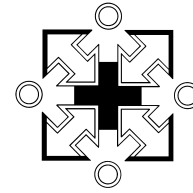


**Carteret General Hospital**  
3500 Arendell Street  
Morehead City, NC 28557

# Press Release



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The Respiratory Therapists of Carteret General Hospital are celebrating National Respiratory Care Week from October 21<sup>st</sup> through October 27. This is a time where respiratory therapists are recognized for the many contributions they make to healthcare. For example, respiratory therapists are actively involved with inpatient and outpatient care and are first responders to many emergency care situations. Additionally, respiratory therapists work in performing pulmonary function and cardiac stress tests, participate in cardiopulmonary rehabilitation care, provide outpatient smoking cessation counseling, and perform sleep and neurodiagnostic tests.

“We are proud of the high quality care that our team of professional respiratory therapists provides to the citizens and visitors of Carteret County”, states Ms. Gaye Fulcher, RRT, Cardiopulmonary Clinical Manager. “This level of quality care was recognized by the American Association of Respiratory Care (AARC) and therefore awarded Carteret General Hospital its Quality Respiratory Care Recognition Award,” Ms. Fulcher continues. According to the AARC this recognition is only held by approximately 10% of hospitals nationwide.

The field of respiratory care is important to the overall health of many individuals facing respiratory diseases. One such disease, asthma, affects more than 17 million Americans – five million of them children. Asthma is a chronic disease of the small airways. Much of the time people with asthma breathe just fine, but when the lungs become overly sensitive to allergens or irritants the airways swell and twitch or tighten up. This makes getting air in and out of the lungs difficult. An attack can make the person feel breathless, wheeze, cough, and have chest pain.

“We have had national guidelines for treating asthma out for some years now, yet many people are still having uncontrolled asthma attacks”, according to Kim Brittingham, RRT, Pulmonary Rehabilitation. “We still need to get the word out to our patients that proper medical treatment and avoidance of triggers can have a great effect on their lives.”

One test that helps diagnose asthma and other respiratory diseases is known as a pulmonary function test or spirometry. “Spirometry is a simple breathing test that measures airflow through the lungs,” explains Elizabeth Miller, RRT, Pulmonary Function Laboratory. While the test has been around for years, it is mainly been used in hospitals and pulmonary function laboratories to measure the progression of lung disease in people who are already diagnosed with a respiratory condition. “Test Your Lungs – Know Your Numbers!” is the battle cry of the National Lung Health Education Program (NLHEP), a group established several years ago with the support of the AARC

and other national health organizations to promote greater use of spirometry in physicians' offices. Here is why you need to know about this simple test.

1. Spirometry can be performed quickly and easily in the doctors' office.
2. The test requires that patient to take a deep breath, and then blow out through a mouthpiece as fast and hard as possible for about six seconds.
3. Spirometry measures the airflow through the lungs. Abnormal results mean air is not getting through as well as it should and could indicate the presence of lung disease.
4. Abnormal spirometry is more likely in people who smoke than people who don't.
5. Quitting smoking is vital for anyone with abnormal results.
6. Medications aimed at decreasing swelling and wheezing may also benefit people with abnormal spirometry.

During Respiratory Care Week, Carteret General's respiratory therapist would like to give back to the community by providing free pulmonary function tests. Slated for Lung Health Day, Wednesday, October 24, 2007, the testing will be offered in the Arendell Street Lobby between the hours of 9am and 3pm. Please mark your calendar for this important screening.

Ralph Waldo Emerson once wrote, "To know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived – that is to have succeeded." This quote is certainly true for the 31 therapists that make up the Respiratory Team at Carteret General Hospital. Countless men, women, and children have benefited due to the dedicated efforts of this team to help others breathe easier.

Carteret General Hospital is a 135-bed hospital serving Eastern North Carolina. In addition to respiratory care, the Hospital offers a full range of acute care, diagnostic and outpatient services including a comprehensive Cancer Center, CGH Imaging Center, Hospice, Home Health, Emergency Department and Birthing Center. For additional information about Carteret General Hospital, call 252.808.6000 or visit our website at [ccgh.org](http://ccgh.org).