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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Maristhill Nursing & Rehabilitation Center Embraces "Culture Change" Initiative

MOVEMENT IS CONSISTENT WITH NATIONALLY-EMERGING ORGANIZATIONAL MODELS

WALTHAM, MA – (April 27, 2009) **Maristhill Nursing & Rehabilitation Center**, a non-profit provider of rehabilitative services, short-term and long-term care located in Waltham Massachusetts, recently announced the implementation of a "culture change" initiative, which is part of an overall philosophy and practice of creating a more home-like environment in which residents are truly at the center of the organization, driving routines, choices, and daily life.

In the past, nursing facilities by-and-large followed a strict "medical model," focusing strictly on the treatment of illness and disease. Medications, lab tests, doctor's visits and therapy took precedence over resident preferences and previous lifestyles, to the extent that a resident might be woken in the middle of the night to be given their pills, or taken out of an activity or meal if the doctor came to visit. Even the physical plant was laid out in a very linear fashion to accommodate nursing care and the efficient distribution of medication. Dietary restrictions were often onerous as well.

"We now recognize that the medical model is often dehumanizing and that people are better-served by being in charge of their lives," said **Carolyn Fenn**, Maristhill's Administrator. "Each of us is made up of more than one dimension and healthcare providers must attend to the physical, emotional, psychosocial and spiritual well-being of each individual if we wish to truly create a holistic, healing environment."

Current and planned changes at Maristhill include "consistent staffing" schedules, meal-time flexibility, intergenerational programming, collaborations with local area organizations and an open-door policy within the facility. Greater participation within the community is also part of the new approach, reducing the sense of isolation and ostracism among residents.

Originally founded in 1969 by the Marist Missionary Sisters, Maristhill is a licensed skilled-nursing and rehabilitation center with a highly-recognized performance record for clinical excellence and quality care. People of all faiths and denominations are welcomed at the 123-bed facility, which is a member of **Covenant Health Systems**, a Catholic health care system sponsoring hospitals, nursing homes, assisted living residences and other health and elder services throughout New England. For additional information about national culture change trends in healthcare or planned cultural enrichment at Maristhill, please contact Ms. Carolyn Fenn at (781) 893-0240 or visit www.maristhill.org. ###