality and service along with cost management and operating efficiency are important, and where collaboration among levels of providers will be essential.

CharterCARE will be a new kind of health system for Rhode Island. Our hospitals will continue to deliver high quality of care at reasonable costs. But instead of rhetoric, this will be our reality as we are committed to earning trust and loyalty of all our key stakeholders. Through collaboration, acquisitions and partnerships, we are developing Rhode Island’s first multi-level coordinated care network that will provide easy access for Rhode Islanders to the right health care at the right time and at the right cost.

And at every step of the way, we will welcome and embrace the active participation of the physician community. Not only is it possible to fully align the goals of physicians and other health care providers, it is an essential element of success in the arena of health care reform.

I look forward to meeting and getting to know more of our employees, our physician partners and members of the Rhode Island community in the weeks and months ahead.

Lester P. Schindel named CEO of CharterCARE

In November 2014, Lester P. Schindel was appointed Chief Executive Officer of CharterCARE Health Partners. He joins CharterCARE from Steward Holy Family and Merrimack Valley Hospital in Mass., where he served as CEO and President. Schindel brings extensive experience in physician practice development and in the development of innovative collaborations and partnerships with allied health providers.

Previously, Schindel served as CEO of Essent Merrimack Valley Hospital, and COO of both Metrowest Medical Center and Leonard Morse Hospital. He is a graduate of Rutgers University and received a master’s degree in health care administration from George Washington University. A Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives (FACHE), Schindel has delivered numerous addresses to a variety of national and regional health care organizations.
The State’s first senior-friendly emergency departments are now open.

With an eye on the health needs of Rhode Island’s aging population, Roger Williams Medical Center and Fatima Hospital opened the state’s first senior-friendly emergency departments in 2013.

For nearly a year, both emergency departments underwent physical renovations and modifications, while providing enhanced training and assessment tools for staff. Nurses in the emergency room completed Geriatric Emergency Nursing Education through the Emergency Nurses Association. Other members of the team—including physicians, pharmacists, social workers, case managers and CNAs—also received geriatric-specific training to enhance the care that seniors receive.

The planning, training and renovations involved in the project were in the works for almost a year and were guided by Dr. William Thomas, a world-renowned geriatrician who has guided 17 other senior-friendly emergency department projects in other states. The focus on the senior emergency departments is especially meaningful in Rhode Island, where it is projected that one in every five Rhode Island residents will be 65 years or older by 2030.

The enhanced assessment tools now being utilized by staff are one of the most important elements of the senior-friendly emergency departments. When a patient over 65 years old comes to the emergency departments at Roger Williams and Fatima, they are not just treated for the ailment that brought them to the hospital. A multi-disciplinary team also performs a series of assessments to gauge the patient’s status and whether they may have poly-pharmacy issues, be a fall risk or suffer from ailments like dementia and depression. These assessments help gauge whether the person has other cognitive or functional issues that may require follow-up care before the condition worsens.

The senior-friendly emergency departments were built on an evidence-based approach to emergency care for seniors. Older Rhode Islanders and their loved ones can feel comfortable knowing there is a place for emergency care designed specifically for them.

There have been a number of physical and environmental modifications designed to make an elder’s visit more pleasant, including...

- Designated treatment areas for seniors
- Non-skid/non-glare floors for easier walking
- Extra thick, pressure-reducing mattresses to enhance comfort and combat the risk of pressure ulcers
- Portable amplification devices for hearing assistance
- Sound absorbing ceiling tiles
- Large print forms and magnifying devices to assist with reading
- Non-glare lighting
- Soothing environmental features like soft music, aromatherapy, and television screens with serene images

Both senior-focused emergency departments were launched in March 2013 with ribbon cutting ceremonies that included guests Lt. Governor Elizabeth Roberts, Catherine Taylor, Director of the Department of Elderly Affairs, and Kathleen Connell, State Director of the AARP.

