Saint Luke’s Hospital of Kansas City

Founded in 1882, Saint Luke’s Hospital (SLH) is the largest hospital in the Kansas City, Mo. metropolitan area. Affiliated with the Diocese of West Missouri of the Protestant Episcopal Church, it is a not-for-profit comprehensive teaching and referral health care organization that provides 24-hour coverage in every health care discipline. SLH is driven by its vision, “The Best Place to Get Care, The Best Place to Give Care,” and its core values of Quality/Excellence, Customer Focus, Resource Management, and Teamwork. Under the leadership of Chief Executive Officer G. Richard Hastings, SLH employs 3,186 staff and 500 physicians.

Saint Luke’s is committed to providing leadership, volunteers, and funding to many community health organizations, including the federal Women, Infants and Children program; the Metropolitan Organization to Counter Sexual Abuse; and The Cancer Institute. The level of financial commitment to community health care education has steadily increased from $9.6 million in 1999 to $12.7 million in 2002.

Specialized care capabilities for very ill people are Saint Luke’s hallmark. These include the Mid America Heart Institute, which treats complex cardiovascular diseases; the Mid America Brain and Stroke Institute, which includes a nationally recognized program dedicated to preventing and treating stroke; a highly rated trauma center and neonatal intensive care nursery; and the only comprehensive maternal-fetal diagnostic and treatment center in the Kansas City area. Many of its treatment regimens are among the best in the nation. For example, in treating ischemic stroke, a leading cause of death and permanent neurologic disability, SLH leads the nation in the percentage of diagnosed patients receiving Tissue Plasminogen Activator (tPA) to help restore circulation and reduce permanent brain injury. In the second quarter of 2003, 27 percent of SLH patients received tPA versus a national average of 3 percent.

From 1999 to 2002, SLH’s financial performance has steadily improved, showing that pursuing and implementing innovative treatments is compatible with sound business practices. In total margin and operating margin, SLH currently ranks among the top 5 percent of the nation’s hospitals. In total revenues, SLH outperforms the Council of Teaching Hospitals top quartile.

Listening, Learning, Improving

Saint Luke’s Hospital accomplishes its mission of “providing excellent health services to all patients in a caring environment” by listening to its customers and designing new and improved ways to deliver health care. SLH uses a continuous-loop model, known as the Performance

2003 Award Winner

Highlights

• In 2002, Consumer’s Checkbook ranked SLH 35th in the nation out of 4,500 hospitals evaluated.

• Since 1997, studies of regional health care providers by the National Research Corporation have shown that patients believe SLH has the best quality health care and the best doctors and nurses of the 21 facilities in the market area.

• SLH has 12 “Customer Contact Requirements,” including “Address patients/guests by last name unless otherwise told” and “Address all complaints within 24 hours or less.”

• SLH outperforms the Council of Teaching Hospitals top quartile in financial performance and ranks in the top 5 percent of hospitals nationwide in total margin.
A Focus on Excellence and Employees

Saint Luke’s “Leadership for Performance Excellence Model” captures all of the elements that drive its focus on performance improvement and excellence, including the strategic planning and performance management process, process improvement model, and a commitment to excellence assessment model based on the seven Baldrige performance excellence categories. Saint Luke’s vision, mission, core values, and strategy sit at the top of the model and influence all of the organization’s plans and processes.

A robust strategic planning approach consists of three phases and seven steps that integrate direction setting, strategy development and deployment, financial planning, and plan management. At a series of retreats, the leadership team develops strategy and a 90-day action planning process to deploy the strategy to all departments. The balanced scorecard process produces a measurement system that aligns all departments with the strategy and ensures the proper focus in key performance areas throughout the organization.

A highly empowered, high-performing workforce is key to Saint Luke’s success. To ensure that everyone is in tune with the hospital’s focus, all employees take part in the Performance Management Process. The process helps employees develop action plans and goals that are aligned with the organization’s strategy and core values and identify personal commitments which contribute to SLH’s values. The process also defines primary customers and competencies needed for each position and sets expectations for each employee. A Process Improvement Model provides employees with the information they need to effectively design, manage, and improve hospital processes.

Factors that determine employee well-being, satisfaction, and motivation are uncovered through formal surveys, open forums with senior leaders, targeted focus groups, senior leader “walk rounds,” “staying” and “exit” interviews, and the Peer Review Grievance Process. An intense focus on ensuring that its workforce reflects the diversity of the community, including diversity training for all employees and “lunch and learn” sessions about diversity-related topics, has led to an increase in minority managers and professional staff, from 3 percent in 1998 to almost 10 percent in 2002. Employees also are staying at Saint Luke’s longer, another indicator of growing employee satisfaction. For the past five years, results for employee retention have exceeded the Saratoga Institute’s median and is approaching 90 percent.

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