

Strategic Planning Meetings

LAWRENCEVILLE — Employees at Lawrence County Memorial Hospital have been busy this week, as management has held a series of meetings to keep them abreast of what's happening with strategic planning at the facility.

The first of the one-hour meetings took place Tuesday morning, and sessions were scheduled at noon and 2 p.m. on Wednesday. The final meeting took place at 6 p.m. Thursday, as the hospital attempted to make it convenient for the 130 full-time and 33 part-time employees to attend a session.

The meetings were to discuss findings of study done by Quorum Health, the hospital's management company that were put together last summer and fall.

"The meetings are designed so that we can be transparent with our teammates here at the hospital to discuss our strategic plan," LCMH Chief Executive Officer Don Robbins said.

Robbins noted that the hospital puts together a strategic plan every three years.

"We want to set the tone, set the table if you will, for goals we want to achieve," Robbins said. "The idea behind these meetings is to let the teammates know what the strategic plan is."

A three-member team from Quorum Health was at the hospital for the better part of a week in July, and conducted "stakeholder interviews" with members of the Lawrence County Memorial Hospital Board, hospital administrators, department leaders, the hospital's providers and 62 "community leaders."

The result was a report, about 140 pages in length. Robbins pared the findings down to about a dozen slides that provided the "meat and potatoes" of the report, which were presented to the employees at the meetings.

During the meetings he highlighted the hospital's strengths and weaknesses, as well as opportunities and threats.

Among the priorities, according to the report, the hospital should try to improve patient access, strengthen market and community outreach efforts, and become better when it comes to search engine optimization.

When it comes to improving patient access, Robbins said the hospital could consider "off campus" locations. It's possible, he said, that primary care clinics could be established in Bridgeport, Sumner, St. Francisville and Flat Rock.

Also, Robbins says a marketing team will be reinstated at the hospital to help get the word out about what's offered at LCMH. Plans also call for "beefing up" the hospital's Web site, www.lcmhosp.org.

The top priority, though, is physician recruitment.

"That's No. 1, because if we don't set the table for the future, we're not going anywhere," Robbins said. "We need a strategy to backfill all these people who are going to be retiring, and it's got to start now."