Roger Williams Medical Center and Fatima Hospital are both part of the CharterCARE Health Partners’ system. The senior emergency departments are the latest addition to CharterCARE’s continuum of comprehensive senior health care services, which is the most extensive in Rhode Island. Both Roger Williams and Fatima are committed to the NICHE philosophy, which provides nurses and other staff in the hospital with the latest in elder care tools and training. Elmhurst Extended Care, CharterCARE’s nursing home affiliate, is the state’s only Eden Alternative facility, providing a place where elders, families, and staff work together to restore choice, joy and dignity to the lives of those who need long-term care. CharterCARE Home Health Services provides a full range of in-home care. Both hospitals are also home to specialized geriatric psychiatry programs.

“Older Rhode Islanders and their loved ones can feel comfortable knowing there is a place for emergency care designed specifically for them.”
Introducing Prospect Medical Holdings

Prospect Medical Holdings, Inc., based in Los Angeles, California, is a health care services company that owns and operates hospitals and manages the provision of health care services for managed care enrollees through its network of specialists and primary care physicians.

In June 2014, CharterCARE entered into a joint venture with Prospect Medical Holdings. Prospect is the owner of 13 hospitals and 32 specialty and primary care clinics located in California and Texas. In addition, through its medical group segment, Prospect owns and/or manages the provision of physician services to approximately 300,000 enrollees of managed care plans through a network of approximately 9,133 primary care and specialty physicians. Prospect is a pioneer in “at risk” contracts and “population management.”

Prospect’s operating philosophy embraces close coordination among hospitals, physicians, nursing homes and other providers to create an efficient, quality driven health care system that positions us to drive growth. Prospect will bring to our joint venture disciplined, data-driven management tools to support cost efficient operations and to sustain quality of care. These tools include data-driven analysis and application of various operational, financial and quality metrics to achieve a highly efficient cost structure that supports operating margin and success while enhancing quality and embracing our mission, including a commitment to charity care.

Renovations planned for hospital entrances.

One of the first capital investments made towards facility improvements at Roger Williams Medical Center and Fatima Hospital will be highly visible ones: the front entrances of both hospitals. At Roger Williams, renovations will include a new front entrance with street level access, an elevator, and a glass canopy for pickup and drop-off of visitors. Renovations at Fatima will include a modernized look for the front entrance including a new glass canopy. Both hospitals will be redesigned to improve handicapped accessibility. Renovations are scheduled to begin this year.

The two heritage hospitals of CharterCARE Health Partners have named two seasoned health care leaders to the position of President.

Kimberly O’Connell, Esq., has been named President of Roger Williams Medical Center. Previously, O’Connell served as Senior Vice President and General Counsel of Roger Williams. In that role, she had oversight of several key services including cancer care and research. She was previously a senior associate with the firm of Edwards & Angell, L.L.P. in Providence.

Tom Hughes has been named President of Our Lady of Fatima Hospital. Most recently, he served as Acting Senior Vice President of Clinical Support Services in the Care New England System. A veteran of the United States Navy, Hughes received his Masters in Health Care Administration from Baylor University. He has been a member of several boards and professional organizations including service as President of the American College of Healthcare Executives, Rhode Island Chapter.
“Each patient comes to us with a unique set of challenges, which is why we treat each person as an individual,” says Dr. Jon Mukand, the Center’s medical director. “That, combined with our medical expertise, is why our patients report a very high rate of satisfaction.”

Southern New England Rehabilitation Center

Helping people, one step at a time.

Kathy and Jerry O’Neill were on their way to see a show at a casino when Kathy noticed something was wrong with her husband.

Immediately recognizing the signs of a stroke, she called for emergency help. Jerry was rushed to the hospital where it was confirmed he had suffered a stroke on the left side of his brain. Following a stay in a Connecticut hospital, Jerry was transported to the Southern New England Rehabilitation Center (SNERC) at Fatima Hospital.

The couple was impressed with the care delivered during Jerry’s inpatient stay, as well as the ongoing support delivered after discharge. The couple are now regulars of stroke support group meetings at SNERC, learning from both staff and others in a similar medical situation.

“The medical professionals are very good and work to help with everything while you’re in the hospital,” said Kathy. “After a stroke, the support group is a place where you can come and learn from one another.”

