

N. C. Memorial Designated As Regional Trauma Center

CHAPEL HILL — North Carolina Memorial Hospital has been designated a "level-one" regional trauma center by the N.C. Office of Emergency Medical Services.

The designation formally recognizes the hospital as a major referral center for patients from throughout the state with critical injuries. N.C. Memorial Hospital is expected to be primarily responsible for treating trauma victims from Alamance, Caswell, Chatham, Durham, Franklin, Granville, Harnett, Johnston, Lee, Moore, Orange, Person, Vance, Wake and Warren counties.

Designating level-one trauma centers is the start of an effort by the Office of Emergency Medical Services to classify hospitals according to their ability to treat injuries and to establish criteria for the transfer of trauma victims, said Dr. Herbert Proctor, director of the N.C. Memorial Hospital Trauma Center.

According to Proctor, a level-one hospital must have a 24-hour emergency department, with at least one trauma

specialist on duty at all times; full-time laboratory, radiology and blood bank services and the ability to have virtually any medical specialist on hand within 30 minutes. In addition, a level-one trauma center must maintain active research, training and continuing education

programs. Level-two trauma centers, mostly the larger community hospitals, will have practically all the patient care capability of a level-one hospital, but will not be required to have research and training programs. Many of the state's small and medium-sized

community hospitals with well-equipped emergency departments will be designated as level-three trauma centers, Proctor said.

"I don't foresee a major increase in referrals to level-one hospitals," he said, "because probably 95 per cent of trauma cases can be

handled perfectly well in community hospitals, and I don't anticipate that changing."

Proctor said the types of injuries that generally need to be referred to a level-one trauma center include: large and serious burns; severe head, chest and abdominal injuries; and

multiple fractures. "Each level-one trauma center will also serve in a consulting capacity to other hospitals in its referral region," he said.

He noted that death rates are lower in states that are already using criteria for patient referrals that are similar to those being adopted in

North Carolina. Eric Munson, executive director of N.C. Memorial Hospital, said that even though the hospital is now classified as a regional trauma center, it will continue to provide complete health care services to local residents, regardless of

their illnesses or injuries. "In addition to formalizing our regional outreach responsibilities," Munson said, "the trauma center designation reinforces our commitment to provide emergency care of the highest quality to people in our own

Students Get Glimpse Of State Govt.

More than 100 students from across the state gathered in Raleigh recently to help "run" state government by attending Youth Involvement Day on Wednesday, November 3. The annual event gives young people a chance to view state government from inside by pairing off with a state government official for the day.

Among the students participating was Frances Heather Griffin an 11th grader at Durham Academy. She worked with the Director of the Division of Prisons, Department of Correction. The students worked alongside their government counterparts, performing the duties of a normal work day.

The students arrived in Raleigh on Tuesday, November 2, to attend a workshop on New Federalism that afternoon, and a banquet and costume party that evening.

Gov. Jim Hunt, an annual participant in Youth Involvement Day, spoke to the students at a breakfast on Wednesday morning. "This is not only a chance for you to observe state government in action, but a chance for you to express your opinions as well. Don't hesitate to speak up, to ask questions and even to make a suggestion," Hunt urged the young people.

Youth Involvement Day is sponsored by the State Youth Council, a component of the N.C. Department of Administration's Youth Involvement Office. Available to all North Carolina students between the ages of 14 and 19, Youth Involvement Day was established to give youth a firsthand look at state government in action and to give state officials an opportunity to hear their opinions.

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