

# Network News

Everything matters.  
Everything we say matters.  
Everything we do matters.  
Everyone is watching.  
Everyone is listening.



Colleen Sweeney, RN, a national expert in the customer/patient experience, speaks to Hartford Hospital staff members.

## The Patient Empathy Project: Dealing with Patient Fears Improves Experience

*“I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.” —Maya Angelou*

Fear is common among hospital patients. That’s what Colleen Sweeney, RN, learned after surveying more than 1,000 patients as part of a three-year study called the Patient Empathy Project. Sweeney, a nurse for more than 30 years, began the project after serving as director of Ambassador and Customer Services at Memorial Hospital in South Bend, Ind. Now founder of Sweeney Healthcare Enterprises and known as a national expert in the patient/customer experience, she recently gave the keynote address at Hartford Hospital’s Hamilton Retreat, held for the past 44 years to bring physician and administrative

leaders together to discuss critical healthcare issues. Sweeney also spoke at Hartford HealthCare’s Patient Experience Collaborative in April 2015.

The topic of customer experience is taking center stage this year as Hartford HealthCare embarks on a system-wide effort to improve the patient experience, including establishing a chief patient experience officer and staff.

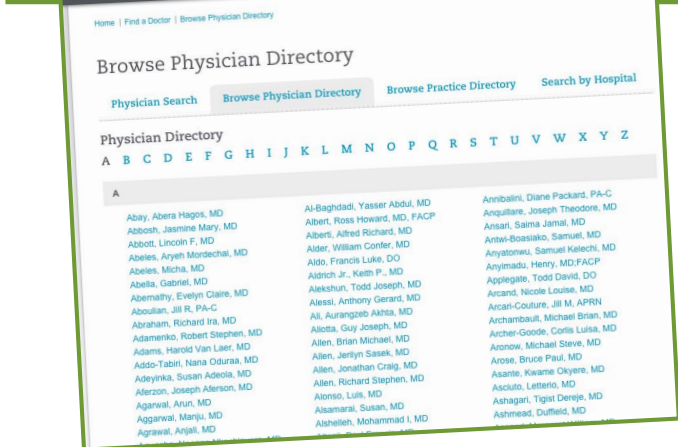
“You only get one chance at a first impression,” Sweeney said. “The first-three-seconds rule is the way of the world. That’s how long it takes to make a first impression, and people rarely change their minds.”

Sweeney gave an example of an innocent misstep during patient admissions at her last workplace. During registration, the staff routinely told patients, “Good luck,”

*Continued on page 6*

# ¿Hablas Español?

Hartford HealthCare is launching a marketing campaign to reach our Spanish-speaking communities. This includes a Spanish-language website, [Facebook page](#), Spanish-speaking physician referral operators at our call center and media interviews on Spanish-language media outlets. Are you a physician or advanced practitioner who speaks Spanish? We have identified about 100 Spanish-speaking physicians in our website's Find-a-Doctor database, but believe there are many more. All we need is your NPI number or full name and department (to identify the correct provider), along with languages spoken with "active" credential status or equivalent. Please send your information to [Christopher.Urbanski@hhchealth.org](mailto:Christopher.Urbanski@hhchealth.org)



# THE HOSPITAL OF CENTRAL CONNECTICUT HOCC Kicks Off Women's Health Campaign

HOCC kicks off a women's health campaign this month. Look for ads that focus on HOCC's unique programs and services and how they appeal to the needs and wants of our female consumers, their families and their communities. Visit [www.MakingWomenHealthier.org](http://www.MakingWomenHealthier.org) to learn more.





# Around HHC

Here is a roundup of stories from around the system that you can find on our HHC Connect intranet. Click the links to read more.

