For Immediate Release

Southwestern Vermont Medical Center Nurse Wins National Recognition

BENNINGTON, VT—October 31, 2016—Southwestern Vermont Medical Center (SVMC) is proud to announce that Barbara M. Richardson, MSN, RN-BC, CCRN, is one of five nurses named as a 2016 American Nurses Credentialing Center National Magnet Nurse of the Year®. The award was bestowed for Richardson’s commitment to structural empowerment, one of the five tenants of the Magnet model.

“I am honored and humbled to be recognized as a Magnet Nurse of the Year,” Richardson said. “And I am tremendously grateful for the opportunity to be doing this important, groundbreaking work at SVMC and for the impact the Transitional Care Team and I have been able to make for patients in our community.”

Richardson, a champion for transitional care nursing, partners with local primary care providers to identify at-risk patients and helps patients navigate from one care setting to another. Richardson created a support network within the community, establishing partnerships with mental health services, Meals on Wheels, and the Support and Services at Home Program, which provides support to individuals who choose to live independently at home. She collaborates with a community care team that works on decreasing emergency department visits. These efforts have resulted in a 69 percent decrease in hospitalizations and a 26 percent decrease in ED visits for patients enrolled in the program. As a result of its work, the transitional care team was awarded a $200,000 innovation grant from the state of Vermont in 2015.

“Barbara is an exceptional nurse, and what she and the Transitional Care Team have been able to achieve really sets Southwestern Vermont Medical Center apart from other health systems our size,” said Thomas A. Dee, FACHE, SVHC’s President and CEO. “We are proud beyond words to see her bring this award home to Bennington.”

The 2016 award winners were recognized at the ANCC National Magnet Conference® in Orlando earlier this month, where Richardson delivered an acceptance speech before the conference’s 10,000 attendees. Earlier in the conference, the Transitional Care team presented a concurrent session titled “Beyond Care Transitions: Nurses Building an Accountable Community.”

Twenty-five of SVMC’s nurses were there in person to support Richardson and to accept the organization’s fourth designation as a Magnet Center for Nursing Excellence. The hospital is one of 444 Magnet hospitals in five countries worldwide. Only about 30 have held the designation as long as SVMC.

“SVMC is a small rural hospital, but the work Barbara and the TCN program have done is revolutionary,” said Carol Conroy, DNP, SVMC’s chief nursing officer. “To see our nurses elevated as examples in this elite national forum, alongside tens of thousands of nurses from 500 Magnet hospitals worldwide, many of which are much larger academic medical centers, is awe
inspiring. We are grateful to our nurses for their tireless work and to our leadership for their support in pursuing the absolute best in nursing care.”

Other honorees include Anne C. Boatright, MSN, RN, SANE, Nebraska Methodist Hospital, Omaha, Nebraska, for Transformational Leadership; Sharon A. Vanairsdale, MS, APRN, ACNS-BC, NP-C, CEN, Emory University Hospital, Atlanta, Georgia, for Exemplary Professional Practice; Christi D. DeLemos, MSN, CNRN, ACNP-BC, University of California Davis Medical Center, Sacramento, California, for New Knowledge, Innovations and Improvements; Colleen K. McIlvennan, DNP, RN, ANP-BC, University of Colorado Hospital, Aurora, Colorado, for Empirical Outcomes.

The Magnet Recognition Program recognizes health care organizations for quality patient care, nursing excellence, and innovations in professional nursing practice. The American Nurses Credentialing Center’s (ANCC) mission is to promote excellence in nursing and health care globally through credentialing programs. In addition, ANCC accredits health care organizations that provide and approve continuing nursing education. It also offers educational materials to support nurses and organizations as they work toward their credentials.

About:
Southwestern Vermont Health Care (SVHC) is a comprehensive, preeminent health care system providing exceptional, convenient, and affordable care to the communities of Bennington and Windham Counties of Vermont, eastern Rensselaer and Washington Counties of New York, and northern Berkshire County in Massachusetts. SVHC’s providers are members of the Dartmouth-Hitchcock Putnam Physicians, a multispecialty medical group operated in partnership with Dartmouth-Hitchcock. SVHC includes the Centers for Living and Rehabilitation, a 150-bed long- and short-term care skilled nursing facility; the SVHC Foundation; and Southwestern Vermont Medical Center (SVMC), which includes 19 primary and specialty care practices. Primary care offices are located in Bennington, Manchester, Pownal, and Wilmington. To learn more, visit svhealthcare.org.

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