

## **Press Release**

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For Immediate Release

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### **Palliative Care Program at MGHP**

Muskegon , MI – A new program has been developed through collaboration between Mercy General Health Partners and Hospice of Muskegon-Oceana. Palliative Care is a program of support to enhance the quality of life for both patients and families. This service seeks to prevent, relieve, reduce or soothe the symptoms of a life-limiting disease or disorder. Currently, there are about one million patients in palliative care programs in America.

Led by a Physician/Medical Director, the Palliative Care Team incorporates the physical, spiritual and psychological aspects of care. Members of the interdisciplinary team include a physician, nurse coordinator, social worker and chaplain. The team works with both patient and their families to identify goals and a support system to achieve those goals. Coordination of therapies, equipment and other needed resources are also provided.

“As we are constantly asked questions regarding the increasing cost of healthcare, it has been a wonderful opportunity to collaborate and share expertise, ideas and resources to meet the needs of the patients of MGHP and our community,” says Shanda Zaharako, RN, Manager of the Emergency Department at MGHP. “This partnership will improve clinical outcomes, control cost and most importantly meet the needs of our patients and their families.”

Palliative Care at MGHP is an inpatient service of the hospital. This type of care is similar to Hospice Care in that both use a team approach to address the patient's physical, mental and spiritual concerns. Palliative Care has a broader scope in that it is appropriate for anyone with a chronic disease and who would benefit from enhanced pain and symptom management. After much research and planning, MGHP is pleased to be able to enhance the quality of life for both patients and families by offering this service to those who would benefit from it.

“We are excited about the potential to collaborate with MGHP on this new initiative. It blends the strengths of both organizations in caring for patients with complex, life-limiting illnesses. Palliative care will be a great help to individuals who are seriously ill, but are not end stage or candidates for hospice,” Mary Anne Gorman, ACSW, Executive Director Hospice of Muskegon-Oceana.