



## 2016 Chair Communique Series

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### ***Our Clinical Mission***

Katherine L. Heilpern MD  
Ada Lee and Pete Correll Professor and Chair

Dear Faculty, Residents and Staff,

Welcome to 2016! It seems 2015 moved at the blink of an eye, and we've leapt into 2016 like a lamb springing for summer pastures. So, in this early part of 2016, I want to pause ... and thank you for your dedication to Emory Emergency Medicine. Your dedication to patient care, your leadership and humility are enabling our successes. And, our opportunities to improve the health of the Metro Atlanta region are because of each and every one of you.

Our department has been in a rapid cycle of growth and change. Today, we'll take a high level look at our clinical care delivery in 2015.

### **Clinical Care Delivery**

*Our Emergency Departments have been very busy*

In 2015, we exceeded 300,000 patient visits in the 5 emergency departments under our purview (Grady Health System, Emory University Hospital [EUH], Emory University Hospital Midtown [EUHM], Emory Johns Creek and the Atlanta VA Medical Center), and the census is predicted to rise again this year. Our leadership team has been working proactively with hospital leaders to finalize FY17 census projections, and I am pleased to share we've successfully negotiated increased faculty physician staffing at all five sites. This will accelerate our promise to deliver care to our patients and families that is timely and of the highest quality.

We owe thanks and congratulations to our Emory Clinic emergency care providers. Next week, our practice at Emory Midtown will celebrate 58 consecutive weeks of a triage Door to Provider time < 30 minutes, and we are closing in on our FY16 ED length of stay goal for patients discharged home from the emergency department. For the last 6 months, our emergency medicine physicians and advanced practice providers at both EUH and EUHM have met two very important and strategic group goals: "Bed to Provider" time of  $\leq 15$  minutes, and "Provider sees to Provider Disposition" time of <150 minutes. Timeliness of care is extremely important for our patients and families, a compact we will strive to maintain and consistently improve.

Our Grady practice exceeded 126,000 patient visits in calendar year 2015, and we are projected to exceed 130,000 visits in 2016. We remain a safety net for Atlanta, while building regional and



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nationally recognized service lines in Stroke, Trauma, Injury Prevention and Control, and Observation Medicine, with the ED at the epicenter. The talented, engaged Grady Health System leadership team is demonstrating their commitment to the linchpin role provided by the ED. The Grady Foundation and Board of Directors, with a lead gift from the Marcus Foundation, secured a \$75 million ED and hospital renovation//expansion that is evidence-based, patient-family focused, and aligns with system emphasis on hospital flow. The ED expansion will continue to take shape at a breathtaking pace throughout 2016, with project completion slated for January 2017.

The Atlanta VA Emergency department is busy and getting busier. The census is rising more than 10% per year, and annual visits now exceed 46,000. This is extraordinary growth, and provides extraordinary opportunity to make a difference in the lives of our veterans. We are partnering well with VA leaders, and providing expertise in disaster planning, ED operations, the health of Women Veterans, ED ultrasound, and many facets of teaching and research.

Our practice at Emory Johns Creek provides excellent community care in North Atlanta with an ED census of 25,000 annual visits. We enjoy a great partnership with hospital leadership, and a high degree of engagement with other services. Our Emory Johns Creek providers continue their strong performance with system quality goals and metrics.

Observation Medicine is a cornerstone of our clinical care delivery model. We care for two thirds of all observation patients at our Emory Healthcare hospitals, with the shortest lengths of stay and lowest costs within the system. In 2015, we cared for more than 11,500 patients in our three Clinical Decision Units, and enjoyed 'best in class' CDU length of stay metrics of 18 hours across the three sites. Planning efforts are well underway for a fourth CDU at Emory Johns Creek Hospital.

Even with all the clinical advances, and the miraculous clinical work you perform every day, we know there is still a lot of work to do, and we are energized to get it done. We are working with hospital administration and clinical partners across all our sites of care to advance Hospital and System Flow.

### *Outside the walls of our Emergency Departments in 2015*

Through the provision and direction of emergency medical services, our Section of Pre-Hospital and Disaster Medicine aided more 250,000 patients and families across the metro region. Our Toxicology Section provided care and consultation to more than 100,000 vulnerable patients and families who accessed the Georgia Poison Center, or sought care and consultation in one of our emergency departments.



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We provide 'sidelines' care for our hometown Atlanta Falcons players and visiting NFL teams. We also provide on-site emergency medical care for major events in the metro region, including the Peachtree Road Race (the largest 10K in the world) and the Atlanta Marathon. This reach impacts an additional 100,000 people, all comforted by the knowledge that you, Emory Emergency Medicine, are there to serve.

All told, our Department touched more than 750,000 patients and families in 2015 ~ 300,000 patients and families through direct care in our emergency departments, and another 450,000 people through gifted medical direction, and/or mass gathering (event) medicine. This is extraordinary, and it's due to your commitment. Thank you for all you do for Atlanta and for Emory.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Karlman C. Hoffmann".

February 2016