



# NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
December 22, 2008

**CONTACT:**  
Dave Urbanek  
Director of Communications, HSHS  
217-492-5824  
Cell: 217-725-8485  
[durbanek@hshs.org](mailto:durbanek@hshs.org)

James P. Zito  
Executive Vice President,  
Prairie Cardiovascular  
217-788-0706  
[jzito@prairieheart.com](mailto:jzito@prairieheart.com)

## **CARE INTEGRATION PROJECT TO ENHANCE QUALITY AND EFFICIENCY FOR PATIENTS**

### ***Prairie Cardiovascular Forms a Foundation of Growing Care Integration Project***

SPRINGFIELD, IL – Hospital Sisters Health System announced today that it is implementing a new project in Illinois and Wisconsin that is dedicated to extending the highest quality health care in a very integrated and effective manner that is more efficient and accessible for patients and their families.

In discussion for two years and developed by a group of 18 physician and health care leaders from Illinois and Wisconsin, the new HSHS *Care Integration Project* builds on the Mission of the Hospital Sisters of St. Francis and focuses on care for the whole person, in the Franciscan tradition of the Roman Catholic Church. The top goals of the *Care Integration Project* are to define integrated patient care models that meet the needs of those we serve and develop relationships with physicians and other clinicians that will allow physicians to cooperatively develop ambulatory care services throughout the region.

“Our *Care Integration Project* has, first and foremost, the well-being of our patients at its core,” said Stephanie S. McCutcheon, President and Chief Executive Officer of HSHS. “We are very excited by the positive response we have received from physician leaders in Illinois and Wisconsin toward our concept of care integration. We will meet the needs of all those we serve by creating collaborative delivery models with physicians and giving them the tools and infrastructure they need.

(MORE)

“We are dedicated to creating a high quality, very effective, efficient system of health services that is seamless for patients and allows our talented physicians to do what they do best,” McCutcheon added.

A cornerstone of the *Care Integration Project* is a recent partnership between HSHS and Prairie Cardiovascular, a nationally-recognized leader in cardiovascular services based in Springfield, Illinois, to become fully integrated as one entity.

The agreement between Prairie and HSHS was approved recently by the Board of Directors of Hospital Sisters Health System and the physician partners and Executive Committee of Prairie Cardiovascular. This agreement is the next evolution of a special relationship that Prairie and HSHS have mutually valued for more than 30 years.

“The HSHS *Care Integration Project* is a significant step forward in the evolution of medical care delivery for our patients,” said Frank Mikell, M.D., President of Prairie Cardiovascular. “We and other physicians with Hospital Sisters Health System believe the future lies in patient-centered, efficient systems of health care delivery and are excited that HSHS is developing this model. We look with great anticipation to this opportunity to work collaboratively with HSHS to make integrated care in Illinois and Wisconsin a reality.”

“We are very pleased to be enhancing our already-strong relationship with Prairie and their talented physicians and staff. We welcome them as strong partners into our health care family,” McCutcheon added. “They share our Mission and values. They have been wonderful partners for many years. This new relationship is the next logical step for both.”

Hospital Sisters Health System plans to seek out and develop care integration relationship models with physician practices in Illinois and Wisconsin to define a new health care journey in the communities we serve – and beyond. These relationships may include a variety of specific medical services from primary care to sub-specialty care.

A top priority of *Care Integration* is to increase efficiency and reduce waste in the delivery of health care. It has been estimated by health care experts that nationally there is \$1.2 trillion of inefficiencies in the delivery of medical services. Efforts to reduce waste in health care will touch all aspects of care delivery, including operational efficiencies in hospitals and clinics, better use of best practices in medicine and efforts to help people live more healthy and productive lives.

(MORE)

Another key aspect of the *Care Integration Project* is expanding the use of the latest medical and information technology to create a seamless care experience for patients at all steps on the care continuum, from recognition and diagnosis to treatment, care and follow-up.

An expanded use of the latest information technology not only integrates patient information but also reduces the possibility of error, makes the decision process for physicians and families easier and lessens bureaucratic requirements for physicians and other clinical professionals.

“We are enhancing the future of health care for our patients and their families by working collaboratively with physicians to make the delivery of medicine more efficient and more structured around them; with their best interests being the highest priority,” McCutcheon said.

The cardiologists of Prairie Cardiovascular Consultants are nationally recognized as leaders in cardiovascular care. More heart patients are cared for by Prairie than any other program in Illinois.

Prairie currently has 47 board certified physicians and 36 clinic sites in Illinois. It is a national leader in the innovation and development of new diagnostic and treatment procedures and continues to advance medicine with a very active research program. Doctors trained at premier medical institutions come from around the world to practice at Prairie. And patients come from throughout the Midwest to experience the Prairie difference.

Hospital Sisters Health System is a Roman Catholic health care mission founded to continue the healing ministry of Jesus Christ. Sponsored by the Hospital Sisters of St. Francis, HSHS is dedicated to serving all people, including the poor and the needy, at each of its 13 Local Systems in Illinois and Wisconsin. The Hospital Sisters Health System provides state-of-the-art health care framed in traditional values taught by St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi.

With over 14,000 staff, the HSHS hospitals in Wisconsin are located in Chippewa Falls, Eau Claire and Sheboygan, with two in Green Bay. In Illinois, the HSHS hospitals are located in Belleville, Breese, Decatur, Effingham, Highland, Litchfield, Springfield and Streator.

###