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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

St. James Mercy Boosts Patient Satisfaction Scores

Hornell, New York...November 6, 2012...St. James Mercy Hospital (SJMH) announced that its patient satisfaction scores have increased significantly over the last year, surpassing the national average in several areas. The improvements are due to an organization-wide effort to enhance the overall patient and family care experience.

The areas where SJMH exceeds the national average include cleanliness/quietness, communication with nurses and doctors, and pain management. “Patient satisfaction comes in many forms,” said Patricia Uldrich, Chief Nursing Officer. “It’s often the little things that can make the difference between a good and bad hospital experience. Many people across SJMH have focused on improving patient satisfaction, and the scores show that our programs are working.”

Most hospitals measure and report patient satisfaction using an outside source, said Uldrich. “The company SJMH uses mails surveys to approximately one of every three discharged patients, collects and analyzes the responses, and provides us with a monthly ‘report card’ that reflects the percentage of 9 and 10 scores we received. We share the report card across the organization to monitor our progress, celebrate successes, and find additional areas for improvement,” she said.

The patient satisfaction scores are reported publicly through the national HCAHPS (Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems) system located at www.healthgrades.com or at Hospitalcompare.com. “The data from these websites lag by as much as twelve months,” said Uldrich, “so we post the most current data and report card on our website at StJamesMercy.org under ‘Quality & Safety’.”

SJMH’s high scores reflect a variety of efforts. “For example, the entire care team – nurses, doctors, pharmacists, therapists, dieticians and case managers – meets as a group every day to review each patient’s progress, to address immediate and future needs,” said Uldrich. “This promotes continuity of care and enhances interdisciplinary communication and care delivery, which is vital to promoting the best possible outcomes for the patient and family. The pharmacists also meet with each patient to discuss current medications and any new medications that will be taken at home. “

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Other efforts include improved pain management protocols, a “quiet please” program, education in interpersonal dynamics, and scheduled calls to every patient within 48 hours of discharge. “Even our computer screen savers remind everyone that compassionate care is the most important aspect of care delivery,” she said. “All of these activities – as well as the recent renovations of the parking lots, hallways, and lobby – are contributing to a better experience for patients, families and visitors alike.”

Rural healthcare facilities like SJMH often score the lowest in the “would recommend hospital” category, Uldrich explained. “Across the nation, smaller community hospitals struggle with the scores they receive on this question on the survey. Though patients may score the hospital’s services very high on the individual aspects of their experience, the reality is that care for critical medical conditions will be obtained in tertiary care centers that focus on critical conditions,” she said. “Since it is a national trend, we believe that patients score community hospitals lower on this category (‘would recommend’) as a way of acknowledging that critical care has to be obtained elsewhere.”

“We are grateful to the entire staff at SJMH and to our wonderful volunteers, for they all have united in their commitment to improving the quality of service at St. James Mercy Hospital.”

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Patient Satisfaction Scores based on three quarters ending 9/30/12 – reflects percentage of the highest ratings of 9’s and 10’s

