

Longmont United Hospital

February 7, 2007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PrestigePLUS receives Spirit of Planetree Program Award

PrestigePlus, Longmont United Hospital's senior wellness program, was awarded the 2006 Spirit of Planetree Program Award for Healthy Communities during the National Planetree Conference in San Diego, California.

The Program Awards recognizes hospitals "who have implemented programs that are best practices in the field of patient-centered care." PrestigePLUS was selected for the Program Award from a pool of over 100 nominations of affiliate programs throughout the country. Panels of judges comprised of Planetree board members and industry experts recognized the winners in eleven categories which included PrestigePLUS for Health Communities.

The Healthy Communities category is defined as "Expanding the boundaries of health care: By working with schools, senior centers, churches, and other community partners, organizations are redefining healthcare to include the health and wellness of the larger community."

Attachment: Background information on PrestigePLUS

2006 Spirt of Planetree Best Practice Award
Healthy Communities
PrestigePLUS, Longmont United Hospital

Longmont, CO

PrestigePLUS is Longmont United Hospital's senior wellness membership program. From modest beginnings in 1991, with more conventional offerings, to a greatly expanded, more holistic approach in 2006, Prestige has become a community leader in providing innovative programs and services for older adults. Our mission is to empower both our members and the greater senior community to assume responsibility for their health and wellness by providing the requisite knowledge, resources and tools to accomplish that goal. We believe our success and longevity hinge greatly on our historical association with LUH's Health Center of Integrated Therapies and our adherence to the Planetree philosophy, both of which focus on the whole person—body/mind/spirit.

Our recent partnership with the city's Senior Services Division enables us to reach beyond our membership to provide wellness activities and educational programs, clinics, classes, counseling and screenings to the larger community, and our office is now located in the Senior Center. This partnership has opened new doors for us and allowed us to reach more deeply and broadly into the community. We co-create programs, share knowledge and skills and support each other in our common mission to enhance the well-being of older adults. The office is staffed by a nurse and a Program Coordinator, and we utilize HCIT staff for therapeutic services, such as Massage Therapy.

Our mission is further realized through our partnerships with other community groups, a sampling of which follows:

- Business Community—engaging local restaurants for program on Gluten Intolerance; presence at Expos, Fairs cosponsored by local businesses; Mall Walker program and Quarterly Health Talks at local indoor mall; bringing in Farmers Market vendors to promote awareness of healthy eating, connection with food sources, socializing in the marketplace; utilizing local professionals as presenters for educational programs.
- Schools—eight years with intergenerational program at local middle school, utilizing “wise elders” to help teens learn to deal with stress and enhance life skills.
- Community Agencies/Programs—presenting at Interfaith Conference on Caregiving; member of Strategic Visioning Coordinating Team on Aging Well in Boulder County; training Peer Counselors for Aging Services in Legacy Writing techniques; Hospice volunteer and member of Hospice Grief and Education Center Advisory Board; participation in Folks in Aging meetings; member of End-of-Life Coalition; consulting with SeniorNet on life story software program.
- Media—cosponsor Spring to Life event with local newspaper; work with local cable TV on Advance Planning Series (produced videos/DVD's that can be checked out or purchased); PSA's and program planning with local radio station.
- Medical Community—enlisting practitioners to participate in free screenings.
- General Community—outreach clinics/educational programs with senior residences, assisted living facilities; present programs on health, wellness, aging to local groups; cosponsored program on Healing through Story with local church; planning intergenerational storytelling project; formed Storycatchers group.

We are fortunate to have vast in-house resources we can call on to reach out to the community. We frequently collaborate with other LUH departments and committees.

We believe that PrestigePLUS can and must play an active role in creating and sustaining a community where people can age well. We also believe that aging begins the moment we are born and that fostering and supporting lifelong education and intergenerational opportunities will create common ground for us all. To do so, we recognize that our greatest impact will come through collaborative efforts with other members of the community. What we can share with them is a health care model that respects, honors and embraces the whole person.