

Irene Cumming: A Record of Achievements

On Oct. 1, 1998, with a low public perception of quality, high staff turnover, only 10 days' worth of operating cash, no endowment and no tax appropriations, The University of Kansas Hospital began what would become one of the most remarkable turn-arounds in modern hospital history.

Although at the helm throughout this transformation, Irene Cumming prefers to describe her role in the hospital's success as an enabler who supported a dedicated and talented staff of physicians, nurses and other health care professionals in providing the best care in the best possible environment.

Under her leadership, the organization began by increasing its focus on patient care and on caregivers. Cumming firmly believed that providing exceptional care for patients and supporting the staff that provides that care would generate growth in patient satisfaction, public perception, patient volume and financial stability, as well as employee job satisfaction.

Cumming also knew an improved hospital would result in a better clinical setting and learning environment for students and residents.

With a Hospital Authority Board dedicated to patient care, and a quality-focused culture, the accomplishments of The University of Kansas Hospital during Cumming's tenure as president and chief executive officer are astounding.

- Inpatient volume has grown by almost 50 percent since 1998 to nearly 20,000 patients, shattering all patient volume records in the hospital's 100-year history. Procedural and Emergency Department volumes have increased by 150 percent and 50 percent,



Irene Cumming celebrated the hospital's Magnet designation announcement in December with cheering staff members.

- respectively, during this same time.
- The quality and safety of patient care has improved dramatically and gained national attention. In 2006, the hospital ranked 11th among the nation's academic medical centers in overall safety and quality rankings.
- The hospital ranks in the top 17 percent of institutions in the University HealthSystem Consortium database in mortality.
- The hospital earned Magnet designation from the American Nurses Credentialing Center of the American Nurses Association, the first designation for a Kansas-based hospital. Only 3.5 percent of the nation's health care organizations are Magnet hospitals.
- The hospital received the first Annual Performance Achievement Award from the American Heart Association for stroke care in a six-state region.
- The hospital's cancer program received the 2004 Commission on Cancer Outstanding Achievement Award, achieved by only 8 percent of cancer programs in the country.
- The hospital earned Solucient's 100 Most Improved Hospitals Award in 2004.
- The hospital is a nationally recognized leader in the Institute for Healthcare

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Improvement's *100,000 Lives* campaign.

- The hospital pioneered the creation of partnerships between physicians and hospital staff to raise quality. The model has been adopted by many institutions across the country.
- Patient satisfaction ratings have climbed more than 900 percent since 1998.
- At the close of 2006, the hospital ranked first in patient satisfaction in the Kansas City area.
- Employee turnover has dropped from 33 percent in 1998 to 11.69 percent today, the lowest among Kansas City-area hospitals.

- 61 percent of nurses have BSN degrees, compared to a 33 percent national average. The hospital has the second lowest nursing turnover rate among large hospitals in Kansas City.
- The hospital's number of staffed beds have nearly doubled from 275 to 508.
- Financial health has improved steadily every year, with revenue climbing 185 percent to more than \$500 million since the Hospital Authority was established.
- Financial strength has allowed significant capital investment in resources and facilities, totaling nearly \$450 million in the eight years since the Hospital

Authority was established. In comparison, the hospital was permitted only \$33 million in capital investment in the final five years it was

outpatient cancer program from a for-profit corporation the university had transferred it to in the 1990s. Then, the hospital

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under the control of the University of Kansas.

- This financial strength has permitted a 340 percent increase in support provided by the hospital to the university since 1998, with \$31 million this year alone.
- The hospital purchased the

invested \$75 million in its cancer program, including the region's largest outpatient cancer center, which will open this summer at the Westwood Campus.

- In 2000, the heart program at the hospital was revitalized, culminating in the 2006 opening of the \$77 million Center for Advanced Heart Care.
- The hospital became, and continues to be, the region's only nationally-accredited Level I Trauma Center.
- The hospital will be the exclusive health care partner for the new Sprint Center Arena when it opens downtown in October 2007.
- The hospital has achieved all of this while still providing care for those who can't afford it. Fiscal year 2007 projections are to absorb nearly \$100 million in uncompensated care charges.



Irene Cumming joined in the groundbreaking ceremony for the \$77-million Center for Advanced Heart Care, which the hospital opened in October 2006.