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FEATURED

## CRH making improvements

BRUCE WHETTEN | DOUGLAS DISPATCH Oct 22, 2014



Chief Medical Officer Dr. Luciano Fochesatto stands in front of some new radiology equipment that was recently purchased for Cochise Regional Hospital.

BRUCE WHETTEN | DOUGLAS DISPATCH

In an effort to educate the community about the progress at CochiseRegionalHospital, Chief Medical Officer Dr. Luciano Fochesatto held a community outreach meeting Oct. 13 at the hospital where members of the community as well as the media could view first hand the changes that have been made.

Dr. Fochesatto said shortly after CRH took over SoutheastArizonaMedicalCenter the Arizona Department of Health Services was down to inspect the premises.

"They found several problems in the hospital operations," he said. "Since then we have been dealing with the state basically."

Dr. Fochesatto added the state would come down about every three weeks and visit and where one problem was fixed, another one would arise. Those concerns have been addressed and now the focus has been on improving the hospital and the care it provides its patients.

The radiology department recently underwent a major upgrade.

"We put in a new CT scanner, a new mammogram and ultra sound, a new echo cardiogram," Dr. Fochesatto said. "We have a new nuclear medicine room that is being installed on the 28th of this month and we are finishing the process of signing up for the MRI machine. ... Not even Sierra Vista can offer this degree of complexity from the radiology stand point of view. ... This was a two million dollar investment."

Dr. Fochesatto said Beth Bowers, the ultrasound tech for CRH, recently spent three weeks in Chicago training with the cardiologist up there on how to use this equipment and address the needs of the patients who may be coming in to use the system.

"We are looking to be able to offer these tests seven days a week," the doctor said.

Telemedicine is another thing CRH will soon be offering, Dr. Fochesatto added.

"We are providing 24/7 coverage for this to backup the ER guys here," he said. "There is always a second opinion available."

The emergency room will also be changed shortly from the tight cramped space it is now to something more roomier and private for the patient.

Dr. Fochesatto, though stationed in Chicago, has 24/7 access to all that goes on at this hospital.

"I know every time a patient comes in (and) checks out," he said, "I get access to the blood hookup, imaging results, cat scans, x-rays."

CochiseRegionalHospital is looking to find ways to keep patients at their facility rather than send them off to another hospital.

"We need to be responsible," Dr. Fochesatto said. "I cannot keep someone here that I cannot handle. However any patient who is transferred out is not transferred unless they have my approval."

The doctor on duty will often times call Dr. Fochesatto and they will discuss the patient together and see what is best in that particular situation.

Admissions used to be 10-15 per month at Cochise Regional now they are up to 40-45 per month.

Heart attack patients are tricky Dr. Fochesatto said and because of that they are still not able to treat them at CRH.

"If you have an acute one you need to be transferred within 90 minutes," he said. "Every case is different so one that happened two or three days ago we can treat through medication."

Staff wise its one nurse for every five patients, Dr. Fochesatto said.

"We currently have 13 full-time nurses," he said.

Dr. Fochesatto is happy with how things are progressing at CochiseRegionalHospital but he admits he would like to see them done a little faster.

He added having to deal with all these issues from the state has slowed things down a bit but he feels the hospital is moving in the right direction and he's wanting to get the word out about all the positive changes being made to Cochise Regional Hospital.

"We are investing heavily in this hospital all in an effort to keep the patients here, Dr. Fochesatto said.