For almost 20 years, SNERC has helped people like Jerry return home following a disabling illness, traumatic injury or orthopedic surgery. The team members help people with other diagnoses like brain injury, Parkinson’s disease, and spinal cord injuries.

Southern New England Rehabilitation Center is accredited by the national Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Programs. To learn more, visit www.snerc.com or call 401-456-3801.

DEB GIANNINI - Paying it Forward

CharterCARE Health Partners was formed in January 2010 with a mission of ensuring community access to high quality care. It only made sense that shortly after its launch, CharterCARE created an advisory committee whose members represent a range of community interests, from elected officials and corporate leaders to non-profit professionals and former patients. The committee meets regularly to receive updates and more importantly, offer their insight and input on the direction of CharterCARE and the health care system in general.

One member of the Community Advisory Committee – Deborah Giannini – brings a unique perspective as both a successful business owner and a former patient who says the care she received at a CharterCARE affiliate changed her life.

On Mother’s Day in 2008, without warning, Deb woke up paralyzed from head-to-toe. She was in the hospital for one month with doctors struggling to accurately diagnose her condition. As she slowly regained feeling, she was transferred to the Southern New England Rehabilitation Center (SNERC) in the hopes rehabilitative therapy could restore her.

“It was one of the lowest points of my life,” she said. “I couldn’t advocate for myself. The therapy staff was amazing. For six weeks, they kept me fighting as I progressed from a bed to a wheelchair.”

As Deb, who owns Alpha Metal-Works in Johnston, grew stronger, the physicians and staff at SNERC sought her input as to the direction and course of her care. She impressed the staff with her determination, going home in a wheelchair and learning how to walk again. “They gave me a chance at life,” Deb said.

The experience, while incredibly difficult, gave Deb even more impetus to make a difference in her own life and the lives of others. She volunteers for a number of causes and recently got her real estate license, joining Williams & Stuart Real Estate. She said the ability to contribute to the direction of CharterCARE is her way of paying back the staff at SNERC.

“I learned so much from the experience of being sick,” she said. “You can’t take shortcuts. If you do things the right way and work hard, you’ll get results.”
When surgical oncologist Dr. Ponnandai Somasundar joined Roger Williams Medical Center, he quickly noted the average age of patients treated at the Cancer Center. Their relatively advanced age was no surprise; Rhode Island has the sixth highest percentage (14.5) of residents who are 65 years or older. What Dr. Somasundar quickly came to understand is that older patients required a different kind of care.

"Older patients may also have multiple problems not specifically related to their cancer," said Dr. Somasundar, Associate Chief of Surgical Oncology. "There are so many needs to consider: nutrition, pharmacy, family support. Patients can also be impacted cognitively or struggle with depression. Our philosophy is that if we take care of all these issues, patient outcomes will be better."

In 2012, Dr. Somasundar was appointed Director of Geriatric Oncology and set out to build the first program of its kind in Rhode Island. The good news? Elder care was already -- along with oncology -- a primary area of focus at Roger Williams. The hospital features both specially-designed units for older patients and innovative elder care training for staff. Elmhurst Extended Care, the hospital’s nursing home affiliate, is nationally recognized for its delivery of the Eden Alternative philosophy of elder care. CharterCARE’s Home Health service is perfectly situated to follow up with patients once they leave the hospital.

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In 2012, Dr. Somasundar pulled together a team of colleagues from a wide variety of disciplines including medical oncology, radiation oncology, nutrition, pharmacy, geriatrics, nursing, psychiatry, palliative care, rehabilitation and social work. “These interventions, when needed, are there for patients and can improve their standard of living,” he said.

Dr. Somasundar also had to grapple with an existing mindset that cancer treatment past a certain age was a waste of time or resources. “This is not about the chronological age,” said Dr. Somasundar. “This concept of ‘The patient has reached 70 years of age and is not a candidate’ has completely gone out of place. It is much more about their physiological age and the opportunity for successful treatment than it is about their actual age.”

One major benefit of the Cancer Center at Roger Williams is the fact that most services are located under one roof. Still, the uncertainty that comes with cancer treatment can add unexpected stress, especially in older patients. To help older patients and their families better manage care and treatment, a new position of Geriatric Nurse Navigator was added. This caregiver assesses nutrition, functional status, mood, current medications, and other medical conditions. This information -- used to design a personalized treatment care plan -- is also shared with the patient’s primary care physician.

