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18 MONTHS ADVISING STATE OF RI ON RUNNING ITS HOSPITAL

Back in the June 22, 2015 Biweekly, we announced AMS was looking for individuals with Long Term Acute Care Hospital (LTACH) experience for an interim management assignment. That team has gone to work at **Eleanor Slater Hospital**, the Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals (BHDDH) facility. In 2015 the hospital was licensed with 284 beds across two campuses. Back then the hospital served 280 patients, nearly all of whom are Medicaid eligible. The operating budget for the hospital was \$116 million, with \$58 million in state funds.

AMS has provided credentialed executive leadership of Jack Sutherland, advising CEO, Tom Souliotis, advising COO, Karen Sutkowski, advising CNO and Jeanne Beando, JD, RHIA, advising director of Risk Management. Pat Corvino has also served as advising dietary director as well as chief of staff. The AMS executive team and project support teams have provided accountable day to day management, leadership, and analysis to assist the hospital in executing the daily operations and strategic goals of the organization. Some of these positions continue to provide assistance today.

Now, 18 months later, the work has included an AMS team that consisted of 14 different individuals, providing advising leadership and consulting support, evolving as necessary.

AMS worked with state leadership in developing executive job descriptions that reflect industry standards in qualifications and compensation. Each job description was approved by June 2016, and an executive search firm began work on recruiting the senior leadership then.

Cynthia Huether was successfully recruited to be the new CEO and began work a few months ago in that position at the Eleanor Slater Hospital. She recently participated in the **Providence Business News Five Questions Series**, and a reprint of that article is attached to the Biweekly. “When you have been working to achieve goals for so long, it is heartening to see a talented senior executive come new to the scene from New York State and give a perspective that adds value to what you have worked so hard for” says Alan Goldberg, principal and president. “In a few months, she has already pushed many initiatives forward that we could only move so far as advising senior leadership. We look forward to much more being achieved.”

**RECENT INTERIM MANAGEMENT ASSIGNMENTS
JANUARY– MARCH 2017**

AMS Interim Management is a combination of consulting and management where AMS runs the department or function. We have been providing interim management recently in the areas below including clinical areas and health information management and compliance.

HEALTH INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND COMPLIANCE GROUP (HIMC)

Director, HIM	Hospital System, NH
Director, HIM	University Health System, MA
Director, HIM	Community Hospital, MA
Director, Privacy	Academic Medical Center, MA
Manager, Compliance	Academic Medical Center, MA
Operations Manager, HIM	Academic Medical Center, MA
Vice President, Risk Management	State Hospital, RI

SYSTEMS ENGINEERING GROUP (SEG) - CLINICAL

Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Nursing Officer	State Hospital, RI
Dietary Director	State Hospital, RI
Laboratory Operations Manager	Community Hospital, MA
Laboratory Compliance Office	Academic Medical Center, NY
Sterile Central Supply Director	Community Hospital, MA

Available for Immediate Placement

HIM Directors

Please contact an AMS Principal with your request

Contact AMS Principals:

- Pat Abrami – pabrami@aboutams.com
- Paul Camara – pcamara@aboutams.com
- Donna Watson Dillon – dwdillon@aboutams.com
- Michael Foley – mfoley@aboutams.com
- Alan Goldberg – agoldberg@aboutams.com
- Jennifer Owen Schuster – jschuster@aboutams.com

Five Questions With: Cynthia Huether

BY NANCY KIRSCH | Contributing Writer

CYNTHIA (CINDY) HUETHER is the new CEO of the Eleanor Slater Hospital, the state's only long-term acute care hospital. The hospital, which provides long-term acute and post-acute care to patients with complex medical and psychiatric needs, was subject to an independent review that Gov. Gina M. Raimondo ordered in the first year of her administration.

Huether has more than 25 years of experience in the health care field, including in C-suite positions, including Rochester Regional Health System and Unity Health System, both in Rochester, N.Y. She talked recently with Providence Business News about her position and the state of the hospital's progress in addressing the concerns identified in the independent review.



