

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Reiki Being Offered to Oncology Patients**

PLYMOUTH, N.H. --- For many people suffering from chronic pain medication alone is not always enough to alleviate their symptoms. For this reason, they turn to alternative forms of healing, one such form is the energy therapy known as Reiki—pronounced RAY-KEY—a Japanese word meaning “universal life energy.” Reiki is based on the premise that we can draw limitless amounts of energy from the universe to support and enhance the body’s innate ability to heal itself.

As a means of helping its patients feel peaceful and relaxed, Speare Memorial Hospital begun offering Reiki treatments to its Oncology patients in February. “Reiki can be a positive adjunct to patients undergoing chemotherapy and radiation treatment,” says Oncology and ICU Nursing Director Donna Toohey. “For this reason along with the smaller patient base, we believe Oncology is a great place to begin offering Reiki at Speare, When a patient informs the staff they are interested in receiving a treatment, we will match the volunteer's schedule to a time that is convenient and fits in with the patient's plan of care.”

A patient will receive Reiki while in a comfortable position, usually in bed. They remain dressed while the volunteer gently places his or her hands in several positions on or above the patient’s body, usually the head, shoulders and feet. The volunteer will hold the positions for several minutes while the energy is guided by the body’s own natural wisdom, treating the whole person as it works to correct physical, emotional, mental, and/or spiritual imbalances. The receiver of Reiki is always in charge and the Reiki treatment may last from a few minutes to a half hour or more. The therapy will be provided free of charge to our inpatients.

“Within a few months, we are hoping to begin offering Reiki to our surgical patients and then to the rest of the hospital,” states Toohey. People respond individually to Reiki, although most feel a sense of calmness, warmth, peace, comfort, and relaxation. Reiki can accelerate the healing process for those who are ill, under medical treatment, and/or in the recovery stages. Toohey explains, “It may not cure your ailment; however, it can be a powerful healing system in conjunction with medications patients are currently using.”

Reiki at Speare Memorial Hospital is being provided by volunteers who have been trained and evaluated by Speare’s Reiki Master Eleanor Wright, RN, in ICU/CCU “We believe that Reiki offers many benefits including relaxation, a decrease in discomfort and enhanced feelings of peace and wellbeing,” Wright states. “This will often lead to a decrease in the need for pain medication, a shorter hospital stay and an increase in the patient’s satisfaction with the services provided here at Speare. We have almost a half dozen Reiki volunteers already onboard, but will be looking for more as we expand throughout the hospital.”

For more information about becoming a volunteer at Speare Memorial Hospital visit online at [www.spearehospital.com](http://www.spearehospital.com) or contact Jennifer Oldenburg directly at (603) 238-6460. 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. Join us on Facebook.

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