



Reid Hospital
& Health Care Services
Caring • Healing • Leading

Reid About Value

Commitment to Safety

December 2006

Dear Community Leader:

In this month's newsletter, I am pleased to share with you what Reid Hospital has done, is doing and has made a priority for the future in areas of patient safety. Our commitment to patient safety is yet another way we provide value to the community.

- For many years, all Reid employees have completed annual safety training to ensure not only that they work in a safe environment but also to help them identify safe practices and test required skills.
- Reid has created a culture that emphasizes preventing errors — a “just” culture that holds people accountable to follow prescribed best practices but does not finger point or place blame. This type of environment engages front-line workers’ involvement in evaluating and making changes in work processes to make patient care safer.
- Medication errors are among the most common medical errors, harming at least 1.5 million people every year, according to a report from the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies of Science. The committee that wrote the report recommended a series of actions for health care organizations that Reid has taken seriously
- Reid encourages our patients to be “partners in care.” We help patients understand how to take their medications at home, and we want to know what medications they are currently taking. In that effort, Reid has printed medication cards for patients to carry and update at every visit to the doctor. I have enclosed a copy of the card for your personal use.
- Registered pharmacists check and double check medications and work full-time on the nursing units to guide staff, physicians and patients whenever a medication question arises.
- We are among only 10 percent of hospitals nationwide to have implemented computer software that uses barcode technology at the bedside to assist the caregiver in checking and double-checking each medication administered to a patient. Caregivers are taught to check for five “rights:” Right patient, right medication, right dosage, right time, right route (oral, intravenous, topical).
- Reid has also created a position and hired a full-time clinical director of safety to oversee the important work of keeping patients safe. She works with a long-standing hospital-wide safety committee that examines and tracks all aspects of a safe environment at the hospital.
- Reid’s long-standing investment in information technology allows us to harness the power of computers for safety.
- In addition to the many state and national awards Reid has received for clinical quality, we recently learned that we were one of seven hospitals to receive a national safety award for measures we have in place and for our record of safety.

When a loved one requires hospital care, we want the best for them. But health care is a human endeavor, and humans — caregivers and those in their care — sometimes err. We want you to be assured, however, that Reid has committed resources — financial, staffing and time — to keep our patients as safe as they can be.

As the holiday season approaches, I wish you and your loved ones a safe, blessed season and a healthy new year.

Sincerely,

Barry S. MacDowell
President