



## A note from Dr. Susan Ehrlich, CEO

### Our Unsung Heroes in Lab and Pathology

During the week of July 22<sup>nd</sup>, The Joint Commission arrived on site for our biannual laboratory survey. The laboratory and pathology have the “privilege” of being on an every other year cycle for survey, while the rest of the hospital is on an every three year cycle. (a heads up: our overall hospital survey is coming sometime around June, 2020!) This year, of course, the pressure of preparation coincided with the pressure of preparing for Epic go-live. Fortunately, TJC arrived just in the nick of time, before go-live.

You might think that during such a challenging time, the survey would have been challenging as well. That may have been true, but the laboratory and pathology teams made it look effortless. With two surveyors here for a total of four days, there was a lot of pressure on and scrutiny of this team. We leaders had the opportunity to check in with the surveyors every afternoon as well as at the end of the survey, and the team appeared calm, cool and extraordinarily prepared. The surveyors were escorted by our Quality and Regulatory team, whose expert stewardship deserves a special shout-out.

In the end, the TJC surveyors came up with ten findings out of a possible 1,305 standards against which they survey, or less than one percent of the standards. Not only that, the findings are measured on a scale of low to high, and limited to widespread impact. None of the findings were in the high or widespread categories. This is really unusual for a laboratory survey, where the surveyors are notoriously focused on lots of small details.

My favorite quote from the surveyors was this: “I’ve surveyed many hospitals, and I’ve never seen an organization with better communication skills between departments. I know this means you are taking great care of your patients.”

When most people think of ZSFG, they think of trauma care or psychiatry care or primary care. They don’t often think of lab and pathology as essential components of patient care. The truth is, without these essential patient care services, we would not be able to care for our patients. They are truly our unsung heroes, and their compassion and expertise was in full display during the survey and continues to be now that we are stabilizing after go-live. Please congratulate and thank them the next time you see them!

Have a great week, everyone —

***Susan***

