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## **MORGAN MEMORIAL HOSPITAL WINS STATEWIDE PATIENT SAFETY AWARD FOR REDUCTION IN PATIENT FALLS**

**ATLANTA** – The Partnership for Health and Accountability (PHA) presented its prestigious Quality and Patient Safety Award to Morgan Memorial Hospital in Madison for its project that reduced the number of falls per patient. The project titled, “Reducing Patient Falls through Timelier Call Bell Response Times,” won first place in the Critical Access Hospitals Category. These annual awards recognize Georgia health care organizations for achievement in reducing the risk of medical errors and improving patient safety and medical outcomes.

Falls can negatively impact patients’ quality of life as well as a hospital’s financial bottom line through increased hospitalization costs. After noticing a gradual upward trend in patient falls in the hospital, staff at Morgan Memorial set a goal to reduce the patient fall rate by 33 percent and to maintain this reduction.

An issue with call bell response times was identified as a possible factor in falls. However, data showed no correlation between falls and nurses’ responses to patient call bells. Exploration of other causes found a correlation between when patient falls occurred and what nursing staff was doing at those particular times. Staff discovered that more than half the falls occurred between the hours of 2 p.m. and 5 p.m. and between 11 p.m. and 2 a.m. These times were also when staff members were updating patient charts and in-room rounding was at a minimum.

By sharing this data with the staff and educating them on the importance of rounding, falls were reduced by 50 percent and this reduction has been sustained since the implementation of the project in January 2010.

“Reducing the occurrence of patient falls contributes to improved patient care and positively affects quality of life,” said Georgia Hospital Association (GHA) President Joseph Parker. “We applaud Morgan Memorial Hospital for taking a leadership role in this effort and are grateful for its dedication to providing the best and safest care possible for its patients.”

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**About PHA**

The Partnership for Health and Accountability (PHA), a subsidiary of GHA, was established in January 2000 to improve patient care and patient safety in hospitals and other health care facilities and create healthy communities.

**About GHA**

Established in 1929, GHA is the state's largest trade organization of hospitals and health systems providing education, research and risk management services to its more than 170 hospital and health system members. Additionally, it represents and advocates health policy issues benefiting Georgia's citizens before the state legislature and U.S. Congress as well as before regulatory bodies.

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