

TO MEDIA:

CONTACT PERSON: Robin Jennings

Director, Communications

Excelsa Health

724-837-1781 TEL

724-516-4483 CELL

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**VOLUNTEERS AUGMENT CANCER TREATMENT STAFF,
SERVE AS PATIENT RESOURCE AT PALMER PAVILION**

GREENSBURG, PA, January 24, 2010 ... Volunteers are a valuable resource and integral part of the treatment process at Arnold Palmer Pavilion, a UPMC Cancer Center and joint venture with Excelsa Health.

Linda Johnson, practice manager at the center, noted those individuals who so willingly give of their time and services benefit both staff and patients. "This service, provided in cooperation with Excelsa Health and the American Cancer Society, has truly added a new dimension in personalized cancer care for our center," emphasized Johnson. "With the consistent pool of committed individuals, we can provide patients with access to a volunteer ambassador who can attend to their personal needs, especially if a staff member is involved with administering treatment."

These patient ambassadors are very helpful in addressing many immediate requests: securing a warm blanket for someone who is chilled or providing beverages or snacks during treatment. In addition, they have assisted with routine office tasks such as typing, filing and organizing patient charts, which in turn frees up the clinical staff to focus on direct patient care needs.

"It has been a win, win situation for all parties involved," noted clinical nurse manager Leslie Stewart, RN. "The volunteers have proven to be very nurturing with patients, sitting and talking with them and their families and ease anxieties to help them get through their treatments. Many are cancer survivors themselves and can relate directly to what the patients are going through."

Johnson added that the experience is very beneficial to the volunteer as well.

“Volunteering in a health care setting provides a useful outlet for someone who wants to do something different from their usual daily activities,” she said. “Having a desire to help someone who is sick and facing challenges associated with their illness is truly a gratifying experience. They are a ray of sunshine to us all.”

Having worked 14 years with cancer patients previously at Latrobe Hospital and now at the Arnold Palmer Pavilion, Alberta Farla can certainly attest to that logic. “Having lost my husband and a good friend to cancer, volunteering at the cancer center has given me opportunity to stay involved and support the cause,” she said. “It provides me with a means to give something back to the community and to make someone else’s experience a little easier.”

An older person with time on her hands, Mary Jane Bythway wanted to do something with meaning. She first volunteered with the American Cancer Society as a patient driver, and most recently as a greeter in the Arnold Palmer Pavilion reception area

“I really enjoy the contact with patients and families and feel that it is time well spent,” said Bythway. “The center is always looking for more volunteers and I would highly recommend it as a worthwhile opportunity for anyone interested in giving of their time.”

Volunteer Cheryl Kubusky considers her time at the center a blessing. “You really don’t realize how fortunate you are until you see someone first-hand struggling with an illness,” she noted. “It puts life into perspective that something as simple as talking to a patient or family member can really make a difference in their lives.”

For more information on volunteering opportunities at the Arnold Palmer Pavilion, call 724-838-1900.