

**Nancy Steiger, RN MSN
Chief Executive Officer
San Mateo Medical Center**



Ms. Steiger is Chief Executive Officer of San Mateo Medical Center (SMMC) where she has been responsible for a reorganization and significant financial improvement while increasing volume, programs and services throughout San Mateo County. Prior to joining SMMC, she was COO of Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital/St. Joseph Health System. Nancy received her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from New York University and her Master's degree from the University of California, San Francisco. She is the co-author of *Self-Care Nursing: Theory and Practice*, published in 1985 and again in 1995.

Nancy Steiger participated in the LEAD program in 2005. The LEAD program, formally known as *LEADing Organizational Change: Advancing Quality through Culturally Responsive Care*, is a joint program of the UCSF Center for the Health Professions and the California Health Care Safety Net Institute. The goal of the program is to help select public hospital teams apply rapid cycle improvement methods to a variety of efforts to improve cultural and linguistic competence, in a learning collaborative, while working to make larger systemwide changes. As a member of the team from SMMC, Nancy provided the organizational inspiration needed for the project to be effective at her hospital. By taking ownership of the

LEAD project and its objectives and by actively participating in the SMMC team's decision making process, she demonstrated to the other team members and the rest of the SMMC staff that cultural and linguistic competence was central to the mission of the organization. Nancy also collaborated with the executives from the other three participating hospitals (San Joaquin General Hospital, Contra Costa Medical Center and LAC+USC Healthcare Network) to move the entire LEAD program forward.

What recommendations would you give to other leaders about undertaking organizational change efforts to improve quality of care for diverse populations?

It is critical that hospital executives and high level leadership demonstrate both verbally and through their active involvement that these changes have a high priority and are consistent with the broader service excellence goals of the institution. We also found it helpful to involve physician leadership early in this process. Additionally, targeting one area of the hospital with a high need for change (we chose the Emergency Department) will enable you to more successfully test rapid cycle improvements before spreading them to the entire institution.

Describe a current leadership challenge that is linked to the LEAD project and how you are using newly acquired skills through the LEAD program.

SMMC has been undergoing significant change and growth in recent years. Leadership was concerned that the LEAD project and cultural competence would be seen by the organization as "the initiative of the day." At the same time that this program was being implemented, work was underway to improve service excellence as well as patient safety. The leadership challenge was linking the role of cultural and linguistic competence as essential to all efforts to improve both service excellence and patient safety and see all three as integral.

Favorite leadership quote.

Example is not the main thing in influencing others, it's the only thing. Albert Schweitzer

What one change, from a national health care policy perspective, would you like to see happen in the next 6 to 18 months?

Providing basic insurance to the uninsured.