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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

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Sharon Emergency Medicine & Sharon Hospital Promote Bicycle Safety in the Emergency Department

Sharon, CT – Together the emergency physicians and Sharon Hospital’s emergency department are promoting bicycle safety. “The physicians of Sharon Emergency Medicine and Sharon Hospital are taking an active role in trying to promote the safety of our bicycle riding population through our helmet give-away program in the emergency department” according to Dr. Scott Whyte of Sharon Emergency Medicine at Sharon Hospital. “We will be issuing bicycle helmets to patients who present for bicycle related injuries that do not own a helmet or have damaged their helmet in a bicycle related accident. We strongly encourage everyone who rides a bike, regardless of their age, to please wear a helmet” said Dr. Whyte.

Head trauma occurs every 15 seconds or between two and ten million times annually in the United States. Approximately 2% of all emergency department visits are for head injuries. Approximately 90% of these visits are for mild Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), and 10% are for moderate or severe TBI. “One leading cause of head trauma relates to bicycle accidents and more specifically lack of helmet use” according to Dr. Whyte.

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The following are several 2005 statistics from the Department of Transportation (NHTSA):

- There are over 85 million bicycle riders in the US
- 784 bicyclists died on US roads in 2005. 92% (720) of them died in crashes with motor vehicles
- About 540,000 bicyclists visit emergency rooms with injuries each year. Of those, about 67,000 had head injuries and 27,000 had injuries serious enough to be hospitalized.
- 1 in 8 of the cyclists with reported injuries had a brain injury
- 2/3 of the deaths are from traumatic brain injury
- A very high percentage (estimated from 45-88%) of cyclists' brain injuries can be prevented by a helmet
- Many years of potential life are lost because approximately half of the deaths are children under 15 years old
- Direct costs of cyclists' injuries due to NOT wearing a helmet are estimated at \$81 million each year & \$2.3 billion indirectly
- Bottom line, to prevent injury, anyone riding a bicycle should wear a helmet.

For information about the comprehensive services offered at the Emergency Department at Sharon Hospital, call the Sharon Hospital Emergency Physicians at 860.364.4110. Please have a safe and pleasurable bicycle riding season.

Founded in 1909, Sharon Hospital (sharonhospital.com) is a 78-bed acute care hospital located in the picturesque northwest corner of Connecticut. The hospital continues to aspire to excellence and strengthen its ability to provide quality comprehensive services. Sharon Hospital is in the process of completing construction of its new birthing center which features private suites overlooking the beautiful surrounding hills. Sharon Hospital's new emergency department & MRI suite are now open. They feature the latest technology in a contemporary new facility with private rooms. Together, the expansion project enhances quality of care at Sharon Hospital; providing a more convenient, modern setting for patients and staff. Sharon Hospital offers residents of 17 towns in

three states (CT, MA, NY) high quality healthcare combined with the warmth and personal care of a hospital that has a 98-year history of community service. Sharon Hospital is an Essent Healthcare facility and is licensed and accredited by many governmental and healthcare organizations, both regionally and nationally. For more information about the services offered at Sharon Hospital, please call 860.364.4141.

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