



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Sacred Heart Hospital Successfully Performs TAVR Procedures**

**PENSACOLA, Fla.** – On Thursday, September 29, 2016 Sacred Heart Hospital Pensacola successfully performed its first two Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacement (TAVR) procedures, a minimally invasive approach that will give high-risk patients who have damaged aortic valves an improved quality of life and life expectancy.



Until recently, most aortic valve replacements required open-heart surgery that involved making a large incision through the breastbone. However, older patients with underlying medical conditions were not candidates for this type of surgery. With the TAVR procedure, a cardiac surgeon can now repair severe aortic stenosis, a narrowed aortic valve, through a small incision.

“Prior to TAVR, patients who were deemed unfit for surgery were left without an alternative treatment,” said Dr. Charles Wyatt, a cardiovascular surgeon at Sacred Heart Hospital. “Now these high-risk patients have an option that is giving them a new lease on life.”

Sacred Heart Health System is a member of Ascension, the largest non-profit health system in the U.S. and the world’s largest Catholic health system.

During the procedure, an interventional cardiologist guides a small catheter through a small incision in the femoral artery in the groin, and then a cardiovascular surgeon inserts the new valve to the heart. Once the valve is in place, it immediately restores full blood flow from the heart. Unlike open-heart surgery, this minimally invasive treatment option results in faster recovery times so patients can get back to their lives quicker.

The first patient to undergo the TAVR procedure at Sacred Heart Hospital Pensacola was 89 year old, Wilbert Keifer. “For months it was hard for me to stand or walk because of my shortness of breath,” said Mr. Keifer. “I was up walking around only 24 hours after the heart valve procedure – TAVR made it better. Sacred Heart Hospital got it done.”

Successful outcomes with this procedure require an experienced medical and support team working at a comprehensive medical center that has the ability to manage risk and complications. One TAVR procedure requires the coordination of a 25-member multidisciplinary team, such as a cardiac surgeon, interventional cardiologist, anesthesiologist and nurses.



To ensure the highest level of patient safety and care, Sacred Heart Hospital Pensacola is utilizing commercial-aviation safety management best practices, called System Safety, in the operating room.

“System Safety has shown to improve patient safety by focusing on communication, leadership and decision-making,” said Dr. Mark Grise, an

interventional cardiologist at Sacred Heart Hospital. “Before doing our first two cases, we conducted extensive simulation training. When you are working with more than two dozen team members in the operating room, it leaves no room for error.”

For more information on TAVR, visit <http://www.sacred-heart.org/heart/services>, or call 850-416-TAVR (8287).

### ***About Sacred Heart Hospital***

Sacred Heart Hospital in Pensacola (SHHP) is a 566-bed acute care hospital that has been rated by area consumers as the most preferred hospital in the Pensacola area and the best for quality and reputation. For more than 100 years, its mission has been to provide high-quality compassionate healthcare to all persons in need, with special attention to those who are poor or vulnerable. SHHP serves as a regional medical center with expertise in providing specialized care for treatment of heart disease, cancer, stroke, bone and joint diseases, and traumatic illnesses and injuries, as well as care to women with high-risk pregnancies. More women choose to have their babies at Sacred Heart than any other hospital in Northwest Florida. Sacred Heart’s Pensacola campus also is home to The Studer Family Children’s Hospital at Sacred Heart, the region’s only hospital dedicated to care of infants and children with acute injuries or illnesses. The Pensacola facilities are the hub of Sacred Heart Health System and its network of hospitals, outpatient medical parks, long-term care facility and a large group of 150 primary care physicians and specialists. Sacred Heart Hospital was founded by the Daughters of Charity in 1915 in a beautiful building that still stands on 12th Avenue in Pensacola. In 1965, the hospital was relocated to its present site on 9th Avenue. Sacred Heart Health System is a member of Ascension, the largest non-profit health system in the U.S. and the world’s largest Catholic health system. For more information, visit [www.sacred-heart.org](http://www.sacred-heart.org).

### ***About Ascension***

Ascension ([www.ascension.org](http://www.ascension.org)) is a faith-based healthcare organization dedicated to transformation through innovation across the continuum of care. As the largest non-profit health system in the U.S. and the world’s largest Catholic health system, Ascension is committed to delivering compassionate, personalized care to all, with special attention to persons living in poverty and those most vulnerable. In FY2016, Ascension provided more than \$1.8 billion in care of persons living in poverty and other community benefit programs. Approximately 160,000 associates and 36,000 aligned providers serve in 2,500 sites of care – including 141 hospitals and more than 30 senior living facilities – in 24 states and the District of Columbia as part of Ascension’s Healthcare Division. Through its Solutions Division, Ascension subsidiaries provide a variety of services and solutions including physician practice management, venture capital investing, investment management, biomedical engineering, clinical care management, information services, risk management, and contracting through Ascension’s own group purchasing organization.

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