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The Wartburg Introduces On-Site Instrumental Evaluation of Swallowing Disorders

(Mount Vernon, NY-September 8, 2010) The Wartburg Waltemade and Pavilion Skilled Nursing Facility and Sub-Acute Care Center now offers to residents and patients, onsite Fiberoptic Endoscopic Evaluation of Swallowing (FEES). With FEES, a mobile digital swallow station is wheeled to the bedside with a monitor and testing software that projects a full color image of the swallow in real time. Michelle Garcia, MS, CCC-SLP, a speech-language pathologist and veteran of nearly 2000 FEES, evaluations inserts a tiny camera on a very fine flexible tube into the nose toward the back of the throat. The patient then eats and drinks food and liquid of different consistency as the speech pathologist views the resident's ability to manage the swallow.

The information gathered helps speech pathologists Michelle Garcia and Paulina Louie, MA, CCC-SLP, develop a care plan and recommend appropriate food consistency. "Physicians order the test based on medical need to facilitate treatment needs for patients to meet their nutritional needs for recovery." added Ms. Garcia. "Beyond this, being able to provide residents with the least restrictive diets that most closely resemble the food they have eaten prior to their illness is a very important part of their quality of life."

"FEES testing gives us real-time color imaging inside the throat to objectively assess a person's swallowing ability," said Ms. Garcia. "This allows us to make an immediate evaluation to identify swallowing problems." Bedside instrumental evaluations such as the FEES allows for an efficient means to provide services without the delay and cost often experienced when transporting patients to the hospital for swallowing tests. The onsite provision of FEES enables therapists to give feedback to residents during restorative treatment and enables frequent re-tests to determine progress throughout therapy.

The Wartburg Adult Care Community is a not-for-profit Lutheran ministry, serving people of all faiths with a full range of residential options and health-related services for older area adults and their families. The Wartburg offers skilled nursing care, rehabilitation, Alzheimer's and dementia care, assisted and independent living, adult day services, home care, memory care, pastoral care and monthly caregiver support groups. For more information about The Wartburg Adult Care Community, please call (914) 699-0800, email info@thewartburg.org or visit www.thewartburg.org

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