IOL's Dr. Hank Schwartz takes center stage with an author and a photojournalist to explore the intersection of life and art. [Learn more.](#)



Little Hats, Big Heart: The grateful husband of a patient donated 200 tiny red hats to Hartford Hospital. [Find out why.](#)



A discussion of opioid abuse in Connecticut drew a standing-room-only crowd to an HHC-sponsored community forum. Pictured: Pat Remer. [Learn more.](#)

These nurses are no wilting petals. HOCC and MidState name Daisy Award winners. More about the [MidState winner, Kathleen Silo](#). More about the [HOCC winner, Carol Roberts](#).



Stamp Out Zika Virus. Dr. Jack Ross, (middle) Chief, Infectious Disease, Hartford Hospital and Dr. Adam Borgida, (right) Chief, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Hartford Hospital joined U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal (left, D-Conn.) and members of the Latino community for a press conference to call for a stronger international response to the Zika virus threat. [Learn more.](#)



Dr. Mohammed Qureshi goes to Washington. Read about the Backus physician's experience as a guest at President Obama's final State-of-the-Union speech [in his own words](#). Pictured: the Qureshi family.

Start a new  habit.

StepItUp30.org. 

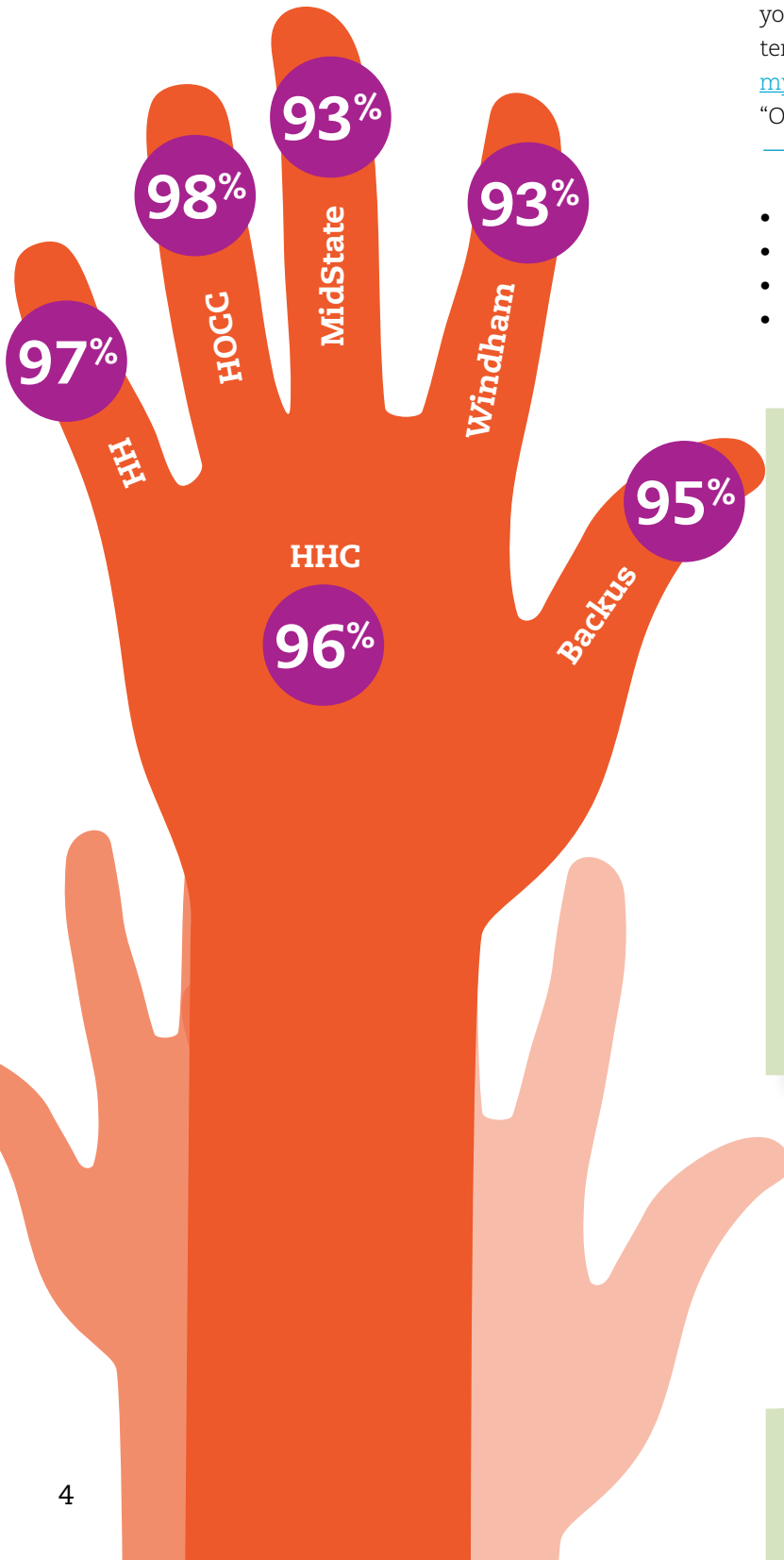
Step it up. Hartford HealthCare wants to encourage everybody to get healthier by getting more active. [Learn more and take the pledge.](#)



