



Press Release

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Pulmonary Rehabilitation Center named in honor of the wife of former ABC News “Nightline” anchor, Ted Koppel, opens at Boone Memorial Hospital

MADISON, W. Va. (November 5, 2013) –

A new pulmonary rehabilitation center opened at Boone Memorial Hospital this month. The center is named in honor of Grace Anne Dorney Koppel, the wife of former ABC news “Nightline” anchor, Ted Koppel.


Boone Memorial Hospital is honored to be one of three rural health organizations in West Virginia to receive financial support from the Dorney Koppel Family Charitable Foundation to start a state-of-the-art rehabilitation program to help patients suffering from Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) and other breathing problems.

Dorney is a Maryland attorney and Board Member of the Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease Foundation (COPDF). She is a national patient-advocate for the empowerment of those who have COPD, emphasizing the improvement in quality of life when pulmonary rehabilitation is provided.

In 2001, Grace Anne was diagnosed with a very severe case of COPD and given a few years to live.

“I could walk half a block,” Dorney said. “Then I had to stop to try to catch my breath and I was not given much time.”

COPD is a group of lung diseases including emphysema, refractory asthma, chronic bronchitis and bronchiectasis. Instead of taking the prognosis as a death sentence, Grace Anne began pulmonary rehabilitation and through hard work and dedication increased her lung capacity and regained her ability to fully live her life. Since 2007, she has shared her experiences on a national platform and is a



testament to not letting her health slow her down. She has served as a national advocate to increase the understanding of pulmonary rehabilitation and served as a model for the power of patients to actively create a healthier future for themselves.

Dorney and Koppel had the idea of expanding access to pulmonary rehabilitation for rural communities. When asked why they chose rural West Virginia, the answer is quite simple.

“Because it’s where the need is. A lot of people here in West Virginia, Pennsylvania and Kentucky have trouble breathing, so there’s great need here,” said Koppel.

After getting help through rehabilitation, Dorney has beaten the odds and is now a 13-year COPD survivor.

“Watching how she was able to improve her condition through physical pulmonary rehabilitation, we’ve been motivated to try to help other people do the same thing,” Koppel said.

“We are very appreciative of the contributions from the partners who made this happen; The Dorney Koppel Family Charitable Foundation, The Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation, Senator Jay Rockefeller, United Mine Workers of America (UMWA), The Charleston Area Medical Center (CAMC) and CAMC Foundation. It is an amazing partnership that will truly transform patients’ lives, especially since the need is so great in our area,” said CEO of Boone Memorial Hospital, Tommy Mullins.

By teaming up with Charleston Area Medical Center and Boone Memorial Hospital, the New River Health Association and Cabin Creek Health systems, the three new centers will give those with lung disease a chance for a better future.

“West Virginia has one of the highest rates of COPD prevalence in the country,” said Boone Memorial Hospital Pulmonary Rehabilitation Director, William Carte, RRT. “The high rates can often be attributed to the high rate of smoking in the State and coal dust exposure to miners. Given these high numbers of patients suffering with breathing problems we can’t be more pleased to now have a program close to home at Boone Memorial Hospital in Madison. We will be able to help a lot of people and are so appreciative to Grace Anne Dorney and Ted Koppel,” he said.

Dorney concluded by saying, “Lung disease here is really a significant health challenge. You can get your life back, and that’s my hope for the people in West Virginia with lung disease.”

For more information about the Pulmonary Rehabilitation Department at Boone Memorial Hospital please contact William Carte at 304-369-1230, Extension: 417.

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