



Minnesota Hospital Association



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## Minnesota hospitals recognized for excellence

### *Association's annual awards competition honors advocacy, volunteerism, improvement*

**ST. PAUL, Minn.** — Eighteen Minnesota hospital representatives and programs were honored May 8 at the 25<sup>th</sup>-annual Minnesota Hospital Association (MHA) Awards banquet.

Following are the winners:

#### **Stephen Rogness Distinguished Service Award, MHA's highest honor**

##### **Jim Hanko, president and CEO of North Country Health Services in Bemidji**

During Jim Hanko's decade-long tenure at North Country Health Services in Bemidji, his hospital has won every MHA award that exists. At the same time, Hanko's own awards shelf has become crowded with state and national accolades from MHA, the American Hospital Association, the Health Care Auxiliary of Minnesota, the American College of Healthcare Executives and others.

In his community, Hanko has worked with area American Indian tribal councils to bring a family advocacy center to his hospital. He also spearheaded the creation of the Drug Free Coalition to combat underage drinking and drug abuse. Lastly, Hanko established local candidate forums on health care issues for the past two Minnesota House and Senate elections.

#### **MHA Public Achievement Award**

##### **Former U.S. Congressman Jim Ramstad**

Jim Ramstad, former U.S. Congressman representing Minnesota's Third District, stood for moderation, common sense and common courtesy in a climate these days so often marked by sharp partisanship. Before serving 18 years in the House, Ramstad brought his moderate Republican views to the Minnesota Senate.

In health care, Ramstad last year won a hard-fought battle to bring parity to coverage for mental health services, including addiction treatment. This legacy was forged by Paul Wellstone. Ramstad, a recovering alcoholic, now serves as a member of the board of the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University.

## **Volunteer of the Year**

### **Corene Kain of St. Cloud Hospital**

A 95-year-old inspiration, Corene Kain helped found St. Cloud Hospital's volunteer program in 1958. Since then, she has logged an estimated 7,000 hours in service — equivalent to 3½ years of full-time work.

Every Monday, she cleans carts, brings clothes to units and trains new volunteers in the hospital's surgical center.

“Although Corene Kain is very modest about her volunteer activities, we know the significance of her contributions,” said St. Cloud Hospital Volunteer Services Director Janene Riedeman. “She is a quiet leader and serves as an outstanding example for us all.”

## **Community Benefit Award (two categories)**

### ***Large Hospital Category***

#### **Fairview Health Services' Minnesota Immunization Networking Initiative**

This Minneapolis-based organization partners with community groups to immunize minorities and uninsured Twin Citians against seasonal influenza. The project provides free annual shots at non-clinical, non-traditional settings, such as churches and community centers. Clinics have even been held at a Hmong flea market and a Somali mall.

The initiative has provided 16,000 immunizations since 2006. Fairview's foundation gave \$10,000 to jump-start the project, and it has provided staff time, influenza vaccine and ongoing funding. The program was even highlighted by the White House.

### ***Small Hospital Category***

#### **Phillips Eye Institute's Early Youth Eyecare Community Initiative**

Phillips' initiative works to eliminate vision problems in children by providing vision screenings and arranging eye services for kindergarteners, first- and fifth-graders in Minneapolis' public schools. Since its inception in 2007, nearly 9,000 children have been screened, and nearly 1,400 received further evaluation and eye care.

More than 100 trained volunteers aid the effort. Phillips has provided more than \$200,000 to fund treatment costs, interpreters and transportation.

## **Spirit of Advocacy Award**

### **Mary Klimp, CEO of Queen of Peace Hospital in New Prague**

Mary Klimp stands out when it comes to making hospitals' voices heard.

Besides developing sound relationships with mayors, city councilors, state senators and representatives, she has also repeatedly championed the hospital perspective before legislative committees.

Additionally, Klimp has or is serving on numerous MHA and American Hospital Association committees. She also represents hospital interests on the Minnesota Department of Health's Health Care Reform Task Force.

At her own hospital, Klimp led the development of a community-wide weight loss program modeled after TV's "The Biggest Loser." In 2008, participants lost a total of nearly 2,500 pounds.

