

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 7, 2009

Contact: Michele Hutchins
(603) 238-6468



SMH Hosting Advance Directives Day Open House

PLYMOUTH, N.H. – Speare Memorial Hospital, along with other national, state and community organizations, is leading an effort to highlight the importance of advance healthcare decision-making with the formal designation of April 16 as National Healthcare Decisions Day (NHDD).

On Thursday, April 16, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., the SMH Social Services Department will be welcoming the public throughout the day, with free information about advance care planning and advance directive forms. Social workers will be available to answer questions and provide guidance on how to initiate conversations about end of life care with family and friends. Individuals wishing to complete documents need only bring photo identification and contact information for the people they plan on designating as their durable power of attorneys for healthcare.

“As a result of National Healthcare Decisions Day, many more people in our community can be expected to have thoughtful conversations about their healthcare decisions and complete reliable advance directives to make their wishes known,” says Kathy Wieliczko, director of Social Services at Speare Memorial Hospital. “Fewer families and healthcare providers will have to struggle with making difficult healthcare decisions in the absence of guidance from the patient. Healthcare providers and facilities will also be better equipped to address advance healthcare planning issues before a crisis, and better able to honor patient wishes when the time comes to do so.”

For more information about Speare Memorial Hospital’s National Healthcare Decision Day Open House, please call 238-2216. More information about the nationwide initiative can be found at www.nationalhealthcaredecisionsday.org.

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. Visit online at www.spearehospital.com.

#####