

Hospital board gets menu overview

Written by Chris Lee

Dietary menus and changes within the dietary department were a topic of interest for East Phillips County Hospital Board members at their Jan. 25 meeting.

Director of the dietary department Linda Alberts provided a brief overview for board members and explained some recent changes with menu items.

Administrator John Ayoub said he wanted board members to receive a little update should questions from the public arise concerning recent changes within the dietary department.

Alberts discussed how she has been trying to update menu items since she began working at the hospital. She described the repetition of items every three weeks and wanted to see what she could do about it.

She said she has a new dietary consultant who proposed a new menu. Patients may request what they would like for the entire day. "This is actually working very well for us," Alberts said.

She outlined how there are different menu types for different types of patients within the hospital.

Staff menus are still on a three-week rotation but she said different "surprises" are being thrown in to keep them guessing.

"I think the patients enjoy having more of a choice," Ayoub said, referring to the newer menu.

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Financial condition briefly outlined

MMH CFO Greg Was reported on the monthly financials as well as a brief update of 2010. He noted December was a good month for the hospital and ended slightly higher than the previous year when looking at year-to-date earnings.

Was said the on-site audit will take place Feb. 28.

Administrator reports activity

Ayoub reported Dr. Rick Amesquita began seeing patients Monday, Jan. 24. Board members were able to meet Amesquita during Tuesday's meeting.

"I'm pleased with his attitude and patient care, and we're certainly happy to have him on board," Ayoub said. He also said since he began seeing patients, staff had made it through a waiting list within the clinic. Ayoub hopes with the addition, patients making appointments will be seen faster.

Ayoub said they extended an employment offer to a physician assistant who is still working towards a graduation date. Ayoub said they are waiting to hear an answer but he feels this person would be a great addition to the hospital and town of Holyoke.

Ayoub also noted a Family Nurse Practitioner student, Tosha Wilson, is spending some time following Judy Sudmeier around. The ideal plan would be to keep her local but at the very least they are helping someone reach their goal.

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The administrator said they are also currently speaking with three female family practitioners who all perform OB.

Results from a recent clinic assessment were presented to board members. Ayoub said the assessment was very thorough and well documented. He said there were some minor things that were suggested to better improve the workflow, but overall was very pleased with the results.

Ayoub reported MMH recently went live on the Colorado Telehealth Network. This was a move from T1 lines to a fiber optic connection that eventually will provide MMH access to communicate with other hospitals. MMH is one of the first to go live on the network, according to the administrator.

With the new connection the bandwidth has more than doubled, allowing more information to be sent at a quicker rate.

Other business

In other business Jan. 25, board members:

—held a 40-minute executive session for negotiations.

—appointed Peggi Pearson as the secretary/treasurer of Melissa Memorial Hospital Corporation.

—voted to allow Ayoub to have a student organization within the Holyoke School District sell a

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supply of Beanie Babies that have been in storage. The items were a donation to the hospital before the move was made to the new facility.

—approved credentialing for Sidney Adler, OB/GYN and Mark Hoenig, Family Practitioner with OB.