

## NJN Hospice

### IN-PATIENT HOSPICE UNIT AT HACKENSACK UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER: FEATURED ON NJN EVENING NEWS

(July 17th, 2007)

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The In-Patient Hospice Unit of Hackensack University Medical Center--the first in-patient hospice in all of Bergen County--was featured this week on the NJN New Jersey Nightly News. Reporting on the Hospice was NJN Healthwatch correspondent Sara Lee Kessler. Featured in the report was Geriatric Oncology Program Director Richard J. Rosenbluth, M.D., who is also the Medical Director of the In-Patient Hospice, as well as Patricia Caraccio, RN, and Jean Albertson, LCSW.

To view the video of this report, click the video box above.

The HUMC Inpatient Hospice Unit is located at Prospect Heights Care Center, 336 Prospect Avenue, Hackensack, NJ 07601. For more information, call (201) 343-7766.

TRANSCRIPT: (Aired July 17th, 2007 on NJN Public Television Nightly News)

**ANCHOR (KENT MANAHAN):** Hospice is a program for patients who have a terminal illness, with a limited life expectancy. Traditionally acute care hospitals have shied away from inpatient programs. But now, as NJN news medical and health correspondent Sara Lee Kessler reports, Hackensack University Medical Center has become the first hospital in Bergen County to open in inpatient hospice unit.

**SARA LEE KESSLER:** It's located offsite in the Prospect Heights care Center in Hackensack. The hallways look warm and inviting. The only clue that it's a Hospital hospice and not a hotel is the presence of the medical team that makes rounds here each day

**DR. RICHARD J. ROSENBLUTH:** it's a very comfortable, quiet environment. The lighting is kept low, it's essentially all incandescent. And the rooms are beautiful too.

**NURSE (to patient):** I have some water, do you want some more water?

**KESSLER:** Dr. Richard Rosenbluth, the Hospice Medical Director says 90% of the patients here have terminal cancer. He believes this 12-bed inpatient unit serves an important need.

**DR. ROSENBLUTH:** For a number of reasons some of the home hospice patients are unable to stay at home. They may have problems with controlling their pain medications, for example, uncontrollable nausea or vomiting, psychosocial problems, emotional problems at home with family members for example. Sometimes a family member simply can't deal with the stress of having a terminally patient at home.

**KESSLER:** That's why 41-year-old Elisa Hernandez is here. This New Milford wife and mother has N-stage cervical cancer.

**MR. HERNANDEZ:** She don't want to get up anymore. She couldn't even take no liquid, her body was rejecting it. So that's when we decided to bring her here.

**PATRICIA CARACCIO, RN:** What we do on the unit is ideally not to use IVs or IM or any type of injections on the unit.

**KESSLER:** Pain is managed with medication placed under the tongue, or with transdermal patches. Nausea is control with suppositories. A week later, Alisa Hernandez says she's feeling better.

**MRS. HERNANDEZ:** Maybe my goal is just to go back home to take care of my kids; get stronger, healthy and take good care of them.

**KESSLER:** In the meantime, the Hernandez's family has literally moved in. During the day the kids play Nintendo; at night Hackensack's inpatient hospice provides in room sofa beds.

**JEAN ALBERTSON, LCSW:** It's great because you guys got to stay every night.

**MR. HERNANDEZ:** And they gave us this big room.

ALBERTSON: The big room.

JEAN ALBERTSON, LCSW: The goal always is for comfort both emotional physical spiritual, and that is the mission. We want to make both the patients and their families as comfortable as possible in the last days of the lives.

DR. ROSENBLUTH (to patient): You're feeling much better today, I understand.

PATIENT: Yes, much better.

KESSLER: Sarah Lee Kessler, Hackensack.