

The Memorial Hospital of Salem County: Planning for the Future

2014 has been a challenging year for hospitals across the U.S. Changes in the reimbursement environment, new requirements of the Affordable Care Act, and the continued shift in care delivery from an inpatient focus to an outpatient model have placed new and permanent influences on how hospitals operate.

For The Memorial Hospital of Salem County, those challenges have been compounded by recent legislative activity in Trenton, resulting in confusion about our local hospital and concerns about our future.

So I was pleased to share an annual overview of our operations and accomplishments during a public meeting we held earlier this week. I appreciate the opportunity to share some of that information with readers of *South Jersey Times*.

A Trusted Healthcare Resource

For most people, hospitals are places to visit only on rare occasion when a loved one is ill or injured. But when you need us – any time of the day or night – the dedicated nurses, physicians and support teams of The Memorial Hospital of Salem County are ready to care for you and your family. With a medical staff of 200 physicians representing 40 medical specialties, we're here to serve the community 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Last year, our Emergency Room team attended to more than 20,000 visitors in our ER, our surgeons performed almost 4,400 surgeries, our inpatient clinical teams cared for more than 3,700 admissions, and our outpatient departments provided an astounding 45,000 patient visits. Again, day or night, sun or snow, we are here for you.

An Economic Generator

With more than 500 employees serving in well-paying jobs, the Memorial Hospital of Salem County is among the top five employers in Salem County. Our hospital pumped approximately \$26 million in payroll into the local community last year – dollars that our employees reinvested in local homes and spent in local businesses. The hospital also generated more than \$1.6 million in local tax revenues that help support local schools and services.

In 2013, we completed a \$3 million expansion and upgrade of our Imaging Department, which now offers MRI, PET, CT Scans, Digital Mammography, Ultrasound and X-ray. We also recently completed a \$1 million project in our Sterile Processing Department and made routine capital investments throughout the hospital.

But perhaps of greatest consequence, The Memorial Hospital of Salem County provided approximately \$10.1 million in charity care last year – medical treatment to patients who were unable to pay for medically necessary emergency care.

In short, the Memorial Hospital of Salem County produced a direct economic impact of nearly \$40 million in 2013.

A Commitment to Excellence

By consistently investing in the hospital and improving our performance year after year, the Memorial Hospital of Salem County has received numerous state and industry accolades:

- Designation as a Primary Stroke Center by the NJ Department of Health and Senior Services;
- “Gold Seal” approval by The Joint Commission, the leading hospital accrediting organization in the U.S.;
- Designation as a NICHE hospital by the New York College of Nursing – Nurses Improving Care for Health System Elders;
- Accreditation by the Intersocietal Commission for the Accreditation of Echocardiography Laboratories;
- Accreditation of our Mammography and MRI service by the American College of Radiology.

We are also designated an Acute Inpatient Dialysis service provider by the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services, and we are a proud member of the Thomas Jefferson Neuroscience Network.

Planning for the Future

As I mentioned above, I’ve had the opportunity to share this information about our community benefit and accomplishments with many audiences in recent weeks. At the end of most of those meetings, I am consistently asked one question.

Is the hospital closing?

In case our track record, investment history and strategic planning leave any doubt, the answer is simple: No. There are no plans to close the hospital. Our board and management team are fully engaged in strategies to support our long-term success. We’re investing in our future, recruiting new physicians, and positioning the hospital to continue to meet the needs of the community into the future.

If you have any doubts or concerns, we invite you to contact us. Come for a tour. Have lunch in our cafeteria. Most importantly, please continue to rely on us for your healthcare needs.

We are honored to care for you and your family, and look forward to serving the community for many years to come.

Sincerely,

Ryan Jensen
Chief Executive Officer