

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****CONTACT:**

Mark Leonard, Chief Executive Officer  
828.586.7101 or mark\_leonard@westcare.org

Wayne Tindle, North Carolina Awards for Excellence  
919.515.4660 or wayne\_tindle@ncsu.edu

**WestCare Health System receives Level 1 Involvement recognition from the North Carolina Awards for Excellence**

*Raleigh, NC (July 9, 2008)* — WestCare Health System has been recognized for Level 1 participation by the North Carolina Awards for Excellence (NCAfE).

The NCAfE program provides assessments of organizations based on the Malcolm Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence. Trained examiners evaluate and score criteria items and provide feedback to participants.

WestCare Health System is a private, not-for-profit healthcare system consisting of the 86-bed Harris Regional Hospital in Sylva North Carolina, 48-bed critical access Swain County Hospital in Bryson City, outpatient medical center WestCare Medical Park of Franklin, and skilled care residential facility, Mountain Trace Nursing Center. Its mission is “to provide quality healthcare and services and improve the health status of the people we serve.”

WestCare Health System is an exemplary example of committed leadership to create a sustainable high-performance organization with a leadership system that includes both healthcare providers and administrative leaders.” said NCAfE program director, Wayne Tindle. “The organization has a collaborative relationship between senior leaders and the medical staff, which improves communication, provides an atmosphere of mutual investment and respect, and enables the organization to focus on results and creating value.

**About NCAfE and IES**

The North Carolina Awards for Excellence (NCAfE) process is a cooperative industry, academic, and government initiative to improve organizational competitiveness and to provide recognition for performance excellence. The program was initially formed in 1989 as a foundation through an executive order of the governor. It was transferred to the Industrial Extension Service (IES) at North Carolina State University in 2001. [IES](#) is the statewide arm of North Carolina State University that partners with business and industry to transfer knowledge and technology.