

# NDH launches health program for women

**RHINEBECK** — Northern Dutchess Hospital has launched a program to complement traditional health care for women.

Pat Camillo, a registered nurse and nurse practitioner with a master's degree and a clinical specialist trained in women's health care, has been appointed to head the program.

She completed her graduate studies at Strong Memorial Hospital, a part of the University of Rochester Medical Center, one of the few schools in the country which offers advanced certification in women's health

care at the master's level.

She has more than 10 years nursing experience in obstetrics and gynecology.

Women's health care is a relatively new field in nursing that looks at the care of women throughout their entire lives, not just when they are pregnant.

Although obstetrical care is included, treatment of the total woman, her emotional needs, developmental concerns, and overall health and well being, is emphasized.

"Because of the great demand for specialized maternal

care services, focus has often not been given to the needs of other women, women who are infertile and need a support system, adolescents needing counseling and education, and women who are beyond reproductive age and have lost touch with the health care system, or who may somehow feel rejected," Miss Camillo said.

"This is not to say that the needs of pregnant women are not important, because they are," she stressed. "It's just that we need to expand the health care we offer to be more

accessible to all women."

Some of the services anticipated as being part of the women's health care program include education for fertility awareness, counseling for infertility, nutritional education, and assistance in helping women through the transition of menopause and aging.

Plans are under way to organize support groups for these and other concerns related to women's health care.

As part of her responsibilities at Northern Dutchess, Miss Camillo will provide in-service

training for nursing staff to help them assess the needs of their female patients.

She also will work with older women in the Skilled Nursing Care Facility, leading discussions on nutrition, exercise, and bodily changes that occur with aging.

"The empathy for, and understanding of, women's concerns that I am able to bring to my job simply because I am a woman goes a long way in helping women patients feel comfortable and relaxed when discussing intimate concerns with me," she explained. "No ques-

tion is too silly. No worry is too absurd. I understand, and I know how to help."

The women's health care program at Northern Dutchess is part of the hospital's on-going expansion of services. "We are continually reaching out to the community, assessing its needs, and trying to establish programs and provide services that will meet these needs," she added.

Miss Camillo is available at the hospital, 876-3001, ext. 271, through Dr. George Verrilli's office, 876-6222, Rhinebeck, or 229-5733, Hyde Park. (pm)