

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**ST. JOSEPH HERITAGE MEDICAL GROUP RECOGNIZED AS
PHYSICIAN PRACTICE CONNECTIONS – PATIENT-CENTERED MEDICAL HOME**

*Local Medical Group’s Model of Care Shows Evidence of Better Health Care Quality,
Broader Use of Technology and Improved Patient Involvement in Care*

ORANGE, Calif-- St. Joseph Heritage Medical Group (SJHMG) has been recognized as a *Physician Practice Connections® – Patient-Centered Medical Home™* (PPC® -PCMH™) by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA). The medical group joins an elite group of physicians recognized by NCQA for preventative care and chronic disease management.

“St. Joseph Heritage Medical Group has always strived to create a ‘medical home’ for the community we serve,” said Charles Foster, vice president, administrator, St. Joseph Heritage Medical Group. “We are honored to accept this prestigious NCQA distinction.”

SJHMG earned the distinction by meeting the Physician Practice Connection’s recognition status, emphasizing excellence in the use of systematic, patient-centered, coordinated care management processes. The physician-led care team is responsible for providing all the patient’s health care needs and, when needed, coordinating care across the health care system. The medical home emphasizes enhanced care through open scheduling, expanded hours and communication between patients, physicians and staff. Quality and safety are also hallmarks of this patient care model.

“The Patient-Centered Medical Home has the potential to change the interaction between patients and physicians from a series of episodic office visits to an ongoing two-way relationship,” said NCQA President Margaret E. O’Kane. “Patients can no longer be silent partners in their care—they are active participants in managing their health with a shared goal of staying as healthy as possible.

The concept of the medical home was introduced in 1967 by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). The objective was to have a central location for archiving a child's medical record. In 2002, the concept grew to include operational issues, accessibility, and continuous, comprehensive, family-centered, coordinated, compassionate and culturally effective care. In 2004 the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) and the American College of Physician (ACP) developed principles that are used by the NCQA today.

About the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA)

Celebrating its 20th anniversary in 2010, NCQA is a private, non-profit organization dedicated to improving health care quality. NCQA accredits and certifies a wide range of health care organizations and recognizes physicians in key clinical areas. NCQA's Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS®) is the most widely used performance measurement tool in health care. NCQA is committed to providing health care quality information through the Web, media and data licensing agreements in order to help consumers, employers and others make informed health care choices.

About St. Joseph Heritage Medical Group

St. Joseph Heritage Medical Group (SJHMG) provides primary care services for Orange County residents with focus areas in Family Practice, Internal Medicine and Pediatrics, as well as urgent care services. SJHMG has 45 physicians in medical offices in Orange, Tustin and Santa Ana—each providing all-encompassing patient care—and is affiliated with over 500 specialists. SJHMG was recognized by the Integrated Healthcare Association (IHA) for overall performance in the top 20% of all physician groups in 2008, as well as excellent clinical quality and patient experience scores. Now in its 46th year, St. Joseph Heritage Medical Group is affiliated with St. Joseph Hospital of Orange and CHOC Children's Hospital of Orange County, two of the county's preeminent hospitals. For more information, please visit www.sjhmg.org.