



To: Saint Vincent Hospital Employees

From: Charlie Martin, Chairman and CEO Vanguard Health Systems, Kent Wallace, President and CEO, Vanguard Health Systems and Joseph Mullany, President and CEO of New England and Chicago

Date: October 8, 2010

Re: Gallup and 'The Culture of Safety' Introduction

We all know by now that employee engagement and the guest experience are tied together. In every industry from retail stores to hotels to hospitals and health care institutions, fulfilled, engaged staff makes for happy customers. In the Vanguard Health Systems family we have been working hard to measure both and improve both.

But does employee engagement have an impact on patient safety and quality? We believe it does. After all, engaged staff are more likely to speak up freely. Engaged staff are more likely to feel ownership of their workplace and they are more likely to look for opportunities to change their work environment for the better by listening to their team for feedback and information.

The kinds of errors that create the greatest harm to patients in hospitals have one thing in common. In almost every instance, someone on the care team knew that something was not right or even knew that something bad was about to happen. But they either weren't sure or didn't feel their opinion counted. The same thing is true in other industries too. In airline crashes almost without exception, someone in the cockpit knew something was wrong and didn't act or wasn't heard.

Great work environments encourage and empower people to contribute even outside their scope of work. They empower people to ask questions even when it might make them a little uncomfortable. And great companies look at the mistakes that are made in a way that encourages improvement and doesn't create blame.

In the coming weeks, we'll ask you all to begin working with your teams to look at the results of the Gallup survey and begin to chart a course toward making your work team more effective and your work more engaging personally.

During those conversations and meetings we'll ask you to begin looking at improving safety within your work team. Those of you in clinical work teams will immediately recognize the importance of keeping your patients safe. For those of you with jobs outside of direct patient care, it may seem a bit harder to see how you can contribute to patient safety.

But everyone from food service staff to housekeepers, from building maintenance to patient transport from administration to finance and billing can play a role in making our Vanguard hospitals the safest anywhere, after all, safety is a core value.

For the past few months, our clinical care teams led by Dr. Mark Montoney, our chief medical officer and Jana Stonestreet, our chief nursing executive, have worked with HPI to develop simple safety practices that we want each of you to know about and learn to use.

We want to build these new safety practices into your team's discussions about your Gallup employee and physician engagement findings. A safe work environment requires many of the same things that a rewarding work environment does – making sure everyone's opinions are listened to, making sure everyone understands what is expected of them, providing constructive feedback and recognition and measuring progress.

Preventing errors and creating a safe environment is a job we all share, which is why we will be rolling out error prevention training across the entire organization beginning in September. We have identified safety champions and are training them through a "Train the Trainer" method. Once training is completed, these safety champions will then roll out error prevention training through a series of training events in your hospital. Look for more information in the coming weeks about sign-up dates.

Thank you all for helping us in our journey to becoming a high reliable organization where employees choose to work, physicians and nurses choose to practice and patients seek our care.