

Winter 2007

Elizabethtown Community Hospital

Medical Records are Going Digital

ECH is taking steps to prepare for an electronic medical records system, which will be required of all hospitals by the year 2014.

In 2006, ECH purchased LibertyNET, a software system used to scan existing patient records into a computer database so that they may be recalled on demand by ECH staff and providers as needed.

The Medical Records department is nearly complete with the first phase of the project, which is to scan all 2006 paper records as well as all incoming paper medical record information. As time permits, records for 2004-5 will also be scanned into the system. The system scans documents as well as colored photos often used to document a procedure or patient care, for example, a picture of a patient's esophagus would be included in their medical record if they had a gastroscopy exam done in the Gastroenterology clinic at ECH.

Phase two of the project will start on February 5, 2007. This step will begin the scanning of billing records at the Business Office. This will assist staff by quickly finding patient billing information and help to receive insurance claims quicker. Additionally, Lab and Radiology results will be sent directly to a patient's information folder rather than being printed and then scanned in.

"This program is a stepping stone to make employees comfortable with the technology. Soon everything will be electronic. Doctors and nurses will be recording patient information immediately by using an electronic device, such as a laptop," explained John Anderson, ECH Chief Financial Officer.

Once these steps are complete, ECH will move to the third phase, going to a full electronic medical record. ECH is working with other hospitals in the region, including

CVPH Medical Center in Plattsburgh, to develop a multi-hospital compatible system to make necessary information sharing seamless.

An electronic system will improve patient care by:

- Sharing information *quickly* through the internet or a local database, important especially in an emergency;
- Sharing information more easily as there will be no need to physically locate and pull records and then take or send them where they need to be;



Above is the team from Medical Records who have been working many hours to electronically scan and file patient medical records. Pictured with ECH CFO John Anderson are from left to right Vickie Cline, Sandy LaShombe, Amiee Adams, and Michelle Rabideau.

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Healthy Heart Day

Tuesday, February 13th

4-7 p.m.

Elizabethtown Community Hospital

Healthy snacks & recipes

Free cholesterol, blood pressure, and blood-sugar tests

Q&A on Heart Disease with professionals

Learn causes and symptoms of a heart attack

Learn simple exercises

Donate Blood

For more information, call 873-6377

Sponsored by the Hospital Auxiliary

Free & Open to the Public

Plenty of Parking at ECH

With the new parking lot on the west-side of the hospital, there is now ample parking for patients, visitors, and staff. When you come to ECH, whether for an appointment or to visit a patient, please use this new lot.

The parking that is in front of Horace Nye Home is strictly reserved for visitors to the Home. Anyone who does park in the Horace Nye Home parking lot, but is only coming into the Hospital will be towed.

Towns get Hospital Update

Throughout the first quarter of this new year ECH Administrator, Rod Boula, will be attending monthly town and EMS board meetings to update the groups as to what is new at the Hospital. Town board meetings are typically open to the public. If you would like to hear this brief presentation, call your local town hall or the Hospital Community Relations Department to find out when Mr. Boula will be speaking there. Some towns tape their meetings and broadcast them on the local access channel, so watch for it there as well.

CT Scanner in Full Service

Depending on the type of CT exam your physician orders, the diagnosis, and medical history, a patient could have either a contrast or non-contrast CT exam. You can now have either of these two exams done conveniently at ECH.

As of June 2006, non-contrast exams have been performed. After additional months of training and preparation, ECH radiologic technologists and nursing staff are working together to provide contrast exams.

With a contrast exam, a patient is injected with contrast material, commonly called dye, that enhances the visibility of certain tissues and organs to more easily see abnormalities to aid in determining a diagnosis. Although it is a low percentage, some patients may have an allergic reaction to the contrast. For this reason, nursing staff has been trained to identify patients with this potential and respond if there is an issue. Julie Tromblee, R.N., explains “medical history and patient information are taken to determine if someone is prone to have a reaction or would have problems eliminating the contrast material.”

Radiologic Technologists who operate the CT scanner are Suzanne Denton, Brent LaDuke, and Jan Vize. Julie Tromblee, R.N. and Meredith King, R.N., who initially received the training to administer contrast, are now training most of the nursing staff to administer contrast and monitor patients. Exams are offered 24-hours per day but are only on an emergency basis during off hours.

“We have a good team put together to provide CT,” said Molly Thompson, Director of Radiology. “This is a valuable service for the community and added convenience for our patients.”



Left, Crete Dorsey, R.N., administers contrast to patient Donald Huntley of Lewis, just before he travels through the ring to be scanned.

Shop On-line to Benefit ECH

Elizabethtown Community Hospital has launched a fundraising program that allows community members and friends to support the Hospital throughout the year just by making their online purchases through *the shoppingmall*. ECH, in conjunction with the Association for Healthcare Philanthropy, Fundlink, LLC, and more than 1,300 major retailers, have created a special website where supporters enter before visiting the online stores of retailers such as Target, Macy's, Best Buy, Dell, Staples and Expedia. These merchants then donate a portion of each sale in the form of a royalty to ECH automatically.

