



A New Day. A New Vision for the Valley.

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## **Merrimack Valley Hospital Announces New Palliative Care Service**

**Nov. 30, 2009-** Merrimack Valley Hospital is pleased to announce its new Palliative Care Service for patients with life-threatening or life-limiting illnesses.

The Palliative Care Team of physicians, nurses, case managers and social workers helps patients understand the nature of their advanced illness, create a treatment plan that will improve their quality of life, and help them realize their end-of-life wishes. Palliative Care is aimed at control for pain, fatigue and nausea; emotional and spiritual support; food and nutrition; quality of life and dignity; health care goal setting; advanced planning; and wishes for end-of-life care.

"The hospital is proud and supportive of the fine work of this dedicated team in formulating a comprehensive and supportive approach for patients and families addressing end-of-life issues," said Chief Nursing Officer Diane Lovallo. "In what can be a stressful and emotional phase of life - a phase we will all eventually face - the support and assistance of such a team of professionals proves to be invaluable."

Any hospitalized patient with an advanced life-threatening or life-limiting illness, or group of illnesses such as cancer, heart failure, HIV, emphysema or dementia, is eligible for palliative care, when referred by his/her physician.

The service also provides help and support to families, friends and caregivers by helping them express their feelings and concerns; allowing them to ask questions and take part in the decision-making process, and informing them of the full spectrum of available resources for home care. The Palliative Care Service also educates families about the health-related problems they may face in the future and helps coordinate services.

For more information please call the Palliative Care Service at Merrimack Valley Hospital at 978-521-8148.

### **About Merrimack Valley Hospital:**

*Merrimack Valley Hospital maintains 107 acute care beds and 17 adult behavioral medicine beds; all are private rooms. The hospital's clinical strengths include a 24-hour emergency department; orthopedic, endoscopic, general, vascular, thoracic,*

*GYN and urologic surgery and outpatient pediatric surgery; wound care with hyperbaric therapy; adult behavioral medicine care with a focus on geriatric issues; a comprehensive Pain Management Center; a Sleep Study Lab; gastroenterology; otolaryngology and hospitalist services. MVH also provides a wide range of outpatient services, such as bone density testing; dysphasia testing; echocardiograms; electroencephalograms (EEG); electromyography (EMG); full-field digital mammography; magnetic resonance imaging (MRI); position emission tomography (PET-Scan); pulmonary function testing(PFT); nuclear medicine; surgical day care; ultrasound (general & obstetrical), and physical therapy and x-rays, and 64-Slice CT scans.*

*The hospital's awards for excellence include the Excellence Through Insight Award, 2008 (HealthStream Research); Best in Value Hospitals, 2008 (Data Advantage); Top Ranked Community Value Provider Award, 2007 (Cleverley & Associates; National Quality Leader Award for Pneumonia Care, 2006 (CareScience Select Practice); High Reliability Cardiac Care Award, 2006 (MassPRO); and An affiliate of Essent Healthcare, Inc., the hospital serves Merrimack Valley and southern New Hampshire. More information can be found at [www.merrimackvalleyhospital.com](http://www.merrimackvalleyhospital.com). Merrimack Valley Hospital is a licensed and certified mammography facility.*