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TRANSFORMATION TO EXCELLENCE - MERCY HEALTH SYSTEM CASE

*Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award
MHS - 2007 Award Recipient*

Vision:

Quality - Excellence in Patient Care

- Demonstrate excellence in patient care using best practice benchmarks to ensure continuous improvement
- Promote a culture of patient safety
- Foster an effective Corporate Compliance program
- Provide information systems and technology to support excellence in health care

Service – Exceptional Patient and Customer Satisfaction

- Provide exceptional patient service through measured customer satisfaction
- Continually improve integrated programs and services based on patient need
- Provide educational programs and health initiatives to improve community health
- Improve community good with special concern for those most in need

Partnering – Best Place to Work

- Cultivate high partner satisfaction by being a best place to work
- Recruit and retain board-certified physicians and other qualified partners
- Promote a safe and healthy work environment
- Foster a learning organization

Cost – Long-Term Financial Success

- Continue growth initiatives and integration strategies
- Emphasize cost containment through efficient operations
- Enhance access to capital
- Achieve long-term financial success

Mission:

The mission of Mercy Health System is to provide exceptional health care services resulting in healing in the broadest sense.

Values:

Patients come first
Strive for excellence

Treat each other like family
Healing in the broadest sense

Profile:

Founded in 1895, Mercy Health System is a not-for-profit, vertically integrated multispecialty health system that serves more than 1,000,000 people each year through its 64 facilities in 24 southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois communities. Mercy operates three hospitals and multiple clinics, specialty centers of excellence and community outreach centers; MercyCare Insurance Company (insurance products); Mercy Assisted Care (post-acute, home care and retail services); and Mercy Harvard Hospital. Mercy employs over 3,800 employee partners and 285 W2 employed physician partners.

Web site: www.MercyHealthSystem.org

Revenue: \$833 million

Workforce: 3,800+ employees; 285 employed physicians

Location: Janesville, Wisconsin (corporate office); 64 total locations, including three hospitals, throughout southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois

Application highlights:

- **Mercy actively supports and strengthens its key communities** by collaborating with community agencies, volunteering on community-based boards and organizations, and delivering a wide range of integrated services to those without ready access to them. Mercy listens to and learns from constituents and partners in government, schools, community organizations, churches, and industry, as well as individuals, to extend its reach and connect resources and people through service. As a result of these efforts, Mercy has developed innovative services to the community including a homeless shelter, a health care center for the uninsured and underinsured, a hospice day program, an aquatic center, a Lifeline personal response system for seniors, Meals on Wheels, and patient transportation services and over 38,000 **community health screenings**, classes and wellness events annually. Through these programs, Mercy staff and volun-

teer partners demonstrate the expansive reach of the Servant Leadership Philosophy and a commitment to the mission of healing in the broadest sense.

- Since 1989, Mercy has grown from a stand-alone community hospital with no employed physicians and no ambulatory care centers to an extensive network of primary care physicians and preventive health and wellness education programs. Mercy's gross revenues have steadily climbed from \$33 million in 1989 to **\$833 million in fiscal year 2007**. Total patient visits have increased tenfold and employee/partners have grown over 700 percent over the last 19 years.
- The **vertical integration of services** enables Mercy to provide a continuum of care with interaction and oversight by physicians and other clinical professionals to provide a consistent quality of care and to build lasting relationships with patients and their families. These integrated services provide a wide range of customer needs within the same system.
- Mercy has created a progressive, service-oriented and sustainable organization by fostering its Culture of Excellence, which is supported by the Four Pillars of Excellence: Quality (excellence in patient care), Service (exceptional patient and customer service), Partnering (best place to work) and Cost (long-term financial success). Through the **Culture of Excellence**, Mercy communicates a common understanding of its mission, values and goals, and it promotes the continuing education of partners and physicians in order to sustain an innovative and service-oriented culture.
- Mercy has identified national benchmarks for the diverse customers and patients served by its integrated health care delivery system four core service areas. Over the past five years, Mercy has implemented **performance improvement initiatives resulting in increased patient and customer satisfaction** in all four core service areas. Results for inpatient satisfaction have demonstrated consistent improvement, and in 2007 attained the 81st percentile ranking with Press Ganey while the Emergency Department satisfaction improved from the 63rd to the 84th percentile ranking. Outpatient physician clinic satisfaction has

been in the top quartile of the American Group Management Association (AMGA) for the last three years, reaching the 81st percentile in 2007.