The shoppingmall works like any other online shopping vehicle except now ECH benefits from the experience. Consumers enter *the shoppingmall* and after selecting an online retailer to visit, they are asked to designate Elizabethtown Community Hospital as the organization that will benefit from their shopping experience. Once the designation is made, consumers are sent directly to the retailer of their

choice to start shopping. It takes just one extra step when shopping online for ECH to earn contributions.

"This is such an easy way for our community to support ECH by going about business as normal on the Web. Imagine if everyone who buys office supplies, purchases a computer, downloads music, or makes airline or hotel reservations online, goes through this virtual mall, what an extraordinary impact it will have on ECH," stated Kerry Haley, Director of Community Relations.

Elizabethtown Community Hospital participates in *the shoppingmall* though its membership in the Association for Healthcare Philanthropy (AHP). AHP and its

partner Fundlink, LLC, in conjunction with more than 1,300 major retailers, created this special online shopping mall website. To find a listing of participating stores and more details about *the shoppingmall*, please visit www.ech.org and click on *the shoppingmall* link.

Visit
www.ech.org
and click on
***the shoppingmall* link**

Medical Records cont'd...

- Gives caregivers a good understanding of patient history to help with diagnosis and treatment.

Additional benefits include creating a standardized electronic exchange of patient information between facilities and saving storage space within the facility and offsite.

Quality assurance and information protection are the number one priorities for this project. Several precautions are being taken to ensure that information is kept safe and secure. At this time, ECH is still maintaining paper medical records along with the coinciding electronic versions until a level of comfort is achieved. Additionally, there is ongoing quality assurance to ensure that all records scanned adhere to stringent HIPAA and state/federal regulations. A security measure that is installed in the LibertyNET program allows an ECH employee to run a report at any

given time, indicating if scanned documents were "touched" and by whom. Because of such high security protection, however, this is highly unlikely.

"It is a great feeling knowing that ECH is moving forward implementing these first two phases. Projects like these and obtaining a medical record system can only be realized by the collaborative efforts of the board, administration, and staff involved in the these projects," said Anderson.

Visit www.ech.org
to send an e-mail to
a patient staying at ECH.

Mark Your Calendar for these Upcoming Events

- ✓ February 13 **Healthy Heart Day** 4-7 p.m., ECH Break room and Boardroom
- ✓ February 20 **Diabetes Support Group Meeting**, 5:30-6:30 p.m., ECH Boardroom
- ✓ March 20 **Diabetes Support Group Meeting**, 5:30-6:30 p.m., ECH Boardroom

For more information about any of these events, call 873-6377.



Auxiliary Year-End Report 2006

Thanks to the generous support of the community, the ECH Auxiliary raised nearly \$10,500 this past year. Below are the list of fundraisers held throughout 2006 and the items purchased to better the Hospital and community.

Hospital and Community Benefit

- 3rd Annual Healthy Heart Day had 70 participants.
- Through various fundraisers, including Dinner @ 8, the Auxiliary donated:
 - ◆ \$6,000 to the Emergency Room.
 - ◆ \$1,000 to the Inpatient Physical Therapy Department for new parallel bars.
 - ◆ \$2,000 to the Laboratory towards the purchase of a new state of the art microscope.
 - ◆ A new nebulizer was purchased for ECHC.
- Emergency comfort items such as clothes and food were given to the ER.
- Several magazine subscriptions for the patients.
- Smocks for the Caring Hearts program for junior volunteers.
- Volunteered for Ironman USA in Lake Placid.
- Brought in a cake and stuffed bunnies for patients who were in the hospital at Easter.
- Awarded the first annual ECH Auxiliary Scholarship.
- Built a float for the E'town Day parade.
- The Auxiliary was a corporate sponsor for the annual ECH golf tournament.
- Each patient in the Hospital over Christmas received a lap robe, sewn by Auxiliary members.

Fundraisers

Bulb Sales	\$150
Uniform Sale	\$2,200
Dinner @ 8	\$6,000
BBQ Basket Raffle	\$676
Thanksgiving Pie Sale	\$511
Tree and Wreath Auction	\$150
Scavenger Hunt	\$855

The year ahead...2007

Plans are already under way to make 2007 a great success. Here are some of the items we have planned, so be sure to mark your calendar.

- Healthy Heart Day scheduled for February 13th
- Dinner @ 8 scheduled for July 28th



Lucas and Gavin Spilling, and Aiden DeMuro, children of Auxiliary Members April Spilling and Karin DeMuro, take a break while helping hand out blankets sewn by Auxiliary member for patients in the hospital over the holiday season.



Above, Dinner @ 8 Co-Chairs Gayle Alexander and Anne Marie Denton speak at the cocktail reception held at the Hand House as Dan Alexander lends his support.

Elizabethtown Community Hospital is a 25-bed Critical Access Hospital located in Elizabethtown, New York. Its services include a 24-hour emergency department, acute and long-term inpatient care, physical therapy, laboratory, and radiology services. It also operates health centers in Elizabethtown and Westport.

For comments, suggestions, or questions about this newsletter, please contact:

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