Susan R. Murray started her career in retail, and then became a flight attendant. 20 years ago while on a furlough from Hawaiian Airlines, she accepted a clinic coordinator position at Straub and never looked back. Today, she is the newly appointed executive in charge of The Queen’s Medical Center – West O’ahu.

Through Susan’s passion for serving others, she discovered her calling in the health care field. People-focused by nature, health care was a very good fit for her. (She is a graduate of Punahou and earned her undergraduate degree in Psychology from the University of Hawai’i.) After earning her MBA in Health Services Management from the University of Dallas in Dallas, Texas, Susan worked for Kapi’olani Medical Center for Women and Children as the Director of Surgical Services. She was later appointed assistant vice president and managed a number of clinical services.

After six years as assistant vice president at Kapi’olani, Susan moved to Baton Rouge, Louisiana, to accept a position as vice president at Women's Hospital. In her three years at the hospital, she grew patient volume and market share and improved patient satisfaction. Susan then became Hospital Administrator of the Women’s Hospital of Centennial Medical Center in Nashville, Tennessee, where she also successfully grew the hospital’s volume and market share.

In 2002, she took a position as the Hawai’i Regional Hospital Administrator and Regional Vice President for Quality, Safety & Service for the Kaiser Permanente Foundation Health Plan and Hospital. At Kaiser, she managed their 318-bed hospital, which has an annual operating budget of $300 million and a staff of over 2,000. Susan also oversaw quality, safety, and service for Kaiser’s 18 clinics and their health plan, which covers 230,000 lives. She held this position for 10 years before coming to Queen’s.

Susan’s official title—QHS Senior Vice President, West O’ahu Region and Chief Operating Officer, The Queen’s Medical Center – West O’ahu—may seem a bit imposing, but her strategy is welcoming. “I will meet with employer groups [in West O’ahu] and the employees of employer groups to listen to their needs,” she says. “Hospitals are a central point in a community. [We are] very excited about becoming an integral part of the community.” The development of services at QMC West will always include listening to the needs of the people. This resonates with the theme for Susan’s work in health care which has consistently been one of patient- and family-centered care.