- The Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award criteria propelled Mercy to new heights as an organization. The criteria led to process refinement and a new level of synergy throughout the System. In 2004, Mercy received the Governor's Forward Award of Excellence, the highest honor bestowed by the Wisconsin Forward Award, for excellence in performance management practices and achievements. This award is Wisconsin's version of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award.
- Multiple **health care outcome indicators for hospital-based care** show favorable trends and best practice performance. The overall risk adjusted mortality rate attained Care Science's best practice during the past two years placing it among the **top 15% of hospitals in the nation**. Mercy focuses quality improvement efforts on CMS priorities and is at or above the 90th percentile for 5 out of 6 AMI process measures; 5 out of 7 pneumonia process measures; and is above the 90th percentile for all CHF process measures. Mercy has improved surgical wound infection rates for Hip surgery to NNIS best practice benchmarks and is in the top 10% of Wisconsin's Check Point benchmark for surgical time out verification. MercyCare Insurance Company enrollees benefit from asthma case management and diabetes management, as well as a childhood immunization project that has been recognized by the National Committee for Quality Assurance as a best practice.
- Investing in information technology to support our patient safety and quality initiatives is vital. Mercy's **electronic medical record** is shared across the continuum of care through a network that spans all Mercy locations. This provides current medical information for patients and helps reduce medical errors and duplication of efforts.
- **Medication safety is an ongoing priority**. Mercy continually implements proven medication safety practices including the use of automated medication management systems. Technology

allows for 24-hour-a-day, 7-day-a-week pharmacist review of medication orders prior to administration at all of our hospital locations.

- The Picture Archiving Communication System, or PACS, makes radiological images available online for easy accessibility throughout the System. This allows radiologists immediate access to the images, **which speeds diagnosis and treatment time.**
- Mercy uses the **Plan, Do, Check, Act Model and Failure Modes and Effects Analysis** as the bases for performance improvement. Mercy demonstrates many best practice outcomes in patient focused care. The Patient Safety and Error Reduction Team, Quality Review Committee, Core Measures Team, Benchmarking Committee and Quality Council all contribute to **organizational excellence in patient care** and the alignment of quality improvements with System-wide objectives. Examples of recent patient focused care innovations include instituting a 30-minute service commitment in all urgent/immediate care clinics and a mail order pharmacy services.
- A philosophy and culture of service is supported by Mercy's **Customer Relationship Management Program.** Mercy builds relationships to meet and exceed patient expectations by enabling each staff member, called a "partner," to be a customer service specialist responsible for developing patient relationships, creating strong personal bonds with patients/customers. As customer service specialists, partners use the Service Recovery Program to "take the L.E.A.D" (Listen, Empathize, Acknowledge, Apologize, Action, Direct, and Document) to turn negative experiences into positive ones and resolve complaints effectively and promptly.
- Relationships with staff partners are built on a **family-oriented culture** of support, respect, and learning in alignment with the Four Pillars. This relationship includes programs specifically designed to enable partners to manage their work-life balance (such as concierge services, flex time, sharing of leave time, and the Work-to-Retire Program), develop personally and professionally through education and training and Personal Development Plans. Numerous communication methods enable effective job

performance by integrating the individuals with the entire organization, sharing best practices, and providing the information necessary for their positions, thereby engaging each individual to contribute to his or her maximum potential.

- Mercy was ranked **number one in the nation on AARP's Top Employers for Workers Over Age 50** list in 2006 and number two in 2007. In addition, Mercy was the only organization to receive AARP's Bernard Nash Award in the Flexible Work Options category for its innovative age-neutral policies. Mercy was also been honored with other workplace awards including **Working Mother magazine's best employers**, the Wellness Council of America Gold Award, 100 Best Adoption-Friendly Workplaces Award, and the Innovative Program Award from Employee Services Management Association.
- Mercy's leaders use a **Servant Leadership Philosophy** enabling them to become facilitators and enablers to those who provide, enhance, and support the services to patients and other stakeholders. This philosophy is taught to leaders at the leadership development academy and is reinforced by a structure of committees and teams that take interdisciplinary responsibility for areas of the operation.
- Mercy's Physician Partnership Model creates relationships with physicians using productionbased compensation formulas that accomplish integration of care while allowing the physicians to emulate private practice, thus fostering innovation and organizational agility. This model provides physicians with an environment similar to a private practice but with access to tools and systems available through the medical system environment. The partnership with physicians is integrated throughout the organization and System goals are deployed to Mercy's **285 W2 employed physician partners** through the Physician Incentive Program, motivating them to reach personal and organizational objectives. Mercy uses additional tools for providing input from medical staff members who are not employed partners, such as medical staff committees and roundtables.
- Mercy's **Leadership Excellence Model** represents a commit-

ment to continuous improvement and cascades strategic directions and accountability in alignment with its Four Pillars through its dashboard system, action planning process, leadership report cards, and individual partner performance appraisals and development plans.

- Mercy's growth has resulted in financial strength, earning it an **"A2" rating** from Moody's Investors Service, which was upgraded from "stable" to "positive" in 2007. Mercy's operating margin has been consistent with Moody's Best Practice of three to five percent for hospitals and health systems.