

LHC receives certificate for excellent health care

By Enterprise Staff

Livingston HealthCare has received a Certificate of Health-care Excellence from the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services in recognition of creating a tobacco-free medical campus in 2006.

The award was presented to Livingston HealthCare CEO Sam Pleshar by Clare Lemke, RN, of the Park County Tobacco Use Prevention Program, for his leadership in creating a tobacco-free campus. The campus provides a safe and healthy environment for patients, employees and visitors, according to a recent Park County Tobacco Use Prevention Program news release.

"This has been a very important process for us," stated Pleshar. "We are really committed to the health of our community and we feel that a tobacco-free campus is a critical part of that."

Dr. Steven Helgerson, the state medical officer at the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, sent a letter accompanying the award certificate lauding LHC's achievement.

"You have joined an increasing number of medical facilities in Montana that have taken this important step," Helgerson wrote. "Through your leadership on this major public health issue, more Montanans will enjoy improved health and quality of life."

During the award presentation, Lemke noted that LHC is one of 15 hospitals in Montana that has instituted a tobacco-free campus, with more slated for 2009.

According to Lemke, LHC's tobacco-free campus model and plan has been used to educate many other Montana hospitals about making the transition. She added that many health institutions nationally have also instituted tobacco-free policies to address tobacco use, the number one cause of preventable death in the U.S.