Building on Community Support,
Looking to the Future
Our 2009 Annual Report
A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

The Pulse of Our Community

2009 Annual Report to the Community

In the calendar year of 2010, Mt. Graham Regional Medical Center is striving to make “service” our top priority. At times it appears that “service” is hard to define, but when you look at Disney, Southwest Airlines and Starbucks, for example, we Americans know good service when we see it. For us in the hospital business, it is difficult to compete with things like theme parks, travel and coffee; yet, we can learn from these service industry leaders and apply similar methods to the provision of exceptional healthcare service.

Another reason for focusing on service has to do with the younger population entering the workforce. This younger group comes armed to the teeth with impressive technical skills. Let’s face it: most of them can run circles around us on a computer. On the downside of these technical skills is the trade-off of having underdeveloped people skills. Today, we have one-twentieth the human interactions that we had back in 1988 (John R. DiJulius, III, What's The Secret: To Providing a World-Class Customer Experience). Because of this “deficit” it falls upon the employers, like our hospital, to help these younger people improve their people skills and increase their service aptitude. Companies like Disney and Southwest Airlines understand this fact and provide to their workforce training in customer service skills.

Some of the objectives of a rededicated focus on service are: higher patient satisfaction; higher patient retention; increased cash flow; lower employee turnover; reduced risk and less vulnerability to the fluctuations in the economy and third-party conditions.

We hope that you and your family will not need hospital services in 2010. However, if you do need to visit the hospital, please know that all of us at MGRMC are diligently at work to provide you with exceptional customer service.

Yours in good health,

Patrick Peters, CEO

8th Annual MGRMC Foundation Golf Tournament Tees Off on April 10

The 8th Annual MGRMC Foundation Charity Golf Tournament will be held at the Mt. Graham Golf Course on April 10. This year’s tournament will have one shotgun start beginning at 9:00 a.m., with registration beginning at 8:00 a.m. The entry fee for each player is $50, and the tournament will be limited to 36 teams so sign up now. Hole sponsorships are available as well as the sponsorship for the putting contest. All proceeds will be used to purchase cancer screening equipment for Mt. Graham Regional Medical Center.

To participate in the tournament or to get more information regarding sponsorships or donations to the MGRMC Foundation, please contact Tammie Holloway at 928-348-4293.
Mt. Graham Regional Medical Center Employees

Step Up for Food Drive Competition

Mt. Graham Regional Medical Center employees took time during the month of October 2009 to help gather more than 7,200 food items that were then donated to local food banks. The food drive, which was organized as a competitive event between departments, was so successful that it is scheduled to become an annual event.

MGRMC recognized the week of October 12–16 as its own “Homecoming 2009.” The football-themed celebration was mainly an employee recognition event meant to boost morale and strengthen unity among staff. During the week, employees were treated to a free BBQ and ice cream social and took part in different competitions. One of the contests held during the week was a food drive competition that placed every employee into one of three teams. Each team was assigned a different food bank and the winning team would have the pleasure of throwing whipped cream “pies” at the losing teams’ captains.

A Winning Attitude

The event brought out more of a competitive spirit in the MGRMC staff than organizers had thought possible. Previous food drives held at the hospital without the competitive component had yielded food items numbered in the hundreds. The incredible amounts of food that started to come in as the competition progressed were astounding.

The three food banks represented were: Our Neighbor’s Pantry, SEACAP and Mt. Graham Safe House. The winning team, which raised food for Our Neighbor’s Pantry, collected more than 3,100 food items. All three organizations expressed gratitude for the contributions, stating that the need for contributions is extremely high with the continued economic uncertainty our valley is facing.

For more information on cardiology services provided at MGRMC, please call 928-348-3770.
Throughout 2009, Mt. Graham Regional Medical Center focused on two important goals vital to the success and growth of the hospital. Those goals were Revenue Growth and Quality Customer Service. With both of these goals, there were benchmarks established on how to measure success.

With regard to the goal of Revenue Growth, Administration was shouldered with the task of rebounding from a disappointing 2008. Several economic factors helped to shape the hospital’s performance during that year, which ended with a small loss on the financial bottom line. While MGRMC was certainly not alone in its economic situation during 2008, Administration determined that we could not have a repeat of that performance during 2009. A goal was set to review and improve all of the processes that affect the hospital’s financial status and to end the fiscal year of 2009 with a 2 percent positive margin or better.

