

St. Joseph Healthcare Abstracts

OH 3383

Sister Corinne Bayley

Interviewed by David Cox

May 15, 1999

Language: English

Project: St Joseph Healthcare

Status: Transcript, 29 pages

Abstract

An oral history with Sister Corinne Bayley. This interview is part of a project documenting the St. Joseph Healthcare System in Orange County, California. Bayley discusses her background in hospital administration and the formation of the St. Joseph System amidst changes in the healthcare environment. Recalls concerns about balancing centralized and localized decision-making, and the evolution of the central board's makeup. Discusses maintaining the ministry's philosophy as the population of Sisters declines, and the future role of lay people in the System. Explains the process of identifying St. Joseph's core values, how they have become embedded in the system culture, and the method of selecting lay people who will adhere to those values. Bayley obtained a masters degree in medical ethics and was appointed bioethics coordinator. Discusses bioethics committees formed at the local hospitals, and her involvement with other such committees around the country. Describes a bioethics workshop series and newsletter she was associated with; also values committees. Discusses the decision to change one core value and what values mean. Feels System's biggest challenge is staying true to its mission. Discusses the impact of growth on the System, and the possibility of using alternative medicine in the hospital. Describes what it means to be a Catholic hospital.

OH 3379**Eleanor Brewer**

Interviewed by David Cox

May 15, 1999; June 19, 1999

Language: English

Project: St Joseph Healthcare

Status: Transcript, 30 pages; 29 pages

Abstract

First Interview, May 15, 1999

An oral history with Eleanor Brewer. This interview is part of a project documenting the St. Joseph Healthcare System in Orange County, California. Brewer explains her background in healthcare and how she came to work at St. Joseph. Describes projects she has overseen, such as changing insurance arrangements and retrofitting a building into a corporate headquarters. Discusses insurance issues and programs. Describes sending new hospital equipment to Mexico City after a major earthquake destroyed a hospital. Recalls various other projects she has been involved with; she often starts projects, which are then turned over to others for management. Discusses the challenge of coming to St. Joseph's as a new, unknown leader from another state, trying to organize the hospitals without threatening their autonomy. Describes the System's adaptation to recent changes in healthcare.

Second Interview, June 19, 1999

Follow-up to first interview. Describes reorganizing the hospitals' ailing HMO, Health Plan of America. Tried to ease the transition for members, and helped many workers find jobs before their positions were eliminated. Discusses negotiations with other groups and HMOs, and explains why Health Plan of America was struggling. Brewer gives her educational and professional background; she initially worked with medical records and privacy issues. Describes how she met Robert O'Leary, who later hired her at St. Joseph. Explains some uses of medical records for research, and her advocacy of privacy issues. Discusses several of the chief officers and Sisters she has worked with at St. Joseph. Describes how she came to have a strong relationship with the Sisters of St. Joseph. Discusses the Sisters' basic philosophy. Explains why St. Joseph is prospering while most California hospitals are losing money. Discusses the importance of asking people how they need to be served; gives examples of local Californians who request dental care, and a Mexican community that requested a plaza, which helped them assemble and improve their area. Predicts changes in healthcare that may be experienced in the coming century. Discusses changes in the population of Sisters and numerous challenges the health system is facing. Brewer enjoys working with an organization that focuses on a mission rather than money.