The Hospital of Central Connecticut's Family Enrichment Center helps parents do their jobs better with DADS program director Troy Ellison. [Learn more.](#)

# Hand Hygiene UPDATE

HHC is on a journey toward hand-hygiene compliance. Our goal is 90 percent compliance at each hospital. Check out our scores for the month of January:



## HARTFORD HEALTHCARE

### E-Mail Signature Guidelines

Your e-mail signature is an important part of HHC's brand image, much like the signs on our buildings and the logo on our lapel pins. Please follow the following guidelines when creating your e-mail signature. Also, please be sure that e-mail sent from your HHC account does not include photos, colored or patterned backgrounds or taglines (such as quotes or sayings). You can find instructions for creating your automatic e-mail signature and a cut-and-paste template at our "A New Outlook" SharePoint site <https://myhhc.hhchealth.org/HHCUnity/Email/default.aspx> under "Outlook How-To's."

- All text is **Verdana 10 pt.**
- Dominant color is **black.**
- Color of name and organization name are **Hartford Blue**
- Signature should contain the url for Hartford HealthCare followed by the url for the your

First name Last name

Title

Optional Second Title

Hartford  
HealthCare



Connect to healthier.™

Organization Name

Street Address

City, State Zip

Office phone numbers (and cell if applicable)

Fax number (if applicable)

Email: [firstname.lastname@hhchealth.org](mailto:firstname.lastname@hhchealth.org)

[www.hartfordhealthcare.org](http://www.hartfordhealthcare.org)

Organization URL

## MIDSTATE MEDICAL CENTER Heartburn Help

Commonly known as heartburn, acid reflux affects millions of people. It can be debilitating, causing pain and discomfort. Years of acid reflux can also damage cells and lead to cancer down the road. For patients who are suffering from chronic acid reflux, a breakthrough new procedure offered at MidState Medical Center can help people find relief.

The new procedure is called the LINX Reflux Management System. It's designed to strengthen the weak sphincter muscle in the esophagus and restore the body's natural barrier to acid.

"LINX is a tiny ring of magnetic titanium beads that wraps around the point at which the stomach and esophagus connect," said Dr. Kenneth Schwartz, Hartford HealthCare Medical Group general surgeon. "The ring opens when you swallow, allowing foods and liquids to pass normally, but it quickly closes again to prevent acid from coming back up," he said.

The LINX system is minimally invasive and reversible because it does not change the anatomy of your esophagus or stomach. Patients go home the same day and can eat normal foods.

For patients who are not candidates for LINX, another minimally invasive surgical option called fundoplication can be an option. This involves wrapping a piece of the stomach around the lower esophagus to tighten it, preventing stomach acid from rising and causing acid reflux.

