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ROBIN TOUSEY-AYERS
Chairperson

Commission on Disabilities Meeting Minutes

City Hall 2nd Meeting Room II

March 14, 2016

- Present: Sally Esposito, Kurtis Kearney, Tricia Palluzzi, Matthew Ranelli, and Robin Tousey-Ayers
- Staff: Michelle Duprey and Paula Pernal
- Absent: Jenifer Blemings, Sara Hungerford, Iva Long, Maria Rivera, Lisa Spruill-Stevenson and Jack Tsai
- Guests: Stuart Warner, Assistant General Counsel of Regulatory Risk Services and Dr. Victor Morris, Vice President Physician & Patient of Access Services at Yale New Haven Hospital (“YNHH”)

Meeting called to order at 5:30 p.m.

Guests

Introductions of the Commission members and guests are made. Stuart Warner stated that based upon a prior meeting back at YNHH on July 14th with some of the Commission members, she and Dr. Victor Morris put together a package to address accommodating patient’s various needs. Ms. Warner stated that Dr. Morris will discuss the process from registration up to nursing.

Dr. Victor Morris stated that patients come into YNHH with various medical needs. He stated that YNHH is constantly monitoring “Right Patient to Right Bed at Right Time”. Dr. Morris believes that YNHH has a very good process in place for placing patients in beds because a lot of other hospitals around the country are always calling YNHH and asking for their process. He stated that YNHH is committed to providing barrier free health care for all patients.

Dr. Morris stated that YNHH has a very good interpreter and sign language services 24/7 in multiple modalities, including In-Patient Video Interpreter Equipment “IPoles” for patient rooms, sign language, in-person, clinical workstations, etc. He also mentioned that medical staff at YNHH is constantly being trained on language services. Ms. Warner stated that Mass General Hospital has lead the way in this area and is the model hospital for these services.

Dr. Morris stated that the first contact with the patients at YNHH is the registration process, whether it is inpatient, emergency, outpatient, or transfer. Dr. Morris stated that YNHH receives about 20 transfers per day. All patients that enter YNHH must be registered for safety reasons—to make sure that YNHH has the correct patient with the correct chart. Dr. Morris stated that a staff person from either emergency, outpatient, etc. assess the needs of a patient, such as hearing and visual impairment, wheelchair, scooter, service dog, cane or walker. He stated that Work Stations on Wheels “WOWS” are used by staff to assist them during the registration process. Once these questions are answered and entered into the EPIC system then it populates this information to Bed Planning, Transport and the Nursing Staff. This information is also available throughout the YNHH system no matter where you might be. Dr. Morris stated that YNHH looks at clinical first while reviewing patient’s needs.

Dr. Morris stated the Bed Associated in the Bed Planning Department have access to the information received from registration. Dr. Morris stated that YNHH has 180 rooms that have some ADA features such as ADA compliant bathrooms. This represents 12% of all 1500 available inpatients beds from all YNHH buildings combined. Ms. Warner mentioned that all the rooms in the new Main 6 unit at the St. Raphael Campus are fully ADA compliant to accommodate their surgical bariatric patients. Ms. Warner & Dr. Morris discussed that gas lines and poles are obstacles when renovating rooms/floors and can’t be changed. Ms. Warner stated that as YNHH acquires more outpatient facilities, it is assessing these buildings for ADA compliance. She stated that all of the newer buildings have some ADA features in the bathroom such as turning radius. Dr. Morris mentions the old East Pavilion and the newer remodeled East Pavilion.

Dr. Morris mentioned that information from the registration process is available to Transportation “Ticket to Ride” to better transport patients with special needs. Sally asked about interpreters during transportation. Dr. Morris stated that YNHH tries to plan as much in advance as possible if a patient needs an interpreter during transport or at radiology for instance. Dr. Morris stated that for deaf patients that are having an MRI at YNHH, there is a window where the patient can see out.

The last piece is the Nurse Handoff or “Handoff 30” where the nurse’s receive the patient. Dr. Morris stated that many times the registration information is not up-to-date by the time the patient reaches the nurse. When this occurs, the nurse will update the EPIC system, and sometimes make an assessment that the patient should be moved to a different bed or contact Bed Management for a different floor for the patient.

Dr. Morris discussed that YNHH is working on the Banner for each patient in EPIC. A patient’s needs will be located on the Banner.