OH 2975

Phyllis Cahill

Interviewed by David Cox

November 3, 2001

Language: English

Project: St Joseph Healthcare

Status: Transcript, 24 pages

Abstract

An oral history with Phyllis Cahill. This interview is part of a project documenting the St. Joseph Healthcare System in Orange County, California. Cahill explains how she became involved with St. Joseph; originally trained to be teacher but had trouble finding work so applied to be St. Joseph receptionist. Describes learning to be a receptionist, and excitement as St. Joseph grew and evolved. Later became project coordinator and learned more business skills. Liked feeling that her work served others. Became St. Joseph's representative for the chamber of commerce, and went on to become president of that body because of her ability to network. Since St. Joseph has been in Orange County for decades, people look to it for security and answers to healthcare concerns; such high expectations can be an emotional burden on the the Sisters. Discusses some tension when the Sisters turned hospital management over to lay people, and the lay leaders' efforts to be true to the Sisters' vision of healthcare. Feels the system has become less united and more departmentalized in recent years. Describes changes to the System and its programs as the number of Sisters diminishes. Faster pace of modern healthcare allows less time for person-to-person healing and soothing. Hopes healthcare in the future will balance financial viability with true service for patients. Discusses health system's efforts to prepare for possible bioterrorism, and how September 11 has affected her sponsorship efforts. Describes past experience of closing some hospitals and acquiring others. Feels it is hard for those who remember a more personable era of healthcare to adapt to a faster, more businesslike climate. Hopes the Sisters will remain strong and make wise decisions about St. Joseph as their numbers grow smaller.

OH 2974

Alan Chamison

Interviewed by David Cox

May 19, 2001

Language: English

Project: St Joseph Healthcare

Status: Transcript, 21 pages

Abstract

An oral history with Alan Chamison, former financial officer in the St. Joseph System. This interview is part of a project documenting the St. Joseph Healthcare System in Orange County, California. Chamison explains how his connection to Robert O'Leary led to a job at St. Joseph. Describes efforts to get hospitals in the System to work together rather than competing, and to get employees to focus on the Sisters' mission in addition to financial success. Gives his educational and professional background. Recalls working with one Sister who ran an efficient hospital and didn't want to chain it to weaker ones, and another Sister who feared he would accept bribes. Discusses the challenge of staying both financially viable and true to the Sisters' mission. Recalls the struggle to get the Health Plan of America back on its feet. Discusses sending aid to Mexico following an earthquake. Describes the impact on his job of diagnostic related groups (DRGs) and Independent Practice Associations (IPAs), and the complexities of negotiating with others. Clarifies which titles he has held in the System. Recalls his two biggest challenges: unifying the hospitals' credit, and convincing religious and lay leaders to be open to growth. Names several hospitals they considered inviting into the System, and explains issues they considered when deciding whether to collaborate with the hospitals. His most satisfying accomplishment was leaving the hospitals even stronger than he found them, and in possession of greater resources. Respects Sisters of St. Joseph and feels honored to have worked with them. Explains what induced him to leave to accept a position in Texas.

OH 3385

Sister Maura Judge

Interviewed by David Cox

July 16, 1999

Language: English

Project: St Joseph Healthcare

Status: Transcript, 33 pages

Abstract

An oral history with Sister Maura Judge. This interview is part of a project documenting the St. Joseph Healthcare System in Orange County, California. The judge describes the development and expansion of the health care system leading up to its formal organization. Explains how she helped the system implement its values. Recalls deliberations about formally becoming a health system, and concern that the Sisters' philosophy be an integral part of the new organization. Discusses the System's incorporation, efforts to define its details, hiring of Robert O'Leary as CEO, and his contributions to the organization. Before becoming involved in the health system, Judge taught high school, then college. Discusses the backgrounds of others she worked with, and many Sisters' evolving understanding of their duty to the community. Explains the benefits of a large System for the individual hospitals. Describes efforts to codify the St. Joseph philosophy and values. Can't think of anything she would have done differently. Discusses potential future challenges for the system, particularly staying true to the core values as the number of Sisters in leadership diminishes. Feelings, values, and financial vitality are all crucial goals of the system. Explains how she came to work in various positions with St. Joseph, and her current involvement with a program that focuses on the wellness of mind, body, and spirit.