For more than 20 years, Bernice Montefusco, of Wallingford, suffered from the complications of acid reflux and found no relief from medication.

Her acid reflux manifested with extreme heaviness in her chest. "I couldn't catch my breath. My lungs and heart were checked out and everything was fine. But they couldn't figure it out," Montefusco said. Through the years, she struggled with pulmonary complications, including chest spasms, a chronic cough and pneumonia.

Testing revealed that she had a hiatal hernia, a

protrusion of part of the stomach into the chest. After fundoplication, she experienced relief almost immediately.

"In both LINX and fundoplication, 90 percent of patients say their symptoms resolve and they no longer need medications. They are very happy patients," Schwartz said.

*Dr. Schwartz and his patient, Bernice Montefusco*

Montefusco is back to square dancing and biking and is able to do more with her granddaughter. "Dr. Schwartz gave me my life back," she said. [Learn more.](#)



# the CHECKUP

A monthly digest of important projects and initiatives that are transforming Hartford HealthCare so we can shape the future of healthcare in our region.



### CareConnect

**What is it?:** CareConnect is bringing the Epic electronic health record (EHR) to Hartford HealthCare, paving the way for more coordinated care, seamless patient transitions and consistent high quality. Primary care offices successfully adopted Epic in August, 2015 and confidence in the system continues to grow.

#### Next milestones:

- Windham Hospital and Midstate Medical Center go-live planned for April 29, 2016
- HHCMG Specialties go-live planned for May 2, 2016
- Clinical Operations and Operational Readiness Committees have been established for Windham Hospital, Midstate Medical Center and Hartford Hospital, and are all active in preparations.

**What you need to know:** Training for super-users, credentialed trainers and end users is underway or starting soon and registration is open now.

### EARN your wellness reward NOW!



Start here: [HHCConnect.org](http://HHCConnect.org)



Participant's in Hartford Hospital's recent Hamilton Retreat carry signs listing some of hospitalized patients' top fears.

### The Patient Empathy Project *Continued from page 1*

which didn't instill confidence.

"What can you tell patients when they're being admitted?" Sweeney asked. "You can tell them, 'You've come to the right place; we'll take great care of you; you made a great decision coming here.' Patients are listening and watching us all the time. Everything we say and do matters."

The color of the walls matters. Temperature matters. "Patients will remember that warm blanket," she said. "Food matters. Three good things happen to a patient every day: breakfast, lunch and dinner. Rest matters: Patients who get enough rest heal and are discharged more quickly."

And patient fear matters. "About half of the discharge instructions we give to patients aren't heard by them because of their anxiety," Sweeney said. In her study, Sweeney discovered patients' top 11 fears when hospitalized:

- |                   |                            |
|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Infection      | 7. Rude doctors and nurses |
| 2. Incompetence   | 8. Germs                   |
| 3. Death          | 9. Diagnosis, prognosis    |
| 4. Cost           | 10. Communication issues   |
| 5. Medical mix-up | 11. Loneliness             |
| 6. Needles        |                            |

To help address these fears, she developed a hierarchy of patient needs that, when met, will deliver the "exceptional patient experience."

5. A bed, nutrition, rest, cleanliness, temperature control, pain control
4. Proper ID, right procedure, right meds, reassurance, addressing fears and concerns, explaining
3. Response to call lights, visiting hours, meeting family needs, listening
2. Individualized care, respect, courtesy
1. The exceptional experience

"Why don't we ask people what their greatest fear is?" Sweeney said. "Part of the reason is that we're afraid to know. We're afraid we can't deal with it. But we need to look the patient in the eyes and find out ... find out what the patient needs and then do something about it. That's empathy." And that's where we want to be, she said.

