Chief Operations Officer
Eleanor Slater Hospital System
Cranston, RI

Position Specification

February 2017
The Opportunity

The Secretary of Health and Human Services for the State of Rhode Island is overseeing significant investments in Eleanor Slater Hospital (ESH) which include the recruitment of a new senior leadership team, including a new role, the Chief Operations Officer (COO). Together with the CEO, the COO will oversee new capital investments and will develop infrastructure and systems of accountability to address weaknesses in the structure and operations of this multi-site Long Term Acute Care Hospital which provides essential care and services for many of the State’s most vulnerable citizens with severe mental and medical disorders.

This is an opportunity for a seasoned and talented operations leader with a strong sense of mission to work with a dedicated staff to repair and update a facility that has faced some unique challenges in the recent past. A leader with vision, tenacity and excellent people skills who can advocate effectively for people with profound physical, mental and social challenges, will create a vital legacy that will have a significant impact on the well-being of Rhode Island’s communities. The new COO will have the opportunity to participate in a strategic planning process early in his/her tenure at Eleanor Slater Hospital and to drive transformational change that will lead to improved accountability, quality of care, and financial results.

Historic and ongoing challenges that ESH has faced include ineffective senior leadership, the lack of necessary information technology and systems, poor staffing ratios, a highly-structured labor environment with multiple bargaining units, and a financial system that runs through the state government.

There are several important factors supporting this turnaround effort and making this an excellent opportunity for both the organization and its senior leadership team.

- This effort has the personal support of Governor Gina Raimondo.
- The Office of the Secretary of Health and Human Services will be very involved with and actively supportive of improving conditions for the patients and staff of Eleanor Slater Hospital.
- Eleanor Slater Hospital’s newly-appointed CEO, Cynthia Huether, has a substantial record of successful leadership in not for profit and publicly-funded organizations and institutions dedicated to serving the behavioral health and long term care needs of vulnerable populations in unionized environments.
- The Hospital’s Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Elinore McCance-Katz is a well-known leader in behavioral health, who seeks to strengthen academic ties by creating and expanding existing healthcare professional training programs including opportunities for resident physician training in psychiatry, psychiatric subspecialties and rehabilitative medicine.
- Middle management is for the most part capable, dedicated, and driven by the mission of serving this special population.
- The quality of care rendered by a very caring and highly dedicated staff is excellent.

“Eleanor Slater Hospital is an absolute treasure for health care practitioner education. This is an institution that cares for the most ill among us — in terms of both physical and mental illnesses. Our current initiatives include reaching out to our Rhode Island advanced educational institutions to establish training experiences at Eleanor Slater Hospital in a number of clinical areas. As a teaching institution, Eleanor Slater Hospital will further enhance the care of patients, stimulate our staff to provide the best care possible and prepare the next generation of clinicians to provide excellent and empathic care. These are exciting times for us and we welcome the idea of continuing to add qualified candidates to our already outstanding staff.”

Dr. Elinore McCance-Katz, MD, PhD, CMO
While these leadership searches are being conducted, the State has brought in an interim leadership team through Applied Management Systems, a national consulting firm with expertise in hospital operations, reflecting the State’s commitment to strengthening Eleanor Slater Hospital.

**The Organization**

In the late 1800s Rhode Island opened two hospitals – the State Hospital for Mental Disease and the State General Hospital— in what is now known as the Pastore Complex in Cranston. In 1905, the RI State Sanatorium opened in Burrillville to treat tuberculosis patients. The General Hospital and State Hospital for Mental Disease merged to become the Rhode Island Medical Center in 1962, with the name change to the Eleanor Slater Hospital (ESH) taking place in 1994.

Today, the Eleanor Slater Hospital System is still located on two campuses, Cranston and Burrillville. It is the state’s only Long Term Acute Care Hospital (LTACH) with 284 beds and is operated through the State of Rhode Island’s Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities, and Hospitals (BHDDH). The hospital provides long-term acute and post-acute hospital level of care to patients with complex medical and psychiatric needs. For more information, see www.bhddh.ri.gov/esh/.

ESH strives to provide a treatment environment in which dignity, individuality, and respect are emphasized. In addition to diagnosis and treatment, the hospital focuses on issues of recovery and quality of living. Staff are dedicated to working with patients and their families using an interdisciplinary approach to care, and they aim to recognize each patient’s individuality and to provide high quality care in a dignified manner.

There is a very active performance improvement effort at ESH. Leadership, physicians, nurses, and rehabilitative staff collaboratively review all processes associated with operations and quality of care. When needed, processes are modified or redesigned with the goal of providing even better care for ESH patients along with improved operations. At ESH, everyone works to provide a seamless system of care.

**The Position**

The new CEO, Cynthia Huether, is responsible for providing strategic leadership for Eleanor Slater Hospital, to ensure its viability consistent with established policy objectives and the achievement of goals relating to quality and cost efficiency.