The hard work and dedication of the entire hospital staff provided substantial dividends. The goal of a positive 2 percent margin was not only exceeded in 2009, it was more than tripled. MGRMC was able to show a greater than 7 percent margin in 2009 from our operational income alone. That margin was even greater when it factored in the income generated from investments that rebounded from their dismal showing in 2008. One of the truly amazing aspects of this turnaround is that MGRMC was able to see such success in its cost-cutting measures without incurring any layoffs. The surplus generated for the hospital from this outstanding effort on the part of all employees led to substantial funds being put aside for future growth at MGRMC.

More Than Money

As to the goal of improving customer service, measuring results is not always as easy as looking to a bottom line. Measuring someone’s experience at our hospital can be an elusive goal. However, Administration knew they had to make that effort. Professional Research Consultants (PRC), a company that specializes in surveying and tracking patients’ perceptions and feelings about their hospital experiences, was brought in to survey our hospital’s patients following their stay at MGRMC. Their initial findings contained both good news as well as the news that we could do better.

While providing the hospital with many points of feedback, PRC provides two questions that MGRMC can focus on regarding a patient’s overall experience at our hospital. The first is: How would you rate your overall experience at MGRMC? This question provides hospital staff with a snapshot of how a patient feels regarding his or her experience at MGRMC. The second question is: How likely are you to recommend MGRMC to a friend or family member? This question measures our patients’ overall loyalty to the hospital beyond just this one visit. Our initial findings with PRC were that MGRMC rated average in comparison with other Arizona hospitals. While that is a positive thing to know, it fell short of our goal of being a hospital that is viewed as better than average by its patient base.

So, with these findings, Administration set the goal of having 65 percent of our patients rate their experience at MGRMC with a 9 or a 10 on a scale of 1 to 10. They further set a goal of 64 percent of our patients saying they would definitely recommend MGRMC to their family and friends. Again this would be determined by patients answering this question positively.
In 2010, the focus of MGRMC will not change. We will continue to work for strong Revenue Growth. By setting and achieving revenue goals, MGRMC will be able to continue expanding its service lines and providing the best in quality medical care to the Gila Valley. By setting and achieving goals with regards to Quality Customer Service, patients will recognize that we at MGRMC strive to provide that quality care because we value each and every person who comes through our doors.

So far, 2009 has been a financially strong year for MGRMC. The changes made to eliminate costs have remained in place while improvements have been made to bring in revenue. The management team at MGRMC continues its commitment to provide the best patient care possible to the residents of the Gila Valley. They are equally committed to providing a financially sound hospital organization that will be prepared to meet the healthcare needs of our community in the years to come.

Looking Ahead

In 2009, we began to see our customer service scores on these surveys rise as staff made great efforts to improve communication to our patients, being respectful regarding noise levels within our hospital and taking time to convey a positive attitude to our patients and visitors at every point of contact. We are happy to report that both goals set for 2009 were achieved.

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Dr. Rheinfelder Completes Successful Term As Chief of Staff, Dr. Damron Assumes Chief of Staff Position in 2010

Dr. Shirley Rheinfelder successfully completed her term as Mt. Graham Regional Medical Center’s Chief of Staff at the end of 2009. She had functioned in that role since January 2008, after having previously served as Vice Chief of Staff from 2006 through 2007. The hospital is extremely grateful for the service Dr. Rheinfelder provided. Her efforts have greatly benefited the care that our patients receive.

Dr. Clinton Damron began his tenure as Chief of Staff in January of this year. Dr. Damron has been serving as Vice Chief Staff since January 2008. Dr. Linda Miller has accepted the position of Vice Chief of Staff and began serving in that role in January of this year. Traditionally, the Vice Chief of Staff assumes the role of Chief of Staff after a two-year term in office.

Ratje Resigns From Operating Board After Nine Years of Service

John Ratje, an MGRMC board member and former Chairman of the Operating Board, resigned his seat in 2009.

Ratje joined the hospital’s operating board in 2000 and was asked to serve as the Chairman of that body from 2002 to 2006. As a strong advocate for the hospital, he was always working to improve what the hospital provided to the community of the Gila Valley.

Following his two terms in office as Chairman of the Operating Board, he continued his service by retaining his board seat and taking an active role in several sub-committees. MGRMC is grateful to John Ratje for his service and wishes him the best in his future endeavors.

