## PRESS RELEASE Molly Dahlgren, Marketing Lead March 27, 2020 mdahlgren@mchhs.org

402-426-1464

## 

**Memorial Community Hospital and Health System Announces Senior Life Solutions Partnership Coming Soon**

Blair, NE – Memorial Community Hospital and Health System (MCH&HS) is pleased to announce a partnership with Senior Life Solutions. Senior Life Solutions will be located on the hospital’s main campus in the former Home Health office at 718 North 21st Street, just south of the Emergency Room entrance. The program has been delayed due to necessary precautions that are being taken to keep patients, visitors and the community safe from COVID-19. Memorial Community Hospital and Health System will begin the program as soon as it is safe to do so.

MCH&HS Senior Life Solutions is an intensive outpatient therapy program. Patients are typically seen in groups; however, they also provide individual and family therapy. Senior Life Solutions is designed to meet the unique needs of senior adults struggling with symptoms of depression and anxiety, stress from age-related health concerns, or difficult life transitions such as the loss of a loved one. Individuals may benefit from the Senior Life Solutions program if they are experiencing any of the following common indicators or triggers of depression and anxiety:

* Recently experienced a traumatic event
* Lost a spouse or close family member
* Loss of interest in previously enjoyed activities
* Changes in appetite
* Difficulty sleeping
* Loss of energy
* Feelings of sadness or grief lasting more than two weeks
* Feelings of worthlessness or hopelessness

Following an individual assessment, patients meet up to three times per week in a supportive, encouraging group setting. The program staff includes a board-certified psychiatrist, licensed social workers, a registered nurse, and other healthcare professionals dedicated to the emotional well-being of the seniors in our community.

Holly Mackie, Senior Life Solutions Program Director, is anxious to begin serving the senior residents in the community. “Senior Life Solutions is an exciting program to offer mental health services to the seniors in our community and surrounding areas. Mental health is important at all ages and stages of life. Senior Life Solutions will provide much needed mental health services to the senior population,” said Mackie.   
  
Referrals to the program can be made by anyone, including a patient’s physician, family member, the patient them self, or another healthcare professional. The Senior Life Solutions program is open to medicare beneficiaries, whether living at home or in a long term care facility, and is available in any of the communities that MCH&HS serves.

During the COVID-19 outbreak, Senior Life Solutions has been helpful in providing valuable information in the communities it serves. Along with MCH&HS, they are encouraging people to engage in meaningful, productive activities to help boost mood and maintain their overall emotional health and well-being. According to Mackie, “It is important to find ways to connect and engage in activities to help mitigate symptoms of anxiety and depression during this time. We put together these quick tips to share with our communities and hope they will encourage self-care and support.”

**Quick Tips for Older Adults Experiencing Social Isolation**

1. Find or keep a sense of purpose. Take up a hobby such as growing an herb garden, crossword puzzles, knitting, or other activities.
2. Age-appropriate workouts can help you not only stay in physical shape but in mental shape as well. Gentle exercises such as walking are suggested. It is always recommended to consult a healthcare professional or primary care physician first.
3. Manage medication. Do you have enough to last you for the next 30-60 days? If you need help managing medications, contact your doctor or a loved one who can help you.
4. Keep a routine that includes consistent sleep/wake cycles. Incorporate talking to family or friends in that routine. Whether it be writing them a letter or calling them on the phone.

**Quick Tips for Families**

1. Stay active, and do it together! Walk the family dog, take a bike ride, or a walk together.
2. If your church has temporarily closed, check-in with them to see if they are offering virtual services that your family can attend together from home.
3. If you have kids home from school, make a video (on your smartphone!) and send it to a loved one who lives far away. A fun interactive way to simply say, hello.

**Quick Tips for Caregivers**

1. Take five to refuel. Make a list of things that help you relax and take 2 to 3 breaks throughout the day.
2. Call or write a friend who can lend a sympathetic ear, make you laugh, and remind you that you are not alone.
3. Pursue other interests. Hobbies, sports, crafts, and other pursuits are not frivolous. They help you clear your mind of worry – if only briefly.

**How to Care for Yourself**

1. Nourish your body. Ensure you are eating a balanced diet and drinking plenty of water. If produce is hard to come by right now, check to see if local farmer’s markets are delivering.
2. Take a break from the news. Although it is important to stay updated, it is recommended to take at least a 15-minute break.

Mackie notes it is also important to stay connected to your loved ones or a mentor using your phone, or applications like Facetime or Skype to speak to them virtually.

For more information, call Memorial Community Hospital and Health Systems’ Senior Life Solutions program at 402-533-4448.

###

**ABOUT SENIOR LIFE SOLUTIONS**

Founded in 2003, Senior Life Solutions is managed by Psychiatric Medical Care (PMC), a leading behavioral healthcare management company. Focused on addressing the needs of rural and underserved communities, PMC manages inpatient behavioral health units, intensive outpatient programs, and telehealth services in more than 20 states. The company's services provide evaluation and treatment for patients suffering from depression, anxiety, mood disorders, memory problems, post-traumatic stress disorder, and other behavioral health problems. For more information, visit [www.psychmc.com](https://cts.businesswire.com/ct/CT?id=smartlink&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.psychmc.com&esheet=51918096&newsitemid=20181221005292&lan=en-US&anchor=www.psychmc.com&index=2&md5=7c2134dda1c22eeeb4e1a0050b12927e).

Memorial Community Hospital & Health System, located at 810 North 22 Street, has been serving the residents of Burt and Washington Counties for more than 60 years. The hospital, and its network of outreach clinics continues to heal, nurture and promote health by proactively identifying and meeting the needs of these communities. For more information visit, http://www.mchhs.org.