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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Page Memorial Hospital's Lifestyle Balance Diabetes Prevention Program Will Be Presented at the Annual American Association of Diabetes Educators Meeting in August.

Luray, VA (April 21, 2008) Page Memorial Hospital's *Lifestyle Balance Diabetes Prevention Program* was recently chosen to be presented at the American Association of Diabetes Educator's national meeting this August. In 2007, PMH, along with seven other organizations, was funded by the Virginia Diabetes Council to develop an innovative, community-based pilot project for people who are at risk for Type 2 Diabetes. Because of the unprecedented success of the project, the Virginia Diabetes Council will present the results to the national Center for Disease Control on April 15th.

With research from the Pittsburgh Diabetes Primary Prevention Study, Melanie Moses Stanley, certified diabetes educator; Sharon Clark, registered dietician, and Ann Hardinger, RN, targeted area residents who were at risk for developing Type 2 Diabetes. Seventeen participants attended a series of five educational sessions to teach them how to implement the necessary lifestyle changes to reverse the progress or delay the onset of the disease. Support was provided in between sessions to answer questions and help them stay the course.

"It's difficult to change the behavior patterns you've practiced all your life in one or two sessions," says Melanie Moses-Stanley. "Mentoring from our team in between sessions was a major factor in the program's success. It kept participants motivated, which resulted in improvements in one or more areas, including weight loss and lower glucose levels" Those who participated were either pre-diabetic, had gestational diabetes during pregnancy, or were overweight.

Luray resident, Lisa Liscomb, participated in last year's pilot project after she was diagnosed with gestational diabetes. As a mother of five, she knew she needed to take action before it got out of

hand. Though gestational diabetes does not guarantee that a woman will develop Type 2 Diabetes, it greatly increases the risk. “With five children and a husband stationed in Baghdad, I needed a program that was easy to understand and follow,” says Lisa. “It helped me make some lifestyle changes for me and my family. I am much more aware of the types of meals I prepare, and I try to involve my kids in physical activities.”

Reverend David Johnson, retired pastor of Rileyville Baptist Church, was referred to the program by his doctor because of his high glucose levels. “The program helped me understand what was needed to bring down my glucose levels,” says Reverend Johnson. “For example, I used to drink a lot of sodas, but now I drink flavored water, and I’ve increased my exercise.” Though Reverend Johnson has a busy schedule since coming out of retirement to be pastor of Chester Gap Baptist Church in Front Royal, he continues to follow the program and keeps his glucose levels within the normal range.

The success of the *Lifestyle Balance Diabetes Prevention Program* is significant because it is a scientifically proven, affordable program that can be replicated in other areas, especially in rural communities where staff is limited. PMH will offer the program again in the fall in partnership with Roche Diagnostics. The cost will be \$10 for the entire program and will be open to newly diagnosed diabetics on a space available basis.

The American Diabetes Association estimates that over 54 million people in the United States are pre-diabetic which, left untreated, almost always turns into Type 2 Diabetes.

Type 2 Diabetes greatly increases the risk for heart attack and stroke, nerve damage, eye disease, kidney failure, and is a leading cause of non-traumatic amputations. It also results in billions of dollars lost because of employee sick days and increased cost of medical care.

For more information and to register for the PMH Diabetes Prevention Program contact Sharon Clark, MS, RD, clinical dietitian at 540-743-4561, ext. 1234.

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