MGRMC Physicians on Staff

- Trent Batty, MD (Family Practice)
- Jeffrey Beeley, MD (Emergency)
- Rex D. Bryce, MD (Orthopedics)
- Bart J. Carter, MD (Gen Surgery)
- Drew Christensen, MD (Family Practice)
- Clinton D. Damron, DO (Family Practice)
- Julene Gentry, MD (Hospital-Based Internal Medicine)
- Gail Guerrero, MD (Family Practice)
- Claytan Hargis, DO (Emergency)
- Douglas “Rex” Harrison, MD (OB/GYN)
- Susan J. Jones, MD (Family Practice)
- Brian J. Karchner, MD (Family Practice)
- Shawn Lee, MD (Hospital-Based Internal Medicine)
- Paul Lenzo, MD (Emergency)
- Paul B. McMaster, DPM (Podiatry)
- Linda Miller, DO (Emergency)
- Brad N. Montierth, MD (Family Practice)
- Alkeshkumar Patel, MD (Internal Medicine)
- Shirley C. Rheinfelder, MD (Family Practice)
- Catherine H. Romero, MD (Family Practice)
- Matthew Sampson, MD (Family Practice)
- Lynn E. Smith, MD (Family Practice)
- Justice Tran, MD (OB/GYN)
- Joel G. Wright, MD (Family Practice)

District Board

- Bart J. Carter, MD–President
- Matt Clifford–Member
- Tom Johnson–Member
- Susan J. Jones, MD–Member
- Cecil Evans, CRNA–Member

Operating Board

- Jean Reynolds–Chairperson
- Bruce Stanfield–Vice Chair
- Caro Gaethje–Secretary/Treasurer
- Clinton Damron, DO–Chief of Staff
- Linda Miller, DO–Vice Chief of Staff
- Cindy Bryce–Member
- Steve Goodman–Member
- John Martin–Member
- Bill Mulleneaux–Member
- Janet Oesterling–Member

Administration

- Patrick J. Peters–President/Chief Executive Officer
- Roland Knox–Vice President/Chief Operating Officer
- D. Keith Bryce–Vice President/Chief Financial Officer
- Lori Burress–Vice President/Chief Nursing Officer
- Wick Lewis–Director of Human Resources
Breathe in, breathe out. Pulmonary function conditions such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) make this simple act more difficult than it sounds. For those with decreased lung function, Mt. Graham Regional Medical Center offers pulmonary function tests to evaluate a patient’s lung capability.

Who Needs the Test?

A pulmonary function test is useful for diagnosing a number of conditions related to loss of lung function. These conditions include COPD, which actually comprises a number of diseases such as asthma, emphysema, chronic bronchitis and cystic fibrosis. This test can also determine a patient’s lung capacity.

“A pulmonary function test helps to measure how severe the disease process is,” says Cleve Claridge, Director of Cardiopulmonary Services at MGRMC. “Because a patient’s lung function can also be evaluated, we are able to help patients determine how much exercise their heart and lungs can handle.”

How It Works

A pulmonary function test also is known as a spirometry test, which is named for the mouthpiece-like device (a spirometer) used to perform the test. A patient first will have nose clips attached to his or her nose, and will breathe into a spirometer. The spirometer then measures the amount and rate of air that is breathed in and out.

“The test allows our technologists to measure airflow, which helps to determine what pulmonary disease, if any, a person has,” says Claridge. “When the lungs have too much air, this means the patient could have emphysema or chronic bronchitis. Too little air could indicate fibrosis of the lungs.”

Here for You

Losing lung function is a scary prospect for those who have difficulty breathing. That’s why MGRMC technicians work to make the testing process as easy as possible.

“When any pulmonary function test is scheduled, the patient is given an overview of what the test entails so they can be more comfortable in knowing what he or she needs to do,” says Claridge. “The testing is truly done at a patient’s pace.”

Once the results from a patient’s test have been read, the patient and physician can work to determine what kind of pulmonary care, if any, is needed.

“We try to ensure the patient’s comfort and safety throughout the entire testing procedure,” says Claridge. “The test can serve as the first step to breathing more easily.”

Can’t Catch Your Breath?

Many people may initially pass off their lung disease as a cold or part of another infection. However, if you experience the following symptoms, it may be time to contact Mt. Graham Regional Medical Center’s Cardiopulmonary Services.

• a cough that does not go away
• difficulty breathing when exercising
• gasping for air
• pain when breathing
• persistent difficulty breathing
• shortness of breath

For more information about Cardiopulmonary Services offered at MGRMC, call 928-348-4225.
Thank You, Gila Valley,

For Recognizing MGRMC as the #1 General Services Hospital for Customer Satisfaction in Southern Arizona!


We are committed to providing even better Customer Service in 2010.

What Can MGRMC Do For You?