- Biggest patient fears in a medical practice, according to Sweeney's study:**
- |                         |                   |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Diagnosis/prognosis  | 5. Rude doctors   |
| 2. Wait times           | 6. Scale location |
| 3. Communication issues | 7. Cost           |
| 4. Cancer               | 8. Germs          |



Network News is a monthly publication produced by Hartford HealthCare. Please send story ideas to [networknews@hhchealth.org](mailto:networknews@hhchealth.org). We will make every effort to consider your story idea, but due to space constraints, editing may be necessary.

## Virtual Huddle Promotes Togetherness for a Far-flung Team

With the rollout of H3W Lean daily management continuing throughout Hartford HealthCare in 2016, the daily huddle is proving to be an effective problem-solving tool in clinical, non-clinical, and now even in remote settings.

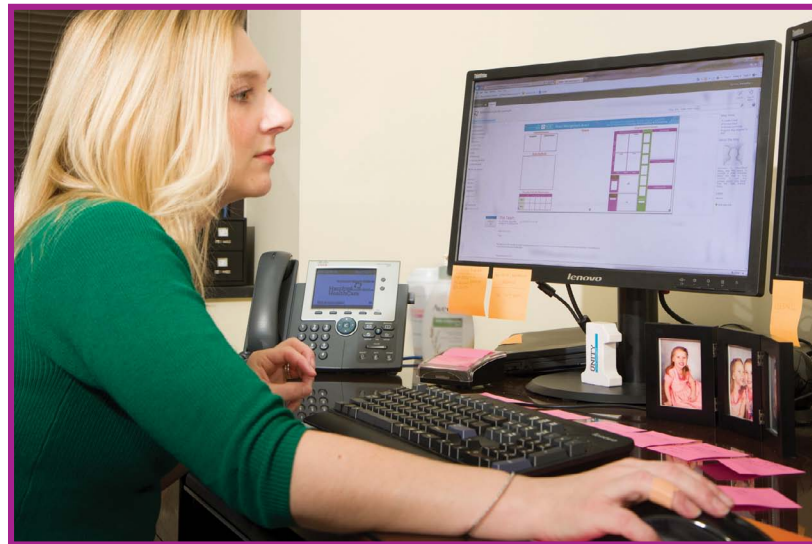
The Hartford HealthCare sales team, which consists of eight account managers representing each of the Hartford HealthCare regions and major service lines, is one of 190 workgroups moving to daily management in 2016. The team, which works almost 100 percent remotely with members constantly on the road, meeting with physician practices or working from home, has instituted a twice-a-week virtual huddle. Team members gain access to a virtual management board and other Lean tools through the HHC SharePoint site.

“We’re a unique group because we don’t really have a home base and all of our roles are so different,” says Samantha Somma, Community Connect Account Manager and workgroup leader. “The huddle empowers us to address issues quickly.”

Lean — a systematic approach to removing obstacles and improving efficiency in the workplace — was initiated in a successful design phase in 2015 and is being rolled out system-wide in 2016 to engage staff daily and further strengthen the H3W operating model throughout Hartford HealthCare. The enhancement to H3W is paired with H3W Leadership Behavior training that is scheduled to reach every employee by the end of this year.

Somma was mentored for her role by Helayne Lightstone, Hartford HealthCare senior director of Marketing and Branding, who is leading the Marketing workgroup — one of the original 14 Lean demo units. Somma will become a mentor for a new workgroup leader as part of the third phase of the Lean rollout which starts this month.

Hartford HealthCare Rehabilitation Network account



*Samantha Somma leads a virtual H3W/Lean huddle using a huddle board on her desktop.*

manager Britta Raczkowski says the virtual huddle promotes a true team atmosphere.

“We all have different territories and different service lines. It keeps us from working in silos and allows us to connect as a team more than it would if we only met once a month. The huddle really bridges the distance for a team like ours,” she says.

Vice President of Sales and Business Development Tom Meggers, who admits he wasn’t sure the Lean huddle would be effective for a department with no home base and with staff with such diverse roles, says he’s been very pleased with the results.

