

For immediate release

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Elizabethtown Community Hospital to Offer MRI

Elizabethtown, N.Y. (November 20, 2009) – Elizabethtown Community Hospital will begin offering Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) on December 3. MRI is a method of diagnosing both hard and soft tissue injuries and disease.

A brand-new mobile MRI unit will be stationed at the hospital one day each week. The hospital will increase the frequency of visits, based on demand.

The state-of-the-art MRI unit will complement the hospital's completely-digital radiology department. Digital images allow for enhanced quality and ease of viewing. Radiologists who interpret these images do so through the hospital's technologically-secure Picture Archiving and Communication System (PACS). Images stored in the hospital's archive system can also be shown on monitors throughout the hospital in an instant.

This service will benefit many residents of Essex County. "There are many people who currently have to travel in order to receive this important diagnostic test", said Molly Thompson, director of the hospital's radiology department. "Regardless of where a patient's doctor is located, he or she is able to obtain an MRI wherever it is most convenient. For many people in the area, a short trip to Elizabethtown is much easier than heading to a hospital much further away."

The addition of MRI is just the latest in a long line of services, technological advancements and overall improvements at the hospital; and something it has been planning for years. Using anecdotal information gleaned from its biannual community surveys, along with an in-depth service feasibility study, the hospital determined that the addition of MRI is an important part of its service mix.

"Due to the hospital's rural location, it is important to offer as many services as possible", stated Administrator and CEO Rod Boula. "In recent years, we've built a beautiful addition, upgraded our radiology department, enhanced our technological capabilities and added important services such as chemotherapy and MRI. The hospital has a great deal of advanced technology and a highly skilled medical staff, providing excellent healthcare for our local communities."

About Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)

MRI is often requested by specialists in cancer treatment, nervous system disorders and kidney disease. It can also be used to diagnose joint injuries, plan for surgical procedures, and look for problems with a person's veins and arteries. Since it can provide a great deal of information about various parts of the body, many general practitioners and family doctors frequently order the test.

MRI works through the use of a large magnet, housed in a giant tube, coupled with radio frequencies and computer technology to produce pictures of organs, bones and other internal body structures. The patient lies very still on a table that moves into the center of the tube (the bore). During the test, the patient does not feel any discomfort, but they will notice a loud banging noise.

About Elizabethtown Community Hospital

Elizabethtown Community Hospital (ECH) is a 25-bed Critical Access Hospital primarily serving Essex County; an area that is home to over 30,000 full-time residents, along with thousands of tourists and seasonal residents. The hospital maintains a 24-hour emergency room and a large variety of specialty clinics staffed by board certified physicians. The hospital has 199 employees.

Elizabethtown Community Hospital is accredited by the Joint Commission, a regulatory body overseeing quality of care and safety. It is the only Critical Access Hospital in Essex County accredited by the Joint Commission.

ECH received its Critical Access Hospital status in 1997.