



Nantucket Cottage Hospital Observes 100th Anniversary of Incorporation And National Rural Health Day

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Nantucket Cottage Hospital observes two special dates this month in recognition of its continuing role as Nantucket's only acute care medical facility.

On Friday, November 18, staff, trustees and volunteers for the hospital are invited to share a 100th birthday cake and refreshments at the hospital, in honor of that date as when the hospital was officially incorporated in 1911 by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The night before, on Thursday, November 17, the Nantucket Cottage Hospital Foundation has invited all hospital staff and friends to a casual celebration at Nantucket's Rose & Crown restaurant. That gathering will also celebrate the first nationwide observance of **National Rural Health Day** on November 17.

Although "rural" isn't commonly used to describe Nantucket, the island's location 30 miles at sea makes **Nantucket Cottage Hospital** the most isolated health care facility in Massachusetts. This month, NCH and Nantucket Healthy Community Collaborative, a coalition of local social services and health care groups, join the Massachusetts Department of Health, State Office of Rural Health and National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health (NOSORH) in recognizing the challenges and assets of rural health care.

NOSORH created National Rural Health Day as a way to showcase rural America, increase awareness of rural health-related issues and promote the efforts of NOSORH, State Offices of Rural Health and others in addressing those issues. Plans call for National Rural Health Day to become an annual celebration on the third Thursday of each November.

Here on Nantucket, the Nantucket Board of Selectmen will consider a proclamation honoring the day at their meeting on Wednesday, November 16. Nantucket Healthy Community Collaborative will observe the day on Thursday, November 17, while Nantucket Cottage Hospital will make it part of its celebrations on November 17 and 18.

Approximately 62 million people – nearly one in five Americans – live in rural and frontier communities throughout the United States. "Today more than ever, rural communities must tackle accessibility issues, a lack of healthcare providers, the needs of an aging population suffering from a greater number of chronic conditions, and larger percentages of un- and underinsured citizens," notes NOSORH Director Teryl Eisinger. "Meanwhile, rural hospitals are threatened with declining reimbursement rates and disproportionate funding levels that makes it challenging to serve their residents."

All 50 states maintain a State Office of Rural Health, each of which shares a similar mission: to foster relationships, disseminate information and provide technical assistance that improves access to and the quality of health care for rural citizens. In the past year alone, State Offices of Rural Health collectively provided technical assistance to more than 28,000 rural communities.

To learn more about Nantucket Cottage Hospital its services and other its 100 years of history, visit www.NantucketHospital.org. Additional information about National Rural Health Day can be found on the Web at www.celebratepowerofrural.org.