

# NEWS RELEASE



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**For Immediate Release**

## **HALIFAX REGIONAL CELEBRATES NURSES WEEK**

*Hilda Jeffers Observes 39 Years as Nurse*

**ROANOKE RAPIDS, NC (April 28, 2011)—Next week the 200 nurses at Halifax Regional will celebrate National Nurses Week with a variety of activities.**

Nurses Week begins May 6, marked as RN Recognition Day. The nurse managers of the various units within the Medical Center will host a reception to recognize nurses on May 9.

On May 10, the Nursing Department will sponsor a “Blessing of the Hands” ceremony in which nursing leaders recognizes the significant work of nurses.

On May 12, the annual Nurse Excellence Banquet will honor seven nurses for their outstanding performances. The weeklong observance ends May 12, the birthday of Florence Nightingale, founder of nursing as a modern profession.

“The purpose of National Nurses Week is to honor the diverse ways registered nurses improve healthcare,” said Karen Daniels, vice president of nursing at Halifax Regional. “From bedside nursing in hospitals and long-term care facilities to the halls of research institutions, state legislatures and Congress, the depth and breadth of the nursing profession is meeting the expanding healthcare needs of American society.”

Hilda Jeffers is an example of the excellence in nursing at Halifax Regional. In 1973, she was a housewife and mother in Roanoke Rapids, thinking about a career.

She enrolled in what was then called Halifax Technical Institute (now Halifax Community College) in the nursing program and became an LPN at Halifax Regional, coming to work after the birth of her second child.

While working full time and sharing parenting and household responsibilities with her husband (“as we still do after 40 years of marriage,” she says), she again went to school. She returned to Halifax Community College and earned an Associate’s degree in nursing and became a registered nurse.

Today, Hilda has 39 years’ experience at Halifax Regional. “Hilda has served the Medical Center in many capacities over the years and been outstanding in all of them,” says Daniels.

Hilda is an example of the many nurses with long term commitments to the Medical Center. Shirley Allen, RN, manager of revenue management, has worked 42 years at Halifax Regional.

Now, Hilda is Bed Coordinator, in charge of “putting the right patient in the right bed at the right time,” explained Daniels. “That’s a difficult assignment, and Hilda performs her job in an excellent manner.”

“We have all this new technology,” Jeffers says, “but at Halifax Regional we still work as a family. I’m proud to be here. The nurses are well trained, and there is a strong emphasis on continuing our education.”

Many nurses trained like Jeffers, rearing children, working at night and going to college in the daytime. “Yes, it was tough as I look back, but it made me stronger and more caring,” she says.

“I am more understanding of patients,” she adds. “And I take nothing for granted.”

Along the way, she felt the call of God to enter the ministry. Again, Jeffers went back to college, earning a Master’s degree in Theology from Moriah Institute in Fayetteville. “God was preparing me for the ministry all along.”

She has been pastor of Macedonia and Oak Grove AME Churches and an Elder at Greater Beulah Land International Fellowship in Conway. “Now I can help to heal the spiritual as well as the physical body,” she says.

“It was part of God’s plan for me,” she declares. It’s also part of Hilda Jeffer’s make-up as a wife, mother, grandmother, nurse and pastor. “I do have some tenacity,” she admits. “If you tell me that I can’t do it, I’ll do it faster.”

Jeffers is one of 46 nurses who have worked more than 20 years at Halifax Regional.

Young and old, the 200 nurses who are being honored this coming week comprise the largest group of employees at Halifax Regional, the ones who provide the compassionate bedside care that results in the Medical Center’s reputation for putting Patients First.

Every year, National Nurses Week focuses attention on the diverse ways America’s 3.1 million nurses work to save lives and improve the health of millions of individuals. This year the American Nurses Association selected “Nurses Trusted to Care” as the theme for its observance.

The American Nurses Association advances the nursing profession by fostering high standards of nursing practice, promoting economic and general welfare, promoting a positive and realistic view of nursing, and working to advance healthcare issues affecting nurses and the public.

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#### **About Halifax Regional**

*Halifax Regional Medical Center is licensed for 204 beds, including psychiatric and nursery. A non-profit organization, Halifax Regional is fully accredited by the Joint Commission. For more information, visit [www.halifaxregional.org](http://www.halifaxregional.org).*