



CHRISTIANA CARE HEALTH SYSTEM

Immediate Release

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Christiana Care Health System's Helen F. Graham Cancer Center wins American Psychological Association's Psychologically Healthy Workplace Award

(NEWARK, Del. – March 12) For creating a healthy, high-performing work environment, the Care Management Department at [Christiana Care Health System's](#) Helen F. Graham Cancer Center has received the American Psychological Association's (APA) 2013 Psychologically Healthy Workplace Award.

One of only four employers from across North America to receive the award this year, Christiana Care won in the not-for-profit category. The [Helen F. Graham Cancer Center](#) department previously won the Delaware Psychological Association's state-level Psychologically Healthy Workplace Award, qualifying it to be nominated for the APA award.

Christiana Care is only the fourth hospital system ever to win the national award. The APA also recognized the Helen F. Graham Cancer Center department as a Best Practices honoree for employee growth and development.

"The real winners of this award are our colleagues, our patients and our community," said Robert J. Laskowski, M.D., Christiana Care president and CEO. "By partnering with our patients and their loved ones in their care, we create greater value for our patients. This not only benefits the patient and their loved ones; it supports our care team to do the best they can."

The Helen F. Graham Cancer Center excelled in its efforts to foster employee involvement, health and safety, employee growth and development, work-life balance and employee recognition, according to the APA. The annual employee retreat, wellness website and flexible scheduling are some examples of the workplace practices that helped earn a 2013 award.

The Helen F. Graham Cancer Center healthy workplace practices are reaping rewards for both the organization and its employees. The department boasts one of the highest job satisfaction levels at Christiana Care and a zero percent turnover rate in 2012. Team members report that

they have been able to reduce their stress, make health improvements and engage in a more active lifestyle.

“This award recognizes the high priority the Helen F. Graham Cancer Center administration places on the well-being of our colleagues and our ongoing commitment to collaborate with our staff in decision-making to create greater value,” said Nicholas J. Petrelli, M.D., Bank of America endowed medical director. “Establishing an Esprit De Corps Committee with scattered events throughout the year for cancer center personnel has also contributed to a healthy work-place environment,” he said.

“Our annual retreat has evolved into a time and place to recognize and thank employees for their good work, to develop team skills and to set goals for the upcoming year,” he continued. “Having the opportunity to laugh together and share long conversations are just some of the many reasons this retreat is well-liked by employees.”

“On a daily basis we work extremely hard on a number of things, such as as communication skills, accountability, teambuilding , effectiveness, talent management, creating highly engaged employees, customer service, staff empowerment and leadership skills,” said Tricia Strusowski, RN, clinical director of the Cancer Program. “Since we began focusing on our work environment, employees have demonstrated measureable improvements in conflict management, internal communications and group cohesiveness. Caring for cancer patients can bring special challenges for our staff and it is important we care for each other,” she said.

Staff at the Helen F. Graham Cancer Center also benefit from Christiana Care’s confidential wellness website with resources for both physical and emotional health. It is also linked to, and provides personalized recommendations based on, an employee’s own biometric results such as blood pressure, blood sugar and BMI. A designated Wellness Champion in each department brings health and wellness information to staff, supports healthy lifestyle changes and leads a weekly after-work yoga group.

All employees are scheduled for quarterly one-on-one meetings with the director. At these meetings, staff share current projects and caseloads as well as suggestions for improvements.

“Forward-thinking employers such as Christiana Care’s Helen F. Graham Cancer Center are taking steps to create a positive work environment where employees can thrive,” said David W. Ballard, Psy.D., MBA, head of APA’s Center for Organizational Excellence. “In turn, employees are more engaged and committed to the organization’s success. This shared responsibility for creating a psychologically healthy workplace promotes an organizational culture that values well-being and performance and delivers results on both sides of the equation.”

APA’s Psychologically Healthy Workplace Awards showcase the very best from among the award winners recognized by APA’s affiliated state, provincial and territorial psychological associations. Nominees are evaluated on their workplace practices in the areas of employee involvement, health and safety, employee growth and development, work-life balance and employee recognition. Awards are given to for-profit and not-for-profit organizations as well as government, military and educational institutions.

The American Psychological Association, in Washington, D.C., is the largest scientific and professional organization representing psychology in the United States and is the world's largest association of psychologists. APA's membership includes more than 137,000 researchers, educators, clinicians, consultants and students. Through its divisions in 54 subfields of psychology and affiliations with 60 state, territorial and Canadian provincial associations, APA works to advance the creation, communication and application of psychological knowledge to benefit society and improve people's lives.

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