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SMH Fills New Safety Coordinator Position

PLYMOUTH, N.H.--- As a both a retired Marine and commercial airline pilot, Bridgewater resident Hoby Harmon lives the mantra “safety first.” Harmon is bringing his breadth and depth of experience to Speare Memorial Hospital as its new safety coordinator working hospital-wide to address quality and patient safety initiatives.

A former director of safety and standards for two squadrons in the Marines, followed by 18 years as an airline pilot flying internationally for Western/Delta airlines out of New York, Harmon says, “Safety is inherent in all communications, they aren’t just industry buzzwords. Safety is a driving force on my outlook and approach to life.” He also attended the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School with studies in aviation and ground safety.

Having spent the first month on the job assessing what is already in place at Speare Memorial Hospital, his job will be to more fully integrate safety processes and procedures, and elevate the hospital’s state of readiness in the event of an emergency. “The goal of any safety program is to minimize and mitigate risk, and when there is risk make it acceptable,” explains Harmon. “You can never get rid of risk, but you can manage its impact with appropriate response.”

As a new position at Speare, Director of Quality and Patient Safety Kofi Cash affirms Harmon’s role as hospital safety coordinator is to tie together existing elements, identify opportunities for improvement and proactively drill and train to ensure appropriate readiness response. Cash says Harmon’s military and aviation experience are desirable as healthcare quality nationwide seeks to adopt the “pilot’s checklist” as a model for enhancing safety practices. Using surgery as an example, Cash says, “The checklist model provides for consistent communication among team members, and in the case of surgery, makes patient safety paramount.”

Harmon moved to New Hampshire in 1990. Prior to joining Speare Memorial Hospital, he graduated from Suffolk University Law School in Boston and worked in various public



service roles including lobbying and political consulting in Concord, and serving in the New Hampshire House of Representatives from 1999-2000. He has also worked for the town of Bridgewater, and graduated as a full-time certified police officer at age 55 from the New Hampshire Police Standards and Training Council police academy. He is also certified as an emergency medical technician and a fire fighter 1.

For more information regarding quality and patient safety at Speare Memorial Hospital visit online at www.spearehospital.com or email qmcomments@spearehospital.com

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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