Another intervention that has been instituted is what Dr. Somasundar refers to as “pre-habilitation.” This is a process that ensures a patient’s physical and mental challenges are addressed before surgery, radiation or chemotherapy to improve the odds of success.

All of these steps have been taken to ensure older cancer patients get personalized care throughout treatment. “My favorite saying is, ‘Roger Williams is the best kept secret for taking care of older cancer patients,’” said Dr. Somasundar. “Our goal is to be a one-stop shop so patients can comfortably see as many members of the team as possible on each visit.”

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Dr. Ponnandai Somasundar, Director of Geriatric Oncology, consults on a patient’s case with his colleague Dr. Vincent Armenio.
Wound care expertise now available in community.

The Wound Care Center at Fatima Hospital now has new hours and a pair of community clinics available for patient convenience.

The hours at the Wound Care Center at Fatima are Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. The Center, which operates under the direction of Robert Indeglia, MD, offers a variety of innovative treatments -- including advanced wound therapy & hyperbaric oxygen therapy -- that are customized to the needs of individual patients.

The community clinics are at 1500 Pontiac Avenue in Cranston and 2 Wake Robin Road in Lincoln. Surgeon Elizabeth Conklin, MD, sees patients in the Lincoln office.

Our multi-disciplinary staff includes diabetes education specialists, nationally certified nurses, podiatrists, surgeons, vascular specialists, on-site testing, and primary care physicians to ensure immediate and expert coordination of your care.

To make an appointment at any of the three locations, please call 401-456-3011

Dr. Ruenger named Chairman of Dermatology at Roger Williams

Thomas M. Ruenger, MD, PhD, an internationally recognized expert in photobiology and photo-dermatology, has been named Chairman of the Department of Dermatology at Roger Williams Medical Center. He joins Roger Williams from Boston University, where he served as Vice Chairman of the Department of Dermatology and Director of the International Graduate Training Program in Dermatology.

As Professor of Dermatology, Pathology and Laboratory Medicine at Boston University School of Medicine, Dr. Ruenger has had his dermatology-related research funded by a number of sources including the American Cancer Society, the Skin Cancer Foundation, and the Scleroderma Foundation.

Teamwork Key in Operating Rooms at Fatima

As Chairman of Surgery at Fatima Hospital, Dr. A. Robert Buonanno oversees a thriving program where surgeons, caregivers, patients and families work together to ensure optimal outcomes. “Every morning after surgery, our surgeons visit patients to follow-up on their care and answer any questions they may have,” said Dr. Buonanno.

The doctor also recognized the benefits of both state-of-the-art technology and highly skilled operating room and nursing staff. Fatima is also home to Care One, which opened a few years ago and offers all private rooms and the latest amenities to surgical patients. “All of that, combined with our recent Joint Commission certification for hip and knee replacements, make Fatima the hospital of choice for people considering surgery,” he said.

Roger Williams first to receive Advanced Palliative Care certification

Roger Williams Medical Center is now the first hospital in Rhode Island to be certified in Advanced Palliative Care from The Joint Commission. This certification recognizes hospital inginitiative programs that demonstrate exceptional patient and family-centered care and optimize the quality of life for patients with serious illness. Roger Williams is only the 77th hospital in the country to receive this designation. Palliative care addresses a patient’s physical, emotional, social and spiritual needs and facilitates patient autonomy, access to information and choice.

CharterCARE affiliates earn Joint Commission certification

Roger Williams Medical Center, Elmhurst Extended Care, and CharterCARE Home Health Services have all earned The Joint Commission’s Gold Seal of Approval for accreditation by demonstrating compliance with The Joint Commission’s national standards for health care quality and safety.

The accreditation award recognizes the three CharterCARE Health Partner affiliates’ dedication to continuous compliance with The Joint Commission’s state-of-the-art standards. A team of Joint Commission expert surveyors evaluated Roger Williams, Elmhurst, and CharterCARE Home Health during this una nnounced on-site survey for compliance with standards of care specific to the needs of patients, including infection prevention and control, leadership and medication management.

