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NEWS RELEASE

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NEW PHYSICIANS JOIN SALINE MEMORIAL HOSPITALIST PROGRAM

Benton, AR (June 1, 2007) Hospitalist programs throughout the US are becoming an accepted trend in patient care.

Saline Memorial Hospital (SMH) implemented the Hospitalist program in 2005 and recently added some new faces to the team. Dr. Marlene Bransky and Dr. Richard Brown recently joined the group and are currently practicing at SMH. Dr. Karuna Gaddam has also been working with SMH since 2006.

“Hospitalist programs are one of the fastest growing medical specialties in the nation,” said Randy Fortner, President and CEO. “SMH is pleased to offer this program to better serve our patients and physicians.”

What is a Hospitalist program? Hospitalists are Internal Medicine physicians who specialize in the treatment and management of hospitalized patients. They are located within the hospital, therefore increasing physician access.

(more)

SMH Hospitalist Program-Page 2

Because Hospitalist physicians are familiar with hospital systems and procedures, they're able to expedite processes and better facilitate connections between caregivers.

"Hospitalized patients have a greater degree of illness than we've seen in the past," said Fortner. "Hospitalists have specialized training in the diagnosis and treatment of inpatients and can be readily available to those patients because their practice is dedicated to the hospital."

But Hospitalists don't replace the patient's primary care physician. Hospitalists provide a valuable service which allows primary care physicians to focus on seeing patients in their office rather than being called away to the hospital.

"Communication between the Hospitalist and referring physician is of great importance at SMH," said Fortner. "The primary care provider supplies the Hospitalist with valuable information about a patient's medical history, medications and special needs. In return, the Hospitalist consults with the primary care provider and maintains regular communication during a patient's stay."

"The benefits to this program are numerous," said Dr. Brown. "I'm excited to be a part of the SMH team and look forward to educating our community about this program."

For more information about the SMH Hospitalist program, please call 776-6000.

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