

Quality Collaborative Formed for Skilled Nursing Care

Lee Health and Local Skilled Nursing Facilities Join Forces to Improve Patient Outcomes

(Fort Myers, Fla. – Feb. 14, 2018) - Selecting a skilled nursing facility after a hospital stay can be confusing and challenging for the patient and family. Lee Health has formed a Skilled Nursing Quality Collaborative to help patients make an informed choice about their care before discharge from the hospital, to improve transitions of care for better patient outcomes and to prevent readmissions following a hospital stay. Twelve Lee County skilled nursing facilities that demonstrate high quality of care standards, based on Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) quality data, have joined the collaborative to date, including Lee Health's HealthPark Care and Rehabilitation Center in Fort Myers.

The choice of a facility for skilled nursing care is made by the patient and/or family. Prior to discharge, patients are provided electronic tablets to review CMS quality data and ratings on all local skilled nursing facilities; Lee Health staff can also send facility profiles to family members to assist them in the choice of facilities for their loved one. Facilities in the collaborative are identified as members. The most important consideration for the family is where their loved one will get the best care to get them safely home as quickly as possible.

"The collaborative was designed to promote optimal healing, share best practice strategies and offer targeted educational opportunities," says Barbara Kenney, Lee Health System Director for Care Management, who spearheaded the formation of the collaborative. "The goals of the collaborative are to increase accountability and expectations for local skilled nursing facilities, and increase collaboration to share clinical best practices. Facilities in the collaborative are actively engaged in process improvement projects that assist in maintaining the highest quality of care."

Greg Anderson, Gulf Coast Village Care Center Administrator, which is part of the collaborative, says there are two major advantages for facilities in the collaborative: "Skilled nursing facilities involved will benefit from a large knowledge base, especially for staff development and clinical pathways, and sharing best practices will help raise the ratings of all facilities within the collaborative."

To become part of the collaborative, facilities must meet the following criteria:

- Overall CMS star rating of 3 stars or more
- Registered nurse on-site (not on-call) at all times
- Therapy available six days a week and evaluations occur within 24 hours of admission
- Accept at least 75 percent of admission requests from Lee Health, without regard to payer or acuity status
- Provide IV-capable medication administration and have all medications available within three hours of transfer

Participation in Lee Health initiatives, including collaborative meeting attendance Kenney anticipates more facilities will join the collaborative in the coming months. For more information, email media@leehealth.org.

Cutline: Lee Health's HealthPark Care and Rehabilitation Center is one of 12 skilled nursing facilities in a new collaborative formed to improve patient outcomes.

About Lee Health

Since the opening of the first hospital in 1916, Lee Health has been a health care leader in Southwest Florida, constantly evolving to meet the needs of the community. A non-profit, integrated health care services organization, Lee Health is committed to the well-being of every individual served, focused on healthy living and maintaining good health. Staffed by caring people, inspiring health, services are conveniently located throughout the community in four acute care hospitals, two specialty hospitals, outpatient centers, walk-in medical centers, primary care and specialty physician practices and other services across the continuum of care. Formerly known as Lee Memorial Health System, the organization began its second century of service with a new name in 2016. Learn more at www.LeeHealth.org.

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