



**Press Release  
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## **Swing Bed Program at Sweeny Community Hospital Provides Skilled Nursing for Extended Treatment**

*Unique program designed to provide patients with the personalized care required for recovery.*

SWEENY, Texas (Jan. 27, 2016) – When a patient at Sweeny Community Hospital (SCH) requires extended care by skilled nurses in a hospital setting, a program called “Swing Bed” is a vital service that helps both the patient and the family for a more efficient recovery.

The Swing Bed Program is designed for hospital patients who have been admitted for at least three days and are not quite ready to go home. Patients may not be ready to be discharged for a variety of reasons, including not having the healthcare resources at home to take care of themselves.

“Our goal is to not only provide exceptional care for our patients right here in Sweeny, but to also ensure they recover efficiently,” explains Kathy Harris, director of the Swing Bed Program at SCH. “When they are finally discharged from the hospital, patients who have gone through the program often have progressed far enough to be able to return home and get back to their daily living.”

Under the program, when a patient is ready to transition from acute care status, Sweeny Community Hospital is allowed to “swing” an in-patient’s level of care to skilled rehabilitation while they remain in the hospital. “It is an odd healthcare term, for a simple bit of paperwork, but it sure makes it easier for our patients. We are also able to accept patients back to Sweeny from another hospital,” Kathy added.

Should acute care be needed again, the patient’s status will be “swung” back without the need to switch facilities.

Covered under the federally-funded Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility Program (Flex Program), services are fully covered by Medicare for the first 20 days. When care is required past the first 20 days, Medicare becomes a co-insurance that pays for a portion of the service.

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As part of the Swing Bed Program, patients have access to 24-hour skilled nursing services, including nursing, wound care, and physical therapy. Patients who typically utilize Swing Bed services are those who undergo extensive surgery, such as a hip replacement or open-heart surgery.

"Most people in the area have never heard about the Swing Bed Program. People often travel to other communities, and even as far as Houston for these kinds of services, totally unaware that they can receive the same skilled care in their own backyard," says Sherri Pierce RN, DON.

For most patients, proper wound care is critical to their recovery. Even though SCH provides out-patient wound care services, Swing Bed patients benefit from the close oversight of the healing process, ensuring that wound dressings are properly maintained.

Lisa Brunner, a physical therapist at SCH, says that physical therapy is the number one treatment patients require under the Swing Bed Program. The familiarity between the medical staff and patients enhances the superior service given by the physical therapy department at the hospital.

"When patients are familiar with the medical staff and have the same people helping them through recovery, they are more comfortable with the care they receive," says Kathy. "Patients are more open to asking questions, and that's important during recovery because the more answers they have the better informed they will be regarding their condition and care."

The swing bed program is available to anyone who qualifies for Medicare and is in need of the services that the program offers. For more information, you can contact Sweeny Community Hospital at 979-548-1500.

### **About Sweeny Community Hospital**

Sweeny Community Hospital provides healthcare for communities in Brazoria County, Texas. Founded in 1965, the facility offers a wealth of medical services, including 24-hour Level IV trauma center; advanced radiology services, including CT scanning and MRIs; surgical services, physical therapy, patient education, hospice care and assisted living, primary care and specialty care clinics, and more. For additional information, please visit [www.sweenyhospital.org](http://www.sweenyhospital.org).