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Report to the Board of Trustees

Good afternoon, Trustees:

I hope you are enjoying Mother Nature's burst of spring color and activity as much as I am.

Here are a few highlights since we last met:

Brooklyn Pharmacy Ribbon Cutting

On March 28, I was joined by community leaders, elected officials, local media and members of our Pharmacy team – led by **Ryan Mezinger**, Senior Vice President, Chief Pharmacy Officer – as we cut the ribbon on MetroHealth's new retail pharmacy inside our Brooklyn Health Center.

These days, the opening of a new pharmacy is indeed a cause for celebration. Over the past 10 years, while Ohio has seen its population rise and grow older, it's also seen 350 pharmacies close, often in neighborhoods that could least afford to lose them. In pharmacy deserts, individuals have less access to the medications they need. This is especially alarming for folks managing chronic conditions like diabetes and hypertension.

Over that same 10-year span, MetroHealth has stepped up to fill these gaps. We have *tripled* the number of retail pharmacies we operate. The Brooklyn Health Center pharmacy is our 12th retail pharmacy location.

Thanks to our Pharmacy team, which filled almost 2 million prescriptions in 2024, our patients have easy, affordable access to the medications they need to live their longest, healthiest and best possible lives.

Investiture Ceremony: Professorship in Research

On March 20, I had the honor to participate in the investiture ceremony of **Dr. William W. Tse**, Chief, MetroHealth's Division of Hematology/Oncology, as the inaugural chairholder of the new MetroHealth Professorship in Research.

The event marked the 18th professorship MetroHealth shares with the Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine – a testament to the strength and depth of our system's 111-year partnership with CWRU.

In my remarks introducing and congratulating Dr. Tse, I outlined his impressive career in research, innovation and treatment of cellular immunotherapies. Almost everywhere else, these kinds of pioneering treatments would be available only to people with private insurance and means. Because of Dr. Tse and his work, these cutting-edge therapies are available to everyone in Greater Cleveland ... at MetroHealth.



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Fireside Chat with Employees

On March 24, I had the pleasure of participating in a fireside chat for employees hosted by our African American Alliance Employee Business Resource Group.

Darlene E. White, Esq., MetroHealth Associate General Counsel, Operational Risk & Managing Attorney, led a wide-ranging conversation about leadership, strategy and vision for our System in the days to come. Almost 300 employees attended the lunchtime event in person or online.

During the Q-and-A portion, I was asked if layoffs were possible in the future. It was an honest and direct question that reflects the anxiety many of our caregivers are feeling during this time of uncertainty and upheaval.

I answered by saying that there were no plans for layoffs, but I also added that our system needs to prepare and plan for potential setbacks, like a deep recession or government cuts to programs, like Medicaid, that serve our patients.

I said that we are working on what we can control, including making our system as operationally efficient as possible.

I likened potential layoffs to a hurricane.

Right now, it's raining, I said, and we should probably close the windows. If things get worse, we might also need to bolster things a bit and board up the windows. Or it might get bad enough that we have to evacuate. That would be a layoff situation.

I told them that I hope we are able to just close our windows and pull together to do everything we can to weather this potential storm.

That's how we get through any potential crisis, by coming together and working together.

I appreciated this opportunity to be honest and transparent with our caregivers. They deserve that respect.

Thank you for your service to our system, our patients, our caregivers and our community.

With deep appreciation,

Christine Alexander-Rager, MD

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