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News Release

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Board Certified Genetic Counselor Joins Community Hospital

Mesa County, Colo. -- Community Hospital is pleased to announce that board certified genetic counselor Rachel Lawrence, MS, CGC has joined Community Hospital's Grand Valley Oncology.

Rachel has training in prenatal, pediatric, cancer, ocular and adult general genetics. She received her board certification in August 2022 prior to joining Grand Valley Oncology.

Rachel brings two years of experience in genetic counseling and is eager to apply her education and training to help patients on the Western Slope. She has a bachelor's degree from the University of Delaware, with a major in psychology and double minors in biology and genetic counseling and has a master's degree in human genetics and genetic counseling from Thomas Jefferson University. Rachel's clinical interests include providing genetic counseling regarding hereditary cancer for both affected and unaffected individuals.

"I like to think of genetic counselors as a being a translator of sorts. I love being able to convey complex or overwhelming information in a digestible and accessible way. I aim to meet my patients where they are at and support them in their decision-making," said Rachel Lawrence, MS, CGC, Board Certified Genetic Counselor with Community Hospital's Grand Valley Oncology.

"We are extremely fortunate and excited to have Rachel at Grand Valley Oncology," said Sarah Watson, Practice Director for Grand Valley Oncology. "As the only genetic counselor in the Grand Valley, Rachel helps patients and family members assess hereditary cancer risks as well as address the need for increased screening and eligibility for targeted treatment," added Watson.

Community Hospital's affiliation with Huntsman Cancer Institute brings together Huntsman's world-renowned expertise along with Grand Valley Oncology's regional leadership beginning a partnership that has opened up a broader range of options for cancer patients locally. Grand Valley Oncology is committed to improving patients and their families' quality of life right here on the Western Slope. Community Hospital understands that access to care, comfort and compassion is important in treating cancer. In recognizing this Community Hospital's Grand Valley Oncology offers a patient-centered approach that treats the whole patient and not just the disease.

Grand Valley Oncology is a Commission on Cancer accredited program. In 2020, Grand Valley Oncology earned the prestigious recognition of Patient-Centered Specialty Practice by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA). The Patient-Centered Specialty Practice recognition is highly coveted and underscores Community Hospital's commitment to providing the highest quality health care possible to patients in western Colorado and eastern Utah.

Today, Grand Valley Oncology is one of the largest cancer centers in the area, offering a full range of comprehensive cancer treatment options including medical and radiation oncology services, gynecological oncology services, genetic counseling, social services, clinical trials, survivorship services and now genetic counseling. Rachel is primarily seeing patients with a personal diagnosis of cancer such as breast, ovarian, pancreatic, prostate, colon, endometrial and other cancers. Many patients Rachel works with have an extensive family history of cancer or a known disease-causing mutation in their family. Referrals for genetic counseling must come from a primary care physician.

For more information on the services provided by Community Hospital and Grand Valley Oncology, please call 970-644-3180 or visit www.GrandValleyOncology.com.

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