## **Innovation of the Year in Patient Care Award (two categories)**

### ***Large Hospital Category***

#### **HealthEast Perinatal Safety Collaborative**

Thanks to HealthEast's Perinatal Safety Collaborative, numerous steps to improve perinatal safety have been implemented at its hospitals.

Begun in 2007, the innovative and multidisciplinary educational initiative works to increase safe administration of oxytocin, a hormone used during childbirth to help contract the mother's muscles. However, if administered incorrectly, the hormone can injure the baby.

To solve the problem, HealthEast partnered with an Institute for Healthcare Improvement collaborative to implement use of best practices. Perhaps more importantly, HealthEast insisted that all providers who have obstetrical privileges — not just nurses — attend the related training. Under the program, 172 providers and 148 R.N.s received the education. The initiative also included audit forms, audit feedback tools and checklists.

### ***Small Hospital Category***

#### **Enhanced Recovery Protocol, Owatonna Hospital**

Owatonna hospital appears to be the only U.S. community hospital following the European-based Enhanced Recovery Protocol (ERP). The protocol decreases the length of stay for patients undergoing major colon surgeries and major incisional hernia repairs. It also reduces the risk of deep-vein blood clots and respiratory issues.

The multidisciplinary measures, for example, include patient nutrition education and use of certain intravenous fluids during surgery.

Thanks to the initiative, 74 percent of relevant Owatonna patients' hospital stays have decreased from 6 or 7 days to 3 or fewer days. Also, only one intravenous blood clot has occurred and no patients have had respiratory problems.

## **Patient Safety Improvement: Calls to Action Award (two categories)**

### ***Large Hospital Category***

#### **Park Nicollet Methodist Hospital**

Park Nicollet has been a consistently strong leader in the Minnesota Hospital Association's SAFE from FALLS initiative, which is one of four MHA patient safety initiatives that work to prevent adverse health events.

In January 2008, the average number of patient falls resulting in moderate or more serious injury at Park Nicollet was 2.5. During the last year, because of the hospital's exemplary work in this program, no such falls have occurred.

What helped most? Lower beds, for one. Secondly, staffers began making hourly checks to assist patients to the bathroom.

### *Small Hospital Category*

#### **Buffalo Hospital Birth Center**

As a rule, Buffalo hospital has faithfully practiced surgical sponge counts both before and after regular deliveries of newborns. Even so, in 2007 the facility still had two occurrences in which gauze was left behind in patients.

The hospital therefore decided to work more deliberately to prevent such retained foreign object adverse health events. For one, it re-educated staff about documenting their visual counts of surgical items. Later, staff members attended the MHA's SAFE COUNT Conference and then joined that MHA patient safety program.

Work included updating policy and procedures, conducting audits and developing interventions. The efforts paid off. The hospital had no such retained objects in all of 2008 or thus far in 2009.

#### **Health Care Career Promotion Award (two categories)**

### *Large Hospital Category*

#### **St. Cloud Hospital's high school student internship program and educational scholarships**

St. Cloud Hospital promotes health care careers through its high school student internship program and its educational scholarships for employees, volunteers and high schoolers. Other key initiatives include:

- an intensive care unit mentoring program for new ICU nurses;
- a graduate nurse residency program;
- a variety of other health care internships;
- a clinical ladder program that supports professional growth in nursing; and
- a promotional program that encourages nursing assistants and practical nurses to apply for the nurse intern and graduate nurse residency programs.

Nearly one-third of graduate nurses hired by St. Cloud Hospital in 2008 had first been patient care assistants, licensed practical nurses or other supportive personnel at the hospital.

### *Small Hospital Category*

#### **Medical Career Exploration Student Program at Kanabec Hospital, Mora**

Kanabec Hospital in Mora offers several job shadowing opportunities for both high school and college students.

Under the program, for example, high school seniors spend a semester working in the hospital. There, they learn about patient confidentiality, infection control and patient privacy laws. Students can focus on working with departments as varied as the lab, imaging, pharmacy, social services and surgery.

Most program participants go on to choose careers in health care, and many return to work at Kanabec Hospital.

