

Welcome Eileen Egan, RN, Esq. to her new role as Executive Director of Phelps Hospital Northwell Health!

We met with Eileen Egan to discuss her history at Phelps, how she was prepared to lead the hospital through the pandemic, and her vision for the future.

How long have you been a part of Phelps Hospital, and what is it about the hospital and community that inspired you to stay and grow here?

I first joined Phelps in 1981 as a charge nurse in the Intensive Care/ Critical Care and Medical/ Surgical Units. I was a part of the Emergency Department for 17 years. After pursuing a career in law, specifically medical malpractice defense, I returned to Phelps in risk management in 2006. I have found that between my nursing background and my legal background, I found success in positions with progressive responsibilities. I have stayed, and continue to stay because my heart is with the Phelps community, and because it is a great hospital with a terrific staff that has become my second family.



What excites you about your new role, and what can you tell us about your strategic focus moving forward?

I am most excited about being able to build on my previous experiences and core values. It is extremely important for quality to always be a primary focus within a hospital. The high quality care and service will drive patient satisfaction, which will drive the reputation of the hospital. This then drives volume. Everything always comes back to the quality in the end. Our high quality of care is known throughout the hospital and within the community.

Can you share a little bit of insight on your leadership style during the coronavirus crisis, such as how you were (and still are) able to maintain focus and control during such a chaotic time, and keeping both patients and employees safe?

My Critical Care and ED experience certainly allowed me to maintain focus on all that had to be done in a relatively short period of time. A major part of my leadership style involves a collaborative approach. I met with our emergency management team, nursing, and physicians constantly and brought everyone's experience with operations to manage the ever-changing situation each day. I also believe in inclusiveness, transparency, and leading by example by being here with my team each day.



While coronavirus has been a huge focus, and reasonably so, other health issues have not stopped in the meantime. How do you see Phelps moving forward and growing, both with a possible resurgence in the fall and beyond?

The day to day operations have shifted quite a bit due to the Pandemic but we continue to provide care and support to all who seek our help. We are planning for a possible resurgence of COVID now that our curve has flattened out. With the assistance of Northwell we continue to grow other programs including Neuro-interventional thrombectomies that can remove brain clots and can spare Stroke patients a lifetime of disability. This technology is actually tertiary care not usually performed at a Community Hospital. Our overall strategic plan for growth has not changed, even with COVID.

What does the hospital's safety process consist of for those coming for physician appointments?

Phelps has a very robust process in place both within the hospital and the outpatient sites, including the Physician offices. Our staff has adequate PPE and all areas are sanitized before and after patient visits. We are blessed to have two separate and distinct OR areas in separate buildings for COVID and non-COVID patients. No matter where a patient goes for an appointment, cleanliness and safety are our number one priority. Phelps is our community's medical and surgical safe space.

Anything you'd like to say to the community regarding their support during this time?

First off, I want to thank the community for their support. The outpouring of love was unforgettable. It was incredible to see people contribute in any way they could - the beautiful handmade signage, the Meal Train that provided our staff with three meals a day for months, the thank you letters, the baked goods – all of it. This experience put in place a deeper level of how much the community values Phelps. We appreciate their trust in our care. The first responders also gave us such powerful support during this time. I would say we had such positive things to focus on from the community that helped us get through this time. We still have a lot of photos and letters hanging up within the hospital. It was overwhelmingly wonderful to see each and every one of you behind us.



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