Hospital Focuses on Socially Responsible Food Purchasing

Washington Hospital is increasing the amount of seasonal, organic, and locally grown produce it puts on patients’ plates thanks to a collaborative purchasing effort by hospitals in the region and a new computer system that makes real-time menu changes. The hospital is part of the Regional Produce Purchasing Project, which works with small independent local farmers to purchase produce.

“It’s really about making smart decisions around how we provide food and nourish the people we serve,” said Kim Alvari, a registered dietitian and director of Food and Nutrition Services. “We want to be socially, economically, and environmentally responsible while providing the most nutritious food possible to our patients, visitors, and staff.”

The Hospital joined the Regional Produce Purchasing Project last fall. It includes six Bay Area hospitals and is organized by San Francisco Bay Area Physicians for Social Responsibility (SF PSR) in partnership with Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF).

Flu Shot Blitz Begins September 29

From September 29–October 5, and October 13–October 19, the Hospital is holding its Annual Flu Shot Blitz. All employees, doctors, and volunteers are welcome and encouraged to receive their annual flu shot in the Fremont conference room (at the main hospital next to staffing office). A roving cart will also be making rounds on the floors.

Reminder: the Alameda County masking mandate is still in effect. All health care workers who work in patient care areas and decline the flu vaccine will be required to wear a surgical mask. The masking mandate applies to anyone who has declined the flu shot or has not received it by November 1.

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After October 19, you can get a flu shot at Employee Health Services [Washington West, 1st floor]. Hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The deadline to get your flu shot, provide proof of vaccine or sign a declination is December 16, 2013!
Community Health Resource Library Provides All of Your Research Needs

Grimmer Library has been consolidated into the Community Health Resource Library, located in Washington West (2500 Mowry Avenue, Suite 100). The Library provides research as well as literature searches. The latest journals and reference materials are also available for physicians, nurses, and other allied healthcare personnel involved in patient care, decision-making, performance improvement and research. In addition, the library offers informational resources for the community on health-related topics in the form of books, journals, magazines and DVDs.

The library is open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday. Free Osteoporosis, blood pressure and body mass index screenings are available from 10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on a drop in basis Monday through Friday. For more information about the library and its services call (510) 494-7030 or visit www.healthlibrary.org. To request articles or literature searches, please contact Lucy Hernandez at 510-494-7009 or lucy_hernandez@whhs.com.

New! Top Hat Raffle Tickets on Sale Now

Enter the Top Hat Grand Raffle to win groceries for a year from Whole Foods Market valued at $2,400. Tickets are $20 each or three for $50. Call the Foundation at (510) 791-3428 to reserve your ticket for a chance to win.

Top Hat XXVII, Washington Hospital Healthcare Foundation’s 27th annual gala, will be held on Saturday, October 12, 2013. Support a good cause while enjoying a glamorous evening of fine food and incredible entertainment. Employees and volunteers are eligible for a discounted ticket at $225. Payroll deduction is available. For more details or to purchase tickets, please call the Foundation at (510) 791-3428 or email foundation@whhs.com.

Get Your Child’s Plate in Shape!

Join Lorie Roffelsen, R.D., for a fun and interactive family class on Wednesday, October 2. Lorie will share healthy eating tips with parents, and kids will have the chance to participate in hands-on activities. They’ll make their own pizza to take home and bake, and also measure out the dry ingredients for apple yogurt muffins.

The class will take place from 7 to 9 p.m. in the Conrad E. Anderson, M.D. Auditorium, Room A in Washington West.

The class is limited to 50 participants and there is fee of $5 per family (pay at the door). Register online at whhs.com/event/class-registration.

For more information, call the Women’s Center at (510) 608-1301.

HOSPITAL PRODUCE, continued

Kim had the opportunity to visit a local farm in August to see firsthand how these small family farms operate. She and Scott Garcia, food purchasing supervisor, took a tour of Dwelley Farms in Brentwood.

“We were able to talk to the farmers and ask questions about food safety,” she said. “About 60 percent of food-borne illnesses come from produce, so it’s important to know who is providing the food and what kind of safe-handling practices they have in place. For example, is there a place for workers to wash their hands, how is the water kept clean, how do they bring the trucks in and out of the fields, and how do they avoid contamination with animal waste? I was impressed with what I saw at the farm.”

The Hospital is in a much better position to take advantage of local, seasonal produce now that it has a new state-of-the-art software tool, the Spoken Menu from CBORD. FNS can make instantaneous changes to patient menus when a good deal on fresh produce becomes available.

Kim said the effort is all part of the Hospital’s continued focus on healthier food and environmentally sound practices. Washington Hospital is a member of SF PSR’s Bay Area Hospital Leadership Team, started in 2005 to help local hospitals share knowledge and pool their purchasing power to focus on healthier, sustainably produced food.

THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR SPONSORS FOR SUPPORTING THE HOSPITAL’S COMMUNITY MAMMOGRAPHY PROGRAM!

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