#### **Best Minnesota Hospital Workplace (two categories)**

### *Large Hospital Category*

#### **St. Cloud Hospital**

St. Cloud Hospital puts its money where its mouth is when it comes to engendering a positive work place. Consider that:

- An annual employee survey habitually sparks improvements. As a result, employee satisfaction rates on a 5-point scale rose from about 3.8 in 2005 to about 4.2 in 2008.
- Employee engagement translates into patient satisfaction as evidenced by the hospital hitting the 96<sup>th</sup> percentile nationally for its inpatient satisfaction score.
- The hospital's employee turnover rate is relatively low, at less than 11 percent.

Self-scheduling of R.N.s; an employee wellness program; employee and patient satisfaction committees; and a committee that works to improve communication between employees and administration also help.

### *Small Hospital Category*

#### **Woodwinds Health Campus, Woodbury**

The holistic model of care and a healing environment at Woodwinds Health Campus in Woodbury was designed as much for the staff as it was for the patients.

Consider that:

- the hospital's nurse vacancy rate is less than 1 percent. In many departments, waiting lists exist for the most sought-after positions;
- turnover is far below the national average, at just 1.56 percent; and
- the organization's patient satisfaction score is in the 92nd percentile.

Woodwinds has shared details about its approach with other professionals during nearly 200 site visits, including with about a dozen international visitors.

### **Trustee of the Year Award**

#### **Gail Blackmer, chairwoman of the Bigfork Valley Hospital Board of Trustees**

Gail Blackmer, chairwoman of the Bigfork Valley Hospital Board of Trustees, has provided two dozen years of outstanding leadership to her hospital. Under her guidance, the organization has:

- undertaken a major new building program;
- instituted an electronic medical record system; and
- experienced double-digit growth in gross revenues each year of her chairmanship.

The building project included a new emergency department, surgery center, public fitness center and pharmacy. It's no wonder that patients rewarded the hospital with top results for the state in a national satisfaction survey.

### **Caregiver of the Year Award**

#### **Karine Zakroczymski (pronounced "Kar-een Zak-ro-zim-skee"), coordinator of the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Program, Unity Hospital in Fridley, part of Allina Hospitals and Clinics**

Karine Zakroczymski has transformed the quality of care that victims of sexual assault receive in Minnesota. Her visionary approach has led to the establishment of exceptional services, health care provider education and community advocacy.

For example, in 2000 Zakroczymski created two hospital programs that incorporate services for survivors 24/7. Today, she coordinates six such programs that serve 200 victims per year. Zakroczymski also recently secured funding and brought a national sexual-assault educational program to two high schools and a college.

Overall, those who know her say it's this R.N.'s compassionate, nonjudgmental care, paired with her unflinching advocacy for patients, that is truly outstanding.

### **Bruce and Denise Rueben Courage Award**

#### **Kathy Lucas, president of Fairview Home Care and Hospice in Minneapolis**

The Bruce and Denise Rueben Courage Award was created this year to recognize courage exhibited on behalf of Minnesota's hospital patients and their families.

Bruce Rueben served as president of MHA for a decade, championing initiatives to improve transparency and quality. His wife, Denise, demonstrated inspiring courage while battling breast cancer.

Kathy Lucas, president of Fairview Home Care and Hospice in Minneapolis, has long been a champion of patient safety — both at her facility and at others statewide. For one thing, Lucas helped launch a patient safety committee and patient safety policies, procedures and standards at her hospital. Resulting safety campaigns focused on eliminating pressure ulcers and falls and on improving medication safety.

Lucas also led the charge to implement safe patient-handling protocols. Through her leadership, those efforts resulted in an 80-percent decrease in employee injuries at the Fairview organization. Lastly, under Lucas' direction, the facility is poised to become one of the first agencies in the nation to make full use of technology to deliver exceptional care in patients' homes.

### **Associate Member of the Year**

#### **JE Dunn Construction, Eden Prairie**

JE Dunn Construction of Eden Prairie habitually provides the hospital association with educational and financial support for the association's events and programs. The company is always willing to go the extra mile to help MHA and its members keep costs low and quality high.

*The Minnesota Hospital Association represents Minnesota's hospitals and health systems.*