

August 25, 2009

Superintendent's Message: OSH Goes Back to School

The month of September is traditionally the start of the academic year for students of all ages and in all stages of learning. It seems fitting that here at OSH we, too, are introducing some new educational and developmental opportunities beginning next month.

In partnership with Oregon Health & Science University, we will begin participating in grand rounds via videoconferencing in September. Grand rounds are viewed as a ritual or traditional practice in medical education. Three times a month local and national experts will present a particular patient case and lead a discussion to increase a clinician's understanding on various forms of mental illness and how treatment should be approached and practiced. Recent grand rounds at OHSU have been videotaped and are available at

http://www.ohsu.edu/psychiatry/grandrounds/gr_video_archive.html

Next month we will be introducing a new leadership module for managers. This module is designed to prepare leaders and managers as they guide their teams through organizational change, using effective and strategic planning. Participants will learn about leadership theory, staff development, effective communication, handling crisis and transformational leadership. Watch for more details on e-mail and at the new EDD Web site

<http://www.dhs.state.or.us/amh/osh/edd/index.html>

Employee engagement continues to be a priority of mine and despite the accumulation of a variety of communication venues – e-mail, Intranet, newsletters – employees still prefer to see OSH leadership face-to-face. This month I have asked my cabinet members to begin making “rounds” next month to all 22 patient units in Salem and Portland. We will pair up and visit monthly each of the three shifts to talk to staff about issues and concerns. We will then discuss staff feedback at our weekly cabinet meetings and publish a recap in Recovery Times and on the Web.

In addition to our own leadership module, there is also the very successful department-wide Leadership Academy, which also kicks off its next class in September. I learned recently that OSH will be well represented in this year's Leadership Academy class. This is a very competitive program and the panel members who reviewed our employees' applications were

impressed with the submissions. I appreciate our staff for participating and I want to thank their co-workers, supervisors and managers for supporting them as they work to achieve their developmental goals during the next eight months.

Our Continuous Improvement Plan includes a well-supported and well-trained work force. This investment we are making now in employee development and education will continue to yield returns for our patients, are staff and our communities for years to come.

As always, I appreciate and welcome your feedback.