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TO LIFE! RECEIVES STATE APPROVAL OF
NEW BREAST CANCER OUTREACH INITIATIVE
Bellevue Woman's Hospital to Partner in Program

Albany, NY (March 2003): In putting its stamp of approval on a new **To Life!** community-based outreach program, "New York State has made it possible for more women and families affected by breast cancer in the greater Capital District to receive supportive services," announced the group's Executive Director Thea Hoeth.

To Life! is a non-profit organization providing free-of-charge breast cancer education and support services in a 10-county region, including and surrounding Albany County. To Life!'s new ***Reach Out to Our Community*** initiative, which will be pursued in association with **Bellevue Woman's Hospital** in Schenectady, New York, is being launched as a result of a \$19,000 state grant recently authorized by Governor George Pataki.

"Women who are battling breast cancer face a long list of challenges," said Jennifer Cassin, chief of patient services for the Hospital. "This joint venture will bring sorely needed support, education and related services to the increasing population of breast cancer patients in our area," she added.

Hoeth explained that *Reach Out to Our Community* is enhancing existing services offered by To Life! and Bellevue Woman's Hospital with the addition of specialized peer support services that will extend to an expanded 17 county service area. Among the new offerings are group and one-on-one support meetings for patients with metastatic breast disease and group sessions for children of breast cancer patients. These services will be offered at To Life! and at the Hospital. The presentation of an education program is included in the program's objectives.

"It is so important to support family members throughout the breast cancer journey because they experience the disease too, only differently," said Hoeth. "By helping the family we help the 'mom and wife' unleash anxiety that can take its toll on her physical and emotional well being during treatment."

This program will also enable To Life! to bring its boutique service to the Hospital on a scheduled monthly rotation. The To Life! *Abracadabra* boutique offers patients and others with a private, one-stop shopping opportunity for prostheses, mastectomy bras, wigs, hats, scarves and skin care products. To Life!'s licensed hairstylist and trained prosthesis fitter are available to assist customers.

In a letter approving To Life!'s outreach initiative, Governor George Pataki said, "Congratulations for your leadership in addressing the needs of your community regarding cancer." He extended "best wishes for success in this challenging and rewarding program."

To Life! and Bellevue Woman's Hospital previously collaborated on an education forum presented under the sponsorship of the Biology Department of Union College on the topic of colon cancer and its detection, treatment and connection to breast and other cancers.