

# NEWS

## Medical center focuses on 'people business'

BY ALAN RUSCH

ELLSWORTH COUNTY I-R

If efforts encouraged by team building consultant Clint Maun are successful, employees at Ellsworth County Medical Center in Ellsworth will all soon be proclaiming "I am ECMC."

Maun, of Maun-Lemke, Inc. of Omaha, Neb., visited ECMC employees Aug. 25 to share his innovative ideas and proven techniques to improve the "people business" of health care at the hospital as well as to move it to the next level of "excellence."

Maun said his involvement with ECMC came about because the Kansas Hospital Association wanted to do a project on culture improvement specifically targeted toward rural and small hospitals. He said a total of three Kansas hospitals, including ECMC, were selected for the project.

To move to the next level of culture improvement, Maun asked ECMC administrator Roger Pearson to put a 90 day team together consisting of 12 employees.

"They named themselves ECMC," Maun said. "Which, in this case, stands for Empowered Co-workers Making Change."

The team consists of Pearson, Betsy Lee, Dale Soukup, Deb Moeckel, Janell Witt, Jeannell Dolezal, Karen Moos, Lynette Dick, Paul Bahr, Rosemary Rathbun, Sandy Wiedel and Tammy Hammer.

Given that both hospital employees and the patients they serve are different today than in years past, Maun said ECMC has to approach its mission of patient care from a team standpoint if it is to be successful.

"You want to capture more market share and not have everybody in Ellsworth County take you for granted," Maun said. "But you can't do it without teams."

Besides a continuing series of 90 day teams, sub-teams will also be formed to deal with such subjects as better orientation, better hiring, team-based interventions, team-based recognitions and team-based recruitment.

"We also have to make sure that work stays enjoyable," Maun said. "There is no reason why work, even in healthcare, can't be fun. That's what most co-workers want — an empowered location that [they are] involved in [that] they enjoy coming to work."

Maun said that if such an en-



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**Clint Maun**  
Consultant

vironment is created using teams, it leads to using those same teams later for market share increase.

"We're interested in growing market share and having the town not take us for granted since we are one of the largest employers in town," he said. "And to make sure there is a great partnership with the [rural health] clinic and the hospital together on the same ground. We're also interested in making sure we don't have anything that makes the work un-enjoyable or frustrating to the customer, such as turf, territory, finger-pointing, blame or chronic negative attitude."

Maun said he understands that teams must be willing to

take on members who are not willing to play "team ball."

"You always attack the problem and not the person," Maun noted. "They might be technically proficient at doing their work, but decide to hold the entire team hostage with their mood or their attitude everyday."

He calls these employees "BMTs" — belly-achers, moaners and groaners.

"We're asking for the majority of the people who work here that care about this place to take on those few that might want to make it not so nice," Maun said.

"We're not going to be held hostage to a few people who

want to make a pitty party everyday. We're asking people to be solution-oriented."

He told ECMC employees to expect to be asked to be involved on teams, either on the overall ECMC team or on a specialty team.

"We're going to chunk this out with very measurable goals," Maun said. "There will be very defined progress notes. We will measure patient satisfaction, margin of new patient business and employee satisfaction. ECMC is going to get those scores up."

If everything goes according to plan, all ECMC employees will unite in a common goal of working in an organization where all employees have a voice; where each individual is important and makes a difference to the organization's success; and where employees take ownerships in the organization.

Maun plans on also getting the business community in Ellsworth excited about "Team ECMC's" efforts.

"The business community needs to be excited about us keeping our patients in town," he said. "The whole town benefits when you have a vibrant, alive economy and