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HSHS St. Joseph's Hospitals in Breese and Highland to Launch New Epic Electronic Health Record System

(BREESE AND HIGHLAND, IL) – HSHS St. Joseph's Hospitals in Breese and Highland will soon go live with Epic, a new electronic health record (EHR) system as part of their ongoing commitment to patient safety while also continuing to streamline health information sharing with other providers.

With the addition of both St. Joseph's Hospitals in Breese and Highland, Hospital Sisters Health System (HSHS) is completing a four-year \$112 million initiative to ensure that patients and providers served by HSHS hospitals and their affiliated partners (Prairie Cardiovascular and HSHS Medical Group) have access to the most advanced electronic health record currently available.

Information contained in the EHR includes care orders, test results, physician notes and reports, as well as patients' medical history. Epic provides a technology platform for this information to be shared with nurses, physicians and other caregivers in one integrated system. It will enhance transparent communication across locations and specialties. The go live date for both hospitals is Saturday, June 8.

“Epic is a widely used health record system, used not only by our HSHS hospitals, but also by many of our physician partners, like HSHS Medical Group and Prairie Cardiovascular Consultants,” said Whitney Mendoza, IT service manager for both St. Joseph's Hospitals. “By using the same EHR, clinicians will have access to more complete and accurate information about the care of their patients at either of our hospitals or at any of our clinics.”

Epic puts important medical information, essential for diagnosis and treatment of patients, immediately at the fingertips of doctors and caregivers, including built in alerts that help improve patient safety. Mendoza said, “Epic will ultimately allow our caregivers to spend more time at the patient's bedside.”

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Epic is used by a majority of U.S. News and World Report's top-ranked hospitals and medical schools who are working collaboratively every day to improve patient care, innovate health care delivery and achieve financial health. All organizations using Epic can easily exchange patient data for improved patient care.

As part of the Epic implementation, patients will also gain access to Epic's patient portal, MyChart. The portal will allow patients to view their medical records, manage their appointments, and communicate with their providers, among other benefits. Patients can access MyChart through their phones and on the internet.

As the system is implemented, keeping security of confidential patient records remains a high priority. Epic technology incorporates sophisticated mechanisms, including individual user passwords and firewalls, to make sure patient privacy is protected.

During Go Live

While both hospitals have had the Meditech electronic health record since 2010, there is a learning curve for the staff. Epic Project Manager for St. Joseph's Hospital Breese Kim Richter shared, "Our colleagues have been hard at work training on the Epic system since March and are doing a wonderful job learning the new system," she said. "When we go live with Epic on Saturday, June 8, we don't anticipate any problems but do ask our patients who come that day and for a few weeks after for patience as we become comfortable with Epic, as it is drastically different from our previous system."

To help with the transition, St. Joseph's Hospitals in Breese and Highland remind patients:

- If you have an appointment for a test at either HSHS hospital in Breese or Highland or at one of their clinics, please arrive 15 minutes early to assist with the registration process.
- Please keep in mind that a new EMR affects every hospital department, including Environmental Services (housekeeping) and Food and Nutrition Services.
- Please be patient with our colleagues and caregivers as they learn the new system.

HSHS St. Joseph's Hospital Breese and HSHS St. Joseph's Hospital Highland are part of the Southern Illinois Division of Hospital Sisters Health System, which also includes HSHS St. Elizabeth's Hospital in O'Fallon, HSHS St. Anthony's Memorial Hospital in Effingham and HSHS Holy Family Hospital in Greenville.

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About Hospital Sisters Health System

Hospital Sisters Health System's (HSHS) mission is to reveal and embody Christ's healing love for all people through our high quality, Franciscan health care ministry. HSHS provides state-of-the-art health care to our patients and is dedicated to serving all people, especially the most vulnerable, at each of our 15 Local Systems and physician practices in Illinois (Breese, Decatur, Effingham, Greenville, Highland, Litchfield, O'Fallon, Shelbyville and Springfield) and Wisconsin (Chippewa Falls, Eau Claire, Oconto Falls, Sheboygan, and two in Green Bay). HSHS is sponsored by Hospital Sisters Ministries, and Hospital Sisters of St. Francis is the founding institute. For more information about HSHS, visit www.hshs.org. For more information about Hospital Sisters of St. Francis, visit www.hospitalersisters.org.