



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 12, 2004

Contact: Denise Nelesen (858) 505-6474

COUNTY CLOTHING "STORE" FOR DISABLED WINS AWARD FOR INNOVATION ***EdgeMart Helps Patients at Edgemoor Maintain Appearance and Dignity***

Edgemoor Hospital, which serves the needs of the county's severely and chronically ill, who are ineligible for care elsewhere, has received "Continuing Best Practices Award" from the *California Healthcare Association* (CHA). The award was given for *EdgeMart*, a free clothing "store" for patients. *EdgeMart* is supplied by clothing and accessory donations from the community, and allows Edgemoor residents to "shop" for new clothing they need and like, at no cost.

"This award commends both the generosity of county residents and the creativity of County government," said Board of Supervisors Chairwoman Dianne Jacob. "It is gratifying to see the community reach out to help the most vulnerable residents of our region."

The average age of Edgemoor residents is 51, and most come to the facility with few personal belongings and little financial support. Donated clothing is sized, grouped and hung on wheelchair-accessible clothing racks, allowing residents to feel a sense of pride in picking out their own clothes, instead of having social work or nursing staff find clothing for them.

In announcing the award, CHA said, "The quality and variety of the programs we reviewed impressed our judges, and while the selection process was not easy, *EdgeMart* clearly stood out."

Maintaining patient clothing is a constant challenge for long-term care facilities; it is sent to a commercial laundry and eventually becomes threadbare. Many patients on low, fixed incomes can't afford to replenish their closets. Prior to *EdgeMart* there was no coordinated effort to sort and display the clothing that was donated to Edgemoor Hospital, which made it difficult for patients to find new items. Since *EdgeMart's* opening, facility staff say that residents are dressing more stylishly and taking more pride in their appearance, and complaints about lost clothing have gone down.

Donations are always needed, particularly large and extra-large sweatshirts and sweatpants, men's shoes and tennis shoes. For more information about donations, call (619) 956-2800, or bring clothing to the facility's administration building, 9065 Edgemoor Dr., Santee.

###