

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SMH Volunteer Coordinator Fostering Community Connections

PLYMOUTH, N.H.--- Eight Plymouth middle schoolers were busily decking the halls of Speare Memorial Hospital's main entrance lobby last Friday. Looking on with great enthusiasm was Speare Memorial Hospital's new Student and Volunteer Services Coordinator Jennifer Oldenburg. "The students have done a great job brightening up our lobby for the holiday season, and a perfect example of how we can partner with students for the benefit of our patients and their families," says Oldenburg.



Just seven weeks on the job, Oldenburg has learned all the current volunteers' names, when they work and what their interests are. Last year the hospital's 100 volunteers generously gave over 11,000 hours of service. Oldenburg explains, "SMH has a strong program. Our volunteers are here because they want to be and believe in this hospital. They take ownership in, and really love what they are doing. I want to build on what we already have, find more ways to cater to patient needs through community connections and be extraordinary."

One idea she has is to develop an "on call" service that will seek to match patient interests with those of hospital volunteers and provide companionship. For example, Oldenburg says several volunteers like to knit. Knitting is a very social activity and a volunteer could knit with a patient helping to provide them comfort in something familiar, as well as companionship.

Oldenburg says she would also like to explore more opportunities for local students to be involved and is looking to partner with Plymouth Regional High School and Plymouth State University. "I enjoy working with students because of their energy, the opportunity to cross educate and foster leadership skills in our kids, as well as meet a hospital need," says Oldenburg with great passion and conviction. A 2002 graduate of PSU, she held a number of student activity leadership roles. She reflects on how much her advisors impacted her and would love to do that for others by tying needs together with student interests.

Prior to Speare Memorial Hospital, Oldenburg spent the last five years as a human resources/benefits administrator at Waterville Valley Ski Resort. She also spent six years working as dispatcher/dispatch supervisor/marine patrol officer for the State of New Hampshire

Marine Patrol Bureau. “I have always been a person to be very involved,” states Oldenburg. “Everything about my previous job at Waterville prepared me for the opportunity here at Speare to not only further my interests in giving back, but also raise the visibility and enhance community engagement between our patients and volunteers.”

For more information about Speare Memorial Hospital’s Student and Volunteer Program, contact Jennifer Oldenburg at (603) 238-6460 or via email: joldenburg@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. Visit online at www.spearehospital.com and join us on Facebook.

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