OH 3387

Jeff Maysent

Interviewed by David Cox

January 20, 2000

Language: English

Project: St Joseph Healthcare

Status: Transcript, 22 pages

Abstract

An oral history with Jeff Maysent. This interview is part of a project documenting the St. Joseph Healthcare System in Orange County, California. Maysent explains how he came to work with St. Joseph Healthcare, and the process of transforming it into an organized system consistent with the Sisters' mission. Discusses establishing an insurance company to serve the System, and obtaining better credit by negotiating as a group of hospitals. Recalls specific Sisters he worked with. Discusses implementing the Sisters' values in the new System. Gives his educational and professional background. Describes some of his responsibilities in the System. Discusses reimbursement issues, including acquiring and selling the Health Plan of America. Explains hospitals' relationship with the government. Lists some of his most important accomplishments. Discusses development and implementation of System values. Can't think of anything he would have done differently.

OH 3380

Sister Nancy O'Conner

Interviewed by David Cox

September 18, 2000

Language: English

Project: St Joseph Healthcare

Status: Transcript, 19 pages

Abstract

An oral history with Sister Nancy O'Connor. This interview is part of a project documenting the St. Joseph Healthcare System in Orange County, California. O'Connor discusses the decision to organize hospitals into a system, and some changes the System underwent over the years. Recalls concern about competing with a national hospital corporation, and the decision to strengthen the regional system rather than focus on growth. Discusses factors that affect financial viability. Considers how the human genome project may affect healthcare. Discusses "Beach House" meetings about whether and how to form a hospital system. Describes advocacy for the WIC (Women, Infants, Children) campaign and Medicare. Recalls major events while she was chairperson of the System's board. Gives her educational and professional background. Feels the biggest challenge in the future will be balancing financial constraints with values. Explains current role as a member of the health system board.

OH 3386

Robert O'Leary

Interviewed by David Cox

January 20, 2000

Language: English

Project: St Joseph Healthcare

Status: Transcript, 34 pages

Abstract

An oral history with Robert O'Leary. This interview is part of a project documenting the St. Joseph Healthcare System in Orange County, California. O'Leary explains how he came to be the first CEO of the St. Joseph System. Describes how he and the Sisters adjusted to the new arrangement. Recalls bringing in Chamison, Maysent, Brewer, and others to help manage the System. Discusses the Sisters' emphasis on values and his efforts to implement them; success in that realm is the achievement he is most proud of. The atmosphere was originally tense, but later warmed up as hospitals saw the success of the System. O'Leary worried that success might make everyone cocky; he saw the earthquake in Mexico as a chance to put success to good use by donating new equipment to a Mexico City hospital. Describes soliciting companies' help, and supplying equipment and training for the Cruz Roja hospital. Tried to be respectful and inquire what the hospital really needed. Discusses the close relationship between St. Joseph Hospital management and the religious community. Feels it is more important for lay leaders to share their unique business perspective than to just say what they think the religious community wants to hear. Discusses the decision to set up their own insurance company. Describes his early efforts to establish the right culture among board members and to build trust with hospital boards. Recalls four-day course to teach and evaluate implementation of St. Joseph values. Describes Sisters' recognition that their numbers were diminishing, and that lay leaders could both compensate for that loss and teach them to manage healthcare better. The only big frustration he remembers is the inability to convince the Sisters to take advantage of numerous growth opportunities, though the System did grow in later years. Recalls struggling to make the Health Plan of America financially viable, and using the profit from its sale to further the religious community's mission. Feels his most important accomplishment is the friends he has made. Later used a values program similar to St. Joseph's to turn around a company that was \$3 billion in debt. Recalls methods of integrating those values at St. Joseph. Describes having a sculpture done of the original founders of the religious community, to commemorate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the community's founding.

OH 3382

Sister Jane Frances Power

Interviewed by David Cox

April 10, 1999

Language: English

Project: St Joseph Healthcare

Status: Transcript, 27 pages

Abstract

An oral history with Sister Jane Frances Power, who was president of the St. Joseph Healthcare System before Robert O'Leary was hired. This interview is part of a project documenting the St. Joseph Healthcare System in Orange County, California. Power discusses current issues in healthcare and in the community of Sisters. Explains how the Sisters came to be involved with healthcare during the 1918 flu epidemic, and recalls the organization of hospitals in the early years. Recalls changes to the system over the years, including the impact of Medicare and increased employment of lay people as the number of Sisters diminishes. Discusses reasons for formally establishing the System, and various features of it. Explains some people's hurt feelings during the process of selecting a CEO and establishing the System. Discusses switching pension plans, changing of presidency, implementing the Sisters' values in the hospitals, and integrating lay people into administration. Explains the Sisters' evolving attitude toward lay employees, and their influence on administration and System values. Feels satisfied with the System's progress, though she wishes the transition had been handled a little differently. Thinks System's growth has been solid and beneficial to local communities.

