Watson Caring Science Institute

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Where Healing Has a Home: Kaiser Permanente Antioch Medical Center Receives the WCSI Lotus Recognition™

KAISER PERMANENTE®
Antioch Medical Center

Watson Caring Science
Lotus Recognition™



Antioch honored for a living culture of Caring Science where aromatherapy at the bedside, restorative spaces for staff, and Caritas leadership sustain both patients and the people who care for them

Deerfield Beach, FL - Kaiser Permanente (AMC) has been awarded the **Watson Caring Science Institute's (WCSI) Lotus Recognition™**, a national honor celebrating organizations that exemplify a deeply embedded culture of human caring grounded in Watson's Caring Science and the **10 Caritas Processes®**.

The **Lotus Recognition™** acknowledges more than programs or outcomes. It honors how caring is lived, practiced, and felt across an organization. **Kaiser Permanente Antioch Medical Center** is a 150-bed acute care hospital including 36 emergency beds, 20 intensive care rooms, eight labor rooms, and 20 post-

partum beds serving the East Contra Costa community of Northern California. With in-house pharmacy and radiology departments, a weekly farmers market, and frequent community health classes, the medical center is built for the area it serves and staffed by many who call that community home. Here, Caring Science is not a concept reserved for training rooms; it is woven into daily huddles, leadership decisions, and the most tender moments at the bedside.



"At Antioch, we take pride in translating Jean Watson's Caring Science into real-time, informed loving-kindness—not only in our professional roles, but in our personal lives," said Aimee L. Poole, Emergency Room Staff Nurse and Chair of Experience & Caring Science Core Council, Kaiser Permanente Antioch Medical Center. *"Receiving the Lotus Recognition affirms what our teams live every day: that compassion, presence, and human connection belong at the center of every shift, every unit, and every caring moment."*



At the heart of **AMC's** work is a commitment to caring-healing modalities that comfort patients and families. In October 2024, the medical center's Care Experience and Caring Sciences committee piloted an aromatherapy program, delivering the calming scents of citrus and lavender through medical-grade sashes that attach to a patient's gown at varying strengths, guided by a nursing policy for how and when the modality is used. In the Emergency Department, lavender helps calm patients in a busy environment and eases agitation among geriatric patients at heightened risk of delirium; on the Maternal Child Health

unit, high utilization has left patients reporting less anxiety and a greater sense of calm during an emotionally charged experience. *"I never thought hospitals offered non-medicated interventions,"* one patient shared, while another said, *"I utilize lavender at home to calm my personal anxieties. I am so surprised to see this offered in the hospital."*

These caring moments are felt across the medical center. Even when the units feel busy and demanding, it is in those moments that **AMC's** teams provide the caring moments that leave a lasting impression on those they serve. The medical center exemplifies how authentic and purposeful rounding is grounded in Caring Science and compassionate care. A key element that can transform the nurse-patient experience.

AMC's commitment to caring for the caregiver is equally visible and equally intentional. Relaxation spaces are available to staff in multiple locations throughout the hospital, including a non-denominational meditation room offering comfortable seating, calming music, soft lighting, and thoughtful messaging that invites deep and reflective healing away from the stimulation of the hospital. Massage chairs, funded through a collective donation from a group of nurse managers, sit in quiet corners of breakrooms across several units offering an accessible source of relief during a shift. *"I use the massage chair often. It is nice having a place to relax and re-center myself during breaks,"* shared a Staff Nurse II on the Telemetry unit. For those who find spirituality through active, healing movement, an employee-only gym with weights and cardio equipment is open 24 hours a day, providing a place to sweat out stress, unwind, and decompress.

In September 2025, the medical center hosted its first annual Care Experience Week, and a companion Care Experience booth at the campus farmers market inviting both community and care team members. There they learned about the benefits of centering exercises, gratitude, and self-care. The overwhelmingly positive response has ensured the booth will return in the years to come.

This culture is carried by people. Alongside multiple **Caritas Coaches®** already sharing their practice with teams, a chaplain is currently completing the **Caritas Coach Education Program**, serving as a highly visible resource for patients and staff and offering a safe online space where care team members can connect and discuss mental health challenges. She recently coordinated The Starfish Experience, an immersive walking exhibit that led attendees through the heartfelt story of the boy who saved the starfish and completed with interactive booths, thoughtful prompts, and actionable steps. For those who attended, the feedback centered on gratitude, humility, and a renewed sense of purpose.

Caring Science is integrated into daily practice with high visibility. Every unit houses a Care Experience huddle board that features a different **Caritas Process®** each month, demonstrating how to bring the science to the bedside. Regionally, the organization's KP Scholars website links to **Watson Caring Science Institute** resources, while locally, **Caritas Coaches** host KP Cares classes which five cohorts have completed the program, introducing the concepts of Caritas to roughly 100 team members. In the

Emergency Department, the Workplace Safety Team opens its training sessions with HeartMath® exercises to center team members for the work, a practice the Care Experience committee is now working to extend to other committees across the medical center.

By honoring **Kaiser Permanente Antioch Medical Center** with the **Lotus Recognition™**, **WCSI** celebrates an organization where Caring Science is not aspirational but alive. A workplace where leaders invest in the conditions for compassion, where staff care for one another with the same tenderness they offer patients, and where every caring moment is recognized as the sacred heart of the work. **Antioch Medical Center** stands as a powerful example of how Caring Science can transform environments, sustain caregivers, and shape lives at every level of care.

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About Kaiser Permanente Antioch Medical Center

Kaiser Permanente is recognized as one of America's leading health care providers and nonprofit health plans, serving members across multiple states and the District of Columbia. Kaiser Permanente Antioch Medical Center, part of the Northern California region, is a 150-bed acute care hospital serving the East Contra Costa community and is committed to delivering coordinated, whole-person care grounded in compassion, clinical excellence, and human connection. Learn more at kp.org.

About Watson Caring Science Institute (WCSI)

The Watson Caring Science Institute (WCSI) is an international non-profit organization that advances the philosophies, theories, and practices of Human Caring/Caring Science, founded by Jean Watson, Ph.D., RN, AHN-BC, FAAN, LL (AAN), WCSI's Founder & Director. Focusing on research, education, praxis, leadership, and legacy, the institute aims to widen the development and understanding of Watson's Caring Science to inform our notion of quality care and healing environments through various educational programs, nurse scientific research, partnerships, events, and affiliations. For more information, please visit www.watsoncaringscience.org.