

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 19, 2009

Contact: Michele Hutchins
(603) 238-6468



SMH Announces Plans to be Tobacco Free July 1, 2010

PLYMOUTH, N.H.--- Already a smoke free facility inside the building, Speare Memorial Hospital has announced plans to become completely tobacco free as of July 1, 2010. The new policy will prohibit smoking or tobacco use at all hospital owned and operated buildings and property, including parking lots.

“Speare Memorial Hospital is committed to improving the health of our community,” says Speare Memorial Hospital CEO Michelle McEwen, FACHE, “as well as providing a healthy and safe environment for patients, visitors, staff, volunteers and medical staff. We all know tobacco use is a health hazard, but we also recognize smoking of any kind, and chewing tobacco, are hard habits to break. Therefore we have established a Tobacco Free Task Force to develop a comprehensive tobacco free transition plan for patients and employees alike.”

Today’s announcement coincides with the American Cancer Society’s annual *Great American Smokeout* aimed at stopping smoking. It is the first step in launching both an internal and external communication and education campaign about the hospital’s future policy. For those individual’s—patients and employees—who do seek to change their lifestyle and discontinue the use of tobacco products all together, encouragement and support will be offered through smoking cessation programs to be scheduled and presented by Speare Memorial Hospital. For inpatients that currently smoke or have quit within the last year, tobacco free counseling will be provided and, if necessary, physicians may order nicotine replacement therapy.

“Under our current policy, employees and visitors are permitted to smoke outside the hospital in a designated area, while our patients are not allowed to smoke,” explains McEwen. “We wanted to take this opportunity to remove this disparity and take a leadership role in promoting a healthier lifestyle.”

Beginning today, signage will be located throughout the hospital to announce the July 1, 2010 tobacco free policy. Patients and community members can expect to see more resources being developed and offered to promote smoking cessation after the new year. However, there are a number of resources available immediately for those who want to begin the journey to becoming tobacco free today:

- New Hampshire Smokers Help Line – 1-800-TRY TO STOP (1-800 879-8678) or www.trytostopnh.org
- www.lungusa.org
- www.ffsonline.org
- www.quitterinyou.org
- www.cancer.org

Look on the right hand side of the home page screen for the “Guide to Quitting Smoking”

- www.cdc.gov/tobacco/quit_smoking/how_to_quit
- www.quitnet.org
- www.smokefree.gov
- www.becomeanex.org
- www.legacyforhealth.org
- www.breathenh.org

Sppeare 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 or join us on Facebook.

#####