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## Press Release

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### **Washington Hospital Pulmonary Rehabilitation Coordinator Honored with Prestigious National Award**

*Fremont, Calif.* – Washington Hospital is home to an award winning respiratory therapist (RT), Margaret Chaika, certified respiratory therapist and certified pulmonary function technologist, who singled out from 100,000 practicing RT's, and the only one in California, was honored as the American Association for Respiratory Care's (AARC) 2008 Continuing Care and Rehabilitation Section Specialty Practitioner of the Year. She is part of an exclusive group of nine therapists honored nationwide and was honored locally at a recent meeting of the Washington Township Health Care District Board of Directors.

“Receiving a prestigious award from colleagues in the field of pulmonary rehabilitation is a great honor,” says Chaika, who has been a respiratory therapist for more than 35 years. “I’ve always been passionate about helping patients and giving back to the community. That’s what Washington Hospital stands for.”

The award, which was presented at the AARC's 54th International Respiratory Congress in Anaheim, is bestowed annually on a section member who best exemplifies qualities and characteristics of excellence in providing respiratory care services to patients in need of pulmonary rehabilitation and asthma education.

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“During the past 35 years, Margaret has dedicated her life and professional care to treating patients and she has earned the respect of physicians and admiration from her peers. Margaret simply loves pulmonary rehabilitation, and it shows,” says Kent Joraanstad, chief of rehabilitation and education services at Washington Hospital. “In her coordinator role, Margaret has expanded and improved the practice of pulmonary rehabilitation for both professionals and patients,”

As pulmonary rehabilitation coordinator at Washington Hospital, Chaika helps patients on a one on one basis with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and other lung conditions regain lost functioning. In fact, Washington Hospital’s pulmonary rehabilitation program is one of the few programs in the Bay Area that individually tailors the program to meet the specific needs of each patient.

Over the years, Chaika has directed the Hospital’s pulmonary rehabilitation program and pulmonary function laboratory. Chaika is actively involved in Washington Hospital’s Respiratory Care Process Improvement Team and she donates her time as a speaker for Washington Hospital’s Community Education Program.

The American Association for Respiratory Care is a professional membership organization of respiratory therapists dedicated to respiratory therapy education and research.

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Among its goals are to advocate on behalf of pulmonary patients for appropriate access to respiratory services provided by qualified professionals and to benefit respiratory health care providers.

In addition to the Continuing Care and Rehabilitation Section, the AARC supports Specialty Sections for respiratory therapists working in Adult Acute Care, Diagnostics, Education, Home Care, Management, Neonatal-Pediatrics, Subacute Care, and Transport. Together, these nine Specialty Sections provide respiratory therapists focusing on specific patient populations and health care settings with the targeted information and services they need to provide the highest quality of respiratory care.

Washington Hospital Healthcare System includes a 359-bed acute-care hospital; the Taylor McAdam Bell Neuroscience Institute; The Gamma Knife® Center; Washington Radiation Oncology Center; Washington Outpatient Surgery Center; Washington Outpatient Rehabilitation Center; Washington Outpatient Catheterization Laboratory; Washington Center for Joint Replacement; the Institute for Minimally Invasive and Robotic Surgery; and Washington West, a complex which houses Washington Women's Center, Outpatient Imaging Center and additional outpatient hospital services and administrative facilities.

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***(For more information, please contact Christopher Brown, director of Community Relations, Washington Hospital Healthcare System, (510) 791-3417.)***