

NEWS RELEASE:
August 30, 2006
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Pardee Addresses Pandemic Flu Issues

(Hendersonville, NC) Pardee Hospital has joined local, state and national agencies in preparing for a flu pandemic. A pandemic flu is a global outbreak of disease that occurs when a new type of influenza virus appears in humans. Since there is little natural immunity, the disease spreads easily from person to person.

Nine months ago, Pardee Hospital formed a Pandemic Task Force to address pandemic flu issues and develop an action plan in the event of a future outbreak. Pardee's Pandemic Task Force is comprised of representatives from various areas of the hospital including infection control, security, employee health, laboratory services, nutrition services, engineering, education, materials management, environmental services, quality services, community relations and nursing.

Task force activities have included policy development, purchasing of equipment to stockpile and addressing concerns about vaccines, staffing and security.

"There has been a tremendous amount of coverage regarding the avian, or bird flu and the transmission of this virus to humans. The main goal of Pardee's Pandemic Task Force is to educate both our staff and the public regarding these issues and help people prepare for the possible scenario of a pandemic flu," according to Donna Goering, Chair of the Pandemic Task Force and head of Pardee's Infection Control.

“Proper hand washing is still the number one way to prevent the spread of germs. This, along with stockpiling of supplies and getting a seasonal flu vaccine, are perhaps the three most important things to do to prepare for a pandemic situation. The Centers for Disease Control has good, reliable up-to-date information on both avian and pandemic flu. Their website is www.cdc.gov,” adds Goering.

Pardee Hospital is a not-for-profit community hospital founded in 1953. The main hospital is licensed for 222 acute care beds and is the second largest employer in Henderson County. The hospital has several locations separate from the main campus, including a 130-bed nursing facility, an adult day services center, a health education center in the Blue Ridge Mall, home care services, a sports therapy and rehabilitation facility on Thompson Street, a midwifery program, various family and internal medicine practices, and an urgent care facility. Pardee is a recipient of the 2006 HealthGrades Distinguished Hospital Award for Clinical Excellence, placing the hospital among the top 5 percent of hospitals in the U.S. for quality of care. More information is available at www.pardeehospital.org.

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