OH 2903

Sister Michaela Rock

Interviewed by David Cox

November 1, 2000

Language: English

Project: St Joseph Healthcare

Status: Transcript, 26 pages

Abstract

An oral history with Sister Michaela Rock. This interview is part of a project documenting the St. Joseph Healthcare System in Orange County, California. Rock describes her decision to become a nun and be involved with hospital work. Recalls her participation in discussions about forming a formal hospital system, Colarelli's contributions, Sister Jane Frances's opinion and leadership, and meetings at the beach house to discuss establishing the system. Discusses why the system was necessary, and a few regrets she has about it. Worries system has come to focus too much on business, not enough on service, and the Sisters' mission. Feels mentoring is key to teaching mission; discusses ways the system could have helped employees learn and grow. Recalls a few times she mentored informally. Explains the discernment process in which Sisters prayed and chose Sister Jane Frances as president of the holding company. Describes her involvement with hospital administration over the years and her current participation in a community health program. Discusses the leadership of David Reed and Rich Statutto, and the process of deciding when to change presidents. Feels CEO compensation packages are excessive. Lists issues St. Joseph will need to consider in the new millennium. Feels system is very good, but can be better.

OH 3384

Sister Susanne Sassus

Interviewed by David Cox

June 29, 1999

Language: English

Project: St Joseph Healthcare

Status: Transcript, 31 pages

Abstract

An oral history with Sister Susanne Sassus. This interview is part of a project documenting the St. Joseph Healthcare System in Orange County, California. Sassus explains how Vatican II and the sixties decreased the number of Sisters working in hospital administration. That and other issues led to beach house discussions about establishing a hospital system; recalls who attended and what Colarelli added to the process. Discusses increasing involvement of lay people in administration and the development of official values. Describes the hiring of Robert O'Leary as the first president of the System, and some concerns people had about changing the organization. Explains the evolution of St. Joseph's administration methods in the twentieth century. Discusses how she became involved with healthcare, her goals and methods, her current sponsorship position, and her focus on values and service. Explains the System's change in focus from acute care to public health. Discusses hospitals the System has acquired or worked with, including the Methodist Health System. Describes some Sisters' current concerns, and efforts to reconcile income from HMO sale with the System's not-for-profit status. Some hospital CEOs left when the System began. Discusses Robert O'Leary's administration and the future of the System.

OH 2961

Sister Joleen Todd

Interviewed by David Cox

March 20, 2001

Language: English

Project: St Joseph Healthcare

Status: Transcript, 27 pages

Abstract

An oral history with Sister Joleen Todd. This interview is part of a project documenting the St. Joseph Healthcare System in Orange County, California. Todd describes her background with the St. Joseph Health System and her limited involvement with the decision to create a formal system. Explains her involvement with John Goldthorpe's Employee Assistance Program. Discusses tensions over the formation of the System and the perpetuation of the Sisters' values. Recalls a few things she wishes had been handled differently, and her efforts to learn and address employees' needs. Discusses some the System's successes, as well as its stormy relationship with physicians. The Rates System's success in various aspects of human relations, and discusses some challenges the System faces. Compares the managing styles of O'Leary, Reed, and Statuto. Describes issues the System and the Catholic Church must address in the new millennium. Discusses hospitals' involvement with public health issues. Describes her childhood desire to become a Sister of St. Joseph and her education after joining the Sisters. Hopes in the future lie with the leaders of St. Joseph who will promote Christ-like service and healthy lifestyles.