Crisis Averted

In less than two years, the employees of the New Roseland Community Hospital have turned the hospital around. By Russ Gager

On the South Side of Chicago, the distance to an emergency room or Level 1 trauma center can be a matter of life and death. So it was with a profound sense of dedication that Tim Egan became president and CEO of the Roseland Community Hospital in July 2013. “The first balance sheet I was presented with showed $30 million in debt,” Egan recalls. “So we’ve had to literally take a hospital that had two wheels in the morgue, pull it back out and resurrect it, and our team here has done a fabulous job in just 22 months.”

Before Egan joined the hospital in the neighborhood named Roseland, rumors had swirled of the hospital’s imminent demise. “When I walked in the door, it was tough,” Egan remembers. “The stakeholders had been through quite a bit of turmoil. Employees, doctors, everyone walked the halls with their heads down looking at the floor. That has now changed so dramatically in such a short time. From putting a new shine on the floors to new coats of paint on the walls, those same people are now upbeat. Their heads are up, and they’re smiling and friendly. It’s been a complete culture change. We like to say that when I walked in the door, we found a time of great crisis, and now it’s a time of great hope.”

Besides the shiny floors and new paint, the New Roseland Community Hospital has undergone more extensive changes to its physical plant. In the last six months, a new $600,000 HVAC system and a new $700,000 fire alarm system have been installed.

More importantly, the hospital upgraded its electronic healthcare records to the latest Meditech 6.0 system, which after months of training and wiring for new computers at a cost of more than $3.5 million went live in April 2014.

“I couldn’t be more proud of the way this hospital has responded to the crisis.”

TIM EGAN, PRESIDENT AND CEO
Breathing Easy

The New Roseland Community Hospital has earned inclusion in the 2015 Quality Respiratory Care Recognition program awarded by the American Association of Respiratory Care. “It’s a national award,” Egan points out. “Only 15 percent of the hospitals in the country are recognised with this distinction. Our cardiopulmonary department strives daily to provide quality respiratory care to patients. To be recognized for this is a great honor for our hospital, our team and our leadership.”

The hospital treats high rates of asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) in the community. “We have epidemic-like rates of asthma in the greater Roseland community,” Egan maintains. “Twenty percent of all emergency department visits in the city of Chicago due to chronic asthma are at Roseland Community Hospital.”

It is raising funds to create the Roseland Center for Breathing Easy. “We would create lung cancer research programs and smoking cessation projects,” Egan says. “Anything to do with the health of the lungs and breathing would be the focus of this new center.”

Preliminary architectural drawings and research have been created for the center. “We’re now in that critical stage of seeking funding,” Egan says. “We’re making a case to the state that a small investment now could mean major savings in the long run to relieve the burden on the Medicaid system in the state. That is a worthy investment now. Our whole focus is making sure we provide the necessary access to primary care treatment so we can cut down on the unnecessary emergency department treatment.”

In July 2014 the hospital put into action a full-service dental van for children. “People fail to realize that dental health is overall health,” Egan says. “Dental problems can lead to major health issues. We are out in the streets every day providing this full, free dental care. We work with schools, churches, community centers and health fairs.”

No Small Plans

After Egan arrived at Roseland Community Hospital, the staff — which he compares to a family — had to take a long, hard look at the hospital’s operations to qualify for accreditation from the Healthcare Facilities Accreditation Program (HFAP) so the hospital could receive Medicare and Medicaid funding. This was done by going through every accreditation requirement before the actual accreditation was performed.

“Our mock survey was a tough day for the family here at the New Roseland Community Hospital,” Egan says. “We really learned where our weak spots were. I was inspired by the reaction we had and how quickly our team came together and worked like a family night and day.” Correcting areas of the hospital over several months resulted in volunteers cleaning inside and out.

“A couple months later when the HFAP came in for the survey, they gave us compliments all around,” Egan says. “We had an HFAP guide created, printed and given to all our employees so they kept it in the pockets of their lab coats. It really was a signal of how this became the New Roseland Community Hospital.”

*The University of Illinois Hospital & Health Sciences System (UI Health) is committed to serving the needs of all Chicago neighborhoods including the Roseland community. UI Health’s Cancer Center does this by providing screenings, education, and outreach. We work to help detect and prevent cancer and make healthier neighborhoods. For more information visit hospital.uillinois.edu.*
New Roseland Front and Center

The New Roseland Community Hospital President and CEO Tim Egan has recently been invited to testify in front of the Illinois House Human Services Appropriations Committee and be part of the “State of Safety Net Hospitals” panel in Washington, D.C. “It is an honor to represent the patients, physicians, employees, and community served by the New Roseland,” Egan says. “All of these stakeholders deserve to have their issues advocated for at the state and national level.”

Egan was invited by U.S. Rep. Robin Kelly (D-Ill), to attend the Congressional Black Caucus Healthcare Braintrust Summit in Washington, D.C. “I was happy to join me to talk about the vital role of safety net hospitals,” Rep. Kelly says. “Safety net hospitals are on the front line of care in vulnerable communities, so it is critical that we understand the unique challenges they face.”

Hospital. Our new style of leadership has really changed the direction of this hospital. We've adopted a five-pillar strategic plan, and the pillars are patients, physicians, employees, community and collaboration.

In July, a former gift shop in the hospital will become a pharmacy that will fill prescriptions at discounted prices for those who qualify. The hospital's long-term plan is to establish a data center for the area that could relieve nearby healthcare organizations of the necessity of purchasing new hardware when upgrading their systems and software.

The hospital administration intends to explore the possibility of creating a desperately needed Level I trauma center on its South Side campus. “We're a very small hospital, but we're trying to lead the way in many healthcare categories from IT to outpatient services,” Egan says.

When looking to the future for the 162-bed hospital, Egan paraphrases the legendary Chicago planner Daniel Burnham. “The New Roseland Community Hospital is making no small plans,” he says. “We're basically 22 months into the reconstruction, and as I look back, I couldn’t be more proud of the way this hospital has responded to the crisis, how it’s come through stronger than ever, and it is now looking to the future. This really is a place where opportunity and vision have finally come together, and I’m excited about the future of the New Roseland Community Hospital.”