

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SMH Diabetes Education Center Receives National Accreditation

PLYMOUTH, N.H. --- The Speare Memorial Hospital Diabetes Education Center has been accredited by the American Diabetes Association (ADA) in recognition of demonstrating best practice and meeting national standards in diabetes self-management education.

“We are so pleased to have received accreditation,” says Marie Veselsky, SMH dietitian and certified diabetes educator. “Becoming accredited by the ADA has been a two-year process. It validates the quality program we are able to offer diabetics in our community, and is based on a demonstrated need.”

Veselsky says diabetes is a disease state that is reaching epidemic status, but that a proactive approach can effectively treat and prevent or delay the onset. Liz Mills, RN, diabetes educator with the SMH Diabetes Education Center, further explains the ADA predicts that one in every three people born after the year 2000 will have diabetes, much of which will be attributed to obesity.

The purpose of the SMH Diabetes Education Program is to not only assist diagnosed diabetics self-manage their disease, but educates pre-diabetic about the steps they can take now to reduce their risk of developing the disease. Based on physician referrals, patients have an initial consultation for general instruction on diabetes and its potential complications, and then are scheduled for nutrition counseling for diet and lifestyle changes. Next, patients complete nine hours of diabetes education classes. The classes are divided into three modules and have been



The SMH Diabetes Education Team: (l-r) Marie Veselsky, dietitian and certified diabetes educator, Liz Mills, RN, Crystal Casscadden, pharmacist, and Craig Johnson, physical therapist.

developed in partnership with SMH Pharmacist Crystal Casscadden and Craig Johnson of Rehabilitation Services.

“The focus of the program is to help people with diabetes better control their blood sugars through a combination of diet, exercise and medication,” explains Veselsky. “It also helps them better understand what diabetes is and the importance of self-management to avoid complications.”

Once patients have completed the required coursework a follow-up plan is developed. Additionally, patients are encouraged to participate in the SMH Diabetes Support Group, which meets monthly. Currently there are 75 members.

To become accredited the SMH Diabetes Education Center had to meet 10 national standards, which also allows for reimbursement by Medicare and private insurers. Among them are: a certified diabetes educator is on staff; a written curriculum reflecting a documented community need and practice guidelines in accordance with ADA; documented outcomes of education interventions and self-management support strategies; and an ongoing evaluation and follow-up for patients and the program overall.

For more information about Speare Memorial Hospital’s Diabetes Education Center and/or Diabetes Support Group contact Marie Veselsky, CDE, or Liz Mills, RN, at (603) 238-6472. Speare Memorial Hospital is a 24-hour, acute care, non-profit community hospital and health care provider serving Plymouth and the communities of central New Hampshire for more than a century.

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