



CRMC Focus on Strengthening Healthcare for Our Community

According to Brian Mitteer, CRMC President/CEO, 2009 was another successful year for Cortland Regional Medical Center. It was a year that saw CRMC initiate many advancements in patient care, accelerate performance improvement efforts, and continue its role as a healthcare leader in the community.

The year saw the introduction of innovative new equipment, technology, and programs to assist in diagnosis and treatment, and the promotion of patient safety. Examples included:

- Imaging Services added 4D ultrasound to improve detail and clarity of diagnostic imaging studies. Digital mammography was also added to the Outpatient Service Center. This technology provides optimal breast imaging and comfort, while using a lower x-ray dosage.
- Rehabilitation Services began the use of new “driving simulator” software that provides patients undergoing therapy with a realistic on-road experience as they prepare to return home. Rehab also introduced a new community mobility program.
- Emergency Services worked to improve efficiency and increase patient satisfaction. By implemented a new “physician first” program, patient waiting times to see a physician were dramatically decreased and helped contribute to higher satisfaction scores.
- Pharmacy began using a new automated medication dispensing system to enhance patient safety.
- Maternity Services introduced a new fetal monitoring system that offers doctors and nurses additional information on mother and fetus more quickly, allowing them to detail care more precisely and efficiently.
- Nursing Services launched a nurse residency program designed to give new nurses a solid foundation and support system as they transition from student to independent staff nurse.

Physician recruitment was a key strategic area for 2009 as CRMC leadership worked to ensure that the residents of Cortland County have local access to high caliber specialty physicians. This past year, four new physicians joined *Regional Medical Practice*, which is an affiliate of Cortland Regional Medical Center. Orthopedic surgeons Drs. Ronald DeThomas, Bruce Greene, and James Lawsing, as well as obstetrician/gynecologist Dr. David Mayo, were all welcomed into the Cortland medical community.

Patient confidence in Cortland Regional doctors, nurses, and other professionals manifested itself with an increase in service volume. The community continued to choose many CRMC outpatient services for its care during the past year. Those services registering increases over 2008 include: rehabilitation visits (21%), respiratory tests (17%), emergency room visits (6%), home health care

visits (5%), laboratory tests (4%), and prompt care visits (3%).

CRMC also received recognition from the Joint Commission, the nation's predominant standards setting and accrediting body in healthcare. An extensive survey was conducted to evaluate the organization's level of performance in key functional areas, such as patient and medication safety, infection control, and provision of patient care. The medical center received the JC *Gold Seal of Approval* and a three-year accreditation for efforts to promote high quality care.

CRMC has ambitious plans for 2010. One priority will be the continued pursuit of its physician recruitment plan to attract specialty physicians to the community, with particular emphasis on cardiology, anesthesia, orthopedics, and primary care.

A second major emphasis for the year will be finalizing architectural plans and securing the necessary financing for construction of a new \$25 million addition to house surgical and obstetric services. Third, completion of a facility master plan, and fourth, continue to add the necessary technology and programs to further improve patient care.

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