

Immediate Release

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Wilmington, DE, Nov. 22, 2013 – [Christiana Care Health System](#) has earned “[Exemplar](#)” status for the second consecutive year for the care it provides the elderly under the [NICHE \(Nurses Improving Care for Healthsystem Elders\)](#) program.

Christiana Care is the only hospital in Delaware to achieve the award and one of just 23 nationwide.

NICHE is the premier designation indicating a hospital's commitment to excellence in the care of patients 65-years-and-older. Exemplar status recognizes Christiana Care’s ongoing, high-level dedication to geriatric care and pre-eminence in the implementation and quality of system-wide interventions and initiatives that demonstrate organizational commitment to the care of older adults.

Christiana Care earned Exemplar status — the highest of four possible program levels — by undergoing a rigorous self-evaluation of the current state and future goals of its NICHE program. The requirements include:

- Implementation of the Senior Health Resource Team model and evidence-based protocols on all applicable units, including specialty units
- Implementation of systemic aging-sensitive policies
- Inclusion of the input of patient, families and community-based providers in planning and implementation of NICHE initiatives
- Assuming regional and national leadership roles

“The NICHE designation and the ‘Exemplar’ status signal our resolve to partner with older adults and their family members to provide expert, compassionate care,” said Virginia Collier, M.D., the Hugh R. Sharp Jr. chair of Medicine at Christiana Care.

“Through our participation in the NICHE program we are able to offer evidence-based, interdisciplinary approaches consistent with The Christiana Care Way that promote better outcomes, positive experiences, improved care and greater value for older adults,” Diane Talarek, RN, senior vice president of Patient Care Services and Chief Nursing Officer at Christiana Care, said.

Following NICHE guidelines, Christiana Care established the We Improve Senior Health Program (WISH) in 2001. Under the leadership of Medical Director Patricia Curtin, M.D., and program coordinator Denise Lyons, GCNS, WISH is a collaborative effort among nurses,

physicians, pharmacists, rehabilitative therapists, social workers, dietitians and other staff to improve the care that Christiana Care delivers to senior patients in all settings.

Since the program began, Christiana Care has trained nearly 2,000 health care providers who have become members of the Senior Health Resource Team. They serve as unit-based resources to address the diverse problems of seniors who are in the hospital. Also, Christiana Care provides inpatient Acute Care for the Elderly units at Christiana Hospital and Wilmington Hospital.

NICHE is an international program that helps hospitals improve the care of older adults. The organization provides principles and tools to stimulate a change in the culture of health care facilities to achieve patient-centered care for older adults. NICHE, based at NYU College of Nursing, consists of over 500 hospitals and health care facilities throughout North America.

About Christiana Care Health System

Christiana Care Health System is one of the country's largest health care providers, ranking as the 21st leading hospital in the nation and 11th on the East Coast in terms of admissions. A not-for-profit teaching hospital affiliated with Thomas Jefferson Medical College, Christiana Care is recognized as a regional center for excellence in cardiology, cancer and women's health services, as well as for its Level-I trauma care and Level-3 neonatal intensive care (both highest capability). Christiana Care includes two hospitals with 1,100 patient beds, a home health care service, preventive medicine, rehabilitation services, a network of primary care physicians and an extensive range of outpatient services.

For more information about Christiana Care, visit www.christianacare.org/howeare.

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