



**H**ave you ever considered being operated on by a robot? To me, the initial thought is not very inviting. Four gear-driven arms with “scissor hand features and mechanical movements” reaching toward me? A headless, faceless, heartless machine hovering over my body? A cold metallic touch? Not interested.

However, the conversion of robotic technology from battlefields to medical center operating rooms is happening. The introduction of robotic capabilities to the operating room theatre marks another chapter in the ever-changing world of health care delivery. Research and innovation breakthroughs resulting in applied technologies—including the use of robots—enable physicians and hospitals to continuously improve patient care.

These improvements include shorter lengths of stay and quicker recovery times. Operations that once required days of recovery are now being performed on a short-stay basis...meaning hours, not days, of recovery.

In addition, because surgery is performed in a less invasive manner, patients usually experience less pain. Smaller wounds from smaller incisions are not as painful as older styles of open surgery. Nobody likes pain.

At Thibodaux Regional, we have acquired the da Vinci<sup>®</sup> Robotic Surgical System. This important investment enables Thibodaux Regional surgeons to be on the “leading edge” as we call it. Thibodaux Regional is at the forefront of hospitals in the region performing gynecological and prostate surgery utilizing the da Vinci System. Not many hospitals in the United States can claim the same capabilities.

Acquiring the da Vinci System provides an immediate gain to area gynecological and prostate patients. In addition, it has the potential to serve a larger patient population. We believe that this new technology is here to stay and that patients needing cardiac surgery—as one example—clearly will have the opportunity to reap the benefits of robotics in the future.

The educational benefits to the hospital are significant. Our very capable staff members will be exposed to “robotic thinking” and acquire technical skills that cannot be learned overnight. The fund of knowledge we are now acquiring will position us to take advantage of the future developments that will naturally occur as technology advances.

After thinking about it, being operated on by a (physician-directed) robot is not so bad. In fact, I don't really care at all as long as the outcomes resemble those predicted. As for the surgery performed, I won't feel anything anyway...I will be under anesthesia!

Greg Stock  
Chief Executive Officer