“It gives us an opportunity to discuss challenges, share ideas and mentor each other through our daily activities. Samantha has done an outstanding job of being a workgroup leader. She has made it seamless for us,” Meggers says.



### HARTFORD HOSPITAL

## Celebrating National Women’s Physicians’ Day



It took until the 1940s for Hartford Hospital to add the first full-time female physician to its staff, and only then because so many of the male physicians were away at war. Dr. Jean Wells (Hollinshead) graduated from Yale

Medical School in 1937. She enjoyed a 50-year career as a West Hartford-based pediatrician, also serving on the staff at the Newington Children’s Hospital. She died in 2012 at the age of 101. On Feb. 3, Hartford HealthCare saluted its many female physicians on National Women’s Physicians’ Day. Read more about [Dr. Wells](#).

# Your Voice Counts

An occasional column by Kim Harrison, HHC vice president for Public Policy and Government Affairs



**We are going to lose an additional \$20 million in funding for Medicaid.**

The governor's midterm budget brought another fiscal blow to Connecticut's hospitals. Gov. Dannel Malloy froze Medicaid supplemental payments, effectively cutting \$30 million of state funds and \$60 million of federal funds. For HHC, this means a loss of \$20 million. While not entirely unexpected, it continues a downward trend in paying hospitals for caring for Connecticut's neediest residents.

The governor's proposed budget also includes an enormous cut to mental health and substance-abuse grants as the state faces an unprecedented spike in heroin addiction and overdoses.

While we recognize that Connecticut faces a \$500 million budget deficit by July 1, simply raiding Medicaid funding for hospitals every year to close the gap is unacceptable and frankly, unsustainable. Cuts to hospitals hurt patients and the state's economy.

In the next 12 weeks, the Connecticut Hospital Association will lead a campaign, much like the one this past fall, asking the legislature to restore funding for hospitals. However, even more important than press events and TV ads are your voices as providers of healthcare. In the next few weeks, we will ask you to reach out to your legislators and tell them not to allow these cuts to go forward. Your participation is critical. It made for success in December and we need you again to speak out even more loudly and often.

## Hartford HealthCare **By The Numbers**

### February is American Heart Month

Here's a look at the role Hartford HealthCare plays in heart health and cardiac care.



Heart disease is the leading cause of death for men and women in the U.S.



610,000

The average number of Americans who die every year from heart disease



The year Hartford Hospital performed the first successful heart transplant



169,587

Number of EKGs (electrocardiograms) performed at HHC hospitals last year. The breakdown:



Number of heart transplants performed last year at Hartford Hospital

- 8,687 at Windham
- 27,151 at Backus
- 20,653 at MidState
- 33,096 at HOCC
- 80,000 at Hartford Hospital



## U.S. News and World Report Ranks Weight Watchers Diet #1

A new survey published in *U.S. News and World Report* ranked Weight Watchers as the #1 diet for weight loss. The Weight Watchers approach was also ranked as one of the easiest diets to follow in the magazine's 2016 rankings. Weight Watchers has received high marks from *U.S. News* for several consecutive years.

For 2016, HHC is offering an employer-paid membership to Weight Watchers. This proven weight-loss approach and powerful group support comes in a variety of options, so you can choose one that fits your lifestyle best. Attend meetings at work, online or in your community. If 15 or more employees sign up, meetings can be scheduled at your HHC location. Membership is free to all employees, with or without HHC health insurance, and to spouses and domestic partners if they are covered by an HHC health plan. [Enroll now at HHC Connect!](#)



### Find Weight Watchers Support on Facebook

More than 3,000 Hartford HealthCare employees are taking advantage of the free 2016 Weight Watchers membership — and now you have a virtual gathering place to find support between meetings.

The Hartford HealthCare Weight Watchers community is a closed Facebook group. Join today using your mobile device or home computer, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1869315966628241/>, or search “Hartford HealthCare Weight Watchers community.”

