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For Immediate Release

TELE-ICU PROGRAM EXPANDS, CONNECTING MORE MARYLAND ICU PATIENTS TO REMOTE CRITICAL CARE STAFF

Second Maryland eCare Hospital goes "live" and Seventh Hospital Joins

WASHINGTON DC – Today, Peninsula Regional Medical Center in Salisbury, Maryland will connect patients and staff in its Intensive Care Unit (ICU) to a team of critical care physicians and nurses almost 100 miles away enhancing patient care. As a member of Maryland eCare, Peninsula Regional becomes the second Maryland hospital to adopt this innovative tele-ICU. At the same time, Union Hospital in Elkton has signed on to bring the eCare program to their patients in 2010.

eCare hospitals connect ICU beds via video camera, voice technology, intelligent monitoring and alarm systems to critical care physicians and nurses at a remote monitoring center based at Christiana Care Health System in Newark, Delaware. With a three-year, \$3 million grant from CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield, the eCare program uses tele-ICU technology to provide supplemental, specialized care to ICUs. Key indicators such as blood pressure, heart rate, oxygen levels, respiratory rates and laboratory results are monitored continuously by the remote team with the assistance of sophisticated software.

The eCare program will become a standard part of care provided in the ICUs of participating hospitals. It does not cost patients extra or replace existing, local bedside staff. Designed to help reduce patient complications and improve outcomes, the eCare program strives to enhance the quality of care provided. By 2010, eCare will support almost 80 ICU beds in seven hospitals across Maryland.

Studies show improved patient outcomes and decreased lengths of stay for patients in ICUs managed by critical care physicians. Yet, due to a current and worsening shortage in the specialty, it's difficult to impossible for some hospitals to have these physicians on-site 24 hours a day.

About Maryland eCare

Maryland eCare, LLC is a group of independent hospitals committed to improving patient care and safety for the communities they serve by sharing resources and bringing skilled critical care to rural Maryland. Maryland eCare hospitals include: Atlantic General Hospital, Berlin; Calvert Memorial Hospital, Prince Frederick; Civista Medical Center, La Plata; Peninsula Regional Medical Center, Salisbury; St. Mary's Hospital, Leonardtown; Union Hospital, Elkton; and Washington County Health System, Hagerstown. For more information, visit www.marylandecare.org.