



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CHA to Recognize Institute Of Living's Jeanne Kessler, RN, as a Healthcare Hero**

WALLINGFORD – At its 98th Annual Meeting on Tuesday, June 28, 2016, the Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) will recognize Jeanne Kessler, RN, a staff nurse on the Geriatric Psychiatric Unit at the Institute of Living, Hartford Hospital, as a 2016 Healthcare Hero. She was nominated for this award by Christine Waszynski and Kelley Boothby.

Ms. Kessler functions as a designated expert in geriatric psychiatric nursing and dementia care. She demonstrates the essence of professional nursing through role modeling, clinical leadership, and a love of learning. Ms. Kessler performs as the preceptor for new nurses and student nurses, serves as a unit staff representative for hosting site visits from The Joint Commission and the Department of Public Health, and provides unit-based staff education.

Ms. Kessler designed and implemented a quality improvement study on reducing sundowning behaviors on a dementia care unit. She also developed and implemented an evidence-based practice research project on medicating dementia patients with behavioral disturbances and its effect on the risk of skin breakdown.

Among Ms. Kessler's responsibilities has been the oversight of four volunteer programs in the acute care setting – Patient Safety/Fall Prevention, Keeping in Touch (a geriatric visitation program for those with delirium), Individualized Therapeutic Activities, and Meal Mates. Her commitment to these programs includes classroom and one-on-one training for volunteers.

Recently, Ms. Kessler agreed to assist with the piloting of a new volunteer role called Personal Touch, a program intended to show whether having a multi-trained volunteer assigned to a specific unit for an entire shift would be more effective than having a variety of volunteers. Ms. Kessler designed a five-hour classroom training program and was willing to conduct it on a Saturday to accommodate more volunteers. The program is already showing signs of success, with results from the first quarter showing an 80% decrease in falls.

Ms. Kessler has not limited her expertise and time to Hartford HealthCare. She has served as a consultant for CARE Camp Consultants in Farmington, provided a week-long summer camp for teens and residents at Buckingham Estates in Glastonbury, developed intergenerational workshops for teens and persons with dementia, and founded the Girl Scout Alzheimer's Awareness Badge Program completed

by more than 130 Girl Scouts. Her exceptional work and dedication to others has been rewarded on numerous occasions, including in 2008, when she was one of only five national recipients of the Hallmark Hero Award. She has also been awarded the Hartford Hospital Evidence Based Practice Nursing Research Fellowship, the Geriatric Resource Nurse of the Year Award, and the Florence Nightingale Award for Excellence in Nursing.

CHA's Healthcare Heroes award was developed in 2002 to celebrate the invaluable contributions of healthcare workers, both to their field and to the community at large. Now in its 15th year, the presentation of the Healthcare Heroes awards has become a highlight of CHA's Annual Meeting.

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The Connecticut Hospital Association has been dedicated to serving Connecticut's hospitals since 1919. Through state and federal advocacy, CHA represents the interests of Connecticut's hospitals on key healthcare issues in the areas of quality and patient safety, access and coverage, workforce, public health, and hospital reimbursement.



