TOPIC FOR TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2019:

Will the new regional medical center help to strengthen patient safety, quality outcomes and the patient experience? What is the connection between that and Mohawk Valley Health System (MVHS) launching the journey to become a High Reliability Organization?

The new MVHS Regional Medical Center in Downtown Utica was designed based on a number of patient-oriented goals, which are all related to patient care delivery, safety and experience. These include:

- Reducing transfers of patients to health systems outside of the Utica area
- Reducing patient length of stay by improving discharge planning
- Strengthening communication and integration between patients, families and their care teams
- Minimizing noise throughout the facility
- Improving patient satisfaction and experience
- Increasing the time that patients have with clinical staff
- Strengthening quality outcomes and patient safety
- Reducing hospital-acquired infection rates and patient falls
- Decreasing unnecessary emergency visits and inpatient utilization
- Reducing medical errors.

These goals influenced the design of every part of the new building – from the main and Emergency Room entrances to the Operating Rooms to private patient rooms and care team stations to separate elevators for patient transport and for visitors.

MVHS is already working on these patient-oriented goals with the objective being to be ready to capitalize on the improvements made possible through the new building. We recently began a significant safety innovation – a two-year journey to become a High Reliability Organization (HRO). Over the next two years, every employee and every member of the Medical Staff will be trained to meet the goal of eliminating preventable harm at MVHS. Training is based on the processes, procedures and lessons learned by aviation and nuclear power plants where errors can cause catastrophic results. The entire organization will learn from the industries that have made significant improvements and have high safety rates by adopting high reliability practices. As an HRO organization, the MVHS team will bring these practices into a new building and transform patient care from excellent to exceptional.