



## **St. Francis Memorial Hospital News Release**

Our caregivers always place their patients' overall safety at the top of their priority list—in fact, patient safety is in everyone's job description at SFMH.

Your safety when entering the hospital doors should be at the top of your priority list too, and we have developed some new documentation to clarify key messages to patients. "While we were preparing for our 2010 accreditation, there were many required organizational practices for patient safety that had to be met. One of the key requirements was patient understanding related to their role in patient safety," explains Joan Kuiack, Director of Patient Care Services.

Kuiack says staff worked hard on developing and implementing new discharge instructions, patient booklets on admission, handouts in the emergency department, and safety brochures to go along with the new Eight Steps to a Safer Hospital Visit posters. "That was the purpose of our focus group held with patients. We developed signage about eight steps to patient safety to highlight this awareness to both patients and families coming to SFMH," she adds.

Working together and becoming familiar with our safety message is one way of providing faster, more efficient care—especially when it comes to knowing your current list of medications and allergies. Have this information written out and kept with you at all times, insists Kuiack.

The importance of proper hand hygiene is stressed as well. It can help to prevent the spread of germs to you and to those around you.

Gwen Brown, SFMH Infection Control coordinator, points out the four moments of hand hygiene:

1. Before initial patient/patient environment contact
2. Before aseptic procedures
3. After body fluid exposure risk
4. After patient/patient environment contact.

Hand washing or using alcohol-based hand sanitizers—especially now that cold and flu season is upon us—is extremely important to reduce the risk of spreading infections.

Whether you are coming to the hospital or not, you should wash your hands often with soap and rub for 10 to 15 seconds, covering all of the surfaces. Rinse off the soap and gently blot with a towel.

SFMH also has a falls prevention program in place that assesses each patient upon admittance. Patients who don't feel stable enough to move on their own should wait for one of our staff to assist.

Above all, if you have a question about your care, please do not hesitate to ask any one of the members of our health care team.