



For Immediate Release

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Harrington HealthCare System Bars Visits by Children

Hospital administration seeks to prevent spread of flu

SOUTHBRIDGE and WEBSTER, Mass. – October 26, 2009 – Children 16 and under will not be allowed to visit patients at the Harrington HealthCare system’s two main campuses, Harrington Hospital in Southbridge and Harrington HealthCare at Hubbard in Webster, beginning Wednesday, October 28. In addition, each patient will be limited to two healthy visitors at a time.

“We are implementing this policy as a precautionary measure – before we have a problem,” said Harrington Hospital President and CEO Ed Moore. “Flu season is upon us, and we at Harrington want to do everything we can to protect our patients, their families, and our staff.”

Visitors will be required to check in at the main lobby and receive a visitor’s pass. People with flu-like symptoms are encouraged to stay home.

The policy does not prevent children from being admitted to the hospital, going to the Emergency Room, or from keeping their appointments at Harrington facilities or physician offices.

Signs announcing the change will be posted throughout Harrington Hospital and Harrington HealthCare at Hubbard.

Flu symptoms can include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches and headache. Those with the flu can be contagious before they exhibit signs of the virus. According to the Centers for Disease Control, people infected with the H1N1 (swine) flu virus, are contagious one day before getting sick to approximately one week after getting sick. This can be longer in some people, especially children and those with weakened immune systems.

For more information about the flu, please go to: flu.gov.

HARRINGTON HOSPITAL is a comprehensive regional healthcare provider serving the needs of Southern Worcester County and Northern Connecticut through:

- our 113-bed acute-care hospital in Southbridge that provides medical and surgical inpatient care, 24-hour emergency services, psychiatric care, pediatrics and obstetrical care, intensive/coronary care and comprehensive outpatient services,
- satellite medical facilities across South Central Massachusetts, housing primary care and specialty doctors, diagnostic imaging, pulmonary and sleep clinic, cardiopulmonary, laboratory services and specialties such as physical therapy and wound care,
- a free-standing cancer treatment center in Southbridge that allows patients to receive advanced, local oncological care, including Intensity Modulated Radiation Therapy and Image-Guided Radiation Therapy, chemotherapy, counseling, pain management and reconstructive surgery.

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