Working closely with Ms. Huether, the new COO will be responsible for hospital fiscal/financial management services, to monitor and control expenditures, provide budgetary expertise and perform specialized and technical budgetary and accounting activities specific to both campuses of the Eleanor Slater Hospital. S/he will be responsible for the overall management of all nonmedical and administrative departments and ensure compliance with established objectives and the realization of high quality, efficient, cost-effective hospital operations. This includes operational compliance with Joint Commission, state, federal and other applicable regulatory standards.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Providing leadership, direction and administration of operations to ensure compliance with established objectives and the realization of high quality, efficient health care services.
- Assuming responsibility for the overall administration of all financial functions as well as the integration and coordination of all non-medical and administrative functions within the Eleanor Slater Hospital.
- Working in conjunction with department heads to identify and analyze operational issues and develop and implement responsive plans, policies, systems, programs or standards.
• Accepting responsibility for the continuous review and evaluation of the effectiveness of existing policies, procedures and work methods relative to hospital operations and to assess and evaluate financial performance with regard to long term operational goals, budgets and forecasts and recommend improvements/changes as required.
• Ensuring implementation of programs, services and activities that comply with Joint Commission and other legal and regulatory standards and requirements; maintaining compliance with these regulations by monitoring operations and initiating corrective action as required.
• Providing insight and recommendations to both short term and long term financial and operational growth plans for the hospital.
• Communicating, engaging and interacting with the Director of BHDDH, the BHDDH Chief Financial Officer, the Eleanor Slater Hospital CEO, and the hospital executive team concerning hospital operations and finances.
• Creating and establishing yearly financial objectives that align with the hospital’s plan for growth and expansion.
• Developing and submitting state budget requests on behalf of the hospital, and ensuring the effective and efficient use of all fiscal resources.
• Taking a leadership role in the development and implementation of capital programs.
• Reviewing federal and state statutes and regulations as they affect hospital finances, and implementing policies, procedures and internal control processes as deemed appropriate to insure fiscal compliance to these statutes and regulations.
• Preparing and presenting monthly financial reports including operating performance by division and actual versus budget by division.
• Reviewing and analyzing monthly financial results and providing recommendations to hospital management.
• Identifying, developing and executing analyses of business initiatives, product launches and/or new service offerings.
• Overseeing financial planning and analysis, and supervising creation of reports, software implementations and tools for budgeting and forecasting.

The Candidate

The ideal COO candidate will have a deep understanding of the changing health care environment on the local, regional and national level. The next COO must have a graduate degree, such as an MBA and a broad background in operations in a Joint Commission accredited hospital or long term care facility, ideally with experience in behavioral health or long-term care facility.

The next COO must have demonstrated leadership ability by having driven significant organizational/operational change. The next COO must have strong financial skills, political savvy, perseverance, tenacity, and a farsighted strategic vision. S/he must integrate relentless pursuit of objectives with the patience required to work through a public process. The new COO must be able to operate effectively at a strategic level, and be equally comfortable dealing with day-to-day operational issues. The next COO must:

- Have both strong financial and operations leadership skills
- Know how to build trust in a highly unionized environment
- Be familiar with the Joint Commission and its accreditation process
- Understand capital budgeting, ideally in a public sector setting
- Be able to drive greater accountability in a highly diverse setting
• Possess familiarity with CMS regulations for Medicare and Medicaid

Personal characteristics of the optimal candidate include:
• Excellent interpersonal and relationship building skills with individuals at all professional levels; comfortable interacting with line staff and with government officials
• Comfort with accountability in a very high visibility role
• Keen political sense, and a respect for political/organizational process
• Being an influential, galvanizing leader
• The ability to mentor, coach and develop the management team
• Patience, perseverance and tenacity
• Ability to work creatively with limited resources
• Excellent oral and written communication skills
• Effective negotiation and persuasive abilities
• A good sense of humor and collegiality

Critical Success Factors
Among the measures of success for the Chief Operations Officer in the first year are:
• Assessment and optimization of operations in both ESH locations
• Advancing initiatives to improve efficiency and reduce costs
• A cultural shift toward greater accountability and higher professionalism
• Development and growth of the management team
• Progress toward developing a more patient-centered model of care
• Continued improvements in quality of care
• A strong partnership with the CEO of ESH and other senior leaders
• Improving the trust level with unions and improved labor relations
• A record of responsiveness to regulatory agencies and the ability to develop corrective action plans
• Strong working relationship with the Secretary of Health and Human Services, allies in the legislature, and with the Medical Executive Committee and physicians of Eleanor Slater Hospital

The Location
Cranston, Rhode Island, with a population of over 80,000, is adjacent to and considered part of metropolitan Providence, the capital of the state. Providence, with a population of over 180,000, is the home of Brown University, several other academic institutions, and many cultural attractions.

From Benefit Street’s "Mile of History" on the East Side to festive Federal Hill, Rhode Island’s own "Little Italy," the capital city of Providence is known and loved for its abundance of historic and cultural attractions. Three-and-a-half centuries of history are alive and well on the streets of Providence, as evident in the scores of immaculately preserved Colonial, Federal, Greek Revival and Victorian houses located throughout the city. The Rhode Island State House, Arcade, John Brown House and the Meeting House of the First Baptist Church in America are among the many historic buildings which are open to the public year-round.

In addition to magnificent architecture, Providence offers a host of attractions for connoisseurs of the arts. Tony Award-winning Trinity Repertory Company, the Rhode Island Philharmonic and the Museum of Art/Rhode Island School of Design offer acclaimed theatre, fine arts and orchestral music. Other exciting entertainment options
include the seasonal "Broadway" series at the Providence Performing Arts Center and numerous alternative theatre and dance productions.

Providence is also home to the Rhode Island Convention Center, New England's newest convention facility, which is in the heart of Capital Center and just footsteps away from spectacular Waterplace Park and the blue-ribbon restaurants for which the city is renowned. See www.pwcvb.com.

Compensation
A compensation package will be constructed commensurate with the background and experience of the selected candidate. Most significant is the opportunity to have significant short and long-term impact in a unique organization that serves a vital public health mission.

For More Information
We welcome applications, nominations, referrals and suggestions. Interested parties please send resume and cover letter to ESLaterCOO2168@ZurickDavis.com. For additional information, please contact Lida Junghans, PhD (lida.junghans@zurickdavis.com) or Jeffrey Zegas at 781-938-1975. All contact with ZurickDavis will remain confidential.

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