For help or more info. contact Carol Vassar at [carol.vassar@hhchealth.org](mailto:carol.vassar@hhchealth.org)



### Weight Watchers: Counting down the pounds

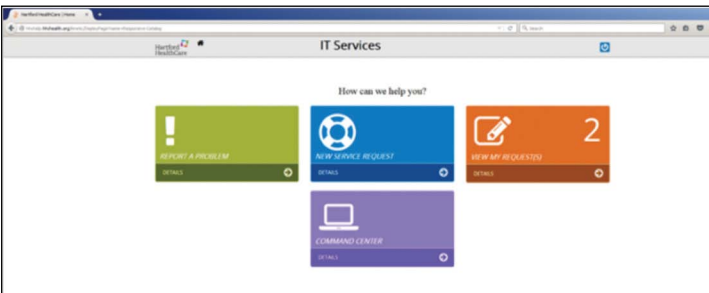
- **First month** of Weight Watchers our HHC employee community has lost an aggregate total of **1,821 lbs.**
- That's a little more than **half-a-pound per person** (that's spread over the 3,055 employees and spouses/DPs who have enrolled to date but still moving the scale in the right direction).
- Additionally, our WWs enrollment is currently at **13.2 % of all eligible members**, exceeding our 10% year-end target.



# Understanding and Navigating the Help Desk Portal

When you have a computer problem, the best way to get your incident into the hands of the ITS team quickly is to use the Self-Service Portal.

When you log on to the portal with your email address and system password, you are faced with a choice. Do you want to “Report a problem” or log a “New service request?”

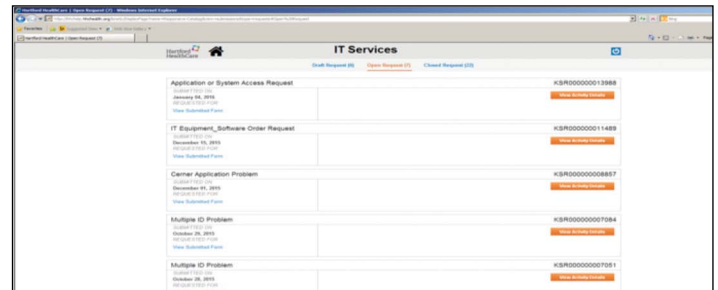


If you select “Report a problem,” you are letting ITS know that something is broken or not functioning properly. It could be that your printer is no longer printing, you’re receiving an error within an application, information is not showing up in an application, or a key on your keyboard is stuck. After you click “Report a problem,” you may carefully choose an icon that best matches your issue.

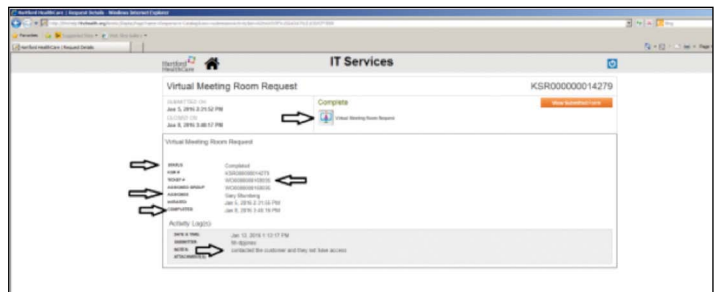
The “New service request” selection is for requesting a change, deletion, addition or new service. This would include requesting a new phone number or equipment such as a printer or new computer. It also includes requests for changes needed within applications such as IDX or Allscripts (think adding a satellite office).

Once your request is submitted, you can track your progress by clicking on “View My Request” from the home screen.

You can then click on “View activity details” to see your



progress. In the example below, you can see which icon was used for the request, the status of the request, the BMC work order number, who worked on it, when it was completed and any notes to the customer.