Dr. Ibrahim Eid named Chief of Vascular Surgery at Roger Williams

Ibrahim G. Eid, M.D. has been appointed Chief of Vascular Surgery at Roger Williams Medical Center. Dr. Eid, who also joins the surgical staff of Fatima Hospital, most recently held the title of Chairman of the Department of Surgery at Steward Saint Anne’s Hospital in Fall River, Massachusetts.

Dr. Eid is board certified in surgery and vascular surgery. He completed his fellowship training at Temple Hospital University and residencies at Good Samaritan Hospital of Maryland, New York University Medical Center, and State University of New York at Stony Brook. He received his physician training at American University of Beirut.

Dr. Saied Calvino joins Surgical Oncology Division at Roger Williams

Dr. Abdul Saied Calvino has joined the Division of Surgical Oncology at Roger Williams Medical Center. He has a special interest in minimally invasive colon and rectal surgery, hepatobiliary and pancreatic surgery. Dr. Saied Calvino is fluent in Spanish.

Dr. Saied Calvino received his medical degree from the University of Panama School of Medicine, completed his Surgical internship and residency at the University of Illinois at Chicago, and a two-year ACGME-accredited fellowship program in Complex Surgical Oncology at Roger Williams Medical Center. He is a Board Certified General Surgeon and part of a select group of surgeons Board eligible in Complex Surgical Oncology.
Elmhurst’s summer camp a great experience for children and elders alike.

For one week in August, our nursing home affiliate Elmhurst Extended Care was the host for Kamp Kalimos, bringing together children and elders for a week of fun and learning. The children learned about elderhood while playing games, making crafts and most importantly, laughing with those that call Elmhurst home.

Anjlee received appropriate dental care during her initial care and subsequent visits. Thanks to the Pediatric Dental Center and the Shriners, she is now on the road to good oral health.

Anjlee is pictured during a follow-up visit with Dr. Jeffrey Higbee and dental assistant Zenaida Corsetti.

Dental Care Part of Health Center’s Overall Mission

For more than a quarter century, the St. Joseph Center has been the health resource for thousands of underprivileged families. The Center is focused on delivering services like adult and pediatric primary care, pre-natal and post-partum care for mothers, and immunizations. This care is often delivered free of charge.

The extensive amount of dental work she needed necessitated an immediate visit to the operating room. The family’s lack of resources made Anjlee an ideal candidate for the Shriners’ Patient Care Fund, designed for patients with no dental insurance who don’t qualify for government assistance and can’t afford treatment. The care made possible by the Shriners includes oral health education to help prevent the need for further care down the road. This early intervention during the formative years is critically important in preventing serious oral health issues and positioning children to become healthy and happy adults.

T
he Health Center is also home to the St. Joseph Pediatric Dental Center, where underprivileged children often see a dentist and receive dental care for the first time. Last year, the Pediatric Dental Center was home to more than 44,000 visits. Among those visitors was two-year-old Anjlee, who visited the clinic with her mother in October. Her mother was concerned about Anjlee’s teeth, which were causing the young girl a tremendous amount of pain. Her mother didn’t have insurance or the money necessary to pay for dental care.

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CharterCARE launches new Physician Services Organization.

CharterCARE’s goal of developing an integrated, regional coordinated care network has taken a major step forward with the creation of Prospect Provider Group of Rhode Island (PPGRI).

This 200-member (and growing) association of primary care and specialty physicians will provide its doctors with a variety of practice management services, including contracting with health insurers.

More importantly, PPGRI’s physicians share a philosophy of care that is uniquely focused on the patient’s immediate concerns as well as overall health and wellness issues. This care philosophy supports the twin achievements of quality health outcomes for patients and lower medical costs for our health care system.

PPGRI is an independent practice association comprised of local doctors who are familiar to Rhode Islanders. With more than 100 primary care physicians and a vast specialty physician network, PPGRI will play a key role in helping CharterCARE transform the way health care is delivered in our state.

To learn more, visit ppgri.com

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