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**Memorial plants garden to supply fresh herbs and vegetables to The Cafe at Memorial
Entrees and salads will feature fresh ingredients from the garden**

YAKIMA – Employees and volunteers at Memorial Family of Services have planted an onsite herb and vegetable garden as part of Memorial’s efforts to be more sustainable and encourage our community to consume more fresh fruits and vegetables.

Workers tilled and composted the garden in April and began planting vegetables on Tuesday, May 19. Crops planted include tomatoes, peppers, zucchini, cucumbers, green beans, radishes, pumpkins and herbs in a 3,200-square-foot plot off of South 29th Avenue behind Yakima Valley Memorial Hospital. These fresh ingredients are all for Memorial use in patient meals and at The Memorial Cafe.

“My hope is that the herbs and vegetables we grow will help to sustain The Cafe through summer and into early fall,” says Cindy Parkey, Memorial Director of Food Services. “Our aim is to provide healthy options for our patients, visitors and employees, while at the same time, focusing on local ingredients and sustainability. This garden is one step toward that goal.”

Parkey wishes to extend special thanks to Yakima Master Gardeners for planting guidance and to Cowiche Creek Nursery and Blueberries, where Memorial bought the plants.

The garden planting matches Memorial’s renewed focus on sustainability under the Healthier Hospitals Initiative, a national campaign to focus on sustainability in health care and improve the health of communities, reduce environmental impact and decrease overall health care costs through better public health.

Memorial joined the Healthier Hospitals Initiative in January. Under the healthier foods and beverages part of the challenge, Memorial has committed to decreasing the amount of meat purchased by 20 percent within a three-year period, increasing healthy beverage purchases and increasing the percentage of local (within 250 miles) food purchased by 20 percent annually.

About Memorial Family of Services

Memorial Family of Services is the largest employer in Central Washington’s Yakima County, with some 2,500 employees who share the organization’s core purpose: to inspire people to thrive. Memorial Family of Services includes Yakima Valley Memorial Hospital – a 226-bed, acute-care, nonprofit community hospital – as well as primary care practices and specialty care services, including high-quality cardiac care, a continuum of cancer care, nationally-recognized home health and hospice care, and advanced services for children with special health care needs. Visit Memorial online at yakimamemorial.org or on Facebook (www.facebook.com/yakimavalleymemorialhospital), Twitter (www.twitter.com/Yakima_Memorial) or Pinterest (www.pinterest.com/yvmh).

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