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## News Release

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### Memorial Hospital Opens New MRI Suite

When local physicians order magnetic resonance imaging they want accurate results quickly so that they can make treatment decisions for their patients. The people who need this type of testing – commonly referred to as an MRI - want convenience, comfort and to get the test done in as little time as possible. The new MRI suite at Memorial Hospital meets the needs of physicians and their patients on all fronts.

The centerpiece of the Memorial Hospital MRI suite is the Siemens Magnetom Espree 1.5T. This MRI machine produces sharp images in less time and in a comfortable setting. Memorial Hospital is the only facility in the Mid-Shore region equipped with this type of MRI, which is ideal for larger individuals and people who are uncomfortable in enclosed spaces.

MRI is ordered by physicians to get images they use to diagnose brain and neurological disorders and to view joints throughout the body. Newer uses of MRI include imaging of organs in the abdominal area and the vascular system.

MRI has been part of Shore Health System’s imaging services since 1987. The first MRI machine was located at the Diagnostic and Imaging Center in Easton. “MRI was originally used for outpatient testing,” says Gary Bigelow, director of imaging services for Shore Health System.

“As MRI applications have evolved for other medical uses, physicians have been using the test more frequently for hospitalized patients.”

Shore Health System added MRI services at Dorchester General Hospital in 2005 and brought MRI to Memorial Hospital the following year. The Memorial Hospital MRI machine was located in a trailer parked on a pad in front of the hospital and patients were transferred on a stretcher from inside the hospital to the trailer.

“We wanted to eliminate the inconvenience of transporting people outside for this test,” Bigelow explains. “When we made the decision to upgrade to the Siemens Magnetom Espree, the timing was right to build an MRI suite at Memorial Hospital.”

The MRI suite is located adjacent to the Freeman Outpatient Center so that it is convenient for people who come for an outpatient test and for hospitalized patients. The suite consists of a comfortable waiting area for family members and a dressing room with lockers for patients’ personal items.

The Magnetom Espree has a large bore – or opening – and a short magnet. These two features reduce the feeling of claustrophobia that prevents some people from getting an MRI.

“With a wider opening and a shorter magnet, our patients have more head room, leg room and elbow room when they are getting an MRI,” Bigelow explains. “Larger people and those who are anxious about being enclosed can have a more relaxing experience. And, because this MRI gets images more quickly, people spend less time in the machine.”

Radiologist Kimberly Oster, MD, adds, “Even with a wide opening, our new MRI equipment has a stronger magnet than any other ‘open’ magnet in our area. This means that our patients are comfortable and that we get sharp, high resolution images for making medical diagnoses.”

Noting other benefits of the new MRI equipment, Dr. Oster says, “This MRI machine allows us to get beautiful images of the aorta, renal and carotid arteries, and other vessels without using

any injectable contrast material. This is a benefit to people who are allergic to these materials and to individuals who cannot tolerate the contrast because they have kidney disease.”

The Memorial Hospital imaging staff can answer questions about MRI and provide a tour of the MRI suite. Call 410-822-1000, ext. 5678 to make an appointment a consultation. To schedule an MRI or any other imaging service, call 410-822-1000, ext. 2600 and press option 1. For more information about Shore Health System’s imaging services, visit [www.shorehealth.org/services/radiology](http://www.shorehealth.org/services/radiology).

**Cutline: MRI technologist Doug Hjemvik, RT, CT, MR, prepares a patient for an MRI using Memorial Hospital’s new Siemens Magnetom Espree 1.5T. The high definition MRI machine has a large opening and a short magnet, which combine to create a more comfortable experience for patients. (MRI at MHE 0610.jpg)**

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