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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Via Christi purchases minority interest in Kansas Heart Hospital

Officials from the Kansas Heart Hospital LLC and the Via Christi Wichita Health Network today jointly announced Via Christi's purchase of a 49 percent minority business interest in the Kansas Heart Hospital.

Terms and purchase amount of the transaction, which closed today, were not disclosed.

"Via Christi's purchase of a minority share won't affect our day-to-day operations," said Gregory F. Duick, MD, Chairman of the Kansas Heart Hospital, an investor-owned cardiovascular specialty hospital that opened in February 1999. "We'll continue to compete and to be in charge of what we do best—providing outstanding cardiac care to our patients."

Via Christi officials said consumers have made it clear that, when possible, they prefer to receive cardiac care in a specialized facility with private rooms, a patient- and family-centric setting located as close to home as possible.

"In addition, HealthGrades has for several years ranked Kansas Heart Hospital as No. 1 in Kansas for overall cardiac care, so there is no question as to its quality of care," said Larry P. Schumacher, President and CEO of the Via Christi Wichita Health Network. "Investing in a model of care favored by consumers and physicians and whose quality has been independently confirmed is in keeping with our mission as it allows us to re-invest our returns in our broader mission."

The 54-bed Kansas Heart Hospital offers comprehensive diagnostic and therapeutic cardiology, vascular, cardiac and thoracic surgery. Kansas Heart has 36 physicians and anesthesiologists on staff and more than 75 board-certified consulting physicians.

The Via Christi Wichita Health Network includes Via Christi Regional Medical Center's St. Francis, St. Joseph and Good Shepherd campuses; Via Christi Rehabilitation Center's Our Lady of Lourdes campus and outpatient rehabilitation, occupational, immediate care and sports medicine clinics; Home Medical Services and Via Christi Home Health; Preferred Medical Associates' family medicine and specialist practices; Via Christi Health Partners; Via Christi Foundation/Children's Miracle Network; Via Christi Research; and Gerard House. It is part of the Via Christi Health System, the largest not-for-profit health system in Kansas.

For more information, contact Lynn Jeane, Chief Operating Officer, Kansas Heart Hospital, at (316) 630-5025, or Roz Hutchinson, Director of Communications and Public Relations, Via Christi Wichita Health Network, at (316) 268-5645.

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