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**Dr. Nora O'Brien Named New Head of Willow Gardens Memory Care,
Westchester's Premier Assisted Living Facility Dedicated to Caring for Those
with Alzheimer's and Dementia**

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(New Rochelle, NY—January 24, 2017)...**Nora O'Brien**, PT, DPT, has been named Executive Director of **Willow Gardens Memory Care**, Westchester County's premier assisted living facility dedicated exclusively to caring for those with memory impairment. Dr. O'Brien brings to her new role the same compassion and leadership she has exhibited at Willow Towers Assisted Living, where she will continue to serve as executive director. Both residences are located on United Hebrew of New Rochelle's Campus of Comprehensive Care, where Dr. O'Brien has served for over a decade. Dr. O'Brien, who holds a DPT in physical therapy, served as Director of Burke Rehabilitation at United Hebrew for nine years, and as a physical therapist at Burke Rehabilitation Hospital for 21 years.

Willow Gardens, a 51-bed facility, is the first nonprofit stand-alone assisted living center in Westchester for those living with Alzheimer's and dementia, a growing demographic in the region. According to the Hudson Valley Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association, more than 40,000 people in the Hudson Valley have Alzheimer's disease, and the number is expected to climb to 50,000 by 2025.

"Our goal at Willow Gardens is to help individuals preserve their independence and, despite memory loss, live their lives to the fullest extent possible," says Dr. O'Brien. "That means we take the time to provide personalized activities, programs, and care to meet the our residents' needs."

Rita Mabli, President & CEO of United Hebrew of New Rochelle, is especially pleased with the appointment. She describes Dr. O'Brien as "an innovator who continually seeks ways to improve and enrich the lives of seniors. So much of what we implemented at Willow Gardens replicates her successful initiatives at Willow Towers' Phoenix Memory Care. She exemplifies leadership, compassion, and high standards of excellence."

Personalized memory support

Dr. O'Brien will oversee the operations of Willow Gardens and manage the staff, which is specially trained in the latest dementia care techniques. She notes that when it comes to easing the frustrations of living with memory loss, there's no one-size fits all method. That's why the staff at Willow Gardens takes great care to learn each resident's history—their work, family, community, philanthropy, hobbies, and more—in order to customize their care and plan activities designed for physical, cognitive, and social stimulation.

"While some residents may respond strongly to art therapy, for others, it might be music, fitness, spiritual, or cultural programs," she says. "Cooking evokes a strong response for many, because of the close link between our sense of smell and our memory. Certain aromas—the smell of freshly baked cookies or apple pie, for example—can spur conversations, create connections with others, and trigger memories of special times. All of our programs provide opportunities for socialization, which research shows is key to maintaining and enhancing a person's quality of life."

A model for dementia care

Dr. O'Brien notes that the location of Willow Gardens Memory Care on United Hebrew's 7.5 acre campus overlooking the Long Island Sound offers unique services to its residents. "With a state-of-the-art, five-star skilled nursing facility, and Burke Rehabilitation at United Hebrew just a few steps away, our campus allows seniors to age in place, remaining at United Hebrew as their needs change over time," she points out.

"It feels very much like home at Willow Gardens," adds Dr. O'Brien. The spacious common areas include an activity room with large windows that overlook a fully secured patio and garden; the dining area, called Palm Court, features a high curved ceiling with translucent panels that let in natural light. A tranquility room offers a private place to meditate or relax. Specially commissioned works of art designed to awaken senses adorn the hallways, lobby, and common areas.

"The artwork, the architecture, expert care, and the activities are all designed to serve as a model for caring for those with Alzheimer's and dementia," says Dr. O'Brien. "I'm grateful to Rita Mabli for the opportunity; it is a privilege to be here."

Dr. O'Brien, a resident of New Rochelle, earned a bachelor of science in physical therapy at New York University, and a doctorate in physical therapy from Dominican College of Blauvelt. In addition to her work at United Hebrew, Dr. O'Brien has served as an adjunct faculty member at New York Medical College and as a consultant for Hospice and Palliative Care of Westchester.

For more information, the public is invited to call Willow Gardens Memory Care at (914) 336-2338 or visit uhgc.org.

About United Hebrew

United Hebrew of New Rochelle (uhgc.org) is a vibrant not-for-profit, non-sectarian, multi-service campus of comprehensive care nestled on 7.5 acres. United Hebrew has been serving the Westchester metropolitan area since 1919, and today, works with more than 1,000 clients daily. Services include: **Long-Term Skilled Nursing; Burke Rehabilitation at United Hebrew; Willow Towers Assisted Living** (*The Beverly and Alfred J. Green Pavilion*, **Memory Care** at Willow Gardens, The Phoenix Neighborhood and Griffen Program at Willow Towers, and Nightingale Neighborhood at United Hebrew); **Independent Senior Housing** (*Low-Savin Soundview Senior Apartments*); **Health at Home** (AZOR Licensed Home Health Care and a Certified Home Health Agency); and **Private Geriatric Care Management Services** (Raven Care Advocates). For more information, call (914) 632-2804 or visit www.uhgc.org.