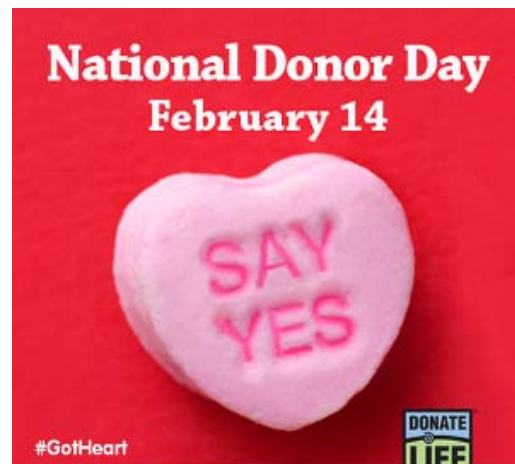


ITS encourages you to use the Self-Service Portal at [www.hhchelp.com](http://www.hhchelp.com). Work orders can be submitted in less than one minute. We hope this makes your day a little easier.

## Did you know?

You no longer need to select your facility before logging on to your Outlook webmail account. Your network username and password is all that’s required because all HHC facilities are now on one network.

If you have suggestions for future TechTips articles, please email [techtips@hhchealth.org](mailto:techtips@hhchealth.org).



#GotHeart



Share the Love. Register Today. [DonateLife.net](http://DonateLife.net)



YOU'RE INVITED TO

## The Fourth Annual Hartford HealthCare Patient Experience Showcase

Connecting Patients to Healthier

Friday, April 8, 2016 | 7:30 AM to 12:15 PM

Heublein Hall, Education & Resource Center (ERC),  
Hartford Hospital, 560 Hudson Street, Hartford

Advancing the patient experience  
through service, communication and environment.

### Connecting Patients to Healthier

**Keynote:** The Hartford HealthCare Way:  
Improving Our Customer Experience  
Stacie Pallotta, MPH, Partner, Strategic  
Consulting Services, Press Ganey

**When the Doctor Becomes the Patient:**  
Lessons Learned from the Other  
End of the Stethoscope  
Daniel Kombert, MD, Director,  
Central Region Hospitalist Program  
Joanne Kombert, RN

**Redesigning the Patient Experience Through  
Lean Transformation**  
Connie Flores, Lean Sensei,  
Hartford HealthCare  
Mohamed Saleh, Lean Sensei,  
Hartford HealthCare  
Sandi Voogd, Lean Sensei,  
Hartford HealthCare

**Registration required:** <http://svy.mk/1Qs5Xzb>.  
For inquiries, please contact  
[Adrienne.devivo@hhchealth.org](mailto:Adrienne.devivo@hhchealth.org)



### About the keynote speaker:

Stacie Pallotta has gathered extensive experience consulting with organizations across multiple industries to assess and improve consumer experience, offering support with vision setting, strategic planning, best practice identification/creation, tactical implementation and sustainability. Stacie's consulting work has also included executive leadership roles, including that of interim Chief Experience Officer for Hartford HealthCare. She joined Press Ganey's Consulting team in 2015.

Prior to working with Press Ganey, Pallotta was a senior leader at the Cleveland Clinic, most recently holding the position of Senior Director, Office of Patient Experience. In this role, she was responsible for leading strategy and overseeing daily operations for several key service lines including Best Practices, External Partnerships, Service Excellence and Culture and International Patient Experience. From within Cleveland Clinic and as an independent consultant, she has consulted with global organizations on developing patient/customer-centered cultures and on best practice implementation. Pallotta is a founding member of the Patient Experience Advisory Group and has worked with more than 25 organizations on organizational culture development, employee engagement initiatives, best practice implementation, service training and patient / customer experience sustainability.

Pallotta earned a Master's of Public Health degree from Case Western Reserve University, and a combined Bachelor of Science/ Bachelor of Arts in biology and psychology from Marietta College in Ohio.