Robin mentioned that Acute Rehab was moved to Milford. Kurtis asked Dr. Morris what happens to patients with disabilities. Dr. Morris stated that patients with mobility issues will be transported by ambulance or other means to the St. Raphael campus from the York Street campus.

Tricia mentioned her surprise that YNHH is looking at the entire campus instead of the individual buildings. Dr. Morris stated that certain medical conditions that trump everything and those needs are considered first. He stated that YNHH has taken two rooms and cut them down into one room. Sally asked Dr. Morris if YNHH has any data concerning patient's needs/bed allocation. Dr. Morris stated that YNHH has no data at this time, but will in the future as it begins to track the data.

Kurtis mentioned about an incident as a patient in the emergency room at YNHH. He stated that YNHH has no beds for him & his scooter. After many hours waiting, he left the emergency room. Kurtis stated that YNHH needs to better serve the needs of persons with disabilities.

Robin stated that the Commission is willing to work with YNHH.

Matthew thanked Ms. Warner & Dr. Morris for taking their time to put the package together for the Commission. Matthew asked Dr. Morris if the geriatric patients' program is the driving force in the shift to accommodate patients with special needs. Matthew also asked Dr. Morris and how YNHH determines bed placement of a geriatric patient if all the beds in the geriatric unit are filled. Ms. Warner stated that there are other units that accommodate geriatric beds. Ms. Warner stated the many of the rooms can't be changed due to gas pipes lines running through the rooms. Michelle mentioned that many of rooms could be made more functional by changing the direction of the door by having it open out instead of in.

Robin asked if you could make adjustments to the EPIC program. Dr. Morris stated that some adjustments can be made to the program. Robin asked if there is a position within YNHH that may advise the registration staff on entering data of patients with special needs. Dr. Morris stated that YNHH is educating the registration staff to ensure that the same staff are entering the data in the same way all the time. Interns do not enter data. Dr. Morris stated that communication is key. He informs his doctors to contact the family members and primary care physicians every day. Sally asked about training for the registration staff. Dr. Morris stated that the training for the registration staff is very long and elaborate. He stated that the patient's needs piece has just been added to the training the past last few weeks. Dr. Morris stated that it would be great for one or two of the Commission members meet with a registration staff member. Dr. Morris & Ms. Warner stated that Peggy is the Director of Admitting.

Robin asked about accommodations for family members of patients that have been moved to other facilities for acute care/rehab. Dr. Morris stated that the Care Management team takes this into account when patients are moved.

Matthew stated that there are three (3) follow-up issues:

1. Doors in geriatric units changed
2. Compile list of units with ADA features and full compliance and code into EPIC system
3. Van Parking at St. Raphael at George Street Parking Garage

Minutes

The Commission members reviewed the January Minutes. Robin stated that the January Minutes is missing information in the first paragraph, entitled, "Matthew made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Sally seconded the motion." Sally said that she seconded the motion at the January meeting. Tricia moved to approve the January Minutes and Matthew seconded. The January Minutes were approved as amended.

Chairperson's Report

None.

Department Report

None.

Old Business

Sally discussed the status of the submission of the elevator ordinance to the Board of Alders with the other Commission members. She along with Alder Ernie Santiago and Alder Sal DeCola had met with the City Services Workshop last week. The elevator ordinance was reassigned to two (2) Committees: The Municipal Committee and The Legislation Committee. Sally stated that Alder Sal DeCola will keep her posted as to the status. Sally contacted the State Elevator Inspector's Office, LCI Department and the Building Inspector Department. She stated that the building that kept coming up during her conversations was Bella Vista. Sally also contacted the New Haven Fire Marshal and she is waiting to hear back from that office. Kurtis recommended contacting private elevator companies. Matthew stated that the private elevator companies would not be impartial.

Matthew recommends that LCI should work more closely with the Commission on this matter. He stated that the Commission could inform the Board of Alders that the Building department does not track calls concerning broken elevators. Matthew stated that the Commission should inform the Board of Alders that there is no centralized record(s) in the City of buildings with elevators.

New Business

Robin reminded the Commission members of the email concerning the app for Transportation for people with disabilities.

Other Business

None.

Public Comment/Announcements

Sally stated that she and Tricia were invited to be on the New Haven Board of Education Parent Advisory Council.

Next meeting shall take place on April 11, 2016.

Tricia made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Matthew seconded the motion.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was approved unanimously at 7:08 p.m.