NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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New Camera Arrives at Galion Community Hospital

GALION - Patients using Galion Community Hospital for radiology services requiring a nuclear medicine camera will benefit from a new state-of-the-art instrument, courtesy of the Galion Community Hospital Foundation.

Nuclear medicine is a branch of medical imaging that uses small amounts of radioactive material to diagnose or treat a variety of diseases, including many types of cancers, heart disease and certain other abnormalities within the body.

To use a nuclear medicine camera, small amounts of radioactive material are introduced into the body. The material accumulates in the organ or area of the body being examined, where it gives off energy in the form of gamma rays. One of the devices that can detect gamma rays is a "gamma camera," often called a nuclear medicine camera. These devices work together with a computer to produce special pictures offering details on both the structure and function of organs and tissues.

Accepting the Foundation's gift was exciting for hospital staff. "We knew we would soon be struggling with repair issues, and even though the old camera was acceptable, technology has advanced dramatically, so I am thrilled that we are able to take advantage of the improvements," commented Deb Kostoff. "Money from the Foundation replaced a camera that was nearly 15 years old." Kostoff, a nuclear medicine technologist for the hospital, recently completed training on the new equipment.

The camera, a Symbia S, is manufactured by Siemens Medical Solutions, one of the largest suppliers to the healthcare industry in the world. According to hospital staff, some of the advantages to the new scanner are its speed and ability to study a wide variety of diseases in all organ systems of the human body. These include the brain, heart, lungs, kidneys, liver, spleen and skeleton. "We can actually see the heart as it is beating, or tell if a gallbladder is functioning or not," explained Dawn Schaffner, nuclear medicine technologist. "The communication between the camera and the computer is enhanced with this machine. We are getting twice the amount of information that we were getting before."

Improvements for the new machine include the ability to hold a patient weighing up to 500 pounds. The previous machine held up to 350 pounds. In addition, the new camera is not in a fixed position, allowing the technician to swing the camera over an ill patient so that the patient can remain comfortably on the bed. Among other features is the

adjustable video screen allowing patients to view a DVD or listen to a CD while the camera is in operation, helping to pass the time for those tests that require an hour or more. "This camera is amazingly quiet while it is working. If a patient chooses to have a support person with them, they can carry on a normal conversation. The new bed on the table is contoured and so much more comfortable than the old one. I'm really pleased to be able to say that it is actually patient-friendly," said Kostoff.

With funds provided to the hospital by the Galion Community Hospital Foundation solely for the camera, purchase price for the new equipment was about $350,000. Boyd Epperson, chair for the GCH Foundation, reflected, "As a community member, I am delighted that the money was available to help with a gift of this magnitude. This is the first action ever made by the Foundation on this scale. Economic times have stressed the hospital, just like any other business, and the need for a replacement camera was undeniable. We were able to help. Now we need to replenish the funds so that we can continue our mission of community service."

The Galion Community Hospital Foundation is a non-profit public 501 (c) (3) corporation. The organization accepts gifts and bequests for a variety of current or new funds. Decisions for fund awards are made by the GCH Foundation's board of directors to focus on health-related needs of the community. To learn more about the Community Foundation, please contact Mari Swearingen, Director, at 419-468-0567.

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