PBN PHOTO/MICHAEL SALERNO

PBN: What motivated you to take this leadership position with Eleanor Slater Hospital, which has been so troubled?

HUETHER: The size of the system was what first interested me. As you may know, the Eleanor Slater Hospital system currently occupies four units – Regan, Pinel and Meyer units in Cranston and our Zambarano unit in Burrillville. During the interview process with the teams from the R.I. Executive Office of Health and Human Services and the ESH staff, I was impressed with the compassion and vision that everyone articulated about the system.

I am excited for the opportunity to work with like-minded people who share my views about serving those in long-term acute care with complex medical and psychiatric needs. This is truly a new beginning for the hospital and I look forward to building our new hospital leadership team. The chief nursing officer position for ESH was posted recently and the others – chief operating officer/chief financial officer and director of risk management – will be posting soon. Building a team that shares the values and goals of Gov. Raimondo's administration – to expand access while providing care with dignity and respect – is very exciting.

PBN: Tell us how Eleanor Slater Hospital has addressed, or will address, a key issue noted in the independent review – that of people holding leadership positions who lacked appropriate training and/or experience.

HUETHER: From what I understand, the first step was bringing in Applied Management Systems [a health care consulting firm based in Burlington, Mass.], a little more than a year ago to serve as advisers and bring in many national best practices to the hospital. Hiring Chief Medical Officer Dr. Elinore McCance-Katz for both the hospital and the R.I. Department of

Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities & Hospitals was also significant.

AMS has served in an advisory capacity to create needed change on the administrative end and Dr. McCance-Katz has brought critical medical leadership and meaningful change to our clinical systems. All of our searches for key leadership positions are on a national level and we hope to continue to bring experienced professionals who, like me, have had success in leading change to improve operational efficiency, integrating care across the continuum and creating new and innovative programs.

PBN: What key skills and expertise do you possess that will help you, as well as your senior staff, "right the ship" at the hospital and chart a smooth course?

HUETHER: One of the reasons I was drawn to this position is because it brings in all the areas of health care in which I have worked. Some of the relevant experience I bring to this job is having worked in New York state government and as executive director/CEO for a developmental disabilities organization, a rehabilitation center and two large behavioral health systems. All of these areas are represented in the Eleanor Slater Hospital system, where we care for those living with a developmental disability, those who need long-term rehabilitative care and those living with a behavioral health disorder. I have years of experience in identifying issues and implementing innovative solutions to create an environment in providing high-quality, compassionate care while expanding access and keeping costs in line.

PBN: There have been some improvements made at the hospital, thanks to recommendations made by an advisory management team. What are those

improvements and what is their focus: improved patient care, reduced expenses or something else?

HUETHER: AMS focused on benchmarking hospital operations and practices with national and best practice models while remaining focused on staff needs and working with patients and their families in a compassionate environment. From what I can determine, in the limited time I have been here, AMS accomplished that and a great deal more. There are many achievements, but a few that stand out are these: Developing a new organizational staffing model; creating a Patient Safety Committee; initiating daily safety huddles; implementing a Nursing Professional Council (which is an industry gold standard); realizing savings of nearly \$1 million by changing a few staffing models and creating patient care safety fairs to retrain staff. They have made significant strides and I am excited at the prospect of continuing the work they started and building on it.

PBN: Two years from now, how will Eleanor Slater Hospital be different than it is now, as a result of your leadership?

HUETHER: Some aspects of Eleanor Slater Hospital will never change – that is, we are a hospital working with patients and their families where dignity, individuality and respect are top of mind. Much of the difference will be where the care is delivered. We are working on the consolidation of forensic and other psychiatric patients on the Cranston campus in units that are more suitable to better support patient and staff safety, while care for medical patients will be centralized at our Zambarano facility. I expect that we will remain ever focused on adopting evidence-based practices striving to be a high-reliability organization. ■