



May 13th 2020 | Weekly CNO Rounding Report

Guest Speakers -

James Reedy CNO St. Charles Redmond Oregon

Bonnie Fryzlewicz CNO Seattle Children’s Hospital

We find ourselves in May laboring forward as pandemic response transforms to surge planning now stacked with asynchronous restarts of care centers and a myriad of logistical challenges and a decimated rev-cycle topped with rumors of layoffs. It feels like this may never resolve... It will, but the reality is it will probably take much longer than we hope. To position for the long-haul, it’s essential to address the “us” factor: Our own resilience and ability to stay focused and effective.

Shifting Focus While Staying Solvent

Fiscal Responsibility

Healthcare organizations don’t have “deep pockets” and what (may be missed) in the public is that you must stay solvent to provide care. **James Reedy** shares with us the challenge of staying simultaneously focused on patients and outcomes while working to remain financially stable. “As leaders, we have a duty to our patients and our people but also a duty to our organizations to be financially sustainable. So, when the pandemic hit, not only did elective and emergent surgeries both plummet, but we invested significant resources in expanding their surge capacity. We went from ~350-bed capacity to ~1,000 including equipment. At the same time we’ve been doing a lot to conserve PPE and so far have been able to keep all of our people whole.”

Adapting to Change

Per **Bonnie Fyzlewicz**, they (Seattle Childrens) have two EOCs running - one for COVID. They did have one of the first US COVID-positive patients - a teenager in February at an Urgent Care tested positive. They've had nine hospitalized pediatric COVID patients and they have tested 2,700 with a 1.2% positive rate. They are blessed by tight collaboration with UW so they were able to ramp up testing early. They've been testing all of their pre-op patients and have had one or two completely asymptomatic pediatric patients come back positive.

Response Framework

Bonnie also shared their Response Framework for varying regional outbreak situations and the response level that goes with each status. “We're currently at response level 3 and hoping to move to 2 soon but likely to go back and forth between the levels.” As a children's hospital, they are allowing a single caregiver with the patients at a time and only 2 designated caregivers but no other visitors. This has been hard on their long-term resident patients so with things opening up they have been able to allow 2 caregivers for these resident patients but the caregivers must essentially shelter in place.

Before COVID they had approx 300 remote workers per day and now they're at around 3000 and they've learned a lot about remote work and who is necessary to be on site. Their leadership teams have been asked to have only one person on site per unit per day to decrease the footprint in the buildings and conserve PPE.

Pete Peterson, Newport Hospital in NE Washington added that they re-opened a 54-bed long term care unit preparing for the surge and not only did they not get a surge but they actually sent 5 of their nurses to New York City to help there. After their 2 weeks in quarantine upon return, there will be a big debrief and counseling session which will help everyone process

Rumors of Layoffs?

**Transitional
Uncertainty**

James Reedy acknowledged that on social media there are plenty of rumors of layoffs and cut hours but so far he doesn't know of any facilities that have had to do that. “There's still a big impact on morale from (rumors) hanging over our heads. They (St. Charles Redmond) have been avoiding hires and using part-time or travelers to avoid additional positions with benefits.”

Bonnie Fyzlewicz reports that Seattle Children's experienced extended OR closures due to air quality struggles in May - July of 2019 and November - February of this year so they were already experiencing the financial impact of that before all of this started. “We have a stellar team working on all the challenges. We have very low inpatient volumes - and we had to close our ambulatory center in Bellevue. However the OR closures actually has helped a little bit because they had a backlog of non-elective procedures.” Bonnie also relates they've seen reports that most children's hospitals are losing over a million dollars each day and that seems accurate for Seattle as well. Additionally they are advocating for funding from FEMA and CARES. Despite the challenges, they have been able thus far to keep their staff whole.

Transparency

Seattle Children’) have expanded their communications and outreach - near-daily bulletins and a weekly forum with the CEO. **Per Bonnie Fyzlewicz** “He has been very clear that they are doing everything they can to avoid furloughs and lay-offs - end-of-year incentives will not occur, exempt staff have been asked to voluntarily reduce hours, and hiring has been severely curtailed.” They anticipate increasing internal mobility to move staff to address needs and have canceled over ninety travelers already as well.

A Uniquely Difficult Situation

Unforeseen Constraints

Bonnie Fyzlewicz adds that as a very space-constrained organization, they have a team assigned to determine how to maintain social distancing when people come back to work - they have many teams working in cubicle pods and they have very small meeting rooms. And a team working on a long term plan for remote workers - there are opportunities to potentially have two employees alternate use of a single workspace and to cancel some leases on some office space for administrative and non-clinical staff. To magnify the challenge, as a lean organization, Childrens’, like virtually all modern healthcare centers, do not carry large amounts of supplies and have had to make adjustments to that. Easier said than done when as a recipient downstream, you do not have control of upstream suppliers who are also embroiled in their own systemic challenges and constraints.

Positioning for the Long Haul

Emphasis on Self-care

There is a summary acknowledgment among NWONL Leaders that the situation and tertiary issues will continue to arise and likely not subside for quite some time. Virtually unanimously they are positioning for 2020 to be a “very long year”. Distill that into: Be prepared for a long haul. Which brings us to resilience. To stay effective we must be able to stay in the game and stay healthy. It’s of no value to our organizations, teams, communities and families is we martyr ourselves. We are needed as leaders for an epic trek, not a mad-dash.

Cindi, NWONL Executive Director and practicing ARNP is keenly following the health implications of this prolonged stress on leaders and is in a unique position to observe leadership from across the region. She is concerned about the follow through of leaders to add themselves to the equation of care. “As its already hard enough to get people (staff and teams) to use available resources, we must set an example and we need to take care of our selves as well.”

Check NWONL’s homepage for what’s happening: [Updates and Events](#).

Peer Support

Leaders, rightly so, are asking openly for ideas and advice from peers: **James Reedy** states “Our people have been experiencing an adrenaline surge, bracing for an impact that so far hasn't come, along with disrupted routines and home life.” This is largely a shared sentiment echoed by many members. Hence sharing what’s working and what’s not is vital to helping all our regional leaders advance.

Academic and Practice Partnership

Looking forward, **Cindi Warburton** asks what is the outlook for current nursing students with the hiring reductions? She laments “Its not an easy decision to make, both in how much and when to bring students back into their organizations. These decisions vary widely based on organizational constraints, logistical and fiscal.” Additionally per Cindi “From my interviews with leaders and academic institutions (nursing school Deans), many students are returning to clinical placements. Things may be getting back to normal over the next six months and allowing more hiring.”

Washington and Oregon State

WSHA and OCN are continuing to hold centric webinars on related topics. They are a recommended resource. Other major news is the myriad of Governors proclamations dropping almost daily in an attempt to manage a rolling, prioritized restart of commerce and public engagement.

Find Additional Resources here for Covid-19 at [NWONL Leader Resources](#)

New NWONL Resources

NWONL message boards are open!

Jump in and add to the discussion, there are currently 2 Topics open.

[Academic Practice Partnerships](#)

[Surge Plans and Nurse Staffing](#)