



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Contact:**

Atiya Butler  
Director, External Affairs and Marketing  
718.334.1259

### **Elmhurst Hospital Center to Receive LIVESTRONG Foundation Grant to Advance Palliative Care in Queens**

**New York, NY – May 13, 2013** – Elmhurst Hospital Center (EHC) has been selected by the [LIVESTRONG Foundation Community Impact Project](#) to receive a grant to support its efforts to be the first hospital in Queens to achieve the Joint Commission’s Advanced Certification for Palliative Care.

Palliative care is a specialized field of medicine that focuses on providing relief from the symptoms, pain, and stress of serious illness. The Palliative Care Program at EHC has been in place since 2007, when it began with solely a medical director and social worker on staff. It has since grown to include an interdisciplinary team consisting of two medical doctors, a nurse practitioner, social workers and a case worker. Palliative care is available for inpatient consultation on all medical and surgery units, including EHC’s ICUs and Emergency Room. Since its inception in 2007, The Palliative Care Program has served approximately 2,150 patients, along with their families.

The LIVESTRONG funding will help EHC meet the stringent requirements established in 2011 by the Joint Commission to achieve its advanced certification, which recognizes hospitals that demonstrate exceptional patient and family-centered care in order to improve quality of life for patients facing serious illness. The Joint Commission is the body that accredits and certifies more than 19,000 health care organizations across the United States.

"Our Palliative Care team is very proud to have received this grant. We could not have done this without the support of our hospital and surrounding community. The votes we received confirmed that our work is recognized and valued," said Dr. Tita Castor, Medical Director of Palliative Care Service at EHC.

"We’re thrilled to receive this grant from the LIVESTRONG Foundation. The funds will be used to enhance our cancer care services," said Chris Constantino, Executive Director of EHC. "At Elmhurst we take pride in providing a quality level of service to all of our patients and we’re pleased to have the support of the LIVESTRONG Foundation for our Palliative Care Service."

To be eligible for Advanced Certification for Palliative Care, a palliative care program must: be in a Joint Commission--accredited hospital; provide the full range of palliative care services to patients 24-hours-per-day, seven-days-per-week; have served a minimum number of palliative care patients; and direct and coordinate the provision of palliative care, treatment and services within an organized interdisciplinary team, among other requirements.

EHC anticipates applying for advanced certification for its Palliative Care Program this fall.

Organizations chosen by LIVESTRONG receive grants of up to \$15,000. The LIVESTRONG Foundation is offering \$1.2 million in funding in 2013 to bring proven cancer support programs to communities across the U.S.

### **About Elmhurst Hospital Center**

Elmhurst Hospital Center (EHC), part of the New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation (HHC), is the major tertiary care provider in the borough of Queens. The hospital is comprised of 545 beds and is a Level 1 Trauma Center, an Emergency Heart Care Station and a 911-Receiving Hospital. It is a premiere health care organization for key areas such as Surgery, Cardiology, Women's Health, Pediatrics, Rehabilitation Medicine, and Renal and Mental Health Services.

Elmhurst Hospital Center serves an area of approximately one million people in a community recognized as the most ethnically diverse in the world. Last year, EHC received close to 700,000 ambulatory care visits as well as receiving over 130,000 Emergency Room visits, making it one of the busiest hospitals in New York City. Over 4,000 babies were delivered at Elmhurst last year alone-the most in this region. Ensuring accessible health care is our priority.