TOPIC FOR TUESDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2019:

How does Mohawk Valley Health System (MVHS) plan to strengthen quality of care and patient safety at the new regional medical center? How is MVHS preparing to address the challenges of bringing people now working at different campuses together into one location?

This fall, we embarked on two inter-related innovations to prepare our organization now to be located at one regional medical center in Downtown Utica in three years.

The first is a significant safety innovation at MVHS – a two-year journey to become a high reliability organization, often referred to as 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 and behaviors. To date, HPI/Press Ganey, a national HRO firm working with MVHS, has done a thorough review of existing patient safety and performance improvement practices, gathered input and feedback from employees and members of the Medical Staff and Board of Directors, and is working with internal teams (with representatives from throughout the organization) to design curriculums for training that will begin early in 2020. As an HRO organization, MVHS will develop safety practices and behaviors that will strengthen quality of care and patient safety today and which will be brought into our new location to transform patient care from excellent to exceptional.

A related initiative is also underway to engage our employees and volunteers, Medical Staff and Board members in defining our new culture and setting the standard for providing high-quality, safe and extraordinary care to patients. Nearly 1,000 employees, volunteers, and members of the Medical Staff participated in “Share Your Voice” focus groups over the last four months to provide input and feedback for updating our mission, vision, and values statements. We are in the process of completing the focus groups and reviewing all the feedback so we can articulate “our story” from which we will be drafting and sharing the MVHS mission statement and organizational values. We anticipate this will be done and shared by early next year.

Our HRO journey and new cultural expectations and values bring together all people in our organization – whether on a hospital campus, in a medical office, or another off-site location – with an understanding of who we are and who we aspire to be. This is a key part of our transition as one health system with a new regional medical center location.