



NEWS RELEASE

Cottage Hospital

For more information, contact:
Maryanne Aldrich | 603-747-9707

COTTAGE HOSPITAL RECOGNIZED FOR COMMUNITY OUTREACH EFFORTS

Cottage Hospital, a critical access hospital based in Woodsville, NH, was recently honored by the Norris Cotton Cancer Center at Dartmouth-Hitchcock for taking a leadership role in a collaborative outreach program centered around cancer prevention and early detection.

In collaboration with the Norris Cotton Cancer Center, Cottage Hospital piloted a robust community outreach program that began four years ago. In the initial program, Cottage Hospital partnered with schools, local businesses, and other area organizations to provide education on tobacco cessation, sun safety, and colorectal cancer screening and prevention. The success of the program, led to a second phase in which Cottage Hospital and other leading area employers launched a second, similar campaign, focused on disseminating messages at the work place. Based on its leadership role in the development and execution of the programs, Norris Cotton Cancer Center recognized Cottage Hospital with a community outreach award.

Telisa Stewart, DrPH, MPH, director of community education and prevention at Norris Cotton Cancer Center, credits the success in the Woodville community to the community's desire to be healthy and to "persistent and consistent" communications. "We crafted a set of easy-to-understand messages for the community, which were disseminated through a wide variety of channels. Our communications also included clear calls to action that community members could take to reduce their risks. The result was a campaign that effectively reached people and encouraged a positive behavior change."

Norris Cotton Cancer Center conducted pre- and post-surveys as part of the project. The results indicated that the campaign had success, particularly in conjunction with the tobacco messaging. Approximately 10% of respondents reported quitting tobacco and 13% reported changing their behavior regarding second-hand smoke.

Maria Ryan, PhD, APRN, Cottage Hospital's chief executive officer, emphasized: "As with other health outreach campaigns, the key to the success of this program was collaboration. Our overall collaborative efforts with other area employers and the Norris Cotton Cancer Center are core to our mission of strengthening the health of our community. Further, the partnerships we developed with local community organizations as part of this effort have allowed us to build a platform to launch similar campaigns in the future."

“Creating and distributing messages that effect health behavior change is always a challenge, but that is particularly the case in rural communities,” says Dr. Stewart. “The success achieved by Cottage Hospital and its collaborators with this program demonstrates that coordinated efforts within a community can make the needle move.”

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About Cottage Hospital: Cottage Hospital is 25-bed critical access hospital located in Woodsville, NH, and serves the Upper Connecticut River Valley. The Cottage family has over 250 employees, 37 active medical staff providers and 35 volunteers. For more information, visit www.cottagehospital.org.

Photo caption: Dr. Telisa Stewart (at left), director of community prevention and education at Norris Cotton Cancer Center, and Mark A. Israel, MD, director Norris Cotton Cancer Center, presented an award to Cottage Hospital CEO, Dr. Maria Ryan, recognizing the hospital’s efforts in a collaborative community outreach program focused on cancer prevention and early detection.