



HARI

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:
Amanda Barney
(401) 946-7887 ext. 111
amandab@hari.org

Hospitals to Establish Tobacco-Free Campuses on November 20 *New Policy Will Prohibit Tobacco Use on Hospital Property*

PROVIDENCE, R.I. – June 4, 2008 – Hospital representatives from throughout Rhode Island gathered today to announce their commitment to establish tobacco-free campuses effective November 20 (The Great American Smokeout). The new policy will prohibit the use of tobacco on hospital property.

Nine hospitals (Landmark Medical Center, Memorial Hospital of Rhode Island, The Miriam Hospital, Newport Hospital, Rhode Island Hospital, Roger Williams Medical Center, St. Joseph Health Services of Rhode Island, South County Hospital and The Westerly Hospital) have joined together to improve the patient experience. This new policy will enhance the safe, clean, healthy environment expected from patients, staff and visitors.

“As health care organizations, hospitals have a responsibility to take a leadership role in this important issue,” said Kathleen C. Hittner, MD, chair of the Hospital Association of Rhode Island board of trustees and president & CEO of The Miriam Hospital. “This policy will further the hospital mission of providing quality patient care in a healthy and safe environment.”

“I commend the Hospital Association of Rhode Island for implementing this important public health policy,” said Director of Health David R. Gifford, MD, MPH. “There is no safe level of exposure to second-hand smoke and hospitals in Rhode Island serve as community leaders in promoting health and wellness.”

“The American Cancer Society is pleased to help support this important initiative,” said Jim Beardsworth, state director of communications, American Cancer Society. “Smoking contributes to 30 percent of all cancer deaths and nearly 90 percent of lung cancer death. We must actively and aggressively promote tobacco-free environments. This new policy will heighten awareness and further promote education on the risks of tobacco use.”

Hospitals have been supported in their effort by various organizations. The American Cancer Society has pledged \$2,000 to assist in purchasing signage. In addition, Jenn Lee Design has provided graphic design support.

Founded over a half century ago, the Hospital Association of Rhode Island is a statewide organization that assists member hospitals in effectively meeting the health care needs of Rhode Island, through advocacy, representation, education and services. HARI members work collaboratively to improve the quality of care delivered and address issues threatening access to health care including increasing health costs, workforce shortages and decreasing reimbursement. HARI members work together to ensure that all Rhode Islanders will receive comprehensive, high quality health care.

###