



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **SHHP's Own the Bone Initiative Recognized as One of the Best in the Country**

**Pensacola, Fla.** – Sacred Heart Hospital in Pensacola is the only hospital in northwest Florida to be recognized by the American Orthopedic Association as an Own the Bone Star Performer for leading the way in post-fracture care.

Sacred Heart Hospital – part of Ascension, the largest non-profit health system in the U.S. – joined more than 200 healthcare institutions nationwide that have taken steps to ensure its high-risk fracture patients receive the treatment and care that they deserve by implementing the Own the Bone program. The program aims to better identify, evaluate and treat patients who suffer from fragility fractures, which are broken bones that result from a fall from standing height or less.

Dr. Eugene Dabezies, an orthopedic surgeon at Sacred Heart Hospital, said the Star Performer designation underscores the hospital's commitment to providing comprehensive care to this at-risk patient population.

"This recognition confirms our hard work in educating patients about bone health and fragility fracture risk factors as a way to help them reduce the risk of repeat fractures," he said. "The Own the Bone program is a clinically-proven, quality improvement program which uses a multidisciplinary approach to ensure patients receive the diagnoses and treatment necessary to prevent secondary fractures."

With more than two million fragility fractures each year, this condition is a huge public health issue in the U.S. In fact, there are three times as many fragility fractures each year as there are heart attacks, six times more than strokes, and seven times more than cases of breast cancer.

Own the Bone Star Performer designation is reserved only for institutions that have achieved a 75 percent compliance rate with at least 5 of the 10 Own the Bone prevention measures including: educating patients on the importance of Calcium and Vitamin D, physical activity, falls prevention, limiting alcohol intake and quitting smoking; recommending and initiating bone mineral density testing; discussing pharmacotherapy and treatment (when applicable); and providing written communication to the patient and their physician regarding specific risk factors and treatment recommendations.

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### **About Sacred Heart Health System**

On the Gulf Coast, Ascension operates Sacred Heart Health System based in Pensacola, Fla. and Providence Health System based in Mobile, Ala. Together, these Ascension healthcare facilities have served Gulf Coast communities for more than 160 years and they employ more than 6,600 associates. Across the region, Ascension provided more than \$113 million in community benefit and care of persons living in poverty in fiscal year 2016. Ascension is a faith-based healthcare organization committed to delivering compassionate, personalized care to all, with special attention to persons living in poverty and those most vulnerable. Ascension is the largest non-profit health system in the U.S. and the world's largest Catholic health system, operating 2,500 sites of care – including 141 hospitals and more than 30 senior living facilities – in 24 states and the District of Columbia. For more on Sacred Heart Health System, visit [www.sacred-heart.org](http://www.sacred-heart.org).

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