



## ***For Immediate Release***

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## **Kona Community Hospital Expands Dietary Initiative Local Food and Vegan Chef**

**February 4, 2019 – Kealahou, island of Hawaii.** Kona Community Hospital has expanded its ongoing healthy dietary initiative to include more organic, locally-grown ingredients. The initiative *‘Ai Pono, Ho‘omaka ana – Eat Healthy, New Beginnings* – launched in September 2018, also welcomed a vegan chef to the team to bring creative plant-based entrees to the hospital’s Ginger Café.

The hospital reached a local food purchase rate of 25% in November, 2018. With the recent addition of produce vendor, Adaptations Inc, the hospital will see an even higher percentage of local, organic foods in the Ginger Café and in patient meals.

Adaptations Inc sources from 70 Hawaii Island farms and offers delivery to the hospital twice weekly. Maureen Datta, co-owner of Adaptations, cites the mutually beneficial relationship in providing local food to the hospital, “Good food is good medicine. Farm fresh produce harvested to order is bursting with nutrition and doesn’t travel through the traditional supply chain from off-island. A hospital’s concern is health and our food hub enables the cafeteria team to focus on providing tasty healthful meals for their patients, staff and visitors.” Adaptations’ role in managing the quality control, food safety concerns, availability, invoicing, consolidation and timing logistics for the hospital make it easier for the hospital to source local food.

Ginger Café diners and hospital patients select from a meat and a plant-based meal option daily. House favorites such as chicken adobo, kalua pork and cabbage, and beef tacos compliment the new vegan/vegetarian meals requested by an increasing number of people addressing health and environmental concerns.

Hyejin Terry, Beyond Green Sustainable Food Partners chef, specializes in vegan cuisine. She most recently served as a Cook and Baker at Sweet Cane Café in Hilo. Terry brings a skill in preparing vegan dishes that appeal to the most faithful meat eaters. Terry describes her cooking style as “hearty, comfort food” stemming from her Southern U.S. roots.

“This year we are turning our focus to bringing fresh, cooked from scratch meals to our patients”, says Judy Donovan, Marketing and Strategic Planning Director at Kona Community Hospital. The effort stems from the hospital’s commitment to make healthy

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choices easier as a Blue Zones Project®. The Ginger Café was the first hospital on Hawaii Island to earn certification as a Blue Zones Project Approved™ restaurant.

**About Kona Community Hospital.** Founded in 1914, KCH is a 94-bed full-service acute care hospital with 24-hour emergency department recently designated as a Level III trauma center supporting the west region of the island of Hawaii. It is a member of the Hawaii Health Systems Corporation, a special agency of the state of Hawaii established in 1996. It is fully accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations. KCH is dedicated to providing and enhancing accessible comprehensive healthcare services to the West Hawaii community.

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