

For immediate release

Contact:

Jane Hooper, director of community relations
Elizabethtown Community Hospital
75 Park Street
Elizabethtown, NY 12932
873-3003
jhooper@ech.org

Elizabethtown Community Hospital Offers Internet Connection For Patients

Elizabethtown, N.Y. (October 21, 2009) – Elizabethtown Community Hospital allows patients the ability to connect to the Internet during their hospital stay.

The hospital's information services department has a few laptop computers available for patients to borrow while in the hospital. These computers may be used to connect to the Internet on a secure, wireless connection, aside from the hospital's main Internet connection and separate from the hospital's computer network. Patients are also welcome to bring their personal laptop from home.

Patients are able to check their e-mail and communicate with friends and family from their hospital rooms.

Brett Sicola, director of the hospital's information services department was happy to put this program into place. "Patients are quite surprised to discover that we can equip them with a laptop and connection to the Internet", he said. "It's very rewarding for my department to directly help our patients."

Over the past few years, the hospital has invested in many technology-based initiatives such as telemedicine which improves its emergency room trauma capability and has allowed for the development of the hospital's chemotherapy program. New digital radiology equipment allows staff to display patient x-rays and CAT scans on monitors in the emergency room. There have also been upgrades to hospital-wide cardiac monitoring equipment and medication dispensing IV units.

Many of these changes have happened alongside improvements in the hospital's technology infrastructure which allows for greater organization and efficient storage of information.

This technology upgrade benefits patients in terms of enhanced healthcare while the ability to borrow a laptop helps them on a more emotional level. "It's difficult to be a patient in a hospital", said Victoria Savage, nurse manager of the hospital's inpatient unit. "People are separated from family and friends. It certainly helps a patient's emotional well-being to be able to communicate with loved ones."