

News Release

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DATE: October 10, 2007

SUBJECT: Good Samaritan Receives Five Awards

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GOOD SAMARITAN HOSPITAL RECEIVES NATIONAL RECOGNITION AT PLANETREE CONFERENCE

Kearney, NE—Good Samaritan Hospital was the only hospital nationwide to receive more than one Planetree Program award at 2007 Planetree Annual Conference last week in Williamsburg, Virginia. A local physician, caregiver and volunteer also received awards. The awards promote patient-centered care by recognizing individuals who personalize and demystify the healthcare experience for others, as well as programs and services that support extraordinary achievement in patient-centered care.

Spirit of Planetree: Physician Champion Award

Dr. Lissa Woodruff is an internal medicine physician with Platte Valley Medical Group in Kearney and is a member of the Good Samaritan Hospital medical staff. Her award reads, "Dr. Woodruff is a well-respected and credible internal medicine physician....Her caring and compassion are evident in her practice with her relationships with colleagues and hospital staff. She works long hours to meet patient needs and her reputation earns her a busy practice. She participates in hospital-physician teams with the purpose of improving care and care systems. Her patients know that she cares about them as individuals first and foremost. She includes the families as part of a person's care. She remembers details about the patients' personal lives....She provides reassurance and comfort, as well as very competent medical care."

Spirit of Planetree: Caregiver Award

Heather Hascall, manager, Richard H. Young Hospital, was recognized for her leadership and contributions in furthering programs supporting patient-centered care. Heather developed the animal assisted therapy program that has more than 60 active volunteer teams of handlers and their dogs, cats and horse. The program has offered more than 5,000 hours of animal assisted service to our hospitals and community this past year. Heather has been active in the implementation of the therapeutic drumming program at Richard H. Young and Good Samaritan hospitals. Drumming now is a regular part of the therapeutic groups with the girls in the residential treatment center and is offered to other groups within the hospital and community. Heather recently became certified in clinical aromatherapy and has been active in all areas of healing arts.

Spirit of Planetree: Therapy Animal Award

Marla Boulton and her dog Gordon received the Therapy Animal Award. Marta has been very active at Good Samaritan, both as a volunteer therapy animal handler and also as one of the Funny Bones Caring Clowns. Gordon joins Marla when she is "clowning around."

Spirit of Planetree: Program Awards. Each year hospitals are invited to submit their best practices that support the 10 components of patient-centered care. This year Good Samaritan Hospital received two program awards.

Human Touch: Healthy Living Center Massage Therapy Program

The massage therapy program at Good Samaritan's Healthy Living Center extends both inside and outside the walls of the Healthy Living Center, and enables staff to bring healing touch into all areas of care. For example, the hospital brings massage to the Family Birthing Center for new moms during their stay in the hospital. Massage therapists partner with the Cancer Center to provide massage to palliative care patients, medical massage can assist with relieving pain from injuries and medical conditions. Infant massage classes provide the opportunity for caregivers of infants to learn techniques that promote infant development and attachment. Hospitals employees can sign up for chair massages.

Nutritional and Nurturing Aspects of Food: The Healthy Living Center Participation Kitchen

The architectural design of the Participation Kitchen provides a comfortable and familiar environment for students as they learn healthy cooking techniques. Class instructors teach practical strategies and ideas for disease management and health promotion while maintaining tastes and traditions. The participation kitchen meals are about more than food -- they are also about building relationships and teams. The Healthy Living Center plays host to an array of cooking classes from "Soups, Chowders and Oodles of Gluten-Free/Wheat-free Noodles" to a "Bewitching Bash" cooking class just in time for Halloween entertaining.

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NOTE: Dr. Lissa Woodruff's photo is attached.

About Good Samaritan Hospital

Established by the Sisters of Saint Francis in 1924, Good Samaritan Hospital is a 287-bed regional referral center in Kearney, Nebraska. Now a member of Catholic Health Initiatives, Good Samaritan provides specialty care to over 350,000 residents of central Nebraska and northern Kansas. Good Samaritan boasts Nebraska's first accredited Chest Pain Center, a Level II trauma center featuring AirCare emergency helicopter transport, advanced orthopedic care, comprehensive neurosurgery and a nationally accredited cancer center among its many unique tertiary care services.

In the spirit of its founders, Good Samaritan serves not only as a medical facility, but also as a community partner. Good Samaritan is called by its core values of reverence, integrity, compassion and excellence to devote funding and resources to programs and services that benefit the health of the greater community.

About Planetree

Based in Derby, CT, Planetree (www.planetree.org) has been at the forefront of the effort to personalize, humanize, and demystify the health care system for nearly three decades. Today, a global community of more than 125 acute care hospitals, continuing care facilities, outpatient clinics, and consumer health libraries is putting into practice the Planetree model of patient-centered care whose components include empowerment of patients through access to information and education, involvement of loved ones and a healing environment.